

The Annual of the British School at Athens

<http://journals.cambridge.org/ATH>

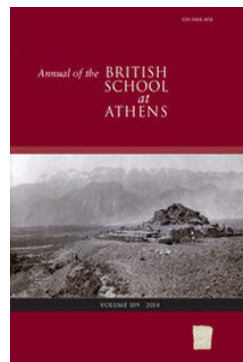
Additional services for *The Annual of the British School at Athens*:

Email alerts: [Click here](#)

Subscriptions: [Click here](#)

Commercial reprints: [Click here](#)

Terms of use : [Click here](#)



The Early Aegean Civilization in Italy

T. E. Peet

The Annual of the British School at Athens / Volume 13 / January 1907, pp 405 - 422

DOI: 10.1017/S0068245400003002, Published online: 18 October 2013

Link to this article: http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0068245400003002

How to cite this article:

T. E. Peet (1907). The Early Aegean Civilization in Italy. The Annual of the British School at Athens, 13, pp 405-422 doi:10.1017/S0068245400003002

Request Permissions : [Click here](#)

THE EARLY AEGEAN CIVILIZATION IN ITALY.

IT may be well to begin by defining the period with which this paper attempts to deal. It is the whole of the Neolithic period in the Aegean, together with that part of the Bronze Age which is prior to the appearance of the style of pottery to which the name Mycenaean was, and is still usually given. With this true Mycenaean period, corresponding to Late Minoan III in Crete, we are not here concerned. Suffice it to say that in various parts of Italy and Sicily, vases, bronzes, and other objects have been found which must have been imported from some centre of this Mycenaean civilization. What is more difficult is to find proofs of connexion between Italy and the Aegean previous to this date, *i.e.* during the period covered by the eight metres of Neolithic deposit on the Palace Hill at Knossos, and by the succeeding Minoan periods down to, and including Late Minoan II.

Just as the researches of Orsi in Sicily have proved the connexion of Sicily and the Aegean in Mycenaean times, so the excavation of South Italy, still in its infancy, has provided considerable evidence of close connexion between Italy and the Aegean in much earlier days. And here two questions, which must be kept quite distinct, arise: firstly, what evidence can we find of the importation into Italy and its islands of Aegean products; and secondly, can any parts of Italy be said to have partaken of Aegean civilization in the full sense, *i.e.* can we say of any part of Italy that it formed a unit in the Aegean civilization in the same sense that Paros or Melos did?

Let us begin with the first question as being the easier. There have

been found in Italy painted vases which are of Aegean workmanship. A few years ago Prof. J. L. Myres published in *Man*¹ a vase now in the Peel Park Museum at Manchester. This vase, which is a *Schnabelkanne* of the usual Aegean type, is said to have come from South Italy, though there is some uncertainty on this point. Prof. Myres mentions two more vases of the same type. 'The others,' he says, 'are (1) the vase in the Louvre (Salle D. 5), which was definitely acquired in South Italy; (2) the vase in the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge, which comes from the Leake collection, has a similar history, and is retained by Prof. Ernest Gardner in the Italian section.' Other painted vases which are undoubtedly of foreign origin have been found in Liguria and in Apulia. These we shall have occasion to examine more closely later.

It is, however, in Sicily that the strongest proofs of this early connexion have been obtained. In 1904 Orsi drew the attention of the International Congress at Rome to the number of Mycenaean products found in south-east Sicily, and at the same time hinted at a pre-Mycenaean connexion.² In 1907 he followed this up with an article in the review *Ausonia*,³ in which he gave in full the evidence relating to the pre-Mycenaean period. It is necessary to bear in mind that Orsi divides the pre-historic age in Sicily into five periods, Sicanian or Neolithic, and First, Second, Third, and Fourth Siculan. The First Siculan is an Eneolithic and Early Bronze culture, while the Second Siculan is the period of true Mycenaean (L. M. III) imports, and does not here concern us. The graves of the First Siculan period usually consist of a chamber of circular plan hewn in a face of solid rock, preceded by a wide and short *dromos*, or *padiglione*, open to the sky.⁴ In one grave found in the ravine called Cava Lazzaro near Modica, the sides of the *dromos*, which is shaped like a segment of a circle, are ornamented with a series of pilasters cut in the solid rock, four on each side of the door of the burial chamber.⁵ The pilasters are connected by semicircular arches, and the arch joining the two central columns forms a span above the door. Six of the pilasters are adorned at the top with a sculptured circle with its centre marked, and three are also marked down the front with a fish-bone pattern. A

¹ *Man*, 1902, paragraph 96.

² *Atti del Congresso Internazionale di scienze storiche*, Roma, 1904, p. 97.

³ *Ausonia*, 1907, p. 5.

