

Anna Kouremenos and Jody Michael Gordon, eds. *Mediterranean Archaeologies of Insularity in an Age of Globalization*. (Oxford & Philadelphia: Oxbow Books 2020, xv and 284pp., 60 figures, pbk, ISBN 978-1-78925-344-3)

This elegant volume had as its starting point a panel held during the Twenty-fourth Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference (TRAC) in 2014 (University of Reading). However, the final product is more than a typical conference proceeding; it is an attempt to understand the processes of globalization within insular historical environments over a large span of time, from the Late Bronze Age until the late Roman period.

The volume consists of eight contributions, an introduction written by the two editors, and an afterword written by P. Nick Kardulias. I shall briefly comment on each contribution and then outline the key, in my opinion, themes of the volume as a whole.

The introduction sets out the key questions and theoretical approaches of the volume. Following on from the methodological paradigm of Horden and Purcell's (2000) *The Corrupting Sea*, which stresses the constant connectivity of the Mediterranean, a region punctuated by geographical fragmentation and prone to risk. Mediterranean history is viewed as the result of 'a dynamic series of cross-cultural interconnections' (p. 3), in which both human agency and environmental forces play a role. The editors rightly stress that while connectivity and networks are indeed a dominant theme in ancient history and archaeological approaches to the Mediterranean, globalization as a hermeneutic tool of analysis is perhaps less developed. Is globalization a useful tool for understanding the material culture of insularity in the ancient Mediterranean? The contributions in the volume certainly seem to imply that this is indeed the case. While I do not necessarily agree that considering the 'pros and cons of connectivity' (p. 17) is necessarily a fruitful way to explore

connections (recent studies on colonialism and imperialism have shown that a binary approach or a 'balance sheet' approach embed colonialist approaches to the writing of history, for which see Boehme, 2016), the volume does an excellent job at highlighting complexities and the importance of local diversity in all case studies.

In the first of the case study chapters, ('Nuragic Networks? Assessing Globalization and Glocalization in a Late Bronze Age Sardinian Context') Anthony Russell explores the material culture of Nuragic society in the latter half of the second millennium BC. He stresses that overall globalization is not useful for understanding developments in Bronze Age Sardinia. Rather, the presence of consistent Nuragic material culture across the island seems to point to local communities pursuing local practices with a strong insular character. This does not necessarily imply that Sardinia was isolated in that period, but rather that the islander (elite and non-elite) communities did not adopt social practices that originated from extra-insular connections.

In Chapter 3, ('Mobility and Globalization: The View from the Bronze Age Cyclades') Evi Gorogianni turns her attention to Ayia Irene, on the island of Keos. She stresses, rightly in my opinion, that globalization is not necessarily a cause for homogeneity, but rather, it may be a factor promoting heterogeneity and even dissonance. Ayia Irene is examined as a 'border town', where non-local objects were an indication of the changing affiliations of the local consumers. The presence of local and non-local objects in the material culture of the site implied a constant flow of producers, travelling in the Aegean and participating in a community of practice

(p. 61). This is a very rich chapter that explores a number of social dynamics, including gender, status, and origin, through an examination of ceramics and textile production.

Charles Barnett and Marina Ugarković, in Chapter 4 ('Globalization Processes and Insularity on the Dalmatian Islands in the Late Iron Age'), understand globalization as engagement with Greek settlement activities. This is an insightful analysis of the complex relationship between Greek agents and local population, with an emphasis on Pharos, Issa, and Corcyra Melaina. I did find the use of the terms 'colony', 'colonization', and 'penetration' of the Adriatic by the Greeks unfortunate. While the authors rightly stress the different degree of local engagement with Greek activities, the viewpoint adopted is very much that of a Greek perspective. A more local-based view, stressing agency and diversity, would have made this otherwise good article even better.

In Chapter 5 ('Apollo Archegetes as a Globalizing Divinity: Numismatic Iconography and the Memory of Sicilian Naxos'), Leigh Anne Lieberman views Sicily as a boundary and a crossroad, a gateway to the west and an important node in the ancient network of communications. Within that context, the cult of Apollo Archegetes served as an indication of local identity expression within the constantly changing landscape of political affinities, territorial domination, and cultural appropriation. Through a careful examination of numismatic iconography, the author shows how what began as a local Naxian cult transcended its original local context to become crucial to the articulation of a pan-Sicilian identity. My one reservation was that it was not clear to me how this elegant analysis fitted with the opening remarks of the form and context of globalization.

