

REVIEWS

G.R. Tsatskhladze (ed.), *The Greek Colonisation of the Black Sea Area, Historical Interpretation of Archaeology*, Historia Einzelschriften Heft 121, Franz Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart, 1998, ISBN 3-515-07302-7, 336 pp., 44 figs.

G.R. Tsatskhladze (ed.), *Ancient Greeks, West & East*, Mnemosyne-Bibliotheca Classica Batava, Suppl. 196, Brill, Leiden/Boston/Köln, 1999, ISBN 90-04-11190-5, XXIII + 623 pp., many illustrations.

K. Nawotka, *The Western Pontic Cities. History and Political Organization*, Amsterdam, Adolf M. Hakkert-Publisher, 1997, ISBN 90-256-1112-5, VII + 262 pp.

G.R. Tsatskhladze, *Pichvnari and its Environs, 6th c. BC - 4th c. AD*, Presses Universitaires Franc-Comtoises, Paris, 1999, ISBN 2-913322-42-5, 232 pp., 118 illustrations.

During the last few years the number of publications in Western languages on Greek colonisation in general and on the colonisation of the Black Sea area in particular has blossomed. Several will be reviewed in this issue; many more in forthcoming volumes of TALANTA. Without doubt, among the most important of these publications are two volumes edited by G.R. Tsatskhladze.

The first is *The Greek Colonisation of the Black Sea Area*. Unlike the second, *Ancient Greeks, East and West*, all papers are dedicated to the archaeology and ancient history of the Black Sea area. It seems that some (5) articles here are the result of an aborted conference (according to the preface of the editor). Maybe this is why, unlike two publications, edited by G.R. Tsatskhladze (*Ancient Greeks, East and West* and *Periplous, Papers on Classical Art and Archaeology Presented to Sir John Boardman*, London, 2000, co-editors J. Prag and A. Snodgrass), none of the articles is very controversial. Several are traditional archaeological reports, most providing an overview of the current state of knowledge in their respective fields of Black Sea archaeology. Like this volume of TALANTA, the articles are published as a *periplous*, only this time moving from the western Black Sea around it clockwise. M. Lazarov and K. Panayotova report on Apollonia Pontica and the Bulgarian Black Sea coast, M. Vassileva and A. Fol on

Greek and Thracian myths and religion, A. Avram writes on Callatis in Roman times, S. Solovyov, S. Saprykin and G.A. Koshelenko/V.D. Kuznetsov on the northern Pontic littoral, J. Hind looks at the interesting problem of Megarian colonisation, M. Treister at metalworking in the north Pontic region, J. Boardman at the early pottery from Olbia and Berezan; the late D. Asheri at the local population of the northern Colchis. D. Braund looks at the east coast (Colchis) and A. Ivantchik has an interesting paper on the foundation of Sinope. The problem with this kind of publication (and it applies to the current volume of *TALANTA*) is the imbalance of treatment – geographically, chronologically, etc. The eastern and southern Black Sea coasts get less attention (two articles for the east and one for the south) while the important period of Roman domination of the Black Sea area is represented only by Avram's piece on the Romanian Black Sea coast; epigraphic evidence only by the article on lead-letters by Y. Vinogradov. This detracts nothing from the value of this book and Tsetskhladze, who in his lengthy introduction gives an overview of the whole Black Sea area, must be given credit for the fact that although some of the material in this book was published before, most of these publications were impossible to consult for western scholars through inaccessible languages and unobtainable publications.

Of all new publications in the field of the archaeology of Greek colonisation, *Ancient Greeks, West and East* is without question the most important. It is an impressive collection of papers (24, including the introductory article) and, in contrast to *The Greek Colonisation of the Black Sea Area*, has a broader focus, extending beyond the Black Sea. Most papers concern those areas of Greek colonisation which have usually received less attention from the archaeological world. It would be too much to review each contribution individually so I will limit myself to the best or most controversial.

