ASPECTS OF GREEK COLONISATION

KRASILNIKOFF (J.A.), LOWE (B.) (edd.) *The Greeks in Iberia and Their Mediterranean Context*. Pp. xiv + 262, ills, maps. London and New York: Routledge, 2024. Cased, £130, US$170. ISBN: 978-1-032-47090-0.

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What was it like to be a Greek-speaker setting up new businesses and homes in unfamiliar lands, trading in routes that took you to the world's end? The volume edited by Krasilnikoff and Lowe helps us draw closer to those 'Greeks of the frontier societies of the West' (p. 1) and their strategies to navigate networks involving a variety of local and migrant groups. Their aim is to make us 'rethink what it meant to be part of the Greek colonial experience, and even what it meant to be Greek' (p. xii).

The experience of migrant communities in the ancient Mediterranean, especially of Greeks and Phoenicians, has received much recent attention. Some examples are the ERC project on 'Migration and the Making of the Ancient Greek World' (MIGMAG), centred on the central and eastern Mediterranean; D. Demetriou's *Phoenicians among Others: Why Migrants Mattered in the Ancient Mediterranean* (2023); and *Local Experiences of Connectivity and Mobility in the Ancient West-Central Mediterranean*, edited by L. Gosner and J. Hayne (2024).

This book comprises twelve short chapters, with individual bibliographies and plenty of illustrations. Eight focus on Iberia and four on southern Italy or the central Mediterranean. The 'context' chapters are, however, limited to Magna Graecia and do not draw systematic connections with Iberia (*The Greeks in Iberia and the Greeks in Italy* would be a more accurate title). The addition of chapters on other areas, such as Libya, Egypt or the Black Sea, would have provided more of a context for the Greek experience at the 'far ends' of their networks. Beyond issues of focus, the gap between the conference from which the volume stems (2013) and its publication (2024) is less than ideal. Although some chapters were commissioned later, the bibliography rarely goes beyond 2016. Still, the chapters are individually of great quality and provide interesting syntheses and analysis of the data, whether written documents, visual arts, pottery finds, architecture, coins or all of the above.

I will focus here on colonisation and cultural exchange. First of all, the studies establish beyond doubt that there were only two fully-fledged Greek settlements in north-east Iberia, on the Catalonian coast: the Massaliotte colony of Emporion (Empúries) and the latter's own colony Rhode (Roses). Emporion, as Krasilnikoff clarifies, was not necessarily a marketplace that became a *polis* (despite its name), but a *polis* whose function was to facilitate cross-cultural trade with locals and others, and whose economy challenges the dichotomy between trading and agrarian *poleis* (p. 75). Although most maps mark Greek colonies further south in Spain, Greek foundations seem limited to this Massaliotte circle and the Phocaean foothold in Corsica, with the location of other Greek ancient toponyms, discussed in various chapters, remaining speculative, and perhaps denoting a Greek record of ports to use and not necessarily Greek settlements.

A partial exception to this pattern is the site of La Picola, which P. Moret reassesses as the only documented site of permanent Greek presence south of Emporion. This small fortified enclave was a 'hybrid site, mixing native and Greek traits' (p. 123). It functioned as a small hub for 'actors in maritime trade', whose presence is justified by the economic pull of the nearby inland Iberian centre of Ilici (Alcudia de Elche). Moret postulates that

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Greeks from Marseilles, Emporion or elsewhere, along with Phoenicians, Carthaginians and Iberians could have occupied the place (p. 131). La Picola sits on the fringes of Phoenician networks, whose eastern end is marked by the large Phoenician site of La Fonteta (Guardamar del Segura), established in the eighth century BCE. As P. Rouillard shows, these networks involved Greeks and Phoenician-Punics. He qualifies them as 'fragmented networks' (p. 41); that is, the materials we see do not follow linear trajectories or homogeneous patterns (inevitably perhaps as cargoes were loaded at different stops and by different agents). Disruptions in the patterns of Greek imports are also discussed in various chapters, especially the break with Phocaean networks after the mid-sixth century BCE, with the ceasing of Greek imports in Huelva (p. 43) and the general shift to non-Ionian interlocutors in Malaga Bay (see below). Overall, Greek presence declines in the fifth to fourth centuries (which are also less documented periods), perhaps due to the increasing control of Carthage in western Mediterranean trade (p. 152).

Even without Greek colonies, however, the impact of Greek activity on the Alicante coast and its hinterland (from Cape Nao to Cape Palos) is surprisingly greater than in the local hinterland of Emporion (Moret, p. 122). In short, understanding the Greek project in Iberia requires de-centring colonisation, which is why R. Capra prefers to emphasise 'presence' rather than 'colonization' (p. 51). As in La Picola, it is likely that groups of Greek-speakers seasonally or permanently settled among non-Greek communities along these eastern coasts, a scenario also postulated for the Phoenicians in areas beyond their colonies, such as Italy and the Aegean. As Lowe shows, it is difficult to trace that kind of activity in places that do not map onto larger urban harbours, such as those of Emporion, Carthago Nova and Tarraco. Nonetheless, secondary harbours and anchorages provided crucial links with local markets, besides shelter. Even without elaborate facilities, and leaving little archaeological trace, small harbours could 'survive for longer in the mind-map both of the sailors themselves and the local populations' (p. 109). Following this intangible trail, A.J. Domínguez Monedero argues that the production of both geography and poetry derives from experiences of exploration and a profound knowledge of the coastlines. In this sense, 'Iberia was a peripheral territory within the general imaginary of the Greek world' (p. 28).

