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Synthesis: Summaries and Responses

The Editors & Authors

Introduction

The workshop "People on the Move: Framework, Means, and Impact of Mobility across the East Mediterranean Region in the 8th to 6th Century BC," which formed the basis of this volume, aimed at tackling the question of how the increased cross-regional mobility of people and commodities in the wake of the Kushite, Neo-Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, and early Achaemenid expansions to the eastern Mediterranean affected a) the actual people who were leaving their homeland; b) the communities left behind; and c) the communities receiving the travelers on a visit or for long-term residence. For the volume at hand, all authors were asked to provide a brief summary of their main lines of argument as well as a specific response as to how the presented data and their discussion may help to develop a cross-disciplinary research focus addressing these general questions, especially with regard to:

Preparation and departure: What routes and means of transport were preferable to others and why? What preparations are necessary? Who or what factors decided whether to leave or to stay? How were necessary stopovers organized? How did communities cope with the loss of specialists or of comparatively large percentages of their inhabitants?

On the way: What motivations for traveling can be discerned? What routes were used? What could happen during the trip? What kind of reception would one expect?

Arrival and reception: How were travelers housed? How did this affect the receiving private or institutional households? How did local "foreign" communities deal with the enhancement of their numbers? How did the decision to integrate oneself into their community or to keep one's distance affect these "foreign" communities, the local society as a whole, and the policy toward "foreigners"? Was long-term emigration the aim or the result of traveling?

Idan Breier: "'He Will Raise an Ensign to a Nation Afar, Whistle to One at the End of the Earth': The Assyrian and Babylonian Armies as Described in Prophetic Texts and Mesopotamian Inscriptions"

This article examines the accounts of the Assyrian and Babylonian armies' incursions westward as depicted by the classical biblical prophets and Mesopotamian sources. We noted firstly the difference in genre between the prophetic texts, which portray the imminent threat standing at the gates, and the cuneiform inscriptions, which extol the mighty feats of the king and his army. We saw that the invading troops are said to come "from a far-off land," covering the distance swiftly and easily, the troops being depicted in mythical proportions, speaking unknown and incomprehensible tongues. Rapidly razing fortified cities, they show no mercy to women, children, or the elderly, the fear they induce paralyzing even the most noble of the defenders and local leaders. They raise a tumult, their shouting and yelling mingling with the cries of the wounded begging for help, this clamor eventually giving way to a deathly silence. The area attacked is left in confusion and mayhem, no voices of life or joy being heard. The Mesopotamian sources give us a closely corresponding picture, boasting of their military capabilities and highlighting the miserable fate of any who lay in their path, in particular those who rebelled against them. In some cases, the prophets appear to have employed terminology taken from Assyrian propaganda. Finally, we adduced two later examples in order to throw the comparisons into relief. These indicate that despite the difference in time and place the invasions are described in very similar terms.

With respect to the questions that arose in the working group, the Assyrian and Babylonian invaders made a long overland trek from their homeland in Mesopotamia to reach their destination, on occasion even gaining the border of Egypt. In gender terms, they were military men and administrators who were exclusively male. Although they left their families behind them, most returned at the end of the campaign to the places whence they had set

out—the exceptions being the administrative officials and troops that remained to govern and keep peace and order. These armies appear to have set out from the birthplaces well equipped for warfare and with the engineering accoutrements required for the campaign. At the same time, as was also the case in Rome, they took advantage of local resources for laying sieges. Being the best military forces of the period, they were able to overcome the resistance they encountered from smaller kingdoms, the rulers of the latter on occasion indicating their submission by sending tribute long before the armies appeared on the horizon. Others, in contrast, refused to surrender until defeated by military force.

With respect to their contact with the local populace, the prophets highlight the language barrier. Modern research indicates, however, that ties were established between the elites, in particular during the reign of Manasseh and the height of the *Pax Assyrica*, when compliant Judah, accepting the yoke of the empire, enjoyed economic prosperity. The influence is evident both with regard to material and religious culture—a fact denounced in the biblical historiographical literature.

Dan'el Kahn: "Egypt and Assyria in Isaiah 11:11–16"

Isaiah 11:11–16 is one out of several prophesies in the Book of Isaiah dealing with the downfall of Assyrian power, the accompanying relief of oppression in the southern Levant and the return of Judean (and possibly Israelite) exiles. This contribution contextualizes the oracle in the mid-7th century BCE as part of the retraction policies of the Assyrian army from Egypt as most likely historical setting. The first line of argumentation constitutes an analysis of the toponymic list in Isaiah 11:11–12 a) as original entity and b) as displaying the dispersion of Judeans (and Israelites?) across the four corners of the earth listed in northeast–southwest and southeast–northwest axes. Key issues are the prominent positioning of Assyria in first place and the continuity of the line in the southwestern direction following the Assyrian expansion into Lower Egypt and toward the core regions of one of Assyria's main opponents: Upper Egypt and Kush (modern-day Sudan). A correlation of the toponymic list with the known and assumed diaspora communities in the Neo-Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, and Achaemenid Empires suggests a best fit for the mid-7th century BCE.