G.M. Bongard-Levin has an interesting piece on the short period M.I. Rostovtzeff spent in England after his flight from Russia, his correspondence with E. Minns and his role in the anti-Bolshevistic movement. Although C. Tuplin's article on the question of Greek racism is thorough, the treatment of this subject itself tells us more about the 'political correct' ideology of our own times than about ancient Greece and its world.

J. Hind deals with information on Greek colonisation provided by the lesser known 1st century Roman historian Pomponius Mela. J. Vanschoonwinkel writes on the origins of one of the 'Sea-Peoples', the Philistines, and gives convincing evidence against the thesis of their Mycenaean origin (as advocated by L. Stager, excavator of Asjkelon, among others). R.A. Kearsley discusses the earliest Greek colonisation at Al Mina (8th century BC), and this site is also re-examined by J. Boardman.

G.R. Tsetskhladze puts forward the theory that through early iron age contacts, the Thracian, Scythian and Colchian kingdoms quite easily absorbed cultural waves and influences from Anatolia (this could have destructive

consequences for the idea of a unique Thracian mythology, as advocated by A. Fol and I. Marazov). A. Ivantchik explains that the myth of Scythian rule in Asia is actually based on short Scythian raids into the Near East. V.D. Kuznetsov tries to prove that the so-called dug-outs found in most of the northern Pontic colonies were not in fact dwellings, as all Russian and Ukrainian scholars assert (see among others, S.L. Solovyov, *Ancient Berezan*, Colloquia Pontica 4, Brill 1999).

In short, this is an extremely impressive collection of articles indispensable for any scholar working in the field of Greek colonisation.

Nawotka's book is one of the first overall studies on the political history of the western Pontic area in the English language. It discusses all facets of the political history of the Western Pontic colonies from Mesembria in the south to Histria in the north; from the foundation legends to the *Pax Romana* (chapter 1); the status of the western Pontic cities under Roman rule (chapter 2); the tribal system (chapter 3); the magistracy (chapter 4); the nature of the constitutions (chapter 5) and the so-called Western Pontic league. The strange omission of the Milesian colony of Apollonia Pontica is unexplained, but it is probably because the author regards it neither as a part of the Roman province Moesia Inferior nor as one of the cities of the West Pontic league (p. 221). These conclusions are merely based on the epigraphic evidence, and take no account of Apollonia's strong economic and political relations with Histria – epigraphically and archaeologically attested at least during the Hellenistic period.

However, in order to get a decent picture of the history of the western Pontic colonies in this period, an interdisciplinary approach is needed, combining ancient written sources, epigraphy, and archaeology. The greatest achievement of the author is the clear distinction made between the Milesian and Megarian systems of colonisation, best shown in chapter 5.

Tsetskhladze's book on the western Georgian site of Pichvnari is a more or less strange combination between the account of an excavation, although not by the excavator himself (although the author excavated on the site for many years), and the interpretation of the material produced by this excavation. The author provides a broad overview of the finds from more than twenty years of excavation.

A problem resulting from the large amount of material is the fact that there is sometimes very little information provided by drawings and other illustrations. For example: Figs. 38-9 are titled "Amphorae from a burial ground", without further clarification, Figs. 15-8 are described simply as Greek pottery!

In addition to Pichvnari, other excavation sites in south-western Georgia are described, such as Nadzhikhurali, Batumis Tsikhe, etc.

An interesting fact is that very few Sinopean amphora stamps were found at

the sites described (p. 27-8), especially compared with the western and northern Black Sea coasts – from the surroundings of Batumis Tsikhe not even a single stamp (p. 84). But the author makes a strong case (in this and earlier publications) that Colchian amphorae were probably made to a Sinopean pattern, or even by Sinopean potters themselves. There is also ample proof of close connections between Sinope and Pichvnari (p. 109-10).