⁴ See, for example, *Bullettino di Paletnologia italiana*, vol. xviii. pp. 1 *sqq.* and 67 *sqq.*

⁵ Orsi in *Ausonia*, 1907, p. 7.

somewhat similar arrangement of pilasters was noticed by Orsi in two graves of the same period at Cava Lavinaro¹ in the same district. No other trace of such architecture is found in graves of the First Siculan period, and the circle is unknown as an ornamental motive on the pottery of the time. It seems therefore natural to see the hand of a foreign artist or at least the reflexion of a foreign influence. This is supported by a further piece of evidence from the cemetery at Castelluccio. In two of the graves the large stone slabs used to close the entrance were roughly ornamented each with two pairs of opposed spirals in relief.² The spiral again is a motive unknown in work of the period in Sicily, and points to foreign influence. The arrangement of the pattern recalls the gold work of Troy and of the shaft-graves at Mycenae. Whether this parallel has any chronological value it is hard to say, as we are unable as yet to divide the First Siculan period into definite sub-periods. All that we can affirm with certainty is that the graves in question are older than those which contain pottery of L. M. III type. It would be interesting to know whether the pilaster ornamentation of the *dromoi* has any close parallel in the Aegean; up to the present I have been unable to find one.³

Almost more remarkable than this funeral architecture is the occurrence in the First Siculan period of several beautifully worked objects of bone. Six of these come from the cemetery of Castelluccio⁴ and a seventh from the cavern of Lazzaro⁵ in the Cava Lazzaro mentioned above. They are about 12 cm. long and of semicircular section. The convex side is carved to show a row of bulb-shaped projections, and the whole is decorated with finely incised ornament. In workmanship these objects are unlike and far superior to anything else found in graves or habitations of this period, and must be imported. At the time of their first discovery Orsi pointed to an exact parallel from the second city at Hissarlik.⁶ This makes it highly probable that these bone objects, whose use is unknown, came from some part of the Aegean. The fineness of the work makes it impossible that they should be Sicilian.

So much for the presence in Italy and Sicily of Aegean imports

¹ Orsi in *Notizie degli Scavi*, 1905, p. 432, Fig. 18.

² *Bull. Pal.* xviii. Tav. vi.

³ Excepting, of course, the Treasury of Atreus, where, however, the pilasters are only two, and the scale is immensely greater.

⁴ *Bull. Pal.* xviii. Tav. iv., Figs. 1 and 2 and pp. 7, 8.

⁵ Orsi in *Ausonia*, 1907, p. 6, Fig. 1.

⁶ Schliemann, *Ilios*, Fig. 564.

and possibly of Aegean workmen. Can we go any further than this? Can we show that any part of Italy or Sicily had a civilization running on parallel lines to that of the Aegean, having perhaps a common source with it?

Whoever has examined the pre-historic records of Italy must have been struck by the clear distinction which can be kept throughout, between the north and south parts of the peninsula, a distinction which becomes more striking when Sicily is included in the southern portion. The great lake-dwelling culture of the Bronze Age was practically limited to the north, though its influence affected a great part of the peninsula. It was not until the very end of the Bronze Age that the *terremare* folk pushed down into South Italy,¹ and even then it is very doubtful whether they survived there. The so-called 'Siculan' pottery, the punctured incised ware of Matera and Pertosa,² is confined to South Italy and is unknown in the north. In the Iron Age the Villanova culture, with its characteristic cremation burial, stopped short in Latium, and never reached Campania or Lucania, though many of its products permeated South Italy.³ Mycenaean and early Greek influences affected the south more than the north, although the former reached the head of the Adriatic⁴ and the latter acted strongly on Etruria. These examples, which might be added to, shew the distinction between north and south in the Bronze and Early Iron Ages.

Can a similar distinction be drawn in the Neolithic period? An examination of the pottery of the period seems to shew that it can.

As typical of the earliest Neolithic remains in North Italy we may take the earliest hut foundations of Reggio-Emilia⁵ and the settlement of Alba Cuneo⁶; and as representative of South Italy we may take the settlements of Stentinello⁷ and Matrensa in Sicily.⁸ The method of decorating pottery most usually employed at Alba or in the Reggio district is the application of strips of clay in relief: the strips are often laid horizontally round the body of the vase, and sometimes vertical strips are added so as to form

¹ Pigorini in *Bull. Pal.* xxvi. p. 17.

² *Monumenti Antichi*, vols. viii. and ix. See *Bull. Pal.* xix., Figs. 14 to 24, for examples.

³ *Papers of the British School of Rome*, iv. p. 285.

⁴ Cf. the Mycenaean vases from Torcello. Dawkins in *J.H.S.* vol. xxiv. p. 125

⁵ E.g. Calerno and Albinea, *Bull. Pal.* i. pp. 101 *sqq.*

⁶ *Bull. Pal.* xix. p. 162.

⁷ *Bull. Pal.* xvi. pp. 177 *sqq.*

⁸ Material unpublished in the museum of Syracuse.

a kind of rough net-work pattern on the vase. The strips are usually pitted with the finger-tip or slashed across with the nail.

