

### WALTER FARBER

In the fall of 1991, **Walter Farber** was invited to attend a symposium that brought together astronomers, historians of science, and Assyriologists to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the birth of Ernst Weidner. The meeting took place in Graz, where Weidner taught for many years, and had as its topic “The Role of Astronomy in the Cultures of Mesopotamia.” In his paper Farber explored some aspects of textual tradition and transmission, exemplified by a chapter of the lengthy compendium of astrological omens, *Enūma Anu Enlil*. Perhaps more importantly, at the symposium he learned a great deal about a particular area of Mesopotamian civilization in which he before had only limited expertise. He thoroughly enjoyed this opportunity to meet colleagues from the sciences who do not regularly attend Assyriological meetings but are nevertheless constantly making contributions to the knowledge of our field.

Farber also finished and submitted for publication an article on the concept of “forerunners,” as used in cuneiform studies. The term is often used to describe diachronic stages of textual development, specifically with scholarly, religious, or literary texts in Sumerian and Akkadian. The paper tries to define the conditions under which the term is correct and applicable but also shows that in many other cases it distorts more than it clarifies.

Besides this, his research on magical texts and amulets continues. He hopes to finish several articles on these topics in the near future and also to get

the long-awaited new edition of the Lamařtu texts into print not too long after that.

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