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**Review of Karampas, D & Falezza, A (eds.). 2023. *Interactions, Trade and Mobility in Archaeology, Proceedings of the Graduate Archaeology Oxford (GAO) Conference 2021***

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## BOOK REVIEW

### **Review of Karampas, D & Falezza, A (eds.). 2023. *Interactions, Trade and Mobility in Archaeology, Proceedings of the Graduate Archaeology Oxford (GAO) Conference 2021***

Stefano A. Cecatiello

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Karampas, D & Falezza, A (eds.). 2023. *Interactions, Trade and Mobility in Archaeology, Proceedings of the Graduate Archaeology Oxford (GAO) Conference 2021*. Oxford: BAR Publishing, 190 pages. £53. ISBN 978-1-4073-6039-3

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*Interactions, Trade and Mobility in Archaeology* edited by Karampas and Falezza is a summative work of the 2021 Graduate Archaeology Oxford conference. As defined in its introduction (Chapter One), the book's purpose is to present the work of young researchers from different institutions on three subjects: social interactions, trade and maritime networks. Its chapters are subdivided into three groups each dedicated to one of these specific topics.

From Chapter One to Six concepts of social and cultural interactions are discussed. Chapters Two and Five are dedicated to the assessment of dynamic changes across networks of interactions. Linares Matás and Lim, in Chapter Two, reconstructs changes in trade and human-environmental interactions across the region of south Mauritania from the 11<sup>th</sup> century. Their approach employs high-resolution multispectral satellite imagery and different Geographic Information System (GIS) functions: least coast pathway and visibility analysis. Wein, in Chapter Five, discusses changes in the trade of antefixes across different communities of Central Italy between 600BC and 400BC in order to reconstruct the power dynamics that led to the rise of Rome. Wein's investigation is structured on GIS-based route analysis,

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Social Network Analysis and a semiotic assessment of the decorations found on antefixes. Both chapters share an innovative utilisation of GIS for the study of networks of interactions. However, as is especially evident from Chapter Two, the authors could apply more critical consideration to their reliance on software analyses and the ways in which these programmes incorporate, process and display information, rather than simply accepting as archaeological truths the results of their implementation.

Chapters Three, Four and Six approach the sociological concept of agency and its role in the formation of and interaction between cultural identities. Papageorgiou, in Chapter Three, discusses the dynamics that characterise the acceptance of foreign traditions by the population of Tell Kazel (Syria), during the Early Iron Age. Developing Bourdieu's concept of habitus, the author observes the different, changing habitual relationship that locals share with traditional and newly introduced forms of pottery. Giamakis, in Chapter Four, assesses pivotal variables in localised processes of identity formation across the Archaic Macedonian Kingdom. Specifically, Giamakis focuses on the relationship between individual agency and social interactions which are extrapolated from an analysis of the burial practices employed by different communities across the Macedonian cemeteries of Archontiko and Sindos (Greece). Park, Conte and Oh, in Chapter Six, identify important agents and factors that contributed to the gradual introduction and acceptance of tanalmun pottery in pre-historic Korea. These are determined through computer simulations based on the application of Agent Based Models. The methodologies developed in Chapters Three and Four are very valuable. Both the concept of habitus (Chapter Three) and comparative assessments between relevant archaeological records (Chapter Four) can reconstruct reliably, through material-based assessments, the roles of agency within processes of identity formation and interaction. Accordingly, Chapter Six demonstrates the potential of digital simulation in identifying factors that shaped technological developments and in directing new archaeological investigations.

Chapter 7 to 11 discusses archaeological research on trade networks. Chapters Seven and Eight develop assessments of trade by relying primarily on material evidence.

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De Mitri, in Chapter Seven, analyses the changing importance of the Salento peninsula in relation to trade across the Adriatic-Ionian basin during the Late Roman and Early Byzantine period. The author achieves this through a comparative assessment of pottery found across relevant Adriatic-Ionian harbours and by structuring this information through Social Network Analysis. Greger, in Chapter Eight, uncovers pivotal aspects of interregional perfume trade across the Mediterranean between the Late Geometric and Early Archaic period. Focusing on the cemetery of Pithekoussai (Ischia, Italy) the author combines statistical analyses on distribution and utilisation of perfumes and related vessels. Both chapters provide insightful material-based assessments of trade patterns. De Mitri's Social Network Analysis well incorporates his study of the distribution of specific pottery types. Yet, his argument would have been strengthened further by a better integration of comparative evidence of trade in the area: such as numismatic and epigraphic records. Greger, in Chapter Eight, demonstrates the potential of its statistical approach in revealing interesting social dynamics regulating commerce.

