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Maria Mina, Sevi Triantaphyllou and Yannis Papadatos (eds). *An archaeology of prehistoric bodies and embodied identities in the Eastern Mediterranean*. pp. xii+1227, b/w illustrations. 2016. Oxford: Oxbow Books. ISBN 978–1–78570–291–4 hardback £48

This edited volume publishes the proceedings of the international conference *Embodied Identities in*

the Prehistoric Mediterranean: Convergence of Theory and Practice, held in Nicosia, Cyprus, on 10–12 April 2012. The twenty–nine contributions published here 'connect archaeologists working in the eastern Mediterranean beyond the regional limits of their area of expertise, to the broader debates currently contested in the archaeology of the body' (p. v.). This well–produced volume is efficiently organised around six broad themes: *the represented body*; *material culture and the construction of identities*; *ritualised practice and the performance of identities*; *embodied knowledge through technology and space*; *the lived body and identities*; *interaction with the dead body*.

Robb's introductory chapter *The Archaeology of Bodies and the Eastern Mediterranean* aptly summarises the current state of anthropological and archaeological scholarship on the topic. *The Represented Body* theme is treated in six papers that focus on figurines from Cyprus (Gamble, Winkelmann and Fox; Knox; Zeman–Wiśniewska) and the Aegean (Papadatos; Goula; Stevens and Simandaraki–Grimshaw). Through their selective and morphologically distinct presentation of the human form, figurines often lend themselves to a nuanced formal analysis in relation to issues of social identity;[1] they are often 'small–scale indices of large–scale social phenomena'.[2] Often the body form is idealised, but not infrequently past societies also choose to depict disability and deformity in an aesthetic naturalism and realism. An instructive example of this choice are the Chalcolithic figurines from Cyprus, which display polydactylism. Gamble, Winkelmann and Fox's interdisciplinary study highlights the likely connection between the artistic rendering of the genetic anomaly and actual individuals with supernumerary digits, contributes to the interdisciplinary study of deformity in the prehistoric Mediterranean, and adds an interesting regional case study to the growing corpus of polydactylism in prehistoric societies worldwide.[3] As in other prehistoric communities, such figurines convey diverse meanings and functions – in the case of the Cypriot ones from dwelling–based cult figurines to sex–neutral status symbols, while deformity must have been viewed in a positive light within the Cypriot Chalcolithic community, 'possibly bestowed upon the fortunate or divinely chosen' (p. 8). Knox's discussion of the Earring and Flathead figurines and Zeman–Wiśniewska's of the so–called 'Goddesses with Upraised Arms' (GWUAs) produces further interesting readings into complex Late Bronze and Early Iron Age notions of identity display and negotiation on the island. The association of the Earring and Flathead figurines with small–scale industrial female group affiliations (including copper processing) and the GWUAs' encapsulation of female performative and experiential roles in ritual, highlight the socio–economic and cultural status(es) of prehistoric women in the eastern Mediterranean. These contributions are in a similar line to scholarship published in the colossal *Women in Antiquity: Real women across the Ancient World,* edited by St. Budin and J. MacIntosh Turfa (2016).

Papadatos and Goula competently discuss the complexity and diversity of the images conveyed by Early Bronze Age Cycladic figurines. Although 'in the Cyclades, the figurines and perhaps the human body constituted a blank canvas onto which people not only wrote, but could also erase and rewrite or add new symbols, and this way express, negotiate or change messages concerning to identity and status' (p. 13), such 'active' palimpsests were not adopted in other areas (Crete and mainland southern Greece), where Cycladic–style figurines also appear. Their findings complement the more recent (2017) publication of *Early Cycladic Sculpture in Context*, edited by M. Marthari et al.

Stevens and Simandaraki–Grimshaw's contribution discusses Evans' use of photography to (re)interpret (or even re–construct) the context of the two Knossos Temple Repositories Assemblages (TRAs) which he took and reassembled into a single and unified TRA whole. The authors demonstrate how the excavator, driven by his own sensitivities and milieu, made false visual declarations regarding Minoan embodied identities (both for the character of the artefacts and the Minoan past) through the process of reconstruction, positioning and 'wholeness'. These declarations are diametrically opposed to the intentionally fluid/unfixed, partial and interchangeable character of the assemblages he uncovered in the two separate Temple Repositories.

The theme of *Material Culture and the Construction of Identities* is discussed in four papers concerning figurines (Bolger), ceramics (Webb) and metalwork (Mina; Aulsebrook). Bolger's paper identifies a shift from a fluid, fractal (or dividual) self (reflected in the manufacture, use, fragmentation and termination of female figurines and pendants associated with lifecycle rituals) to a 'standardised self' displayed by new forms of personal ornamentation, inspired by intensified cultural interactions between local

[1] Morris 2009.

[2] To adopt the title used for the study of Mesoamerican figurines in Halperin et al. 2009.

