

BOOK REVIEW

State Formation in Italy and Greece: Questioning the Neoevolutionist Paradigm. Edited by NICOLA TERRENATO and DONALD C. HAGGIS. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2011. Distributed in the United States by David Brown Book Company. Pp. x + 280. Paper, £35.00/\$70.00. ISBN 978-1-84217-967-3.

Most of the papers in this volume edited by Nicola Terrenato and Donald C. Haggis were originally delivered at the conference “Current Issues in State Formation in the Mediterranean and Beyond” held in 2003 at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. A few contributions were solicited to provide fuller treatment of the subject of state formation in Italy and Greece. In the editors’ own words, the book “... aims at bringing to the forefront current work in the Aegean and Italy, comparing and contrasting approaches to the problem of state formation in each region” (preface). The book belongs to the category of scholarship which for the past two decades has challenged traditional developmental paradigms for the emergence of complexity and state societies through the application of new theoretical frameworks as well as new approaches to archaeological data. The contributors to this volume approach the issue of state formation from several different perspectives and consider different sets of data (survey data, architecture, trade, ritual, botanical data, texts).

In the Introduction, the editors provide a valuable review of scholarship on state formation as well as discuss the individual contributions. The rest of the book is organized in two parts focusing on the Aegean and Italy respectively. The contributions are divided equally for each region and are 14 in total.

In the Aegean region, the first paper by Daniel Pullen discusses the emergence of state-level complexity in central and southern Greece during the Early Bronze Age. By integrating regional studies and data derived from excavations Pullen discusses the development of centralization or lack thereof on a regional scale. Krysti Damilati and Giorgos Vavouranakis compare two Early Minoan non-state communities (the cemetery at Mochlos and the settlement at Myrtos) with Late Minoan I palatial contexts. By contrasting the ways in which each society used the material record (primarily symbolic architecture) the two scholars succeed in revealing similar strategies of social integration in both non-state and

state contexts, thus questioning the traditional evolutionary paradigm of state-level organization. The next paper by Klaas Vansteenhuyse discusses aspects of regional integration, political centralization, and cultural domination in Neopalatial Crete arguing that the Knossian state in Late Minoan IA was predominantly based on its control over ideological resources. Rodney Fitzsimons' paper focuses on the nature of monumental building techniques used at Mycenae in the early Mycenaean period and how they related to changes in the socio-political system that produced them. Turning to Classical Greece, Edward van der Vliet's paper challenges the definition of the Greek *polis* as an early state organized upon centralized and hierarchical lines and turns to alternative approaches to understand its evolution such as heterarchy and regime building. Lastly, David Small focuses on social change by examining contexts of social interaction (the agora and its civic buildings, sanctuaries, and even households). Using as a case study the city of Priene, Small traces changes in these interactional contexts that allow him to illustrate several lines of evolution and change within community and the transition from corporate to exclusionary ideology.

Turning to Italy, D. I. Redhouse and Simon Stoddart combine regional studies and the application of the XTENT model (a method of generating settlement hierarchy) to illustrate the evolution and diversity of state formation in Etruria as well as the role of political agents in bordering zones between expanding territories. Next, by drawing upon the Kipp-Schortman model for state formation, ethnohistoric data, and archaeological evidence, J. Theodore Peña effectively demonstrates how exchange relations between the inhabitants of southern coastal Etruria and the Phoenician and Greek traders may have influenced socio-political developments in the region leading to the emergence of states. Carrie Murray's contribution focuses on the creation of authoritative statuses in Etruria. By examining the development and transformation of ritual space, Murray illustrates the varied circumstances and actions of social agents that shaped the trajectory of each city. Christopher Smith takes a holistic approach to examining state formation in early Rome by combining recent theories of the state with a survey of the history and archaeology of Rome emphasizing human agency. Social agents also form a key element in Terrenato's analysis which focuses on the role of clan leaders in the formation of the early Roman state. Rather than approaching the state as an authoritative and all-powerful entity, Terrenato explains how elite groups endorsed the transition to statehood and thus ultimately used the state to serve their own goals. Laura Motta's contribution utilizes environmental data in examining social transformation in early Rome. The analysis of crop pro-

cessing techniques allows her to distinguish coexisting traditional productive systems and a new state economy indicating the overlaying of different sources of power within the state. Lastly, Albert Ammerman undertakes a comparative study of the Forum in Rome, the Athenian Agora, and Piazza San Marco in Venice, exploring how in each case the relocation of the early civic center and the subsequent de-memorization of this event played a role in the formation of the city-states.

In sum, this volume contains a number of thought-provoking papers that will give scholars of state formation new tools to advance their own research. Regrettably, there is not much cross-cultural comparison and discussion and the volume lacks the feel of a dialogue between the individual contributions accentuated by the lack of a concluding chapter synthesizing the varied approaches to the problem of state formation in each region. Overall, the editorial work is meticulous with typos and other mistakes being rare and insignificant consisting mostly of punctuation errors. Some of the black and white photographs (9.2, 9.3, 9.4, 10.2), however, are not of publication quality. Despite these minor flaws, the papers in this volume make important contributions toward understanding state formation in Italy and Greece and there is no doubt that the volume will be heavily referenced by Aegean Prehistorians, Classical archaeologists, and anthropologists for many years to come.

PANAGIOTA A. PANTOU

State University of New York at Buffalo, papantou@buffalo.edu