

GREEK PRE-COLONIAL CONTACTS: CONTEXTUALIZING THE MOVEMENTS OF THE
EUBOEANS OVERSEAS IN THE EARLY 8TH CENTURY BCE

by

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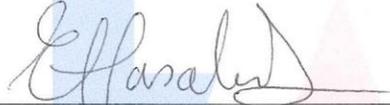
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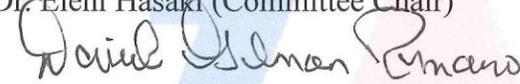
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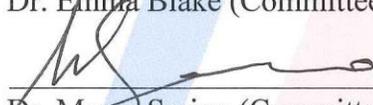
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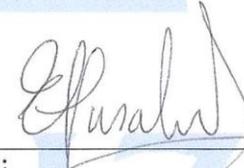


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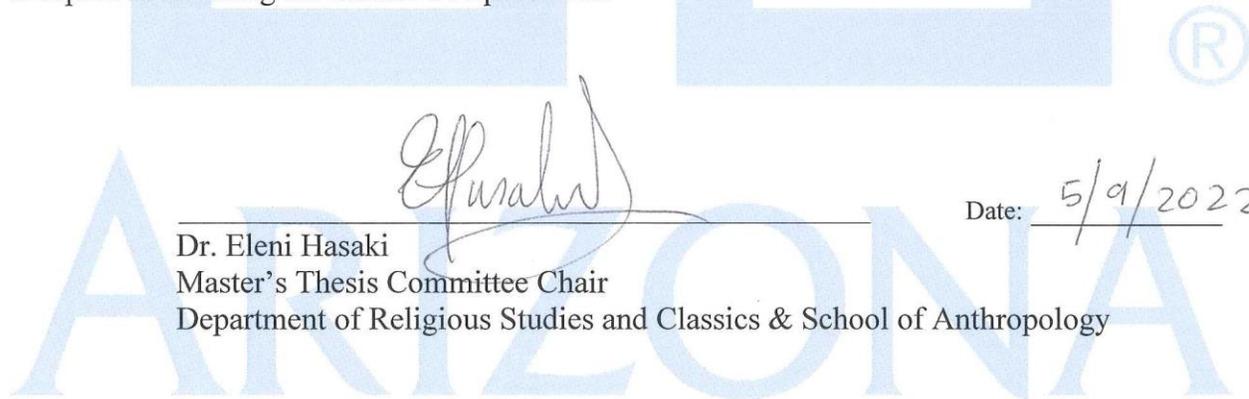
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Abstract

Studies on Greek colonization first came into clear focus shortly after World War II. Dunbabin's 1948 overview of western Greek colonies, rooted in the literary evidence of the early historians Herodotus and Thucydides, was quickly bolstered by the archaeological evidence of Buchner's discoveries at Pithekoussai in 1952. While scholarship on colonization from both a literary and archaeological perspective continued unabated in the ensuing decades of the 20th century, the discourse was largely dampened by a shift away from trends of migration in the larger post-processual framework of archaeological study. However, beginning in the 1990's and early 2000's from advancements and the acceptance of techniques in digital archaeology and archaeometry, mobility studies have dramatically increased in popularity. In the Greek case, this has resulted in the term 'colonization' itself coming under fire. This is indicative of the divide between scholars who still largely follow the normative model of Greek colonization, on the one hand, versus those who embrace the new terminology of "mobility" and its entailment of wider interactions in which the unilateral Greek colonization-as-foundation framework is called into question. This thesis follows along with the more recent trend in scholarship by attempting to contextualize the earliest movements of the Greeks, specifically the Euboeans, in the west in the century before the first known act of *ktisis* (i.e. Pithekoussai around 750 BCE). The aim is largely to bridge the gap between disparate and insulated fields of scholarship in order to construct a coherent historical narrative diachronically and regionally framing the pre-colonial period (the early ninth to late eighth century BCE). Throughout, the primacy of the Euboean "colonizer" as an instigator of interaction is challenged, first by examining the possibility of continuity between Bronze Age and Early Iron Age networks to the west, as well as by setting the Greek endeavors within a more globalized Mediterranean world of Phoenician mobility.

Finally, the materiality of cross-cultural interactions is considered by examining the archaeological finds, largely of Euboean Middle Geometric II skyphoi, which attest to dynamic elite relationships leading to colonialism.

Chapter 1: Introduction to Studying Ancient Pre-Colonization

The focus of this study is on the networks of Euboean Greek trade and interaction that were forged during the period of the Early Iron Age before what is widely considered the historical period of the phenomenon of Greek colonization in which *ktisis*, or the foundation of a settlement, is the main component. The main objectives of this investigation are first and foremost to shed light on a period of exploration which is not well understood, but which is of vital importance in its implications for reconstructing any sort of history in the Mediterranean. This involves contextualizing and ramifying what is often regarded as a singular and synchronic Greek impetus toward mobility within a larger framework of cultures and individuals across time. A second objective, therefore, is to juxtapose the Early Iron Age movements of the Euboeans with Phoenician and earlier Bronze Age Mycenaean exploration. While it is hard to support an argument for the continued use of Bronze Age networks to the West into the Early Iron Age, it is possible to argue for continuity in the form of Phoenician networks and the maintenance of social memory. Finally, the third objective is to glimpse the diffusion and reception of culture through the material record in the form of Euboean pottery scattered across the Western Mediterranean. By accomplishing these objectives, the aim is to show that the pre-colonial western endeavors were not a unilateral expedition of Greeks from Euboea, but were rather multivariate and highly negotiated voyages within a sea of mobility between different ethnic groups which, through the pressure of elite ideology, resulted in colonialism.

In order to properly embark on such an analysis, however, it is pertinent to first comment on the current state of scholarship regarding Greek colonization. The field of study on Greek colonization is indeed a vast one. Copious amounts have been written on the subject, in part due to the fact that over the course of over three centuries Greeks spread out as Plato puts it “like ants

or frogs around a pond.”¹ Some of the earliest interest in the phenomenon in anglophone scholarship may be traced back to colonial writers in the Americas.² During the nineteenth century, Raoul-Rochette’s (1815) work, *Histoire critique de l’établissement des colonies grecques*, provided one of the earliest systematic approaches to the subject. A more sustained interest in the topic, however, in what may be considered modern scholarship, began in the twentieth century shortly after World War II with the publication of Dunbabin’s seminal *magnum opus* in 1948, *The Western Greeks*. No doubt interest specifically in early colonization was bolstered by the brilliant discovery in 1952 of Pithekoussai, the earliest western Greek settlement, on the island of Ischia in the Bay of Naples by Buchner.³ Following in line with this came the well-known publications of Graham (1983), Boardman (1999), and Malkin (1987) among others.

Towards the end of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century interest in colonization seems to have grown, becoming increasingly popular in scholarship. Generally speaking, it appears that this interest is due to an increasing trend in anthropology and archaeology (not just the Classics) toward examining larger trends of mobility and migration. In many ways, it appears that the field of archaeology, emerging from the post-processualism of Hodder, is circling back towards earlier trends of culture-history and processual approaches. This trend has benefited from (and indeed may be caused by) the increased reliance and trust in scientific approaches to studying archaeology (such as radiocarbon dating, isotope analyses, and DNA) which may shed a determining light on the movement of individuals and groups in the

¹ Plato, *Phaedo* 109a-b.

² See for bibliography Graham 1983, xxxv-xxxvi.

³ For a lucid and more-or-less comprehensive overview of Buchner’s excavations in English see Ridgway 1992. Buchner’s discovery added archaeological evidence to complement Dunbabin’s mostly historical account.

archaeological record, as well as digital humanities approaches (such as network analyses) which help model theoretical frameworks of migration and mobility.⁴

Furthermore, within the field of Greek colonization specifically, scholarship has picked up since the 1990's and early 2000's due to a split in the field along more-or-less theoretical lines. Recent substantial edited volumes by Tsetskhladze (2006 and 2008) and particularly by Donnellan *et al.* (2016a and 2016b), have attempted to redefine and formalize this divide by bringing together scholars on both sides. Variouslly characterized as “a schism, a new ‘Great Divide’... an intellectual apartheid”, this rift largely settles between so-called “revisionist” scholars on the one hand and “traditionalists” on the other.⁵ In the traditionalist view, colonization is very much a state-run exploit in which a *metropolis* sends out a portion of its population to found a new colonial settlement abroad, that is the *apoikia*. The expedition is run by an *oikist*, legitimated by the oracle at Delphi with religious and civic power. The sacred flame from the mother city is transplanted to the new colonial foundation, showcasing the relationship between *metropolis* and *apoikia*, and a cult to the founder is established. Additionally, the traditionalist view largely accepts the historical account of colonization provided by the later authors, i.e. Herodotus and Thucydides.⁶ As opposed to this view, the revisionist scholars question the validity of the classical sources to project realistic historical accounts backwards into the Archaic period. The revisionists also largely question the ability of the early Archaic states in mainland Greece to undertake any sort of systematically organized colonial endeavors, stressing that in the early Archaic period especially the *polis* as a concept was not yet solidified

⁴ See van Dommelen 2014, 479-80 and Kristiansen 2014 and the comments that follow for what he terms the “Third Science Revolution.” In Kristiansen’s view, the field of archaeology acts as a pendulum swinging between periods of scientific approaches and reactionary periods with a more humanistic bent.

⁵ Donnellan and Nizzo 2016, 10. For a discussion on the recent state of scholarship see Greco and Lombardo 2012.

⁶ Hall 2008, 383-88, 421-2. With regard to the ancient literary tradition on colonization, Hall similarly divided scholars into what he called the “historical-positivist,” “poeticist,” and “historical-constructivist” approaches.

enough to engender any of the connotations associated with the term *metropolis*.⁷ Pertinent to the material under study here, this traditionalist/revisionist divide has largely focused on what has recently been termed “the Euboean discourse.”⁸ This refers to the scholarly attention paid to the Euboeans since the mid-20th century, when they replaced the Cretans as the *de facto* instigators of maritime contacts both in the Aegean and in the west.

Along more ideological lines the division between scholars has also largely revolved around terminology. Foremost among them, Osborne has called into question the validity of the term ‘colonization’ itself.⁹ According to Osborne, the application of the term ‘colonization’ ambiguously conflates more modern acts of colonization, i.e. those associated with the European colonial powers since the fifteenth century C.E., with the Greek endeavors. In the same vein, Osborne denies political associations with the term ‘colonization,’ insisting that the polis was not yet solidified as a concept in the early Archaic period. Malkin on the other hand provides a rebuttal to Osborne.¹⁰ According to Malkin the “revisionist” attempt to provide alternative terminology, such as diaspora, mobility, migration, etc., falls short in that these terms encompass their own set of erroneous connotations just as does ‘colonization.’ Furthermore, we must make sense of the very real evidence that attests to the connection between *metropolis* and *apoikia*. This includes the wide range of evidence for *nomima* (sacred calendars, travel terminology, formal terms for magistracies and institutions) as well as the right to return. This does not mean that Malkin conceptualizes an early version of the *polis* already in the early eighth century BCE.¹¹

⁷ See Osborne 1998; Papadopoulos 1997; Ridgway 1992, 108. *Contra* Domínguez-Monedero 2011.

⁸ Kotsonas and Mokrišová 2020, 235; See also Kotsonas 2020, 301-5 on “Euboeocentrism.”

⁹ See Osborne 1998 and 2016.

¹⁰ See Malkin 2009 and 2016.

¹¹ Malkin 2016, 38-9.

“In short, I agree that the idea of a well-established mother City sending out a copy of itself makes little sense for the early period. But this does not negate the foundational aspect of the colonies themselves, nor does it negate the formation of mother-cities as *in tandem* with colonies. In short: we need to retain the concepts of mother cities and colonies (in the sense of new city foundations, not as subsidiary branches); forget the red herring of comparisons with modern imperialism altogether, and redirect our vision to the reciprocal and networking aspects of the formation and foundation of city-states in the 8th Century as a coherent phenomenon.”

Considered in its entirety, Malkin's argument seems the more plausible and practical compared to Osborne.

The whole of this digression on terminology is largely to justify the use of the term ‘pre-colonial’ in the very title of this thesis, as well as throughout the remainder of the following pages. The term ‘pre-colonial’ itself first appeared in connection with Greek trade to the west in an article by Blakeway (1933) published by the *British School at Athens*. Since then the term has remained in use; although, it has been noted that ‘pre-colonization’ denotes a teleological sense which makes the later colonial acts of *ktisis* seem inevitable.¹² Some scholars have therefore dubbed this period instead by the term “prospecting phase.”¹³ Nevertheless, it seems gratuitous to deny the linking of events and path dependence that eventually led from the appearance of Euboean pottery to colonial acts of foundation in reality.¹⁴ Thus, the term ‘pre-colonization’ is maintained. Similarly, the use of the terms ‘colony,’ ‘colonialism,’ and ‘colonization’ are maintained following Malkin’s reasoning and Dietler’s definitions while still attempting to acknowledge the shortcomings attendant.¹⁵ To this end, the more revisionist ‘mobility’ as a term

¹² Ridgway 2003, 17. This is Ridgway’s updated critique of the term which he used throughout his earlier definitive work on the subject (Ridgway 1992), and his critique was no doubt influenced by the heat of the debate by Malkin and Osborne at the time.

¹³ Nijboer 2016, 25.

¹⁴ On path dependence see Blake 2013, 204-207.

¹⁵ Dietler 2005, 54. Dietler defines the modern use of ‘colony’ as both “encompass[ing] the Greek term *apoikia* and the Latin *colonia*.” Dietler defines ‘colonialism’ as “the projects and practices of control marshaled in interactions between societies linked in asymmetrical relations of power, and the processes of social and cultural transformation resulting from those practices. Hence, colonization is, ultimately, solidified or maintained through colonialism; but colonialism can also operate without the formal political subjugation of foreign territories that colonization implies. Or it may precede an eventual colonization. The nature and effectiveness of such practices defined as colonialism,

is also used as a way of suggesting more neutral connotations and more flexible patterns of interaction “beyond questions concerning boundaries, origins, and destinations.”¹⁶

Having addressed the theoretical issues associated with colonization, the following chapters attempt to situate Euboean pre-colonial contacts in light of the “Euboean discourse” and the recent scholarship on Mediterranean connectivity. One of the biggest challenges in taking on such an examination is limiting the speculative nature of observations. Archaeological evidence for well-established Early Iron Age sites in the Mediterranean is already hard to come by, and predictably the amount of available evidence for direct pre-colonial activities (or mobility in general) is even more scarce. Perhaps because of this, the available literature on the pre-colonial period from the Euboean perspective is often varied, contradictory or incomplete (a situation possibly made worse due to the larger divisions within the field of colonization itself). Scholars tend, therefore, to focus individually on particular sites, regions or peoples: Euboean activity is often examined within the northern Aegean, within the Levant, or within the colonial west, but rarely as a whole; similarly there is a seemingly systemic divide which inhibits sustained dialogue between scholars on the treatment of Euboeans, Phoenicians, and native Italic groups.¹⁷ Rarely are the Euboean endeavors juxtaposed with the earlier Mycenaean voyages.¹⁸ Granted, some of these divisions are being ameliorated by the organization of symposiums and edited

and their potential permutations, may be extremely variable from one context to another, ranging from such things as trade, to missionary activities, warfare and raiding, political administration, and education. Similarly, the processes of transformation are highly variable, and they always entail a host of unintended consequences for both indigenous peoples and alien colonists. Both parties eventually become something other than they were because of these processes of entanglement and their unintended consequence.”

¹⁶ Kotsonas and Mokrišová 2020, 218. The line between ‘migration’ and ‘mobility’ is often hard to adequately represent, especially in the context of early encounters. Historically, ‘migration’ has referred to the earlier movements of Dorians, Aeolians, and Ionians to Asia Minor variously placed in the LHIII period or the Protogeometric period.

¹⁷ Or even worse, earlier scholars saw these groups in competition with one another rather than as parts of a connected Mediterranean. See for example Crielaard 1992/3 with the provocative title “How the West Was Won: Euboeans vs. Phoenicians.”

¹⁸ To my knowledge, Ridgway 1992 is one of the few exceptions to this.

volumes in the most recent decades. However, lacking is a coherent synthesis of these various threads. The contribution of this thesis is to meet such a need, to weave together Mycenaean, Phoenician, and Greek mobility within a coherent historical narrative from the Euboean perspective and utilizing recent archaeological discoveries.