The next step deals with the geographic identification of the *tongue of the Sea of Egypt* and the *splitting of the river into seven streams* in Isaiah 9:15–16, which are identified as the Nile and its delta branches as well as the paleo-lagoon in the northeastern area of the Pelusian branch of the Nile. The *drying out of the water to cross it on foot* is contextualized in the corresponding Egyptian literary imagery. The foreseen second exodus is finally identified as most likely referring to the hope of return of Judean soldiers and further exiles out of Egypt as part of and in the wake of the Assyrian army retreat from Egypt back to the Levant.

With regard to the key workshop questions, the principal aim of the contribution is to incorporate a further relevant source by re-dating Isaiah 11:11–16 into the socio-political context of the mid-7th century BCE. While the focus of the presentation is on the chronological and geographical re-contextualization, the source in question opens up many further issues relevant to the workshop: It highlights the importance as well as the possibility of positioning religious imagery in its historical as well as geographical context. This is facilitated by cross-disciplinary approaches, in case of the contribution at hand drawing on Biblical, Greek, Egyptian, and Assyrian sources. The case study also indicates practical information on potential travel routes between the eastern Nile delta and the southern Levant. Furthermore, it provides additional indications of Judeans as part of the Assyrian army and of (potentially) dissolving diaspora communities of Judeans (and Israelites?) in Egypt in the 7th century BCE.

Heidi Köpp-Junk: "Pharaonic Prelude—Being on the Move in Ancient Egypt from Predynastic Times to the End of the New Kingdom"

As the title of this article indicates, this section precedes the main focus of the volume temporally and is to be seen as a prologue. The article provides overview information and facts about the situation and developments from the Predynastic Period to the end of the New Kingdom. This analysis offers the reader the possibility of benefiting from an evaluation of a variety of sources from earlier periods that refer to the practical side of travel and mobility. It answers key questions from the workshop concerning the previous period and puts focus on factors affecting mobility and travel that remain constant. A very important finding is that a high degree of mobility is already attested in the period between the Predynastic and the end of the New Kingdom; it is not just an issue that first emerges in later periods, such as in Greco-Roman times with pleasure trips or touristic voyages by single representatives of the upper class. Moreover, the developmental trend indicates that the number of travelers increases over the course of time. Nevertheless, it would be unwise to make generalizations about the individual experience of travel and mobility.

Although the textual, iconographic, and archaeological sources from Egypt up to the end of the New Kingdom do not have traveling and mobility as their main theme, they highlight essential features. They reveal that travel and mobility were fundamental issues in Egyptian culture. The attested travelers originate from a variety of professions and from all levels of society. One of the most characteristic features for traveling in ancient Egypt up to the end of the New Kingdom is that private travels are only seldom recorded. In most cases the travelers are, according to the texts, on the move due to a kind of enhanced mobility. Furthermore, traveling women are rarely attested. But it can be nonetheless assumed that private traveling, as well as female mobility, occurred due to social reasons, such as visiting relations. The lack of evidence to support these kinds of travel is not specific but

due instead to a general dearth of source material. However, traveling was tiring, difficult, and dangerous, and could be even life threatening, since the voyager was exposed to natural hazards including wind, rain, and sandstorms, as well as to robberies. Therefore, it should be assumed that people avoided traveling unless they were required to do so.

The modes of travel and transport an individual could choose depended on his financial background. On overland travels, members of the lower classes had to travel on foot, since it was the easiest and cheapest way to move. The use of donkeys as mount animals would presuppose that one was able to afford them. The elite traveled by palanquin and, since the New Kingdom, by chariot. Sledges, carts, and wagons were not used in ancient Egypt as a mode of passenger locomotion, but only for transport. All in all, carts and wagons are very seldom attested in the textual, archaeological, and iconographical sources. The same applies to ridden horses and donkeys. The chariot was not restricted to warfare, but it was also a highly esteemed vehicle of the elite and served as prestigious mode of locomotion for both men and women in civil contexts. On the waterway, a variety of boats and ships allowed the traveler to reach his destination in comfort with relative efficiency, so that even very long distances could be covered with comparative ease. For the transport of very heavy cargoes, the waterway was preferred as far as it was possible with regard to the destination.

