

## *Euboean cults and myths outside Euboea: Poseidon and Briareos/Aigaion*

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### *Περίληψη*

Αυτό το άρθρο επικεντρώνεται στους ευβοϊκούς μύθους και λατρείες και έχει σκοπό να ερμηνεύσει καλύτερα δύο ενδιαφέροντα στοιχεία σχετικά με ένα κεντρικό / περιφερειακό θέμα: Ποσειδώνας και Βριάρεως.<sup>1</sup> Εμφανίζονται στενά συνδεδεμένοι με τις θαλάσσιες διαδρομές που ξεκινούσαν από τρία σημαντικά κέντρα της Εύβοιας (Ερέτρια, Χαλκίδα και Κάρυστο) για τις κοντινές ή μακρινές ακτές της Μεσογείου κατά τη Γεωμετρική και Αρχαϊκή περίοδο. Θα προσπαθήσουμε να καταδείξουμε το πώς οι λατρείες των αποικιστών μπορούν να παρέχουν πληροφορίες σχετικά με τις άγνωστες λατρευτικές συνήθειες των μητροπόλεών τους, οι οποίες επίσης άλλαξαν εξαιτίας των νέων συνθηκών που συνάντησαν οι αποικιστές στο εξωτερικό. Επιπλέον, μια ανάλυση των δεδομένων θα καταδείξει τη σημασία της Χαλκίδας στη διάδοση των μύθων όπως του Βριάρεω / Αιγαίωνα και θα τονίσει τη σημασία της περαιτέρω διερεύνησης του ρόλου της Καρύστου.

### *Introduction*

Cults and myths have often been read as markers of Greek presence abroad, in many regions of the ancient Mediterranean. A particular version of a mythical tale, a peculiar epithet of a god or a specific feature of a hero can, indeed, provide potential clues about the presence of Greeks outside Greece and, at the same time, elements which help us identify the provenance of said Greeks, especially in light of two key concepts: 1) myths, obviously, do not travel on their own but with people or, to some extent, with decorated pottery;<sup>2</sup> 2) deities and heroes are always related to the local culture of different Greek communities, and they are also usually a result of the complex work of defining and elaborating their mythical universe, a basic element of the construction of their identity.<sup>3</sup>

Therefore, surveys of myths have often supported the analysis of Greek movements in the Mediterranean, with particular reference to complex phenomena such as the *apoikiai* and, in general, the so-called 'long-distance travels'. Quite often such surveys have followed studies of the most active

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1. It is our great pleasure to thank the Scientific Committee and the Organizing and Editorial Committee for accepting our paper proposal and for welcoming us.

2. For some useful remarks, see Hall 2007; Neils 2007; Osborne 2013.

3. See, for example, Hall 2000, 40-49; O'Cleirigh et al. 2000 (especially part seven: 'Identity of Hero and Community'); Wickersham 1991. A very helpful case-study, focusing on Corcyra, is developed in Antonetti 2001.

Greek component within the ‘Mediterranean web’<sup>4</sup> from the 10th to the 8th century BC, namely the Euboeans.<sup>5</sup> In the present study we want to focus on some observations about two significant mythical elements related to Euboea and to the wide and complex picture of Euboean maritime travels in the early Archaic period: Poseidon and Briareos/Aigaion. They are related to some of the main routes followed by Euboeans on the sea: towards the northern Aegean (Pieria, Chalkidike, Thrace), the Near East (north Syria, Phoenicia) and the Far West (along the Tunisian coast, Carthage and, finally, to the Straits of Gibraltar). Moreover, for several reasons, they appear relevant within the culture of Euboean centres as well. Our paper will illustrate the first results of a larger work, still in progress, which aims to provide an overall picture of the Euboean mythical presence abroad, taking into account places where literary, epigraphic and archaeological sources allow us to detect different types of Euboean presence or interest.

### *Poseidon*

Sometimes, while cults and myths spread from the motherland to the new communities abroad, we find ourselves going backwards, when the evidence from the colonies compels us to dig deeper into our knowledge of their mother cities. This is the case, for instance, with Poseidon.

Poseidon has never been seen as a conspicuous deity in the Euboean pantheon, in which the two children of Leto (Apollo and Artemis) have always been the main actors, mostly because of their well-known shrines in Eretria and its *chora* and the role of Apollo Archegetes in Sicily.