This type of ornament is not restricted to the localities mentioned. It occurs in practically all Neolithic deposits in North Italy—some of the best examples come from the Grotta all' Onda in Tuscany¹—and it lasts on into the Eneolithic and Bronze Ages. In Sicily it is completely absent in the Neolithic period, while in later times it is quite rare, and is seldom marked with the finger in the Northern fashion. Its place is taken by the Stentinello ware, a fine grey-brown pottery, carefully incised with geometric patterns which are filled in with a white substance. The regularity of some of the designs on this ware led Orsi to examine it very minutely² and to discover that the process used was not always incision, but often impression by means of specially prepared implements. The distribution of this ware in Sicily seems to be limited as yet to the east part of the island and especially the south-east. It occurs in open settlements at Stentinello and Matrensa, and a few fragments have also been found near Paternò, near Cafano, in the Syracusan caves of La Seggia and La Scorosa,³ and finally in the Grotta Corruggi near Pachino. Pottery of the same type occurs on the Italian mainland at Molfetta near Bari,⁴ at Matera, and in the Tremiti Islands off the peninsula of Gargano.⁵ There are also in the museum of Tarentum several sherds marked as coming from the Piazza d'Armi in that city. It is true that the mainland pottery differs in some respects from that of Sicily: there is not the same orderly horizontal arrangement of the design that is so conspicuous at Stentinello, or more particularly at Matrensa, and the ornamental elements are not always the same, nor do we, in Italy, get the white filling in the incisions. But in both cases we have the combination of incision and impression, the use of mechanical means to produce the effect, and of carefully prepared clay and further, although there are some ornamental elements on the mainland which are not to be found at Matrensa or Stentinello, several of these occur elsewhere in Sicily. Thus the motive of Fig. 1 *a*, which is common at

¹ *Bull. Pal.* xxvi. Tav. v.

² *Bull. Pal.* xvi. pp. 188–191.

³ Von Andrian, *Prähistorische Studien aus Sicilien*, Taf. v. Figs. 5, 6, 11, 14, 15, 16.

⁴ Mayer, *Le Stazioni preistoriche di Molfetta*, Tav. iv., v., vi., vii.

⁵ *Bull. Pal.* xxxiii. pp. 1 *sqq.*, Tav. i. and ii. A single fragment from the Vibrata valley, now in the Museo Preistorico at Rome, closely resembles the Tremiti examples.

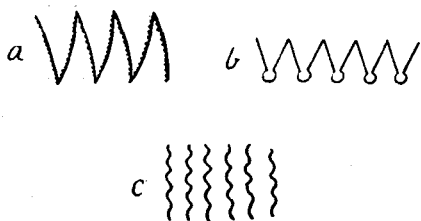


FIG. 1.—DESIGNS COMMON TO S. ITALIAN
AND SICILIAN POTTERY.

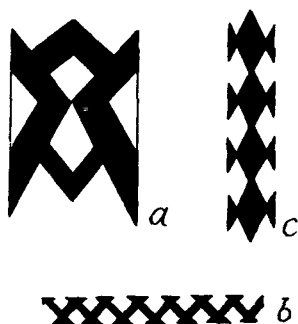


FIG. 4.—ORNAMENT-MOTIVES FROM
CASTELLUCCIO.

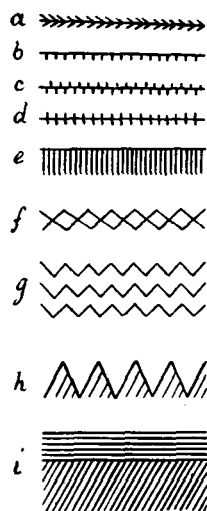


FIG. 3.—DECORATIVE MOTIVES
COMMON TO CRETAN AND
SICILIAN POTTERY.

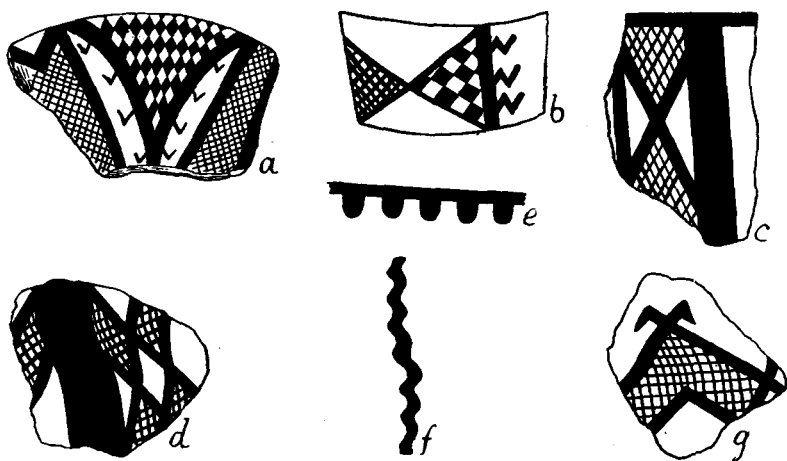


FIG. 5.—ORNAMENT-MOTIVES FROM SICILY AND FROM THESSALY COMPARED.

