

linguistic terms, when in the Middle Helladic period there is barely any evidence for dominant ‘chiefs’, let alone kings.

Certainly, the position seems to have become established later. We know from Hittite texts that by the 13th century Ahhiyawa (not mentioned by Palaima), quite probably the state dominated by Mycenae itself, had a single ruler whom the Hittite king was prepared to correspond with as effectively an equal. There are those who would argue that this was, in fact, the sole *wanaks* and that references in the texts from different sites are always to this person, to whom local rulers were subordinate. The reviewer does not believe this; but he does believe that the development of the hierarchy that can be reconstructed most clearly from the Pylos tablets, which may not have been duplicated in all Mycenaean ‘palatial’ states, could have been an extremely complicated process. It is not clear how much light can be shed on the process by the study, largely unrelated to archaeological data, of what may have been significant words in the ideology supporting this hierarchy.

Despite his critical comments, the reviewer welcomes this collection, as offering considerable food for thought on a whole variety of important topics.

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- Dickinson, O. 1994. *The Aegean Bronze Age*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
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- Maran, J. 2017. Tiryns: from the rise of its palace to the post-palatial resurgence. Ventris Lecture, Institute of Classical Studies, London, 17th May 2017.
- Molloy, B. 2012. Martial Minoans? War as social process, practice and event in Bronze Age Crete. *Annual of the British School at Athens* 107: 87–142.
- Mountjoy, P.A. 1999. *Regional Mycenaean decorated pottery*. Rahden/Westf.: Leidorf.
- Mylonas, G.E. 1973. *Ο τάφικος κύκλος Β των Μυκηνών*. Athens: Athenian Archaeological Society.
- Palincaş, N. 2007. Contacts with the Aegean and their social impact in the Late Bronze Age in the lower Danube, in I. Galanaki, H. Tomas, Y.

Galanakis and R. Laffineur (eds) *Between the Aegean and Baltic seas. Prehistory across borders*: 231–238. Liège: Université de Liège, and Austin: University of Texas at Austin.

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Jana Mynářová, Pavel Onderka and Peter Pavúk (eds). *There and Back Again – The Crossroads II. Proceedings of an International Conference Held in Prague, September 15–18, 2014*. pp. 555, b/w (occasionally colour) illustrations, tables, maps in almost all papers. 2015. Prague: Charles University in Prague, Faculty of Arts. ISBN 978-80-7308-575-9 hardback \$123.

(all indications of date in this review are BCE unless designated otherwise. The terms Palestine and Syria are used in their ancient sense, like Mesopotamia and Anatolia, and are not intended to have any modern reference at all)

This publication in a handsome-looking hardback volume of the papers given at a recent conference in Prague is large (24 papers) and diffuse, but has Egypt and its ‘rich and complex relations with the Levant, the Aegean and the Sudan’ in the 2nd and 1st millennia, particularly the later Bronze Age, as its central theme. The majority of the papers concentrate on texts, which can provide valuable evidence even when material objects or artistic representations are the subject of the paper. They offer a salutary reminder of the sheer range and quality of documentation available from fully literate civilisations like those of Egypt and the wider Near East, and make a striking contrast with Aegean prehistory, which depends, for lack of written sources, on hypotheses that are always liable to change as a result of new archaeological discoveries and/or to be reinterpreted in the light of new theories and approaches. Of course, the same can happen with ancient texts, and a major drawback is their tendency to concentrate on a limited range of topics that are not necessarily those that we most want to know about; but they can provide a historical and social dimension to the interpretation of the past in a way that the most refined analyses of archaeological material simply cannot match, as several papers demonstrate.

Although the conference was held in Prague, all papers are in English and are well presented,

containing extremely few errors or misuses of English (but one example of a ‘false friend’ deserves mention because encountered before: p. 132, German *perlen* should be beads, not pearls, in English). Given the evident importance of many of the topics discussed, all scholars of the English-speaking world should be grateful for this. There are relatively few illustrations, mostly maps or charts, but they are generally clear and, in the case of those used to illustrate technological discussions, attractive, even stunning (e.g. the pictures, in colour, of Egyptian glass vessels in Wilde’s paper on developments in Egyptian glass technology, one of which is used on the book cover). These and others provide a striking reminder of the sheer quality of craftwork in Egypt and the Near East, which can sometimes be lost sight of by scholars who specialise in prehistoric Aegean or later Greek art.

