

Peoples in the Black Sea Region from the Archaic to the Roman Period

Proceedings of the 3rd International Workshop
on the Black Sea in Antiquity held in
Thessaloniki, 21-23 September 2018

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Contents

Introduction	iii
North Black Sea	
Greeks and non-Greeks in the <i>BCOSPE</i> Project.....	3
Victor Cojocaru and Lavinia Grumeza	
Olbian Style Bronze Mirrors with Zoomorphic Handles from Mingachevir	13
Zaur Hasanov	
Chronology of the Early Scythian Sites in the Lower Don Region	23
M.Yu. Rusakov and A.A. Rusakova	
Greeks and non-Greeks in Contact: Commercial and Epigraphical Practices According to the Lead and Ostrakon Letters from the Northern Black Sea	31
Madalina Dana	
‘Barbarian’ Peoples of the Northern Black Sea Region on the <i>Tabula Peutingeriana</i> versus Literary Tradition.....	43
Alexander V. Podossinov	
South Black Sea	
‘Barbarians’ in the Southern Black Sea: The Extreme Case of the Mossynoikoi	53
Manolis Manoledakis	
Roman Soldiers in Sinope	65
Lâtife Summerer and Perikles Christodoulou	
West Black Sea	
Quantitative Approaches to Epigraphy: Epigraphic Production in Thrace as a Mirror of Social Organisation.....	83
Petra Janouchová (Heřmánková)	
<i>Aegyptiaca</i> Pontica: Old and New Evidence from the West Pontic Coast	95
Mila Chacheva	
Consumers of Attic Pottery in the Western Black Sea Region	105
Despoina Tsiafaki and Amalia Avramidou	
Inconspicuous Presence? Macedonians on the West Pontic Coast in the Early Hellenistic Period	113
Margarit Damyanov, Emil Nankov and Daniela Stoyanova	
East Black Sea	
‘Colchians Did Not Like to Write’: Reflections on Greek Epigraphy in the Eastern Black Sea Region and Its Hinterland.....	131
David Braund	
The Other Greeks: The Achaei of the Western Caucasus	141
Ioannis K. Xydopoulos	
General	
Pontic Greeks and Locals: Subterranean Dwellings Once Again.....	149
Gocha R. Tsetskhldze	

The Roman Naval Strategy in the Black Sea in the 1st-3rd Centuries AD. Some Preliminary Considerations	185
† Mihail Zahariade	
List of Contributors	189

Introduction

This volume contains papers presented at the ‘Third International Workshop on the Black Sea in Antiquity’ entitled ‘Peoples in the Black Sea Region, from the Archaic to the Roman period’, which was organised from 21 to 23 September 2018 at the International Hellenic University. It completes the series of workshops on the Black Sea in Antiquity that started in 2012 at the university, within the frame of its English-speaking postgraduate programme ‘Master of Arts in Black Sea Studies’. The programme, which is now entitled ‘Master of Arts in Black Sea and Eastern Mediterranean Studies’, was launched in 2010. In a period when the Black Sea had undoubtedly become a dynamic field, with dozens of research programmes and publications devoted to it, the specific programme was the first worldwide dedicated exclusively to the Black Sea region, which thus penetrated as a separate field into the area of education.

Two years after the establishment of the programme, an international workshop on Black Sea in Antiquities was held in Thessaloniki from 21 to 23 September 2012, in order to supplement the teaching procedure with a workshop on the topics taught, and bring the students in touch with international scholars. The proceedings of this workshop were published in 2013 by the British Archaeological Reports (S 2498), under the title ‘*Exploring the Hospitable Sea. Proceedings of the International Workshop on the Black Sea in Antiquity held in Thessaloniki, 21-23 September 2012*’.

The success of that workshop as well as its impact on several Black Sea scholars led to the organisation of a second one, three years later, the proceedings of which were published in 2016 by Archaeopress, under the title ‘*The Black Sea in the light of new archaeological data and theoretical approaches. Proceedings of the 2nd International Workshop on the Black Sea in Antiquity held in Thessaloniki, 18-20 September 2015*’.