To this end, Chapter 2 will clarify the chronological bounds of the period under study. In addition, the principal actors will be addressed. This includes defining the Greek constituents while at the same time situating them within a larger network of Mediterranean players. The early traders from the Levant, that is the Phoenicians, are addressed, and a simplified overview of the indigenous groups, i.e. the Etruscans/ Villanovans, is provided.

Chapter 3, continuing with the theme of contextualizing the early Greek traders within a more globalized network, examines the continuity between Bronze Age sites of Mycenaean contact with evidence for early Iron Age sites in the Western Mediterranean. A trope in scholarship currently is that the Dark Ages were not so dark. While it is hard to establish any direct continuity, evidence of Phoenician networks of trade throughout the Mediterranean, under which the Euboeans were subsumed, are analyzed to bolster the argument for indirect lines of continuity. Noted here is the significance of social memory, largely through the Homeric mythos and the character of Odysseus, in playing a vital role in establishing and legitimizing networks of mobility in the Western Mediterranean.

Chapter 4 then examines the archaeological evidence in relation to the earliest pre-colonial contacts. Focus is primarily on the evidence of Middle Geometric II Euboean *skyphoi* and the distribution of these pots in the west. While acknowledging that ‘pots do not equal people,’ the aim will be to display the ways in which identity and cultural interchange are materialized (such as through the adoption of elite ideologies or symposium ideologies as

indicated by the skyphoi). Finally, Chapter 5 presents a conclusion to the analysis presented here emphasizing the rich, globalized framework of Early Iron Age interaction.

Chapter 2: Chronologies and the Principal Actors

2.1 Chronologies

In order to effectively assess pre-colonial trends, and in particular the archaeological finds, it is pertinent to define a reliable chronological boundary.¹⁹ In particular, pre-colonial dates may be arrived at by working backwards from the known chronology of established colonies. Advantageously, colonial foundations in South Italy and Sicily (as opposed to those efforts in the Black Sea) are granted a clear chronological basis derived from a lengthy passage of Thucydides.²⁰ Dunbabin has long since validated Thucydides' chronology, establishing the internal consistency of his dating and the veracity of Thucydides in relation to other authors such as Ephoros or Eusebius.²¹ According to Dunbabin, the Thucydidean dates are not mere generational calculations (to which certain odd intervals such as the 108 years between the foundations of Akragas and Gela would disagree), but rather they are derived from written records established in the colonies themselves.²²

While we may rely on the Thucydidean dates, certain discrepancies still remain. In particular, the foundation date of Cumae in the Campanian plain north of Naples is still uncertain. This uncertainty stems from the absence of a date in the textual sources: Livy (8.22.5—6) only implies that Cumae was a foundation of Pithekoussai; Strabo (5.4.4), on the other hand, does not mention Pithekoussai at all in the Cumaean foundation, and instead calls Cumae the oldest colonial foundation in the west.²³ The earliest archaeological evidence found at

¹⁹ Graham 1990, 46.

²⁰ Thucydides 6.3.1—6.5.3.

²¹ Dunbabin 1948, 435-471 (Appendix I). Variations in these other authors represent, according to Dunbabin, errors in transmission from a single chronological system which existed in antiquity, and which is essentially the system given by Thucydides.

²² Dunbabin 1948., 447-452. See also Coldstream 1968, 302-331.

²³ Ridgway 1992, 31-32, 118-119.

Cumae, however, (Late Geometric II Corinthian pottery) necessitates a date no earlier than 725 BCE.²⁴ In comparison with the Thucydidean date for Naxos of 734 BCE (which again we may take as reliable), Cumae, it seems, would not have been the earliest western colonial foundation.

Naxos appears to be the first well-defined colony, one which we may accurately apply the designation of *apoikia* to. That is to say that Naxos had a proper *oikist* cult (Thucydides 6.3.1 gives the mother city of Naxos as Chalcis with the founder being a certain Thoukles), and the city was settled in the manner of a Greek *polis*, meaning that it was self-sufficient and could rely on a surrounding *chora*. Thus, the colonial period proper occurs from around the end of the Late Geometric I period, and mainly in the Late Geometric II period. Following from this, we may designate the period directly prior as the “proto-colonial” period.²⁵ This is the period of the foundation of Pithekoussai which occurs about the middle of the eighth century BCE, from the end of Middle Geometric II to the end of Late Geometric I.²⁶ Pithekoussai defies definition as an *apoikia* in the sense of Naxos.²⁷ While we know that Pithekoussai was a Euboean settlement, we do not know the identity of any *oikist*. Similarly, there is as of yet no secure evidence that Pithekoussai took advantage of a *chora* (rather this was the ostensible purpose for founding

²⁴Ridgway 1992, 31-2; d’Agostino 2006, 232-3. d’Agostino notes recent finds in the northern stretch of the city walls of Cumae of vase fragments which may push back the date of Cumae to near-contemporaneous with Pithekoussai.

²⁵ d’Agostino and Soteriou 1998, 355-368.

²⁶ The exact date for the foundation of Pithekoussai has been notoriously hard to pin down ranging from the 770’s BCE to just before the foundation of Naxos in the 730’s BCE. Notably, DeVries 2003, 147-154 has made the case that Pithekoussai was less of an independent, early event, but rather that it was founded more closely with Naxos, Syracuse, and Megara Hyblaia as a broad-based colonial movement. DeVries’ observations are drawn from a detailed comparison of the pottery found at Pithekoussai with LG and MG Corinthian pottery found in well deposits at Corinth. DeVries’ argument does not take into consideration, however, the unique character of Pithekoussai as opposed to that of the more formalized colonial character of establishments such as Naxos and Syracuse. It is reasonable to assume a gap of time to account for this development. The date of 750 BCE preferred by excavators Buchner and Ridgway is more or less adopted here, but regardless, downdating Pithekoussai (while it would negate the idea of a “proto-colonial” period) does not seriously affect the conceptualization of the pre-colonial period mainly at issue here.

²⁷ Ridgway 1992, 107-109. Ridgway falters on defining Pithekoussai, rather calling it both an *emporion* and an *apoikia*. That the very first experiment with Greek settlement abroad should defy definition, however, should not be entirely surprising.

Cumae) or that the *polis* concept was established enough in Greece itself by the end of Middle Geometric II to be packaged and implemented in the west.²⁸ Finally, having delimited the colonial and proto-colonial periods we may assign the term “pre-colonial” in the west to the period prior to the foundation of Pithekoussai in which no settlements yet existed.²⁹ This was the period of the late ninth and first half of the eighth century BCE, or the Middle Geometric II period, in which itinerant elites, merchants, and traders (or as Thucydides calls them, pirates) plied the western Mediterranean waters initiating informal, emporion-type interactions, opening up inroads, and establishing networks with Italian Iron Age peoples. The material evidence of this period comes in the form of pottery and Near Eastern imports, both of which are comparable and datable on stylistic grounds and are discussed in fuller detail below.

In summation, the dates outlined here are what are commonly referred to as the ‘Traditional’ chronology, or the Conventional Absolute Chronology (CAC), rooted in Thucydides and the stylistic dating of the ceramic evidence. While the CAC is used throughout the remainder of this text, it should be noted that strong objections have been raised recently regarding this chronology.³⁰ Far from being absolute, the CAC seeks to impose a chronological resolution (dating in the order of decades) that is hardly feasible for such an early period. In addition, it has been noted that many of the important dates in the CAC tend to cluster around the decade 770 BCE to 760 BCE, betraying a bias in the archaeological interpretation of pottery towards the transition from Middle Geometric to Late Geometric.³¹ Given these objections,

²⁸ Greco 2006, 169; Malkin 1994; Osborne 2016.

²⁹ d’Agostino and Soteriou 1998, 355-368. Aside from a purely chronological definition, there is also merit in defining “pre-colonial” in a structural sense, i.e. any interactions which d’Agostino calls of a “weak” economic motive on the part of the Greeks.

³⁰ Nijboer 2016; Ridgway 2003, 19-22.

³¹ Nijboer 2016, 44. For classical archaeologists, the terminology often used to delineate this period (i.e. from “Dark Ages” to “Renaissance”) is also telling.

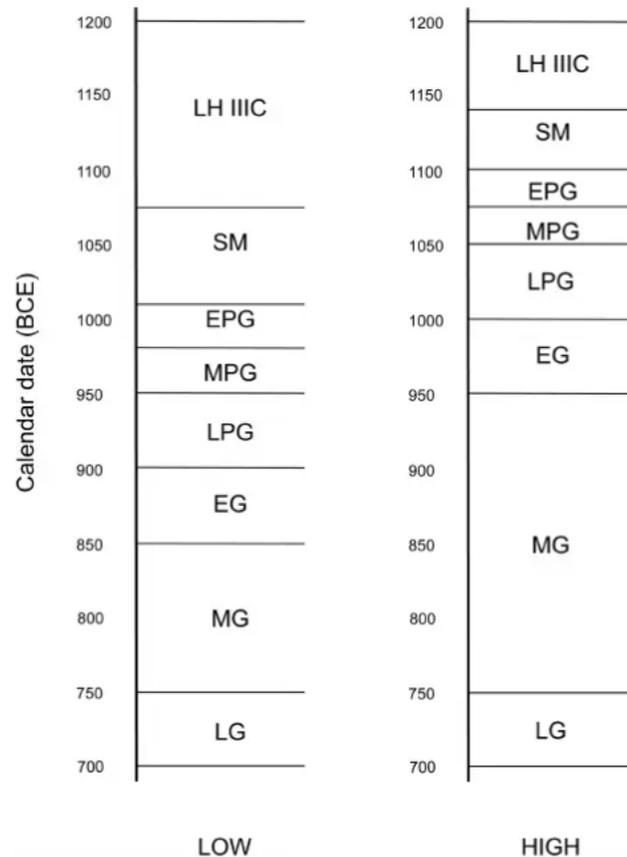


Figure 1: Chart displaying the Conventional (LOW) Chronology and radiocarbon Revised (HIGH) Chronology. From Toffolo et al. 2013.

therefore, a new chronology has arisen. This revised chronology takes as its basis a number of radiocarbon dates and some dendro-dates. For the period under consideration here, this essentially means pushing back the dates in the first half of the eighth century BCE by some seventy years (after about 750 BCE the traditional and revised chronologies more-or-less align) (Fig.1). While the revised chronology does seem to be gaining ground (and may well supplant the CAC in the coming years as more radiocarbon dates become published), for the time being it remains hard to reconcile some characteristics and inconsistencies of the radiocarbon dates, namely the existence in the calibration curve of the Hallstatt plateau which has for a long time

rendered radiocarbon dating in the Aegean from 800 BCE to 400 BCE ineffective.³²

Additionally, one radiocarbon study involving Irene Lemos and analyzing material from Lefkandi, Kalapodi, and Corinth has sided with the CAC, dating the transition from Sub-Mycenaean to Protogeometric to the late eleventh century BCE.³³ Thus, the traditional chronology is tentatively maintained here.³⁴

2.2 Euboeans

With a defined chronological framework in place, we may turn now towards a brief examination of the primary actors in the early colonial movement. From the Greek side of things, this entails discussion of the Euboeans. Since the discovery of Pithekoussai, it has largely been taken for granted that the Euboeans were responsible for the earliest endeavors abroad. Certainly, ancient authors such as Strabo (5.4.9) placed the Euboeans at Pithekoussai. However, more recently there has been pushback in seeing the Euboean Greeks as a collective unity orchestrating trade enterprises throughout the Mediterranean.³⁵ In using terms such as “Euboeans” or “Greeks” we are largely applying anachronistic ethnic and cultural homogeneity. According to Hall, the early Greek explorers viewed themselves primarily as belonging to an *oikos* (thus the term *apoikia*) or a specific *polis*³⁶ before identifying with any subhellenic affiliation (such as Doric, Ionic, etc.), let alone recognizing a greater Hellenic identity in relation to ‘others’.³⁷ Thus, the primary cities of Euboea are mentioned below, followed by a description

³² Nijboer 2016, 40-41 makes some attempt to show that the Hallstatt plateau may be overcome.

³³ Toffolo *et al.* 2013.

³⁴ This is through no strong feeling of my own. In general, it is my opinion that the chronology of the Early Iron Age in the Mediterranean as a whole is in strong need of revision, though this requires immense sustained collaborative effort on the part of experts in regional fields and the publication of more reliable radiocarbon and dendro-dates.

³⁵ Papadopoulos 1997; Papadopoulos 2011. See Ridgway 2003 for a rebuttal.

³⁶ For the argument that the *polis* was already beginning to be formed, particularly in Euboea and driven by external interaction, by as early as the 9th c. BCE, see Domínguez-Monedero 2011.

³⁷ Hall 2003, 50.

of the Phoenician actors, and finally the Etruscans in order to highlight the larger entanglement of ethnic identities and peoples moving within the Mediterranean during the pre-colonial period.

Euboea, it seems was largely sheltered from the various changes taking place within the rest of Greece during the Dark Ages. As early as the tenth century BCE at Lefkandi³⁸, it is possible to discern archaeologically an elite stratum of society which was trading prestige goods with Cyprus and the cities of the Levant.³⁹ As an example, Cypriot bichrome jugs, the first instances in Greece since the Bronze Age, were found in the Toumba cemetery of Lefkandi; the famous Lefkandi terracotta centaur, as well, displays certain affinities with Cypriot stylistic preferences.⁴⁰ Certainly, the famous tomb of the “hero,” cremated in a burial in a large apsidal peripteral building at Lefkandi with his consort and horses and presenting the earliest examples of Near Eastern imports, attests to some sort of a super elite “trader-warrior” group within society.⁴¹

As further evidence for such elite “trader-warriors” within Euboean society and as an example of the type of graves displaying Levantine goods, Tomb 79 in the Toumba cemetery is illuminating.⁴² This tomb was clearly that of a warrior given that among its contents were found an iron sword, iron spearhead, two iron knives and around twenty-five iron arrowheads. Additionally, inside the tomb was found a large number of smashed and burnt pendant semicircle plates and skyphoi, as well as two high quality kraters. That this person was a trader (or at least highly involved in some way with trade), however, is highlighted by the fact that the tomb

³⁸ Charalambidou 2017, 85-6. There is now solid evidence to assume some continuity between Bronze Age and Early Iron Age settlement at Lefkandi. The “Megaron” building at Xeropolis was occupied continuously it seems from LH III C to the early Protogeometric period.

³⁹ d’Agostino 2006, 201-3. Niemeyer 2006, 148-149.

⁴⁰ Ridgway 1992, 22-23.

⁴¹ Mazarakis Ainian 2012, 73-79; Lemos 2003, 189-91.

⁴² For the tomb and its contents, see Lemos 2003, 190.

contained two ‘Phoenician’ bichrome jugs, Cypriote jugs, Attic vases, and sixteen Syro-Palestinian or Cypriot hematite stone weights.⁴³ While some scholars, such as Papadopoulos⁴⁴, have taken the presence of these imports to suggest that the tomb belonged to a resident Phoenician foreigner (perhaps a guest-friend as so often described in Homer), Lemos counters this by claiming the high unlikelihood of a foreigner receiving such an elaborate and elite burial.⁴⁵ Tomb 79 dates to the eighth century BCE attesting to the continuance of “warrior-trader” tombs from that of the Lefkandi “hero” earlier in the tenth century BCE. Such individuals had both the means and the incentive (i.e. to get closer to the sources of material wealth) to initiate pre-colonial endeavors.

On the reverse side of things, Euboean skyphoi decorated with pendant concentric semicircles,⁴⁶ a type which probably evolved at Lefkandi around 900 BCE, have been found in contexts throughout Cyprus, North Syria, and Phoenicia; although, it is unclear exactly why such Euboean drinking vessels were desired in the Near East (or what other trade goods may have accompanied such cups).⁴⁷ Similar pottery finds have been found throughout the Northern Aegean, leading to the interpretation of a Euboean material and cultural *koine* encompassing Oropos⁴⁸ (located just across the Euboean gulf opposite Eretria, which may have been its *metropolis*), a few islands in the Cyclades (such as Skyros), and the Chalkidike and Thermaic

⁴³ Charalambidou 2017, 87. It has been argued that the weights were brought together from several broken sets to be deposited in the burial, and are therefore symbolic of the life of the deceased.

⁴⁴ Papadopoulos 1997.

