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The Nemea Valley Archaeological Project: 1985 Season Report

J. L. Davis

James C. Wright
Bryn Mawr College, jwright@brynmawr.edu

J. F. Cherry

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in a systematic way, the entire corpus. This paper proposes criteria for a consistent classification of Etruscan mirrors based on stylistic features and physical characteristics.

In the past, style alone was utilized to assign mirrors to particular groups. This was so because most scholars were working from drawings of the engraved designs rather than studying the actual mirrors. Stylistic features were often employed indiscriminately or with little attention to qualities which are salient only when the objects are studied in person. Also ignored until recently were several important "stylistic" features which have nothing to do with engraved designs: mirror shape; disc section; shape and decorative treatment of the handle or tang; subsidiary ornament on the obverse or rim, etc.

A new approach to Etruscan mirrors has become possible with the publication of several major collections. We are now in a position to couple stylistic features with more objective data such as chemical composition, weight, ratios of various measurements, etc., which can be analyzed by modern statistical methods. These methods will relate chemical and physical characteristics to the classification based on stylistic criteria and, in some cases, provenance.

Using a series of examples, this paper explores the potential for developing a rational classification of Etruscan mirrors based on both sets of criteria. In addition to the system's value as an organizational tool, the paper also demonstrates its potential for dating certain mirror groups and for answering questions of authenticity (see R. De Puma, "Etruscan Mirrors: Questions of Authenticity," in Atti del Secondo Congresso Internazionale Etrusco [Florence 1986]).

**Morgantina Before the Greeks: Aspects of Prehistory Reconsidered: Robert Leighton, University of Edinburgh**

Excavations at Morgantina undertaken by Princeton University and by the Universities of Illinois and Virginia since 1955 have revealed evidence of prehistoric occupation which is of major significance for the Sicilian Bronze and Iron Ages, and for the question of the Hellenization of an inland native settlement. The prehistoric material from stratified habitation levels and well-preserved hut floors has been studied over the past three excavation seasons, resulting in a reassessment of the early history of the site.

The Early Bronze Age Castelluccio settlement (early 2nd millennium B.C.) is followed by a hiatus until a substantial new settlement of the later Ausonian II (10th–9th cs. B.C.) was established in the Late Bronze Age. The preliminary identification of a tenuous interim period of occupation in the 13th–12th cs. is no longer considered valid (E. Sjöqvist, AJA 68 [1964] 146; R. Leighton, AJA 88 [1984] 389–91). Although the Ausonian settlement, which is characterized by ceramics and artifacts closely paralleled at Lipari and Lentini, comes to an end before the Greek colonial period, occupation of the Citadella just prior to the foundation of the hellenized Archaic town is attested.

Particularly interesting in this respect is a little-known class of Iron Age painted pottery, sometimes misleadingly called Sikelo-geometric, which, however, is distinct from that produced under Greek colonial influence. This pottery, of uncertain origin, continues the Sicilian Bronze Age tradition of fine painted ware. Production of this indigenous geometric style was abandoned only when Greek colonial influence brought about profound changes in the manufacture and style of local painted pottery.

**The Earliest Greeks in the Territory of Metaponto: Sarah S. Leach, Sweet Briar College**

Recent excavations in the territory of Metaponto have made important contributions to the history of the Greek colonial period in southern Italy. The hilltop settlement at Incoronata, overlooking the colonial city of Metaponto, offers new evidence about the important questions of when and from where the first Greeks arrived in this territory. The site, excavated by teams from the University of Texas at Austin, the University of Milan and the Archaeological Superintendency of Basilicata, indicates a substantial Greek presence in the area prior to the foundation of Metaponto.

Strabo claims that Metaponto was founded by colonists from Achaea and the excavators of the city have suggested a foundation around 650 B.C., on the basis of the earliest Greek pottery found there. The site of Incoronata, however, contains Greek and indigenous pottery of the 8th and early 7th cs. B.C., but none of later date. Examination of the pottery from the University of Texas excavations at Incoronata shows numerous similarities with that found at Sybaris, earliest of the Greek foundations along the Gulf of Taranto, rather than with Siris, as Adamesteanu and Orlandini maintain.

Sybaris also is said to have been an Achaean foundation, but she belongs to the first generation of colonial ventures on the Italian peninsula, one characterized by exploration and commerce rather than by immediate foundation of subcolonies. In the period of exploration following the foundation of Sybaris the Greeks appeared at Incoronata. Probably they were looking for the same sort of native settlements whose trade had proved so lucrative for the Euboeans in Etruria, but the local population of Basilicata was neither so rich nor so well-organized as that of Etruria and the initial trading ventures gradually gave way to new colonial foundations.

**SESSION IV C: PREHISTORIC AEGEAN: EXCAVATION AND SURVEYS; NEopalatial AND POST-Palatial**

**The Nemea Valley Archaeological Project: 1985 Season Report: Jack L. Davis, University of Illinois at Chicago, James C. Wright, Bryn Mawr College, and John F. Cherry, University of Cambridge**

The Nemea Valley Archaeological Project completed its second season in 1985. Work continued with survey of the
valley, excavation of Tsoungiza hill, environmental and anthro-

topological research (including historical ecology), and

studies in the museum (notably of ceramics, lithics, and flo-

tal and faunal remains).

