

Prehistory and Proto-History

Florence Gaignerot-Driessen and Jan Driessen. *Cretan Cities: Formation and Transformation* (Aegis 7). pp. 1-182, colour illustrations. 2015. Louvain-La-Neuve: Presse universitaires de Louvain. ISBN 978-2-87558-328-4 paperback €40; e-publication €26.

How often does one read a review volume from cover to cover? *Cretan cities* was one of those rare experiences. It felt almost like reading a well-written novel where one's interest is escalating from chapter to chapter, only in this case there were not one but altogether ten authors: six chapters were written by a single author (E. Tegou; D. Lefèvre-Novaro; A. Pautasso; S. Wallace; D. Haggis; J. Whitley) and two by a pair of authors (V. Zographaki and A. Farnoux; D. Viviers and A. Tsingarida). All ten of them have been involved in eight widely ranging (mostly long-term) and methodologically diverse field projects, distributed in central (Axos, Phaistos and Prinias) and eastern (Karphi, Dreros, Azoria, Praisos and Itanos) Crete. The 'wild' Cretan west is not represented. Besides offering up-to-date presentations and preliminary interpretations on the above mentioned field projects, the papers incorporate successfully and productively the history of research that had taken place in each of the sites/regions at an earlier (often, much earlier!) date; of the eight projects only that of Azoria is deployed on a previously unexcavated area. In some of the papers we encounter meaningful comparisons with other relevant contemporary projects not represented in the volume (e.g. by Stampolides in Eleftherna, Tsipopoulou at Halasmenos Ierapetras and Whitelaw *et al.* in Knossos). Most papers provide references to recent (21st-century) magisterial syntheses on the Iron Age archaeo-historical landscape of Crete. These impressive oeuvres - by Sjögren, Prent, Erikson, to mention the ones featuring most prominently in the references - but also the unpublished thesis of Gaignerot-Driessen, have promoted the archaeology of Iron Age Crete to the forefront of Aegean and landscape analysis studies.¹

Although this is a volume that an instructor should unreservedly include in the 'must' readings of Aegean archaeology seminars, and one that will

remain a point of reference for quite some time, I am certain that for another scholar, especially an archaeologist, historian or epigrapher, whose research is devoted to Iron Age Crete, the views presented in the different papers are bound to leave a completely different impression; they may renew arguments and fuel disagreements, and, hopefully, it will all lead to productive discussions. For this Cypriot outsider, however, who had eagerly accepted to review *Aegis* volume 7, this 182-pages long book has provided a gratifying learning experience to the end: it accentuated the diametrically diverse, though temporally parallel, episodes of *micro-state* formation and 'behavior' in Crete and Cyprus; and this, in spite of the fact that 'Cyprus' and 'Cypriot' are terms that one will almost never encounter in any of the papers - but for two or three inconspicuous occurrences (e.g. p. 53 on a Cypriot lekythos) and an unfortunate one by Whitley (p. 144) who, against timely warning,² chose to follow the problematic *Inventory* of Hansen and Nielsen³ on the (wrong) number of the Cypriot *poleis*. Hence, reservations aside, I confess that I undertook to review *Cretan Cities* in the name of a self-defined mission, which was to further and deepen my own understanding of the diachronically never-converging lives of the two mega-islands in the first millennium BC.

Although each paper was independently produced with the explicit purpose of focusing on the presentation and interpretation of a particular field project's distinctly regional data-sets, together they bring forward in an eloquent manner (in no small part, I would suspect, as a result of the editors' skills) a corpus of common cultural features that can be defined as the hard-core essence of the Cretan city-state institution. Effortlessly, the reader acquires a generic but well-structured view of how social and cultural identities were created in the context of the Cretan *poleis*, and there are distinct cases in which identity and status were legitimized through the appropriation of the (Minoan) past (Pautasso on Prinias, p. 65; Wallace on Karphi, p. 87). To use the words of Lefèvre-Novaro (p. 53), 'le temple de la divinité poliade et l'*agora*', were 'les deux critères archéologiques fondamentaux pour déterminer l'existence d'une cité'. Paper after paper examines the key role of sanctuaries as kernels of urbanism and arenas for the construction and display of elite identities, justifying in this respect why they were of primary concern in the urban investment schemes of a Cretan *polis*. The locational proximity of the temple, the agora and the famous *sphyrelata*

¹ Sjögren 2003; Prent 2005; Erikson 2010; Gaignerot-Driessen 2013.

