

# HESPERÌA, 35

STUDI SULLA GRECITÀ DI OCCIDENTE

Fondatore

LORENZO BRACCESI

Nuova serie periodica - 1

Direttori

ALESSANDRA COPPOLA, MARIA CHIARA MONACO

«L'ERMA» di BRETSCHNEIDER

Università degli Studi di Padova  
Dipartimento dei Beni Culturali:  
archeologia, storia dell'arte, del cinema e della musica

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Contributi di

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MARIA CHIARA MONACO-RAFFAELLA CANTORE,  
CALOGERO MICCICHÈ, ELENA SANTAGATI,  
ALESSANDRA COPPOLA,  
GIUSEPPE LEPORE-FRANCESCO BELFIORI,  
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Via Marianna Dionigi, 57 – Roma  
www.lerma.it - www.lerma1896.com

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di testi e illustrazioni senza il permesso scritto dell'Editore

**Hesperia, 35**

«L'ERMA di BRETSCHNEIDER, 2019- .- v. ; 24 cm - p. 104

ISSN (Print) 1126-7658  
ISSN (Online) 2283-7531

ISBN (Carta) 978-88-913-1860-2  
ISBN (Digitale) 978-88-913-1863-3

CDD 938.

1. Grecia antica-Storia

Con questo volume *Hesperia* cambia, ma nella continuità. Il numero dimostra infatti la progressione della serie originale, arrivata ormai al trentacinquesimo volume, ma d'ora in avanti la collana si divide in due: la serie periodica, vera e propria rivista, a cadenza annuale, con una direzione e un comitato scientifico autonomi; e la serie monografica, altrettanto autonoma, con la direzione e il comitato scientifico precedenti.

L'ambito privilegiato resta l'occidente greco nei vari aspetti storico-politici, storiografici, letterari, filosofici, archeologici, artistici, sociali, religiosi e culturali. L'ampiezza dello sguardo, l'apertura metodologica, l'aggiornamento dei dati e delle prospettive di ricerca saranno ancora il criterio selettivo dei contributi.

Un grazie sentito a Lorenzo Braccisi, che ideò questo periodico, per averci offerto la responsabilità e il piacere della direzione di questa nuova serie.

ALESSANDRA COPPOLA, MARIA CHIARA MONACO



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MARIA CECILIA D'ERCOLE

*KATA THALASSAN.*  
THE WESTERN NETWORKS OF MARITIME CIRCULATION  
AND THE SANCTUARY OF DODONA\*

For centuries, religious beliefs have been one of the most important reasons accounting for mobilities and networking, and allowed to enter in contact with different cultural horizons. Oracles, by offering hope of having insights into the future, provided the Greeks with additional grounds for embark on their travelling. It is well known that the Greeks would consult oracles on behalf of their community or for their private, individual matters<sup>1</sup>, which, incidentally, is the topic of this article. As Irad Malkin showed some decades ago, beyond the seemingly enigmatic and mundane responses, oracular sanctuaries played a fundamental role in the development of ancient Greek colonisation, especially towards the West<sup>2</sup>. Such oracles were necessary for the leader of the expedition to be legitimised, and for it to be successful.

In this article, I will particularly focus on Dodona, one of the most important oracular sanctuaries, which so far has been less considered in the framework of what I call the Greek colonial «essaimage», that is to say «swarming», particularly towards the Western Mediterranean<sup>3</sup>. To the best of my knowledge, except for an article published by Julia Vokotopoulou in 1992<sup>4</sup>, the role of the sanctuary of Dodona in the dynamics of coloniza-

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\* I had the pleasure to present a first and shorter version of this paper at the conference in honor of Irad Malkin in Tel Aviv, the 26<sup>th</sup> of November 2018. I wish to thank all the participants to that compelling scientific meeting, for their suggestions and remarks. I am grateful to the editors of «Hesperia» for suggesting the publication of the article in their review.

<sup>1</sup> On the reasons of consulting gods in ancient Greece: R. STONEMAN, *The Ancient Oracles. Making the Gods Speak*, New Haven - London 2011, part. 5-25.

<sup>2</sup> I. MALKIN, *Religion and Colonization in ancient Greece*, Leyde 1987.

<sup>3</sup> M.C. D'ERCOLE, *Histoires méditerranéennes. Aspects de la colonisation grecque en Occident et dans la Mer noire (VIIIe-IVe siècles av.J.-C.)*, Paris 2012. For a general overview of the contacts between Dodona and the Greeks of the North-East, J. PICCININI, *The Shrine of Dodona in the Archaic and Classical Ages. A History*, Macerata 2017, 73-86.