The survey covered over 16 km², including a cross-val-

ley transect from near Phlius to Mt. Apesas, an area north

and west of Tsoungiza, and a transect south of Nemea, not

far from Mycenae. Thirty sites were defined, and at these,

as well as in 1300 individual landscape tracts, Archai-

Classical and Byzantine material was abundant, as in

1984. This year, however, finds of Late Neolithic, Middle

Helladic, Late Geometric, and, especially, Roman date

helped fill gaps in the sequence of settlement and land-use

in the region. Examination of several recently abandoned

villages was coordinated with anthropological-historical

investigations.

On Tsoungiza, excavation sampled all periods except the

Neolithic. Surface collection and resistivity survey helped
to define the perimeter of the site. Structures, floor deposits,
and pits provide the following sequence of occupation
(phases often recognizable only as highly localized con-
centrations of finds): EH I, II (several phases), III; MH III;
LH I (substantial settlement deposits), II A, IIB, II A2, and
II B1–2. Study of the 1926/1927 excavations was nearly
completed. Emphasis of the 1985 excavations was on defin-
ing limits of occupation, and on exposing structures of Early
Neoreanae date (a total of six so far). Of the Early Bronze
Age, much new material, including a burnt late EH II
building and several luxury items, suggests that the site was
a place of some importance at that time.

THE PSEIRA PROJECT: 1985 SEASON: Philip Betancourt,
Temple University, Costis Davaras, Aghios Nikolaos Museum, and John McEnroe, Hamilton
College

The Pseira Project is a Greek-American collaboration to
investigate the Minoan settlement on the tiny, barren island
of Pseira, first excavated by Richard Seager in 1906 and
1907. The initial season focused on a better understanding
of architecture exposed by Seager. Three buildings were
cleaned: Building AC (the “Shrine”), Seager’s House B, and
the House of the Pillar Partitions.

Important new conclusions include a better understand-
ing of the “shrine”, which had a complex plan and more
than one phase of construction, and information on Minoan
baths, staircase construction, and pillar-and-door partition
walls from the House of the Pillar Partitions, one of the
finest examples of Minoan domestic architecture in eastern
Crete. Finds include loom weights, wasters from a kiln, ob-
sidian in all stages of manufacture, and other objects indi-
cating Pseira was a full Minoan community, not just an
outpost from Crete as has sometimes been suggested.

Excavations at Kommos during 1985: Joseph W.
Shaw, University of Toronto

Excavations at the Minoan harbor and Greek sanctuary
site of Kommos in south-central Crete concentrated around
and within the huge Minoan ashlar buildings in a further
attempt to define their size, plan, and use. The LM I build-
ings (J, T) flanked a large court at least 28.75 m. (east–
west) by 35 m. (north–south), bordered along the north by a
sta with adjacent storerooms on the east. T suffered heavy
burning, mostly in its eastern rooms, probably in early LM
I, but continued in use into LM II. In LM III, although the
sta was abandoned, much of the western area was remod-
elled and reused, and on the east a very large new construc-
tion, P, was built. Being at least 35 m.², P is the largest LM
III structure discovered. Its plan, although simple, is of
great interest, consisting of at least five enormous galleries,
5.60 m. wide and as much as 35 m. long, facing onto a huge
open space completely open to the sea. We do not yet know
whether the galleries were open on the east, but on the west
they were open, without doorways or any other means of
closure. The purpose of the galleries, which have no inter-
nal floor features or crosswalls, remains unknown, but the
theory proposed earlier by Maria Shaw that they were for
storage, and in particular storage for ships during the win-
ter months, gained plausibility this season when no obstruc-
tion was found hindering passage to the sea.

Little or nothing remains of the original contents of these
ashlar buildings, and what we have are remnants of the
times of reuse, at the moment appearing to be of a domestic
nature. Artifacts of note emerged, however, in an LM I–III
house north of the east–west Minoan road, as well as in
Greek levels. In the latter were Protogeometric vessels and
small bronzes, including figurines.

EXCAVATION OF BATES’ ISLAND, A LATE BRONZE AGE
EGYPTIAN TRADING STATION: Donald White, Uni-
versity Museum, University of Pennsylvania

The only natural harbor between Alexandria and To-
brook is at Mersa Matruh, which, prima facie, suggests the
importance of this site for the Cyrenaican Pentapolis and
Egypt proper over a broad time span. In 1914 Oric Bates
( Harvard African Studies 8 [1927] 125 ff.) surveyed Mat-
ruh, ancient Patarion, excavating a cache of Late
Bronze Age Cypriot White Slip Ware on a small island east
of the town. The University Museum undertook two
months of survey and excavation this past summer, concen-
trating on Bates’ Island and its nearby environs. Our goals
were 1) to confirm the 1914 discovery of Bronze Age mate-
rial and to increase the sample of artifacts and refine its
chronology; 2) to clarify the nature of the early settlement as
well as its relations to the neighboring Libyan tribes and
Dynastic Egypt; 3) to fix the foundation of Patarion, con-
ventionally linked with Alexander’s trip to Siwah; and
4) to assess the role played by Patarion’s eastern subur-
ban extension with the town’s later period of development.

The report largely focuses on the first two objectives. In
addition to Bates’ original White Slip, we now have Myce-
naean, Minoan, Cypriot Base Ring I and II, Red Lustrous,
White Shaved, White Painted Wheelmade III (?), and a