

Davis' ideas and methodology is a welcome approach. This book's value lies in providing exemplars that combine archaeology and art history in modern scholarship, thus inspiring others to follow in Ellen Davis' pioneering footsteps.

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SHERRATT (S.) and BENNE (J.) (eds) **Archaeology and Homeric Epic** (Sheffield Studies in Aegean Archaeology). Oxford and Philadelphia: Oxbow, 2017. Pp. xvi + 165, 17 figs. 9781785792952.

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Once upon a time, Aegean prehistorians from all over Europe and America would gather every January in Sheffield for a symposium. The theme would reflect the preoccupations of prehistorians anxious to create a counter-narrative to the study of the Aegean world from the Palaeolithic to the end of the Bronze Age: a narrative of social and political development, informed by anthropological and archaeological theory that had finally freed itself from the tyranny of the text. Homeric archaeology is dead! Long live Aegean prehistory!

The volume under review is one of the last in the series to be published. Its very title is an acknowledgement, if not quite of defeat, but rather of the continuing relevance of Homer to the study of the Aegean Bronze, Iron and Archaic ages. It deals directly with the 'Homeric Question' as understood by archaeologists. That is, what exactly can archaeologists usefully glean from these texts? And does the 'World of Homer' relate to any single period? The book also touches, albeit obliquely, on the older Homeric Question: whether the composition of the Homeric poems was an event (attributable to a single poet) or a process that took centuries.

Both the editors and many of the contributors (Dickinson, Sherratt, Snodgrass, Davis, Mazarakis-Ainian and Panagiotopoulos) are as well versed in Homer as they are in their archaeology. They can address both 'Homeric Questions'. After a brief editorial introduction, Snodgrass outlines quite why archaeologists cannot ignore Homer. Forty years ago, it was still widely assumed that both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were composed in the years around 700 BC. This assumption underpinned debates about 'the world of Homer', particularly Finley's notion that Homeric society reflected the social order of an historical period (tenth and ninth centuries BC (M.I. Finley, *The World of Odysseus* (New York 1954)). Advances by literary scholars, first the dating of the poems to the seventh century, and then, more radically by Nagy (for example, G. Nagy, 'An Evolutionary Model for the Making of Homeric Poetry: Comparative Perspectives', in J. Carter and S.P. Morris (eds), *The Ages of Homer* (Austin 1995), 163–79), the recognition that the composition of the poems was more a process with stages lasting over several centuries than a single event, have rendered attempts to make Homer part of history much more difficult. Many of these ideas are taken up by Dickinson, who provides an effective rebuttal to many cherished beliefs: that the Trojan war was an historical event (datable to the Late Bronze Age and comparable to Rameses III's defeat of the Sea Peoples); that the 'catalogue of the ships' reflects Mycenaean political geography; or that the world of Homer relates to any specific historical period. Sherratt's focus is more on what archaeology can tell us about the oral tradition of Homeric poetry by looking at the iconography of bards (and their lyres) from the Late Bronze Age to early Archaic times. Davis and Lynch's focus is narrower, on the post-Bronze Age history of Pylos (that is, the site Ano Englianos). They argue that later occupation was sporadic at best, that there was no sanctuary erected over the palace and that this Pylos was simply forgotten: it is not Telemachus' Pylos. Panagiotopoulos, too, is concerned with memory, in his case how the past was

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