

MEDITERRANEAN ARCHAEOLOGIES OF INSULARITY IN AN AGE OF GLOBALIZATION

ANNA KOUREMENOS & JODY MICHAEL GORDON

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As can be seen by the vast amount of research literature, insular studies in general have experience an overwhelming interest from scholars around the world during the past 10 years. All kinds of insular studies pop up from different disciplines. Especially plentiful is insular research analyzing the global impact deriving from the climate crises like topics of global warming and its impact on the sea level rise and how this might or rather will impact social structures of island habitation around the modern world. This interesting volume under review studies social structures under the lens of modern globalization but deals with ancient cultures around the Mediterranean Sea from the Middle Aegean Bronze Age to the Late Roman period.

As stated in the preface, the two editors organized a panel for the 118th Archaeological Institute of America (AIA) annual meeting in Toronto, Canada in 2017. The volume under review is based on the papers from this meeting, but they have been supplemented with contributions written by additional scholars. All research contributions use case-studies from different islands of the Mediterranean region to analyze both the material and cultural evidence in order to document the process of insular cultural changes, identity, and connectivity.

This very stimulating anthology begins, after a preface and a section of abstracts, with an introduction written by the two editors. After that, the eight research papers have been arranged chronologically. Finally, the volume ends with an afterword and a short index.

In the introduction (Chapter 1), the two editors present a selection of important research contributions of island studies in the ancient Mediterranean with a focus on their theoretical approach on identity, connectivity, and as the title states, globalization. Anna Kouremenos and Jody Michael Gordon also show with a case study how these approaches and this theoretical framework may be applied and developed regarding ancient island societies and island identity. Finally, they focus on

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globalization and how this phenomenon has affected us all in the 21st century and not least how (Classical) archaeology as a discipline recently has addressed globalization in different and interesting ways of looking at ancient Mediterranean life. Kouremenos and Gordon conclude that “[f]or globalized archaeologies, materiality and mobility are key to revealing levels of connectivity.” In short, a globalization approach to archaeology is useful in analyzing ancient societies and can also be used to reveal agencies and connectivity in general. The introduction ends with a presentation of the eight research papers set into a historical context with some final remarks about the book’s afterword.

The first two research chapters (Chapters 2-3) investigate Bronze Age societies on each side of the Mediterranean world, Sardinia in the West and the Cycladic island Kea in the East. Anthony Russell begins with an investigation of the material culture of the local islanders from late Bronze Age Sardinia in order to find evidence of globalized societies. He analyzes two import commodities in his case study: Helladic pottery and copper oxhide ingots. The Sardinians, who was famous for their circular towers, the Nuraghes (after which the culture is named today), were clearly integrated into regional trade as shown by the amount of Helladic pottery and copper oxhide ingots found. However, Russell’s analysis convincingly states that Sardinians were not embracing the input from other cultures. Instead, they use imports e.g. the Helladic pottery for a very local purpose. The Nuragic culture seemed to have had a very closed and insular development with a low degree of connectivity with their neighbors. Thus, Russell concludes that there were no Nuragic globalized communities on the island.

Whereas there were no direct traces of globalized communities on Sardinia in the West, Evi Gorogianni’s study shows that in the East, in the Middle to Late Bronze Age Aegean societies, globalization was not a modern phenomenon. In this case study, Gorogianni analyzes both local and imported pottery together with objects used in textile production like loom weights and spindle whorls found at the site of Ayia Irini’s Northern Sector on Kea. Besides the obvious factors that were strong forces in the process of globalization, namely trade and exchange (pottery), it is also argued that migration and a planned articulation of a kinship network based on marital alliances played a major role of globalization in the Aegean (textile production). Gorogianni also uses parallels from outside of the Aegean (like the Incas) to strengthen her case of marital alliances that lead to cultural exchange in the Aegean. Her exciting theories and refreshing views are a most welcome contribution to Aegean Bronze Age studies.

Moving away from the Bronze Age and into the Iron Age, the key words for the two next chapters are *Greek colonization* and *Greek influence*. Chapter 4 deals with the Dalmatian archipelago located on a major sea route in the Adriatic, while Chapter 5 treats the first Greek colony on Sicily, the city of Naxos.