⁴⁵ Lemos 2003, 191. Mazarakis 2012 seems to agree.

⁴⁶ These are sometimes classified as SubProtogeometric (SPG) which overlaps more or less (depending on the chronology) with Middle Geometric II. For the most part, Middle Geometric II is used throughout this thesis.

⁴⁷ Ridgway 1992, 20-21, 25.

⁴⁸ Mazarakis Ainian 1998. This site is also identified with Homeric Graia, which according to tradition participated in the earliest colonial endeavors in South Italy and Sicily. As further evidence, a metalworking quarter was excavated at the site synchronous with the metalworking site of Mezzavia on Pithekoussai (see Ch. 4.2).

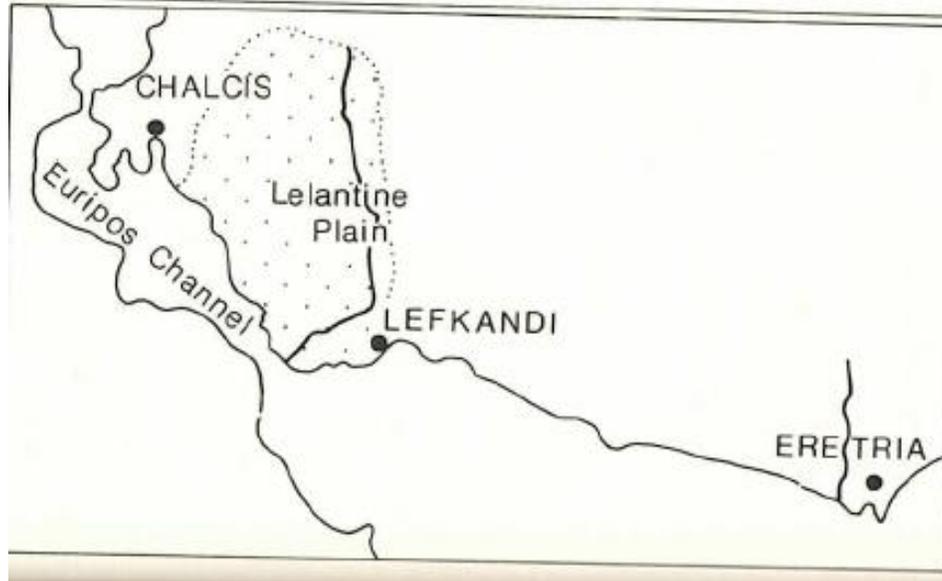


Figure 2: Map of Euboean cities active in pre-colonial trade. From Ridgway 1992, 12.

Gulf (where later authors inform on various Euboean colonies⁴⁹).⁵⁰ Lemos, clearly seeing the Euboeans as initiators in the North Aegean (which they may well have been), has stated that “the security of such a *koine*...provided the means to explore to the east and the west.”⁵¹ As the following sections in this thesis on the Phoenicians and others hope to show, however, in their voyages to the west, at least, the Euboeans moved from being large players within a small regional network to being small players within a larger more integrated Mediterranean whole. Nevertheless, it is clear that reciprocal trade in the Levant and North Aegean and elite tastes as reflected in tombs prompted the Euboeans to become adept seafarers from an early period.

In addition to Lefkandi, Chalcis, with evidence to suggest occupation on the site since the fourteenth century BCE, also presumably flourished in this early period (although the modern settlement on the ancient site sadly prevents archaeological analysis) (Fig.2). The etymological

⁴⁹ See Kotsonas 2020 for an analysis of the literary tradition, which names eleven Euboean colonies in the Northern Aegean (30 if we are to believe Strabo).

⁵⁰ On the Euboean *koine* see Lemos 1998; Mazarakis Ainian 2012, 83-9; and Charalambidou 2017, 96-100.

⁵¹ Lemos 1998, 58.

connection between the name of Chalcis and the real technological proficiency of Euboean metallurgists should be noted. As opposed to Chalcis, Eretria seems to have been founded only later in the ninth century, coeval with the decline of Lefkandi.⁵² In Ridgway's view, the decline of Lefkandi contemporaneous with the start of pre-colonial contacts in the west points to the attractiveness of the new opportunity for emigration.⁵³ In any case, it is likely that Lefkandi's, as well as general Euboean, decline was hastened towards the end of the eighth century BCE by the Lelantine War fought between Chalcis and Eretria over the fertile plain separating the two cities. Although the sources of the war are notoriously vague, we can be sure that Euboean influence within Greece and abroad altered drastically, allowing Corinth to assume preeminence in colonial matters east and west.⁵⁴

2.3 Phoenicians and Phoenician Colonization

The Phoenicians are an extremely important group to understand in the context of early colonization, and even more so in the context of pre-colonization, and thus it is surprising that they are often missing from many accounts on the subject.⁵⁵ 'Phoenician' (*Phoinikes*) or 'Sidonian' are the names ascribed by various Greek authors to the peoples (who probably referred to themselves as Canaanites) occupying the Levant at the end of the Bronze Age.⁵⁶ Like the Greeks at this time, the Phoenicians were an ethnically diverse group who likely identified not as a homogenous group, but according to their local city state or familial ties.⁵⁷ Their most

⁵² Ridgway 1992, 14-15. Ridgway notes that the Xeropolis mound at Lefkandi is generally presumed to be the original site of "Old Eretria."

⁵³ Ridgway 1992, 14.

⁵⁴ Ridgway 1992, 19-20. For a critical overview of the historicity of the war see also Hall 2013, 1-8.

⁵⁵ E.g. Boardman 1999. For consensus see Papadopoulos 1997 and 2011.

⁵⁶ Sommer 2007, 97-8.

⁵⁷ See Quinn 2017 for the argument against "Phoenician" identity. As Quinn argues, the conception of the "Phoenicians" as a collective or unified group is a modern idea which was propagated and disseminated in the 19th century in the service of nationalist ideals. Quinn's argument is a reminder that though it may be useful to

important cities were Sidon, Tyre, and Byblos, with Tyre featuring most prominently in the expansion overseas.⁵⁸ During the eleventh and twelfth centuries BCE following the collapse of the palace societies, rather than crumbling as a whole, different regions of the Levant reacted in their own ways to the economic and societal downturn. In the tenth century BCE despite certain amounts of instability provided by the neighboring Assyrians, the region experienced a revival with political and administrative organization returning in the form of city-states. Trade with Cyprus and the Aegean (Lefkandi) reopened. By the ninth century BCE, the rise of complex interrelations among cities in the Levant resulted in the most prosperous period for the region. A standardized stylistic repertoire of material culture appeared, and the search for metals (particularly silver, gold, copper, and iron) drove the coastal cities of the region to expand across the Mediterranean, reaching Huelva in Spain by the end of the ninth century.⁵⁹ Prior to the evidence found at Huelva, which was discovered in 1997, there was no solid archaeological evidence for Phoenician exploration in the west before the eighth century BCE,⁶⁰ but recent study appears to be pushing this date further and further back in time. Analysis of silver deposits, for example, has shown that the Phoenicians must have been exploiting resources on the island of Sardinia at Sant' Imbenia as early as the tenth century BCE.⁶¹

Just as from the ninth to eighth centuries Euboea was in a unique situation capable of initiating colonial contacts in the west, so too then were those city states which developed in the Levant immediately after the Bronze Age collapse. Phoenician colonial efforts (Fig.3) differed in

homogenize ancient groups under a collective ethnic or national identity, this obscures underlying complexities of individuals who likely identified in various ways within the context of different interactions.

⁵⁸ Aubet Semmler 2019; Roller 2019, 645-6. The biblical Hiram of Tyre was well known for his construction of a fleet of ships at the behest of King Solomon of Israel.

⁵⁹ For a more detailed chronological overview with bibliography see Oggiano 2016.

⁶⁰ van Dommelen 2005, 118; Aubet Semmler 2019, 75-7.

⁶¹ Eshel *et al.* 2019, 6009-11.

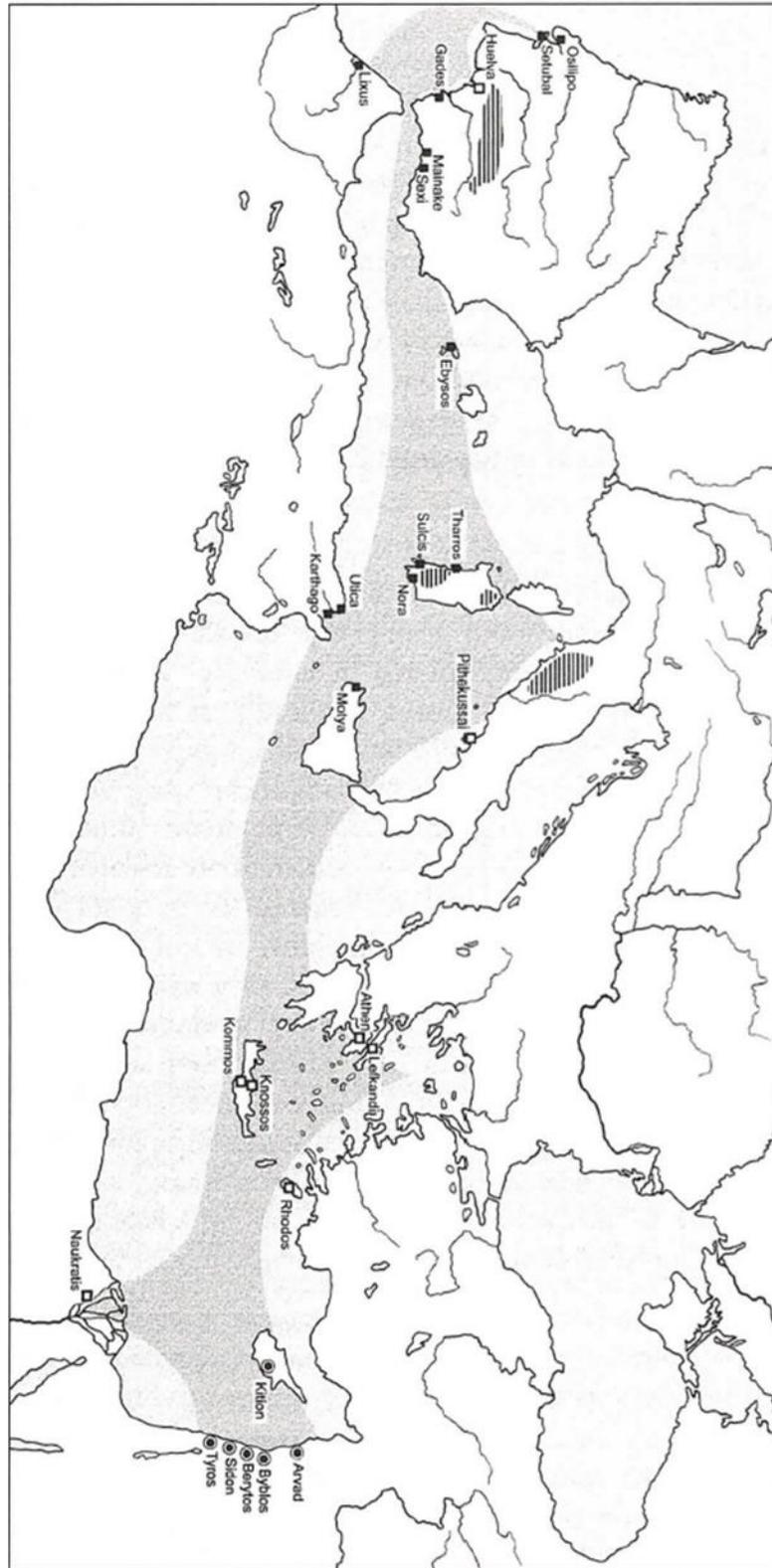


Figure 3: Map of Phoenician expansion. Hatching indicates metalliferous areas. From Niemeyer 2006, 147.

a number of respects from the Greek colonial model.⁶² First, Phoenician expansion predates the earliest Greek endeavors. As hinted in the chronological description above, in contrast to Greece, the cities of the Levant experienced less of a cultural downturn after the collapse of the Bronze Age. This may have allowed for Phoenician explorers to remember, and follow in, the old east-west routes of Bronze Age commerce and sailing which stretched across the Mediterranean. Secondly, Phoenicians did not venture abroad out of the necessity caused by overpopulation at home, as was the case in many of the later Greek ventures. Rather, it seems Phoenician merchants, acting at the behest of elites and elite ideology, were concerned with maintaining a pre-Bronze-Age-collapse standard of living. This would then explain the drive of traders to the sources of wealth (i.e. metals) in the western Mediterranean, that is Sardinia and the Rio Tinto Mines in Tartessos (likely the biblical “Tarshish”) which were exploited extensively all the way up until the much later Roman period. Lastly, the form of Phoenician colonial settlements differed from Greek ones. As opposed to *apoikia* and *emporion*, the Phoenicians preferred to establish *enoikismoi*, or enclaves within native settlements, and *fondaco*, or factories (differentiated from *apoikia* in that they did not make use of a surrounding *chora*).⁶³

2.4 Etruscans

Finally, it is important to define the Etruscans, one important native group which helped shape the nature of contacts taking place within the west. The intent here is to be more illustrative rather than exhaustive. By this I mean that it would be impossible in the space allotted here to describe in detail the numerous native peoples inhabiting the Italic peninsula, Sicily, Sardinia, and the various small islands in the western Mediterranean (Fig.4), though this

⁶² See Niemeyer 2006, 143-168 for a lengthier discussion than is presented here. See also Roller 2019, and Aubet Semmler 2019 who provide a detailed overview of Phoenician expansion in the west.

⁶³ Carthage is exceptional in this regard.



Figure 4: Map of Ancient Italy. From d'Agostino 2006, 205.

would certainly provide a more accurate picture of the enmeshed groups which came together to form the larger, composite Mediterranean network. In his book *The First Western Greeks*, Ridgway examines the native Italic groups based on the geographic differences between Campania, Latium Vetus, and Southern Etruria.⁶⁴ Here primarily the Etruscans in Campania are briefly examined by reason of the fact that this is the group which would ultimately come within direct contact of the first Euboean settlement at Pithekoussai, and would thus play a vital role in the transmission of Greek culture, language, art, and technological skill to Etruria (which subsequently had a profound impact on European history). Since it is impossible to tell which native group the first western Greeks first encountered upon plying western waters, this approach seems suitable.

Importantly the Etruscans were not a cultural unity, but rather is a term used to designate a group of peoples living mostly independently and who are identifiable through the stylistic similarity of their artifacts in the archaeological record (primarily in funerary contexts) during the ninth and eighth centuries BCE.⁶⁵ In this period, Etruscan peoples from southern and central Etruria arrived in the region of Campania in the so-called first wave of “Etruscanization.”⁶⁶ The migration of Etruscans into Campania is evident in the change of burial practices that manifests itself in the *necropoleis* of the region. The Etruscan burials, which constitute cremations in the well-known biconical urns and hut urns found contemporaneously throughout Etruria and Latium, stand in contrast to the inhumation practices of the indigenous Fossa Culture of the area. The native inhabitants present before the Etruscan arrival are variously labeled Oscans or Opici,

⁶⁴ Ridgway 1992, 121-129

⁶⁵ Ridgway 1992, 127. Etruscan ethnic formation is born out of this stylistic unity of the Villanovans.

⁶⁶ Cuzzo 2013, 302.

and their own history does not appear to go back farther than the middle of the ninth century BCE based on current archaeological evidence.⁶⁷

One consideration of this “Etruscanization” is whether or not it was a standard act of colonization in its own right as opposed to a more subtle process of acculturation.⁶⁸ The model of Etruscan colonization is best exemplified in the takeover of the Etruria-Padana/ Po River Valley in the north during the seventh century BCE, wherein native inhabitants were actively displaced to allow for the opening up of trade networks. That a similar process took place in Campania, however, and at such an early date, is debatable. Etruria itself during the ninth century was only just forming into a proto-urban network of city-states. Thus, the second model of “Etruscanization” might rather have consisted of cultural hegemony. That is elite Etruscans may have disseminated their own more advanced culture to the local population leading to territorial reorganization. While this second theory seems more plausible, it is undeniable that two centers of strong Etruscan connection ultimately coalesced in this period.

