

**Dr. Andrea Babbi**

## **A WAY OUT OF THE EARLY IRON AGE DILEMMA.**

Cultural entanglement, display of power, trade and negotiation  
among the Mediterranean 'Warrior' elite during the Iron Age (c. 1000-670 BC)

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### **LECTURE 1**

#### ***'Warriors', Rulers and Traders at the very End of the Second Millennium BC***

#### **Summary**

The analysis of the burial furniture yielded by the undermentioned graves throws light on the complex dynamics characterizing the Eastern Mediterranean at the very end of the Bronze Age. By commenting on the similarities and differences among the sets of grave gifts it will be possible to sketch out the framework of cultural and social connections among the so called 'lesser rulers'. These led to communities which thrived immediately after the collapse of the palatial systems both in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Aegean Sea. This kind of contextual analysis gives the opportunity to shed light on some relevant theoretical constructs such as: the characterization as a "Warrior" in cases of graves with weaponry; the World-System Theory and its pertinence with reference to the archaeological past; the social value of trade.

#### **Funerary Contexts**

- Cyprus, Episkopi-Kaloriziki Cemetery, Tomb 39
- Greece, Crete, Pantánassa, Erimokklisiés, Tholos Tomb 1985
- Greece, Euboea, Lefkandi, Toumba Burial Plot, PG Building, Southern Shaft in the Central Room
- Greece, Attica, Athen, Kerameikos Cemetery, Grave PG A2

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## LECTURE 2

### ***Seafaring the Mediterranean Networks during the very early First Millennium BC***

#### **Summary**

Thanks to the spreading of shapes and decorations with a specific pedigree as well as peculiar assemblages in the graves of prominent individuals, the early first millennium BC Mediterranean long distance sea-route networks can be clearly traced and investigated. Concurrently, the ownership and manipulation of 'exotica' boosts and becomes a rather useful practice as regards displaying power and social standing; therefore it was widely shared among the prominent. Three funerary contexts located respectively in the Near East, Greece and Italy will be commented on to describe the above mentioned practices. Conceptual tools useful for interpreting the funerary evidence such as the Network Theory and the 'hodological space' construct as well as the anthropological arguments concerning the controlling of space and time will be taken into consideration.

#### **Funerary Contexts**

- Israel, Achziv, Northern Cemetery, Tomb N. 1
- Greece, Euboea, Lefkandi, Toumba Burial Plot, Grave 79
- Italy, Calabria, Drapia, Caria, Torre Galli Cemetery, Grave 86

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## **LECTURE 3**

### ***Influences and reactions in a glocalized Iron Age Tyrrhenian World***

#### ***Summary***

Over the last decades, archaeological thought has started to distinguish many shades of gray as far as the globalization phenomenon in the Iron Age Mediterranean basin is concerned (the so called Mediterraneanization phenomenon). More recently, the active role exerted by local communities in negotiation processes with out comers, selection of specific foreign features consciously adopted among a plethora of influences, appropriation and re-elaboration of foreign shapes and decorations, which could be fruitfully used in local mechanics of competition with the goal of legitimizing inequality within the local communities, has been rightly underlined. In order to put the funerary evidence into the right perspective, the following aspects will be addressed: diachronical or synchronical analysis of the evidence; a glocalized point of view instead of a globalized one; an investigation of the characteristics hinting at agency exerted by the locals.

#### ***Funerary Contexts***

- Italy, Campania, Pontecagnano, Eastern Cemetery, ECI burial plot, Grave 3289
- Italy, Campania, Pontecagnano, Eastern Cemetery, ECI burial plot, Grave 3285
- Italy, Campania, Pontecagnano, Western Cemetery, Aedilia burial plot, Tomb 3090bis

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## LECTURE 4

### *Cultural encounters and transcultural attitudes during the Greek Colonization*

#### **Summary**

The consequences of the phenomena commented on in the previous lectures are marked out clearly during the last decades of the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC. Actually, the long lasting acquaintance between the local rulers and the Aegean groups settling along the coastline of the central Mediterranean region, led to deep cultural blending. In point of fact, local elites developed new ways of legitimation by actively internalizing foreign elements which consequently made them more socially compelling. The result of a similar trend is the spreading of either sets of burial offerings or single objects that can be described as a meshwork of many different but inextricably intertwined influences. Such phenomena gave birth to a new original multifaceted

cultural trend, the fundamental premise for the rise of historical urban aggregations. All of the above as well as theoretical terms such as ethnicity/identity, cultural biography of things, meshwork, transculturality, the middle ground, the making and control of collective memory, colonization and colonialism, are commented on by looking at the evidence unearthed from the undermentioned graves.

### **Funerary Contexts**

- Cyprus, Palaepaphos Kouklia, Katô Alônia, Tomb 1/1962 'Warrior Tomb', earliest burial
- Greece, Argolis, Argos, Odeion Plot, Grave 45
- Italy, Latium, Tarquinia, Monterozzi cemetery, 'Tomb of the Warrior'
- Greece, Eretria, West Gate, Grave 6
- Italy, Campania, Cuma Fondo Artiàco, Grave 104

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