² See Cadogan *et al.* 2012, Introduction, p. 5, note 13. On the fluctuating number of the Cypriot polities in the ancient sources, see Iacovou 2004.

³ Hansen and Nielsen 2004.

statues of Dreros provide strong defense in favor of the messages that the urban landscape was required to express (Zografaki and Farnoux, p. 109). In the architectural planning of urban developments the interplay of temple and *agora* could hardly have been fortuitous: 'Le temple semble constituer le point pivot de l'aménagement' (Zografaki and Farnoux, p. 110).

The dedication of weapons to these sanctuaries (Tegou on Axos, p. 27, 29) was an equally meaningful practise. In the case of the metal offerings deposited in the 8th-century sanctuary under the pronaos of Megale Mater, Novaro explores the relation to ceremonies associated with the rituals of the initiation of the young members of the aristocratic clans (Lefèvre-Novaro Phaistos, pp. 53-54). At Dreros (Zografaki and Farnoux, p. 106), the authors observe that, while during the first phase of the sanctuary the main dedications were of wheel-made animal (bovine) figurines, whose modelling represents an uninterrupted tradition dating back to the Subminoan period, the second phase is marked by the dedication of weapons, including cuirasses (panoplies). Invested with cultic and political meaning, these rich and memorable offerings are eloquent witnesses of the social transformations that generated the urbanization of the city of Dreros (p. 109).

The above are material indices that can be found in different versions and with a different emphasis in other parts of the Aegean world. The *andreion* (Lefèvre-Novaro, p. 54, note 8), on the other hand, emerges from the papers as the unequivocally Cretan institution, the bulwark of the oligarchic constitution of the Cretan cities, effected through the military upbringing of its youth (Tegou, p. 29) and the ritualised practise of common dining (Pautasso, p. 67) among male citizens.⁴ This established tradition, which is also associated with 'les edifices a foyer central', is viewed as central to the definition of social hierarchies within each community (Prinias, pp. 70-71). Wallace notes that 'texts tell us that public feasts played a central role in binding the community together' and proposes that 'a spatially distinguished feasting institution' would have existed already in post-collapse communities (Wallace, p. 92). Haggis (p. 131) presents relevant evidence from 6th-century public or communal spaces in the Archaic city of Azoria, christened the Communal Dining Building and the Monumental Civic Building: 'each seems

to have functioned primarily as a dining hall, and each integrated cult buildings or ritual installations into their architecture'. Whitley (p. 146), in an in-depth analysis, which takes us from the citizen state as a *participant state* to commensality, also underlines that *polis* participation required cult participation, hence sacrifice and feasting. Through this fascinating excursus, Whitley (p. 147) returns to examine Cretan commensality, which is closely connected with the *andreion*. Thus, he can claim with authority that the *andreion* was 'first and foremost' an institution, not a monument with a fixed architectural form (p. 153 and note 39). This extremely pertinent point applies both to the Cretan *andreion* and the Cretan *agora*, which was primarily 'a meeting-place in which major political and legislative acts were publicised' (Tegou, p. 35). Originally, both institutions were not necessarily associated with built monuments, but even when they were, these early Cretan *agorae* and *andreia* did not acquire a readily identifiable architectural plan.⁵ It is their public character 'de nature religieuse et politique' (Zografaki and Farnoux, p. 113) that is amply confirmed.

