

imports (not always from far away, e.g. Voudeni to the north) are mostly LH IIIC stirrup jars, a potential affirmation of their significance as status symbols, though some kylix pieces and a deep bowl fragment assigned to LH IIIB are also thought imports. A minor criticism is that the entries for vases in the tomb catalogue can include an unnecessary amount of parallel hunting, when, before LH IIIC, vases are likely to be either versions of or clearly influenced by standard types, as defined in authoritative studies like French's classic BSA articles or Mountjoy's books, and need no further references. Once stylistic homogeneity has broken down, in LH IIIC, parallel hunting is more useful, providing significant evidence for interconnections between the different regions and also for assigning vases without context to phases.

Not only in pottery but in other respects the patterns suggested by the material preserved from the Aigion and Chalandritsa tombs fit Achaeen norms, as analysed by Papadopoulos (where chamber tombs are called 'family vaults' in the standard way, although the number of recorded burials was generally only three to five, though ranging from one to nine¹) and Cavanagh and Mee.² The presence of spearheads, quite common in Achaea,³ might hint at an original 'warrior burial' in the heavily robbed T. 19, but hardly in T. 44, where two seem to be associated with the burial of a middle-aged woman, in a tomb where the only primary burials were of women. Interestingly, one of these spearheads is of the same type as that represented by a stone mould found at Stavros (p. 254). In one significant area Papadopoulos's analysis does require updating; contrary to what he suggested,⁴ chamber tombs had clearly come into use at Chalandritsa by LH IIIA1 and were relatively common in LH IIIA2.

Overall, these two publications make a very useful addition to the documented Mycenaean material from Achaea, especially for the fascinating and still poorly understood postpalatial era, and provide much food for thought.

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Cavanagh, W. and Mee, C. 1998. *A private place: death in prehistoric Greece*. Jönsered: Paul Åströms Förlag.

Hope Simpson, R. and Dickinson, O.T.P.K. 1979. *A gazetteer of Aegean civilisation in the Bronze Age, Vol. I: the mainland and islands*. Göteborg: Paul Åströms Förlag.

Papadopoulos, Th. J. 1979. *Mycenaean Achaea*. Göteborg: Paul Åströms Förlag.

Margaretha Kramer-Hajos. *Mycenaean Greece and the Aegean World: Palace and Province in the Late Bronze Age*. pp. xi+218, 46 b/w illustrations, 8 tables. 2016. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. ISBN 978-1-107-10754-0 hardback. £80.00.

Diachronic surveys of Mycenaean civilization, our term for the material culture that flourished above all on the central and southern Greek mainland during the six or seven centuries (ca. 1700/1600-1000 BC) we assign to the Late Bronze Age, typically and understandably focus on the regional cores of that culture in the northeast (Argolid and Corinthia) and southwest (Messenia) Peloponnese where it arose and has been most extensively documented. The overview of this culture provided by Margaretha Kramer-Hajos (hereafter MK-H) is refreshingly different in its spatial focus on the Euboean Gulf region of east-central Greece (figs. 1.1-1.2) as well as in its conceptual emphasis on certain aspects of network theory and human agency. Despite her study's seemingly all-inclusive title, MK-H makes very clear right from the start of her excellently organized text precisely what will distinguish her consideration of the Mycenaean era during three successive periods of roughly commensurate length (two centuries apiece) that she terms prepalatial, palatial, and postpalatial: a non-traditional regional focus (1-18) and a particular theoretical orientation (19-31). She will employ network analysis to describe how social, political, and economic structures changed through time, while her examination of agency through iconographic analysis will provide her with clues as to why these structures changed (31-32).

MK-H devotes a pair of chapters to each of her prepalatial (Chs 2-3: 33-69), palatial (Chs 5-6: 107-148), and postpalatial (Chs 7-8: 149-179) periods, with a single chapter (Ch. 4: 70-106) set aside for the transitional Late Helladic (LH) IIB-III A1 ceramic phases (ca. 1430-1370/1360) that constitute the

¹ Papadopoulos 1979: 55.

² Papadopoulos 1979; Cavanagh and Mee 1998.

³ Papadopoulos 1979: 163.