These centers were the two cities of Capua and Pontecagnano. Both cities were sited excellently, founded in fertile coastal plains at a remove from the coast itself (perhaps to avoid piracy), yet situated on riverways to afford ample traffic for trade. Capua sat in the plain north of Naples, and made use of the Volturnus River which linked it together with central Etruria as far as Orvieto and Chiusi. Pontecagnano sat in the Salerno valley and made use of the Picentino River; its closest relations, as evidence of Greek pottery brings into focus, was with the southern coastal centers of Etruria, most notably Veii. Pontecagnano with its two cemeteries (a western and an eastern one) figures prominently in the first period of “Etruscanization” displaying wider

⁶⁷ D’Agostino 2004, 238.

⁶⁸ Cuzzo 2013, 302.

contacts already in the ninth century BCE through burial goods from Sardinia, Sicily, and Calabria.⁶⁹

Most notable, of course, is the appearance of Greeks in the eighth century BCE in the region. Evidence of Euboean contacts is visible in some of the most substantial finds of Middle Geometric pendant semi-circle drinking cups at both Capua and Pontecagnano. By the mid-eighth century BCE, pre-colonial contacts had given way to colonizing efforts at Pithekoussai (modern Ischia) and Cumae on the mainland. While it is not clear what the exact motivations were for the Greeks to draw them to the region, presumably they found it easier to make inroads with the marginal Etruscan cities of Campania rather than with the more cohesive cities of the Etruscan homeland.⁷⁰ More on the profound cultural interchanges between early Greeks and Etruscans is presented in Chapter 4.

⁶⁹ D'Agostino 2004, 239. Iron swords probably attest to the presence of a group of warriors from Torre Galli.

⁷⁰ D'Agostino 2004, 240. Malkin 2002, 159.

Chapter 3: Towards a Broader Network: Integrating the Euboeans within a Sea of Mobility

3.1 Introduction

Contextualizing early pre-colonial endeavors involves not just widening the scope of principal actors beyond a principally Euboean perspective, it also involves understanding the wider diachronic nature of mobility towards the western Mediterranean. In doing so, one question becomes apparent: to what extent did the earliest travelers comprehend and remember the routes taken by their predecessors in the Bronze Age? To answer this question, the following chapter examines first the distribution of ceramic evidence of Mycenaean voyages to the west in the second millennium BCE. The Mycenaean networks are then compared to the Euboean networks as they begin to appear in the Early Iron Age. From here, the discussion turns once more to the Phoenicians, the plausible continuous link in maintaining the Bronze Age networks of exchange, from which the Euboeans were able to gain access to the west. Finally, a discussion of social memory and the role of the Homeric *mythos*, in particular the myth of Odysseus, is provided in order to understand the zeitgeist of the colonial traveler and whether or not they conceptualized themselves in a novel landscape or in a mundane one already established by earlier trading activity.

3.2 Mycenaean Networks

Evidence of Mycenaean interaction in the western Mediterranean during the Bronze Age is widespread, with Mycenaean potsherds located variously at sites in South Italy, southeastern Sicily, the Aeolian Islands (Lipari, Filicudi, Salina), the Phlegraean Islands (most notably



Fig. 2. - Carta di distribuzione delle ceramiche micenee in Italia

1. Manaccora 2. Molinella 3. Coppa Nevigata 4. Trani 5. Bari 6. Giovinazzo 7. Torre S. Sabina 8. Punta Le Terrare 9. Otranto 10. Leuca 11. Porto Cesareo 12. Avetrana 13. S. Cosimo d'Oria 14. Torre Castelluccia 15. Porto Perone 16. Satyrion 17. Taranto (Sroglio del Tonno) 18. San Vito di Pisticci 19. Termitito 20. Broglio di Trebisacce 21. Torre del Mordillo 22. Molinello 23. Thapsos 24. Matrensa 25. Cozzo del Pantano 26. Serra Orlando 27. Pantalica 28. Florida 29. Buscemi 30. Milena 31. Agrigento 32. Lipari 33. Panarea 34. Salina 35. Filicudi 36. Praia a Mare 37. Polla 38. Paestum 39. Eboli 40. Toppo Daguzzo 41. Vivara 42. Ischia 43. Antigori 44. Domu s'Orku 45. Barumini 46. Tharros 47. Territorio di Orosei 48. Monte Rovello 49. Luni sul Mignone 50. San Giovenale 51. Trezzano di Monsampolo 52. Frattesina 53. Fondo Paviani

Figure 5: Distribution map of Mycenaean ceramic imports in Italy. From Vagnetti 1983, 32.

Vivara), and Sardinia (Fig.5).⁷¹ Chronologically, the extent of Mycenaean contact has been separated into roughly three main phases.⁷² In the first phase, 1600 to 1450 BCE (LH I-II), some small quantities of Mycenaean pottery appear in Apulia, at Porto Perone and Punta Le Terrare, in the Aeolian Islands, and at Vivara in the Bay of Naples. This is the phase of Mycenaean emergence in Greece, and it has been argued that the Mycenaean came to exploit the west for resources since the Minoans largely controlled eastern trade with Egypt and the Levant until the end of LH II.⁷³ According to Marazzi, however, even in this early period things may have been more complicated with the Aeolian Islands and Vivara acting as hubs of interconnection, as Levantine traders accessed the hub at Pantelleria (an island just south of Sicily) through a North African coastal route (Fig.6 and Fig.7).⁷⁴ Regardless, the evidence on Vivara, in particular, indicates at least the importance for traders of the Phlegraean Islands for establishing contacts with the opposing coast of South Italy, just as Pithekoussai on the nearby island of Ischia became the first established settlement of Greeks in the eighth century BCE.

In the second phase, 1450 to 1200 (LH IIIA-IIIB), Mycenaean imports of pottery reach their greatest extent as the Mycenaean palace centers in Greece reach their zenith. At many of the same sites as in the first phase, imports increase; at new sites, imports begin to appear. Ischia, at Castiglione very near the later Pithekoussai, has produced sherds; although, surprisingly no imports have been found in the *peraia* of Campania opposite the island (in stark contrast to the concentration of later Euboean pottery found there).⁷⁵ Notably in this period, imports appear in

⁷¹ C.f. Ridgway 1992, 7 for the lamentation that “the relevant archaeological evidence is currently accumulating in quantities and at a rate that combine to defy synthesis.”

⁷² Vagnetti 1983; Ridgway 1992, 5-7; Blake 2008, 4-6. Blake 2014, 42-45.

⁷³ Cline 1994.

⁷⁴ Marazzi 2016, 143: “In questa prima fase gli ambienti insulari tirrenici e del canale di Sicilia appaiono fungere da importanti terminali/snodi per lo sviluppo di una interconnettività interna alle regioni occidentali.”

⁷⁵ Ridgway 1992, 6, 86.

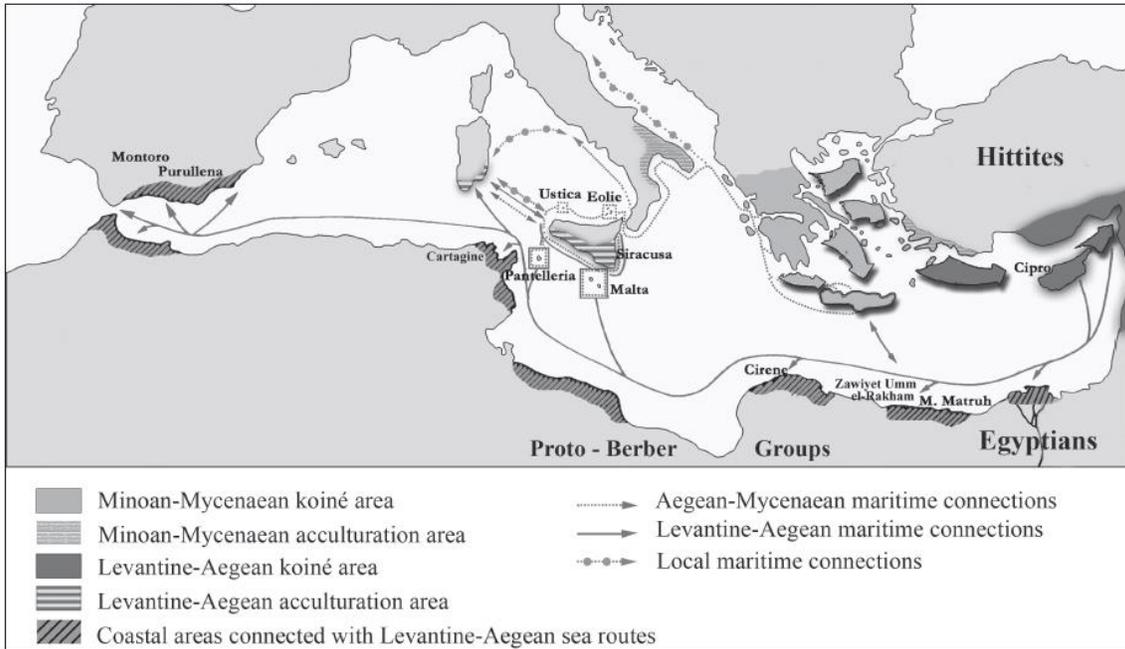


Figure 6: Hypothetical map of Mediterranean exchange routes around the 13th century BCE. From Marazzi 2018, 96.

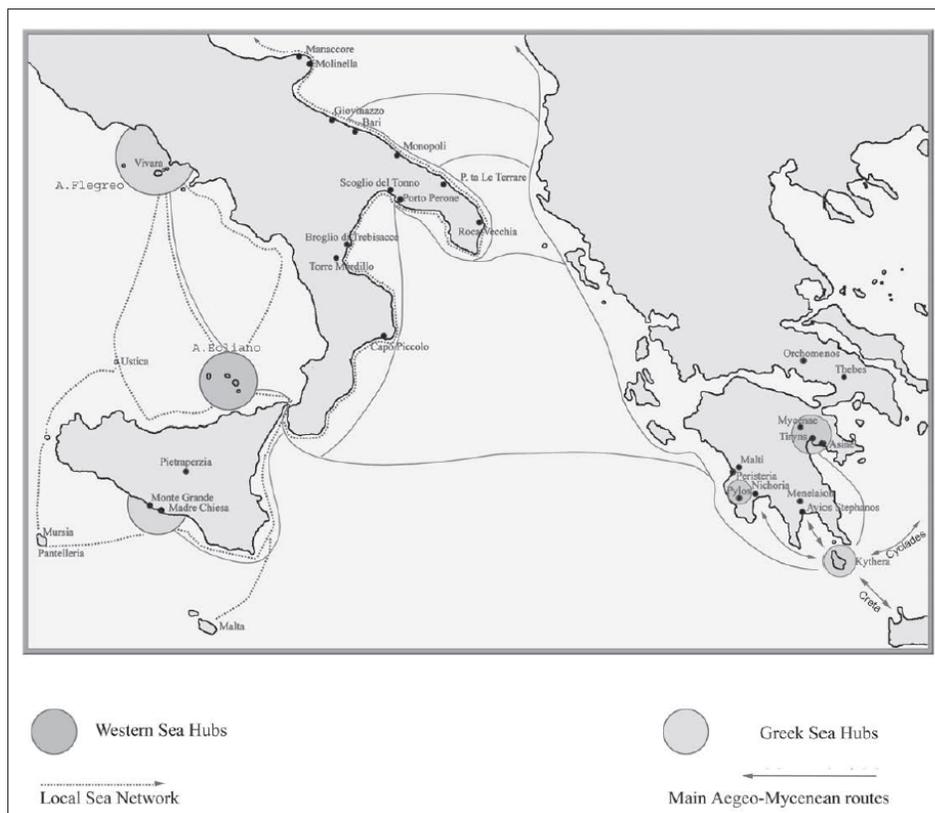


Figure 7: Map of Mycenaean routes to the west based on archaeological evidence. From Marazzi 2016, 133.

the southeast of Sicily (at Thapsos and surrounding sites), in Calabria, in Sardinia towards the southwest, and two sherds even found their way as far west as Spain.⁷⁶ Sherds from coastal sites find their way to more inland communities (a model repeated in the later eighth century BCE contacts as well). Additionally, by LH IIIB imitation copies of Mycenaean wares, termed Italo-Mycenaean, begin to appear in various quantities at various sites. Of such close quality are these imitations to the original imports, that they provide perhaps the best evidence for the actual presence of Mycenaean traders and craftsmen themselves within Italic communities disseminating knowledge and technical skill.⁷⁷

In the third phase, 1200 to 1100 (LH IIIC), imports begin to dry up as the Mycenaean states crumble following the Bronze Age collapse. Italo-Mycenaean wares pick up, perhaps filling the gap in demand left for the original imports. Some of these local made copies find their way as far north as the Po and Veneto regions, indicating perhaps “native hand-to-hand trade down the peninsula stimulated by the Mycenaean presence in Apulia.”⁷⁸ By the eleventh century BCE, Aegean wares cease appearing altogether in the west, only reappearing again in the early eighth century BCE.

Knowing the extent of Mycenaean imported pottery to the west, it is fruitful to make some comparison with the later efforts of the Euboeans. First off concerning motivations for western exploration, it is widely believed that the Mycenaean were primarily driven abroad by the search for metals, just as the early Greek explorers seem to have been.⁷⁹ The Euboeans,

⁷⁶ Blake 2008, 5.

⁷⁷ See Blake 2008, 21-25. These copies never outnumbered local production, and Blake argues their existence does not necessitate permanent residence. Rather, they could indicate the seasonal residence of craftspeople accompanying traders waiting to collect goods.

⁷⁸ Ridgway 1992, 7.

⁷⁹ Blake 2008, 6-9. Blake raises a somewhat attractive alternative to the metals hypothesis arguing that perishable materials such as alum or murex shells may have also served as exchange goods. It is debatable whether many native Italic groups had the social complexity for mining on any large scale; although the more organized Nuragic

however, started their explorations in the East, where their pottery is first found in the Levant. The Mycenaean pottery, on the other hand, appears earliest in the west, as mentioned above in the first phase, before it turns up in eastern contexts. This is pertinent as it implies that the Euboean routes west were primarily those of the Levantine traders who were accustomed to following the coast of North Africa, and were not the same, therefore, as the Mycenaean route. This mediates against any notion of direct continuity. Although some findspots of Mycenaean and Euboean pottery overlap closely (such as on Ischia or in Apulia at Otranto), given the wide spread of Mycenaean pottery (occurring at over 93 sites⁸⁰), it is possible that any similarities may be attributed to pragmatism and the attractive natural conditions of any particular site (Otranto for example is the first landfall directly opposite eastern Greece).

While some scholars comment on the robust and interconnected nature of exchange between Mycenaean and Italic peoples based on the pottery evidence,⁸¹ Blake takes a much more minimalist position,⁸² noting that the contextualized evidence of Mycenaean imports only allows for a reconstruction of interactions in which the Mycenaean ventured to the west sporadically and unsystematically.⁸³ They remained transient in the landscape, establishing no permanent settlements, and they were able to exert no control over the native Italic people who shared perhaps a similar value system. Yet, the fact remains that Mycenaean imports continue to appear in the west over the course of some 500 years. This perhaps begs the question: Why then Pithekoussai? What was different about the prospecting of the Euboeans and the nature of their

groups on Sardinia may have been able to provide metals to the Mycenaean. *C.f.* the Cape Gelidonya and Uluburun shipwrecks for evidence of metal and multifarious cargo respectively.

⁸⁰ Blake 2008, 1.

⁸¹ Marazzi 2016 and Marazzi 2018.

⁸² Harden and Purcell 2000, 269 as cited in Manning and Hulin 2005, 291: “the archaeological record is always minimalist.”

⁸³ Blake 2008, 14.

interactions in the early eighth century BCE that ultimately culminated in less than a century with a permanent settlement and the later explosion of colonization? It is unlikely that the Euboeans had any direct memory of the Mycenaean endeavors, but their experience was different from their Mycenaean predecessors in two ways: 1) they could rely on Phoenician contacts which they had already established, and which did perhaps extend an indirect line of continuity to the Bronze Age networks, and 2) they could legitimize their endeavors consciously through myth.