Nevertheless, as Knoepfler has underlined, Poseidon would be expected to have a significant place among the island’s cults since Euboea:

dans son ensemble, réunit toutes les conditions requises pour l’expansion de ce culte: une longue façade maritime très propice à la navigation, avec des nombreux ports et plusieurs caps (en particulier sur le tronçon érétrien de la route), un sol certes relativement stable, mais nullement à l’abri des séismes, voire de terrible raz de marée, et enfin un relief et des cultures favorable à l’élevage du cheval.<sup>6</sup>

A strong incentive to study this cult in Euboea comes from an Eretrian foundation in the northern Aegean, Mende, which is on the Pallene Peninsula. In the early 1990s, the late J. Vokotopoulou discovered a sanctuary of Poseidon on Cape Poseidi, 4 km from the settlement; this sanctuary is also attested by epigraphic data.<sup>7</sup> A remarkable inscription dated to the late 6th century BC defines the god [--- γ]α[ι]ῶχε κυανοχαῖτ[α ---],<sup>8</sup> which refers to Poseidon as a chthonic deity, related to earthquakes (in Homer he is not only γαιήοχος, but also ἐννοσίγαιος<sup>9</sup>), and recalls the words of Polyphemus: κλύθι, Ποσειδάων, γαιήοχε, κυανοχαῖτα (Hom. *Od.* IX, 528).<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, an altar of the 4th century

4. The expression is quoted in Crielaard 1998. A good synthesis on human mobility within the ancient Mediterranean and the main related issues is Gras 1995.

5. Among the main examples are Antonelli 1995a; 1995b; Braccesi 2010; Debiasi 2008; Lane Fox 2008; Valenza Mele 1977; 1979; Rossignoli 2004.

6. Knoepfler 2000, 337.

7. *SEG* XLIII, 428.

8. *SEG* XLV, 776; Vokotopoulou 1992, 446.

9. The chthonic nature of the cult at Poseidi is attested by the presence of clay channels which were used to enable the libations to penetrate the earth (Moschonissioti 1998, 265).

10. Hesychius gives the following definition (s.v. γαιήοχος): ὁ τὴν γῆν συνέχων, ἢ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ὀχοῦμενος ἢ ὁ ἵππικός, ὁ ἐπὶ τοῖς ὀχήμασιν <ῆ> ἄρμασι χαιρών. Λάκωνες. According to Chantraine (1968, 219) it derives from the Indo-European root *wegh*, ‘to shake’. The Doric form—with alpha—is attested by Pindar (*Ol.* I, 25; *Pyth.* IV, 33), in Aeschylus (*Sept.* 310) and in Pausanias (III, 20, 2-9; III, 21, 8-9; VII, 21, 7). The Ionic form is found in Homer, (*Il.* XIII, 43, 59, 83; XV, 174, 201, 222;

BC was dedicated to Poseidon Pontios,<sup>11</sup> an epithet clearly related to the world of the sea.<sup>12</sup> These epithets are rarely attested; nevertheless, these two facets of Poseidon are equally attested in Euboea, where the god is strictly related to both water and earth, as we shall see below.

Yet, in another Euboean *apoikia*, Chalkidian in this case, we find a *Poseideion*. According to Hesiod<sup>13</sup> a shrine for Poseidon was founded by the god's son Orion near Zankle, in Sicily: Orion—the poet says—founded the *temenos tou Poseidonos* and then went to live in Euboea. According to Pausanias (IX, 20, 3) his burial was in Tanagra, Boeotia, and there, in front of Euripos, he was worshipped. Strabo says he is Boeotian (IX, 2, 12) but that he was raised at Oreos, in the north of Euboea (X, 1, 4) where, as pointed out by Knoepfler,<sup>14</sup> he could have been worshipped. Interestingly, we may note a tribe called *Oreonidis* in Eretria.<sup>15</sup>

What about Euboea then? The record shows that Poseidon was worshipped in several Euboean communities: in Aigai, as attested by Homer (*Il.* XIII, 21), who does not mention more than the toponym. However, Strabo, quoting his verses in book VIII (7, 4), thinks this should be identified with the town in Euboea and not that in Achaea. Moreover, in book IX, the geographer provides us with a location for this Aigai, opposite Larimna and Halai in Boeotia, and adds that here there was a *tou Poseidonos hieron tou Aigaïou*.<sup>16</sup> Hesychius adds: *s.v.* Αἰγαί· νῆσος πρὸς τῇ Εὐβοίᾳ, ἱερόν Ποσειδῶνος. Aigai has not been located with certainty, but it was probably near modern Limni. It was a deme of Chalkis, as attested in a Delphic proxeny decree dated to the end of 4th or the beginning of the 3rd century BC. Moving southwards, in the *chora* of Karystos, precisely at Cape Geraistos, the harbour of the town, on the eastern shore of Euboea, inscriptions also attest to the presence of a shrine of Poseidon.<sup>17</sup> Yet in the *Odyssey* (III, 176-179), many bulls were sacrificed there to Poseidon in order to thank him for the safe voyage. From the Athenian tribute lists, we know a *Posideion*, probably located at the northern tip of the island (it paid the *phoros* in 425/424),<sup>18</sup> was a deme of Histiaia in the 2nd century BC.<sup>19</sup> Hesychius, furthermore, mentions an *epiclesis* of Poseidon, 'Euripios', strictly related to the River Euripos.<sup>20</sup> Indeed, in later sources Abas, the eponym of the Abantes, was the son of Poseidon and Arethousa.<sup>21</sup> Otherwise, literary sources never mention or even hint at the presence of Poseidon's cult in the main Euboean cities, Chalkis and Eretria, and inscriptions do not add as much information as we might hope. Denis Knoepfler has examined three inscriptions that are probably related to the cult of Poseidon in Eretria.<sup>22</sup> The first piece of evidence is two fragments of a marble plaque, probably part of an altar,

