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over northern Syro-Mesopotamia during the middle of the second millennium B. C. E. Revised versions of a dozen presentations delivered to that meeting (all in English) have been collected in the volume under review (link to Table of Contents: http://www.degruyter.com/view/product/129816?rskey=6GEfFM&result=1).

The primary reason that so little is known of the rise of Mittani, as indeed about many aspects of its history, governance, and society, is that no archives of the central authority have yet been recovered, all available information concerning this polity being drawn from textual material found in the cities of its vassals (most importantly Alalakh and Nuzi) or of its rivals (Hattusa, Thebes, and Akhetaten [Tell el-Amarna]).

In order to work around this dearth of direct evidence, the organizers invited authorities on two of these contemporary archives (S. de Martino and J. Klinger on Hattusa; E. von Dassow on Alalakh) as well as philologists expert in the texts of preceding periods that shed light on the region later dominated by Mittani (M. Biga on Ebla; C. Michel on Kanesh; M. Guichard and G. Chambon on Mari; J. Eidem on Shubat-Enlil / Shehna and Shusharra [Tell Shemshara]). Joining them are archaeologists whose work centers on the relevant geographic area (A. Otto, D. J. W. Meijer, R. Koliński, B. Lyonnet, X. Faivre). The book closes with short summary observations by N. Yoffee and G. Schwartz, followed by indices of texts cited, toponyms, personal names, and ethnica.

The participants were charged with organizing their remarks around three conceptions of space (pp. 3–4): "constituent space" (underlying regional topography and social and economic organization), "confederate space" (the theater of social and political relations, including trade, transcending the local), and "conquered space" (territory absorbed through formal military and political expansion). In their introductory remarks to the volume, the editors draw the undoubtedly correct general conclusion that political power in the ancient Near East was always fragile (p. 7), and regarding Mittani in particular, von Dassow demonstrates that the hegemony exercised by its kings was based on "a network of points of control" (pp. 14–15).[1] She also notes that the polities subordinate to Mittani employed various types of governance, from local monarchy in Alalakh to administration by popular assemblies in the towns of the middle

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In summer 2009 the Excellence Cluster Topoi of the Freie Universität Berlin hosted an international conference on the origins and development of the Hurrian-dominated state of Mittani, which exercised hegemony

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1 This is precisely the metaphor employed by M. Liverani in regard to the governance later exercised by the early Neo-Assyrian state over basically the same territory; see most conveniently The Ancient Near East: History, Society and Economy (London 2014), 505.

course of the Euphrates,[2] to rule by a governor appointed by the central authority at Halab / Aleppo.

In this connection, Otto shows that the more or less standard-sized houses revealed by the excavation of Late Bronze Emar, a site whose written records give great prominence to the local assembly, are matched by those at earlier Tall Halawa, indicating "a low degree of hierarchy and strong collective governance" along the Middle Euphrates already in the Middle Bronze Age (p. 53). In contrast, she points to the great difference in the extent of residences in cities such as Alalakh, Ugarit, and Nuzi, which hosted palace-based societies (p. 55).

But when did the federation known as Mittani come into existence? It was certainly not present in the last quarter of the third millennium, for there seem to be no Hurrian personal names in the texts from Ebla (Biga, p. 100), a kingdom whose geographic horizons were comparable to those of later Mittani (p. 94), although Hurrians certainly were at home at contemporary Urkesh (Tall Mozan). During the eighteenth century, the region of Ida-maraş, the western Habur triangle and heartland of Mittani, was dotted by a congeries of tiny states subject to the suzerainty of Shamshi-Adad and his sons and later of Zimri-Lim of Mari, wherein "the legitimacy of the [local] kings rested on a complex and unstable balance between hereditary right, popular support, and the suzerain's approval" (Guichard, p. 156). During the same epoch, northwestern Syria was dominated by Yamhad, centered on Halab / Aleppo, and the records of its client state Alalakh (level VII) mention few if any Hurrians.

The earliest textual attestation of Mittani (*Mtn*) is in the "autobiography" of the Egyptian soldier Amenemhet, who took part in a Syrian campaign, probably under Thutmosis I (reigned c. 1493–1483) (de Martino, p. 61). But just when between the fall of the "Kingdom of Upper Mesopotamia" and the early fifteenth century was this Hurrian polity established?