<sup>4</sup> J. VOKOTPOULOU, *Dodone et les villes de la Grande Grèce et de la Sicile*, in *La Magna Grecia e i grandi santuari della madrepatria*, Atti del trentunesimo convegno di studi sulla Magna Grecia, Taranto 1991, Taranto 1992, 63-90. E. EIDINOW, *Oracles, Curses, & Risk among the Ancient Greeks*, Oxford 2007, analyses in some pages (71-80) the questions referring to travels.

tion and maritime circulations has not been analytically explored. However, as we shall see, it is worthy of close attention, in the attempt to trace and understand the movements and the choices not only of the singular and collective mobilities during the archaic and classical periods.

The sanctuary itself presents some significant specificities<sup>5</sup>. Firstly, it is located in an actual borderland, both real and symbolic, political and cultural at the same time<sup>6</sup>. Strabo (VII 7, 10) states that the sanctuary was surrounded by Barbarians. It was indeed very near to the frontier dividing Greeks from Illyrians, and on the border between several Epirote tribes, Molossi, Chaons and Thesprotians<sup>7</sup>. Moreover, in the Greek perception of space, this region is supposed to separate the earth from the netherworld, as it is crossed by such rivers as the Acheron, which are supposed to flow into the Underworld<sup>8</sup>.

Secondly, the mythical narrative of this sanctuary encapsulates concepts of mobility and rootedness at the same time. According to Herodotus's version (II 54), its first priestess came from the sanctuary of Zeus in Thebes, where she had been abducted by some Phoenician pirates. If this version is known to the priests of Thebes, the account in Dodona, known by the same historian (II 55), mentions two «black doves», *peleïades*<sup>9</sup>, which, willingly, flew away from the Egyptian sanctuary: one of them reached Libya and founded the oracle of Zeus Ammon, whereas the second flew to Dodona<sup>10</sup>. The story then goes that the fabulous bird claimed, taking up a human voice, that an oracular sanctuary ought to be founded in that place<sup>11</sup>. Be it a woman or a dove, the founder of the sanctuary is considered as a foreigner, either for the colour of the skin or for the odd language, incomprehensible to the majority of the locals. If the founders did originate from remote regions, the epiclesis of the main divinity of the sanctuary, Zeus *Naios*, already mentioned in the *Iliad* (II 233), seems to suggest a direct link with the verb *naiō*, «to inhabit», which evokes the two concepts of dwelling and rootedness<sup>12</sup>.

A third particularity is the form of oracular transmission. The responses were given,

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<sup>5</sup> For a general overview on the sanctuary: S. I. JONES, *Ancient Greek Divination*, Oxford 2008, part. 60-75; M. DIETERLE, *Dodona: religiongeschichtliche und historische Untersuchungen zur Entstehung und Entwicklung des Zeus-Heiligtums*, Zürich - New York 2007.

<sup>6</sup> On the topic of the frontier in the Greek history and regions, see now L. Gallo - B. Genito (a cura di), *Grecità di frontiera. Frontiere geografiche e culturali nell'evidenza storica e archeologica*. Atti del convegno internazionale, Napoli 2014, Alessandria 2017.

<sup>7</sup> STRABO VII 7, 10-11.

<sup>8</sup> On the imagery of the rivers, see A. BALLABRIGA, *Le Soleil et le Tartare: L'image mythique du monde en Grèce archaïque*, Paris 1986; ID., *Fictions d'Homère. L'invention mythologique et cosmographique dans l'Odyssée*, Paris 1998, 111, fig. 3.

<sup>9</sup> According to STRABO VII fr. 2, the old women of Thesprotia and Molossia were called *peleiai*, «doves».

<sup>10</sup> On the links between Dodona and Egypt: STONEMAN 2011, 55-60.

<sup>11</sup> On the doves of Dodona: PLATO *Phaedr.*, 275 a-b; OV. *met.* VII 629-630; STRABO VII 7, 10; SOPH. *Tr.* 171-172.

<sup>12</sup> See E. LHÔTE, *Les lamelles oraculaires de Dodone*, Genève, 2006, 416-418 for this possible etymology of the name *Naios*.

according to the tradition, by interpreting the rustling of the wind blowing through the oaks' leaves<sup>13</sup>, or the chimes produced by striking bronze cauldrons placed in the sacred space<sup>14</sup>. This means that the environment of the holy place was made of sounds rather than stones<sup>15</sup>: according to archaeologists' reconstructions, it was only at the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> century that a modest building was erected within the sacred enclosure<sup>16</sup>. Thus, this bare natural landscape, but resonating with sounds, is likely to have been impressive to the visitors reaching this valley.

Being a place of divine and suggestive sounds, this sanctuary was also the realm of the written word. From at least the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC, consultants or priests, the interpreters of divine will, inscribed the questions on leaden tablets, found when the site was excavated<sup>17</sup>. Uncovered since the first excavation of Constantin Carapanos at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, several thousands of these tablets have recently been published. A book by Eric Lhôte, in 2006, suggested classifying hundreds of them thematically, providing a commentary for each of them<sup>18</sup>. In 2013, another extensive study, by S. Dakaris and J. Vokotopoulos, published a corpus of several thousand tablets, which offers a very significant overview of the frequentation of the sanctuary between the 6<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries<sup>19</sup>. This general study enables to question this extraordinary material, in order to highlight the role of the Epirote sanctuary in the strategies of maritime traffic and colonial settlements towards the Ionian coast, southern Italy and Sicily in particular.

