A. Robu, *Mégare et les établissements mégariens de Sicile, de la Propontide et du Pont-Euxin. Histoire et institutions*. Pp. 544. Bern: Peter Lang 2014.

Of the mother cities involved in the Greek colonization, Megara was the only one consistently active towards the west as well as the north-east, towards Greater Greece as well as the Black Sea area. In spite of varied and extensive research undertaken over the past decades on Megara and her daughter cities, the only comprehensive effort concerning her relations with her colonies remained still K. Hanell's Megarische Studien (1934). The present book, a revised version of the author's PhD thesis, defended at the Universities of Neuchâtel and du Maine, intends and succeeds to fill this gap.

This is not a book to be approached lightly. There is little background information given and the author expects the reader to constantly follow him in the detailed, thorough and learned discussion of Megarian colonization in the West and East that he offers. This is a very *quellennah* work: although the results offered by archaeological research are by no means neglected, the backbone of the book is the discussion and reassessment of the data offered by ancient literary sources, from the best-known to the most obscure, and also of inscriptions and coins. It will no doubt establish the author as one of the leading specialists of Greek colonization.

The book focuses on several issues concerning Megara in the Archaic period, the Megarian colonization process in Sicily, the Propontic and Pontic area and the political institutions in Megara and her colonies. The main novelty compared to Hanell is the examination of the scope and importance of the local elements encountered by the Megarians during the colonization process and, afterwards, of the relations of the new-founded cities with the local populations. One of the main aims of the book is to deepen the understanding of the colonization process, namely of the manner in which mixed populations managed to create new communities and of the specific part the Megarians played therein.

Understanding Megarian colonization and its specificity requires understanding the inner structures of Megara herself in the period of colonization, as colonization and *synoikismos* were contemporary events which influenced each other. The author examined in detail the literary tradition concerning those events in the history of Archaic Megara which may have influenced the colonization process. He was able to show that Plutarch's list of five Megarian districts (often taken to mean that prior to the establishment of the city, Megara was divided in five *komai*) is merely the expression of Megarian propaganda towards the neighbours Corinth and Athens, the justification of Megarian territorial claims (over Salamis and Perachora, held by the Athenians and the Corinthians respectively). The Megarian and Athenian literary tradition on the conflicts with Athens over Salamis diverge widely. Among the reasons for the conflict, hurting the other city's commercial or naval activities is here estimated less important than the need for land allotments for the young; the thirst for glory as well as religious and agonal components also played their part. The loss of Salamis was a heavy blow for Megara, which regarded it as due to treason. However, while it may have contributed specifically to the foundation of Mesambria, the author shows that to consider it a main cause for Megarian colonization is acceptable only if the internal struggles at Megara are also taken into account. The author repeatedly examines the causes suggested hitherto for Megarian colonization and opposes the theory on *stenochoria* as a cause for Megarian colonization. He rejects overpopulation as an insufficient reason, the defeats of Megara at the hands of Corinth as unconfirmed archaeologically

and identifies as main causes internal factors such as inequality concerning civic rights and land ownership, discord and internal struggle which led to the exile of the defeated parties (visible especially in the case of Heraclea Pontica). The succession: fall of the kings – aristocratic regime – tyranny of Theagenes (mid–7th c.) – moderate oligarchy – democracy was carried by various aristocratic factions vying for popular favour, more than by an authentically democratic party. Differences between various colonization waves also played limited parts, as well as incidental causes such as famine.

Part II of the book examines in turn the establishment of *apoikiai* in the three main areas of Megarian colonization: Sicily (Megara, Selinous), the Propontis (Astacus, Chalcedon, Selymbria, Byzantion) and the Black Sea (Heraclea Pontica, Mesambria). In each case, the author examines the (often contradictory) literary traditions concerning the foundation, the relations between the newly established city and the local population, the causes of the foundation, the relations with the mother city and with other Megarian cities. Extant sources throw their light differently on the various colonies of Megara: the Megarian cities of Sicily are, concerning their founding period, better illustrated by archaeological sources, while Pontic and Propontic cities are better by epigraphic sources than the cities in the west.

On the foundation of Megara Hyblaea, the author argues for a date in the third quarter of the 8th century, involving an alliance with the Siculi for the establishment of the colony, due to conflicts with other Greeks. He also rejects the notion that Megarians were in this instance in some way subordinated to Chalcidians or Euboeans and asserts the specificity of the Megarian colonizing movement. The controversial information given by the ancient sources on the date of Selinous' establishment is resolved by accepting two phases of foundation: one of preliminary investigation and/or taking possession, the other of official foundation. The notion of colonization in phases is supported also by the expansion of the city in Western Sicily, so speedy that it presupposes a good knowledge of the area, and by archaeologically attested varied relations to the Sicani – peaceful with some of them, hostile with others. Selinous was founded through a combination of factors connected to landownership and trade and built up a network of alliances which superseded the barrier between Greeks and natives, which is presumably why the city attracted Greek colonists also from other cities than Megara.