The narratives of the campaigns of the Old Kingdom Hittite rulers Hattusili I and Mursili I (on which see Klinger, pp. 79–84) are important for solving this problem. With the single exception of a later copy of the Annals of Hattusili I,[3] where it is probably an anachronistic addition by a scribe of the thirteenth century, there is no mention of the state of Mittani in the records of the Old Kingdom (de Martino, p. 63). When the early Hittite monarchs do encounter Hurrians in far eastern Anatolia and in Syria–

and members of this ethnic group did indeed constitute one of their primary adversaries in the region–they are referred to simply as "Hurrians" (*Hurri* or *Hurla/i*) or as "Hurrian troops" (ÉRIN.MEŠ *Hurri*) with no stated link to a state-level polity. In fact, at this point they seem to have been loosely-organized bands, or perhaps mercenary *Freikorps*.[4]

The chief opponent of Hatti in Syria during the late seventeenth and early sixteenth centuries was Yamhad, along with Babylonia itself the sole survivor of the constellation of major powers of the age of Hammurapi. Hattusili conquered much of Yamhad's territory, and according to the historical introduction to the later treaty between Muwattalli II and the appanage ruler Talmi-Teshub of Halab (mid-thirteenth century), Mursili "destroyed[5] the kingship of Halab."[6] Having thus removed the long-time hegemonic power in northern Syria, the Hittites did not attempt to install their own administration in the region, or perhaps were unsuccessful in such efforts–the relevant evidence is exiguous. In any event, their retreat into Anatolia left a power vacuum beyond the Taurus, to be filled by the nascent Mittani.

Of the contributors to this volume, de Martino feels that the establishment of Mittani as a state likely came about following the reign of Mursili I (p. 66), while Schwartz postulates that the threat posed by the Hittites itself provided the stimulus for the consolidation of the independent Hurrian groups into the single polity of Mitanni (p. 271). Most intriguing is Eidem's suggestion that the Hurrian population of the northern Zagros known as Turukkum (and particularly Itabalhum, one of its constituent parts), whose buffeting at the hands of the Gutians, Eshnunna, and Shamshi-Adad is recounted in texts from Mari, Shubat-Enlil, and Shusharra, ultimately formed the "kernel" of later Mittani (pp. 139–43).

Two of the archaeological papers included here address population dynamics accompanying the rise of Mittani. Koliński examines various survey data for the Old Babylonian and the Mittani eras on the upper Habur, in the Habur Valley, and along the Balikh drainage, finding "a considerable degree of continuity" in

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2 See D. E. Fleming, Democracy's Ancient Ancestors. Mari and Early Collective Governance (Cambridge 2003).

3 KBo 10.1 obv. 11, where we find not "Mittani" but the synonymous "Hanigalbat."

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4 On the conditions permitting such marauding, see F. van Koppen, "The Geography of the Slave Trade and Northern Mesopotamia in the Late Old Babylonian Period," in: Mesopotamian Dark Age Revisited, ed. H. Hunger and R. Pruzsinszky (Vienna), 9–33.

5 Lit. "fulfilled," D-stem of malû. For a full translation of this document, see G. Beckman, Hittite Diplomatic Texts, second ed. (Atlanta 1999), 93–95 (No. 14).

6 For details, see H. Klengel, Syria: 3000 to 300 B. C.: A Handbook of Political History (Berlin 1992), 80–83.

habitation between the two periods (p. 184).[7] Lyonnet and Faivre survey settlement in the upper regions of the western Habur from the Old Babylonian to the close of the Mittani era, and discern no general increase in population during this time, but do observe a change in its distribution, namely a dispersion of people from urban centers into smaller villages (p. 241).

The final archaeological offerings are less focused on Mittani *per se*. Meijer revisits the question of nomadism, stressing the distinction between completely migratory populations like Bedouin, and unitary communities, some of whose members are (largely transhumant) pastoralists while the majority remain sedentary village-dwellers. He believes that no true nomads were to be found in ancient Syro-Mesopotamia (p. 164). Finally, Chambon compares the various systems of volume measures employed contemporaneously in the realm subject to the kings of Mari.

Given the high quality of its contributions and its fine production values (including clear maps on a usable scale), this book is a standout in the recent wave of conference volumes emerging from the "Centers of Excellence" at German universities. No Mesopotamian archaeological collection or philological seminar library should be without it.

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7 His essay also demonstrates the difficulties inherent in comparing survey data collected by researchers employing divergent techniques and definitions of archaeological periods.