

Review

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Teresa E. Cinquantaquattro and Matteo D'Acunto, eds. 2020. *EUBOICA II. Pithekoussai and Euboea between East and West. Proceedings of the Conference, Lacco Ameno (Ischia, Naples), 14–17 May 2018, Volume 1*. *AION ArchStAnt* n.s. 27. Napoli: Università degli Studi di Napoli «L'Orientale». Dipartimento Asia Africa e Mediterraneo. ISSN 1127-7130, pp. I–IX and 10–385, with colour and black and white figures, paperbound.

Twenty years after the highly successful international conference *Euboica. L'Eubea e la presenza euboica in Calcidica e in Occidente*, organized by Bruno d'Agostino and Michel Bats in Naples between the 13th and 16th November 1996, it became obvious to Teresa E. Cinquantaquattro and Matteo D'Acunto that the new archaeological discoveries on much the same themes accumulated in the meantime called for a second international meeting to discuss them. The idea and practice of colonization, “colonial realities” confronted to the indigenous element in different areas of the Mediterranean, Euboean colonization and its particular traits, are among the topics of the new symposium. The conference was this time held in Lacco Ameno from 14 to 17 May 2018 and was entitled *EUBOICA II. Pithekoussai e l'Eubea tra Oriente e Occidente*. Its success was undeniable and the general euphoria is captured in a series of color photographs/clichés that decorate the introductory pages of the 1st volume of the proceedings, published in 2020 as No 27 of the Nuova Serie of the *Annali di Archeologia e storia Antica*.

The volume opens with a brief preface of the editors advising the reader on the structure and contents of the two volumes of the Proceedings, but also on the side-events that accompanied the conference (exhibition *Pithekoussai... work in progress*). The key-note lecture was offered by N. Kourou (“Euboean Pottery in a Mediterranean Perspective”, p. 9–35); it acts as a general introduction to the 1st volume and lures the reader into a meticulously planned and masterly executed journey across the early Iron Age Mediterranean. This important essay relies on exhaustive archaeological research about the dissemination of Euboean pottery over the Mediterranean shores between the late 10th to the mid-8th centuries BC. The author discusses the first two (out of three) consecutive stages of Euboean ceramic expansion and makes apparent the multifold aspects of connectivity and economic interaction between the Euboean gulf, the Levant, the Central and the Western Mediterranean. The long-distance voyages undertaken by Euboeans on their own or as participants to Cypriot and/or Phoenician ventures from the PG and until the LG Ia period, reveals the absence of any strategy or model of expansion on their part. However, the experience they accumulated during these early travels seems to have served them well in the third stage of the distribution of Euboean pottery (second half of the 8th century BC), which coincides with the appearance of the first Greek colonies in the Central Mediterranean and which is not discussed in Kourou's article.

Fifteen contributions grouped by geographical criteria constitute the first volume of the Proceedings; the first five of them deal with issues based upon archaeological data from ongoing excavations in Euboea.

The meticulously excavated site of Xeropolis, Lefkandi, offers the opportunity to the excavator, I. Lemos, to discuss the major problem of the “Transition from the Late BA to the EIA in Euboea and the Euboean gulf” (p. 37–53). In a coherent text accompanied by stimulating photographic documentation, Xeropolis is used as a case study to demonstrate the continuity of occupation between LBA and EIA, which is also witnessed in some further, well excavated Euboean sites. Archaeological finds confirm the prosperity of the island even after the destruction of the palatial system, probably due to the conservation of regional networks and the maintenance of connectivity between Euboea, the Aegean and the Mediterranean shores; the leading role of the island in the final centuries of the BA was enhanced during the EIA and led finally to the establishment of Euboean colonies in the Northern Aegean and Italy.

An attempt to explore the region of Early Iron Age and Archaic Chalkis, a significant albeit incompletely known settlement because of the continuous use of the same site through the centuries, is undertaken by X. Charalambidou (“Chalcidian deposits and their role in reconstructing production and consumption practices and the function of space in Early Iron Age and Archaic Chalkis: some first thoughts”, p. 55–71). She wisely exploits the archaeological data offered by several pits and wells scattered within the ancient habitation area to “highlight models of production and consumption...as well as the function of spaces within the ancient town”. A most welcome inference, among several others of equal importance, is offered by the discards on the south slope of Agios Ioannis hill: as they lay in the immediate vicinity of ceramic workshops and not far from the Agios Stefanos port, to the south of the ancient city, they are tangible evidence of LG–Archaic Chalcidian ceramic production and of its export trade, possibly during the Euboean colonization movement.