At first glance, the maritime role played by the sanctuary may well astonish. The sacred place lies indeed in a valley at the foot of mount Tomaros, in the hinterland of Epirus. However, in spite of this inland location, it is linked to the sea, connected to the wide Ionian gulf where Ambrakia was founded in 625 by the Corinthians<sup>20</sup>. Some consultants

<sup>13</sup> On the holy oak of Dodona: EUR. *Melan.* fr.14; DION. HAL. *ant. Rom.*, I 14, 5; STRABO VII fr I b; PAUS. I 17, 5.

<sup>14</sup> CALLIM. *hymn Del.* 286; STRABO VII fr.3; ST. BYZ. *s. v. Dōdōnē*; SUDA *s. v. Dōdōnē*.

<sup>15</sup> On these aspects of the oracle: S. GEORGOUDI, *Des sons, des signes et des paroles: la divination à l'œuvre dans l'oracle de Dodone*, in S. Georgoudi – R. Koch Piettre – F. Schmidt (éds.), *La Raison des signes. Présages, rites, destin dans les sociétés de la Méditerranée ancienne*, Leiden-Boston, 2012, 55-90.

<sup>16</sup> S.I. DAKARIS, *Archaeological Guide to Dodona*, Athens 1996.

<sup>17</sup> For the first publication: C. CARAPANOS, *Dodone et ses ruines*, Paris 1878 (see the tablets 39-83 and pl. 27-4).

<sup>18</sup> LHÔTE 2006, part. 1-11, drawing the history of the discovery and successive loss of the corpus of the inscriptions.

<sup>19</sup> S. DAKARIS – J. VOKOTOPOULOU – A. PH. CHRISTIDIS, *Τα χρηστηρια ελάσματα της Δωδώνης των ανασκαφών Δ. Ευαγγελίδη (Les lamelles oraculaires de Dodone)*, Fouilles de D. Evangelidis, I. Les inscriptions 1-2220 et vol. II 2221-4216, Athens 2013.

<sup>20</sup> On the foundation of Ambrakia, see know U. FANTASIA, *Ambracia dai Cipselidi ad Augusto. Contributo alla storia della Grecia nord-occidentale fino alla prima età imperiale*, Pisa 2017, part. 16-23. The same author evokes (*ibid.*, 16, note 33) a narrow path that still during the XIX century connected Ioannina and Arta.

of the sanctuary claim indeed their origin from Ambrakia<sup>21</sup> This unexpected maritime feature is enhanced by the fact that many tablets, more or less well preserved, bear questions related to long-distance and to maritime trade. Such inscriptions date from the middle of the 6<sup>th</sup> up until the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century: most of them belong to the period between the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> and the 4<sup>th</sup> century. Moreover, the maritime dimension of the sanctuary is also emphasised, as we shall see, by the probable origins of the consultants, which may be inferred from the writing style.

Concerns about maritime trade can be identified by some specific words. Firstly, the verb *emporeuomai* (or *enporeuomai*) occurs at least 41 times in the Dodona tablets. It is almost always employed in the form of the masculine participle *emporeuomenos*<sup>22</sup>, indicating the personal involvement of the people seeking advice from the oracle. Within this group, at least 15 examples cannot but be connected to maritime trade by such evidence as the reference to a maritime destination, the association with other significant words such as *naus* or *pleō*, finally the indication *κατὰ θάλασσαν*<sup>23</sup>, sometimes in the form *κατὰ γᾶν καὶ κατὰ θάλασσαν*<sup>24</sup>, «on land and sea». Obviously, it can be assumed that many other inscriptions may have referred to shipping trade, even though it is not specified.

Another lexical field which clearly links to maritime journeys is that of ship (*naus*<sup>25</sup>) and sail (*pleō*<sup>26</sup>, *nauklareō*, *nautilloimai*<sup>27</sup>). There are 13 mentions of a ship, at least three times associated with the verb *nauklareō* (ναυκλαρέω or ναυκληρέω)<sup>28</sup>, probably with the meaning of «navigate». In a tablet dating from the 4<sup>th</sup> century, a certain Timodamos asks if it could be advantageous for him to invest some money in trade (ἐμπορεύεσθαι ἀπὸ τῷ ἀργυρίῳ)<sup>29</sup>. We could see here a technical term for a commercial boat, the *gaulos*,

<sup>21</sup> As one Sokrates, asking to Zeus Naios and Dione about his health and his future: EIDINOW 2007, 106 n. 7.