[3] Standen et al. 2018 is the most recently published study that treats two cases of human polydactyly (cal 3800–4000 BP) from the Chinchorro culture in Chile which are probably earlier than the prehistoric case of Africa (Niger) and the much later cases from the USA Southwest, Zambia, Hawaii, and Peru, and associated iconography.

Cypriot communities and those of the surrounding mainland in the 3rd millennium BC. The author stresses the need for contextualising questions of agency, identity and materiality 'from the 'bottom up' – on a site–by–site, communal basis rather than an island–wide or regional basis' (p. 53). A similar need is highlighted by Webb's discussion of the Early Cypriot I–II ceramic assemblages from Vounous and Psematismenos, alongside the decipherment of individual identities. This approach is particularly useful when investigating the display of identity in Early Bronze Age Aegean insular and coastal communities. Mina discusses how standardised metalwork forms (metal jewellery and accoutrements) used by certain community members in Early and Middle Bronze Age Cyprus, would have served as tokens of self–representation and embodied collective identity that transcended gender and possibly age. Paired with Aulsebrook's investigation of Mycenaean decorated metal vessels, these observations point to similarities with contemporary and Late Bronze Age uses of metal in the continental Bronze Age and with the formation of regional networks.

Another group of papers explores *ritualised practice and the performance of identities*. Chapin's exploration of the fresco decoration of Room 31 in the Cult Centre at Mycenae breaks the anonymity of Aegean art as she attempts to unveil the identity of the three painted female figures. Differentiations in costume, attribute, posture and gesture set the canvas upon which elite identities, in this case female ones, are detected in relation to Late Bronze Age Aegean ritual performance, hinting – in particular – at the practice of ruler cult at the site. Once again, Mycenaean rulership is brought to the fore of scholarly investigation.[4] Past strategies of demonstrating authority, personal achievement and social identity may make sense when approached via a sensory archaeological approach. Mikrakis discusses how LBA/EIA elites based their claims to authority on feasting practices and conspicuous consumption rather than warfare or the supernatural: 'masculinity in Greece involved not only fully socialised aggression but also specific modes of song, dance and conviviality' (p. xi). Similarly, Vlachou shows convincingly how the selective deposition of oversized pitchers with nuptial iconography (mainly dancers and, on one occasion, a wedding celebration) in a number of Late Geometric Attic graves exemplified the social and marital status of the young females that were buried therein. Pilavaki's research of rock engravings and the construction of identities in Iron Age Thrace with focus on the intertwining of imagery, religious symbolism and the materiality of landscape, is a welcome addition to the growing literature on this artistic and cultural phenomenon in the Aegean region; the contextualisation of the findings would have allowed for a more substantial contribution to the study of rock art in European prehistory and protohistory.[5]

A group of papers looks into *embodied knowledge through technology and space*. In a thought–provoking essay, Elefanti and Panagopoulou explore the manufacturing body and how the concept of complementary flaking techniques and individual actions 'represent the result of social intelligence and bodily executed tradition' in the Middle Palaeolithic Lakonis Cave I (p. 117).[6] Social acts (such as food preparation and consumption, tool making and knowledge transfer) directly associated with the cave's large hearth complexes would have facilitated the expression of the embodied personal and social identities of its Neanderthal occupants.[7] Very often technological novelties and/or choices reflect clear shifts in embodiment practices and/or the transmission of individual identities as in Georgiou's discussion of the extended use of picrolite as a prestige good in the Philia Bronze Age culture on Cyprus, and in Christakis' essay on the negotiation of individual (previously anonymous) potters' social coming into being, expressed through the making and (pre–firing) marking of Bronze Age pots from Syme, Viannos in Crete. Through an investigation of the modes of embodiment of communal and private land ownership through material culture in the nonliterate societies of the Aegean Bronze Age, Kouka makes a useful contribution to the ongoing scholarly discourse on an archaeology of land ownership[8] and highlights patterns of cultural interaction, economic competition and inheritance of land and of profession.

Through a survey of regional case studies from across the eastern Mediterranean and approaches focusing on food consumption, bodily movement and body modification, Lorentz explores the potential of theoretically informed human bioarchaeology to produce rounded interpretations of the lived body and identity, another of the

[4] Also, Palaima 2016.

[5] Also Coimbra and Iliadis 2011; Gavaldo and Sansoni 2012; Kristiansen 2012; Nash and Chippindale 2002; Chippindale 2004.

[6] For a more recent discussion on whether the choices made during this period were culturally and/or technologically determined see also Logkovanlis 2017.

[7] For a useful, short and general introduction to the study of Middle Palaeolithic hearth–related assemblages based on ethnoarchaeological models and archaeological data, Vaquero and Pastó 2001.