A most welcome contribution is the one made by S. Verdan, Th. Theurillat, T. Krapf, D. Greger and K. Reber, on the “Early phases of the Artemision at Amarynthos” (p. 73–116), which was securely identified as the renowned cult place for Artemis as late as 2017. Even though proof for SM, PG and SPG occupation is still sparse, the excavators consider that uninterrupted occupation of the sanctuary area from the LBA is most likely. There is definite evidence for LG architectural and ceramic remains, while the architectural layout of the sacred precinct in the Early Archaic period is well defined and “perpetuated” in the later phases of the sanctuary. Plenty of pottery and minor objects testify to the cultic activity, even though no definite suggestions can be offered as yet on the beginnings of the cult, or on the evolving nature of the divinity/ies worshiped over the centuries. Despite the fragmentary evidence, the authors dare pose some crucial questions regarding the transition between the LBA and the EIA in the Paleoklissies area and the role of the Amarynthian sanctuary in the genesis of the polis of Eretria. This important contribution tackles in a creative way the data from an ongoing excavation; despite the fact that the research has not been completed yet, it ventures interpretations of issues that are at the forefront of scientific interest.

A very interesting albeit twisted assessment of the Euboean colonization of the EIA is the one attempted by J.P. Crielaard in his article “Karystos-Plakari: A ‘Pre-Colonial ‘Foundation’ in Southern Euboea” (p. 119–33). After summing up the results of the recent excavation on the site of Plakari in the bay of Karystos (most likely the location of EIA and Archaic Karystos), the author explains why the site sets an example of a new and rather insignificant installation that, apparently, did not participate to the colonization of Italy controlled by Central Euboean settlements. Plakari could instead have served as an ‘exercise’ for Euboeans of the EIA in founding new communities at home, equipped with all the necessary components to function successfully as *poleis*, before they ventured in installing ‘genuine’ colonies abroad.

A recently excavated sanctuary probably dedicated to Apollo is presented by A. Chatzidimitriou in her article “Zarakes: A cult site in South Karystia, on the island of Euboea” (p. 135–58). In spite of the poor architectural remains that need further investigation and at present allow few conclusions, the significant amount of pottery, mostly relief vases and louteria, some of them with dedicatory inscriptions, lead to important inferences as to the start of the cult sometime in the 8th century BC, the operation of workshops on the site during the 7th and 6th centuries BC and the trade connections with other Euboean settlements and neighboring islands.

The next two articles do not deal directly with material from individual sites or regions; they are rather concerned with historical issues regarding the East side of Euboea.

In his paper “Forgotten cities in Eastern Euboea” (p. 159–79), B. d’Agostino figures out why Kerinthos, Oichalia-Viglatouri and –very likely– Kyme, important settlements along the East Coast of Central Euboea in the Mycenaean period and flourishing in the first two centuries of the historical period, seem to decline after the mid-9th century BC. In the first two centuries of the 1st millennium Lefkandi commanded the trade routes with the Aegean and the Levant and was oriented towards the exploitation of minerals, a venture in which the above three cities were apparently also involved. Through a complex but sound reasoning D’Agostino explains why this system collapsed by the middle of the ninth century, when Near Eastern mines stopped being profitable, a development that seems to have caused also the decline of the East-Euboean settlements in question; by the same time the commercial and colonial aspirations of the Euboeans shifted to the West.

Complementary to D’Agostino’s article is the one by A.C. Cassio (“Κύμη, Κούμη, Cumae and the Euboeans in the bay of Naples”, p. 181–85), in which the author demonstrates that the name Κούμη, used from the 15th to the 19th centuries of our era to designate modern Κύμη on the East coast of Euboea, is a very ancient phonetic relic perpetuating the pronunciation of the city’s name by ancient Euboeans. If this inventive proposition is true, then we may infer that when Strabo writes that Cumae in the bay of Naples is «Χαλκιδέων και Κυμαίων παλαιότατον κτίσμα», he has in mind the Euboean city and not the homonymous Aeolic one; this explains why there is not a hint of the Aeolic dialect in early or later Cumaean inscriptions.

