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## **NEW OPPORTUNITIES IN TURBULENT TIMES: ATTICA IN THE 12TH C. BC**

Eleni Salavoura<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Greek Ministry of Culture*

Mycenaean civilization survived the disasters of ca. 1200 B.C., however the 12th century on Mainland Greece and the Aegean was clearly a period of upheaval. The centrally administered palace economies of the 13th c. gave way to more dispersed forms of economic organization. Athens was not highly centralized, and the Attic countryside, especially its western, eastern coast and the plain of Mesogaia, flourished in the palatial times. In the 12th c., the continuity of occupation in Athens and the eastern coast of Attica indicate a region that did not suffer a major destruction or abandonment. The fragmented landscape of the Postpalatial Aegean points to the existence of new decentralized coastal and maritime networks, which frequently consist 'small worlds'. Any narrative of collapse in Attica has to be compatible with the foundation and century-long life cemetery of Perati, a site with imports from Cyclades, Dodecanese, Crete, Cyprus, Egypt and Syria. A second Late Helladic IIIC chamber tomb cemetery, 2 km western from Perati, at Porto Raphti: Drivlia, as well as Mycenaean finds from nearby sites of the eastern coast indicate that Attica participated in long-distance trade, but it was also incorporated in a mainland-looking network.

This paper will focus on the networks around the Saronic and Euboean gulf, and their connectivity with the wider Eastern Mediterranean world. In order to understand the ascendance and decline of these regions and microregions, and even individual sites, network analysis will be used, attempting to identify the changes of the maritime networks from Palatial to Postpalatial times, as well as to the transition to the 11th century BC. The study of the archaeological finds along with the changes detected in the settlement pattern will contribute to review Attica's role, suggesting that times of crisis and recession are also times of new opportunities.

### **Keywords**

Late Bronze Age Attica and Athens, Eastern Mediterranean, coastal and maritime networks, 'small worlds'/ micro-regions, decentralized economy, resilience

### **Note/comment**