<sup>22</sup> DAKARIS – VOKOTPOLOU – CHRISTIDIS 2013, I 137, nr. 430, first half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>23</sup> *Ivi*, I 172, nr. 580A, *κατὰ θάλασσαν ἐμπορευόμενος*, end of the 5<sup>th</sup> century; 250, nr. 3364 A, middle of 4<sup>th</sup> century; *ἐμπορευόμενος κατὰ θάλασσαν*.

<sup>24</sup> *Ivi*, I 137, nr. 430; *SEG* 43, 1993, 104, nr. 341, 4<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>25</sup> *Ivi*, I 66, nr. 167A, middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> century; 105, nr. 302B, middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> century; 259, nr. 1005A, beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup>; 298, nr. 1182 A, first half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century; 337, nr. 1363A, middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>26</sup> *Ivi*, I 429, nr. 1809, second half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century; 99, nr. 283B, 5<sup>th</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> century; 85, nr. 228B, beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century; 423, nr. 1772A, first half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century; 122, nr. 366A, and 479, nr. 2054 B, middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> century; 312, nr. 1244, second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century; II 177, nr. 3030A, second half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century; 10-11, nr. 2261 A, end of the 5<sup>th</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> century; 33, nr. 2363B, beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century; 77, nr. 2546A; 307, nr. 3656B, second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century; 92, nr. 2610A, end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>27</sup> *Ivi*, I 225, nr. 843B, end of the 5<sup>th</sup> century; 304, nr. 1210B, and 111, nr. 323A, first half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>28</sup> *Ivi*, I 134, nr. 2810A, middle of the 5<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>29</sup> I follow here the interpretation of F. SALVIAT, *Timodamos et son "gaulos". Oracles et marchands à Dodone*, in *L'Illyrie méridionale et l'Épire dans l'Antiquité*, 2. Actes du Colloque international, Clermont Ferrand 1990, Paris 2004, 61-64.

a word that Herodotus attributes to some Phoenician ships<sup>30</sup>. The shape of this commercial ship could be identified, according to L. Casson, in a seal found in Palestine<sup>31</sup>. In Aristophanes's *Birds*, the word *gaũlos* appears in expressions that allude to a very lucrative commercial activity<sup>32</sup>. As for the verb *nauklareō*, it occurs at least 6 times, and in this Dorian form in three cases<sup>33</sup>. Another technical word used for the activity of sailing is the verb *nautillomai*<sup>34</sup>, which occurs at least 5 times, always in the participle, *nautillomenos*.

When we look at the destinations of these maritime routes and journeys, what is striking is that they constitute a fairly coherent space where the trajectories are directed in particular to the Corinthian western colonies and to the colonial cities of southern Italy and Sicily. I believe that the concept of networks<sup>35</sup> could perfectly fit these multidirectional links.

We can read the mention of Korkyra in a tablet of the 4<sup>th</sup> century<sup>36</sup>, which seems to pose a personal question on a commercial travel to the Ionian island: -λλοσι [-ε] -ς Κόρκ[υραν---] σὺν Ε[---]. Two others tablets, of the same century, mention Corinth as a possible destination. If one is very poorly preserved<sup>37</sup>, on the second one can more clearly read the question posed by one Agēs or Ageus, whether he should make trade in that city; the answer is, according to the editors' suggestion, εν Κο[ρινθῶ]ι, in Corinth<sup>38</sup>. The *polis* of Epidamnos, founded around 625 by Corcyrians and Corinthians on the Illyrian coast, appears at least four times, in some texts dating as early as the middle of the 6<sup>th</sup> until the 5<sup>th</sup> century<sup>39</sup>. More precisely, the most ancient tablet of this series could date back to around 550-525. It bears some words in the Archaic Corinthian alphabet: ἐμπορίας ἐς Ἐπίδαμνον<sup>40</sup>. Should the date of the middle of the 6<sup>th</sup> century<sup>41</sup> be correct, this example might well be as one of the most ancient inscriptions of the whole corpus

<sup>30</sup> HEROD. III 136; VIII 97.

<sup>31</sup> L. CASSON, *Ships and Seamanship in the Ancient World*, Princeton 1971, fig. 26.

<sup>32</sup> ARISTOPH. *av.* 598, 602.

<sup>33</sup> DAKARIS – VOKOTPOPOY – CHRISTIDIS 2013, I 66, nr. 167A: middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> century: Apollodoros asks if he will succeed if he ναυκλήρῳν ναυῶν, which probably means «leading boats»; it is probably a mixed dialect, not a mere Doric, that would be rather *nauklareōn*; 105, nr. 302B, middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> century; 298, nr. 1182A, first half of the century; 407, nr. 1687, 5<sup>th</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>34</sup> *Ivi*, I 111, nr. 323A, first half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century; 225, nr. 843B, end 5<sup>th</sup> century; 304, nr. 1210B, first half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century; vol. II 124, nr. 2762A, first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century; 395, nr. 4097A, end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>35</sup> So well developed by I. MALKIN, *A Small Greek World. Networks in the Ancient Mediterranean*, Oxford 2011.