It is improbable that a real account of this excavation will be published, due to the enormous amount of material (more than 1000 burials excavated and less than 15% published), and the loss and looting of material during the civil war of 1992. So the author should be given credit for disclosing at least a part of the finds, especially in view of the almost total lack of specialist publications on Georgian archaeology and ancient history in western languages (there are several overviews by O. Lordkipanidze and D. Braund and G.R. Tsetskhladze himself, and other specific sites will be published by M. Vickers and A. Fürtwangler in the near future). This book gives many details of (at least in the West) long neglected ancient history of far Eastern Europe.

J. G. de Boer

R. Rolle, V.Ju. Murzin und A.Ju. Alekseev, *Königskurgan Certomlyk. Ein skythischer Grabhügel des 4. vorchristlichen Jahrhunderts (Hamburger Forschungen zur Archäologie Band 1, 1997)*, Verlag Philipp von Zabern, Mainz 1998; Teilband I, VIII + 222 pp., 40 Abb., 52 Taf.; Teilbänder II und III, 278 pp., many illustrations, linedrawings, etc. Cased. ISSN 1434-7040; ISBN 3-8053-2331-X.

At a time when more and more theoretical works are appearing, which often neglect primary evidence or select hard evidence to accord with previously formulated hypotheses, and when resources for new excavation have melted away, the re-excavation of well-known sites and the restudying and republication of material from them is a quite astonishing achievement. Returning to old excavations refreshes the mind as well as helps us to think again and in new ways about the problems raised.

Chertomlyk barrow is one of the most spectacular sites of Scythian culture of the 4th century BC. It was excavated by I.E. Zabelin in 1862-63, and all material is kept in the State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg. A joint Soviet-German team looked again at the site from 1979 to 1986. They conducted a very thorough examination of all finds. These two superbly-produced volumes publish the results of this extremely welcome project. Although the material from this barrow has been well known and widely used for more than a century, the very fine quality of the illustrations published here, many of them detailed, allows us to look at these objects and make iconographical identification of scenes from new perspectives. This is especially so for the sheath and *gorytus*.

The first volume provides a general description of the barrow, its details, burial rites, stratigraphy, chronology, and the place of this site within Scythian archaeology overall. The authors studied thoroughly what little documentation Zabelin left behind regarding his excavation. Much space is devoted to the results of the 1979-86 investigations. There are plenty of plans, sections, reconstructions, etc., which indeed help the reader follow the authors and provide a very clear idea about the construction of this barrow and about Scythian burial rites.

The second volume is in two parts: the first consists of a catalogue of objects, new and old, found in the course of excavation of the site (233 items); the other is a series of thematic studies of different aspects of the site and of Scythian culture. The catalogue presents a detailed description of each object, with a complete set of photographs and line drawings, and 30 colour tables (many illustrating golden objects and fragments of textiles).

The second part is written by a number of Ukrainian, Russian, and German scholars, who present essays on subjects such as Zabelin as an historian and archaeologist, the techniques used and the stages of construction of the mound, the palaeogeography of 4th century Scythia based on the study of material from the Dnieper area, metalworking, Scythian secular architecture, skeletal and anthropological material from Chertomlyk, amphorae, metal objects and their metalographical study, etc. There is also a very detailed study of the famous Chertomlyk amphora and its relief decorations.

One feature of this book should be emphasised above all. Within one work we are confronted with two methods of excavation and interpretation – one Eastern, one Western. This is reflected, for example, in the discussion of social hierarchy according to size of barrows, the striving to discover local Scythian iconography, and even mythical meanings in very Greek-looking scenes and objects. It is extremely welcome that nowadays more and more academics accept ancient Iranian influence on Classical Scythian material culture.

This international team of academics has produced two exemplary volumes. They form issue 1 of *Hamburger Forschungen zur Archäologie*, edited by Hans Georg Niemeyer and Renate Rolle. Huge credit must be given to the editors and authors, but also to the publisher, Philipp von Zabern, for the excellent standard of production. We eagerly await further works of this nature and quality.