A major aim of the first workshop was to bring together mainly young scholars (Doctors or PhD students) from all over the world who are engaged in research in the specific field. Indeed, for several of the participants, it was their first international publication. In the next two workshops half of the participants were young scholars, on whom the focus remained, but the workshops were also open to senior researchers, most of whom had encouraged our efforts from the very beginning – many of the authors of the three volumes visited the

International Hellenic University, at least once, to teach and supervise Master dissertations.

In the three volumes, 50 papers have been hosted in total, written by 66 (56 different) scholars. With this volume the International Hellenic University celebrates the first ten years of its Black Sea postgraduate programme, which still attracts students from all over the world, due to its uniqueness. The book is dedicated to all students and instructors who had been part of this MA programme, or contributed to its success in any other way all these years.

The reader will notice that the four parts of the Black Sea littoral are not equally represented. While there are four or five papers devoted to the north and west, the south and east have been the subject of only two papers each. This was not a deliberate choice; neither does it reflect the analogy in the workshop itself. Some colleagues that had presented papers about the southern part did not manage to submit them for several reasons; as far as the eastern part is concerned, it might invoke the smaller area that it covers, or otherwise, an accidental fact.

This time the focus of the workshop was on the peoples, as the very title indicates. Peoples that either inhabited, colonized, considered to have visited, acted in, or influenced in any way the Black Sea area. In some cases the activity or some characteristics of these peoples are examined through the archaeological evidence, while in others through epigraphy and the written sources, or even maps.

Our journey starts from the northern Black Sea. The first paper, by V. Cojocaru and L. Grumeza, provides a kind of bibliographical introduction to the volume. It presents the *Bibliographia classica orae septentrionalis Ponti Euxini*, a series of six volumes dedicated to the bibliography of the Northern Black Sea shore in antiquity, focusing on the historiographic debate on the Greeks and non-Greeks, and trying to obtain a clearer understanding of the ancient peoples of the Northern Black Sea region. In the next paper, Z. Hasanov deals with bronze mirrors with zoomorphic side handles, dated from as early as the 7th century BC, which are common in a wider area of the Northern Black Sea region, the Northern Caucasus and the Carpathian Basin, but also in the necropolis of Mingachevir in Azerbaijan. It is the finds from the latter area that constitute the main topic of

the author's research, who examines their possible areas of origin, in any case highlighting their Scythian influences.

The early Scythian sites in the Lower Don region, which M.Yu. Rusakov and A.A. Rusakova address in the third paper, in an attempt to discriminate between three centres of the archaic Scythian culture, based mainly on burial finds, belong also to the same period. M. Dana introduces us to the crucial issue of the contacts between Greeks and non-Greeks in the northern Black Sea, by examining letters on lead and ostrakon from the area, dated from the period between the 6th and the 3rd centuries BC. They mention people bearing non-Greek names involved in commercial transactions with the inhabitants of the Greek cities, acting as business partners, competitors or opponents. Finally, moving to a much later period, A. Podissinov devotes his contribution to the so-called 'barbarian' peoples of the northern side of the Euxine, as they appear on the *Tabula Peutingeriana*. The author suggests that the placement of these peoples on the map, among other geographical objects (such as mountains, rivers, lakes, and seas), might help us understand their geographical location in some literary sources, as well as in reality.

Our next stop is the southern Black Sea littoral. Among the numerous peoples that inhabited this one thousand kilometres long strip of land between the mountains and the sea were the Mossynoikoi. They had the 'privilege' to have been called by Xenophon and the Ten Thousand as the most uncivilised people whose country they had traversed during their expedition. Examining the narrations of their customs and their way of life in Greek sources, M. Manoledakis attempts to explain the reasons for such a negative perception of the Mossynoikoi by the Greeks. The next paper focuses on Sinope, and more specifically on the presence of Roman military there. L. Summerer and P. Christodoulou investigate this presence through seven inscriptions and a possible reference to a soldier in a further inscription. One of them is published here for the first time, while the other previously published inscriptions are revisited. Information gained from this epigraphic evidence is evaluated in terms of personal concerns, origin, rank and marital status of the soldiers, in order to shed light on the ethnic and cultural diversity of Roman Sinope.