<sup>36</sup> DAKARIS – VOKOTPOPOY – CHRISTIDIS 2013, I 422, nr. 1768A, 4<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>37</sup> *Ivi*, I, 437, nr. 1855B, 4<sup>th</sup> century: [εν Κοριν]θῶι ἐ[μπορευόμενος].

<sup>38</sup> *Ivi*, II 266, nr. 3442A, beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>39</sup> *Ivi*, I 2, 3, (= *SEG* 43, 1993, 103, nr. 335), ca. 550-525; II 212, nr. 3185, middle of the 5<sup>th</sup> century; I 422, nr. 1770 B, 5<sup>th</sup>- 4<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>40</sup> *Ivi*, I 2, 3, (= *SEG* 43, 1993, 103, nr. 335); LHÔTE 2006, 211-212, nr. 98.

<sup>41</sup> LHÔTE 2006, 211-212, dates the tablet around 475; E. EIDINOW, *Oracles, Curses, & Risk among the Ancient Greeks*, Oxford 2007, 346, prefers to maintain the high chronology, 6<sup>th</sup> century.

of Dodona. Quite the same phrase can be read in two more recent tablets, the first one of the middle of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, also written in a Corinthian dialect<sup>42</sup>, the second one, poorly preserved, of the 5<sup>th</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> century<sup>43</sup>. Another tablet, published by E. Lhôte, shows a quite similar sentence, in the plural: ἐμπορούμενοι ἐς Ἐπίδαμνον. These epigraphical remains attest the role of the *polis* in the commercial traffic of this area, which is evoked some centuries later by Plutarch, about the presence in the city of a *pōletes*, the «seller», a magistrate elected every year, to manage commercial relations with the Illyrians<sup>44</sup>. In particular, that magistrate was in charge of selling local products outside the city, which led to the setting up of a market outside the walls to avoid the hazardous commingling of citizens and Barbarians. As Plutarch says, «the Epidamnians ... perceived that such of their citizens as associated with the Illyrians were becoming corrupted» (*poneroi*). As a result, a buffer zone was established to keep dangerous interactions at bay, outside the city. Again, both the concepts of middle ground and borderland can be useful to understand these economic and cultural contacts.

The island of Pharos, where a Parian colony was founded, according to Diodoros, in 385/384<sup>45</sup>, was another destination of maritime trade. It appears at least twice in the corpus of Dodona. Already in the second half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, according to the date proposed by Dakaris, which means before the Parian foundation, one Theokleidas asks whether he will make fortune sailing toward Pharos (εἰς Φάρον πλεύσας)<sup>46</sup>. At the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, a certain Aristodamos asks whether it might be advantageous for him (ἢ λῶρον καὶ ἄμεινον) to sail to Pharos during the summer: πλέοντι [κατὰ θάλασσαν] ἀν καὶ εἰς Φάρον τοῦ θέρους<sup>47</sup>. In both scripts, the grammatical forms of some expressions (*satei* for the Attic *têtes*, «this year»; *onasis* for the Attic *onesis*, «gain, profit»)<sup>48</sup> reveal the Dorian origin of the person who wrote the questions, probably the consultant himself. Another witness of these maritime travels to Pharos appears on one other tablet dating from the 4<sup>th</sup> or from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century. One Hexakōn, a name attested in Crete, Cyrenaica, Athens and Sicily, asks to Zeus and to Dione if it could be advantageous for him to dwell in Pharos<sup>49</sup>. More interesting, one tablet keeps a rare attestation of a travel of a woman, *Materina*, possibly for economical reasons. In a tablet dated from the first half of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, she asks if the two-months journey to Pharos will be safe, and if it would be a good perspective to go towards the land which remains to work (ἐπι[ίλοι]πον

<sup>42</sup> DAKARIS – VOKOTOPOLOU – CHRISTIDIS 2013, II 212, nr. 3185: [περὶ ἐμπορί]ας ἐς Ἐπίδα[μνον].

<sup>43</sup> *Ivi*, I 422, nr. 1770 B, 5<sup>th</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> century: [περὶ ἐμ]πορία[ς]/[ἐς Ἐ]πίδ[αμνον]/(– – –)(.)ΤὼΝ(...).

<sup>44</sup> PLUT. *mor.* 297e = *quaest. Gr.* 29. On this magistrate, P. CABANES, *Histoire de l'Adriatique*, Paris 2001, 53-54.

<sup>45</sup> On the circumstances of this foundation see now A. COPPOLA, *From Paros to Pharos*, in D. KATSONOPOULOU (ed.), *Paros IV. Paros and its Colonies*, Paros 2015, Athens 2018, 369-376.

