



## CONNECTING THE MEDITERRANEAN THROUGH NEW ARENAS

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Regional interconnectivities in the Mediterranean past have been the subject of scholarly interest since Braudel's mid-twentieth century exposition on the connected Mediterranean of the sixteenth century era of Philip II. He emphasised the recurring cycles in which geographic environments and social values developed and argued that a landscape is constructed by its inhabitants as much as its physical nature. This perspective promoted a long duration focus of historical understanding, rather than a single, fixed point history or a chronological narrative based upon events. It served as a starting point for thinking more broadly about how the Mediterranean works to both connect and divide regions. It has also encouraged scholarship to consider how people have capitalised upon the opportunities provided by the sea and its environs to foster the movement of individuals and groups, as well as goods, ideas, beliefs, practices, and ways of living. The papers in this collection similarly reflect upon enduring characteristics of a lived Mediterranean, with a focus on the world of the Greeks and Romans. While each discusses different peoples, periods, and media of focus, several underlying themes emerge.

Lilian de Angelo Laky's contribution draws the coastline of the eastern Adriatic – a region long neglected by modern scholarship - into mainstream discussion about Greek movement and settlement during the mid-first millennium BCE. This region was known by the Greeks as Illyria, and it was home to a number of tribes and kingdoms, as well as several significant Greek settlements. Nineteenth and twentieth century politics made fieldwork in this region difficult, however, and thus it has largely been overlooked in broader

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Greek colonisation syntheses. Yet the Adriatic itself was a sea that united its own coastlines. This paper's assessment of the local networks of interaction along the eastern Adriatic coastline and their engagement with the wider Mediterranean world provides a much-needed synthesis of our knowledge to date and opportunities for future research.

Moshe Fisher examines the uses of marble in architectural construction and decoration in ancient Israel as a medium of social connectivity from the Hellenistic to Roman periods. Marble does not occur naturally in this region; it was sourced from various quarries and workshops around the Mediterranean to construct and decorate substantial public buildings. The fact that marble was imported throughout these periods demonstrates connectivity in several ways. Firstly, there is the shared understandings of civic status and wealth that constructions in marble communicated to diverse communities and cultures around the Mediterranean. Secondly, the fact that marble use held such shared representations over time reflect the long duration of connectivity the Mediterranean itself afforded those resident around its shores.

Fabio Morales zeroes in on the balance between local and global significance through examination of the Attalid dedication on the Athenian Acropolis. Erected most likely at the end of the third century by Attalos I of Pergamon, the Attalid dedication is, in fact, a series of nearly life-size sculptures of Giants, Amazons, Persians and Gauls, all in a state of defeat and near collapse or death, according to Pausanias, who saw the bronze originals still in place in the second century CE. What survives today are later marble copies. Nevertheless, in their iconography, we recognise the allegory of Greek conquest over barbarians, to which the Attalids presented themselves as heirs by the second century BCE. Morales assesses the iconographic and historical reflections of order and chaos in this collection as a metonym for the balance between widely shared understandings in a new global-world order and the traditions of the past that had created conflict between groups, and which the Attalids sought to overcome to create a stable empire.

Examining such global-local engagement in a specific context diachronically, Juliana Figueira da Hora highlights the evolution of practices in sanctuary contexts in the north Aegean. While these sacred mainland contexts were established by Greeks inhabiting the north Aegean islands, the practices performed reflect a blend of Greek and Thracian traditions that evolves into something unique to this region. This is the essence of hybridisation, in which global Greek, local Greek and local Thracian traditions and beliefs coalesce here into explicitly regional practices.



This form of hybridisation is also the focus of Fabio Vergara Cerqueira's analysis of the development of south Italian Red Figure vase forms and motifs between the fifth and third centuries BCE. In this study, form and format styles derived from Greek and indigenous vase production and painting practices are assessed in light of their contribution to what we regard as Apulian Red Figure vases. Through a blending of Greek and indigenous traditions and preferences, a distinct style emerges over the second half of the first millennium BCE that defines ceramic output of this region.

Funerary inscriptions afford us another arena in which to examine the translation of global practices as they merge with local ones. Airan dos Santos Borges de Oliveira explores specifically hospitality and patronage as evidenced in epitaphs from the Roman province of Lusitania, Hispania, during the second century CE. Close analysis of two funerary texts reveal a careful balance between widely shared Roman values and their specific articulation and significance in the context of Lusitania. Ergün Laflı, Stefano Magnani and Maurizio Buora present two Roman era funerary inscriptions from the eastern Pontus that reveal how Latin was used to display local awareness of global forms and practices, and to communicate this to others, whereas the Greek texts spoke to a local, Greek-speaking, community familiar with virtues long associated with Greek funerary texts.

Early Christianity is the focus of Pedro Luiz de Toledo Piza contribution. He explores how methodologies of globalisation theory might be used effectively to gain new perspectives on the early development of Christianity, when new ideas, practices and beliefs were evolving while also amalgamating with existing traditions.

The interview with Hans Beck pulls together the various theoretical strands that each of the above papers present to consider how methodologies of globalisation theory help us to understand the complex connectivities of antiquity. Looking particularly at Greek culture, he assesses the balance between shared traits that we collectively regard as Greek against their varied performances in localised contexts to conclude that Greek culture in itself is multiple in how the Greeks were Greek. He emphasises the importance of local contexts in constructing a global understanding of what it was to be Greek, and how being Greek was recognised by other Greeks and non-Greeks alike.

The papers in this volume are linked by a number of common themes. One is that connections between groups are socially complex, and when endured over time will often merge widely shared and localised practices into



something new in a particular time and place, and distinct from elsewhere. Another is that these practices communicate identities, values and beliefs to diverse audiences, features of which may resonate in different ways to different viewers. These are complex connectivities. That such complex connectivities communicate multiple meanings to diverse audiences over time and media reflects a third theme, and one that returns us to Braudel. This is the idea of a long duration of history constructed of recurring cycles of social values set within cyclical geographic repetitions of contrasting seasons, tides, and landscapes that collectively evolve slowly.

It could be argued, therefore, that globalisation perspectives – with their shared and local practices in a complex, symbiotically balanced tension with one another – represent another kind of repetitive process within the lived environment of the ancient Mediterranean. Even in our world today we see tension between practices in common as they compete against distinguishing identities and traditions. To find a way past these conflicts, it is all the more important to recognise the enduring characteristics of the human lived experience within the physical environment. Only study of the diverse and complex connectivities between people and groups in the past allows us to understand the options that lie ahead for ourselves.