3.3 Cypro-Levantine Networks

Evidence of Cypro-Levantine trade particularly with Lefkandi has already been mentioned in the previous chapter, as has a description of the Levant in the Early Iron Age and the unique colonial model employed by the city-states there. Additionally, the importance of the establishment of a Euboean *emporion* at Al Mina, a North Syrian town on the mouth of the Orontes River, in the last quarter of the ninth century BCE cannot be overstated.⁸⁴ It is from here that Euboean traders, interacting with Phoenicians, likely first heard of the opportunities offered in the west, including the rich mineral deposits.⁸⁵

The Phoenician route west begins it seems as early as the eleventh century BCE. In this period Levantine sailors rekindled relationships with Egypt, probably seeking after gold from Nubia in the wake of the weakened state of the Pharaohs.⁸⁶ By the early tenth century BCE, Phoenicians had established trading stations on Cyprus and on Crete at Kommos.⁸⁷ Based on isotopic analysis of silver deposits, it is posited that the Phoenicians had already reached as far

⁸⁴ Boardman 1999, 38-46.

⁸⁵ Ridgway 1992, 25-6; Oggiano 2016, 96-7.

⁸⁶ Stampolidis 2003, 220. The story of Wen Amun, c. 1070-1050 BCE, may also be recalled.

⁸⁷ Stampolidis 2003, 220.

west as Sardinia by the late tenth century BCE, linking them only little more than a century with the ‘collapsed’ Bronze Age networks. By the ninth century BCE, the isotopic analysis shows that Phoenicians had reached Iberia.⁸⁸ Additionally, a recent study compiling the most up-to-date archaeological evidence from a number of sites in Iberia (Fig.13) and conducting Bayesian analysis of radiocarbon dates from Huelva has confirmed an intense Phoenician presence there around the second half of the ninth century BCE.⁸⁹ At Huelva, an *enoikismos* in the lower city was established which displayed finds of Phoenician and Cypriot⁹⁰ ceramics (some with graffiti), a set of Phoenician lead weights, and grape seeds (which were not native to the area and had to be imported). Also found was evidence of iron and silver metalworking which strongly suggests that Phoenician travelers accompanied their imports and engaged in reciprocal relationships with native peoples.⁹¹ Phoenician presence is corroborated at a site inland from Huelva known as El Carambolo where a structure was discovered resembling a Phoenician temple (based on its construction and the presence of a bronze statuette of Astarte) dating to the late ninth and early eighth centuries BCE (based on ceramic typologies).⁹² Thus, it seems that by the time the Euboeans began to initiate their pre-colonial endeavors west in the late ninth century BCE, the Phoenicians were already well acquainted and well established with the westernmost extreme of the Mediterranean.

Further details of the Cypro-Levantine network may be extrapolated from the archeological evidence provided by shipwrecks. In 1999, two shipwrecks lying on the floor of

⁸⁸ See Eshel *et al.* 2019.

⁸⁹ Suárez-Padilla *et al.* 2021.

⁹⁰ As Stampolidis 2003, 217 has remarked (as many others) Phoenician material remains are eclectic and can be hard to differentiate from Cypriote and Egyptian wares from which they draw motifs.

⁹¹ Suárez-Padilla *et al.* 2021, 1498; Markoe 2003, 210-12. Markoe describes a number of bronze bowls of Cypriot and Egyptianizing Phoenician type from the Idaean Cave on Crete which similarly attest to a direct transmission of knowledge from immigrant Phoenician master craftsmen metalsmiths to native apprentices.

⁹² Suárez-Padilla *et al.* 2021, 1500.

the Mediterranean thirty-three miles west of Ashkelon were surveyed.⁹³ These two ships, named Tanit and Elissa, were dated to the late eighth century BCE but are likely just as representative of the early ninth century BCE and the pre-colonial period (Fig.8). The ships were Phoenician and were likely sailing from Tyre since among the crew's property was found a mushroom-lipped wine decanter, "the unmistakable 'calling card' of Phoenicians from Tyre."⁹⁴ Based on other personal belongings including cooking wares, it seems that the crew of each ship numbered around six people. Although the two ships could have been part of a larger fleet, this gives some indication as to the scale of mobility in this period. It has been suggested that the ships were sailing west to Egypt or Carthage, but it is just as likely that they were headed to even further ports of call on Sardinia or in Iberia.⁹⁵ As for cargo, each ship was carrying nearly 400 Phoenician amphorae filled with wine, and some quantity of purple textiles.⁹⁶ That the ships were carrying such a quantity of wine is interesting given the earlier evidence of grape seeds found at Huelva mentioned above and must attest to the prevalence of the liquid as a trade good. Finally, from the ships' demise we may comment on the nature of maritime routes taken by Phoenician (and therefore probably Euboean) traders. The ships sank upright (not capsized), and so were probably swamped by a storm wave, common along the North Sinai coast, as they attempted to tack before the wind.⁹⁷ This means that the ships were heading for the deep sea and

⁹³ Stager 2003; Emanuel 2019.

⁹⁴ Stager 2003, 238.

⁹⁵ Stager 2003, 243-4. Stager suggests Egypt as the ships' destination, but his support is slim and rests on much later Papyrus evidence from the 5th c. BCE.

⁹⁶ Stager 2003, 241-3. The amphorae, which were lined with pitch, were analyzed by the Molecular Archaeology Laboratory at the University of Pennsylvania Museum. Additionally, several pieces of wool fibers were found which had washed into the amphorae after their clay stoppers failed.

⁹⁷ Stager 2003, 244-6.

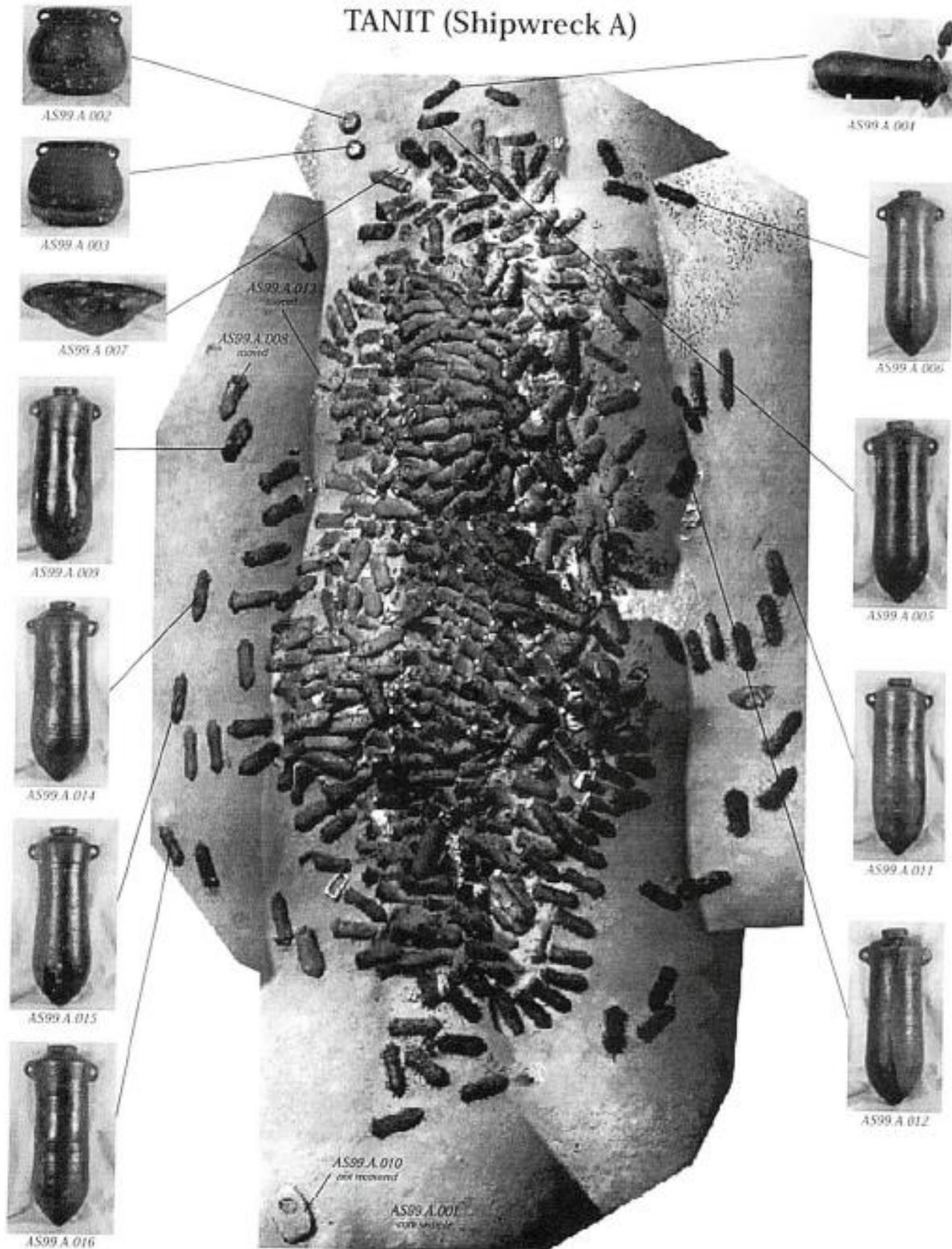


Figure 8: Photomosaic of Tanit from the Ashkelon Shipwreck. 8th c. BCE. Retrieved artifacts including torpedo-shaped Phoenician amphorae shown in margins. From Stager 2003, 234.

that seafarers took direct routes towards their intended destinations, a practice which would have been efficient given the long distances involved in travelling west.⁹⁸

So then, either in conjunction with the experienced merchants of the Levant or separately, Euboean travelers following in the older Phoenician routes (which the material evidence suggests they were acquainted with) found their way circuitously to the west. Presumably, they would have landed first on the island of Sardinia which had long harbored Phoenician settlements at sites such as Nora and Sulcis, where Euboean pottery has also been found (Fig.3).⁹⁹ Because metalliferous Sardinia had been claimed by Phoenicians, however, and the nearby *Colline Metallifere* were already under the burgeoning control of the Etruscans near Populonia, it seems the Greeks settled on the site of Pithekoussai, an offshore installation from which it would have been easy to make contact with the detached, more decentralized Etruscan cities of Capua and Pontecagnano, as well as indigenous Campanian groups.¹⁰⁰

The conception of the Punic-Euboean route, already posited by Ridgway in 1992, addresses, at least in part, a number of questions which have been raised in regard to the earliest Greek ventures in the west.¹⁰¹ One such question saw the establishment of Euboean settlements at both eastern (Al Mina) and western (Pithekoussai) extremes and asked to what extent these were the coherent agenda of a larger, organized Euboean trade network aimed at reaching the Etruscan and native Italian markets. Situating the Euboean ventures within the larger sphere of Mediterranean exploration fraught with the competing interests of the more mature Phoenician explorers and indigenous groups, however, argues against any notion of an organized Euboean

⁹⁸ Stager 2003, 244; Cline 1994; Bass 1991. This is in contrast to the usual notion that seafarers traveled in a counterclockwise fashion westward hugging the coastline.

⁹⁹ Ridgway 1992, 28-29. Pendant semicircle skyphoi have also been found at the Nuragic site of Sant' Imbenia.

¹⁰⁰ d'Agostino 2004, 240.

¹⁰¹ Graham 1971, 42-45; Graham 1990, 45-52; Dunbabin 1948, 3, 7-8.

trade network. Rather, pre-colonial ventures it seems were the undertakings of individual, probably elite (or incentivized by elites), agents from individual Euboean *poleis* (Lefkandi, Eretria, Chalcis, Oropos).¹⁰² Another such question seeks to answer the problematic notion of Pithekoussai being both the earliest and farthest colonial settlement. It would seem that geographical determinism played little role in the settlement's siting given the abundance of attractive locations much closer to the Greek mainland either in Sicily or Calabria which were not first settled.¹⁰³ Understanding the circuitous nature of the larger Phoenician trade route into which the earliest pre-colonial Greek explorers were co-opted, however, goes some way in providing an answer to this question.

Aside from the Punic-Euboean route, it should be mentioned that another path to the west existed in the pre-colonial period. This secondary route was much more direct and involved what Braudel called 'cabotage,' or hopping along the coast, through the Central Ionian Islands of Ithaca, Corcyra, and Cephalonia. Presumably, this route was easier since the short distances between islands afforded sailors frequent stops to refuel.¹⁰⁴ Ultimately, this route stemmed from Corinth and was more limited in its range, ending it seems at Otranto in the southern extreme of Calabria where Middle Geometric II Corinthian pottery has been found. Thus, d'Agostino calls this Corinthian route a "closed" circuit, essentially a part of the Greek world; whereas, the Euboean route was an "open" circuit outside of the Greek world, including Phoenician traders, and extending far wider.¹⁰⁵ It should be noted that similar routes to the Corinthian and Euboean

¹⁰² d'Agostino 2006, 212-14. This is supported by the evidence of slight differences in pre-colonial imported Euboean pottery which is found throughout different parts of Italy. On the nuance of individual colonial motivations, see also Hall 2013, 120-24.

¹⁰³ Graham 1964, 71-98, 191-2. This is in contrast to later examples of colonial endeavors, in which proximity to the mother city played a role.

¹⁰⁴ Souyoudzoglou-Haywood 1999, 3.

¹⁰⁵ d'Agostino and Soteriou 1998, 355-368.

ones have been posited for the Mycenaeans and Levantine traders respectively of the Bronze Age (LH I-II).¹⁰⁶

3.4 Social Memory and the Homeric *Mythos*

If the integration into Phoenician trade routes represented an indirect link between Euboean pre-colonial explorers and earlier Bronze Age voyages, then the *mythos* of Odysseus helped to provide a more direct connection. Scholars dwelling on the subject of colonization have for a long time recognized Odysseus's pre-colonial attributes as one of the *nostoi*, or heroes fated to wander the Mediterranean on their way home from the Trojan War, as well as the significance of the Homeric *mythos* for what it can reveal about early seafaring endeavors in the west. Oft cited is the response of lying Athena to Telemachus:¹⁰⁷

“Then the goddess, flashing-eyed Athene, answered him: “Therefore I will frankly tell you all. I declare that I am Mentès, the son of wise Anchialus, and I am lord over the oar-loving Taphians. And now I have put in here as you see, with ship and crew, while sailing over the wine-dark sea to men of strange speech, on my way to Temese for copper; and I bear with me shining iron. My ship lies yonder beside the fields away from the city, in the harbor of Rheithron, under woody Neion.”

Thus, understanding the Odysseus *mythos* will allow us to understand the mindset of the early Greek travelers and the ways in which they were able to legitimize and rationalize their early prospecting ventures into rights of settlement.

Odysseus is particularly important among the *nostoi* in that he differs from them: he is the only hero to go on a journey to mythical lands (the other *nostoi* all journey to topographically known places).¹⁰⁸ In addition, the connection between the early pre-colonial voyagers and the mythical hero is at once apparent. From the very first line of the *Odyssey*, Odysseus is

¹⁰⁶ Marazzi 2016.

¹⁰⁷ Hom. *Od.* 1.178-186. Translated by A.T. Murray and revised by George E. Dimock, 1995. Loeb Classical Library. Hom. *Od.* 6.1-12 is another such well-known passage concerning the role of Odysseus as *oikist*.

¹⁰⁸ Malkin 1998, 151

characterized as “πολύτροπον, ὅς μάλα πολλὰ / πλάγχθη.”¹⁰⁹ As Peter Struck has commented on these lines¹¹⁰: it is significant that we don’t get the word for homecoming, *νόστον*, until a few lines after this phrase. It suggests that we should understand the wanderings of Odysseus, and not the homecoming, as the point of the narrative. This idea is complemented by the fact that Odysseus, unlike various other heroes (Jason, Oedipus, Achilles), is not intricately linked to any autochthonous tradition. Whereas we might expect Odysseus to be a perfect example for such a trope, Homer leaves out any details that might suggest such a link. Again, this emphasizes the wandering nature of Odysseus and situates him as the perfect pre-colonial hero.

In addition to this, we can be fairly certain that Odysseus was on the minds of the early travelers in the eighth century BCE. The so-called Nestor’s Cup is a testament that the Homeric tales were known at Pithekoussai by 720 BCE at the latest.¹¹¹ Furthermore, Malkin (though perhaps in a minority) has supported an early date for the Homeric myths, placing their written appearance in the ninth and early eighth centuries, and he supports the view that the inscriptions on Nestor’s Cup allude to the Homeric poems.¹¹² Malkin also posits that the post-Troy ethnographic framework of the *nostoi* in Italy is earlier than the pre-Troy construct, which “traced the origins of the Italian peoples to the migrations of Pelasgians, Arkadians, or Cretans” and which did not develop before the sixth century BCE.¹¹³ So Odysseus was certainly known to the early Euboeans and was associated with the west and early western colonization, but to what extent then were Euboean voyagers consciously following Odysseus’ model?

