

Leggo!

Studies Presented to Frederick Mario Fales
on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday

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Vorwort des Reihenherausgebers

Michael Streck

Der zweite Band der Leipziger Altorientalistischen Studien ehrt einen großen Wissenschaftler, der dem Altorientalischen Institut seit einigen Jahren eng verbunden ist. Mit rund einem Dutzend Vorträgen hat Mario Fales unsere Kenntnisse von Assyrien, den Aramäern oder Sigmund Freuds Beziehung zur Altorientalistik bereichert. Im Rahmen des Erasmus-Programmes studieren Studenten aus Udine in Leipzig und umgekehrt. Möge uns Mario Fales auch in Zukunft oft besuchen und uns durch seine außerordentlichen Kenntnisse bereichern!

Leipzig, im August 2011.

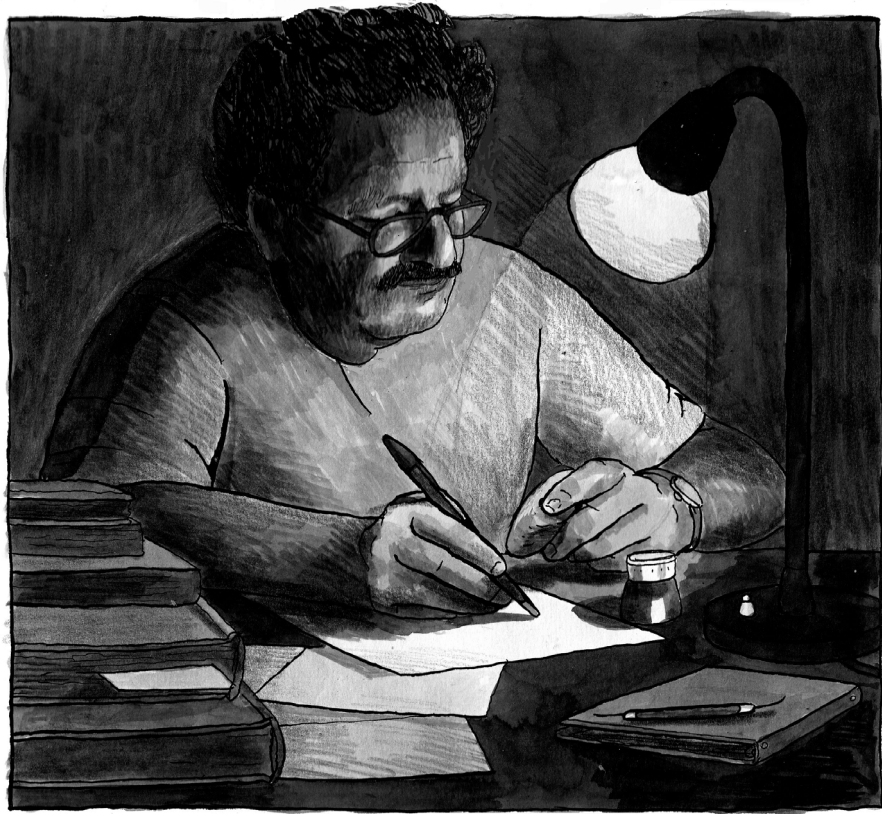
Foreword

Giovanni B. Lanfranchi, Daniele Morandi Bonacossi,
Cinzia Pappi, Simonetta Ponchia

Leggo!, reminiscent of the Latin meaning “to observe, collect, choose, select”, and almost synonymous with “to evaluate”, is part of Mario’s famous idiolect, by which he has always entertained his students and friends, shifting from the highest scientific rigour to the ironic interpretation of questions and situations. Students have often heard and still often hear the word with a certain apprehension, fearing the immediate and severe judgment of their works it might announce. Sometimes, however, the expectant tone in which the word is pronounced promises an appreciative attitude in the evaluation of their efforts, and is perceived as an encouragement on the difficult path of historical and Assyriological studies. The expression is not less reassuring when the object of evaluation is a glass of wine raised in celebration of academic or social events, or the beginning of a new research project.

The levity of tone does not diminish but adds to the lucid and penetrating analytical capacity which characterizes Mario's fundamental attitude. He has in fact extended the philological method, derived from his multilingual and multicultural education, to many fields of experience, in which analysis and criticism might be linked with tasting and appreciating, from music to literature, art, cuisine, etc. The method must of course have its roots in a Mesopotamian fondness for interpreting signs, for “reading” the multifarious messages of the universe, and condensing them into a text.

This time we have decided to anticipate Mario's comment in receiving this homage to his scientific career, the reading of which we hope will please him and kindle his interest. In place of the long description of Mario Fales’ many merits and academic accomplishments and rewards, we leave to the reader a reconstruction of the honouree’s scientific and human stature, according to an own method of reading and interpreting. This text condenses, in the words of students, colleagues, and friends, many references to Mario's themes of research, results of projects that have been originated in his school and in cooperation with colleagues all over the world, discussions, ideas and hints for future developments, as well as preoccupations and engagements that the historian of antiquity and of the Ancient Near East in particular must feel and undertake. Most of all, this book should be read as a token of our gratitude for Mario’s indefatigable enthusiasm in promoting Near Eastern studies as fundamental reading of human experience.



Drawing by Andrea Ventura.