

Critical Source Review

There are three categories of sources I expect to use in my dissertation, namely epigraphy, numismatics and archaeology. Of the different factors which contributed to the uneven progress of the Euboian League I aim to focus on the idea of ethnic identity and the role of intervening larger powers. This means that I will be using the various sources to examine the connections and networks both between the Euboian *poleis* and the wider world.

Literary sources will not play a large role in my dissertation. While there are some significant incidental references to Eubolia and events surrounding it on their own they provide little information. However, since the role of ethnic identity and the general development of the *koina* are important elements some literary sources are useful. Since Hall suggests that myth was critical in the formation of ethnic identities references to a Homeric past must be considered¹. Strabo records information on Eubolia, in particular on the sanctuary of Artemis Amarysia, that gives us some hints of how the island and its inhabitants were later perceived². While ancient analysis of federalism is largely non-existent insights can be gleaned from the works of Polybius and Xenophon³. Literary sources then are not insignificant but they often do not directly inform my subject.

Archaeology

The archaeological record for Eubolia varies across the island. Of the four main *poleis* only Eretria is a large and well documented archaeological site. Knowledge of Chalkis is limited by the fact that it has continued to be a site of strategic importance and habitation meaning that, unlike Eretria, a modern town covers the area allowing only scattered glimpses beneath. Relatively less covered are the northern and southern regions of the island containing Histiaia and Karystos respectively. Recent decades though have seen some important work around Karystos.

Despite the uneven nature of the archaeological record there is much that will contribute to my study. One idea I intend to pursue is that if it was not the weakness of a sense of identity that led to the irregular history of the Euboian *koinon* it was the pressure of outside interference. Possible archaeological evidence supporting this idea is available. It has been argued that both Eretria and Karystos display signs of an Athenian presence in the 5th century and possible imperial interference in the form of cleruchies⁴.

For the most part I wish to examine the connections between the Euboian *poleis* and the exterior world. This would mean looking through the archaeological record to see if we can determine the state of communication and connection between the different regions. As examples it is possible to note the discovery of fortifications around the edges of Eretrian territory and recent work on a fortification in the region of Styra⁵. The latter is potentially of interest as it is dated to c.400B.C.E at the time of the incorporation of Styra into Eretria and close to one of the period suggested as marking the beginning of the Euboian *koinon*. While we perhaps shouldn't read too much into it, the positioning of a fortification on the border between Eretria and Karystos may say something of the relations between those two during this period.

The most significant single site for my study is likely to be the recently discovered sanctuary of Artemis Amarysia⁶. The confirmation of this important sanctuary will contribute to our understanding of the religious aspects of the *koinon*. As a site still under excavation, publication of the findings may be limited and their interpretation only preliminary but already it is intriguing to note that some of the most substantial structures identified so far date from the 4th and 3rd centuries

1 Hall, 1997; Hom. Il. 2.535

2 Strab.10.1.10

3 Beck, 2001

4 Green and Sinclair, 1970; Seifried and Parkinson, 2014

5 Whitley et al, 2006

6 Fachard et al, 2017

B.C.E, significant periods for the Euboian League⁷.

As well as sites on the island itself it will be useful to see if there are other places where Euboian identity may have been formed. In the network model proposed by Malkin for Archaic period colonisation the creation of a sense of identity may have come about in part due to activity overseas⁸. While not directly relating to the period I am primarily concerned with the archaeological record of Euboia beyond the island is worth considering.

Epigraphy

Alongside coinage epigraphy is perhaps the most important source. Overall the epigraphic record for Euboia reflects the state of the archaeological record. Knoepfler notes that Eretria has presented a relatively large body of texts while the other *poleis* are comparatively little known⁹. As my study will cover aspects of Euboia's relations and connections with the outside world other better covered areas will come into play such as Attica and Oropos.

