

My aim is to examine the possible reasons behind the alternating pattern of formation and dissolution which make up the history of Euboia during the Classical and Hellenistic periods. Most work on the Euboian League has so far focused on reconstructing its history with explanations often limited to brief comments on the geographical and ethnic fragmentation of the island¹. These factors may indeed have been decisive but further exploration of them will be profitable as this question essentially leads us to examine the factors that contributed to the rise of federalism.

In their introduction to the most recent general survey on Greek federalism Beck and Funke provide an overview of the development of scholarship on the topic². Though there were significant earlier works the foundational study of Greek federalism is Larsen's 1968 survey, which while it has since been challenged on some points did much to launch the subject³. Larsen's work has in recent decades been challenged due to its view on the development of the *koina* out of the tribal group or *ethnos*⁴. It is not so much the conclusion that ethnic identity or a sense of shared kinship was an important, perhaps even critical, factor in the development of the *koina* as the fact that the weakness of Larsen's work was its "lack of in-depth structural analysis"⁵. For Hall, Larsen was mistaken in assuming that the ethnic identities of the groups who formed *koina* "were primordial categories that had entertained a consciousness of their ethnic unity in the period prior to the supposed migrations"⁶. Mackil criticised this primordial view as it does not explain how these identities were formed nor what function they played in the development of federalism⁷.

More recent scholarship has been reluctant to draw a straight line between the tribe and the *koinon* and has instead looked at a range of factors which contributed to the development of federalism. One of the most important approaches is that of Mackil. Rather than there being one decisive factor or path, federalism came about as the result of a series of interactions on the economic, religious and political levels⁸. Applying this to my subject would mean searching for the connections in these different activities across Euboia. Should it be the case that interactions in one area of activity seem weak than this may indicate that a relative importance can be given to one of the different factors. Mackil and van Alfen earlier suggested the idea of a "cooperative coinage" and stressed that economic relations could have preceded the creation of political institutions and laid the groundwork of cooperation that led to federalism⁹. The possibility that coinage may have existed separate from political institutions is relevant to Euboia as at times a league coinage seemed to exist while the league did not¹⁰. Perhaps this was not an attempt to maintain the fiction of a federal state but a testimony to existing economic interactions on the island which suggests cooperation and interaction were ongoing in the absence of a federal state.

Euboia's fragmented ethnic make-up is given as one of the reasons why forming a federation on the island was difficult¹¹. Perhaps the most influential work on the subject of ethnicity is that of Hall. While those who see themselves as belonging to an ethnic group are likely to adhere to a primordialist view whereby their group is a naturally existing unit for Hall ethnic identity was socially constructed and deployed¹². Through tales of heroic ancestry and mythology people explained the origins of their groups and their current situation. Instead of seeing these stories as a faint memory of a genuine past, Hall's idea would suggest that the stories were part of an active

1 Knoepfler, 2015, p159; Picard, 1979, p207

2 Beck and Funke, 2015

3 Larsen, 1968

4 Mackil 2014; Hall 2015

5 Beck and Funke, 2015, p8

6 Hall, 2015, p48

7 Mackil, 2014, p270

8 Mackil, 2013

9 Mackil and van Alfen, 2006

10 Wallace, 1956, p

11 Picard, 1979, p207

12 Hall, 1997, p19

process of creating and reinforcing a sense of group identity¹³. This is the approach I will be adopting towards the critical question of ethnic identity. Euboia is significantly less well documented than other regions but information on the identities of its inhabitants is available from literary sources, the iconography of its coinage and perhaps its religious festivals. These sources should allow me to see if identities on Euboia were used to mark divisions and so were an obstacle to federalism or whether they were flexible and open to the construction of a new island-wide group.

It will be necessary to consider the impact of outside powers on developments on Euboia. Eckstein's model of the Classical and Hellenistic eras as periods of interstate anarchy in which no practice of enforceable international law existed has implications for the development of the *koinon*¹⁴. The need to group together in the face of an unstable world would be an obvious motivation for federalism and numerous *koina* saw their history influenced by outside powers¹⁵. This is particularly relevant in the case of Euboia for throughout the period under consideration Chalkis especially was a target for larger states. This experience of imperialism may have helped the growth of a sense of Euboian identity. Equally the domination of another power could be a hindrance as occupation and interference prevented the unification of the island. How the Euboians reacted to and tried to operate in this interstate anarchy is a factor to keep in mind when trying to explain the history of its federal experience.