The subsequent three papers refer to the Boeotian coast facing Euboea and strongly influenced by it.

Difficult as it is to follow the complex mythological genealogies and traditions from differing chronological backgrounds, it is nonetheless rewarding to seek the point of L. Breglia’s contribution “Mythic traditions of Euboea and Boeotia in the Archaic Age” (p. 187–209), which brings forward the strong ties that link the two regions together, sometimes even with the Argolid. The interpretation of mythological traditions gives rise to several issues referring to the nature of these links, social, political or ritual, which the author discusses at length. Despite their complicated Mythological background, reflected in the complexity of Breglia’s text, much is to be learned on the actual closeness of the two areas, mirrored in their installations in the West. The second part of the author’s contribution deals with later explanations of the island’s name, which link it to mythological personalities common to both areas, Boeotia and Euboea.

A. Mazarakis-Ainian in his article “Thirty-five years of excavations and research at Homeric Graia (Oropos)” (p. 211–30) moves us to the mainland coast opposite the Eretriad. The excavator has already made the site of Oropos widely known through his regular excavation reports and the numerous studies he has published on the subject over the years. However, a summary on the progress made in field work and scientific publications since 1996 (i.e., the year of the first *Euboica* conference) helps to re-assess the importance of the site within a wider geographical and cultural context and confirms the opinion that the pre-classical Oropos falls within the Euboean rather than the Boeotian or Attic cultural orbit. A rich documentation in figures (mark the 3D reconstructions) and drawings highlights the importance of the site for the EIA history and makes it accessible to a wider public.

V. Vlachou, an active member of the excavation team of Oropos and a tenacious student of the site’s pottery, was most suitable to discuss, in a concise but comprehensive paper (“Pottery production, workshop spaces and the consumption of Euboean-type pottery beyond Euboea. A view from Oropos in the 8th century BC”, p. 231–61), the nature and distribution of workshop spaces within the building complexes/quarters of the site, to analyze the ceramics found in these units and to identify the influence exercised on local pottery by neighboring production centers. As the shapes and decoration of the Oropos ceramics leave no doubt that the settlement lay within the Euboean sphere of influence the author has used it as a case study to investigate the impact exercised by Euboean potters and painters on several distant and close-by installations of the 8th century BC; among the numerous areas influenced by Euboea, only Pithekoussai and Cumae developed a highly individual style, combining Greek and indigenous characters that rapidly spread in Campania and beyond.

The next three articles deal with sites on the Northern Aegean and Northern Greece, areas for which Euboeans have also shown an early interest.

The study of pottery and the architectural remains from Kefala on the NE side of Skiathos island, North Sporades, offer the opportunity to A. Alexandridou (“One more node to the Thessalo-euboean small world: the evidence from the site of Kephala on the island of Skiathos”, p. 263–75) to examine whether the literary tradition asserting that Skiathos belonged to the sphere of Euboean colonization is based on archaeological evidence and to re-discuss the issue of the Euboean *koine*. Very cautiously, because of the restricted material, she puts forward the concept that Kefala acted as a meeting point for a “small world” network in Central Aegean, strongly influenced by the Thessalian cultural milieu; interaction with Central Euboean and Northern Aegean settlements is detected on the site only later and always through the intermediary of Thessaly.

Highly original is the contribution of S. Verdan and E. Heymans in the 1st volume of the Proceedings (“Men and Metals on the move: The case of Euboean gold”, p. 279–99): They elaborate on the hypothesis that the gold of the 8th century BC Eretrian hoard, supplied probably by the colonies in the Thermaic gulf and sharing many characteristics with hoards from the Southern Levant of the late 11th to the late 8th centuries BC, was destined for monetary use. The idea was first suggested in the ‘80es and elaborated later, between 2000–2003. The authors develop their argument in a cautious and systematic way, insisting on the fragmentation of the gold pieces, most of which weigh less than one gram, so that transactions could be carried out by adding pieces of metal thus achieving a high level of precision, especially in small scale transactions. This Eretrian method of “payment” encompassed probably the use of a weight standard and an accurate set of weights, both being of primary importance for- and firmly rooted in the Euboean involvement in the Cypro-Levantine commerce.