Matera and Molfetta¹ is to be found in Sicily at Paternò, and in the Caves of La Seggia and La Scarosa,² while the motive of Fig. 1 *b* is common to Matrensa and Molfetta. In fact the smaller finds in Sicily form a link between the pottery of Stentinello and Matrensa on the one hand, and that of Molfetta, Matera, and the Tremiti Islands on the other. That is to say, all this early Neolithic ware of Sicily and south-west Italy forms, despite local differences, one single series with a single origin, and is sharply distinguished from the North Italian pottery. It is true that both incision and very elementary impression were used in North Italy, but the schemes were entirely different from those of the south, and the workmanship far inferior.³

What I chiefly wish to suggest is that this South Italian pottery, which we may for the sake of brevity call Stentinello ware, belongs rather to the Aegean than to the Italian series. This hypothesis is supported by an examination of its distribution, its forms, and its ornament. The localities in which Stentinello ware is found have already been given; they are precisely those parts of Italy which lie nearest to the Aegean and which are most likely to have enjoyed the early Aegean culture. It is well to add that a few fragments bearing the well-known Molfetta *tremolo* pattern,⁴ Fig. 1. *c.*, have been found in one of the caves in Cape S. Elia in Sardinia and in the cave of the Arene Candide in Liguria.⁵ It is significant that these localities are both known from other evidence to have had some connexion with the Aegean in quite early times. Liguria for example has furnished numbers of shells which do not occur in Ligurian seas at all, but come some from the Atlantic, others from the Indian Ocean, while others again are common in Sicilian or Sardinian waters or on the African coast. Besides this the Arene Candide cavern contains a few objects of obsidian, which point directly to the south. The wide range of Ligurian connexions is clearly exemplified by the finding in the caves of *pintaderas*, objects found in places so far apart as Moravia and the Canary Isles.⁶ It is also notable that though the daggers of copper of the Eneolithic period in Upper Italy may be classed under a small number of fixed types, the Pollera cave in Liguria and that of S. Bartolomeo in Sardinia have

¹ Mayer, *op. cit.* Figs. 88, 89, 91.

² Von Andrian, *op. cit.* Taf. v. Figs. 6 and 15.

³ The difference may be well observed in the pottery from Toscanella Imolese now in the Museo Civico di Bologna.

⁴ *Bull. Pal.* xxvii. Tav. v. Fig. 5.

⁵ *E.g. Bull. Pal.* xix. Tav. i. Fig. 2. Other examples of impressed ware from Liguria are to be seen in the Museo Preistorico at Rome.

⁶ *Bull. Pal.* xxix. p. 228.

yielded daggers of shapes which will not fit into the series, and therefore point probably to foreign influence.¹

To come to the question of vase-forms. Fig. 2 *a* is a reconstruction by Mayer of a vase found at Matera, and covered with ornament of type Fig. 1 *a*. This will at once be recognised as an Aegean shape, with close parallels at Hissarlik, in the Cycladic cist-graves, and above all in the

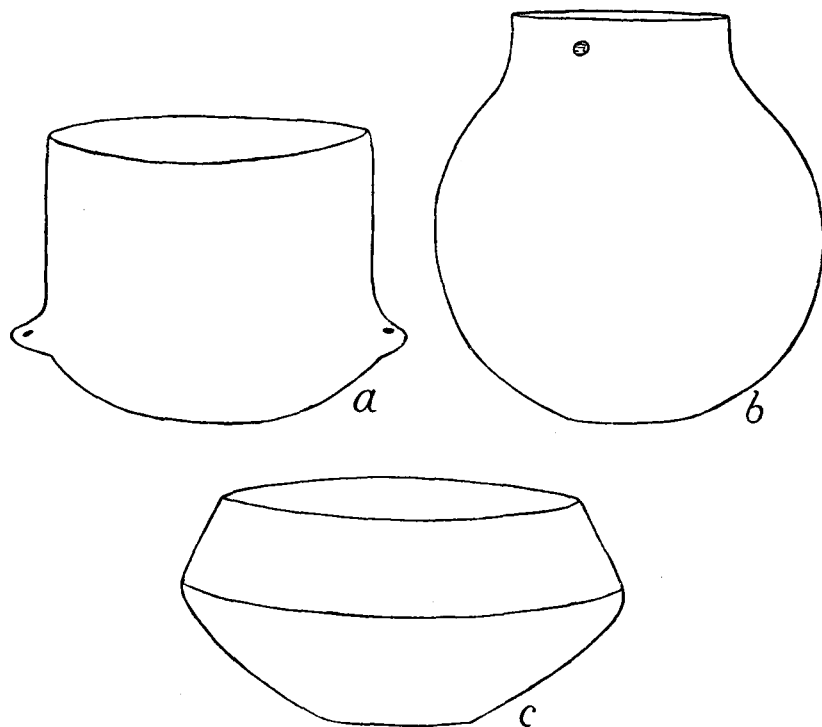


FIG. 2.—AEGEAN VASE-SHAPES FOUND IN S. ITALY.

Neolithic burial found by Mr. Tod at Hagios Nikolaos in East Crete.² Fig. 2 *b* is Mayer's reconstruction of a vase commonly found in the hut-foundations of Molfetta. This has an exact parallel—even to the holes in the neck—in a vase from the early tholos at Hagia Triada in Crete.³

¹ *Bull. Pal.* xxvii. pp. 84-5, and Fig. 124; and xxiv. Tav. xvii. Fig. 2.

² *B.S.A.* ix. p. 341, Figs. 1*a* and 2*c*.

³ *Memorie del. R. Ist. Lombardo di scienze e lettere, Milano*, vol. xxi. 5, p. 249, Plates VIII. and IX.