Charles Bennett and Marina Ugarković set out to explain local diversity under the lens of globalization in the form of Greek influence. Furthermore, they also trace the networks that connected Dalmatia to the Greek world and analyze how increased connectivity affects both local communities and the Greek colonies on the islands. Their study shows how the material culture and cultic practices were selectively adopted both by the locals and by the Greek colonists on the islands of Pharos, Issa, Korčula, and Brač and thereby this study also clearly shows the local diversity in each community on the four investigated Dalmatian islands.

Leigh Anne Lieberman follows, in Chapter 5, Justin Jennings's definition of global cultures. They are "created by dynamic tension between the global and the local."² She then investigates eight complementary trends that characterize this process creating global cultures and examines their impact on Naxos on Sicily and their settlement during the 5th and 4th centuries BC. She focuses on the manipulation of numismatic iconography of the two gods Apollo and Dionysus minted by several east Sicilian communities. Lieberman's fascinating study convincingly shows how iconography of the two gods was exploited in response to different transitions like destruction, depopulation and repopulation of Naxos by Naxos' shifting populations and their surrounding neighbors. Former studies have used ancient literary sources in order to understand the fate of Naxos and the eastern part of Sicily without any satisfying results, but Lieberman's innovative approach can explain the cultural changes that took place, how the use of symbols (like images of Apollo Archegetes) on coins that originated in a *local* Greek polis (Naxos) became a symbol for eastern Sicily on a *global* level.

From one of the smallest archaeological objects (coins) to the largest (architecture), Alexander Smith sets out to study the Late Talayotic stone house architecture on Menorca in Spain in Chapter 6. He analyzes the Carthaginian and Roman influence on the local domestic architecture in a "new" globalized world with increasing extra-insular contacts from the two super powers during the late 6th to 1st centuries BC. This refreshing paper, about another culture named after its towers, megalithic Talayots (Arabic for "watch tower"), claims that being exposed to global influence leads to self-reflection and an emphasis on indigenous customs. This local insular expression of identity can be

² Jennings, J. 2011. *Globalizations and the Ancient World*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 29.

traced specifically in the domestic architecture with a continuation from traditional local megalithic structures from the 9th to 7th centuries BC. Smith's study also demonstrates that the local architectural development of the round megalithic house and the use of space, found new expressions but always remained true to the island's traditional local architecture.

The keyword for the next two chapters is *ports*. In Chapter 7, cult statues found in ports on Delos, Rhodes, and Amphipolis are studied, while Chapter 8 analyzes globalized ports (and cities) on Crete.

Lindsey A. Mazurek takes us back to the Aegean Sea and into the Hellenistic period. Her case study focuses on tracing a specific statue type of the Egyptian goddess Isis, the *Knotenpalla*. The type is characterized by a costume featuring a fringed mantle knotted between the breasts to create an X-pattern over a thin chiton with folds cascading over the lower half of the body. The *Knotenpalla* was (probably) created by Greek devotees of Isis in the middle of the Hellenistic period. Her cult statues/statuettes of this type were thought to be created and also found in port cities on Delos and Rhodes. However, since another Isis statuette of the same type was found at the port of Amphipolis in mainland Macedonia, Mazurek suggests a new way of considering island and mainland connectivity by using a seascape-approach analyzing the transmission of the *Knotenpalla* statue type. She concludes that these ports had a shared innovation connected to a religious movement with increased maritime mobility that characterizes the Hellenistic globalization.

In Chapter 8, Jane E. Francis' case study move us to ports and cities on Crete in the Early Roman Empire. She examines the material (ceramics, statues, architecture, infrastructure) and cultural (taste, lifestyle, imperial cult, cultic practices, burial customs) evidence in order to understand the process of the Romanization of Crete. Francis' analysis demonstrates that Romanization was a slow process that took several generations after the Roman conquest in 67 BC. It also shows that the transformation into a Roman province was not uniform and that globalization and insularity can be studied here on one single island at the same time in order to give a more nuanced picture of the process of globalization. Francis concludes that Roman Crete was never entirely Romanized and thereby both globalization and insularity existed at the same time during the Roman period.