Overall I will be looking at a dynamic process and a series of changing interactions. Such a situation calls for a network approach to federalism. Network theory is a way of envisioning relations and connections between points, be they people, groups or places. A network is essentially a collection of points joined together¹⁶. Network theory has been deployed and developed across a range of disciplines and given the rise of the internet and the loosening of some traditional hierarchies across numerous societies in the recent decades it is an approach very much of our times¹⁷. Network theory has in some ways come rather late to ancient history and archaeology but more and more studies have demonstrated various aspects, starting in 1990 with Alexander and Danowski using Social Network Analysis to study Cicero's interactions¹⁸. As Alexander and Danowski pointed out the results of such an analysis may not lead to brand new conclusions but do help us envision societies in a different way and the visual elements of the theory such as charts and graphs can help us see aspects that may not otherwise be obvious¹⁹.

For McInerney the *koinon* is best understood as a complex network and while not specifically employing the theory Mackil hoped that her model of interactions would contribute to a network understanding of federalism²⁰. From the studies that have been carried out so far using network theory there are several interesting examples that can contribute to an understanding of the Euboian League.

Malkin saw the Greek spread across the Mediterranean as a type of 'small-world' network²¹. In such a network groups of points, nodes, are connected by so-called weak links, tenuous contacts, to more distant points eventually creating a widely dispersed network that remains interconnected. Most interesting for my work is the impact Malkin saw this having on the island of Rhodes. What was a multi-*poleis* island was, when viewed from a distance by its colonists and contacts, seen as one place, its identity was condensed by distance²². Euboia too was a multi-*poleis* island involved in colonisation and so it will be worth searching for a similar effect that may have helped form a Euboian identity. The situations of Rhodes and Euboia are not exactly parallel and it is interesting to

13 Hall, 1997

14 Eckstein, 2006

15 Mackil, 2013, p2

16 Newman, 2010

17 Malkin, 2011

18 Cline, 2012; Alexander and Danowski, 1990

19 Alexander and Danowski, 1990; Clime, 2012

20 McInerney, 2013, p469; Mackil, 2013, p406

21 Malkin, 2011

22 Malkin, 2011, p69

note Constantakopoulou's suggestion that Euboia was not seen as a true island²³. However, Malkin provided a useful hint that a similar identity forming process may have occurred when he noted that a colony of Chalkis in Sicily created a sub-colony named Euboia²⁴.

There are other forms of connections that will enable me to examine the networks of Euboia. Rutherford uses social network analysis in relation to the theoric networks which connected *poleis* to major sanctuaries²⁵. More promising perhaps is Mack's work on proxeny²⁶. Since proxeny was one of the main ways a *polis* connected to the wider world its network of *proxenoi* can reveal its interactions²⁷. Data is of course a problem here as to be fully relevant social network analysis requires a full dataset²⁸. Data for proxeny networks involving Euboia can be found but the information available to us will cover only a fraction of the network and will in most cases be spread across time. Despite these limitations proxeny decrees and other epigraphic evidence can be instructive. For instance, Chidioglou was able to state that Karystos' network centred on Attica and the city had a stronger connection to Delos than did the other *poleis* on Euboia²⁹. Findings like this perhaps go some way to explaining why Karystos kept its distance from the league in the 4th century, as Wallace believed it did³⁰.

Using aspects of network theory to explore the contacts and communications of the *poleis* of Euboia and looking across the spectrum of interactions suggested by Mackil should provide some firmer answers as to why the Euboian League developed the way it did³¹. Further research on the unusual *koinon* of Euboia should add to the increasing number of studies on Greek federalism.

23 Constantakopoulou, 2007, p13

24 Malkin, 2011, p53

25 Rutherford, 2007

26 Mack, 2015

27 Mack, 2015, p149

28 Scott, 2012, p28

29 Chidioglou, 2017, p332

30 Wallace, 1956

31 Mackil, 2013

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