Fig. 2 *c* is a form well-known in Hissarlik II, in the Cyclades, and in the Neolithic deposit at Knossos. It occurs at Molfetta. At Molfetta occurs the rectangular or boat-shaped vase,¹ which has parallels in the Neolithic ware of Knossos² and later, in a painted vase from Basilikè² (E. M. III). Finally in the museum at Molfetta is preserved,³ without precise notes as to its origin, a bifurcate handle similar to those so common at Knossos in the Neolithic deposit.

Unfortunately the Stentinello pottery was in such a fragmentary condition as to give little clue as to shapes, and the material from Matrensa, which includes nine complete vases, is not yet published, so that it would hardly be fair to give sketches of it. Those who have seen these vases, however, will bear me out in saying that in type they are thoroughly Aegean, and have few affinities with the pottery of Upper Italy.

Finally we have to consider the question of ornament: Wosinski's voluminous work⁴ has proved that the white-filled incised ware has such a wide distribution and appears in so many different periods, that its occurrence both in Sicily and in the Aegean is a fact from which no inference can be safely drawn; but he who will compare the decorative elements at Stentinello and Matrensa with those of Neolithic Knossos will not fail to notice the striking resemblance. In both cases the ornament is carefully arranged in a horizontal system, due regard being given to the contrasting of plain and ornamental surfaces; sometimes a single ornamental element is used alone on a vase, sometimes several elements are combined. In both cases we may note a passion for covering the broad handles with ornament. The punctured and incised ware found in the upper metres of the Neolithic stratum at Knossos is practically unknown in Sicily. Petersen figures one example from Stentinello.

In order to get a striking idea of the similarity between the two wares it is well to compare Plates 6, 7, and 8 in *Bull. Pal.* xvi. with *J.H.S.* xxiii., Plate IV, and *J.H.S.* xxi., p. 96, Fig. 30. The Sicilian ware from Matrensa offers further parallels, and I have therefore thought it best to give sketches of the decorative motives common to the Cretan and the Sicilian wares. Numbers (*a*), (*b*), (*c*), and (*d*) of Fig. 3 are examples which shew how in both wares the ordinary line was embroidered to give finer effects, while (*e*) is a more unusual form of (*b*), common of course to both types of pottery.

¹ Mayer, *op. cit.* Fig. 45.

² In the Candia Museum.

³ Mayer, *op. cit.* Fig. 40.

⁴ *Die inkrustierte Keramik.*

Number *f* is a very favourite motive, admitting in both wares of further ornamentation. The zigzag line is used both at Knossos and in Sicily, either alone or in parallel series, as in (*g*). In (*h*) we have the common motive of singly-hatched triangles—a dog-tooth-ornament. Figure *i* is a particularly valuable parallel. It is usual in vessels with a clearly defined but low neck; around this neck runs some simple horizontal scheme, as for example a band of straight lines, while below it spring parallel lines set vertically, or aslant, sometimes in groups of ten or twelve. The comparisons here instituted were made directly from the sherds themselves in the museums at Candia and Syracuse. The illustrations as yet published are not entirely representative of either material, and the comparisons will therefore appeal most to those who have a first-hand acquaintance with one at least of these types of pottery.

The Stentinello ware of South Italy might in the same way be compared with the Cretan, though I doubt whether the relationship is so close in this case. We shall merely note that the stamped triangle motive, so common in the white incised ware of the cist-graves, is found at Molfetta¹ and in the Tremiti islands.² It is only fair to add that it also occurs on a vase found by Brizio two years ago outside Bologna, and by him considered to be Neolithic, and also in the village at Toscanella. Both these examples may, however, be of Bronze Age date.

In the light of all this evidence and bearing in mind the break between North and South Italy, we are surely justified in saying that South Italy belongs to the Early Aegean circle of culture, or at least, that in origin the civilization of South Italy lies close to that of the Aegean. We are not as yet in a position to point to the original home of this civilization. We find it settled in Crete at a very early date, and we can trace its evolution there through a long period; in South Italy we are only permitted to catch glimpses of it at isolated moments. Without wishing to enter on the dangerous ground of ethnology we may say that there is no reason to prevent the earliest South Italians from being of a different race, or branch of race, from those of the North. It is significant that at Molfetta there are two distinct settlements, one superimposed upon the other, the earlier of which contains Stentinello ware, while the later shews typical North Italian ware with ornament consisting of relief-strips of clay.³ May this not be

¹ Mayer, *op. cit.* Tav. vii. Figs. 8 and 14.

² *Bull. Pal.* xxxiii. Tav. i. Figs. 3 and 4.

³ Mayer, *op. cit.* pp. 117-119.

due to the advance of a different people or tribe from the North? We can certainly trace the relief-strip pottery down to Molfetta across the valley of the Vibrata.

So far then we have tried to shew that the South Italian early Neolithic culture was intimately connected in origin with the Aegean and more especially the Cretan. Towards the end of the Neolithic period Italian pottery undergoes a complete change. In almost all parts of Italy and in Sicily and Sardinia appears pottery of the so-called dolmen type, ornamented with incised bands, and having as one of its most typical forms the *Glockenbecher* or bell-shaped cup.¹ The origin of this ware need not detain us here; suffice it to say that in Sicily it is found in cave-dwellings, and not, like Stentinello ware, in open settlements, and that, as in South Italy it overlies and perhaps replaces Stentinello ware, so in North Italy it overlies relief-strip ware. The appearance of this pottery in Italy is an event to which there is no parallel in the Aegean.