After Sardinia, Sicily, and Crete, it is finally time in Chapter 9 to study the influence of connectivity on the last of the big islands of the Mediterranean Sea. The third largest island, Cyprus, is the subject of Jody Michael Gordon and William R. Caraher's case study. Like in the former chapter, the process of globalization during the Roman period is examined by analyzing the material culture. Gordon and Caraher compare the archaeological remains (ceramics, coins, architecture)

between the Early (c. 30 BC-AD 29) and Late Roman (c. AD 293-649) periods, when Cyprus was integrated into two empires, the Roman and the Byzantine respectively. The study shows that during these two periods, Cyprus experienced an extra-insular influence, especially during the 4th century when the imperial administration moved to Constantinople. The examination of the archaeological remains also shows that the Cypriots embraced these globalizing influences gradually and, as the study showed in Chapter 8, the globalization and insularity existed side by side. The Cypriots embedded the global influence selectively in their material culture, just like the Cretans.

P. Nick Kardulias states in his Afterword that by studying ancient societies through the lens of globalization, we can as archaeologists give modern man a fuller and more clear understanding of forces affecting our life today. He further emphasizes the strength of the volume with its long chronological and wide geographical span. The contributors' focus on insularity versus globalization "provides the additional time depth and data from a range of cultural settings that can enrich our understanding of both the geographical and temporal extent of globalization. Archaeology reveals long-term patterns of interaction that help us understand the general nature of the process. It is in this way that the present volume can address those who often ask what lessons the ancient world holds for life in the 21st century." As in all good collections of papers, an afterword by a highly respected scholar within the field is an excellent way to finish the volume. P. Nick Kardulias does just that.

Ancient people living on islands with borders of water defining their living space with contact to other places and people only by means of transportation and commerce by rafts/boats/ships has thereby given the islander a self-identity that is expressed and might be "easier" to detect through their material culture compared with people living on the mainland. This volume under review shows that archaeology is an excellent discipline to use for studying insularity³ combined with recent social

³ Of three recent ongoing projects investigating insular studies in the ancient Mediterranean world: 1. *Being an Islander: Art and Identity of the Large Mediterranean Islands* at Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, directed by Anastasia Christophilopoulou (Curator of Greece, Rome and Cyprus at the Department of Antiquities of the Fitzwilliam Museum). The research project runs between 2019 and 2023, with a major exhibition opening on 21 February 2023 and closing on 4 June 2023.

For the webpage, please see: https://fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/being-anislander-art-and-identity-of-the-large-mediterraneanislands?fbclid=IwAR3DHmpP9KoMikIbtYZjvtgwwJas4BoansqmMH6G9jc6EJ_ZSNSLT6U7YFg

2. *The Small Cycladic Islands Project (SCIP - also EKYNH: το πρόγραμμα Έρευνας Κυκλαδικών Νησίδων)* is a collaboration between the Ephorate of Antiquities of the Cyclades, the Norwegian Institute at Athens, and Carleton College, directed by Demetrios Athanasoulis (Director, Ephorate of Antiquities of the Cyclades), Žarko Tankosić (Project Manager, SFF SapientCE, Department of Archaeology, History, Cultural Studies and Religion, University of Bergen, Norway), and Alex R. Knodell (Associate Professor of Classics & Director of Archaeology, Carleton College, US): <https://smallcycladicislandsproject.org/>

3. *DFG Netzwerk: Island Studies Network: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Island Exchanges, Environments, and Perceptions* at Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen, Institut für Klassische Archäologie, coordinated by Laura Dierksmeier and Frerich Schön: <https://uni-tuebingen.de/fakultaeten/philosophische-fakultaet/fachbereiche/altertums-und-kunstwissenschaften/institut-fuer-klassische-archaeologie/forschung/dfg-netzwerk-insular-dynamics/>

theories and approaches from a globalization perspective in order to shed new light on connectivity, cultural diversity, and not least what causes social and cultural changes in the ancient Mediterranean world through different time periods. The authors strive to show that islands in the ancient Mediterranean Sea was not static places as has been formerly presumed in earlier island studies, and the contributors succeed in their endeavor of studying ancient island societies through the lens of modern globalization.

The results of the above-mentioned papers collected and edited by Anna Kouremenos and Jody Michael Gordon clearly set the high standard within academia for further studies of the processes of globalization within insularity in the ancient Mediterranean world.

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