XX, 34; *Od.* I, 68; III, 55; VIII, 322, 350), in *Hom. Hymn Herm.* 186-187—attesting the cult in Onchestos—and to Poseidon himself, in Hesiod (*Theog.* 15), in the Orphic hymns (XVII, 1) and again in Pausanias (VII, 21, 8). As for inscriptions, this *epiclesis* is extremely rare; indeed, the Ionic form is attested only four times, once in Attica where it referred to Erechtheus (*IG* II, 3538; 5058)—who was worshipped as a chthonic deity. The Doric form is to be found in Poseidi and in Sparta (*IG* V, I, 213).

11. *SEG* XLVII, 939.

12. Poseidon in the *Iliad* is not only the earth-shaker, but the lord of the sea as well (XV, 190). The epithet 'Pontios' is ever rarer than the former. Few literary sources attest it; we find it in the Homeric Hymn to Poseidon (line 3), in a fragment by Eupolis (Fr. 140 Kock), in Euripides (*Hipp.* 44-45; *Rhes.* 188)—though the tragic poet uses it for Ares as well (*IA* 765)—while in the Orphic hymns this epithet is used for Zeus (63, 16). On the other hand, epigraphic data concerning this particular definition of Poseidon come only from Poseidi and Elateia, in Phokis (*CIG* VII, 3, 119).

13. Fr. 149 Merkelbach-West *apud* Diod. Sic. IV, 85.

14. Knoepfler 1998, 107.

15. *IG* XII, 9, 191A.41.

16. The possible connection between the cult of Poseidon at Aigai and the *epiclesis* Aigaïos found in Homer is not accepted by Knoepfler (2000, 338).

17. *IG* XII, 9, 44; *SEG* 27, 608.

18. *IG* I<sup>3</sup> 71.11.91-92.

19. *IG* XII.9 1189, XII, ll.20, 28, 39. See Hansen and Nielsen 2004, 656, *s.v.* Histiaia/Oreos.

20. Hsch. *s.v.* Εὐρίπιος· Ποσειδῶν.

21. Aristocr. *FGrHist* 591 F 7 *apud* Steph. Byz. *s.v.* Ἀβαντίς.

22. cf. Knoepfler 2000, 340-349.

found reused in the shrine of Apollo Daphnephoros.<sup>23</sup> On the plaque, Amphitrites is mentioned.<sup>24</sup> The nymph was most certainly worshipped in the sanctuary of Poseidon, as attested elsewhere, for instance in Corinth and in the Cyclades.<sup>25</sup> In Eretria, a few sanctuaries have been discovered, but the deities they were dedicated to have not yet been identified. In one of these shrines, located near the harbour of the town, three bull figurines have been found; the animal is strictly related to the cults of both Zeus and Poseidon. The second inscription examined by Knoepfler is a boundary stone dated to the 4th century BC, with the name of Naustolos, probably a maritime hero.<sup>26</sup> The third inscription<sup>27</sup> is a stele of the κοινόν τῶν ὀγδοιστῶν, celebrating the cult of a deity each eighth day of the month, which was, indeed, the day dedicated to Poseidon. However, the most interesting information concerns the calendar of Eretria, Chalkis and a few of their colonies: months *Hippion* in Chalkis,<sup>28</sup> Eretria<sup>29</sup> and Olinthus<sup>30</sup> are attested—while in Rhegion we find the form *Hippios*.<sup>31</sup> Since this month is not attested elsewhere, Robertson has labelled it an ‘Euboean month-name’.<sup>32</sup> It is clear that it is related to the role of Poseidon as lord of the horses, as he is defined in line 5 of the Homeric Hymn to Poseidon (ἵππων τε δμητῆρ’ ἔμεναι σωτῆρά τε νηῶν). According to Massimo Osanna, this epithet referred to the invention of the cavalry by the god and, therefore, represents his connection to the earth.<sup>33</sup> Robertson, on the other hand, thinks that both the bull and the horse, which is sacred to Poseidon, represent the ‘watery element’.<sup>34</sup> This connotation is not surprising since the aristocracies of both Chalkis and Eretria were named *hippobotai* and *hippeis*. Moreover, it is possible that in Karystos there was another month named after the god, *Posideon*, which is actually frequent in Ionian *poleis*.<sup>35</sup> This was related to a winter festival in honour of this deity, and it matches December/January, when the year started.<sup>36</sup> We recently found out that this spot in the Eretrian calendar was occupied by the month *Daphnephorion*, which may have taken the place of the Ionian *Posideon*.<sup>37</sup>

