

EARLY GREEK COLONIES

COLOMBI (C.), PARISI (V.), DALLY (O.), GUGGISBERG (M.A.), PIRAS (G.) (edd.) *Comparing Greek Colonies. Mobility and Settlement Consolidation from Southern Italy to the Black Sea (8th–6th Century BC). Proceedings of the International Conference (Rome, 7.–9.11.2018)*. Pp. xviii + 596, b/w & colour figs, b/w & colour maps. Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2022. Cased, £154.50, €169.95, US\$195.99. ISBN: 978-3-11-068232-8.

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This edited volume stems from the conference ‘Comparing Greek Colonies: Mobility and Settlement Consolidation from Southern Italy to the Black Sea (8th–6th century BC)’ held in Rome in 2018. The volume is dedicated to the memory of Enzo Lippolis, one of the original convenors of the conference, who sadly passed away shortly before the event.

The volume is the most recent in a series of conference proceedings on the topic of ancient Greek colonisation with expanded geographic scope of the central Mediterranean and the Black Sea and an explicit interest in indigenous groups and local contexts (e.g. L. Donnellan, V. Nizzo and G.-J. Burgers [edd.], *Contexts of Early Colonization* [2016] and *Conceptualising Early Colonisation* [2016]; J. Lucas, C.A. Murray and S. Owen [edd.], *Greek Colonization in Local Contexts* [2019]). The main strength of this volume is that it combines contributions ranging from Italy to Russia, and that it brings together different scholarly traditions and conclusions that reflect the continued multivocality of the debate on early Greek colonisation. As the conference took place in Italy, it is understandable that the bulk of the contributions cover the central Mediterranean. However, the chapters focusing on the archaeology of the Black Sea provide varied case studies, which previously have often been published in Romanian, Georgian and Slavic languages. In this volume, most chapters are in English and Italian, with a smaller number in French and German.

In addition to a short general introduction, the 36 chapters are organised in three main sections – focused on economy, indigenous populations, and social and territorial systems – followed by a roundtable discussion. The chapters are united by a relatively tight chronological frame of the eighth to the fifth centuries BCE, during which different types of mobilities led to a myriad of cultural exchanges and interactions. As the length of this review does not allow for a discussion of all chapters, I will foreground a representative selection.

The short introduction frames the volume and explains the utility of studying the phenomenon of ‘ancient Greek colonisation’ from a comparative perspective, bringing the western Mediterranean into conversation with the phenomena witnessed in the Black Sea. The introduction does not provide an overarching terminological definition of colonisation, nor does it dwell on the character of contact; it is open ended and highlights broad geographical, cultural and social differences between the two regions.

The first section foregrounds the construction of economic systems, and it incorporates archaeological and literary approaches. It opens with P. Vannicelli’s introduction, which stresses that, while the character of colonial activity in the archaic period was varied, there were what one might call real colonial foundations in southern Italy. This is a topic that weaves through many chapters in the volume. While some chapters question the character of early colonial activities, the appropriateness of the term ‘colony’ and the ethnic connotations of the phenomenon, most chapters embrace the more traditional

vision of Greek colonial foundations as Greek settlements transplanted overseas. In this respect, M. Giuseppetti's discussion of Archilochus of Paros' testimonies demonstrates how legends of mobility were embellished and understood differently in different time periods, and, similarly, how modern readings of textual evidence might misrepresent undertones of many foundation myths. S. Gimatzidis brings archaeological evidence into the discourse and suggests that later claims of belonging have coloured our perception of cultural and ethnic identities of northern Aegean 'colonies'. He uses a comparison between Mende and Sindos to point out a relative continuity of pottery consumption at eighth-century BCE Mende, identified as an Eretrian colony by Thucydides, and the more pronounced changes to pottery making at Sindos, which did not raise claims to a Euboean colonial past in later periods. The emphasis on migration, rather than colonisation, is further developed by K. Riehle in a contribution that assesses evidence for migrant craftspeople and agropastoral practices in southern Italy from the Final Bronze Age onwards. This chapter moves away from using settlements as units of analysis and invites us to consider similarities and differences in lifeways across urban divisions.