¹⁰⁹ Hom. *Od.* 1.1-2.

¹¹⁰ In a talk given at the Penn Museum April 4th, 2014.

¹¹¹ Jeffrey 1963, 235-6; Hansen 1976, 28; Meiggs and Lewis 1988, 1-2. The script on the cup is Euboean. See also Malkin 2002, 167 for iconographic evidence that the Homeric myths were present in Pithekoussai. For marks/inscriptions on pottery and their relationship to literacy, see Papadopoulos 2017, 88-96.

¹¹² Malkin 1998, 45, 160.

¹¹³ Malkin 1998, 3.

Scholars have debated this question. Early on, Dunbabin reflected the view that the Greeks were indeed consciously retracing the routes traveled by the Mycenaeans based on the *Odyssey's* mention of Sicily and the slave trade linked to there.¹¹⁴ Later scholars rejected this notion, however, as the *Odyssey* contains no precise geographical details which would be helpful to travelers, either Mycenaean or Euboean.¹¹⁵ This notion, that the earliest Greek settlers were re-enacting the wanderings of Odysseus, is important if we consider that Odysseus represents a Bronze Age sailor. The wanderings of Odysseus are full of terrifying creatures and strange monsters which belie a certain fear of the unknown. Thus, Odysseus repeatedly asks if he is dealing with "bread-eaters;"¹¹⁶ he is anticipating whether or not he will encounter primitive, absolute "others" (and he frequently does). If the eighth century BCE Euboeans are retracing the steps of Odysseus, then we might imagine them saddled with similar fears and with a similar mindset towards the west.

Theoretically, however, it is possible to indicate that this was not the case. As already mentioned, most scholars today reject the notion of retracing the mythical. Even if Euboean sailors were following in the footsteps of Odysseus, Eliade argues that the existence of the myth itself would take away the fear of the unknown:¹¹⁷

Myth assures man that what he is about to do *has already been done*, in other words, it helps him to overcome doubts as to the result of his undertaking. There is no reason to hesitate before setting out on a sea voyage, because the mythical Hero has already made it in a fabulous Time. All that is needed is to follow his example. Similarly, there is no reason to fear settling in an unknown, wild territory, because one knows what one has to do. One has merely to repeat the cosmogonic ritual, whereupon the unknown territory (= "Chaos") is transformed into "Cosmos," becomes an *imago mundi* and hence a ritually legitimized "habitation."

¹¹⁴ Dunbabin 1948, 1-2.

¹¹⁵ Ridgway 1990, 69; Dench 1995, 34

¹¹⁶ Hom. *Od.* 9.89; 10.101

¹¹⁷ Eliade 1963, 141.

Thus, with Odysseus as the primogenitor of future travelers, the ur-colonizer,¹¹⁸ and the representative of Bronze Age exploration, there is no need to fear the western landscape as some unexplored “New World.” There are no “quasi-ethnographical” cyclopes who are waiting to cannibalize the unsuspecting traveler.¹¹⁹ That part of Odysseus’ travels is in the “frightening Beyond.”¹²⁰ It is part of an unreal, intangible world which was mediated by the Phaeacians as “the last afterglow of the phantasy realm which [Odysseus left],” and which is no longer open to human men.¹²¹ Thus, free of the fear of the unknown, the western landscape becomes a place open to settlement.

Additionally, there is another aspect of Odysseus outside of his depiction in the Homeric myths. This aspect relates to Odysseus’s role as an origin of ethnic identity. As Odysseus traversed the land in his mythical wonderings, he also sowed the seeds of the individual ethnic groups whom the later Greeks would perceive as native to the Italic peninsula and Sicily. Hesiod states that from the fruits of Odysseus’s and Circe’s love is born the child Latinus, and from the fruits of Odysseus’s and Calypso’s love are born both Nausithous and Nausinous.¹²² Latinus, in particular, is important as he will go on to sire the race known as the Etruscans in the Greek mindset.

The idea of Greek heroic genealogy can be understood as a retroactive attempt to legitimize the act of settlement. The notion of Greeks applying their own heroic genealogies to

¹¹⁸ Odysseus does not necessarily colonize any cities in the *Odyssey*; rather, he visits them and leaves quickly, very much in line with the Mycenaean model expressed by Blake 2008 above. In this sense it may be better to call him an “ur-explorer.” The sense of the term here is to imply only that Odysseus opens up the eventual colonial routes for the real Greek explorers of the eighth century. Malkin 1998, 120-55 does point out that there are stories beyond the *Odyssey*, as reflected in Tiresias’ prophecy in Book Eleven of the Homeric tale, in which Odysseus might be seen more as a colonizer.

¹¹⁹ Vidal-Naquet 1986, 21

¹²⁰ Malkin 1998, 9.

¹²¹ Segal 1962, 27

¹²² Hes. *Theog.* 1010-20.

foreign, indigenous ethnic groups has been seen in comparison with the arriving Europeans in the fifteenth century CE and later who thought it necessary to spread their “monotheistic and exclusionary” Christian ideology to the native inhabitants of the “new” lands they encountered.¹²³ Malkin largely downplayed this similarity by taking recourse to the overall nature of Greek religion as being fundamentally different to the monotheistic religion professed by the Spanish.¹²⁴ Thus, in his view the Greeks could not be viewed in similarity with more exclusive European colonizers who accepted no gods other than their own.

The problem with that argument, however, is twofold. First, in his book Malkin cites as evidence for his claim that Greeks accepted other gods as their own the first chapter of Drews’ (1973) monograph *Greek Accounts of Eastern History*. In this chapter, Drews states that “the splendor and sophistication of the Eastern civilizations impressed the Greeks profoundly.”¹²⁵ The Eastern civilizations were, in fact, ahead of the Greeks in many ways. I have already addressed that the eighth century BCE Greeks traveled east first before going west (as opposed to the early Mycenaean voyagers), where they encountered the Phoenicians who had suffered marginally less from the Bronze Age collapse and who introduced the Euboeans to western trade routes. The Greeks then were already in heavy contact with the eastern civilizations. The western civilizations of Italy and Sicily, in contrast, during the ninth and eighth centuries were lagging behind the complexity of the eastern civilizations in the Levant, presenting less of an organized society capable of exploiting the region’s natural resources. Instead, if we are to believe Homer for a moment, then the western landscape was filled with “golden age primitives” and “quasi-

¹²³ Malkin 1989, 17.

¹²⁴ Malkin 1989, 17. Malkin cites the fact that Greeks often had no qualms in assuming foreign gods under a Greek name as evidence that “what we call ‘Greek heroes’ were not Greek but simply heroes.” *C.f.* the case of Herakles and the Phoenician Melqart.

¹²⁵ Drews 1973, 4-5.

ethnographic” cyclopes. It is not out of the question, then, to assume that the Greeks might have viewed the western lands in their own minds with a hint of the superiority that characterized the European colonists to the “New World.”

The second problem with Malkin’s argument, is that he minimizes the degree to which heroic genealogies were “Hellenocentric.” As Bickerman illuminated over half a century ago, the Greeks scorned what they viewed as barbaric, native origin stories in favor of their own imposed, ethnocentric genealogies which made sense to them.¹²⁶ Dench added praise to Bickerman saying “[his] article very impressively challenged the hitherto prevalent view that myths of colonization by heroes were somehow ‘objective’ statements about the ethnicity of native peoples.”¹²⁷ Shown in this light, it becomes easy to see how the story of Odysseus fathering the Etruscan race as given in Hesiod might be viewed in comparison with the imposition of monotheism by the Europeans in the “New World.”

“Hellenocentrism” has also been looked at by scholars with a view closer to colonization and to the *Odyssey* itself. Scholars again saw the monsters, the wanderings, the unreal fantastical lands, the “downright unfriendly natives with peculiar habits which run contrary to Greek norms of civilized behavior,” but this time they saw it all in parallel to later “Western literature from the diaries of Christopher Columbus to those of Captain Cook and beyond.”¹²⁸ Between the “sea monsters and Eldorados, cannibals and Noble Savages with exotic names” the literature of colonization, both old and new, was staggeringly similar and reflected on the “hopes and fears of the travelers relating to the territories they are ‘discovering’ and to the native populations they

¹²⁶ Bickerman 1952, 65ff.

¹²⁷ Dench 1995, 35.

¹²⁸ Dench 1995, 35-6.

encounter.”¹²⁹ All of this highlights the usefulness of myth in contextualizing a novel landscape. But this contextualization happens at the level of taking the “unknown” and rematerializing it in terms of the familiar and known. It may be argued that one of the primary reasons in needing to do this is in order to provide a legitimization for transgressions in abusing resources and peoples in a new land.

The etymology for the ancient name of the west serves as one final piece of evidence in support of the above view. The name given to part of the Italian Peninsula was ‘Hesperia.’ According to Dench, this means “the ‘land of the west’, a name which nicely conveys an impression of Italy being ‘out there’, rather like our expression ‘Far East’, which carries with it implications of our own sense of geographical centrality.”¹³⁰ I am not suggesting here necessarily that the Greeks had a central world view on the order of magnitude as that of the later European colonists. Certainly, the European colonists had a super-inflated superiority complex based on their real and perceived level of technological advancement in comparison to the local peoples they encountered. This was heightened by the fact that the Europeans came from their own centralized monarchies. Already by the Middle Ages, an idea of Europe as an entity had emerged; by contrast “the idea of “Greece” as a place did not exist in the Archaic period,” much less the pre-colonial period.¹³¹ At best, Greece was made up of small, decentralized, and fragmented groups with fragmented identities only just emerging in the ninth and eighth centuries.¹³² So then it is certain that the Greeks were not centralized like the Europeans were centralized, but this does not mean that we can simply ignore the evidence of “Hellenocentrism” and the influence of myth on the individual Euboean voyager’s mind as they surveyed the lands

¹²⁹ Dench 1995, 36.

¹³⁰ Dench 1995, 38.

¹³¹ Malkin 1998, 17.

¹³² See Malkin 2011.

of Italy for the first time. The issue is nuanced and complex, but perhaps, at least to some degree, the myths helped to contextualize further the western landscape for the earliest travelers which in turn led to the legitimization of later settlement and colonization.

Chapter 4: Materializing Early Euboean Culture-Contacts

4.1 The Archaeological Evidence

In examining the chronologies, character of Euboean traders, Mycenaean networks, and Cypro-Levantine networks in the previous chapters, certain inferences concerning the archaeological character of pre-colonial contacts have already been made. It is pertinent here, however, to provide a concentrated look at the specific, Euboean character of the archaeological evidence and where it comes from. In addition, some remarks may be made about the cultural interactions of Greeks, Phoenicians, and Italians in order to further contextualize the pre-colonial period and highlight the importance of this early period for shaping later culture contacts. Finally, the establishment of Pithekoussai is briefly discussed as an end to the pre-colonial period.

Beginning with Phoenician traders, a number of early eighth century BCE imports to the west are discernable including Egyptian and Egyptianizing scarabs, seals (such as those which belong to the Lyre-Player Group), faience pendants, plaques, statuettes, and amber. A fine bronze bowl of Phoenician manufacture has been found at Francavilla Marittima.¹³³ Euboean imports to the west, as mentioned, consist primarily of Middle Geometric II skyphoi, easily identifiable from the local production for the fact that they are wheel-made (Fig.9). These skyphoi come in mainly two types: the pendant semicircle type and the chevron type. Generally, the pendant semicircle type is regarded as predating the chevron type; although, some overlap between the two exists, and it is possible that both were produced contemporaneously.¹³⁴ The

¹³³ Graham 1990, 47; Guggisberg 2018. Importantly, Graham notes that it is often difficult to closely date these Oriental finds without association with better dated objects.

¹³⁴ Ridgway 1992, 87; Graham 1990, 48. Graham again comments on the potential difficulties of dating the skyphoi, particularly the pendant semicircle type, which spans from 900 to 700 BCE.



Figure 9: Euboean Middle Geometric skyphoi. Top two: Pendant semicircle type. Bottom: Chevron type. From d'Agostino 2006, 211.

most numerous type found is the chevron type. Descœudres (2006) has shown the distribution of the Euboean imports in the Mediterranean pre-800 BCE and in the first half of the eighth century BCE which illustrates that the Euboeans went east before venturing west with the help of Levantine traders (Fig.10 and Fig.11).

From the start of the eighth century BCE numerous examples come from the Quattro Fontanili and Grotta Gramiccia necropoleis at Veii in Etruria.¹³⁵ Of eight examples from the Quattro Fontanili necropolis, five are in the Euboean style (two are Veientine and one Cycladic). Three of these five have clays which suggest their import from Euboea.¹³⁶ The other two are made of local clay, and Ridgway asserts are by the hand of an expatriate Euboean potter working in Veii and supplying the region.¹³⁷ The large number of such pots at Veii, which was situated in a prime position on the Tiber for communication and trade with both the interior of Etruria and the southerly Etruscan sites in Campania, has led to the conclusion that Veii was a distribution center of sorts allowing exchange and access for the Greeks to the mineral resources of Etruria.¹³⁸ Aside from Veii, Euboean skyphoi are more rare in the coastal centers of Etruria, but some isolated examples do show up at Tarquinia, Narce, Cures, and Rome.

Three chevron skyphoi have been found at pre-Hellenic Cumae, as well as numerous fragments from Capua and Pontecagnano.¹³⁹ The imported wares at these sites make Campania another significant area of Euboean pre-colonial activity equal to Veii (which should come as no surprise given Pitthekoussai's later proximity). Interestingly, nine small fragments of Middle

¹³⁵ Ridgway 1992, 131-133.

¹³⁶ Charalambidou 2017, 91. Recent studies with NAA (Neutron Activation Analysis) have shown that the clay sources of Euboean pottery, including imported pottery, were likely from Phylla, located in the Lelantine plain only 3 km north of Lefkandi.

¹³⁷ Ridgway 1992, 131. The others may be imitations.

¹³⁸ d'Agostino 2006, 212-115.

¹³⁹ Ridgway 1992, 129.

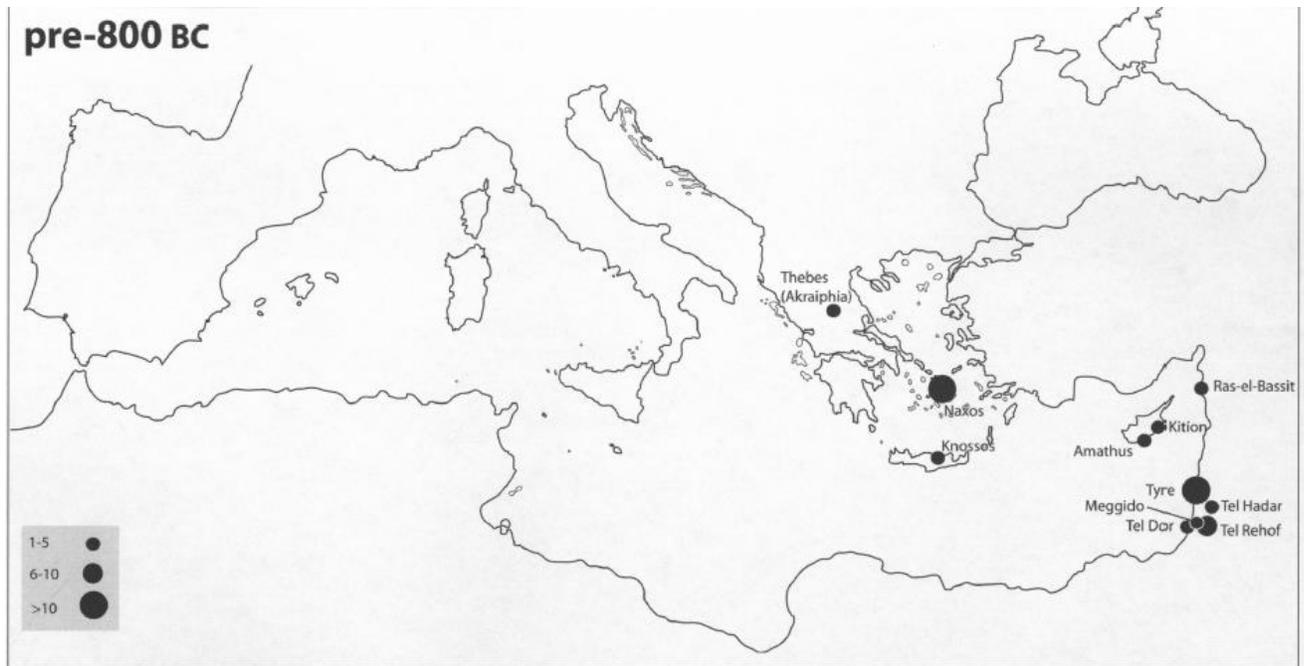


Figure 10: Distribution of Euboean pottery pre-800 BCE indicating early contacts in the Levant. From Descœudres 2006, 9.