⁴ Papadopoulos 1979: 157.

immediate prelude to the palatial era. In the first of her prepalatial chapters, she concentrates on early Mycenaean warrior iconography and weaponry (swords and chariots), the high-status tombs that have yielded most of the relevant artifacts, communal feasting, and ship depictions as sources for coastal raiding activities. Valuable though her discussion of our earliest pictorial evidence for what was important to emerging Mycenaean elites may be, there is a significant disconnect here between the sources of her pictorial evidence (the Shaft Graves at Mycenae for combat iconography, the western and southern Cyclades for the ship depictions) and her regional focus on the Euboean Gulf, even if high-status warrior burials, an imported horse bridle, and communal feasting are all attested at coastal sites in that area such as Mitrou. One may also question her assessment of such complex figured scenes. For example, on the well-known 'Battle in the Glen' ring from Mycenae's Shaft Grave IV (35-36, fig. 2.3), the details of the individual figures' actions have been interpreted in significantly different ways by Sidney Carter on the basis of a greatly enlarged image of the original gold ring.¹ By contrast, MK-H relies on a drawing of the ring's impression reproduced from the *Corpus der minoischen und mykenischen Siegel* I² that, due to its mirrored version of the original, inappropriately shows the two principal warriors wielding weapons held in their *left* hands. Her useful discussion of swords and chariots in early Mycenaean contexts may now be placed in a wider spatial and chronological framework thanks to the recent appearance of Robert Drews' *Militarism and the Indo-Europeanizing of Europe*.³

In her second chapter on the prepalatial period, MK-H directs her attention to the insights to be gleaned from the rapidly changing picture provided by the ceramics of the LH I and II phases in central Greece. She does an excellent job of explaining why the numbers of early Mycenaean sites in this region have been grossly underestimated until recently because of problems in evaluating the dates of the pottery generated by surface surveys, but aside from a brief mention of an orally delivered 2012 paper (60 n. 1) she fails to mention the important work on this specific issue published in some detail by Peter Pavuk in that same year.⁴ She likewise makes no mention at all of the extensive work done by Iro Mathioudaki on the Mainland Polychrome Matt-painted class of pottery,⁵ and devotes relatively little attention to the various

classes of pattern-decorated, color-coated, plain, and cooking pottery imported from Aegina with the exception of Salvatore Vitale's preliminary reports from Mitrou (63). As a consequence, she attributes more significance to the distribution of the earliest dark-on-light lustrous-decorated pottery (repeatedly and somewhat misleadingly termed 'lustrous ware') in this region than it may actually warrant (61-65). Was this earliest Mycenaean decorated class, whether imported from regions to the south or locally imitated in central Greece, actually any more indicative of an elite network among the Euboean Gulf's coastal sites than Aeginetan imports during the early Mycenaean era (65)? Was the replacement of locally produced bichrome matt-painted pottery by monochrome lustrous-decorated pottery really a *fait accompli* by an early stage of the LH IIA phase (63)? Such suggestions are certainly worth entertaining, but a good deal more evidence from well-stratified and carefully excavated settlements will be required before they can be accepted with real confidence.

The LH IIB-IIIA1 ceramic phases transitional between the prepalatial and palatial periods witness the full 'Mycenaeanization' of the Euboean Gulf region through such widely disseminated cultural markers as decorated pottery and tomb types. MK-H uses the distribution of amber beads and chamber tombs to make this case (70-76), drawing attention to concomitant changes in the network of intersite links that accompanied such 'Mycenaeanizing'. Contemporary shifts in ideology are suggested by changes noted in the deployment of prominent iconographic elements such as chariots, lions, and griffins in glyptic art (76-94). Novel sword types and the portrayal of both chariots and armed elites in parades rather than in combat (76-77, 100-105) are further evidence of noteworthy ideological developments, although these last date from the palatial era (LH IIIA2-B), as does the production of the Mainland Popular Group of soft-stone seals whose differential usage in palatial versus non-palatial contexts is also assessed in this chapter (94-100). The various strands of evidence explored, potentially somewhat confusing in view of their surveys of different data sets in a mixture of distinct time intervals, are skillfully woven together in a brief but compelling set of conclusions (105-106), a regular feature of every chapter in the book but one that is particularly helpful in this one.

The two chapters dealing with the palatial era focus on the two polities that clearly dominated the east-central Greek mainland from early in the 14th century to the palatial collapse shortly after 1200 BC, namely those centered at Orchomenos (107-127) and Thebes (128-148). Though both Boeotian palaces

¹ Carter 2000: 27-33, 69-73, fig. 59; Stocker and Davis 2017: 583 n.1, 602 n.64; Vonhoff 2008: 283-284 no. 30, pl. 7:30.

² Sakellariou 1964: no. 16.

³ Drews 2017.

⁴ Pavuk 2012: 40-88.