Alexander Smith rightly unpacks the underlying concepts of colonialism in the study of domestic architecture in Menorca

during the second half of the first millennium BCE in Chapter 6 ('Balearic Indigeneity in a Global Mediterranean: Considering Circular Domestic Structures of Late Iron Age Menorca'). Local Menorcan elites, it seems, consciously opted out of foreign influences in their domestic architectural design; in that sense, the concept of acculturation as a given for local elites in a globalized context is rightly presented as fallacious. This article is a highlight of the volume; the emphasis on the 'hyper-iteration' of local culture (p. 163) is a useful reminder that globalization does not necessarily produce homogeneity and that indigeneity is an excellent way to explore material culture away from prevalent hermeneutical schemes that are the produce of modern colonialism.

In Chapter 7 ('Fashioning a Global Goddess: The Representation of Isis across Hellenistic Seascapes'), Lindsey A. Mazurek explores the spread of a specific sculptural iconography of Isis (the Knotepalla) to understand the movement of ideas and people within highly interconnected seascapes. She views ports as valves of communication, opening and closing depending on context, agents, and product. This contribution does two things successfully: it is a detailed analysis of the Knotepalla type (a particular type of sculptural depiction of a knotted dress) and its significance in the cult of Isis in the Aegean (and beyond) and it is also an excellent exploration of the spread of cult, the relevance of ports and the importance of maritime connectivity for the creation of regional seascapes.

Chapter 8 ('Globalization and Insularity in (Dis)Connected Crete') by Jane E. Francis highlights the extreme regional variation in the degree of romanization and acculturation in Roman Crete. Through a careful exploration of the degree of participation in Roman processes by the local communities on the island, the author

shows not only that there was a great degree of change over time (from the early to late Roman period) but also that different regions, and even different sectors in local societies within these regions, experienced romanization in a vastly different manner. Indeed, the material culture of Roman Crete is best understood as a produce of insularity and participation in the globalized processes of romanization.

Finally, Jody Michael Gordon and William R. Caraher (Chapter 9, 'From the Land of the Paphian Aphrodite to the Busy Christian Countryside: Globalization, Empire, and Insularity in Early and Late Roman Cyprus') explore the way that local practices in the production of numismatic, ceramic, and architectural material culture were the result of the complex interplay between connectivity (and globalization) and imperial insularity. I consider this to be another highlight of the volume in its careful and nuanced use of imperialism as a globalizing process that promotes connectivity. The authors are able to integrate a great range of material culture within an elaborate methodological discussion that stresses above all the local diversity of Cyprus: the island is indeed 'an island of distinct places' (p. 259).

Central to all contributions is the interplay between connectivity and insular specificity. The concept of globalization is understood differently in each contribution. While Jennings' (2011) key parameters of globalization (time-space compression, standardization, homogenization, deterritorialization, unevenness, heterogeneity) are often the starting point of the discussion, the contributions explore the dynamics of globalization in relation to the specific historical context of their chosen topic (be that the Greek settlement overseas context, the impact of Rome, or cultic spread). This produces an exciting discussion with important methodological implications for our field. Indeed, I would argue that one of

the most important contributions of this volume is the insistence that processes of globalization need to be context-specific.

I also particularly appreciated the emphasis on indigeneity and heterogeneity as elements of a continuous discourse of local resistance and construction of local identity. Globalization should not be understood as a blanket imposition (normally top-down) of cultural norms, products, and ideas, but rather as a complex process that may result in increased heterogeneity and local diversity. This should be stated loud and clear, and indeed this volume makes an excellent case for re-thinking our conceptual tools, including the, in my view problematic, notion of hybridity. An underlying theme is the diversity of experience and behaviour even in the most inter-connected world.

All in all, this is an excellent volume, which is more than the sum of its parts. It shows clearly that insularity and globalization are fruitful analytical categories; and it will, I suspect, open up the agenda for discussion in our field.

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doi:10.1017/eea.2022.12