Contrastingly, Chapters 9, 10 and 11 address trade predominantly from literary sources. De Luque Morales and Medina Luque, in Chapter Nine, discuss defining factors of trade of Baetic oil across the Roman Empire of the High Period. Their investigation relies on literary evidence and GIS based analysis of the relationship between Baetic trading settlements and the Baetis river basin. Wright, in Chapter 10, infers the dominance of Palmyrenes and other local ethnic groups in the organisation of trade across the Persian Gulf during the Roman Empire. Wright relies on the study of literary sources from the Greco-Roman "Periplus of the Erythraean Sea" combined with comparative, general assessments of material evidence found across the Persian Gulf. Gautam, in Chapter 11, tries to prove the economic connection between trading routes and temples constructed by the Gurjara-Pratihara Dynasty in north India between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries. The assessment is mostly structured on literary evidence and analysis of the spatial relationships between these temples and routes. Overall, Chapter 9, 10 and 11 rely on general overviews of relevant literary sources to introduce the social complexity of trading relationships across a variety of contexts. These chapters focus on incredibly interesting topics which would benefit from dedicated assessments with greater reliance on material evidence.

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Chapters 12 to 16 are grouped by the editors as relating to the analysis of maritime networks. This is true for Chapters 12, 13 and 16, while Chapters 14 and 15 more tangentially touch on the subject. Čelebić, in Chapter 12, describes changes in the organisation of the maritime trade infrastructure of the East Adriatic coast during the Illyrian and Roman period. The author relies on the study of archaeological evidence and GIS environmental analysis of intervisibility and viewshed. Nakas, in Chapter 13, demonstrates the complex phenotypical variability of harbours across the Roman Mediterranean. Nakas reveals the coexistence of communal and region-specific features that characterised Roman harbours by combining archaeological analysis of both material and literary evidence. Delacruz, in Chapter 16, elaborates a model for the assessment of cultic interactions across the Ancient Saronic Gulf. It utilises Social Network Analysis to summarise results from the combined implementation of ArcGIS least-cost pathway and gravity models developed in the programme Ariadne. The analysis of maritime networks provided by Chapters 12 and 13 is accurate. Chapter 12 wisely pairs archaeological sources with the utilisation of GIS to adequately consider a specific case study and identify future avenues of research. Concurrently, Chapter 13 elegantly juxtaposes concepts of communal and site-specific characteristics of Roman harbours to draw a description of the complex variety of these Roman constructions. Contrastingly, the analytical methodology provided in Chapter 16 is less complete, with inconsistent application of different and not necessarily compatible data-processing software. Karampas and Theodoulou, in Chapter 14, provide a good introduction to the history of coastal and underwater archaeology on the island of Crete. Their chapter focuses particularly on the foundation of the Ephorate of Underwater Antiquities and its positive effects on the research and preservation of the island's heritage. Tzovaras in Chapter 15, infers the authenticity of four Early Bronze Age lead boat models which were illegally trafficked from the Cycladic islands to the UK during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Their authenticity is proven through the utilisation of Highlighted-Reflectance Transformation Imaging and computer analysis. This approach is utilised to understand mathematically their similarities with comparative representations of Early Cycladic boats and possible deterioration during the process of archaeological formation. Although the utilisation of such digital approach would benefit from

more thorough discussion, the proposed analytical model appears useful and innovative for discussing the authenticity of illegally sourced antiquities.

In conclusion, the book successfully presents the work of different young researchers on subjects of social interactions, trade and maritime networks. As such, it usefully shows interesting analytical approaches to the addressed topics, especially in terms of the implementation of different types of software analyses for the study of both spatial and material evidence. These innovative approaches represent good foundation for effective research that can be developed further with more critical appraisal.

### **Competing interests**

The author declares that they have no competing interests in publishing this article.