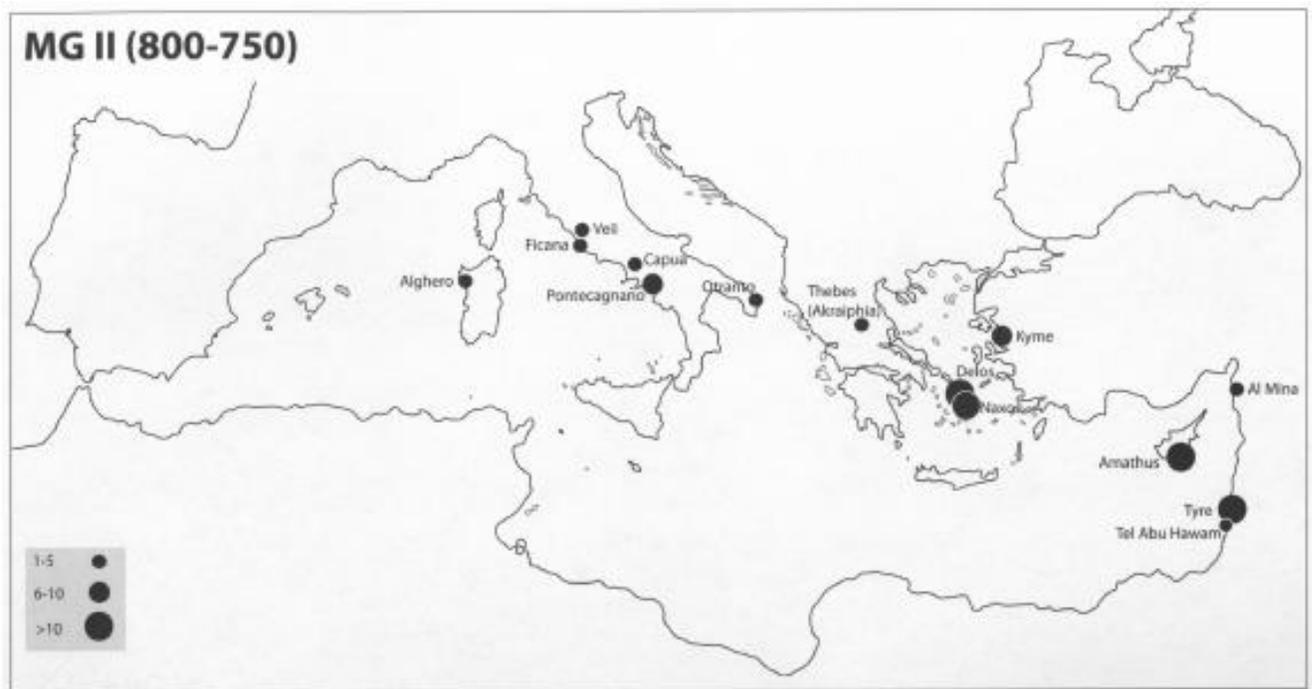


Figure 11: Distribution of Euboean Middle Geometric II pottery indicating the earliest evidence for Greeks in the west. From Descœudres 2006, 10.

Geometric II chevron skyphoi have been found in the acropolis dump at Pithekoussai: evidence it seems of “activities preliminary to the establishment of a permanent base” (Fig. 12).¹⁴⁰ Skyphoi have also been found at San Marzano sul Sarno, Torre Mordillo, Incoronata, and Scoglio del Tonno in South Italy; at Villasmundo in Sicily; and at Sulcis and Sant’ Imbenia on Sardinia as already mentioned.¹⁴¹ Most recently, numerous finds of Middle Geometric pottery have been found in Iberia and at Utica / Carthage (Fig. 13).¹⁴² This includes 13 fragments from Utica, 33 fragments from Huelva, 2 vases from La Rebanadilla, and 1 fragment from El Carambolo. To my knowledge, this constitutes the extent of the distribution of Middle Geometric finds so far discovered in the west which may serve as evidence of pre-colonial contacts during the first half of the eighth century BCE. By the second half of the century, the Aetos 666 kotyle and Corinthian wares come to replace the earlier pendant semicircle and chevron skyphoi types.¹⁴³

The Middle Geometric ceramic finds inventoried here requires some further explanation and qualification. First, the comparatively large number of find spots, and in particular the number of ceramics and the clustering around the region of Campania, attests to a degree of path dependence wherein relationships between Euboeans and native Italic groups continued over the course of the pre-colonial period due to the reciprocal nature of those relationships and the cost of severing such relationships and beginning new ones.¹⁴⁴ Such cooperation between differing groups then led ultimately to the foundation of Pithekoussai and the following Euboean colonial foundations in the area. Because of these resulting foundations, it is probable then that to some

¹⁴⁰ Ridgway 1992, 87. One of the nine sherds has been identified as Corinthian: evidence perhaps, however tenuous, of overlap between the open Euboean and closed Corinthian circuits as well. It should be noted that DeVries 2003 takes issue with the identification of the MG chevron skyphoi found at Pithekoussai, downdating them to LG1.

¹⁴¹ d’Agostino 2006, 213.

¹⁴² García Alfonso 2016, 117-126.

¹⁴³ Ridgway 1992, 87.

¹⁴⁴ Blake 2013, 207.

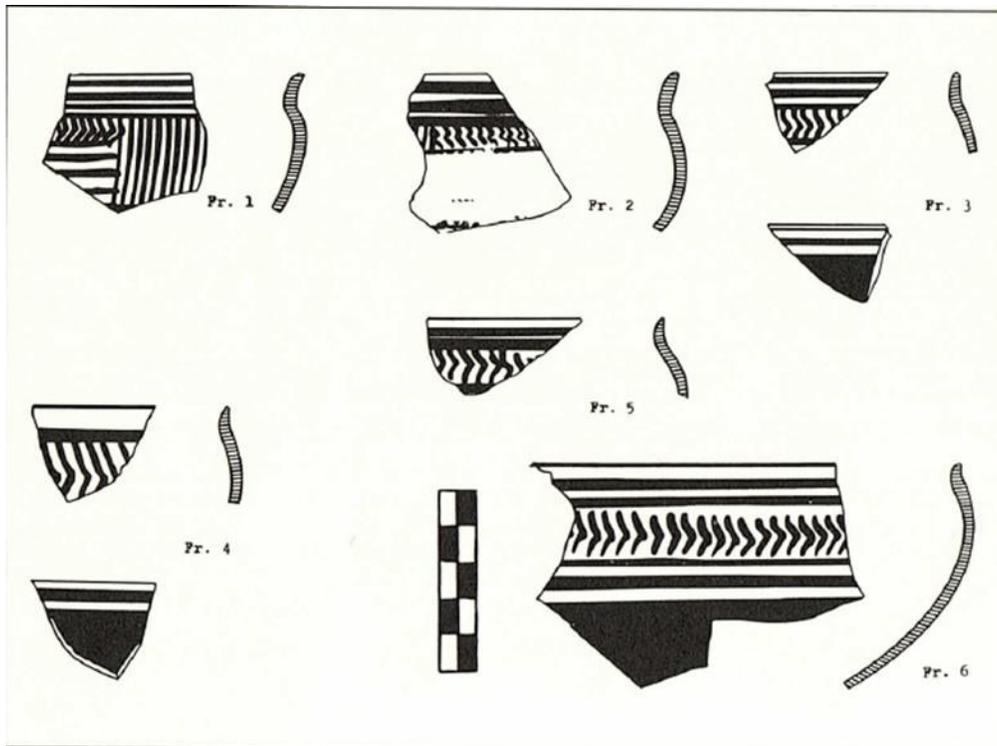


Figure 12: Drawing of Middle Geometric II fragments from the acropolis dump, Pithekoussai. 1: Corinthian. 2-6: Euboean. From Ridgway 1992, 86.

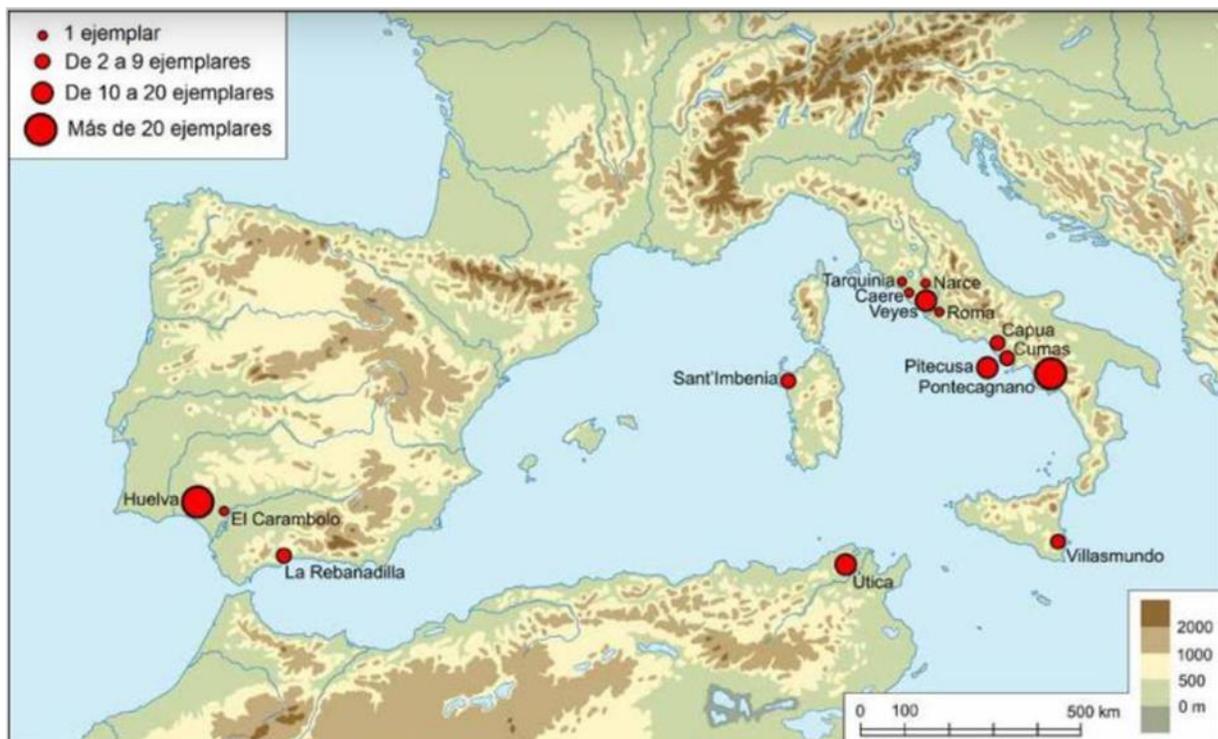


Figure 13: Dispersion of Middle Geometric II pottery (Attic and Euboean) including the recent discoveries in Iberia and Utica. From García Alfonso 2016, 108.

degree the pots do equal people. The corresponding concentration of finds in Etruria attests to the close relation between that area and Campania. The finds farther afield in Sardinia, Utica, and especially in Iberia, however, do not necessarily need to equate to Euboeans. For one, over ten of the fragments from Huelva, one of the vases from La Rebanadilla, and the one fragment from El Carambolo mentioned above are Attic Middle Geometric II, not Euboean.¹⁴⁵ Additionally, all of these areas display greater concentrations of Phoenician material (see Ch.3.3 above) and in most cases later become Phoenician colonies rather than Euboean ones. While Euboeans themselves need not have travelled as far as Iberia, the surprisingly large amounts of Middle Geometric evidence recently come to light in this area provides further evidence for Euboean integration into Phoenician trading networks.

The evidence of such material culture may also inform us about the greater cultural impact of pre-colonial encounters. In particular the prevalence of the form of such imported material, namely drinking cups, has led scholars to remark on their probable use in a symposium type setting in which both elite Greeks and elite Etruscans (or other native Italic groups) could interact through ritualized drinking and establish a middle-ground within the colonial landscape.¹⁴⁶ That wine was certainly present and important in these trade relationships see above on the cargo of the Ashkelon ships (Ch. 3.3). Drawn together under a shared elite ideology and within the equitable structure of the symposium, early pre-colonial Euboean traders could initiate relationships of gift exchange with native inhabitants. However, Greek custom was soon adapted to its local context. Greek symposium wares were rapidly co-opted as markers of social

¹⁴⁵ García Alfonso 2016, 117-126. These vases display Attic meanders and paste instead of the Euboean chevrons and semicircles. That actual Athenians accompanied these vases seems unlikely given that Athens displays no interest in colonization until the 6th c. BCE.

¹⁴⁶ d'Agostino 2006, 215-17; d'Agostino 2004, 240; d'Agostino 1990, 75-ff; Malkin 2002, 161.

visibility in the funerary sphere of the Tyrrhenian elites.¹⁴⁷ With only the few examples previously listed of Euboean skyphoi and kotylai from the pre-colonial period, it seems that native demand outstripped the pace of importation leading to the establishment at Veii and in Campania of local production centers of imitation Euboean drinking wares.¹⁴⁸ The continuation of elite drinking practices and the use of symposium wares as social indicators in the funerary world continue towards the second half of the eighth century BCE and into the Orientalizing period in Etruria, Latium Vetus, and Campania as evidenced in numerous so-called “Princely Tombs” which borrow from the Greek canonical example of heroic elite burial: that of Patroclus in Homer’s *Iliad*.¹⁴⁹

4.2 Pithekoussai

It would be wrong to leave out of any such account of early Greek pre-colonization mention of Pithekoussai. Pithekoussai marks the functional end of the pre-colonial prospecting phase, and thus serves as an end to the period under study here, but in reality also constitutes a beginning. As already discussed in Chapter 2 when outlining the chronological framework of this study, the period of the foundation of Pithekoussai from about 750 BCE or so warrants the label “proto-colonial.”¹⁵⁰ This term applies in the sense that the settlement of Pithekoussai seems to have maintained the same pre-colonial motivations, but within a scaffolding of institutions, not quite at the level of later colonial endeavors. Pithekoussai is located on the promontory of Lacco

¹⁴⁷ On Greek symposium wares, see Lynch 2011, and on symposium ideology and foreigners at the symposium, see Hobden 2013.

¹⁴⁸ d’Agostino 2006, 216; Ridgway 1992, 137. Instead of correlating the paucity of Middle Geometric skyphoi with the rise of an imitation market, Ridgway instead asserts that pre-colonial Greek merchants were trading skills instead of goods. This was in the form of advanced technological knowledge concerning craft specializations.

¹⁴⁹ Cuzzo 2013, 311. Further local adaptation may be seen in Tomb 2465 from Pontecagnano which associates heroic burial with female remains; this points to what is known from later iconographic representations, namely that Etruscan women are allowed at the symposium; whereas, they were banned in Greek contexts.

¹⁵⁰ See note 26 above.