All papers are long, with big bibliographies, but good summaries are made available in long abstracts included in the list of contents. They are grouped in four sections: Methods and Technologies; Egypt and the Aegean – the Iconography; Problems of the 2nd Millennium BCE; and Problems of the 1st Millennium BCE. The second section is much the smallest, containing only 3 papers (of which one does not in fact involve Egypt), and the fourth section of 5 papers does not include anything that has much relevance to Greece, but the other two cover a wide range of topics. Papers directly concerned with relations between the Aegean (especially Crete) and Egypt, or the wider region of the Near East often called the Levant are relatively few and essentially focus on various forms of transfer, of iconographical elements, technological skills, or goods. But many others may be considered to have relevance to the Aegean, for they relate to historical and social developments in the Near East, which may be considered the most influential part of the wider world within which the prehistoric societies of the Aegean developed. Even before the Bronze Age, technologies and materials that must have originated from somewhere in the Near East appeared in the Aegean, and during the second millennium the Aegean was progressively drawn into the international trade network whose hubs were cities in the Near East, especially Syrian ports, and in which Egypt played a major role, if more as a consumer than producer. The transfer of technological skills must have taken place in a context of lively exchange of information and products, which would have involved direct contacts between individual craftsmen, so potentially outside palace/temple control, and this would have been a natural setting for the passing on of iconographical elements, beliefs,

stories (including myths), and ritual practices. Also, increasing involvement with the Near Eastern trade network must have introduced the most developed societies of the Aegean to the complex politics and diplomatic relationships of the region, in which some eventually played a role.

These considerations provide reasons to give some attention to many of the papers, but where they are concerned with matters that have only a tangential relevance to the wider Near Eastern background of Aegean prehistory and about which the reviewer knows relatively little (as in the fourth section), he sees little point in trying to discuss them. For reasons of space, his comments cannot be extensive, and will necessarily be rather cautious, since he does not feel sufficiently knowledgeable to detect where the argument depends on controversial or heterodox views.

The papers in the first section include many of the most interesting. Two concern the Amarna letters: the first of all, by the Clines, reports the results of subjecting them to Social Network Analysis, while a later one by Mynářová discusses what they show about the processes of administration and decision-making that were followed in dealings with Egypt’s ‘client kings’ in Syria-Palestine (she also contributes a short paper on the project studying the palaeography of the tablets). The Egyptian administration was clearly very familiar with clay tablets written in Akkadian with the cuneiform script, as was standard by this time for diplomatic correspondence between rulers in the Near East, and often preserved them, at least for a time. The Amarna letters must derive from one or more preserved collections, but they consist largely of letters from the ‘client kings’ of Syria and Palestine, mostly to one of two pharaohs (Amenophis III and Akhenaten), over a fifteen to thirty year period;¹ very few are from major rulers, and fewer still from the pharaohs to any of these, so that we see only one side of any correspondence. Further, we know nothing of any exchanges between the various correspondents of the pharaohs. This, along with the likelihood that the collection forms only a portion of what must once have existed, surely limits the value of any deductions about social networks. Nevertheless, what has survived allows the reconstruction of administrative procedures, and gives many fascinating glimpses of the conduct of diplomatic relations between the greater kings, at a time when the Hittites were recovering from temporary eclipse to establish lasting control of most of Syria and face the Egyptians on equal terms.

¹ Cf. Moran 1992, Introduction, particularly xiii–xviii.

The second paper, by Creasman on Egyptian wood, a basic building material needed even for great constructions, and also for ships, is really a statement of the potential of the material recovered from Egyptian sources, not only for economic studies but for chronology, through the dendrochronological method. Very little has been learned by study so far, but he is able to argue that Egypt may have been largely self-sufficient in wood for a much longer period than used to be thought, although some timber was being imported from an early period.

