
Reviewed by Rosa Maria Motta, Christopher Newport University (rosa.motta@cnu.edu)

A fortuitous discovery in 1959, during excavations to install new sewage drainage pipes in Piazza S. Francesco, in Catania, uncovered a wealth of East-Greek pottery in the sanctuary of Demeter whose votive deposit had long been concealed by strata of hardened lava as well as later Roman and Byzantine edifices. Antonella Pautasso's book complements other relatively recent works on the East-Greek pottery from Sicily (Boldrini, 1994; Dehl Von Kaenel 1995), and enriches the "not-yet-complete picture of the East-Greek material of the western Mediterranean" (p. 21).

Antonella Pautasso's presentation of the Catania artifacts is thorough and innovative, and her iconographical analysis of the material, which she relates to similar specimens from Sicily and other parts of the Greek world, places her research among the top in current East-Greek pottery scholarship. The book is not, however, to be recommended as an introductory text, nor is it suitable to beginners. The continuous reference to other authors and their works does not in fact help an uninitiated reader. Finally, the last chapter of the book, written in English by Michael Kerschner and Hans Mommsen, seems to be directed toward an international audience well versed in chemistry and physics.

The first chapter is quite long and divided into four sections. The first section analyzes 78 pieces (Plates 1-3) that include both commonly known 'ionic bucchero' and gray ware. Pautasso classifies all pieces according to their style, with the larger number consisting of cigar-shaped alabastra (1-44), followed by alabastra with rounded bases (45-53), omphalos phials (65-75), stemmed dishes with some decorations (55-63), in addition to two small trilobite oinochoai — a globular aryballos (54) and a painted cup (64). When classifying the alabastra, the author follows the classification that Dehl von Kaenel used for the specimens found at the Malophoros sanctuary of Selinunte. She divides the Catania specimens in three groups (pp. 27-30): the decorated alabastra, with bands of concentric circles (1-2); the smooth surface alabastra (3-6); and the specimens with the concentric circles in incuse (7-44), which present various subgroups among them. Finally, she lists the decorated stemmed dishes, which include specimens decorated with either a meander band on the rim and the inside (55-60), or with floral motifs; the latter include a few specimens decorated with strings of lotus flowers or blooms on the rim and rosettes on the inside (61-63). The phialai mesomphaloi are divided into two distinct groups: the deeper bowls with grooved walls and large central omphalo (65-66), and the thin-walled, shallow bowls with smaller omphalo (68-75). This section of Chapter 1 seems a bit confusing as the specimens are divided into too many different groups that often overlap. Perhaps one single categorization, either by type or fabric, would have helped the reader.

The Catania deposit includes also a large quantity of plastic vases, among which are specimens in the form of *Korai* and *kouroi*. While she leaves this latter group to a forthcoming publication dedicated to coroplastic art, the second section of chapter 1 is dedicated to the 57 plastic vases, which she calls "figure vases" (*vasi configurati*, p. 41) following Biers. After a review of existing East-Greek pottery studies, which include the works of Payne, Higgins, Ducat, Boardman, and Jones, Pautasso does a detailed analysis of each specimen within Ducat's typological and stylistic classification of the *grenade* group and the *terre cuite vases*. One small protome in the shape of a bull (Table IV, 78) seems to fit the *à couleurs lustrées* type that Ducat places in group III Robertson, but Pautasso prefers to compare it to the protome of the Chester collection at Oxford. The list of figures in the *grenade* group at the Catania deposit is very vast (Tables IV and V), including three pomegranates (79-81), a mermaid (82), a dolphin (83), a horse (84), a squatting komast (85), a woman's bust (86), a monkey (87), a porcupine (88) — the most common figure — and two types of hares: a crouching type (89) and dead type (90) commonly found in Etruria. The specimens of the *terre cuite* technique (Table V) are divided into two subgroups based on the clay, and include specimens ranging from *Dickbauch-Dämonen* (91-92) to a series of birds (100-126), to a protome in the shape of a lion (128).