Besides *andreia*, the extensive and early publication of Cretan laws, legislative texts (Tegou, p. 35), 'inscription règlementaires' (Zografaki and Farnoux, p. 112),⁶ on the walls of public and especially sacred edifices located in the Cretan *agora*, is one of the unmistakable characteristics of the Cretan *polis* constitution (sharply analysed by Whitley⁷). Along with the foundation of sanctuaries and the deposition of armour, Zografaki and Farnoux add 'la rédaction de lois' (p. 113) in the formation process of a Cretan city. As much as the early alphabetic literacy of Archaic Crete was almost exclusively geared towards the publication of oligarchic laws, the contemporary Cypro-syllabic literacy of Archaic Cyprus consists of inscriptions (on stone or precious metal objects, not buildings) issued by the eponymous city-state ruler, who was invariably (self-) addressed with the exclusive Greek term *basileus* (the *quasireu* of the Linear B tablets).⁸ On both islands, and differently from the character of early alphabetic writing on mainland Greece, early Iron Age literacy was employed in the legitimization of their very different city-state authorities. Whether issued by oligarchic clans in Crete or *basileis* in Cyprus, inscriptions confirm that

⁴ Pautasso explores the construction of the Archaic temple of Prinias (Temple A) on top of LMIIIC sacred meals (ritual dining) and interprets it as marking the public space of a young polis (see p. 67).

⁵ Note that in discussing the case of the *agora* at Dreros, Zografaki and Farnoux state that the form and the development of the Cretan *agora* remain unknown (see p. 112).

⁶ At Axos, Tegou observes that the dedication of weapons dies out in the mid-6th century and by the end of the century the emphasis is on legislative work and its publication on specially designed space (see p. 36).

⁷ Whitley 1997.

⁸ Cf. Iacovou 2013a; Satraki 2013.

the administrative urban center and its territory, which together constituted a geopolitical unit, were referred to as *poleis*.⁹

The question, therefore, that begins to loom large as one goes through the papers is: were these *poleis* created *ex nihilo* on Crete and Cyprus? Almost to the end of the 2nd millennium BC, the two islands had hosted impressively complex and internationally active politico-economic organizations; and then what? Haggis appears critically concerned with the socio-political context of the transitional horizon: 'our picture was not of what the period was, but mostly what it was not, that is, palatial or *polis*; a result of palatial collapse or a vague precursor of *polis* emergence' (p. 120). Nevertheless, only one of the papers, that of Wallace, treats the reader to a bold interpretative model and a holistic view of the 'Construction of Cretan Society after the 1200 BC Collapse' (p. 79). For this reason, if we were allowed to reorder the succession of papers, I would have definitely introduced the volume with Wallace's 'The Creative City' (pp. 79-102), since it provides the necessary (though not necessarily unanimously adopted) background to the rest of the individual case studies.

Despite the fact that Wallace's 2010 monograph¹⁰ has attracted a variety of reactions and serious criticism (I take at face value most of the points raised by Kotsonas,¹¹ and even underline the exclusion of non-English scholarship, which is also a serious malaise in Cypriot studies), I do not think that it can be dismissed; despite its cumbersome and often exhausting writing style, as far as the treatment of the 12th-century horizon is concerned, Wallace's research approach is inspiring, and this is confirmed by the present paper. Admittedly, this Cypriot non-specialist on Crete could be reproducing misunderstandings (as Kotsonas fears in the closing sentence of his review) but I have yet to come across another, more promising analysis and evaluation of the crisis years in Crete: 'Rather than suffering either violent destruction or highly compromised continuation, as occurred at many mainland sites around 1200 BC, the majority of Cretan communities made pro-active adaptive changes which avoided such outcome' (p. 79). The data in support of this conclusion can be better refined in the future but I doubt that they could easily become outdated. Besides providing the scope for a lively debate (e.g. Haggis p. 120, in this volume), Wallace's approach opens the way for the study of parallel phenomena in the rest of the Mediterranean: 'settlements of

the period 1200-1000 BC formed the core around which the later Cretan polis [just like the Cypriot polis] was built, in material as well as social and political terms' (Wallace, p. 80). Her section on 'The origins of Iron Age complexity: ca 1200-1000 BC as foundation period' (p. 80), is music to my ears; there are sentences here which I could adopt by simply changing Crete/Cretan with Cyprus/Cypriot: 'understanding why and how an early shift towards state-level complexity happened in Crete [and Cyprus] gets us closer to understanding why the Cretan [and Cypriot] polis in its Classical form was [were] different from those of Central Greece' (p. 80).