Different kinds of accommodation are documented, even though no guest houses, such as ones known from later times, have been shown to have existed. Since the Old Kingdom, travelers on official duty and members of the elite could provision themselves at temples and depots. For messengers on chariots, special stations were available.

In addition, the emotional life of the traveler, as well as the psychological impact the location change had on him, is very rarely treated as an issue in the texts, be it referring to the traveler, to those he left behind, or to the host society. Feelings that are stated referring to the traveler are, e.g., loneliness, annoyance about the strange surrounding, and worrying about the family that was left behind. Although travel was surely a great experience for those who were on the move, the emotional aspect received remarkably little attention in the Egyptian texts mentioning travel and mobility. This is evidently due to the nature of the sources, since in other texts from the New Kingdom, such as the Ancient Egyptian Love Songs, feelings are addressed in great detail.

Alexander Schütze: "The Standard of Living of the Judean Military Colony at Elephantine in Persian Period Egypt"

The aim of this paper is to apply research questions and methodological approaches of economic history in order to get new insights into the daily life of the Judeans at Elephantine. The Judean military colony of Elephantine provides the unique opportunity to combine both archaeological and papyrological evidence for the study of the living conditions of a foreign settlement in the Persian period. Three concepts for the evaluation of the standard of living were discussed: wheat wages, the calculation of the caloric value of rations, and the comparison of household sizes.

The concept of wheat wages is a very simple method to convert data on rations as remuneration into a measure that is comparable with data from other regions or time periods. The application of this method revealed that the provision of the military colonists at Elephantine with rations of barley was relatively modest compared with data from other regions and epochs provided by Walter Scheidel. The calculation of the caloric value of cereals gives a basic idea of how many people could be fed by the rations provided. The caloric value of the monthly payments of barley at Elephantine was obviously not sufficient to feed a whole family. Thus, only the combination with payments in silver may have provided a sufficient income for the military colonists and their families.

Both Aramaic papyri and the archaeological record provide data on the size and design of households at Elephantine. The size of households is a rather simple proxy for comparing living conditions of different settlements. The settlement at Elephantine consisted of modest houses (33–56 m^2) sufficient to house nuclear families of 4–5 people. The buildings at Elephantine constituted an entirely new type of housing with considerable consequences for the organization of social life. A comparison with excavations at Syene and Tell el-Herr indicates that the living quarter at Elephantine was an example for a more or less uniform type of settlement for foreign military colonists in Persian period Egypt although substantial differences in the size of houses at Elephantine/Syene and Tell el-Herr are observable. Due to the limited space, commonly shared facilities (e.g., for bread production) were in use.

All three approaches, wheat wages, the calculation of the caloric value of rations, and the comparison of household sizes allow converting disparate data into a currency that is universally comparable. Limitations of these approaches are uncertainties regarding the actual size of measures like the artaba and the limited data available for analysis. They, however, provide the opportunity of comparing living conditions of people from different regions and epochs. The paper, thus, provides new perspectives for the comparison of foreign settlers in the context of ancient Near Eastern empires in the 1st millennium BCE.

Thomas Staubli: "Cultural and Religious Impacts of Long-Term Cross-Cultural Migration Between Egypt and the Levant"

The increase of cross-cultural learning as a consequence of intensified travelling and migration between Egypt and the Levant during the Iron Age happened after millennia of migration in earlier times. The Proto-Hamito-Semitic

language and Levantine burial customs in northern Egypt illustrate at an early stage the migration of ideas, mentalities and customs along with people. Triggered by the first expansion of Egypt to the Levant during the Twelfth dynasty, Semitic-speaking immigrants in Egypt developed the alphabetic script on the base of the Egyptian characters. During the Fifteenth Dynasty the intensive migration in the regions caused a creolization of the population in the eastern delta and in parts of the Levant. The Amarna experiment and the cosmotheism of the Eighteenth Dynasty presuppose a multicultural society due to migration, mainly from the Levant. The Ramessides built their own capital, Pi-Ramesses, in the delta, nearby Avaris. They venerated Set, the Egyptian adaptation of the Canaanite Baal, as dynastic god, as well as other Canaanite gods.

The material culture of the centers of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah still reflects the long-lasting affiliation with Egypt. Under the pressure of the Mesopotamian aggressors, the exchange with and migration to Egypt is stronger than ever before. The biblical stories of the patriarchs reflect the Levantine-Egyptian koine of that time. Abraham figures as progenitor of the Canaanite-Egyptian koine, Jacob is mourned and honored by the Egyptians, Joseph rules in Egypt as a Pharaoh, the Hebrew Moses is educated by Egyptians, married to a Midianate and saves his people with a Midianite god. Thus, the Egyptian-Levantine koine is incorporated in the migrating founding fathers of the Israelite narratives. Furthermore, the Joseph story processes Egyptian literature: the Sinuhe story and the Bata story, both of which take place partly in the Levant. On a legal level, the Egyptians are a privileged group in Israel and on a theological level they are even seen as a "people of YHWH."