Let us now advance a stage, leaving the Neolithic period and coming to the earliest age of metals in the Aegean. This stage is marked in Crete, in the Cyclades, at Aphidna, Chaeronea and elsewhere, by the appearance of painted pottery. In Crete no change of people seems to occur, and we see painted ware developing gradually from white incised ware, using the same designs and obtaining much the same effects. In Sicily too the early metal period is marked by the appearance of painted ware, but we are as yet unable to trace its development from the Neolithic incised pottery. What we see is a fully developed style: its beginnings are unknown to us. It is well known that Orsi attributes the Neolithic and the Eneolithic periods in Sicily to different branches of one people;² the earlier he calls Sicani, and the later Siculi. Petersen denied this change, pointing out that very many of the decorative elements in the painted ware are derived from the earlier incised ware,³ and Dr. Mackenzie has recently supported this view.⁴ The ethnological question need not detain us here, and I shall only remark that anyone who will read Petersen's article will be convinced that the painted ware preserves much of the tradition of the incised; but there are a number of new decorative elements to be accounted for, and above all we have to explain the intro-

¹ For examples see Von Andrian, *op. cit.* Taf. iv. Figs. 4, 5, 7.

² Mackenzie, *J.H.S.* xxiii. 165.

⁴ *Röm. Mitt.* xiii. 171-191.

³ *Bull. Pal.* xvi. 197.

⁵ *B.S.A.* xii. p. 229.

duction of paint. The latter gives little trouble. We know that just previous to this date paint had begun to be used for vase decoration in several parts of the Aegean. Couple with this the fact that the only part of Italy to adopt it was Sicily, the nearest point to the Aegean, and the inference is obvious. It is not absolutely certain however. The use of paint may have arisen spontaneously in Sicily, but we have no evidence as yet to prove this. It is true that in the cave of Cala Farina Orsi found rough incised sherds with bands of red paint on them, but he himself admits the possibility of their being mere imitations of painted ware at a time when the latter had already developed.¹ Thus the mere fact that paint was used for this Sicilian ware gives us no certain clue to its origin.

Let us turn to the ornament. Here it is natural to ask whether Crete had any influence upon Sicilian painted pottery. We cannot answer the question with certainty, but two facts are worthy of note: firstly, not a single sherd of Cretan or Early Aegean painted pottery has ever been found in Sicily. This is of course quite indecisive and may be contradicted by new discoveries; indeed, if we could find an unrifled cemetery of Period I. in the neighbourhood of a fine harbour such as that of Syracuse, round which so many settlements of Period II. were built, we should in all probability find Minoan pottery there. Secondly, the Minoan period to which Siculan I. is parallel is one about which we know little as yet. The excavation of Knossos and Phaistos yielded no complete series of Early Minoan pottery, and though the gap has been filled to some extent by discoveries in the east of the island, and in particular by Mr. Seager's work at Basilikè, it would be dangerous to say that the series even approached completeness. All we can say is that the Early Minoan pottery as yet found shews little affinity with the Sicilian, and affords no particle of evidence for a common origin or for the derivation of the one from the other.

It was in reading Prof. Soteriades' report² of his excavations at Chaeronea and Elatea that I was first struck by the resemblance of the decorative elements of his painted Neolithic pottery to those of the painted ware of Sicily. The, as yet unpublished, Thessalian painted pottery from Sesklo and Dimini, now in the museum at Athens, also presented analogies with the Sicilian. Desiring to get first-hand evidence on the question, I

¹ *Bull. Pal.* xxxiii. pp. 16, 17.

² *Ath. Mitt.* 1905, pp. 113 sqq.

went up to Chaeronea, where Prof. Soteriades' pottery was at that time lying in an improvised museum. The excavator himself, though suffering at the time from fever, received me with the greatest kindness, and, in addition to giving me much information about his work, went through many baskets of sherds with me. This examination confirmed the theory already suggested by the articles in the *Mitteilungen*, that the North Grecian and Sicilian decorative schemes had much in common. It must be stated, however, at the outset, that there is one very important difference: the Sicilian decoration is almost always arranged vertically (Hoernes' *Rahmenstil*), the vase being divided into vertical 'frames' and each holding a complete and separate ornament; the Chaeronean pottery is mainly decorated in the horizontal sense (Hoernes' *Umlaufstil*),—that is to say, the ornament is grouped on the vase in horizontal bands. Whether this is invariable or not, I am unable to say, as I saw the sherds before any attempt at restoration had been made. Nevertheless, this great distinction between the two series of pottery does occur, and it would be more than foolish to try to pass it over. The Thessalian pottery, however, which has certain affinities with the Chaeronean, is often ornamented in the vertical sense (*Rahmenstil*).

Having admitted this distinction, let us examine the points of similarity. Anyone who is not familiar with the painted ware of the First Siculan period may refer to the illustrations in *Bull. Pal.* vol. xix. Tav. 5, 6, 7, vol. xxiii. Tav. 1, and vol. xxiv. Tav. 20, 21, 22. The clay is impure and of a yellow-grey colour. It is covered with a coloured slip, either cream-yellow (passing into dirty white at Castelluccio) or dark brick-red. On this slip are laid geometric designs in black or dark brown with the occasional addition of white. The colours are matt, but the whole surface has a slight hand polish. There is no sign of the use of the wheel.