<sup>46</sup> DAKARIS – VOKOTOPOLOU – CHRISTIDIS 2013, II 177, nr. 3030A, second half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>47</sup> *Ivi*, I 85, nr. 228B, beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>48</sup> *Satei: ivi*, I 85, nr. 228B; *krematōn onasis: ivi*, II 177, nr. 3030A.

<sup>49</sup> LHÔTE 2006, 271-273.

[γα] οργῆδον)<sup>50</sup>. The name of this woman is largely attested in the Greek cities of Epirus, like Buthrotos<sup>51</sup>. If the majority of the scholars identify the destination of this maritime journey with the Adriatic island, the time required to reach it may rise some questions. Should we alternatively think of a trip to the Egyptian island of Pharos in the harbor of Alexandria? But even for a journey to the Egyptian coasts, two months seem to be a too long period. Might we think, as for the other tablets, to a circulation between Ionian and Adriatic seas, which could possibly imply some intermediary steps and stays? If we accept this hypothesis, the question of Materina, as well as on the other tablets seem to draw in a coherent way a western space of mobility and circulation, often connecting between each other several Greek foundations. One could wonder which could be the meaning, in this colonial context, of the «remaining land»: the land which is still not divided and allotted?

In the same geographical context, the journey toward the coastal *polis* of Apollonia is attested at least in a fragmentary tablet, which is also one of the most often published among this corpus<sup>52</sup>. According to Éric Lhôte, the word *alaston* could be read *ala(i)ston*, and could mean «free of pirates»<sup>53</sup>. As this would be a *hapax*, the author remains very cautious about this hypothesis; nevertheless, his proposition might be corroborated by the fact that piracy was, notoriously, one of the most dreadful hazards for navigators across the Ionian-Adriatic space<sup>54</sup>.

This was the first and nearest maritime space mentioned in the tablets of Dodona. But a second, more distant area encompasses the coasts located in the remote West. Indeed, some questions refer to expeditions to Sicily<sup>55</sup>, Elea, on the Campanian coast<sup>56</sup> and even to Carthago<sup>57</sup>. For the latter destination in particular, someone asks to the gods if he will succeed in reaching the Punic city, with his ship and his goods: καὶ να[ος] καὶ χρημάτων, [ε]ἰς Καρχαδόνα. In these dynamics of western circulation, we could include also a tablet which brings a collective question: at the 4<sup>th</sup> century, some people from Ambrakia ask if it would be advantageous for them to sail to work (περὶ ἐργασίας) in Messina<sup>58</sup>.

<sup>50</sup> DAKARIS – VOKOTOPOLOU – CHRISTIDIS 2013, II 124, nr. 2762A.

<sup>51</sup> P.M FRASER. – E. MATTHEWS, *A Lexicon of Greek Personal Names*, III A. *The Peloponnese, Western Greece, Sicily and Magna Graecia*, Oxford 1997, 289, with a long list of attestations from Buthrotos.

<sup>52</sup> DAKARIS – VOKOTOPOLOU – CHRISTIDIS 2013, I 122, nr. 366A (middle of the 4<sup>th</sup> century); SEG 43, 1993, 102, nr. 333: right part of a lead tablet, ca. 300-275, (ES?) Απολλωνίαν πλεύσας ἦι ἀλαστῶν τη- / [---]ε ὄντων πυνθάνοιτο. LHÔTE 2006, 208-210, nr. 97, suggests a different reading, as we shall see below.

<sup>53</sup> LHÔTE 2006, 209-210.

<sup>54</sup> On the Adriatic piracy see L. BRACCESI (a cura di), *La pirateria nell'Adriatico antico*, «Hesperia» 19, 2004.

<sup>55</sup> EIDINOW 2007, 77, nr. 9 (dated around 375); DAKARIS – VOKOTOPOLOU – CHRISTIDIS 2013, II 406-407, nr. 4154B (end of the 5<sup>th</sup> or at the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century), such as Archō(n)idas asks if he could make a right choice sailing toward Sicily: πότερον πλέω εἰς Συκ[ελίαν]. We might wonder if this person could be the Archonidas known by another tablet.

<sup>56</sup> Ivi, 2013, II 33, nr. 2363B, beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century: *Elaie* (---) *pleō*.

<sup>57</sup> Ivi, I 337, nr. 1363 A, middle of 4<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>58</sup> LHÔTE 2006, 225-226, nr. 106.

Another text, written in an Ionic dialect, questions the god about an expedition to the Adriatic Sea, into a population not clearly identified, that of the Tisates<sup>59</sup>. Rather than a journey to the *emporion* of Adria in the Po valley, as Éric Lhôte suggests<sup>60</sup> I will opt, following Esther Eidinow<sup>61</sup>, to reading here a general allusion to the Adriatic trade, to reach a population, the Tisates, who still remains to be identified. A parallel could be drawn with another inscription in the corpus, dating from the 4<sup>th</sup> century, which mentions the navigation to the lands of the Liburnians, on the north-eastern coast of the Adriatic sea<sup>62</sup>.

