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**Vyron Antoniadis. *Knossos and the Near East: A Contextual Approach to Imports and Imitations in Early Iron Age Tombs*. Pp. xii + 170, with b/w ills and col. plates. 2017. Oxford: Archaeopress. ISBN 978-1-78491-640-4, paperback £30.**

**Barbara Bohen. *Kratos and Krater: Reconstructing an Athenian Protohistory*. Pp. xvi + 250, with b/w ills and one col. plate. 2017. Oxford: Archaeopress. ISBN 978-1-78491-622-0, paperback £40.**

**Xenia Charalambidou and Catherine Morgan (eds). *Interpreting the Seventh Century BC: Tradition and Innovation*. Pp. viii + 460, with col. and b/w ills. 2017. Oxford: Archaeopress. ISBN 978-1-78491-572-8, paperback £75.**

The Aegean and Mediterranean world between 1000 and 600 BCE (the Early Iron Age and the earliest part of the Archaic period) continues to attract considerable scholarly attention. And for good reason. The period between 1000 and 600 BCE is the formative period in Greek history, where those institutions we most firmly associate with Greek culture (the sanctuary, the polis, the alphabet and the literature that resulted from it) took their definitive form. It is also a period where investigation has to be undertaken primarily by archaeologists. As all these books testify, the volume of relevant archaeological material increases exponentially every year, as does the sophistication of archaeological methods and theories. This does not quite mean that archaeologists can ignore texts. What to us now appear to be 'texts' however

– in particular the works of Hesiod, Archilochus and Homer – were, in the first instance, oral poems. When, how and where their works became ‘texts’ remains contested, since epic has its distant origins in the Bronze Age; ‘Homer’ is relevant to all periods from the Late Helladic through to the Late Archaic (and so to no period in particular).

The three books under review (all published by Archaeopress) make valuable contributions to this growing body of archaeological literature; each has distinct approaches to the problem of how best to use texts. And, while there may be a unity of interest in this period, there is no unity in their approach.

In many ways Antoniadis’ book is the most straightforward (partly because there are no texts to speak of). It is a monograph, based on his Barcelona PhD dissertation, on the role played by imports in Early Iron Age Knossos, a period which ends just before 600 BCE. The importance of imports for Knossos – and in particular the role played by ‘Oriental’ metalwork for the development of Knossos’ most idiosyncratic style of painted pottery, the ‘Orientalising’ Protogeometric B – has remained a mainstay of debate since the publication of Brock’s *Fortetsa* (Brock 1957). Antoniadis’ is a contextual study, looking at how the objects are used in their principally mortuary context as well as their wider cultural impact, and the light they shed on the wider Mediterranean world of the ninth to seventh centuries BC. His focus is not principally on the impact of imported metalwork as of imported (Cypriot and Phoenician) painted pottery, which mainly take the form of lekythoi (flasks for perfumed olive oil). He provides a full descriptive catalogue and tries to work out which class of persons received the ‘originals’ and which the local copies. That flasks for perfumed oil were closely associated with a certain kind of ‘performative masculinity’ in other parts of the Greek world, notably Corinth (Shanks 1999) in the seventh century BCE does not, however, form part of his argument.

The other monograph, by Barbara Bohen, is one of the strangest books I have come across in many a year. Bohen, though an American, comes to the field of Geometric pottery (that is ninth- to eighth-century painted pottery) from a very different academic tradition to the ‘contextual’ approach practised by Antoniadis. Her (New York University) thesis was on Geometric pyxides from the Kerameikos cemetery in Athens (Bohen 1988). She was a student of Gunter Kopcke, who (like the principal author of most of the Kerameikos volumes, Karl Kübler) was in turn a student of Ernst Buschor, the excavator of Samos, friend of Martin Heidegger and perhaps the most

influential German classical archaeologist of the first half of the twentieth century. This fact may in part explain the idiosyncrasy of her approach.