Anyone who will trouble to turn up the plates I have mentioned, more especially those in vol. xix., will at once perceive which are the commonest ornament-motives at Castelluccio. Some of these are, so far as I know at present, quite without parallel at Chaeronea, as for example Fig. 4 *a, b, c*. These may well be developments of the local Siculan style; other motives, however, are less peculiar to the island.

In both the Siculan and the Chaeronean ware two methods of ornamentation stand out pre-eminent, the use of doubly-hatched surfaces and of the chess-board pattern. Orsi thinks that these are patterns natural

and even inevitable in pottery which is essaying to imitate the technique of rush- or wicker-work baskets.¹ Even admitting that such a derivation would account for the independent appearance of these two patterns in two localities, it does not take us very far, for in both places the two ornaments are used in very similar combinations. Note, for example, the fondness of the Siculan pottery for using both patterns side by side on the same vase, *e.g.* Fig. 5, *a* (after Orsi, *Bull. Pal.*), and compare the daring example from Elatea in Fig. 5, *b* (after Soteriades, *Ath. Mitt.*). Compare, too, the scheme of the two opposed triangles in the latter figure with the Siculan example in Fig. 5, *c*. In Fig. 5, *d* is one of the commonest of the Siculan decorative schemes, two doubly-hatched bands cutting at right angles, the outside lines being thickened. A similar scheme is usual at Chaeronea, where the same thickening of the outer lines is to be noted. Above all should be observed the curious irresponsibility sometimes shewn in both wares in the arrangement of the design. Thus in Fig. 5, *b* three small zigzags are attached to the base of the chequered triangle, with which they are entirely out of keeping, while in another example from the same place the zigzags are replaced by V-shaped appendages. It is surely more than a coincidence that precisely the same ornament is treated in a precisely similar manner in Sicily (Fig. 5, *a*). Further examples may be added. The ornament shewn in Fig. 5, *e* is common in Chaeronea ware, while in the Syracuse museum there are three Siculan examples from Grotto Lazzaro, Paternò, and Cala Farina. The *tremolo* Fig. 5, *f* appears in both wares in the same thickened form, and similarly placed in a vertical position. Finally the flag ornament of Fig. 5, *g* may be mentioned: the example given is Siculan, but in the Chaeronea ware it appears in a similar scheme, formed by producing the sides of a triangle at its apex.

In addition to these resemblances it is to be noticed that the colour scheme is much the same in both wares. The most typical Chaeronea ware is decorated in dark red on a light yellow ground, while the Siculan ware is in brown on a similar background. The brick-red background sometimes found in Sicily is at Chaeronea used only in monochrome ware.

These similarities in small detail are too numerous and striking to be overlooked. They at least lead us to consider very seriously the possibility of a real connexion between the ware of Sicily and that of Chaeronea.

¹ *Bull. Pal.* xix. 44.

Have they a common origin, or did one borrow from the other? The first question we cannot answer—we know too little of the Neolithic pottery of the Balkans to speak of origins. There is no doubt that the pottery of Sesklo and Dimini is clearly connected with that of the *Tells* of Bulgaria,¹ and that the Chaeronea ware is distinctly related to both, but we can get no further. Abandoning this question as unanswerable in the light of present knowledge, can we find any evidence for the use of Chaeronean models in Sicily? Though no fragment of such pottery has ever been found in Sicily, there is a probability that such importation did take place, and for this reason. At Molfetta about 120 sherds of imported painted ware were found, and others of a similar type occurred at Matera. Dr. Mayer, writing in 1904, assigns these fragments, in part at least, to some school of Aegean vase-painting as yet unknown to us elsewhere;² but since the discoveries of Chaeronea and Thessaly I think we can affirm with comparative safety, that most of the sherds come from some part of the Balkan peninsula, and that some at least are actual Chaeronea ware. Of this latter fact I was able to satisfy myself by comparison with a couple of Chaeronean sherds which Prof. Soteriades had kindly given me. Much of this Molfetta ware resembles more closely the Thessalian series, and comes without doubt from some part of the Balkans. Several of the Matera pieces exhibit all the appearances of Chaeronea ware. If these vases come from the Chaeronea district, they must have come by sea up the Gulf of Lepanto and across the Adriatic. Unfortunately we do not know the distribution of Chaeronea ware. In the hope that it might extend westward to the Adriatic coast of Epirus I spent a few days searching for it in Aetolia, but without success. None of the many peasants I questioned had ever found or seen coloured vases. Nevertheless the fact remains that in quite early times there was a large trade in painted vases across the mouth of the Adriatic, and it seems almost impossible that this trade failed to reach Sicily. Assuming that it did so, we have an explanation of the appearance of Chaeronean motives in Sicilian ware. This, however, is not a demonstrated conclusion, but only a probable suggestion.

It should be noted that the only other locality in Italy where painted pottery is found is Liguria, where two of the caverns³ have yielded

¹ *B.C.H.* 1906, pp. 360 *sqq.*

² Mayer, *op. cit.* p. 141.