Let us consider now the specific role that the western foundations (*apoikiai*) may have played in these networks of mobility from and to Dodona. It is common knowledge that the oracle could be consulted by a whole civic community. That was the very case of the citizens of Taras, who made their question (around 350-280), which has reached us incomplete unfortunately, about the general prosperity (*περί παντυχίας*) of their city and the territories under their control<sup>63</sup>. But other cases enable us to know the expectations, wishes and fears of those, mostly men but also women, who had made the journey to the sanctuary. Moreover, as we shall see, the tablets, which date back to a time several generations after the foundation, evidence the appeal that these cities could have for newcomers, some decades or even centuries after the initial wave of settlement. Dating mostly between the 5<sup>th</sup> and the 4<sup>th</sup> century, some of these inscriptions show the movements and the settlements of individuals and families in some colonial cities, as well as the mobilities between them: in a nutshell, these writings allow us to have first-hand documentation providing valuable information about some of those movements. Thus, we can view and have insights into the interweaving maritime connections that marked the ancient Mediterranean. Let us explore more carefully some of these cases.

In a tablet of the very beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, a man asks whether it might prove better for his business and properties (*περί πανπασίας καὶ περί ροικέσιος*) to settle in Kroton, for him and – he adds – for his wife: the answer of the oracle is positive<sup>64</sup>. In this case, we notice that women could engage in the colonisation process, which, I believe, was less likely in the first, more adventurous expeditions. Yet, it must have become more usual in the following periods. Other questions imply a mobility in-between colonies. Some time during the 4<sup>th</sup> century, some sailors ask if they should set out to Messina from Ambracia<sup>65</sup>. In another graffito, one Nicomachos consults Zeus Naios about his migration from Herakleia to Taras, asking, precisely, if he would meet success if he would enroll to migrate to Taras<sup>66</sup>. The verb *apographein* which is used here, implies the allusion

<sup>59</sup> *Ivi*, 214-216, nr. 100.

<sup>60</sup> *Ivi*, 216.

<sup>61</sup> EIDINOW 2007, 79, nr. 19.

<sup>62</sup> DAKARIS – VOKOTOPOLOU – CHRISTIDIS 2013, II 324, nr. 3742B, 4<sup>th</sup> century: *ei esi Libu(---p)len*.

<sup>63</sup> LHÔTE 2006, 35-38, nr. 5.

<sup>64</sup> *Ivi*, 239-240, nr. 114.

<sup>65</sup> *Ivi*, 225-226, nr. 106.

<sup>66</sup> *Ivi*, 275-276, nr. 132.

to a list, as it is a technical word constantly associated to “enter in a list, a register”. Used in the passiv form, the verb means «to register oneself, enter as a candidate for»<sup>67</sup>. Here, the medium *apographomai* seems to have the same signification «to be registered». E. Lhôte dates this inscription from the second half of the 4<sup>th</sup> century. To my knowledge, this is the unique testimony of an existing list of citizens who signed up to leave a colony to settle down in another, close colony. Herakleia was founded by Taras and Thourioi in 433, a few dozen kilometers from the mother city. Now, even in this case of geographical and political vicinity between the two communities, one individual who wishes to leave his city is apparently required to formally sign up on a citizen’s list. One may wonder whether such thoroughness was implemented in the major mainland cities, where the issue of citizenship animated heated debates during the classical period. But, let us return to Nichomachos’ question: Esther Eidinow suggests two hypothesis of interpretation. Either Nikomachos was a metic, «a free person who lived ... in a polis without becoming its citizen, simply moving from one city to the other, who would need to register himself as liable for a metic tax of some sort. Alternatively, it may be that he is a citizen of Herakleia moving back to the mother city of Taras under some kind of system of shared citizenship»<sup>68</sup>.

In all cases, a similar circulation between colonies may well be documented by another inscription of Dodona, in which one Ariston, writing in the first quarter of the 4<sup>th</sup><sup>69</sup> or at the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century<sup>70</sup>, asks if it will be advantageous and possible for him to sail to Syracuse and then to a «colony» – *apoikia* – whose name is not specified. It might be a Syracusan colony, as in the previous case, but may also be one Thourioi’s colony, if the consultant is an Athenian, as Éric Lhôte argues<sup>71</sup>.

In sum, these examples offer a concrete insight into the important issue of *epoikoi*, the subsequent settlers in a colony, a category which has recently been brought to the attention of scholars<sup>72</sup>. The inflow of new inhabitants to people and bolster colonial cities is well attested, as early as the archaic period (7<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> centuries) both by literary and archaeological sources: in Megara, Massalia, Cyrene, and many other cases. Nevertheless, seldom are such direct testimonies to be found regarding individual and family choices, thus providing insights into the actual anxieties and concerns of the consultants. This historical process, namely *epoikia*, provides a better understanding of some dynamics of colonization, and favours the reviewing of the relationships between older and newer citizens. We know, for instance, that in some cases, longstanding settlement in the city is re-

<sup>67</sup> H.G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT, *A Greek English Lexicon*, Oxford 1996, *ad vocem*, 194-195.