Bohen’s material focus is on kraters; a focus which creates a considerable overlap with earlier volumes in the Kerameikos series (e.g. Kübler 1954), whose dense and distinctive German prose cannot easily be forgotten. Her argument (but see Luke 1994) is that kraters – a term used to describe large bowls employed to mix wine and water used in the later symposium – relate to kratos – that is, to power. The kraters in question are much larger – much more monumental – than later symposium kraters, and their purpose seems principally to be funerary; to mark (largely male) graves, and to make visible the ‘power’ of the dead. Bohen provides a complete catalogue of all known Early to Late Geometric kraters from these excavations, with discussion of comparanda from the neighbouring Dipylon cemetery. The catalogue of 312 krater fragments is in itself a major contribution to our knowledge of Early Iron Age Athens. Hitherto the extreme rarity of this shape from contemporary tombs in the Agora (Papadopoulos 2017: 822–8) could have been explained away by the vagaries of survival. But the sheer number of krater fragments from the Kerameikos precludes this kind of interpretation. We must allow for longstanding differences in practice between distinct ‘burying groups’ (*sensu* Morris 1987) within Early Iron Age Athens; I freely admit that I may have inadvertently exaggerated (Whitley 1991) the uniformity of Athenian burial practices from Early to Middle Geometric times (and so, equally, exaggerated the changes towards more localized expressions of identity and status at the very end of the 8th century BCE). Bohen, therefore, has legitimate grounds for taking issue with many of the claims of the ‘social archaeology’ of the 1980s and early 1990s. But she also (equally inadvertently) provides evidence in support of some of these social interpretations. For what becomes absolutely clear in her illustration of these kraters is that the majority are decorated with circular motifs in their metopal panels, and the majority of these in turn have the ‘cross-in-circle’ motif we also find on the largest of the belly-handled amphoras (often used to contain the ashes of important women). Bohen argues – again with some reason – that these similarities can in part be explained by their being the products of the same workshops (though this would not, in itself, explain why this motif is quite so popular in ‘rich’ graves). Here, her groupings make a useful contribution to the archaeology of the period and underscore the continuing centrality of the study of the Kerameikos cemetery for any general understanding of Early Iron Age Greece.

The strangeness of her work does not then lie in these substantive contributions to the archaeology of the period (which are considerable), but in her approach to chronology and to literary sources. With chronology she takes issue with Coldstream (1968), whose scheme has been the bedrock of most analyses of the archaeology of ninth- and eighth-century Greece, partly on the basis of 'king lists' which are known only from very late sources (i.e. Pausanias and the author of the *Athenaion Politeia*, the Aristotelian 'Constitution of Athens). These sources are used without any recourse to source criticism (such as P.J. Rhodes' [1981] indispensable commentary). The king list is presented as an undisputed historical fact, and the possibility of its being invented to suit later purposes is not explored. Nor is the term *basileus* itself explored. In Homer and Hesiod one could argue that a better translation than 'king' of this term might be 'lord' or 'chief', as the 'kings' seem to have very limited power; the implications of this are not explored. So, while her alternative chronology might have some merit, the extraordinary claim that periods can be linked to a succession of kings obscures her more substantive points.

The last book under review is an edited volume whose focus is the Greek-speaking Mediterranean in the 7th century BC. It thus overlaps considerably with an earlier volume edited by Roland Étienne (Étienne 2010). Étienne's volume concentrated on key themes and questions, such as the role of the Near East and the 'Orientalising' and the impact and spread of alphabetic scripts; articles were commissioned from relevant experts, the intention being to provide a conspectus of both the major themes and the major regions of the Mediterranean world at this time. Charalambidou and Morgan's aims seem more empirical if also more diffuse: 'to make readily accessible the material record as currently understood and to consider how it may contribute to broader critiques and new directions in research' (p.1). The editors mention Osborne's 'crisis in archaeological history' (1989), that is the apparent under-representation of material in some regions (Attica, the Argolid) during this time. The arrangement of papers is broadly by region, the authors comprising both junior and senior scholars (with perhaps an over-representation of retired members of the Greek archaeological service). As a consequence the range of approaches is at times bewilderingly diverse.