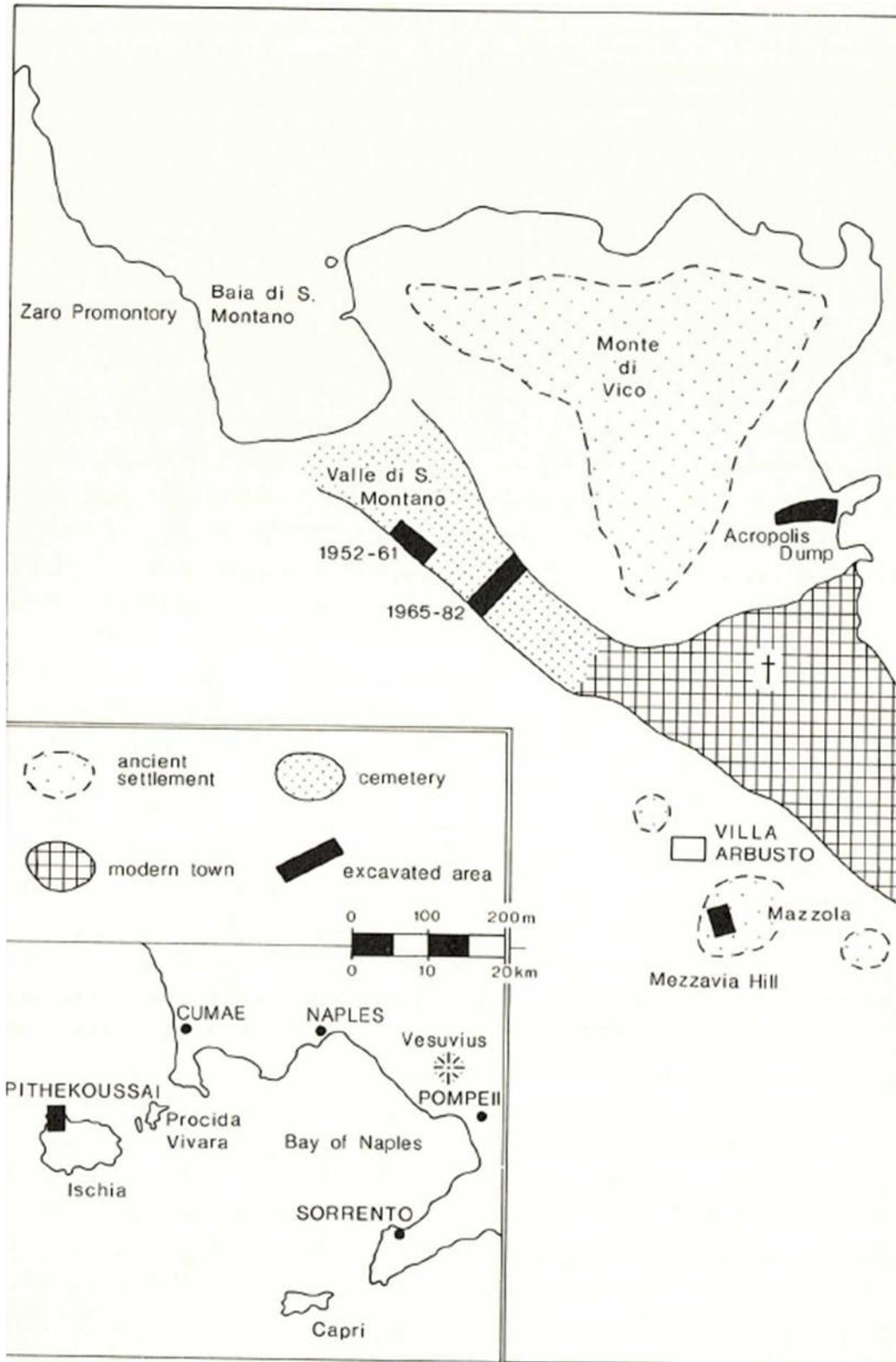


Figure 14: Map of Pithekoussai (Lacco Ameno d'Ischia). From Ridgway 1992, 38.

Ameno on the modern day island of Ischia. The promontory is bordered on two sides by good harbors including the Baia di San Montano. The extent of excavations in the settlement have

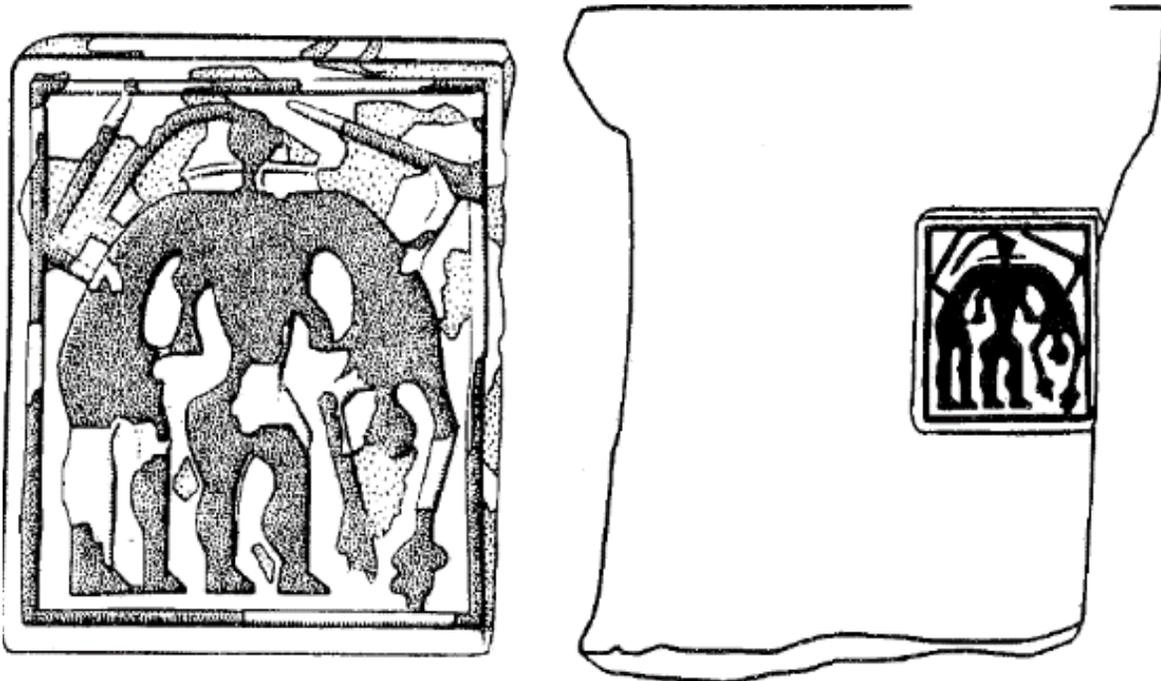


Figure 15: Geometric seal impression on amphora neck of Ajax carrying Achilles, from Pithekoussai. From Malkin 2002, 167.

uncovered three primary areas of interest: the first is the acropolis dump on the Monte di Vico; the second is the suburban industrial complex at Mezzavia; and the third is the necropolis which outstretches from the bay over the Valle di San Montano (Fig.14).

In terms of the acropolis dump, numerous finds require comment. The first of these, the nine pieces of Middle Geometric II pottery fragments have already been mentioned above. In addition, a Geometric seal impression stamped on the neck of an amphora was discovered in the dump which depicts Ajax carrying Achilles (Fig.15); taken together with the famous Nestor's cup found in the site's cemetery, it seems certain then that Homeric myths were well-known and recognizable to the settlers at Pithekoussai.¹⁵¹ Furthermore, recent osteological analysis of the

¹⁵¹ Ridgway 1992, 89-90. On the Nestor's cup inscription, see note 111.

Nestor's Cup burial have shown that the famous cup was buried not with an adolescent boy as was commonly held, but rather with up to perhaps three individuals, none of whom appear to be children.¹⁵² This reinforces the idea of elite male ideology within the setting of the symposium as being a central factor at the early site and removes much of the problems associated with interpreting the cup in the context of a child burial. Iron slag, bellows mouthpieces, crucibles, and a piece of hematite shown to originate from Elba off the coast of Populonia in Etruria have also been recovered from the cemetery.¹⁵³ This is material evidence of the continued pre-colonial interest at Pithekoussai in securing inroads to the rich mineral deposits of Etruria.

Further finds of metalworking come from the industrial complex at Mezzavia, including evidence that gold and precious metals were worked in addition to iron and bronze.¹⁵⁴ Interestingly, the finds of metal from the acropolis dump taken together with the industrial complex allow for some reconstruction of the Pithekoussan economy. d'Agostino relates that the economy was driven primarily by craft specialization and the more advanced level of Greek *techne*.¹⁵⁵ In this model, raw materials were sourced from the mines in Etruria, worked under Euboean (and perhaps Phoenician) metallurgical expertise at Pithekoussai, and then sold back to Tyrrhenian elites as finished goods.

Lastly, there are the finds from the necropolis in the Valle di San Montano. The burials in the cemetery help to paint a picture of the social stratification of the society at Pithekoussai. From North Syrian seals of the Lyre-Player Group, Egyptian scarabs, and Phoenician red-slip

¹⁵² Gigante *et al.* 2021. The study also reported faunal remains found in the burial including those of a sheep/goat, possibly a dog, and possibly an avian species.

¹⁵³ Ridgway 1992, 91.

¹⁵⁴ d'Agostino 2006, 222.

¹⁵⁵ d'Agostino 2006, 224. C.f. note 41 where Ridgway makes the same argument but in the case of earlier pre-colonial contacts.

ware found in the cemetery, it is possible to posit that a group of Phoenicians were presumably living and working in Pithekoussai, making up perhaps fifteen percent of the population.¹⁵⁶ Further information of stratification can be gleaned from the types of burials found.¹⁵⁷ At Pithekoussai, a group of adults, both males and females, were cremated before being buried along with grave goods under stone tumuli. Adolescents were not cremated, but were instead buried in pit graves. Infants were also inhumed but in pots instead of pits, a practice referred to

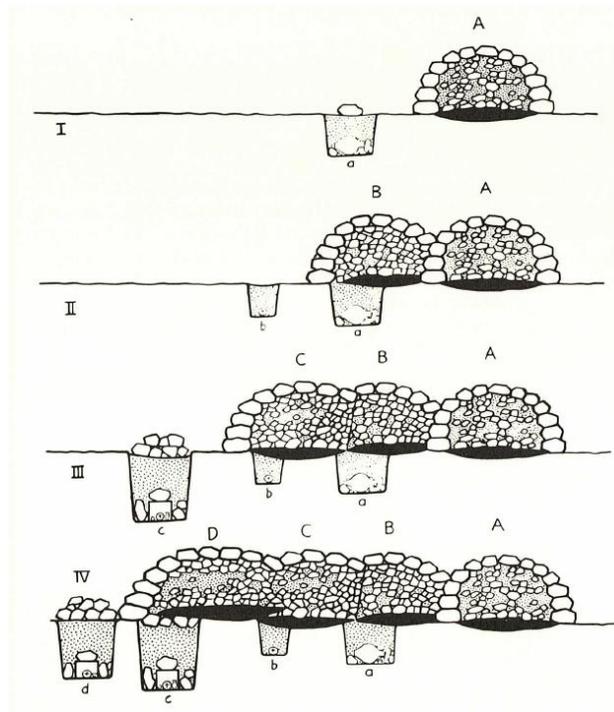


Figure 16: Four phases of development in a family burial plot from the Valle di San Montano cemetery, Pithekoussai. Adult cremation tumuli and adolescent inhumation pits visible. From Ridgway 1992, 47.

as *enchytrismos*. From this, it is hard to decipher any meaningful social divisions besides those based primarily on age. One group of burials, however, a group of adults (comprising about half the population) were not cremated as expected, but were instead inhumed in shallow graves. No

¹⁵⁶ Ridgway 1992, 111-18. Phoenician inscriptions on vases found in the cemetery also attest to a Levantine presence.

¹⁵⁷ Ridgway 1992, 45-83; d'Agostino 2006, 225-26.

grave goods accompany these adults. As compared with the cremated adult burials it appears that these inhumed individuals comprised a lower social class towards the bottom of society. Finally, it has been noted that many graves of cremated adults and inhumed adolescents and children occur together across different generations, comprising groups of apparent family burials (Fig.16).

There has been speculation as to the existence of an elite aristocracy at Pithekoussai, as there certainly was formulating back in Euboea and in neighboring Cumae. It seems likely that the majority of the population belonged to a prosperous upper middle-class.¹⁵⁸ However, important to note is that only some ten percent of the early eighth century BCE levels (which are between seven and eight meters deep) have been excavated in the San Montano necropolis.¹⁵⁹ Based on the grave goods which included imported and domestic (Euboean) pottery, bronze, silver and Levantine objects, it is clear that this middle-class was emulating elite burial practices. Thus, it is likely that the establishment of Pithekoussai was fueled by gentilitial aristocrats seeking to be closer to the production centers of raw materials for precious items (*keimelia*, *athyrmata*) which were necessary to maintain elite ideologies centered on relationships of feasting, hoarding, and gift exchange. These aristocrats could not operate alone, however, and needed to encourage other social classes responsible for “the production of food, craft development, shipbuilding, defence, etc.” to move as well.¹⁶⁰ Hence the metallurgy production area and burials found at Pithekoussai. Whether or not a similar situation characterized the

¹⁵⁸ Ridgway 1992, 77.

¹⁵⁹ Domínguez-Monedero 2011, 197.

¹⁶⁰ Domínguez-Monedero 2011, 201.

earlier movements of pre-colonial, prospecting Euboeans a half-century to a century earlier is difficult to say,¹⁶¹ but it is clear that an atmosphere of colonialism rather quickly manifested.

¹⁶¹ Mazarakis Ainian 2012, 78. It is argued that the elite “hero” of Lefkandi buried in the large peripteral apsidal building at Toumba may have been the first Greek to renew overseas contact with the Levant in the mid-10th c. BCE based on the character of his grave goods, though this seems speculative. Interestingly, as opposed to the aristocrats of Pithekoussai encouraging lower social classes to settle with them, Mazarakis Ainian posits that the “hero” may have instead brought back itinerant Phoenician craftsmen to produce locally in Euboea, though again this is debatable.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

“Nobody sails the seas just to get across them.”¹⁶² In stating the obvious, Polybius draws our attention to the unique and pervading degree of mobility which characterizes the Mediterranean at large. Within the larger networks of the Mycenaeans, the Phoenicians, and the Euboeans, individual voyagers set out abroad with their own particular intentions and rationales and operated under a multiplicity of identities and cultural associations from the level of the *oikos* all the way to larger subhellenic or regional identifications. In pursuing individual or small group collective agendas facilitated by the mobility of the Mediterranean Sea, interconnectivity grew as peoples on the move entangled with one another and with local populations. Even in the wake of Bronze Age collapse, the thrust towards exploration could not be stifled for long, as regional groups less affected by collapse such as the Phoenicians maintained networks of mobility, and other groups such as the Euboeans, affected to a greater degree, quickly sought to be reincorporated into Mediterranean connectivity.

In his important monograph on Greek colonization, John Boardman stated disparagingly that:¹⁶³

“The difference in the reactions of [the Greeks and Etruscans in response to the stimulus of eastern influence] is a measure of the difference in their quality and originality. The Greeks chose, adapted, and assimilated... The Etruscans accepted all they were offered, without discrimination. They copied...with little understanding.”

Boardman’s comments belie a degree of philhellenism which pervaded earlier scholarship on the matter of Greek ventures abroad. His account is one which centers the Greek perspective and the Greek voyager as the only one with any agency. It is within only the past few decades with publications such as Horden and Purcell (2000) that themes such as Mediterraneanism,

¹⁶² Polybius, *History*, 3.4.10 as cited in Horden and Purcell 2000, 342.

¹⁶³ Boardman 1999, 199-200.

connectivity, mobility, core vs. periphery, world systems theory, and network theory have begun to decentralize the Greek perspective by contextualizing it within the larger complexity of interaction taking place in the unique geographical and ecological landscape of the Mediterranean.

In many ways, the synthesis and analysis provided here is not original. David Ridgway, in his 1992 publication *The First Western Greeks*, had already addressed many of the topics concerning early eighth century BCE pre-colonization and in much greater detail than is presented here (especially Pithekoussai). Yet at the same time, Ridgway's publication pre-dates both the rise in scholarship of the themes stated above, as well as the theoretical debates on terminology addressed in Chapter 1 and on chronologies and ethnic identities addressed in Chapter 2.1 and 2.2 which led Purcell to label colonization studies as a "field in crisis."¹⁶⁴ This thesis, therefore, has attempted to weave together Ridgway's overview with the current scholarly trends and more recent archaeological evidence in order to (re)contextualize the Euboeans and their prospecting endeavors in the first half of the eighth century BCE. In doing so, the evidence has been assembled to answer the question of *how* the Euboeans managed to find their way to western waters; how their voyages differed in character from the Phoenician model or the Mycenaean model in order to foster a unique feeling of colonialism which was legitimized by the *mythos* of Odysseus, and which manifested in the material culture left behind. This material culture does not testify to a unilateral model of cultural assimilation, but rather to a complex and nuanced state of relations ultimately culminating in the settlement of Pithekoussai and the later acts of *ktisis* in the second half of the eighth century BCE.

¹⁶⁴ Purcell 2005, 115.

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