A 6th century hiatus or a pending political economy analysis?

Despite their similarly 'pro-active' changes and choices with which each of the two *megalonisois* faced the crisis years (especially the 12th century BC) and the transition to the Early Iron Age, the overall impression with which I am left after reading this set of papers is that little else could be more diametrically different than the 6th-century phenomenon of Crete and Cyprus and, more precisely, the politico-economic status of their respective *poleis* in the Archaic and Classical periods. Almost all the papers present material evidence dating as a rule from the late 9th or early 8th centuries down to the 6th or early 5th centuries; and then, something quite startling and apparently quite unexpected seems to happen, as most authors begin to describe a mysterious site discontinuity: Phaistos (Lefèvre-Novaro, p. 55) had three urban temples at the end of the 7th century but from the beginning of the 6th century all data point to a dying polity. In the 'upland settlement' of Prinias (Pautasso, p. 60) the climax of urbanisation, signified by the construction of the temple in the second half of the 7th century, was quickly followed by the site's abandonment in the mid-6th 'pour des raisons qu'on ne peut encore expliquer' (Pautasso, p. 73). In the case of Azoria, the later 7th century is recognized as a 'period of urban growth, imprinting on the landscape a new settlement plan'. Yet, for all the radical and unparalleled in magnitude and scale, rebuilding at the end of the 7th century (Haggis, pp. 126-127), the site was rapidly abandoned in the 5th century (Haggis, p. 132). At Itanos, an important 'pastas house' building constructed at the end of the 7th century or early 6th century BC was abandoned during the second quarter of the 5th century BC (Viviers and Tsingarida, p. 176). In his attempt to contest that there may have been more than 49 political communities on Crete before the 6th century BC, Whitley underlines that many Cretan *poleis* 'seem to have been abandoned by 500 BC'

⁹ Cf. Hatzopoulos 2014.

¹⁰ Wallace 2010.

¹¹ Kotsonas 2011.

or 'were destroyed in the early 5th century BC.' (p. 143). Although Haggis views this 'puzzling hiatus' or '6th century discontinuity' through a theoretical framework that attempts to explain 'the emergence, growth, and collapse of complex societies in the Aegean' (p. 119),¹² the reader will fail (I certainly did) in finding a coherent answer regarding this 'period of silence' (Haggis, p. 119). I even went back and re-read Kotsonas,¹³ who in 2002, had made a good case of the Archaic gap being a 'mirage' created by research failures (especially in the field of ceramic studies) and neglect of the particular period, but I do not see how this could provide a comprehensive response to what authors in this volume describe as site abandonment and site destructions. It would be hard to avoid thinking in terms of a widespread phenomenon of urban shrinkage. This is where I would have liked to be given a reference to a study that has tried to identify, on the basis of the available material evidence, (a) how many and which *poleis* suffered destruction, (b) how many were abandoned and, (c) precisely which ones continued unharmed in the 6th century and throughout the Classical period.

One has to admit that none of the authors characterise the period as one of growth and expansion as regards Cretan urbanism.¹⁴ If '[t]he building of houses and public spaces at Azoria was a political act', as Haggis maintains (p. 138),¹⁵ then this act had apparently come to a halt. In this respect, the 6th to 5th century horizon in Crete presents a striking contrast to contemporary (Archaic to Classical) developments in Cyprus, where urbanisation appears to have reached a climax with the construction of secular administrative complexes (i.e. the Cypriot 'palaces' at Amathous, Idalion, Vouni and Ancient Paphos).¹⁶ This stunning contrast alerted me to the fact that none of the authors had dealt with the issue of political economies. If I am not mistaken, the term is used once by Haggis (p. 119) but neither in the Azoria paper nor in any of the others will the reader find a justification as to the political economy, which could have sustained the independent status of at least 49 mini-states on Crete (medium-size feudal estates could be an equally valid description)¹⁷

especially given the absence of international trading activity on behalf of all these *poleis*. Unless the authors had agreed not to discuss evidence pointing to long-distance Mediterranean trade, and I mean something other than a few random exchanges within the Aegean or imports from the Cyclades - which makes the effort of the Itanos project to identify Phoenician presence rather awkward¹⁸ - the difference presented by the commercial and cultural expansion of the Cypriot city-states in the eastern Mediterranean is phenomenal. Consider, for instance, the practice of dedicating terracotta figurines and limestone statues of Cypriot origin and/or style in Greek sanctuaries of the eastern Aegean and Phoenician sanctuaries in the Levant,¹⁹ which led to the coining of the term 'Cyprianizing'.²⁰