Non-colonial Greek presence is clear in other areas dominated by Phoenician and local Tartessic cultures: respectively, the Bay of Málaga and the area of Huelva, where Geometric Euboian pottery reveals early collaborations with Phoenicians in their westernmost endeavours. During the seventh and the early sixth centuries the concentration around these hubs of Greek pottery as well as graffiti suggest the integration of pockets of Greek artisans and residents (Domínguez Monedero, E. García Alfonso). This relationship intensifies in Málaga during the sixth century, exemplified by flagship findings such as the 'Tomb of the Warrior'. This rich grave included an engraved Corinthian helmet beside other Greek weaponry, as well as a Phoenician scarab, highlighting the involvement of Greeks (perhaps elite mercenaries) in Phoenician circles (García Alfonso, p. 150).

As for other general trends, while Greek transport amphorae are rarely found, the import and the local imitations of Greek banqueting vases, such as Ionian cups, reflect the adoption of Greek habits and paraphernalia by local and Phoenician elites. This is not, by itself, a reliable indicator of who is bringing the vases, however, as it could also have been Phoenicians and Iberians, as the taste for Greek drinking cups is obvious at Carthage and the Levant as well. The 'custom-made' nature of pottery assemblages is also evident in the Attic painted pottery that makes its way into elite burials in Iberian sites in Granada and Jaén. As C. Sánchez Fernández and D. Rodríguez Pérez reveal, with their choices and omissions the artists tailored their production to specific markets and the tastes of local clients.

Most relevant and often cited is Herodotus' anecdote about the Phocaeans' dealings with king Arganthonios of Tartessos in south-west Iberia, who, in the early sixth century BCE, offered them territory to settle in and gave them funds to protect themselves against the encroaching Persians (Hdt. 1.163–165.2). This is precisely the type of local alliance that Greeks and Phoenicians depended on when settling and trading in foreign territories (Capra, pp. 58–9). Herodotus' interlocutors presented these Phocaeans as the first to discover the Tartessic markets, even though in the seventh century the famous rich merchant Kolaios of Samos claimed as much too (Hdt. 4.152.2–5). As Domínguez Monedero points out, there is no contradiction between the competing anecdotes, as each reflects independent local claims, only later woven into a coherent narrative (p. 19) (see S. Celestino and C. López-Ruiz, *Tartessos and the Phoenicians in Iberia* [2016], pp. 30–40). These events in fact map onto the changes in Greek relations reflected archaeologically and discussed in the volume: Phocaean or Ionian activity declines in Huelva (the core of archaic Tartessos) after the mid-sixth century (García Alfonso, pp. 147–8), just after Phocaea falls to the Persians, and when, according to Herodotus, Arganthonios had already died. They instead fled to Corsica and other places. But in the colonial sphere of the north-east, Greek success also depended on productive interaction with native groups, such as the Indiketai at Emporion. The exceptional findings of two lead tablets at Emporion and Pech Maho near Narbonne recording commercial transactions feature in several chapters. Written in Greek, but bearing Greek, Iberian and other native, non-Iberian names, they offer a small window into the 'inter-cultural' dealings in which Greeks were embedded in the sixth and fifth centuries (esp. Capra, pp. 56–60).

Two chapters on Magna Graecia bring additional perspectives on what it meant to be Greek in diasporic contexts, despite the lack of explicit comparisons with Iberia. They show how the inhabitants of Velia (Greek Elea) highlighted aspects of their Greek heritage in unique ways, differently from other Italian centres, such as Naples (K. Lomas), and how materials in the hypogea of two Apulian towns show code-switching 'between various cultural identities in order to navigate and negotiate their way through politics and trade' (J. Hjarl Petersen, p. 249). Both focus on the Hellenistic and Roman periods, as do the chapters dedicated to Dionysios I of Syracuse (Krasilnikoff) and the chapter on piracy in the central Mediterranean (J.R. Hall). Here the sources' ambiguity about what constitutes 'piracy' as opposed to state-sponsored 'pillaging' invites a reflection on the precariousness of migrant communities, depending on where the line between those doing the pillaging and 'us' is drawn. The representation of the tyrant of Syracuse as a founding figure (of the Syracusan empire and of new settlements) is relevant here too, reminding us of the diachronic and self-reproducing nature of colonial projects. These four chapters, however, are still misaligned with the Iberia chapters, as they deal with later periods, 'Hellenistic' (in the west we might say 'Punic') and early Roman. A direct comparison of the contexts of Greeks in Sicily, or synchronous analysis, is lacking.

The volume is a welcome addition to the study of the Greek presence in the central and western Mediterranean, and it fits current trends that emphasise local agency, exchange and negotiation over cultural diffusion and colonial dynamics. It also synthesises scholarship that is largely unavailable in English. The edition, especially on the side of the press, could have been more carefully produced, but readers will find plenty of food for thought and important data in the essays. The editors and authors should be thanked for their efforts.

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