

Lesbos and the Troad between Anatolia and the Aegean: Continuity and Change in the Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age

Lesbos and the Troad, two regions situated at the crossroads between Anatolia and the Aegean, played a pivotal role in the cultural and historical development of the Eastern Mediterranean during the Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age. This article aims to explore the rich archaeological evidence from these regions, shedding light on the complex interactions, continuities, and changes that characterized this period.



The Kingdom of Priam: Lesbos and the Troad between Anatolia and the Aegean (Oxford Classical Monographs)

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The Late Bronze Age

During the Late Bronze Age (c. 1600-1200 BCE), Lesbos and the Troad were home to thriving Bronze Age civilizations. Archaeological excavations have revealed the presence of numerous settlements, including the fortified

city of Mytilene on Lesbos and the port city of Troy in the Troad. These settlements were part of a wider network of trade and cultural exchange that stretched across the Aegean and Anatolia.

One of the most significant features of the Late Bronze Age in this region was the presence of the Hittite Empire, which extended its influence into western Anatolia and the Troad. Hittite texts provide valuable insights into the political and economic relationships between Lesbos and the Troad during this period.

Archaeological Evidence from Lesbos

Archaeological excavations on Lesbos have uncovered a wealth of evidence from the Late Bronze Age. The most notable site is Mytilene, a fortified city that served as the administrative center of the island. The city walls and palace complex attest to the importance and prosperity of Mytilene.

Other important sites from this period include the settlement of Thermi on the west coast of Lesbos and the cemeteries of Polichnitos and Mantamados. These sites have yielded a variety of artifacts, including pottery, tools, weapons, and jewelry, which provide valuable information about the everyday life and cultural practices of the Late Bronze Age inhabitants of Lesbos.

Archaeological Evidence from the Troad

In the Troad, the city of Troy stands as a testament to the region's significance during the Late Bronze Age. Troy was a major port city and a key player in the trade networks that connected the Aegean and Anatolia.

The archaeological remains of the city include monumental fortifications, a royal palace, and numerous temples.

Other important sites in the Troad from this period include the settlement of Beycesultan, the port city of Assos, and the cemeteries of Sarikasik and Kumtepe. These sites have produced a rich array of artifacts, including pottery, jewelry, and weapons, which shed light on the cultural connections between the Troad and other regions of the Mediterranean.

The Early Iron Age

The transition from the Late Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age (c. 1200-800 BCE) was marked by widespread political and social changes. The collapse of the Hittite Empire and the subsequent migrations of peoples in the Mediterranean led to a period of upheaval and instability.

In Lesbos and the Troad, this period witnessed the emergence of new cultural and political entities. Local leaders began to assert their power, and new settlements were established. The transition to iron technology also brought about significant changes in warfare and economic practices.

Archaeological Evidence from Lesbos

Archaeological evidence from Lesbos suggests that the Early Iron Age was a period of both continuity and change. Settlements like Mytilene continued to be inhabited, but there were also new settlements established, such as the fortified site of Antissa on the north coast of the island.

Artifacts from this period reflect a blend of local and foreign influences. Pottery shows similarities with both Anatolian and Aegean styles, indicating the continued interaction between these regions. The discovery of iron

weapons and tools свидетельствует about the increasing use of iron technology in this period.

Archaeological Evidence from the Troad

The Troad also experienced significant changes during the Early Iron Age. The site of Troy was abandoned, and new settlements emerged in the region. One of the most important of these was the city of Assos, which became a major port and trading center.

Archaeological excavations in the Troad have uncovered evidence of a flourishing iron industry during the Early Iron Age. Sites such as Beycesultan and Kumtepe produced large quantities of iron weapons, tools, and other artifacts, suggesting that the region played a key role in the spread of iron technology throughout the Aegean.



Lesbos and the Troad played a vital role as crossroads between Anatolia and the Aegean from the Late Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age. The archaeological evidence from these regions reveals a complex and dynamic period of cultural interaction, political change, and technological innovation. The continuities and changes in the archaeological record provide valuable insights into the resilience and adaptability of human societies during periods of transition.

Further research and archaeological excavations are needed to fully understand the complex interactions between these two regions and their wider significance in the development of the Eastern Mediterranean.

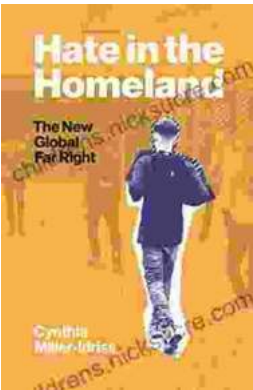
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