The most significant individual inscriptions for my subject are IG XII.9.898 and 899 and IG XII.9.207. The first two are from the early second century B.C.E and provide some of the most detailed information on the league allowing Knoepfler to describe it at that point as a full federal state¹⁰. From a century earlier IG XII.9.207 concerns the organisation of festivals in the different *poleis*, demonstrating both the role of religion and, as one of the festivals was in honour of Demetrius Polikrates, the role of the larger powers in the development of the league.

In terms of examining the networks of the Euboian *poleis* the most helpful epigraphic evidence will be proxeny decrees. For Mack the institution of proxeny was key to the networking of *poleis*¹¹. There is a large dataset of proxeny decrees covering the Greek world though it goes without saying the data is far from complete so the conclusions drawn from it are limited. However, proxeny decrees should give us an idea of the interactions and communications across and beyond the island. Helpfully one of Mack's case studies is a proxeny list from Histiaia¹². A snapshot of its proxeny network in the 260s B.C.E shows the city trying to maintain contact with Macedonia and Athens during a politically unstable period. While Mack discounts another unidentified proxeny catalogue often ascribed to Euboia a certain amount of information is available. Chidioglou has collected a number of proxeny decrees relating to Karystos¹³. These decrees alongside other epigraphic evidence led her to conclude interestingly that Karystos' network focused on the Aegean islands, the Kyklades and Attica.

These are the ways in which I intend to use the available epigraphic evidence, not just to attest the existence of the Euboian League and any internal information we can find but to examine the networks and links of the cities to each other and the outer world.

Numismatics

Coinage is often fundamental to the study of federal leagues. Due to the frequent absence of literary sources and the fragmentary nature of epigraphic sources the coins of the *koina* supply much of the critical information on the leagues. The existence of a federal coin often confirms the existence of the federation itself and speaks to a level of cooperation. The location of the mint, the iconography,

7 Fachard et al, 2017, p172

8 Malkin, 2011

9 Knoepfler, 2001

10 Knoepfler, 2015

11 Mack, 2015

12 Mack, 2015

13 Chidioglou, 2017

their distribution and whether federal coins circulated alongside local issues all allow a reconstruction of some aspects of the league history. Indeed for Larsen the coinage of the Euboian League was the most significant fact about its history¹⁴.

The two principal studies on the coinage of the Euboian League, those of Wallace and Picard, highlight both the importance and the potential issues in the use of coinage¹⁵. With so much relaying on coinage a different reading of the same evidence can radically alter our understanding of the history of the Euboian League. For instance Wallace sees a federal organisation around the time of the island's revolt from Athens in 411B.C.E¹⁶. Picard believes Wallace's chronology is too long and by lowering the estimate argues against the existence of the league at that point¹⁷. Largely due to the coinage almost half a century can be added or subtracted from our history. Larsen's comment on the interest in the coinage of the league stems from the idea that Eretria may have been minting federal coinage in the absence of a league or with it having little practical presence. Wallace too saw the city maintaining the fiction of a league during certain periods¹⁸. This warns us that we can not simply read the league's history off its surviving coins.

The iconography of the coins is important in what it may tell us about the sense of identity on the island. Even if the coins don't always testify to a political reality the existence of a common set of images in use across the different *poleis* suggests a feeling of community. While the coins of Euboia frequently carry images related to the individual city common images such as a female head representing Euboia or a cow represented the island as a whole. Nelson and Picard link these images to Artemis Amarysia and so provide us with evidence for the religious element in identity formation¹⁹.

Additionally, it is important to note that coins for all their symbolic weight were also practical instruments. Mackil and van Alfen's idea of a cooperative coinage which seeks to shift the focus onto the coins economic function is of interest²⁰. Elsewhere Mackil argues that economic factors were a large element in the development of *koina* meaning for my study that the coinage is a sign of the links and communication between the island's *poleis* which I wish to study²¹.

14 Larsen, 1968, p.97

15 Wallace, 1956 ;Picard, 1979

16 Wallace, 1956, p.1

17 Picard, 1979, p.165

18 Wallace, 1956, p.4

19 Nelson, 1931, p.90; Picard, 1979, p.221

20 Mackil and van Alfen, 2006

21 Mackil, 2013

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