



Review

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state of research on the later prehistory of Mesopotamia. In a concise and general manner, the author presents the background developments preceding the rise of the classic city-states of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers toward the end of the fourth millennium B.C. A brief introduction surveys advances in the calibration of radiocarbon dating, and provides a note on the geography of the region. The body of the book is divided into six chapters: the first is a brief overview of the history of research (largely static over the past decade, due to extraneous geopolitical factors), while chapters 2–6 are arranged in chronological order, from the earliest sedentary settlements in the region, through small agricultural communities with ceramics and sometimes seemingly central granaries and other storage facilities, to pre-urban settlements, and finally to the earliest city-states. Succinct summaries of the architectural remains from the major excavated sites are presented, together with the available data concerning subsistence. Relatively little emphasis is placed upon chipped stone tools, ceramics, or other categories of small finds. Similarly, there is little description of mortuary practices or religion.

The author notes that the earliest well-documented evidence for sedentism derives from the Levant, though this probably reflects the current state of research. Given the title of the book, the description of Natufian settlements representing “villages” rather than “hamlets” is somewhat surprising. There is, however, a summary of recent research from northern Mesopotamia, between the Khabur and Tigris Rivers, at important early Aceramic Neolithic sites such as Qermez Dere, Nemrik, M'lefaat, Magzalia, and Umm Dabaghiya, which parallel PPNA and B developments further to the west and south. Indeed, though showing distinctive local traits, many of these sites display evidence for some manner of connection with the Levantine sphere. The supposedly defensive rampart at Magzalia level 13 seems destined to join that of Jericho: the former appears to be nothing more than a compound or enclosure wall. As the author notes, even the more imposing plan of Tell es-Sawwan dating to about 6000 B.C. is problematic.

Huot emphasizes the geomorphological processes of alluvial aggradation operating throughout Lower Mesopotamia during the Holocene, which have undoubtedly masked the earliest stages of expansion into this ecological setting sometime during the seventh millennium B.C. Analogous problems, of course, occur somewhat later in the Nile Delta, thwarting investigation of broadly parallel developments in socioeconomic complexity.

From a technical viewpoint a few criticisms should be noted that detract from the overall presentation. Though the text is accompanied by numerous plans and illustrations, these are not numbered. The plans are commonly taken directly from reports; some have been overly reduced and many lack scales. The two site distribution maps are poorly drawn. While a condensed bibliography is presented covering general topics (with a heavy Francophone bias) and site reports at the back of the volume, the body of the text lacks bibliographic citations. This is notwithstanding detailed discussions of various topics by various researchers to whom little or no reference is made. Nevertheless, this is a readable and lively account of the current state of research on the prelude to the appearance of the

city-state in Mesopotamia, and essential reading for those interested in the archaeological data pertaining to these processes.

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GORDION EXCAVATIONS (1950–1973), FINAL REPORTS II: THE LESSER PHRYGIAN TUMULI, Pt. 1: THE INHUMATIONS, by *Ellen L. Kohler*. (University Museum Monograph 88.) Pp. xxxvi + 262, pls. 85, figs. 72, tables 9. The University of Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia 1995. \$70. ISBN 0-934718-39-3.

This volume is another landmark in the growing University of Pennsylvania Museum series of final reports on the Gordion excavations conducted by Rodney S. Young from 1950 until his tragic death in 1974. Ellen L. Kohler deserves our deep gratitude for devoting many years of intense effort and devotion to the preparation of both this volume and that of its forthcoming sister (*Gordion II.2: The Cremations*). The first of the series, R.S. Young's *Gordion I: Three Great Early Tumuli* (Philadelphia 1981), established a format and style for the series that, sensibly, has been adhered to with expansion to accommodate a wider variety of materials, and the coherent treatment of horse trap-pings and vehicular remains.

Fifteen excavated tumuli containing wooden chambers and inhumations, 11 on the Northeast Ridge and four on the South Ridge, are described together with their contents in parts 1 and 2 respectively. These burial mounds are all firmly in the Phrygian Tradition, which perhaps began no earlier than the eighth century at Gordion. In the book under review, the date suggested for the earliest excavated, Tumulus W, is 750–740 B.C. O.W. Muscarella (*BASOR* 299–300 [1995] 91–101) has recently made the stimulating suggestion that the introduction of tumulus burial at Gordion could be associated with the introduction of kingship. It is noteworthy that a tradition of royal tumulus burial, but with stone chamber and dromos rather than the doorless wooden chamber of Phrygia, also began at Lydian Sardis in the eighth century. The ultimate origin of the tradition, not discussed by Kohler, appears to have been beyond the borders of Anatolia.