Having completed the north-south axis, we then move to the western part of the Black Sea. P. Janouchová (Heřmánková) examines epigraphic production in Thrace as a mirror of social organisation. She attempts to demonstrate how approaches towards publication of inscriptions changed over the course of thousand years, from the 6th century BC to the 5th century AD, and to discuss the potential relationship between the

socio-political organisation and the size of epigraphic production. She argues that at pre-state level society inscriptions were seen and used as social prestige markers that only a few powerful individuals were able to secure. M. Chavheva presents the Egyptian and Egyptianizing objects found on the West Pontic shores, mostly in the Greek colonies. Special attention is paid to some personal ornaments like faience scarabs, glass and bronze pendants, a finger ring with representation of a Ptolemaic queen, etc. These intriguing small finds led her to some observations on the perception of Egyptian cults and magical connotations in a different cultural environment.

In the next paper, stress is laid on the consumers of Attic pottery in the Black Sea region. D. Tsiafaki and A. Avramidou aim to extract information from vases regarding the people – producers, transporters and consumers – related to them. Issues such as particular preferences and tastes, contacts and exchanges or variations through time and site are explored, in order to understand the presence and use of Attic vases by the inhabitants of the region. M. Damyanov, E. Nankov and D. Stoyanova discuss the available evidence, written and archaeological, of Macedonian presence along the Black Sea coast from the Thracian conquests of Philip II to the death of Lysimachus. The review of the scarce written sources reveals more evenly spread data for the time of Philip and Alexander III, while all mentions for Lysimachus' reign are concentrated to the north of the Balkan Range. Similar is the picture provided by the archaeological evidence.

Finally, we head to the eastern Black Sea region, where the indisputably dominant peoples were the Colchians. D. Braund observes that the Colchians seem to have a remarkably minimal habit of writing in ancient times, and explores the significance of the absence or presence of the written word in social and political contexts, wondering whether the lack of ancient Greek epigraphy in Colchis might point to the superficiality of Greek cultural influence in a more profound manner. But it was not only the Colchians that inhabited the western Black Sea side. Several Greek sources from the 5th century BC and on mention the Achaei, crediting them ethnic descent from Homeric heroes. Since in the course of ancient Greek history there have been many attempts from the Greek colonists to re-categorize the barbarians as Greeks, I. Xydopoulos tries to answer why in this case not only this re-categorization was not applied to the Achaei of the Black Sea, but instead we have a reverse picture, i.e. Greeks turning into barbarians.

In the last part of the volume, one will find two contributions dedicated to aspects of Greek and Roman activity in the whole Black Sea and not in

a particular side of it. In a richly illustrated paper, G.Tsetskhladze re-examines subterranean architecture as one characteristic of the first Greek colonies around the Black Sea, using Berezan and Olbia as case study. Considering new material, he concludes that these structures were most probably Greek and not local, as has sometimes been supported. Finally, M. Zahariade examines briefly the Roman naval policy and strategy in the Black Sea in the 1st-3rd centuries AD. Unfortunately, Mihail Zahariade passed away only a few days after having submitted the final version of his paper. He was a Romania's prominent archaeologist, who left significant research work as a valuable legacy.

I would like to thank several people and institutions for their valuable contribution, in many different

ways, in organising the workshop as well as in the editing of its volume: the administration of the International Hellenic University, as well as the 'Alexander Onassis Public Benefit Foundation' for supporting and financing the workshop; the staff of the University who have dedicated a lot of time and effort to organising and arranging all the procedural details; Anna Papadopoulou and Dori Rauschenberger, for helping in several ways, such as carefully reading all the papers and carrying out proofreading of them; and of course many thanks to *Archaeopress. Publishers of Academic Archaeology*, especially David Davison, Dan Stott, Rajka Makjanic and Vendi Jukic Buca, who once again showed a gratifying interest in publishing the proceedings of our third workshop.

Manolis Manoledakis