The Cypriot *poleis* developed strong extrovert political economies in the Archaic period, first (from the later 8th century BC) through their voluntary liaison with the Neo-Assyrian empire and later, most likely, through the Ionian trading network,²¹ a contact, which apparently, the Cretan *poleis* did not explore.²² Interestingly, while the Cypriot *poleis* are traditionally portrayed as vassals to various continental empires, especially the Assyrian and the Persian (largely as a result of the uncritical adoption of historical sources),²³ the Cretan *poleis* were never compromised by foreign overlords.

Where does it all take us? Did the Cretan micro-states hold on to an over-fragmented *micro-economy* in order to preserve their conservative institutional system? Despite all the infighting, which almost certainly was the only way to increase one's vital territory, it would be hard to deny that the number of independent Cretan *poleis* remained far too high for the successful implementation of any economic system based on the island's natural resources. In Cyprus, on the other hand, the territorial devolution of the Early Iron Age, which appears to have led to as many as ten political units (but not at any time 12),²⁴

¹² 'On Crete, our traditional reflection on the 6th century problem has led us away from considering discontinuous patterns of cultural development as normative societal structure.' (p. 119.)

¹³ Kotsonas 2002.

¹⁴ Even if Itanos 'clearly exhibits an international profile from the 4th century onwards' (Viviers and Tsingarida, p. 180), this time-period is not related with either the foundation of the Cretan city or the 6th-century BC phenomenon.

¹⁵ Haggis's argument is that 'urbanization is not as merely incidental to the process of state formation, but is a critical part of the social and political discourse that constitutes the formation of the city-state itself' (p. 138).

¹⁶ Cf. Hermary 2013.

¹⁷ Haggis maintains that a large part of primary production was

'relegated to dependents at the periphery, turning the urban house into a consumer and estate manager' (p. 136).

¹⁸ 'They may have been mainly Phoenicians for the earliest evidence of occupation in Itanos is contemporary with the involvement of Eastern merchants in the Mediterranean exchange traffic' (Viviers and Tsingarida, pp. 169-170).

¹⁹ Cf. Fourrier 2001; Hermary 1991.

²⁰ Karageorghis *et al.* 2009: 22.

²¹ Iacovou 2013: 38.

²² Wallace 2010: 392-396.

²³ On the likely character of the Assyrian vassalage, especially Yon and Malbran-Labat 1995. To this day, Herodotus remains the main source regarding Cyprus's 'submission' to the Persians though no confirmation has been identified in the Persian records; the 'submission' date in the reign of Cambyses (c. 525 BC), is indirectly estimated by circumstantial evidence and linked to the end of the reign of Amasis in Egypt (570-526 BC); see Watkin 1987.

²⁴ It is modern archaeological literature that has unjustifiably

of which at least four had inland capital centers, was put into reverse gear in the course of the Archaic period; by the 4th century they had been reduced to seven, and all seven of them were governed from ports of international trade; not one *polis*-capital had survived inland: they had all been absorbed/incorporated into the economic territory of coastal *polis*-states.²⁵

In Crete most of the known *poleis* are located inland and of the eight presented in the volume only one is on the coast: Itanos (Viviers and Tsingarida, p. 166). The Itanos paper stands out because of the authors' praiseworthy attempt to apply a landscape perspective, but their effort to build a persuasive case in favour of an urban port 'widely open to foreign influences' (p. 173) seems rather weak; we are not referred, at least in this paper, to so much as a single pot or other object coming from the Eastern Mediterranean that could provide material justification to their suggestion that Itanos had served as a Phoenician emporium. Instead, what is described as contact with the outside world are 'Laconian, Rhodian, Chian and other East Greek ceramic imports' (p. 173). The lack of structured Mediterranean mobility on behalf of the Cretan cities can hardly be remedied through tales, such as the one of Korobios, the murex fisherman from Itanos (p. 171).