We start with historiography, and a conspectus of his earlier conspectus from Étienne. He points out that, while the processes that manifest themselves most clearly in this period (e.g. the Orientalizing,

'colonization') have been extensively studied, the period itself has not. The next two papers focus on Crete (whose 'crisis in archaeological history' occurs in the sixth not the seventh century). Kotsonas' paper is partly historiographic, partly empirical and discusses Crete's fluctuating role in wider metanarratives about the Orientalizing and the 'birth of Greek art'. The next paper, by Kokkourou-Alevras, focuses precisely on this point, arguing that the earliest Greek limestone sculpture begins in Crete. The iconography of Cycladic relief pithoi is the subject of Simantoni-Bournia's paper, and sculpture at Delphi – in bronze and stone – of Aurigny's.

If 'Orientalizing' art is one of the perennial obsessions of the scholarship of this period then so is trade, especially when that trade entails luxury goods. This is the theme of the next five papers. Vacek takes another look at that quintessential 'port of trade', Al Mina; Bourgiannis examines Cypriot imports in Rhodes; Webb re-examines the 'Egyptianness' of faience; and Theodoropoulou takes another look at purple dye and other marine luxuries. Gros provides an ironic coda on luxuries – his subject is cooking wares.

The next two papers have diametrically opposed approaches to the painted pottery of the Eastern Aegean. Paspalas presents a micro-study on one Orientalizing vase from J.M. Cook's excavation in Old Smyrna, Kerschner presents an overview of East Greek pottery production. The latter subject has been revolutionized through the use of neutron activation analysis (see Villing and Mommsen 2017); pots which we have traditionally viewed as 'Rhodian' (from 'Nestor's cup' in Pithekoussai [here figure 32.1 p.375] to the Euphorbos plate now in the British Museum) may actually have been manufactured in Kos.

The next three papers deal with the central Aegean. Charalambidou returns to Euboea and the Euboean gulf. This region is the gift which gives on giving as far as new material is concerned, and it is quite a struggle to keep up. Zapheiropoulou provides a focused study on painted pottery from Paros; Koutsoumpou an overview of work on Kythnos. Mazarakis Ainian (on architecture in general) and Frederiksen (on fortifications) interrupt the stately progress of regional studies with something more synthetic. Regionalism, however, is no less evident in these studies than it is in many of the other papers, and some of the general themes of these two papers crop up in the next two, whose focus is the Corinthian gulf. With her customary thoroughness, Morgan takes another look at early cult buildings –

not solely temples, though they are included here – in and around Corinth, and Gadolou provides another bulletin on the precocious development of temple architecture in Achaia. Sanctuaries – specifically the sanctuaries of Apollo Ismenios and Herakles at Thebes – are also the focus of the next two papers by Aravantinos and Kalliga. It is the sanctuary of Herakles that provides us with our cover image, one of Nessos abducting Deianeira.

And so eventually (with the next three papers) we reach Attica, the traditional ‘centre’ of most studies of Early Iron Age and Archaic Greece. That we come to this region so late is, I think, an attempt to de-centre Athens, to treat it as just another region among many others. Palaiokrassa-Kopitsa provides a further study of the sanctuary of Artemis at Mounichia, now part of the Piraeus. Both D’Onofrio and Alexandridou return to the problem of ‘heroic’ or ‘elite’ burials in the Kerameikos and at Vari.