In studying the techniques used in gold-working and stone vase manufacture in Crete, Morero and Prévalet show good reason to believe that, after the original transfers of knowledge and skills from the Near East (in the case of gold-working showing links with the north-east Aegean and so Anatolia), there was independent local development in both crafts in Crete. Similarly, later Mycenaean stone vases show distinctive features relating to their local manufacture. Wilde's paper on developments in the Egyptian glass industry, already referred to, covers similar themes, the possibility of foreign influences on development in Egypt and potentially imported materials (raw glass), perhaps also the presence in Egypt of skilled Asiatic workers. But the suggestion that seems implied more than once, that the 'gifts' to Tuthmosis III sent from countries as distant as Assyria, which could have included raw glass (pp. 140–41), actually represent 'tribute' of the kind required from the Syro-Palestinian 'client kings', is surely outdated.² Certainly, there seems no reason to suppose that Tuthmosis III got anywhere near Assyria, let alone conquered it (as implied p. 144). This point has relevance to the Aegean, since the goods being brought on the famous 'Keftiu' tomb-paintings, and a group of metal vessels listed in the Karnak inscriptions as sent from 'Tanaja', probably on the Greek mainland, are described by the same term *jnw/jn.w* that has traditionally been translated 'tribute'.³

Perhaps the most significant paper of this section is that by Gestoso Singer, whose very extensive and well documented paper on small ingots and scrap metal in the eastern Mediterranean deserves attention from everyone interested in the processes of Bronze Age trade at any level higher than local barter. It demonstrates the extent to which generally small quantities of metal were coming into use as a form of currency during the Late Bronze Age, and argues that this encouraged activity by

'merchants' that were increasingly independent of 'palace' control. The relevance of this to the Aegean is obvious, although it does not seem that 'palaces' were equivalently powerful in every part of the Near East, let alone the Aegean. The paper is also very useful for its detailed summaries and analyses of the Uluburun, Cape Gelidonya and other less well known shipwrecks (no less than 22 of Bronze Age date have been identified along the Carmel coast, six of which contained metal ingots, p. 107) and of various 'hoards'.

The section finishes with Emanuel's paper on the appearance of a new style of rigging, which allowed much more efficient sailing, on ship depictions in the Aegean and Egypt from around the end of the 13th century. This seems to have been developed in the Aegean, unsurprisingly, since travel by sea will have been a far more significant cultural feature than in Egypt, and is a reminder of the complexity of the relationship between the Aegean and the Near East, in which the Aegean was not always the recipient of influences.

The second section, consisting of three papers covering specific iconographic transfers to Crete, offers linked case-studies. Weingarten discusses the relatively short-lived appearance of images of a female form of the Egyptian god Bes (here called a demon, for *daimon* presumably, as not an evil figure) on Middle Minoan seals. Blakolmer covers the much more successful adoption, beginning around the same time, of the hippopotamus-lion hybrid Taweret, also a female protective figure, who was developed into a major, ?male figure in Neopalatial iconography labelled the 'Minoan genius' in modern discussions, that was evidently so significant that it even made appearances in Mycenaean art. He goes on to discuss the question of why Minoan Crete adopted Near Eastern motifs for religious iconography. Here the reviewer feels bound to comment that in his summary of developments in Neopalatial Crete, pp. 207–8, Blakolmer has given an account that must be described as controversial. Although it deserves to be considered seriously, his interpretation of the data to support his overarching theory that a process of 'integration and unification' was initiated by the palace of Knossos, with the goal of a 'transformation ... to a state-centred polity under the dominance of the Knossian palatial authorities' (later defined as priests), is likely to be strongly contested. In contrast, his rejection of any interpretation of the foreign elements identified as part of an 'East Mediterranean *koiné*' will probably be widely welcomed. The third paper, by Dubcová, incorporates some of the material covered by the other two, but concentrates on the adoption

² Cf. Panagiotopoulos in Cline and O'Connor 2006: 372–373, 375–377.

³ Panagiotopoulos, *op. cit.* 392–4, cf. also 397–398.

and persistence, in Crete especially, of images of Syrian-Mesopotamian rather than Egyptian origin, the 'Master/Mistress of Animals' and related 'bull-man' figures. She argues that these images entered Aegean iconography repeatedly, with different associations, as they continued to do later (cf. well-known examples of the 'Mistress of Animals' theme in early Greek vase-painting). Ultimately, these papers are drawing attention to a real phenomenon, which will remain hard to explain convincingly in the absence of written sources.