<sup>68</sup> EIDINOW 2007, 74.

<sup>69</sup> LHÔTE 2006, 219.

<sup>70</sup> EIDINOW 2007, 79, nr. 17.

<sup>71</sup> LHÔTE 2006, 219-21, nr. 103.

<sup>72</sup> M. GRAS, *I Myletidai di Siracusa e la fondazione di Imera. Della complessità della colonizzazione greca in Sicilia*, in E. Lattanzi – R. Spadea (a cura di), *Se cerchi la tua strada verso Itaca... Omaggio a Lina Di Stefano*, Rome 2016, 3-8. According to this interpretation, the Myletidai, coming from Mylai, became inhabitants of Syracuse; a part of them took later part in the foundation of Himera.

quired to access public charges. A passage from Aristotle's *Politics* (IV 4, 1290b 11-14) on the political regimes in Apollonia of Illyria and Thera indicates that in both cities, public charges were reserved to citizens who could prove their «good birth» (κατ' εὐγένειαν): they were precisely the descendants of the first settlers, a small minority among the multitude (πρῶτοι κατασχόντες τὰς ἀποικίας, ὀλίγοι ὄντες, πολλῶν). The importance of family legacy is also highlighted by Strabo (IV 1, 5) in a passage on the constitution (*politeia*) and the public charges in Marseille. Here, the condition required to become a *timouchos* is to have children and to belong to at least a three generation of citizens. Clearly, this emphasises that the oldest inhabitants of the city are prioritised, and it evidences the citizens' concerns about the future development of their *polis*. It is true that the ability of the colonies to welcome new citizens is, undoubtedly, the proof of the openness and fluidity of these cities, as Michel Gras recently pointed out. However, these developments may also have sparked tensions and contrasts within the community. Indeed, the *epoikoi*, although being Greek, could often be viewed as foreigners and thus considered dangerous, just like any stranger. Some passages from Aristotle's *Politics* are very explicit on this point. In dealing with the different factors of tension and division inside the *polis*, the philosopher presents the case of several cities, from Sybaris to Byzantium, from Syracuse to Apollonia, where the arrival of new colons accounts for conflicts and internal struggles. The figure of the new-comer is thus at the crossroads of the citizen and the alien; one could argue that, in a way, he shifts the border into the heart of the polis.

To conclude my paper, I would like to reflect further, by drawing on the case of Nichomachos the Herakleian, whom I mentioned earlier, emigrating to Taras. The distance between the two cities is about thirty kilometres, but he travelled to Epirus to query the gods about his planned settling in Taras. This seemingly irrational behaviour provides an opportunity for a final consideration, based on the importance of distance in these patterns of circulation, including the ones that developed around sanctuaries. In a certain sense, the consultants, who had reached a remote, highly sacred place, were likely to be in awe, which one could consider as the prerequisite to ponder over one's destiny and make appropriate choices. The distance, appears not only as a factor of mobility, but also a way to legitimate individual and collective choices. What is perfectly expressed by a contemporary scholar, Claude Markovits, referring to the dynamics of circulations: «Circulation is different from simple mobility, inasmuch as it implies a double movement of going forth and coming back, which can be repeated indefinitely. In circulating, things, men and notions often transform themselves. Circulation ... therefore ... implies an incremental aspect and not the simple reproduction across space of already formed structures and notions»<sup>73</sup>. Even if referred to a different space and period, these thoughts could perfectly explain a wide part of ancient mobilities: a major issue on which the corpus of Dodona helps us to shed light.

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<sup>73</sup> CL. MARKOVITS – J. POUCHEPADASS – S. SUBRAHMANYAM, *Society and Circulation: Mobile People and Itinerant Cultures in South Asia 1750-1950*, Delhi 2003, 1-22 (quotation at pp. 2-3).

## ABSTRACTS

*The paper focuses on some aspects of trade, migrations and colonization in the western Mediterranean area, in which the oracle of Dodona played an important role. The sanctuary has so far not been considered for the dynamics of circulation in the Western Mediterranean, and seems on the contrary to have had a great reputation for individual and collective mobility, directed in particular towards the Corinthian Gulf, the cities of the Ionian-Adriatic region (Epidamnos, Apollonia) and Southern Italy (Taranto, Syracuse), between the 6<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries B.C. Such dynamics reveal some important sides of ancient colonisation, as the mobility of the epoikoi, the new settlers that reached the previous foundations, sometimes with their whole familial group.*

ceciliadercole@noos.fr