

**Review of *Between Venice and Istanbul. Colonial Landscapes in Early Modern Greece* (2007, Davies, S. and Davis, J. L. eds., Hesperia Supplement)**

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The editors of this volume begin with an introductory comment to the effect that the landscape archaeology and history of early modern Greece remains ‘a poor step-child’ of Classical archaeology. While this may still be true for some, the sheer range of work highlighted here reflects many years of targeted effort, beginning arguably with the first rush of Aegean field surveys in the 1970s and early 80s, but gathering both in pace and diversity of approach from the 1990s onwards. More recently still, it fits into a trend, in several different parts of the world, of research projects that seek to integrate surface material culture, standing remains and text to address the colonial landscape history of the last five hundred years. Part of this common emphasis reflects a strong interest in patterns of continuity or rupture in agrarian strategy, land tenure, settlement and/or resource exploitation and their articulation with broader geopolitics, as well as how these patterns might clarify our understanding of regional economies, national identity and landscape change today.

This volume emerges from a workshop, but includes further invited contributions, and brings together a large number of the major researchers on this period of Aegean history over the last thirty years. Most of the chapters are of real theoretical, methodological and/or evidential importance, rather than the kinds of hastily-gathered papers that are sometimes found in workshop or conference proceedings. The editors have also done a good job of creating a sense of coherence to the overall volume, through a useful introduction, a first chapter with general historical background and series of brief lead-ins to each section. The text is neatly set out, colourful in parts (including photographs of contemporary ceramics), and has a useful index at the end. Overall, the volume will be of interest to landscape archaeologists, specialists in Venetian or Ottoman archival research, historians of early modern Greece and the more general reader seeking greater time depth to their understanding of how the present day Mediterranean landscape have been structured.

The geographical coverage provided by these contributions is good, though also showing clear signs of the spatial clusters of recent research, in Boeotia, Messenia and Kythera for example, and with less attention given to Attica, Euboea or the northern Aegean. As in early modern Mediterranean map-making, so too in the current set of academic priorities, islands (or quasi-islands such as Methana) loom larger than life. Such an emphasis brings certain interpretative rewards, but it is also reassuring to see that this volume balances it, with a) due attention to the often very contingent historical trajectories that such places have followed, b) important mainland contributions on the Morea, Boeotia and ‘continental’ islands such as Cyprus and Crete, and c) a much broader regional overview wherever possible. In addition to what are by now well-appreciated, perspectives from fieldwalking, architectural survey and Venetian documents (e.g. notarial records,

censuses), it is good to see further showcasing of the huge potential of both the important, but more rarely-exploited Ottoman records (Kiel), and of studying the complex production and consumption patterns behind contemporary ceramics (Vroom).

As the editors note, it is at the awkward interface between different kinds of complementary or contrasting dataset (i.e. different kinds of texts, standing architecture and portable material culture) that some of the most frustrating, but ultimately rewarding work is to be done. Several contributors here expose and exploit this mix of evidence, for example, confronting the ugly fact that both the observed archaeological record and the historical documents present an overly static picture of a landscape that was in fact made up of people and things in both regular and occasionally-sudden motion (particularly the chapters by Forbes, Malliaris and Bennet). Even so, the editors and authors are clearly aiming to conjure up a level of future interdisciplinary integration that this volume fulfills only in part. Most chapters are still usually configured by a domain of academic 'practice' with regard to landscape-scale analysis (following Bennet's use of the term in chapter 10 for understanding traditions of spatial record-keeping), prioritising a particular kind of dataset or method, with complementary approaches attached thereafter. This is largely inevitable and perhaps appropriate for an overview of the subject like this one, but it is also a good sign of the need for future interdisciplinary landscape projects where this period is not just of equal interest, but the absolute research priority, and in which specialists are able to target, from the design stage onwards, those problems and locations where their datasets and methods overlap most promisingly. What this volume already demonstrates to great effect is the healthy state of the 'poor step-child' whose investigative methods and interpretative ambitions certainly now rival or exceed those of its better-known parents and siblings.