Equally inventive is the article by A. Kotsonas (“Euboeans and Co. in the North Aegean: ancient tradition and modern historiography of Greek colonization”, p. 301–24), which warns the reader against the central role in Mediterranean interaction assigned by recent scholarship to Euboea and the Euboeans of the EIA: a similar role was ascribed to Crete in the first half of the 20th century only to be dismissed as early as the 50es. The author attempts to employ historical sources as effectively as possible: After a lengthy discourse regarding the colonial activities of the Euboeans in the North Aegean, which focuses on their foundation traditions, on the geographic diaspora of the colonies in relation to the location of their metropolis and on the lack of any mention of *Oikists* for the Euboean colonies of the North Aegean by literary tradition, Kotsonas concludes that the extent of Euboean colonization in the North has been overstated and needs “to be appreciated in more nuanced ways through the range of novel approaches to Greek colonization”. Interesting as the article might be, the large amount of information presented requires the full concentration of the reader before he reaches a rather evident conclusion.

The last two articles cast a look towards the Western Mediterranean, Sardinia and Spain, where Phoenicians and Euboeans interact with the local element, sharing goods, technology and ideas.

M. Rendeli is the author of “Sant’Imbenia/Pontecagnano Sulci/Pithekoussai: Four Tales of an Interconnected Mediterranean” (p. 325–45), which he sings together with the late P. Bernardini giving the reason in a highly emotional introduction. A detailed catalogue of the Euboean and Euboean inspired pottery found in Sant’Imbenia and Sulci is followed by most interesting final remarks. The Greek pottery imported between the late 9th and the 6th centuries BC, although not of great use in building local chronological sequences, it is important for understanding the nature of the commercial contacts of the two sites on south and north Sardinia, respectively. Sulci and Sant’Imbenia are completely different in nature, the first being a Phoenician colony controlling its immediate neighbourhood, while the organization of space in the second betrays an “early collective decision made by many villages” possibly towards the formation of a state. The final conclusion is that when Euboean pottery made its first appearance in the Western Mediterranean coasts, the local societies were ready to welcome foreign merchants and partake of new ideas and new trade networks.

In an articulate and richly documented review of the maritime trading routes followed by Phoenicians in the Mediterranean and beyond the straits of Giblartar, as well as of the settlement of colonists in the Iberian Peninsula, M. Botto reaffirms the view that Tyrian sailors preceded the Greeks in the area and inaugurated the first contacts with the indigenous population as early as the 9th century BC (“Phoenicians and Greeks in the

Iberian Peninsula between the 9th and 8th centuries BC”, p. 347–83). Phoenician attempts took the form of a precise political plan aiming at the exploitation of the rich metal resources in the area. The diversified material found in Spain from the late 9th/early 8th century BC on, leads to the conclusion that ever-widening networks of contacts “preceded and partly accompanied the foundation of the first colonies” in Iberia; in these early networks Greeks, Sardinians Villanovans and Cypriots competed under a strongly felt Phoenician presence.

The first Volume of *Euboica* II is a major contribution to the archaeology of Euboea, and the Euboean presence in Chalkidike, the Central and Western Mediterranean in the Early Iron Age. There is no doubt that the book will become an important reference work and soon. Although much of the strength of the volume is placed in the detailed presentation of unpublished archaeological material, most of the contributions are characterized by a synthetic approach leading to important conclusions. Of course, some papers are more astute than others, but as a rule the articles are varied and stimulating and the book is of a remarkably high standard.

As if to answer to the criticism of J. Papadopoulos¹ on the “Hellenocentric tone” of *Euboica* I and the omission of any reference to the Phoenician exploits, two out of fifteen contributions deal with the Tyrian involvement in the Mediterranean commerce and colonization, while several others present the Euboean relations with indigenous populations of the Northern Aegean and the Central Mediterranean.

The first volume of the *Euboica* II Proceedings contains a wealth of bibliographical material, the illustrations of the papers meet unusually high standards and while the edition is deprived of the colourful use of several European languages, the exclusive use of English conceals many practical benefits for the reader... The *Abstracts* of the articles at the end of the book are helpful, but one wonders on the omission of the *Discussion* on the papers.

All in all, *Euboica* II is a most welcome sequel to *Euboica* I, which will give rise to valuable scientific discourse. We anticipate with pleasure several more conferences on the same or similar subjects and, of course, as many volumes of Proceedings!