

remembered within the Bronze Age, with a particular focus on the use of antiques ('heirlooms'). Mazarakis-Ainian revisits the topic of tomb cults and hero cults, specifically the reuse of Bronze Age tombs in early Archaic times, bringing in some new information from Thessaly.

The volume also contains some contributions from non-archaeologists which throw oblique light on both Homeric Questions. Haubold discusses what the 'New Trojan War', the acrimonious dispute between the archaeologist Manfred Korfmann and the austere ancient historian Frank Kolb, can tell us about modern Germany's relation to the classical and Homeric past. He finds echoes in this modern 'war' of an older dispute between Schliemann (the archaeological romantic) and Williamowitz (the strict and sceptical philologist). Dalley brings comparative Near Eastern literary evidence (Gilgamesh) to bear on the Homeric tradition. Her focus is not so much on oral as on textual transmission. Beissinger takes us back to Parry's and Lord's use of South Slavic epic to understand the oral tradition of Homeric composition, where there were sharp differences between what was remembered (and celebrated) in the distinct Muslim and Christian epic traditions. Beaton shifts focus again to the twelfth-century AD 'epic' of Digenis Akritas, demonstrating how Homeric scholarship affected its reception as a national epic in nineteenth and twentieth-century Greece. The whole is rounded off by a short bilingual (modern Greek/English) 'epic' of nine stanzas by Paul Halstead explaining why Homer does not mention Gilgamesh.

This is in brief a very *useful* book. It comprises a whole series of short essays on difficult topics which will help introduce students of archaeology, ancient history and classics to their full complexity – the root structure of the great tree that is Homeric studies. The only drawback is that it is now a little out of date. The symposium was held in 2007. Since then, new discoveries (notably the combat agate from the 'Griffin Warrior Tomb' in Pylos; see S.R. Stocker and J.L. Davis, 'The Combat Agate from the Grave of the Griffin Warrior at Pylos', *Hesp.* 86 (2017), 583–605) have provided solid iconographic grounds for inferring that many epic tropes (duels over the body of a fallen comrade, the siege of a great city) were embedded amongst Greek speakers well before the traditional date of the Trojan War. Contributions to C. Pache's edited collection *The Cambridge Guide to Homer* (Cambridge and New York 2020) take the archaeological and historical implications of the Nagy thesis much further than is explored here.

There is also much poignancy in reviewing this book. This must be one of the last (if not the last) in the series, as Sheffield Archaeology is no more. It has been managed out of existence by a Vice-Chancellor determined to pursue the 'bottom line' without regard for the enormous contribution that Sheffield Archaeology had made to the field of both Aegean prehistory and Homeric archaeology.

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KNODELL (A.R.) **Societies in Transition in Early Greece: An Archaeological History.** Oakland: University of California Press, 2021. Pp. 382. £27. 9780520380530.  
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This book presents a sociopolitical history of Greece from the Palatial Bronze Age to the early Archaic period (ca. 1400–700 BC), with a geographical focus on central Greece rather than on Crete or the Peloponnese. Due to the disparate approaches and priorities of Aegean archaeologists, Early Iron Age archaeologists, classical archaeologists and ancient historians, together with outdated notions of Greek 'prehistory' dating back to Schliemann, the Early Iron Age has long fallen into a cross-disciplinary gap and has been

treated as marginal and of inferior importance to the Late Mycenaean period and the Archaic Cultural Revolution which frame it. With this nuanced and innovative contribution, Knodell successfully bridges this ancient chronological divide and its artificial modern counterpart: that between Aegeanists and Greek archaeologists, which has no grounding in the data, and which has only recently begun to be breached. Building on key recent studies by John K. Papadopoulos, Tamar Hodos and James Wright, among others, the author adopts an approach based on the comparative archaeology of complex societies, analysing the wide variety of regional differences in sociopolitical organization which characterized the Greek world from the Early Mycenaean period onwards, a productive ground on which the sequestered disciplines which study pre-Archaic Greece might be brought together. In line with recent trends in archaeological theory which have aimed to re-emphasize locality and regional idiosyncrasy, Knodell's approach is driven by the need 'to articulate local and regional specificity and difference' (6). Of particular significance is Knodell's provision of a broadly applicable theoretical base and multiscalar comparandum for studies of secondary state formation in other disciplines and geographical regions.

Chapters 1 and 2 are devoted to theoretical and comparative approaches, the archaeological evidence available from each of the geographical regions of central Greece under discussion, and the network and spatial models which the author uses to interpret this evidence. Knodell gives an excellent and fully up-to-date chronology for the cultural-historical and ceramic phases of Greek history from the Early Mycenaean period to the late Archaic, which could profitably be assigned to students (7). In chapter 3, Knodell demonstrates that, in contrast to overgeneralized narratives of the Greek Bronze Age which have extrapolated too heavily from the Mycenaean palatial centres, the palace systems of the Palatial Bronze Age were anomalous, and that village societies were the norm in Greece over the long term. In light of his extended account of the sociopolitical diversity of Mycenaean Greece, Knodell then resituates it within the geopolitics of the Late Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean. As a means of delineating the scope of his book, Knodell does not integrate the history of the cultural, musical, artistic and symbolic worlds within his new social and political history of pre-Archaic Greece. Perhaps as a consequence of this, his accounts of Mycenaean interaction and engagement with the other societies of the Eastern Mediterranean are strikingly minimalist.