⁵ Mathioudaki 2011, 2015.

were located well inland, MK-H's informative surveys of the two make very clear not only how their rise impacted the coastal settlements along the Euboean Gulf that they came to dominate but also how much the two seem to have differed from each other. Orchomenos' wealth and power were based upon the agricultural exploitation of the drained Kopaia Basin and were manifested chiefly in the fortified strongpoints that protected this massive hydraulic engineering accomplishment and gave Orchomenos a secure outlet to the sea at Larymna (fig. 5.6). Thebes, on the other hand, through its control of more outlets to external sources of exotic materials, is argued to have specialized in the production in its palatial workshops of a wide range of sparingly distributed prestige goods that were utilized to secure the adherence of competitive local elites throughout eastern Boeotia and the southern Euboean Gulf zone. Of particular interest to this reviewer in this section of the book was MH-H's highlighting of the lack of ship iconography at practically all palatial sites other than Pylos (see 133 n.4 for a ship fresco fragment from Iklaina, also in Messenia) and her explanation for this phenomenon (128-141): in contrast to the chariot, the ship was for various reasons simply not suitable as an image for promoting elite ideology, especially not in polities whose palatial centers were as far removed from the sea as were both Orchomenos and Thebes.

By contrast, ships, their military usage, and the rise of a 'sailor-warrior culture' together constitute the central theme of the two chapters devoted to the postpalatial period (149-179), during which the coastal communities of the Euboean Gulf manifested, through the iconography decorating substantial numbers of kraters recovered from such sites as Kynos, Lefkandi, and even inland Kalapodi, a return to the celebration of warrior values that MK-H argues had been so prominent during the prepalatial period. The renewed power and prominence of these settlements after their relative unimportance during the palatial era is clear from their readily visible and accessible locations along the Attic, Boeotian, and Locrian coasts during the troubled 12th and 11th centuries BC. The marked contrast between their frequency on the one hand and the large numbers of abandoned settlements of the palatial era in the central Greek interior on the other is truly striking (fig. 8.2), as is the apparent absence of contemporary refuge settlements of the sort so popular in parts of postpalatial Crete and some central Aegean islands. Together with a dramatic rise in the quantities of ship imagery in the only significant pictorial art form (ceramics) that survives the palatial destructions of ca. 1200-1175, MK-H notes a reaction against iconic symbols of the palatial era such as the griffin, the lion,

and the sphinx (149-152)⁶. In commenting on the novelty of locally produced pictorial pottery in this region at this time, she further observes that 'unlike earlier pictorial pottery, . . . the LH IIIC Middle kraters are more similar to fresco painting in their focus on a single subject and setting (maritime or terrestrial). These krater depictions are essentially narrative rather than emblematic' (154). Yet her interpretations of these pictorial scenes are in some cases seriously flawed or incomplete. For example, a krater rim from Kynos illustrated in fig. 7.2 that she identifies as 'arguably the most important postpalatial Bronze Age document from the Euboean Gulf area' does not, in fact, illustrate 'a scene not attested anywhere else in the Bronze Age Aegean: a battle taking place on board a ship' (152). The two warriors depicted amidships on this fragment, despite the fact that they are outfitted with shields of different types, are clearly not depicted dueling but rather are members of the same crew: they both hold their shields in their outstretched left hands, clench javelins (161-162) in their upraised right hands, and prepare to launch their weapons in the same direction as that in which the Bowman in the bow is loosing an arrow.⁷ The significance of this and other images of warships among the rich series of such depictions from Kynos is their demonstration that the principal kind of military engagement at sea envisioned by their painters consisted of the casting of missiles between boats, either from the bow or from the middle of a ship (also 155-156, figs. 7.3-7.4). This is therefore an altogether different form of combat from the one-on-one dueling so popular in the prepalatial period, one in which the weaponry consists of missiles and the combat is between crews, not individuals; just as important a figure as the javelin-casting or arrow-firing warriors is the helmsman steering the craft from the back of the ship. As is also the case on the famous Warrior Vase from Mycenae depicting groups of land-based foot-soldiers and also on the chariot teams illustrated on contemporary Tirynthian kraters, the emphasis in postpalatial combat is on corporate activity rather than individual heroes. Perhaps most significantly, the Kynos kraters were probably used not so much by putative high-status drinkers in a symposium setting (155) as by the crews of warships celebrated in the depictions who themselves used these mixing bowls in celebrating their victories. The drinking occasions at which such kraters were displayed presumably served to bond the crews of individual ships as tightly as possible, as an elite team within a larger community. To interpret such postpalatial scenes in this way draws attention to the fact

⁶ Also Rutter 1992, 2014.