Astacus, whose exact location is not even known, was founded as a preliminary phase of the Megarian colonization of the Straits, conceived as a coordinated project, due to the importance of the navigation through the Straits. The maritime connection to the Black Sea was less important in the 7th century than it would become in the 4th; however, Megarians are shown to have favoured colonization in stages and to have occupied step by step such sites as were better placed in regard with the route towards the Black Sea. The importance of alliances between Megarian cities for survival is illustrated also by the war between Megara and Samos, triggered by the founding of Perinthus by the latter, and which was in fact fought by the Megarian colonies in the Straits. The reasons for the site chosen for the foundation of Chalcedon, the origin of the legend about the "city of the blind", include favourable maritime currents, the opposition of the Thracian tribes on the European shore and the presence of metal deposits in the Princes' Islands. For Selymbria, in spite of the sources variously presenting her founders as Megarians, Byzantians or Chalcedonians, there is little doubt that the former are to be preferred. In the case of Byzantion, the tradition of the Megarian establishment is a late one (since the 2nd century BC), contending with several alternative ones: the foundation of a place called Hestiai on the European shore of the Bosporus, Spartans and Athenians as founders, Milesian participation, Boeotian contribution, *epoikoi* from Chalcedon, Corinthian or Argive contributions. The latter, the Argive ones mostly, are supported by arguments connected to mythology, cults and institutions, as well as political connections between the two cities. The author argues that the foundation of Byzantion was the work mainly of Megarian colonists,

but involving so many groups of colonists of different origins that it may count as an "international" effort. The sources recording all these groups and contributions may reflect variants put into circulation by families of such origins. While there are no archaeological data on the territory of the city or on Thracian settlements prior to her foundation, literary sources speak of intense connections to the Thracians, pacific as well as hostile. Some of the genealogies of the founding hero Byzas present him as Thracian, which reflects the Byzantines' wish to establish kinship with the Thracians.

The Megarian colonies in the Black Sea area, Heraclea Pontica and Mesambria, belong to a culturally heterogeneous area. The discussion of the sources concerning the foundation of Heraclea weigh the respective contributions of Megarian and Boeotian colonists. Their collaboration is especially visible where religion and cults are concerned. One of the most striking features of this city, the subjection of the Mariandyni (on whose origin the sources contradict each other), is described in the sources as established through a formal agreement, which is however of doubtful historicity. On Mesambria, the two traditions on foundation, Ps.- Skymnos and Herodotus, giving different dates and founders, are shown to point towards Mesambria receiving several waves of colonists from Megara herself, Chalcedon and Byzantion. The connections to the Thracians were of long standing: the city was preceded by a Thracian settlement whose existence ceased however about three centuries before the coming of the Greeks, the eponymous hero of the city, Melsas, bears a Thracian name, peaceful relations alternated with military conflicts and even with a protectorate of Thracian dynasts over the city in the Hellenistic period.

Of Megarian political institutions, only those of Megara herself are discussed and, in her colonies, those of Megarian origin. At Megara, the *phylai* are attested epigraphically and by the tripartite structure of several institutions (tribunals, *strategoi*, *thearoi*). At Byzantion, Chalcedon and Mesambria, no names of tribes are attested; their existence can be deduced from the tripartite structure of some institutions. At Heraclea, the Dorian tribes are attested, not however clearly in her colonies. A further subdivision of the citizen body, into *hekatostyes*, is attested at Megara only since the Hellenistic period, but it exists in the colonies. These subdivisions are attested in Byzantion, Chalcedon, Heraclea and perhaps Chersonesus; Selinous is a doubtful case. In the Classical and Hellenistic periods, the *hekatostyes* lost their initial numeric meaning; their functions were initially military, they are also connected to the religious domain. Finally, the *ikadeis* attested at Mesambria are not subdivisions of tribes, but a college of magistrates.

The discussion of magistracies starts with the eponymous office. The occurrence of the *basileus* in Megarian colonies (Chalcedon, Heraclea, Callatis, Chersonesus) testifies to the antiquity of this office, attested at Megara, but replaced there, under Boeotian influence, with the *archon*, later with the eponymous *strategos* or *archiereus*. The author shows the eponymous office at Byzantion, the *hieromnamon*, which does not occur at Megara, as being of Argive origin; from here it was passed on to Chalcedon and Mesambria (with mainly religious prerogatives) and to Perinth. Among the colleges of magistrates, the *aisimnatai*, one of the oldest at Megara, occurring also at Chalcedon, Selinous and Selymbria, was an oligarchic institution (less so at Chalcedon in the Hellenistic period, where, presumably under Athenian or Byzantine influence, it turned into a democratic office). The *proaisymnon*, attested at Chersonesus and Callatis, is interpreted as having no connection to the college of *aisimnatai*, he was the president of the *probouloi* and as such president of the Assembly; however, no *probouloi* are attested at Chersonesus.The *strategoi*, attested at Mesambria, Byzantion, Chalcedon, Selymbria, Herakleia and Callatis, also originate from Megara, where the institution, attested for the Hellenistic period, reappears in the Roman period with new functions. The occurrence of the *damiorgoi* at Chersonesos shows that the institution existed at Megara in the Archaic age; the author it is however less probable that they

replaced the five *strategoi* as Megara entered the Achaean league. Collective offices attested in the colonies, but not also at Megara, were the *probouloi* (Kallatis), *pentekaideka* (Byzantion) and *nomophylakes* (Mesambria, Chalcedon, Chersonesus).

Ligia Ruscu