The extension of Greek settlement in the Central and Western Mediterranean – something that used to be called ‘colonisation’ (but see Osborne 1998) – is another major development of the seventh century. D’Acunto provides a full synthetic overview of ‘Greece’s second colony’ (after Pithekoussai), Kyme (or Cumae) in Campania. Jacobsen, Saxkaer and Mittica look at the earliest evidence from Sybaris, a city conveniently destroyed before the end of the Archaic period which has only recently been re-located. Shepherd and Lentini both look at Sicily, the former an overview, the latter another micro-study (a pairing that occurs more than once in this volume).

Up to this point the move between regions had some geographical logic. Though the next shift is more abrupt – to Greek Macedonia – the theme of ‘colonization’ continues. Moschonissioti summarizes recent finds from Mende in the Chalkidiki. Tzifopoulos, Bessios and Kotsonas provide an overview of the (largely late 8th century) inscribed cups from Methoni. This deposit, which has striking parallels to the finds from the sanctuary of Apollo at Eretria, has rekindled two debates; one about the ‘Greekness’ of early Macedonia and another of the date of the introduction of the alphabet. The latter is the subject of Alan Johnston’s piece, which treats the issue as being a largely empirical one, and one that is principally about letter forms. This topic remains severely under-theorized in that it continues to be treated as the province of philologists and epigraphers, who still seem to regard the ‘recovery’ of literacy as both inevitable and natural.

This volume is then a conspectus, but a series of views – micro-studies jostle with more focused overviews of topics and regions. For the most part the emphasis is either on the earlier part or the very end of the period – the seventh century as a ‘Sub-Geometric’ continuation of the eighth, or as the precursor of the more sophisticated world of the sixth. The central part of the seventh century – the period whose dearth of material provoked the original ‘crisis in archaeological history’ barely gets a look in. Nor, apart from the two epigraphical papers, do texts to any great extent. These deficiencies are however very much remedied in the final paper by Crielaard. His focus is on the link between lyric poetry (Archilochus, Sappho) and how young women – korai – are represented in visual culture. He makes a strong case for the role of belts as (symbolically if not functionally) ‘chastity belts’, something that must lead to a thorough reappraisal of many of the images considered in earlier papers to be simply ‘art’.

With the exception of the papers by Étienne, Crielaard, Mazarakis Ainian and Frederiksen the approach is empirical, the coverage regional. Not all regions of the Greek-speaking Mediterranean are covered. Charalambidou and Morgan’s perspectives are from Euboea and the Corinthia respectively, and this may in part explain the Aegean and West Mediterranean bias of many of the papers. The Black Sea, Naukratis and North Africa are not covered at all, though Cyprus sometimes has a supporting role as a kind of *deus ex machina*. Traditional themes in the study of this period, such as the gradual emergence of images we can link to known myths (such as Herakles and Nessos) are delicately alluded to without being discussed with the thoroughness that we now know they merit. Issues both methodological (such as the role of petrography and chemical analysis in the study of pottery, a theme of Gros’, Kerschner’s and Charalambidou’s papers) and theoretical (such as the interpretation of mortuary remains) are touched upon in various papers, but not systematically addressed in the volume as a whole. And the major historical interest in this period – the process we might call ‘Mediterraneanization’ (Morris 2003), that is the process by which the Mediterranean world as a whole becomes completely connected during this century and then (most remarkably) stays that way until the fall of the Roman Empire – is not really debated. That is not to say that the individual contributions are not, in themselves, of great value: the volume does give a very good impression of the ‘state of the art’ in purely evidential terms. But it does not really discuss the fundamental debates that the study of this period necessarily entails.

For the most part Archaeopress has done these authors proud. The quality of illustrations (often in colour) and production in the Charalambidou and Morgan volume is particularly high. These high standards are also evident in the other two volumes. Archaeopress, however, do not provide editorial support – a lack particularly noticeable in the volume by Antoniadis (where there are just too many typos). These are nonetheless affordable books, both for academic libraries and for specialists in the field. Their cumulative arguments and reappraisals are very much worth taking on board and demonstrate the continuing vitality of a field that addresses one of the most significant formative periods in history to be found anywhere in the world.

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