⁷ Vonhoff 2008: 301 no. 163, pl. 38.

that some of the Euboean Gulf communities, most notably Mitrou, chose *not* to produce pictorial art of this kind (169), possibly because they were more invested in other ways of recognizing and celebrating communal social solidarity. One may therefore wonder whether what MK-H provocatively refers to as ‘galley communities’ were necessarily as common as she suggests by identifying them throughout the Euboean Gulf as well as in parts of the Cyclades, the Dodecanese, and even the western Anatolian coast or in seeing possible connections between these 12th century communities and the warships that reappear in Attic Geometric pictorial art some four centuries later on which hand-to-hand combat on board individual ships is unambiguous (171-174).

In her final thematic section on postpalatial trade, MH-K makes a solid case for the decentralization of wealth not only between settlements up and down the Euboean Gulf corridor but also within individual settlements (174-179), at the same time observing that this region (inclusive of the large LH IIIC cemetery at Perati) has yielded plenty of evidence for intercultural contacts with the east throughout this terminal stage of the Bronze Age and even beyond. Much the same picture for the nature and extent of postpalatial Mycenaean and Early Iron Age trade has been painted in greater detail recently by Sarah Murray.⁸ MK-H brings her text to a close with the sort of short but both comprehensive and effective summary for the book as a whole (180-185) that she has supplied throughout at the end of each and every chapter. In fact, thanks to the unusually clear organization of this volume, readers with limited time can rapidly acquire a reliable appreciation for the book’s topical coverage and principal arguments simply by consulting these concluding summaries.

The extensive bibliography (187-206) accompanying this relatively short volume is rich, although as noted above it features some noteworthy omissions. One would have expected as full a record of publications of the recently excavated settlement of Mitrou as possible, so the absence of several important contributions by Van de Moortel and Zachou, Lis, Tsokas *et al.*, and Karkanas and Van de Moortel is somewhat surprising.⁹ Coverage of early Mycenaean feasting behavior is incomplete without citing Lindblom,¹⁰ and the failure to list major titles on early Mycenaean ceramics by Dietz¹¹ and on the Aeginetan ceramic industry by Lindblom and Gauss and Kiriati

is odd.¹² Typographical errors, always of minor significance, are few and far between: the captions of the two views of Mitrou provided in fig. 1.5 (17) have been inadvertently switched; ‘tracts of land’ are mistakenly reproduced as ‘tracks of land’ (74 line 10); and the statistics cited of seals depicting lions attacking bulls (85 paragraph 2) do not correspond with those presented in the accompanying table (86 table 4.3) until one realizes that the final four items listed in the table specify calves and oxen rather than bulls and should therefore be omitted from consideration, notwithstanding the table’s caption. The erroneous description of the main scene on the famous Lion Hunt dagger from Mycenae’s Shaft Grave IV (85 line 3) is an equally rare factual blooper. Illustrations and tables are quite numerous and generally serve their purposes well, albeit invariably rendered in black-and-white rather than even occasionally in color.

Margaretha Kramer-Hajos’ overview of the ups and downs of Mycenaean civilization from the perspective of small to medium-sized communities sprinkled along a heavily traveled waterway connecting east-central Greece with the north is stimulating reading from beginning to end. She weaves a broad range of distinct threads in current Aegean prehistoric scholarship into an engaging narrative tapestry that illustrates how different the experiences of these communities may have been from contemporary settlements in the Peloponnese where Mycenaean culture first emerged and subsequently developed into centralized palatial states, even when these central Greek communities came to be incorporated into such states. Although her book makes no effort to serve as a general introduction to Mycenaean civilization other than by way of its title, it functions admirably as an intermediate-level exposition of the variety of mainland Greek material culture during the Late Bronze Age and of such associated themes as regionalism and diachronic change. Perhaps most valuable for its usage as an archaeological teaching text is its exemplary combination of data analysis with explicitly stated theoretical orientations and clear, jargon-free writing. Briefer and theoretically more critical reviews suggest similar reactions by other specialists who have wrestled with many of the same issues addressed in this slim but very worthwhile volume.¹³

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⁸ Murray 2017a, 2018.

⁹ Van de Moortel and Zachou 2012; Lis 2012; Tsokas *et al.* 2012; Karkanas and Van de Moortel 2014.

¹⁰ Lindblom 2007.

¹¹ Dietz 1991.

¹² Lindblom 2001; Gauss and Kiriati 2011.

¹³ Knodell 2017; Murray 2017b.

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