

conjured by and mention of it would perhaps not be out of place in the incantation published here by Lambert.

This is a fine volume and a worthy tribute to its recipient.

**Alasdair Livingstone**

MARLIES HEINZ and MARIAN H. FELDMAN (eds):

*Representations of Political Power: Case Histories from Times of Change and Dissolving Order in the Ancient Near East.*

xii, 210 pp. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2007. \$39.50. ISBN 978 1 57506 135 1.

Stimulated also by the current situation in the Middle East, the study of cultural continuity despite political change in the Ancient Near East is a topic which has recently found substantial interest. This handsomely produced book seeks to explore the representational strategies used by those wielding political power in the Ancient Near East to maintain (social, ideological, religious, economic and cultural) stability at times when political order is dissolving or under threat. Its agenda is closely linked to that of another recent volume, Harriet Crawford (ed.), *Regime Change in the Ancient Near East and Egypt: From Sargon of Agade to Saddam Hussein* (London, 2007) which, unsurprisingly, contains several contributions that deal with the very same disruptions highlighted by some of the eight case studies assembled by Heinz and Feldman.

Hence, the papers by Paul-Alain Beaulieu (“Nabonidus the Mad King: a reconsideration of his steles from Harran and Babylon”, pp. 137–66) and Amelie Kuhrt (“Cyrus the Great of Persia: images and realities”, pp. 169–91) are nicely complemented by two studies in Crawford’s volume, Michael Jursa on the continuance of the Babylonian administrative organizations during the period of change from Nabonidus to Cyrus (“The transition of Babylonia from the Neo-Babylonian empire to Achaemenid rule”, pp. 73–94) and Erica Ehrenberg on the perseverance of Neo-Babylonian artistic conventions in the seals used under Achaemenid rule (“Persian conquerors, Babylonian captivators”, pp. 95–103) – this alone indicates how rewarding the study of Babylonia’s evolution from an independent state under the last Babylonian king Nabonidus to a province within the Persian empire is when investigating the effects of regime change. Beaulieu’s contribution focuses on Nabonidus’s own representation of his legitimacy and kingship in texts and, to a lesser degree, images in the context of his ill-fated attempt to create a new theology to reflect the political realities of the cosmopolitan Babylonian empire, an example of “the failure of an old monarchy to maintain its legitimacy in times of dissolving order and the incapacity of an ancient but waning civilization to reinvent itself in a world dramatically transformed” (p. 163). Kuhrt’s article, on the other hand, is a deconstruction of a particularly successful representation of power, which features Cyrus as “a young idealistic liberator with a new vision for ruling the world” (p. 180); in an exercise of historical methodology, she investigates the man behind the image.

Marlies Heinz’s paper (“Sargon of Akkad: rebel and usurper in Kish”, pp. 67–86) is the third, and last, contribution to focus on one ruler; a subject such as Sargon of Akkad, usurper of the throne of Kish and a Mesopotamian legend as the founder of the first “empire”, whose image depends to such a high degree on later tradition, would have benefited had the sources been subjected

to the same methodological rigour that Kuhrt employs for her study on Cyrus. Also, the rest of the volume deals with the third and second millennia BC. Susan Pollock (“The royal cemetery of Ur: ritual, tradition, and the creation of subjects”, pp. 89–110) questions the idea that the “attendants” buried in the graves of a select group of people from Ur dating to the mid-third millennium BC went to their deaths willingly and asks how the consent of the subjects to their own subordination was achieved, how “disciplined bodies” were created. Two articles are devoted to the changes of the Middle Bronze Age, when “new” architectural techniques and artistic styles shape the appearance of Syrian urban communities and feature prominently in the competition between kingdoms such as Qatna, Ebla and Alalakh (Marian H. Feldman, “Frescoes, exotica, and the reinvention of the northern Levantine kingdoms”, pp. 39–65) and a “new” ruling elite, the Amorites, wield power in Syria and Mesopotamia (Brit Jahn, “The migration and settlement of the Amorites from the point of view of the settled Babylonian population”, pp. 193–209). Hittite imperialism puts an end to these states, as Ancient Near Eastern historiography would have it, and some of its effects are scrutinized in the contributions of Dominik Bonatz (“The divine image of the king: religious representation of political power in the Hittite empire”, pp. 111–36), who analyses the pictorial representations showing Hittite rulers in a religious function, and of Regine Pruzsinszky (“Emar and the transition from Hurrian to Hittite power”, pp. 21–37), who traces the fate of local administrative institutions after the integration of the kingdom of Ashtata into the Hittite empire; this last topic is also treated in Masamichi Yamada’s recent article “The Hittite administration in Emar: the aspect of direct control” (*Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und Vorderasiatische Archäologie* 96, 2006, 222–34), the revised version of a paper presented at the 2004 colloquium “The city and its life: cultural continuity and discontinuity in Ancient Anatolia”.

The editors, Marlies Heinz and Marian H. Feldman, have eschewed a chronological order of contributions in favour of three thematic sections: “Reestablishment of order after major disruption”, “Changing order from within” and “Perceptions of new order”, and justify this organization in the “Introduction: representation – tradition – religion” (pp. 1–18). The volume is not the product of a dedicated meeting, and this is obvious to the reader: as fascinating as the individual case studies may be, conceptually there is very little that unites them – except for an interest in political power and its various forms of representation (texts, images, architecture), and of course change and continuity in the Ancient Near East.

**Karen Radner**

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## THE NEAR AND MIDDLE EAST

RICHARD M. FRANK:

*Early Islamic Theology: The Muʿtazilites and al-Ashʿarī. Texts and Studies on the Development and History of Kalām, Vol. II.* Edited by Dimitri Gutas.

(Variorum Collected Studies Series, CS834.) xii, 400 pp. Burlington and Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007. £65. ISBN 978 0 86078 978 9.

This is the second of three volumes of collected studies by the great scholar of Islamic theology, philosophy and mysticism Richard M. Frank; the first,