Guggisberg and Colombi's introduction to the section dedicated to contact with indigenous populations is interested in 'preconditions' of Greek colonisation and the complex processes of cultural amalgamation that took place between the different local and incoming social groups. Indeed, the long history of social relationships between migrants and locals are key here, and exploring them provides information on the way in which locals might have understood and reacted to cultural norms, customs and identity of the newcomers. In one of the contributions that most strongly embraces post-colonial approaches G. Zuchtriegel emphasises the need to break down dichotomies between non-locals and locals that are often equated to rural versus urban divisions in favour of understanding ethnic identities as social constructs employed in negotiating relationships between people from different locales. In four case studies he demonstrates how both languages (and names in particular) and material culture were used to construct complex identities within local discourses of belonging that went beyond ethnicity. L. Altomare's contribution develops the theme of breaking down entrenched divisions with respect to settlement patterns. He shows that looking at settlement patterns as colonial versus indigenous masks the continuous developments in the structure of local communities and urban spaces, with the example of Francavilla Marittima. While most chapters in the volume focus on excavated material, the chapter by O. Belvedere and A. Burgio stands out as it uses results from pedestrian field surveys to problematise the 'local equals inland' versus 'non-local equals coastal site' dichotomy. It productively explores issues of territoriality, control and interaction linked to different types of subsistence strategies in the hinterland of Himera.

The third part of the book concerns territorial and social systems. Dally's opening chapter eloquently weaves common threads of this section, including the importance of studying social structures and hierarchies that played out in the chora. He calls for more attention to practice in order to move away from strict separations usually made between natives and non-natives, resulting from an over-reliance on ethnic identities. E. Mango's case study of the Himeran territory analyses the landscape in the archaic period and thus engages with the evolving discussion on the role of chora and sanctuaries as territory markers. This section also has a number of chapters focused on the Black Sea. V. Lungu's comparative discussion of territoriality around Istros and Orgame covers a wide range of issues concerning the dynamics in the hinterland and between cities, bringing in the concept of a mobile city in relation to the decline of Orgame in the fifth century BCE. Interestingly, mobile cities were also present in Ionia, the alleged source of colonists at Orgame and Histria. I. Bîrzescu's chapter complements some of these observations, and

furthermore suggests that the Propontis was an enabler of Ionian colonisation of the Black Sea.

Several chapters in the volume either present new data or shed new light on questions related to local and regional histories and socio-economic resources. These include – but are not limited to – the contributions by A. Bresson and G. Olcese (metals and minerals in Ischia), A. Butyagin and A. Kasparov (pottery and animal and plant consumption at Myrmekion and surroundings), and E. Spagnoli (coins from Croton). Many contributions present results of recent archaeological fieldwork and museum study – for example, C.M. Marchetti and Parisi (Satùro), M.C. Parra (Kaulonía), C. Marconi (Selinus), C. Blasetti Fantauzzi (Erice), L. Nigro (Phoenician presence at Motya), R. D’Oriano (Sardinian Olbia), S. Helas (funerary record of Selinus), Y. Vinogradov (Taman Peninsula) and A. Bujskikh (Olbia). They are supplemented by colour images, maps and charts, which are mostly clear and helpful.

The concluding section provides a critical discussion of the main themes and issues raised by the volume. The most pressing point is what we understand by ‘Greek colonisation’. There is not much critical discussion in the body of the volume of early Greek identities (or the possible lack of) or of the term ‘colonisation’ – standing for a foundation as known from ancient texts, especially with respect to organisation of urban and rural spaces, cults and links to the metropolis. Indeed, many chapters take for granted that colonisation happened early and that a group cultural identity of the Greeks was in existence as early as the eighth or seventh century BCE. Yet many of the same chapters mention the presence of long-distance movement of goods and people already in the Late Bronze Age and interrogate the interplay between urban and rural lifeways traced through common denominators of economy, cult and landscape markers, as discussed by M. Gras. Therefore, D. Demetriou’s chapter is important as it succinctly summarises the major issues related to what we envision as ‘colonisation’, namely how the focus on ethnicity – in the persistent application of the janiform use of the terms ‘Greek’ and ‘non-Greek’ – hinders understanding local histories and reactions to involvement in an increasingly mobile Mediterranean and the sheer diversity of people and encounters that led to the emergence of a vast number of city states in all corners of the Mediterranean.

The second challenge is that of a comparative perspective, dissected by L. Donnellan. Over a decade ago S. Handberg and J.K. Jacobsen (‘Greek or Indigenous? From Potsherd to Identity in Early Colonial Encounters’, in: M. Gleba and H.W. Horsnaes [edd.], *Communicating Identity in Italic Iron Age Communities* [2011], pp. 175–94) briefly applied an explicit and critical comparative approach to the study of ancient Greek settlements east and west. This volume adds value to this call, but Donnellan is right to question the feasibility of a true comparative study. The variation in quality, quantity and accessibility of data from different parts of the Mediterranean precludes a true comparison, especially when coupled with different intellectual histories as well as inconsistent local chronological and typological systems. In a complementary vein P.G. Guzzo reminds us of the main pillars of good scholarship – applying critical and heuristic models to study the archaeological and literary record, embracing new methods and engaging with intellectual histories – that can serve as a way towards a more critical understanding of the phenomenon described as ancient Greek colonisation.

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