Gocha R. Tsetskhladze
University of London

Octavian Bounegru & Mihail Zahariade 1996, *Les Forces Navales du Bas Danube et de la Mer Noire aux I^{er} – VI^e Siècles. Colloquia Pontica 2*. Edited by Gocha R. Tsetskhladze. Oxford, Oxbow Books, xii + 124 pp. ISBN 1-900188-17-1.

The authors, both known for their extensive Greek and Roman archaeological research and the teaching of Ancient History, have brought together the historical, epigraphical and archaeological evidence which enables archaeologists to set ship finds – and their nautical environment – along the Lower Danube and on the Black Sea in the 1st-6th centuries of our era in their proper historical context.

Extensively, classical texts and archaeological reports on topics in this field are made accessible. This results in a *Supplementum Epigraphicum*, which lists the bibliographical references to the texts themselves, and a synopsis of excavated site plans of cities, harbours, and their installations. However, one needs in some cases the original publications to analyse the finds and plans critically. The principal sources of relevant ancient ship types and the logistics of the *classes*, interwoven with the Roman fortifications along the Danube, are of course Trajan's Column and a series of mosaics.

The resulting handsome publication will be a great help for any scholar and academic who wants to set up a research program on nautical archaeology and Roman frontier defence systems in the Black Sea region. He has to bear in mind that nautical archaeology in northern and western Europe can only set, by anticipation, standards for the excavation and interpretation of ships as real archaeological artefacts, still to be discovered.

Our Romanian colleagues have contributed an indispensable guidebook to the nautical-historical scene of the period, especially in Romania, which will give ships and harbour(installation)s – to be found, no doubt, in great quantity – their true historical perspective.

From such a perspective, we can only eagerly await Pontic shipfinds and *Les Forces Navales, Part 2: Fouilles d'Archéologie Navales du Bas Danube et de la Mer Noire aux I^{er} – VI^e Siècles*.

M.D. de Weerd

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TRANSLITERATIONS

The editors urge the authors to use the following standards of transliteration from Russian, Bulgarian, and Greek in their contributions:

Russian:

Аа = a	Зз = z	Щщ = p	Чч = ch
Бб = b	Ии = i	Рр = r	Шш = sh
Вв = v	Йй = y	Сс = s	Щщ = shch
Гг = g	Кк = k	Тт = t	Ъъ = '(apostrophe)
Дд = d	Лл = l	Уу = u	Ыы = y
Ее = ye, e (1)	Мм = m	Фф = f	Ээ = e
Ёё = yë, ë (1)	Нн = n	Хх = kh	Юю = yu
Жж = zh	Оо = o	Цц = ts	Яя = ya

(1) ye initially, after vowels, and after Ъ and Ь ; e elsewhere; when written as ë in Russian, transliterate accordingly as yë or ë.

Bulgarian:

Аа = a	Жж = zh	Мм = m	Тт = t	Шш = sh
Бб = b	Зз = z	Нн = n	Уу = u	Щщ = shch
Вв = v	Ии = i	Оо = o	Фф = f	Ъъ =
Гг = g	Йй = y	Пп = p	Хх = kh	Ьь = '(apostrophe)
Дд = d	Кк = k	Рр = r	Цц = ts	Юю = yu
Ее = e	Лл = l	Сс = s	Чч = ch	Яя = ya

Greek:

Αα = a	Εε = e	Ιι = i	Νν = n	Ρρ = r	Φφ = f
Ββ = b	Ζζ = z	Κκ = k	Ξξ = x	Σσ, ζ = s	Χχ = sh
Γγ = g	Ηη = e	Λλ = l	Οο = o	Ττ = t	Ψψ = ps
Δδ = d	Θθ = th	Μμ = m	Ππ = p	Υυ = u	Ωω = o

The spiritus asper is to be rendered as h.