I admit that in Cyprus we are becoming of late slightly obsessed with the issue of political economies or, to be precise, with the key question of how could the island support the long-term economic success of ten or seven independent mini-states on an island that is only slightly larger than Crete (Whitley, p. 144). This vital question has led to new research considerations that attempt to understand the construction and function of the territories.²⁶ In this respect, progress has been made in the study of extra-urban sanctuaries and their significant role (e.g. as frontier or route controlling posts) in binding together state territories.²⁷ The time-period (Cypro-Archaic) of their mass establishment, their geolocation (especially in relation to copper deposits) and the significance of their particular royal or elite dedications (often in the form of over life-size statues) are now closely linked to particular politico-economic territories.²⁸ Returning to Crete and to the small rural sanctuary at Aghia Triada, in which, Novaro (p. 55) says, only

human and animal figurines were deposited, and which she herself describes as used by the 'classes sociales inferieures', I find it difficult to see how this inconspicuous cult site could have played 'sans aucun doute un role symbolique dans la defense du territoire de Phaistos'. On the other hand, Novaro has to be congratulated for promoting a much-needed nuanced interpretation of the commercial sanctuary at the port of Kommos, and especially that of the 'tripillar shrine', not as a Phoenician sanctuary *per se* but as a 'typologically Levantine' cult site, which was 'l'integration in loco de forms religieuses d'origine Levantine, sans doute selon des phenomenes qui ne sont pas rares en Mediterranee' (p. 55).

Clearly, then, if we are going to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the *poleis* in Crete or Cyprus, the region - instead of the site - has to become 'the effective analytical unit' (Haggis, p. 120). The actual size in square km of any island-bound economic territory may be totally irrelevant to its capacity to support a state economy; hence dividing an island's physical size by the historically known number of its *poleis* - an exercise done by Whitley in the context of the Praisos paper (p. 144) - which neither in Crete nor in Cyprus seems to have been stable for any length of time, will not help.²⁹ Admittedly, thoughts expressed in this review are formed from an external point of view, and by comparison with the state of research in the easternmost Mediterranean island, but I dare say that the way forward has been outlined in the Azoria paper, where Haggis (p. 121), employs the example of the impressive thesis of Gaignerot-Driessen (she is not otherwise represented in the volume except in her editorial introduction) to explain why we need to change the emphasis from the *polis* to the territory. Via this regional analytical approach, Gaignerot-Driessen was able to identify not only the axes of communication in the region of Mirabello, established as early as LMIIC, but she has also associated the spatial location and relocation of inland and coastal sites forming 'miniature state territories' with long-distance trade routes (p. 122).

Finally, in the name of a revered tradition that expects a reviewer to tax the editors with at least a couple of miss points, I will say that a student, also colleagues working in other parts of the Mediterranean, would have liked to find in the Introduction (Gaignerot-Driessen, pp. 13-19) a chrono-cultural table for Crete (preferably against one of mainland Greece); also, at least one more map with the rest of the site names mentioned in the different papers would have been extremely useful. Turning to the illustrations, the drawings

increased the number of the Cypriot *poleis* to 12; for a detailed analysis, Iacovou 2013b: 15-47.

²⁵ Salamis, Kition, Amathous, Paphos, Marion, Soloi and Lapithos; exhaustively treated in Satraki 2012.

²⁶ Cf. Fourrier 2013.

²⁷ Cf. Fourrier 2007.

²⁸ Cf. Toumazou *et al.* 2011; Papantoniou 2012.

²⁹ Cf. Iacovou 2014.

of artifacts, as well as black and white and color photographs, are of an excellent quality; the same cannot be said for many of the site plans, where one can rarely make out the numbers or lettering.