The third section of Chapter 1 is dedicated to the *Late Wild Goat Style* vessels from the Catania deposit. Before analyzing the specimens, the author again discusses the style, following the works of Schiering (1957), Kardara (1963), Cook (1977), Jones, Boardman (1986), as well as the most recent classification of East-Greek pottery, based on chronological and geographical distinctions, done by Kerschner and Schlottzauer (2005). The Catania *Late Wild Goat Style* material includes both open and closed vessels, and Pautasso examines each piece (Tables VI - IX) with great iconographical accuracy. Most of the pieces (130-169) are attributed to a North Ionian source at the beginning of the sixth century. Among the oldest specimens of the *Late Wild Goat Style* of the Catania deposit is a stemmed dish (144), which she dates somewhere between 600 and 580 BCE on account of its double bands. In a final analysis, she separates the vessels into three groups according to the type of clay: *Type A* with pink-reddish yellow...
The Chiot type pottery at the Catania deposit is particularly important for both "its quantity and its quality" (p. 79), and Pautasso dedicates a large section of Chapter 1 to the classification of all the Catania vessels, listing the smaller, often unreadable fragments on separate tables (pp. 110-113). As with the previous sections, the author does a quick synthesis of the distribution of Chiot pottery, based on the works of Cook (1949), Boardman (1956, 1986, 1998), DuPont (1983) and Lemos (1991), agreeing with Lemos' theory of four distinct workshops "which follow and develop different stylistic and decorative traditions within the diachronic context of the Chiot pottery production" (p.80). The Catania deposit presents so many specimens that it is possible to follow the production course of two different techniques — the Reserving Style and the Black Figure Style. The first style contains the group of Late Wild Goat Style chalices (Tables X-XIX), which Lemos classifies as the Catania Chalices or Animal Chalice Style. Particularly notable is chalice No. 173 (Table X), one of the few previously published specimens, which Lemos grouped with the Painter of Würzburg. According to Pautasso, however, elements such as the guilloche with external eyelets and the large drawn rosette between the two goats seem to recall the later Painter of Demeter's Chalice Style. Pautasso's book analyzes most unpublished pieces — only pieces 209 and 210 had been published earlier — making the present text an excellent source of information for anyone studying Chiot pottery.

The pottery from the votive deposit of Catania is important not only because it constitutes one of the most comprehensive aggregations of East-Greek pottery in the western Mediterranean, but also because it enables scholars to compare and contrast it with pottery from other deposits from Sicily and Magna Graecia as well as those from Naucratis, Cyrene, and Tocra, and in Chapter II Pautasso analyzes the Catania pottery in its Mediterranean context. It seems probable, she argues, that the flourishing of contemporaneous sanctuaries along maritime routes, from the Aegean coasts to the coasts of North African and eastern Sicily, might have been the result of the development and growth of the Naucratis emporium. The chapter is therefore a general analysis of the typology and style of East-Greek pottery from various areas in Sicily, southern Italy, South Ionia, North Ionia, Aeolis and eastern Doris. At times the reader feels that the book is about East-Greek pottery in general and not about the East-Greek pottery from the Demeter sanctuary in Catania.

The final chapter, authored by M. Kerschner and H. Mommsen, analyzes the fabric of the Catania pottery to determine the provenance of the pots. The authors accurately describe the basic concepts of neutron activation analysis (NAA) — the method that measures the "elemental concentration profiles of pottery" (p.126) — and explain how the elemental composition of pottery depends on the geochemical composition of the clay that was available locally since the transport of clay paste "is not very probable in ancient times" (p. 126). The archaeometric analysis of the Catania pottery produced three provenance groups of East Aegean imports: fine ware from the island of Chios; bird bowl from North ionian mainland workshops; and painted pottery from Kyme in Aeolis, with a possible share of workshops in its vicinity. The analysis also detected sources of local imitation: a group from Gela and one from Sicilian Naxos. A third group comprising "grey ware" and South ionian type pottery lacks clear reference in order to determine its provenance. Although the chapter is highly technical, with various elemental charts that might appear intimidating to non-science-inclined readers, the authors’ approach to the subject is simple, making the chapter quite clear and very informative.

In the final analysis, by treating each pottery piece in terms of its technology, style, and iconography La Ceramica Greco-Orientale greatly contributes to the advancement of East-Greek pottery scholarship. Pautasso handles a lot of material with genuine expertise, offering a new understanding of the broader distribution of East-Greek pottery in Sicily. This comprehensive volume is therefore sure to be a good reference work for classical archaeologists. It will interest not only students of East-Greek pottery but also those interested in the archaeology and history of Sicily and Magna Graecia.

Works cited:


Notes:

3. Boehlau 1898, pl. 9.1-4 and 8.
7. Hayes 1966, 44.
8. Most of the fragments are today at the Paolo Orsi Museum in Syracuse, Sicily.
10. Hein 2002, 542-553. The analysis, which was done at the Geesthacht in Germany, compared elemental composition of the Catania ware against the known elemental composition of the Bonn pottery standards, which have been themselves calibrated with the Berkley pottery standard.
Is there a direct train between Palermo and Catania? (Studi E Materiali di Archeologia Greca, 3.1.)