The imprint of migration and mutual cultural appreciation is evident in the imagery of stamp seals, the local mass medium, as has been demonstrated exemplarily for the early and late Palestinian series of the Middle Bronze Age, for the falcon-headed god, Baal-Set, Ptah, the striding light-god, and Harpocrates. From the iconography it becomes apparent that the themes of the epoch under research, the 8th–7th centuries BCE, are connected with earlier periods and with later periods as well.

This sketch of the cultural-religious *histoire de longue durée* of the Levantine-Egyptian relationship offers the view that Judaism and Christianity, universal religions of a new kind, are the multiform results of deeply deliberated transformational processes in two or (if we include northwestern Arabia) three regions with a very different physical nature, but at the same time a long-lasting, intense exchange on all levels of human life. More and more people in the region understood that the feelings of justice and the experiences of love and forgiveness here or there are similar and more important than local manifestations of Gods and their animosities. As a result, in these new religions the communities and their solidarity became more important than the country, and as a consequence the local temple cults were replaced by communitarian houses of prayer, study, and care.

It should be noted however, that the two regions never fused into one single political entity. It was precisely the koine of two different cultures that was so fruitful. The downside of the koine is the production of negative images on both sides as a result of cultural conflicts and traumata. The Deuteronomistic view of Egypt as a place of slavery and oppression has uncritically been generalized as Egypt's general image in the Bible by generations of biblical scholars. However, as demonstrated, there are good reasons to assume that migration, acculturation, creolization, and reciprocal learning, as well as understanding and appreciation, were much more characteristic realities in daily life in the region of northern Egypt and the Levant.

Melanie Wasmuth: "Cross-Regional Mobility in ca. 700 BCE: The Case of Ass. 8642a/IstM A 1924"

This contribution provides a detailed source criticism regarding cultural diversity and cross-regional mobility for a specific case study: a property sale deed written in Guzana, modern-day Tall Halaf in 700 BCE, excavated in the debris of a house in Assur, modern-day Qal'at aš-Šerqāṭ, and kept in the Archaeological Museum Istanbul (Ass. 8642a/IstM A 1924). The artifact is examined with respect to its archaeological and archival context, the persons involved in the contract (who are to a high percentage newcomers to Guzana or by nature of their profession or status explicitly denoted as temporarily staying there), and the additional information on cross-regional mobility to be gleaned from the history of object mobility of the artifact. Key issue is the separation of source-inherent and academically inferred information, which allows to highlight a much wider scope of interpretation than usually acknowledged in current academic research—even potentially reversing the direction of long-distance mobility. The three aspects taken into closer consideration concern the academically inferred identifications on the basis of etymologically foreign names, the interpretation of geography-related identifiers as ethnicons, gentilics, or toponyms referring to former or current places of living, and the hierarchical or parallel structure of identifying appositions, especially in the case of cited patronyms. The discussion is completed with two brief résumés on the source's potential for investigating the degree and impact of cultural diversity in ancient societies and for opening up research questions on the practicalities of cross-regional mobility. Principal issues of the latter are a brief discussion of the term and implications of the identifier *ubaru* ("visitor"), which is ascribed to three of the witnesses of the sale, and the potential reasons behind purchasing a (house with) bath in Guzana, the deed of which is later to be found in Assur.

With reference to the volume's general topic, this contribution demonstrates the background of its underlying workshop design: the rather obvious existence of intensive long-distance mobility and subsequent

cultural diversity already in the foremath of the first "world empires" and the difficulty of researching them in the current academic organizational setup and due to various sources-inherent difficulties, although they might be mostly overcome within a large-scale cross-disciplinary research context. The aim is not to provide answers to the various research question posed and even articulated as a research agenda on the practicalities and social impact of this mobility, but to exemplify their need and potential lines of investigation by a specific case study.

In addition to the issue of Assyriological source criticism focusing on the interpretation of geographic identifiers, etymologically foreign names, and parallel vs. hierarchical sentence structures for identifying phrases, the contribution highlights various pragmatic and conceptual questions with regard to cross-regional mobility: What is perceived as Egypt/*miṣir* in times of conflicting claims to control and of increasing cultural diversity? Which features characterized contemporary perceptions of cultural entities, exemplified by "Aramaic" as well polyglottic societies? To which extent is the ancient perception of persons of (geographically) foreign origin as ingroup members of social, administrative or economic relevance? Furthermore, research questions and data sets that may allow illustrating some administrative issues of housing travelers and defining their administrative status are pointed out.