[8] e.g. Relaki and Catapoti 2013.

volume's broad themes. Kopanias and Fox's study of the cranium of a female adult individual, 'Skeleton 2', from Tell Nader in the Kurdistan region of Iraq points to the intentional modification of the cranium and to the practice's link to group identity in the Ubaid; their work confirms Lorentz's earlier work on circumferential headshaping as a cultural marker in the prehistoric eastern Mediterranean.[9] The social construction, perception, experience and meanings of age, in particular those attached to childhood and old age, have been largely neglected in Aegean archaeology.[10] In order to address this shortfall, Triantaphyllou uses ritual taphonomy to investigate the differential modes of disposal of the deceased and the spatial arrangement of the human remains at the inter–cemetery level based on the chronological age variation of the individuals in the Aegean Neolithic and Bronze Age. One would expect have expected at least one paper on diet and identity in this thematic block.

The importance of burial and (post)funerary ritual 'as a means of constituting highly local identities' (p. xi) and the complexity of Aegean deathways are topics addressed by a group of papers on Minoan Crete (Girella and Todaro; Leggara Herrero; Hatzaki) and Late Bronze Age and transitional Bronze Age/Iron Age mainland Greece (Galanakis; Papadimitriou; Whitley). Girella and Todaro's study of the circulation and retention of selected human bones (mainly skulls and long bones) and Galanakis' discussion of episodes of 'intentional fragmentation', show how aside from representing (parts of) rites of passage directed to the dead, such acts also 'played a crucial role in the definition and negotiation of social identities and the reinforcement of corporate links' (p. 177) and 'in the creation of memories – helping both to remember and forget the dead – in an embodied, entangled and commingled way' (p. 194), in the Aegean region between the end of the 4th and the 2nd millennium BC.[11] In this respect, the role of *dromoi* as performative spaces in Early Mycenaean tombs also 'facilitated both the formation of collective identities through processes of shared remembering, and the development of hierarchical relations within and between groups through the embodiment of common systems of social classification' p. 212), as discussed by Papadimitriou.[12] The shaping of individual and group identities linked to socio–political changes at a temporal and regional level is also acknowledged by Leggara Herrero (Middle Minoan I Crete), Hatzaki (Neopalatial to Final Knossos) and Whitley (transitional Bronze Age/Iron Age Greece).

Does this edited volume achieve the goals set by the editors? Definitely yes.

By breaking regional and chronological barriers, the editors have succeeded in bringing together twenty–nine contributions that cover a variety of perspectives on the perception, construction and performance of prehistoric identities and provide a useful overview of the complexity and plurality of these notions in the eastern Mediterranean. The theoretical and critical engagement with the terms 'body' and 'embodied identity' is persistent throughout the volume. I could not agree more with John Robb's statement that 'this book represents a key moment in turning away from regionalism towards a broader outlook' (p. vii), and with Kotsakis' closing remark that 'this turn to the individual bodies seems like a bold, yet very significant, step forward' (p. 226).

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Budin, St.L. and J. MacIntosh Turfa (eds) 2016. *Women in Antiquity: Real Women across the Ancient World*. London and New York: Routledge.

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[9] cf. Lorentz 2009a, 2009b, 2010, 2014 and 2010.
[10] cf. Gallou in press (a) and (b).
[11] These findings fit the results of similar research recently published too, e.g. individual papers in Dakouri–Hild and Boyd 2016; Gallou 2016; individual papers in Harrell and Driessen 2015.
[12] See also Papadimitriou 2016.

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Papadimitriou, N. 2016. Structuring space, performing rituals, creating memories: towards a cognitive map of Early Mycenaean funerary behaviour, in Dakouri–Hild and Boyd (eds), *Staging Death. Funerary Performance, Architecture and Landscape in the Aegean*: 335–360. Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter.

Relaki, M. and D. Catapoti (eds) 2013. *An Archaeology of Land Ownership* (Routledge Studies in Archaeology 9). New York and London: Routledge.

Standen, V.G., Santoro, C.M., Arriaza, B., Valenzuela, D., Coleman, D., and Monsalve, S. 2018. Prehistoric polydactylism: Biological evidence and rock art representation from the Atacama Desert in northern Chile. *International Journal of Paleopathology* 22: 54–65.

Vaquero, M. and I. Pastó. 2001. The definition of spatial units in Middle Palaeolithic sites: the hearth–related assemblages. *Journal of Archaeological Science* 28.11: 1209–1220.

Raffaele D'Amato and Andrea Salimbeti. *Early Iron Age Greek Warrior 1100–700 BC.* pp. 64, 49 colour + 13 b&w ills. 2016. Oxford and New York: Osprey Publishing. ISBN 978-1-4728-1560-0 paperback £11.99.

This is the third booklet in this format concerned with 'warriors' of Greece by the same authors, the others being *Early Aegean Warrior 5000–1450 BC* (2013) and *Bronze Age Greek Warrior 1600–1100 BC* (2011). All include among their illustrations many colourful reconstructions by Giuseppe Rava, which considerably enhance the quality of these booklets by their imaginative if often over-enthusiastic liveliness.

The Osprey series to which these booklets belong is designed primarily for wargamers (though teachers