Methods of excavation and recording prevalent in the 1950s and 1960s were deficient by the standards normally (but, alas, not universally) applied today. Kohler has worked assiduously to transform the daybooks and other, often inadequate, records into a clear and straightforward account supplemented by informed discussion and valuable insights. In the preparation Kohler has been helped by the recollections of many of those who took part in the

excavations. The text is enhanced by clear diagrams of each tumulus, and photographs taken before and during excavation, the variable quality of which cannot be blamed on the author. Description of each tumulus is followed by a catalogue of finds according to their position within each monument. Comparanda discussed in the catalogues retain the Gordion field numbers for which a concordance is provided (pp. 247–49). The catalogues of finds are also complemented by drawings and photographs, although drawings of many of the most important objects and pottery vessels have not been included (e.g., TumH 2, 3, and 4, are woefully inadequate; TumH 5, where the incised decoration just visible on pl. 27G and mentioned in the text is not shown on the drawing). Many of the photographs are perhaps too small. Both figures and plates, in order to present objects in the same order as in the catalogue, contain a plethora of scales, resulting in irritating inconsistency. Some fragmentary and broken objects are not illustrated. Clearly, the catalogue of finds and accompanying illustrations are largely, if not completely, based on the records made before Young's death. This publication has, then, been 22 years in the making.

Part 3 comprises a commentary divided into five chapters. Since the volume is one of an as yet incomplete series of excavation reports, only selective issues relating to the inhumation tumuli, including evidence from the three Great Tumuli published in *Gordion I*, are discussed. Wider issues and an overview of the tradition and practices of tumulus burial at Gordion have, inevitably, been held over for report on the cremation tumuli. Chapter 17, "Construction Methods," provides a clear, valuable summary and discussion, leading to a suggested grouping of the tumuli according to their characteristics rather than their contents. Chapter 18, "Platforms, Coffins, and Assemblage Patterns," contains sections on "Pre-Kimmerian Traditional Burial Assemblages," "Assemblages in the Lesser Pre-Kimmerian Chambers," "Assemblages in the Lesser Post-Kimmerian Chambers," and "Assemblages Found in the Stone Caps." The division into Pre- and Post-Kimmerian is based on comparanda of grave gifts with excavated pre- and post-destruction material from the City Mound at Gordion. Chapter 19 is a brave attempt at establishing an internal chronological sequence and assigning absolute dates on the evidence presented in the two previous chapters. The suggested date for Tumulus B, ca. 630 B.C., has been recently confirmed by a dendrochronological date of 627 ± 1 B.C., and a new date of 718 B.C. for Tumulus MM (Midas Mound) (P. Kuniholm et al., *Nature* 381 [1966] 782; *XII. Arkeometri Sonuçları Toplantısı* [Ankara 1997] 166). Chapter 20, "Selected Forms of Gifts," pulls together classes of material, but again leaves much wider discussion for the next volume. The final seven-page chapter, "Summary and Conclusions," succinctly summarizes the preceding 226 pages, and tantalizingly mentions, but defers discussion of, some of the wider issues. It will be to this final chapter that most readers will turn in the first instance, and beyond which few outside the specialist fields of the Anatolian Iron Age or the archaeology of death will need to venture. The "Turkish summary" is condensed into two pages.

There are two appendices: the first, by C. Brixhe and M. Lejeune, deals in a single page with the signs carved into the wood of Tumulus B and graffiti from Tumulus J;

the second, by Sebastian Payne, discusses the pair of equids found in Tumulus KY. The index is clearly set out, comprehensive, and extremely useful.

This volume, and its companions, must find their way into any library that covers the archaeology of Phrygia, the ancient Near East, the Balkans, or the Eurasian Steppes. They will be heavily used, frequently referred to, and of lasting value.

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EARLY SOCIETIES IN SICILY: NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN
ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH, edited by *Robert Leighton*. (Accordia Specialist Studies on Italy 5.) Pp. viii + 211, figs. 86, tables 2. Accordia Research Centre, University of London, London 1996. £32. ISBN 1-873415-13-3.

There was a time when 90% of Sicilian prehistory was published in three national Italian journals, *BPI*, *NSc*, and *MonAnt*. Then came regionalization. For archaeology, the change was not immediate, but today 90% of Sicilian prehistory is made known through regional journals, monographs sponsored and published on the island, local conferences, and Sicilian exhibitions. The outside world, and especially the world outside Italy, is frequently left in the dark. This is why a volume such as the one reviewed here is so useful. As Robert Leighton is at pains to point out in his introduction, *Early Societies in Sicily* is not intended as a compendium of Sicilian prehistory. Rather, it is a collection of stimulating papers in the tradition established by the Conferences on Italian Archaeology, of which four have taken place in recent years in England. There are 16 papers in all, spanning periods from the Palaeolithic to the end of the Sicilian Iron Age in the seventh century B.C.

Leighton's introduction gives a review of radiocarbon dates and a rapid-fire summary of what he sees as currently important areas of discussion. Contributions on early faunal and human populations and the development of the Mesolithic, the first by Laura Bonfiglio and Marcello Piperno, the second by Biancamaria Aranguren and Anna Revedin, come next. Sebastiano Tusa then discusses the transition from hunting and gathering to farming in western Sicily. His view of gradual adaptation, based on his well-known excavations at the Grotta dell' Uzzo, has been presented before, but in this paper he also adds a section on a remarkable discovery at Partanna, a cleft dug to a depth of over 13 m in the sixth or fifth millennium B.C. and then filled with debris of the Middle Neolithic. Fabrizio Nicoletti's paper on lithic industries of the Neolithic and Bronze Age is singularly welcome because it deals with an aspect of Sicilian prehistory that traditionally has been woefully neglected. We move on to Tusa on the Sicilian bell beakers, a theme that has attracted his atten-