³ Viz. della Pollera and dell' Acqua.

a few imported fragments, too few to give any idea of their origin.¹ It is significant that it is in the Ligurian cases that we found Stentinello ware and other evidence of Aegean affinities.

Before leaving the question of pottery there are two or three small points to notice. One of the commonest forms in the Siculan painted series is the hour-glass cup of the type given in Fig. 6. This, as Orsi has pointed out, is precisely similar to the shape from Hissarlik given in Schliemann's *Ilios*, Fig. 1080. We may add that the similar form with

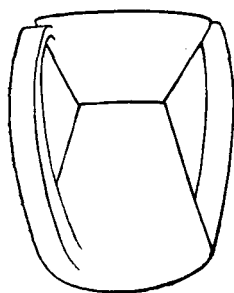


FIG. 6.—SICULAN 'HOUR-GLASS' CUP.

only one handle, also common in Sicily, is known in the Cycladic graves at Siphnos. Again, Sardinia has yielded two vases which are of the Aegean *Schnabelkanne* type.² This form is unknown in Italy, and connects Sardinia at once with the Aegean. The island would form a natural stopping-place on a voyage from the Aegean by way of Sicily to Liguria. Together with these forms must be noticed an anthropomorphic vase from the Pulo at Molfetta, showing a rendering of the human face,³ and recalling the similar vases at Hissarlik.⁴ The occurrence of this

vase is the more remarkable as the plastic art developed very late in Italy; it therefore points without doubt to foreign importation, though the particular vase in question may be a native imitation.

A strong confirmation of the connexion between Italy and the Aegean is afforded by the finding in several places of small clay idols representing human figures. It must be remembered that the idol, which plays such a great rôle in early Aegean civilization, is entirely foreign to that of Italy. Apparently the *terremare* folk were the first Italians who had any conception of the plastic reproduction of animal forms, and even they may have derived their ideas from foreign models. If, therefore, we can find idols in Italy the fact will be the more significant.

At Stentinello were found three pieces of plastic work. Two represent animals, while the third appears to be a human torso.⁵ It is cylindrical in form, flattened at the shoulders. There is no reason to regard these as

¹ Only two, so far as I know. One is figured by Montelius, *Italie Centrale*, vol. i. Plate 117.

² *Mon. Ant.* xi. Tav. xviii. Figs. 16 and 18, ³ Mayer, *op. cit.* p. 83, and Tav. iii. Fig. 21.

⁴ Schliemann, *Ilios*, Fig. 157.

⁵ *Bull. Pal.* xvi. Tav. vi. Figs. 9 and 14.

imports, and it is very probable that the plastic art was part of the original heritage of this folk long before they reached Sicily. As far as we can judge from the remains, this idol conformed to neither of the two early Aegean types, the so-called 'island' idol and the Thessalian.

At Villafrati ai Colli near Palermo, were found 'small painted idols along with bichrome vases.' The material has never been properly published, but it is clear from the presence of painted vases that it belongs to the First Siculan period. I was unable to find the idols in the Palermo museum, where they are said to be. Petersen describes them as 'zwei mykenische *idoletti*.' His figure is, however, too small to help, and as a matter of chronology it is difficult to see how true Mycenaean idols can occur in Siculan I. But whatever the date of these figures, they point to the Aegean, while, if they really were found with painted pottery, they must be of quite early period.

In the cavern of Arene Candide in Liguria were found two idols.¹ The work is rough, probably native, and the types are not obviously quite Aegean. As we have, however, already seen reason to connect Liguria with the Aegean, the presence of the idols becomes significant.

Upon the idols from the *terramara* at Tarentum we cannot insist, as they may be of true Mycenaean date, copied, as Quagliati suggests, from Mycenaean models. It must be added, however, that they conform to neither of the well-known painted types, and that Mycenaean idols were not found in the same stratum, but only in the stratum lying above and sharply separated from it.²

Thus the evidence of the idols supports the idea of Aegean connexions in Sicily and Liguria at least.

In conclusion, I wish merely to recapitulate my main contentions, which are three in number. Firstly, that South Italy and Sicily were, during the Neolithic and Early Metal period, in direct communication with various centres of the Aegean civilization, using the word in its widest sense. Objects were imported into, and perhaps imitated in, various parts of Italy, including the South-East coast, Sicily, Sardinia, and Liguria. The places most strongly pointed to are Hissarlik, the lower part of the Balkan peninsula, and perhaps Crete, and one is inclined to suggest a trade route from the Aegean up to Sicily, Sardinia, and Liguria. Secondly, the earliest civilization of the Neolithic period in South Italy is of an Aegean

¹ Figured by Issel in *Liguria geologica e preistorica*.

² *Not. Scav.* 1900, p. 418, Fig. 3.

rather than an Italian type, and presents considerable affinities with that of Crete in particular. It is possible that both have a common origin and are due to branches of a single people. Thirdly, as in the Aegean so in Sicily, though nowhere else in Italy, the Early Metal period was marked by the appearance of painted pottery. Much of the design is native, derived from wicker-work, but some seems to point to the Balkan peninsula, while the technique was probably introduced from elsewhere in the Aegean.

T. E. PEET.