The paper in the third section mostly relate in some way to Egypt's relations with its northern neighbours in Palestine and Syria. Thus, Cohen reconsiders the standard view that Egypt had no interest in Palestine in the early Middle Bronze Age, in the light of revised chronology that brings the development of urbanisation in Palestine down to the middle of the Twelfth Dynasty; he argues that there is some evidence for interest, but that Egypt was much more interested in establishing control of the resource-rich region of Nubia to the south. Material relevant to this theme is provided by Boschloo's paper on cylinder seals and scarabs made of green jasper, which use a material that may come from Egypt and show 'egyptianising' features but have quite a wide distribution in the Middle Bronze Age Levant and may come from different workshops based there. In a paper on radiocarbon dates Höflmayer shows reason to question the synchronisms suggested by the 'SCIEM school' between the Tell el-Dab'a sequence and 'historical' Egyptian chronology, which clashed with a dating sequence based on radiocarbon dates, and with the aid of new dates from sites in modern Israel and Lebanon proposes an alternative system that harmonises the two, but suggests higher absolute dating. He also reports new data that suggest a quite different, and notably higher, dating for the pharaoh Khayan/Khyan (pp. 284–5). This all has relevance to the long debate over Aegean absolute chronology in the late Middle and early Late Bronze Age and the date of the Thera eruption. The reviewer does not feel sufficiently competent to make a pronouncement, but will admit that he is reluctantly coming to the conclusion that something closer to the 'high chronology' may have to be accepted.

Ahrens demonstrates the weakness of arguments that the early Eighteenth Dynasty pharaohs took any significant interest in Syria before Tuthmosis I's military expedition, probably launched from Byblos and reaching the Euphrates, which was not followed up. The real turning point is clearly still in Tuthmosis III's reign; in a series of military expeditions over years this pharaoh extended

Egyptian control over Palestine and parts of Syria and confronted the important power of Mitanni, centred in northern Mesopotamia, though not with total success. The Amarna letters of nearly a century later reveal much about the extent and nature of this control, which included the requirement that local rulers send sons or brothers to be brought up at the pharaoh's court as prospective rulers, as indicated in Matic's paper on the very varied depictions in tombs and temples of children among the 'tribute' being presented. By this time Mitanni and Egypt were allies, in opposition to the re-emerging power of the Hittites, and we can observe in the Amarna letters the manoeuvrings of various rulers who acknowledged Egyptian sovereignty, most of whom were to become Hittite 'vassals' eventually. One paper, by Simon, concerns a reference in letter EA 151 to the kingdom of Danuna, which he argues to be situated in the Syrian Hatay region, and not in Cilicia, as widely accepted. In Cilicia there is much later inscriptional evidence for a kingdom called Hiyawa in Luwian but DNNYM in Phoenician (this in turn is linked to the 'Denyen' named as one of the peoples forming the great alliance, named 'the Sea Peoples' in modern texts, whose supposed attack on Egypt was defeated by Ramesses III in the early twelfth century). The reviewer finds his arguments persuasive, and welcomes the dissociation suggested between Hiyawa and Ahhiyawa (pp. 401–2), but deplores the suggestion that the Cilician DNNYM were Aegean immigrants 'at the dawn of the Hittite Empire' (p. 400), for which he knows of no archaeological evidence whatever (it is bad enough being expected to identify migration directly from the Aegean in the complex of traits, only some of which have Aegean sources, that make up 'Philistine' and 'Sea Peoples' material culture).⁴

Papadimitriou provides a useful discussion of the ceramic evidence for trade in the eastern Mediterranean from the Aegean and Cyprus during the 2nd millennium, which makes the differing patterns over the period clear. It looks as if a growing connection with Cyprus and the Near East introduced Aegean, largely Mycenaean, traders to the possibilities of marketing a product, almost certainly perfumed oil, on a large scale, as the Cypriots had already been doing, and also well produced decorated pottery as a good quality table ware. Interestingly, at the time when Mycenaean pottery became really common in the Near East, the quantities of Cypriot pottery diminished, especially in Egypt – which completely undermines a theory that has had some popularity, that Mycenaean trading activity never went further than Cyprus and Cypriot traders passed on Mycenaean material

⁴ Cf. Dickinson 2006: 62–63 for some comments.

