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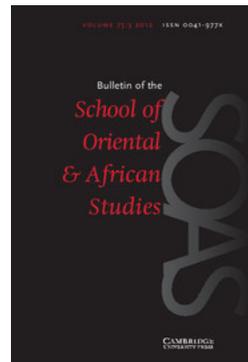
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Barjamovic: *A Historical Geography of Anatolia in the Old Assyrian Colony Period.* (Carsten Niebuhr Institute Publications.) xviii, 519 pp. Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press, 2011. £142.99. ISBN 978 876353645 5.

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REVIEWS

THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST

GOJKO BARJAMOVIC:

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This book, a revised version of the author's PhD thesis, attempts to take a methodologically systematic approach to the myriad toponyms of the Old Assyrian trader colony texts found mainly at Middle Bronze Age Kaneš (Kültepe levels Ib and II), Central Turkey, in over 20,000 cuneiform texts excavated since 1948. Most of these texts are still in the process of publication, but the author has had access to a significantly larger number than previous works have been able to draw on. Late Bronze Age Hittite sources are also discussed. The strict application of a comprehensive methodology, including consideration of textual, historical, infrastructural, logistical and topographical factors, leads to a radically new picture of Middle Bronze Age Anatolian geography and of the distances involved in the Old Assyrian trade network, which will be disconcerting to many scholars and influential beyond the confines of Middle Bronze Age Anatolian studies.

The book is divided into six chapters. Chapters 1–3 concern the general background of Old Assyrian trade, sources, methodology and the landscape of Bronze Age Anatolia. Chapters 4 and 5 treat a selection of major place names located, according to the author, either to the east or to the north and west of Kaneš/Kültepe. Chapter 6 offers a brief summary and overview of research perspectives.

The methodology involves a statistical gravity analysis of co-occurring toponyms aimed at producing clusters of likely geographically proximate names. Toponyms that are listed as ends or beginnings of journeys are factored out, as are those that appear in a text due to further text-internal motivations or are mentioned because of their significance as a commercial centre.

Beyond statistics the author considers what is being traded at the different locations, in an attempt to reconstruct a comprehensive circuit of trade. Key here is that certain localities seem associated with particular raw materials. It is only logical that some of these localities be placed near to where the raw materials – in this case copper, silver and gold in particular – were to be found.

The textually based analysis is combined with a detailed consideration of the constraints imposed by the landscape, possible routes, presence of rivers, mountain ranges, natural resources and archaeological sites. The author clearly spent a great deal of time acquainting himself with the modern Anatolian landscape, apparently by car. It will be interesting to compare his appreciation of the landscape with that of the as yet unpublished PhD dissertation of L. Ullmann, who explored it largely on foot while investigating Late Bronze Age Hittite historical topography (L. Ullmann, "Movement and the making of place in the Hittite landscape", PhD Dissertation, Columbia University, 2010).

The major deviation from other models of the geography of Old Assyrian trade in Anatolia is in the size of the network envisaged here, which would extend much further to the west and north-east than previously thought. The trade revolves around several important commercial centres: Purušaddum, previously thought to be either

Acemhöyük south of the Salt Lake, or somewhere in the vicinity of Konya, now moves out to Bolvadin, specifically Üçhöyük, in the Lakes region; Durhumit is placed at the other end of the network near Merzifon in the north-east, again very different to the alternative location of this city, which is mainly based on evidence for the location of Hittite Turmitta near Ninassa somewhere in the vicinity of the western bend of the Kızıl Irmak (e.g. M. Forlanini, in J.G. Dercksen (ed.), *Anatolia and the Jazira in the Old Assyrian Period*, Leiden 2008, 68–74). Trade in textiles and tin will have been directed from Kaneš south of the Salt Lake via Ulama (= Acemhöyük) towards Purušhaddum, and trade in copper from Durhumit via Wahšušana and Šalatuwar also towards Purušhaddum.

Given that the distances involved are the stumbling block that will prevent many scholars from accepting the proposed scheme, and that travel would have been impossible for much of the year due to winter on the Anatolian plateau, it is a pity that there is little consideration of the time it would have taken the merchants to travel. The assertion that the merchants subordinated time and distance to achieving the best profit is understandable, but only if the circuit itself is practicable (p. 412).

The travelling time between Assur on the Tigris and Kaneš (some 1,000 km) is estimated to have been five to six weeks based on a donkey's typical speed of 30–35 km per day (p. 15). This seems a slightly enthusiastic estimate, given that each donkey had a packer, who would presumably not have been running, and that one needs to factor in an unknown quantity of rest-days. (See also J.G. Dercksen, *The Old Assyrian Copper Trade*, Leiden, 1996, 11 with fn. 29).

Once in Anatolia traders would be making further large journeys to Purušhaddum, whether from Durhumit or Kaneš. These can only have been achieved with the extensive trading infrastructure and regional delegation that the author demonstrates did exist. If the merchants could travel from Assur to Kaneš, then presumably they could also travel large distances within Anatolia. The information on travelling times given by the texts themselves is difficult to interpret. In particular the author has to offer a reinterpretation of the crucial text *TC* 3.165, previously thought to give a travelling time of four days between Kaneš and Purušhaddum (pp. 333–4, compare Dercksen, *Old Assyrian*).

The author acknowledges that being unable to use palaeo-environmental data to full effect in his reconstruction of the landscape has weakened his arguments (p. 409). This is indeed regrettable as rivers of a certain size are taken as fixed points in the landscape, and decisions on locations are made (Wahšušana, Šalatuwar) on the basis of their proximity to rivers that would require bridges or ferries. The landscape of much of Central Anatolia may have been considerably wetter and marshier at the Bronze Age (for the Salt Lake see K. Kashima, *CATENA* 48, 2002, 3–21) although studies that present a comprehensive picture are lacking. Thus what are now tiny brooks may have been considerably larger. The Kızıl Irmak and the Sakarya are not the only rivers that may have had to be crossed by ferry or bridge on a journey from Durhumit to Purušhaddum.

The author presents his findings as a preliminary report, to be altered in accordance with new evidence. The book is clearly the most comprehensive and methodologically sound treatment of the subject to date and will provide the benchmark by which to measure future contributions. As a large work its use is enhanced by full indexes, many colour photographs, charts and fine maps. It is also beautifully bound and presented.

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