Chapter 4 addresses changes in material culture, settlement networks and political organization during the Postpalatial Bronze Age, arguing that the Greek societies which emerged in this period should be seen as a return to a previous and less complex sociopolitical mode, instead of being described with the loaded language of collapse and regression. Chapter 5 frames the Early Iron Age as a time of experimentation and transition from the Postpalatial Bronze Age. Knodell makes the subtle but powerful point (theorized elsewhere by Christopher Witmore: 'Complexities and Emergence: The Case of Argos', in A.R. Knodell and T.P. Leppard (eds), *Regional Approaches to Society and Complexity: Studies in Honor of John F. Cherry* (London 2017), 268–87) that the Early Iron Age should be understood on its own terms, and not as an intermediary to a later eventuality: the subsequent Archaic period and the rise of the polis, which was one among myriad historical possibilities that could have emerged from the sociopolitical and cultural conditions of Greece in the ninth century BC. In other words, the Early Iron Age and the Archaic period should be viewed as emergent rather than resultant entities. In wider comparative terms, as Witmore argued in the above article (269), this incentivizes us to think about how similar sociopolitical complexities could have turned out otherwise, and how the networks which Knodell discusses might operate differently in other ancient contexts. I find problematic Knodell's demarcation of the eighth century BC as the 'Protohistoric Iron Age' and his designation of the Archaic period as a subsequent continuum from 700 to 480 BC, since

Greece in the eighth century BC rapidly underwent a tremendous variety of sociopolitical, economic, cultural, literary, cultic and architectural changes which are integral to the Archaic period as a whole and cannot be separated from it. Nonetheless, Knodell's approach in chapter 6 aptly demonstrates how one should approach the polis in a non-teleological fashion, as an unpredicted emergent entity which arose out of the Early Iron Age, while nonetheless appreciating the genuinely radical significance of the events of the early Archaic period. Knodell's stimulating study provides a broad and solid foundation for further integrated research across multiple disciplines.

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FORSÉN (J.) (ed.) **Agios Elias of Asea, Arcadia: From Early Sanctuary to Medieval Village** (Skrifter utgivna av Svenska institutet i Athen, 4<sup>o</sup>, 58:1). Stockholm: The Editorial Committee of the Swedish Institutes at Athens and Rome, 2021. Pp. 179, illus. 446 kr. 9789179160661.

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Sacred spaces on Greek mountaintops have long held a strong fascination for classical scholars. In recent years, these have become a focal point for new methodological approaches (for example, increasingly complex GIS analyses) and for a renewed interest in religious experiences (for example, within the scholarly framework of 'lived ancient religion'); yet one persistent issue is the comparatively small number of well-published excavations at mountaintop sanctuaries.

The reviewed volume makes an important contribution to addressing this problem by presenting selected results of a four-week multinational excavation project conducted in 1997 at the late archaic Doric temple and fourteenth-century church at the mountaintop site of Agios Elias above the Asea Valley (Arcadia). During this excavation, a Swedish team focussed on three trenches across the temple's southern cella wall and krepis (its inner chamber and stepped platform; trenches A1–3), a Finnish team on the area to the east of the temple (trenches B1–3, including a sacred hearth) and a Norwegian team on the documentation of the temple's architectural remains.

In the volume's opening chapter, Jeannette Forsén offers a detailed description of the stratigraphy uncovered by the Swedish team (i.e. in trenches A1–3). In contrast, the following eleven chapters, each examining a particular category of find, draw on material from the entire site. Considering the excavation's organization, this is a practical and necessary approach, even if readers may occasionally wish that they knew more about the stratigraphic context of material uncovered in trenches B1–3. This issue will likely resolve itself through subsequent publications, but until then, for a broader picture of the site, the reader might find it helpful to refer to J. Forsén, B. Forsén and E. Østby, 'The Sanctuary of Agios Elias: Its Significance, and Its Relations to Surrounding Sanctuaries and Settlements', in H.N. Nielsen and J. Roy (eds), *Defining Ancient Arkadia. Symposium, April 1–4, 1998* (Copenhagen 1999), 169–91.

Chapters 2–10 focus on inorganic materials from Agios Elias. In chapter 2, Forsén presents the site's Protogeometric to Hellenistic pottery, which comprises exclusively fine wares, includes imports from various regions on the Peloponnese and beyond, consists of shapes comparable to those recorded at other Arcadian sanctuaries (with an emphasis on feasting and votive offerings) and largely predates the construction of the Doric temple