to the Levant. The paper does have a tendency to place undue emphasis on trade in pottery, without considering the possibilities of 'invisible' commodities like wool, grain, even timber maybe, at a level lower than that suggested by the contents of the Uluburun ship, with its relatively enormous quantities of metals and other high-level goods. Other evidence for contacts is also mentioned, such as the Aegean-style frescoes from Tell el-Dab'a and several Syro-Palestinian sites, but it is surprising to see no reference in the context of trade to Ahhiyawa (probably the leading power within the Mycenaean world) and the clear indication, from the late 13th century treaty between the Hittite king Tudhaliya IV and the king of Amurru, that Ahhiyawan ships would be active in Amurru ports and might even be landing goods destined for Assyria.⁵

One last paper in this section, by Morris, discusses a letter found at Ugarit, the wealthiest city state on the Syrian coast, sent by the pharaoh Merneptah to the king of Ugarit, in which the pharaoh effectively rejects an invitation to send a statue of himself to be placed in the greatest temple of Ugarit. This sheds interesting light on the history of this period; the invitation may well reflect a wish to return to an old allegiance, at a time when Hittite power was weakening while that of Assyria was growing, all of which, as just noted, may have affected the Aegean.

The papers in the fourth section, as stated above, relate to topics of which the reviewer has no detailed knowledge, but all seem sensible discussions. Onderka discusses two temples in the Sudan, products of the long-lived Egyptian-influenced civilisation of Kush, based first at Napata, whose rulers were for a period, from the late 8th century well into the 7th, pharaohs of Egypt, then at Meroe, which was still flourishing at the time of the early Roman empire. One temple seems to belong to the mid-7th century, associated with Taharka who disputed control of Egypt with local rulers and the Assyrians, and the other to the 1st century CE, apparently built by the king Natakamani and queen Amanitore whose inscriptions in a revival of the Egyptian hieroglyphic script are discussed by Vrtal in the second paper of the section. There is then a discussion by Morriconi and Tucci of Assyrian and Egyptian influences on 7th century Philistine culture, as shown in the material from Tel Miqne (Ekron), which was at its most flourishing in this period; this flourishing is argued to be due to its position within the Assyrian empire rather than later Egyptian domination. Kahn discusses an interesting question, 'Why did Necho II kill Josiah?', referring to the death of one of the last kings of

Judah in the late 7th century. The traditional view is that Josiah attempted to dispute Necho's march to the Euphrates to confront the Babylonians and died in battle at Megiddo, as described in some detail in the Bible in 2 Chronicles 35: 20–24 (though without an explanation of Josiah's action); but the older and probably more reliable source in 2 Kings: 29–30 merely states that Necho 'killed' Josiah when they met at Megiddo. Kahn argues that this was in fact an execution of a disobedient vassal; the reviewer finds his demonstration of the difficulties in the traditional view convincing, and his hypothesis certainly deserves serious consideration.

Finally, there is a discussion by Bonadies of a class of amphorae in soft stone, of a shape with conical body and angular shoulder, which starts from three examples in the Louvre that probably come from Egypt. Other examples of this type have been found in archaeological contexts in Assyria (many), Samaria, various Egyptian sites, Carthage (1 example), and, in some quantity, Spain. They have generally been thought Egyptian, but are more closely related to the Bronze Age 'Canaanite jar' type, which persisted into the Iron Age; if produced in Egypt, they may represent a mixture of influences and have been the work of Levantine craft workers.

Overall, a collection that offers a view of Egyptian civilisation ranging wide in time and space.

Beckman, G.M., T.R. Bryce and E.H. Cline 2011. *The Ahhiyawa Texts*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.

Cline, E.H. and D. O'Connor (eds) 2006. *Thutmose III. A New Biography*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Dickinson, O. 2006. *The Aegean from Bronze Age to Iron Age. Continuity and Change between the Twelfth and Eighth Centuries BC*. London and New York: Routledge.

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Leslie Preston Day, Heidi M.C. Dierckx, Kimberly Flint-Hamilton, Geraldine C. Gesell, Kevin T. Glowacki, Nancy L. Klein, David S. Reese and Lynn M. Snyder. *Kavousi IIC: The Late Minoan IIIC Settlement at Vronda*.

⁵ Beckman *et al.* 2011: 63, 68.