Although I sincerely apologize to the editors for the delayed submission of the review, I hope that Florence and Jan are still willing to receive praise for an original and enviable achievement: in turning a targeted seminar series into a cohesive collection of papers, which are presented in this finely produced *Aegis* volume, the Driessens have introduced a challenging new model in the dissemination of archaeological knowledge: they have initiated a wise alternative to the traditional mass conferences, which, as a rule, and even when they are only two-days long, tend to be too demanding of a student's or even a season scholar's stamina to absorb new information. Looking into the future, we have little doubt that the Driessens could put together a similar seminar series in which the amazing multitude of the Cretan *poleis* could be further appreciated in terms of their strengths and weaknesses if placed against the contemporary state system of Sicily and Cyprus but also the non-state system of Sardinia in the first millennium BC. Although the trend among Aegean archaeologists is to define the Iron Age *polis* against the diametrically different palatial cultures (Minoan and Mycenaean) of the second millennium BC,³⁰ a comparative study of *island politics* - i.e. city-states that had developed on Mediterranean islands in the first millennium BC - could prove extremely fruitful, even for Crete, and especially for a better comprehension of its idiosyncrasies in the construction of peculiarly miniature micro-state forms, whose political economy remains rather a mystery. After all, it would be hard to deny that 'the centre of the 'micro-state' phenomenon' (Whitley, p. 143), almost certainly extends a bit further than the Aegean, and includes the central and eastern Mediterranean.

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³⁰ In the present volume, especially Whitley (p. 145): 'it [the polis] does not replicate (not even closely resemble) the power structure of the Mycenaean palaces'.

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Robert B. Koehl (ed.). *Studies in Aegean Art and Culture. A New York Aegean Bronze Age Colloquium in Memory of Ellen N. Davis*. pp. xvii+158, 65 colour and b/w illustrations. 2016. Philadelphia (PA): INSTAP Academic Press. ISBN 978-1-93153-486-4 paperback \$36.

This is a publication, in paperback format, of papers that were mostly presented at a special session of the New York Aegean Bronze Age Colloquium, held

to honour the memory of Ellen Davis. Although her output was not very extensive, it included studies of considerable importance apart from her *magnum opus* on Aegean Bronze Age vessels of precious metal, and several of the papers are clearly intended to complement these studies and carry them further. The papers vary considerably in length, in breadth of topic, and in the amount of illustration provided, but all have something interesting to say.

Weingarten offers a well-illustrated account of the parallels in clay from Crete of the Gournia silver kantharos, still the only Middle Minoan vessel of precious metal extant, and strengthens Davis's argument that the shape is originally an Anatolian metal form, though the Minoan versions, all from east Cretan sites, are considerably smaller than the commonest Anatolian forms, several of which are shown. The chronological problem that worried Davis about this link can be resolved, since on a revised chronology no Minoan versions of this shape can be shown to appear in pre-MM II contexts; thus, a correlation with Kültepe Ib, where the shape is common, is perfectly possible. Weingarten offers comments on the shape's possible cult function(s), but not on the context in which originals might have come to Crete; the reviewer would suggest that one or more Anatolian metal vessels might have come as something like diplomatic gifts, in the context of the strengthening contacts, now becoming evident at Miletus particularly, between Minoan Crete and western Anatolia.

Wiener returns to the famous gold cups found in the Vapheio tholos, that Davis used as a focus for her discussion of Aegean precious metal vessels and distinction of 'Minoan' and 'Mycenaean' traditions of production.¹ Here the reviewer should declare an interest, since he has commented critically on Davis's distinction and offered an alternative interpretation.² Wiener has his own criticisms (p. 18), but is more concerned with examining why the personage buried with a pair of very finely decorated gold cups from different metalworking traditions, and a matching pair in plain silver, should have wanted such pairs. He relates this to a tradition of burying pairs of drinking vessels, going back to what seem to be a genuine pair of gold sauceboats, reflecting the importance of host-guest relationships. But there is not much evidence for this tradition in the MH period, and it is much commoner to find, in rich Mycenaean burials, drinking vessels

¹ Davis 1977.

² Dickinson 1994: 140, 142. Unfortunately, the beginning of the first relevant paragraph on page 140 is missing in the first printing; it should read, 'The evidence assembled by Davis for two distinct craft traditions is certainly impressive ...', thereafter as printed. This may have been corrected in later reprints.