### **Briareos/Aigaion**

The earliest information about Briareos/Aigaion comes from Homer and Hesiod. In the *Iliad* Thetis summons him and all the Hekatoncheires on Olympus to help Zeus who had been imprisoned by Hera, Poseidon and Athena. Briareos, Homer says, is so called by gods whereas humans call him Ai-

23. SEG L, 874.

24. The Nereid was the bride of Poseidon according to Hesiod (*Theog.* 930); other authors speak of their bond (Ath. XI, 5; Pind. *Ol.* VI, 104; Plut. *De soll. an.* 36).

25. On the Isthmus, the cult of Amphitrites had already begun in the 7th century BC (*IG* IV, 219 and 246) and was still active in the 2nd century AD, when Pausanias (II, 1, 6) saw a statue of the Nereid beside that of Poseidon inside the temple. As for the Cyclades, we have evidence of the presence of the nymph on Syros (*IG* XII, 672), on Tinos (for instance *IG* XII, 5, 739; 800; 809; *IG* XII, Suppl. 304; 305; 307; 321, 322, 323) and on Naxos, where Poseidon would have kidnapped her (Eust. *Od.* III, 91).

26. *IG* XII, 9, 256.

27. SEG L, 876.

28. *IG* XII, 9, 207.

29. *IG* XI, 4, 1065b.

30. Robinson 1938, 51, n. 5.

31. The same toponym, Πήγγιον, is related to the function of Poseidon as an ‘h’ deity; cf. Helly 1987, 144.

32. Robertson 1984, 9.

33. Osanna 1996, 114.

34. Robertson 2005, 91.

35. cf. Trümper 1997, 39-120.

36. According to Knoepfler (1989, 39-40) the Euboean calendar started during winter as in Boeotia and the Cyclades (*contra* Hatzopoulos 1988, 75). Proof of that would be the renewal of the mandate of the appointment of hieromnemons for the Amphictyonic League that occurred in the spring for Euboeans, Boeotians and Dorians.

37. Voutiras and Sismanidis 2007, 265-266.

gaion, and he is stronger than his father.<sup>38</sup> It is not easy to understand who is the father being named by the poet: some scholars suggest Poseidon, but there is no solid evidence to support this idea.<sup>39</sup>

Hesiod and Eumelus are the first authors to relate Briareos' family. The poet from Ascra says, referring only to Briareos, that Ouranos and Gaia were his parents, and Kottos and Gyges his brothers. The three brothers are named Hekatoncheires because they have 100 arms and 50 heads, powerful strength and huge bodies.<sup>40</sup> The Hekatoncheires aided Zeus in the fight against the Titans.<sup>41</sup> The Corinthian Eumelus, a poet of the Early Archaic period (end of the 8th-early 7th century BC),<sup>42</sup> tells a different version: Briareos was the son of Gaia and Pontus and the Hekatoncheires fought with the Titans against Zeus.<sup>43</sup>

The duality attested by Homer is the main characteristic of Briareos/Aigaion in Greek literary sources, and it is not simple to explain. It is logical and realistic to think of a fusion of two entities: 'the strong one', Briareos, referring to the strength due to his 100 arms, and the sea-god, Aigaion, perhaps belonging to pre-Greek tradition.<sup>44</sup>

Greek literary sources allow us to detect some peculiarities and specializations of these two deities. Briareos is directly related to metalworking within a tradition preserved by Callimachus, who relates him to the Giants and positions him under the volcano *Aitne*, in Sicily, a place strictly connected to the colonial Euboean presence; here Briareos works with the pincers of Hephaestus.<sup>45</sup> Furthermore, a papyrus from Oxyrinchus tells us that 'the first to use metal armour was Briareos, whilst previously men protected their bodies with animal skins'. Before this passage, the papyrus refers to the invention of weapons, which is attributed, as some say, to the Cyclopes in a cave in Euboea called *Teuchion*.<sup>46</sup> This event is attested also by a fragment of Ister.<sup>47</sup> Immediately after, the text of Ister informs us about another theory concerning the *πρώτος εὔρετης* of bronze arms and armour, referring to the Curetes of Euboea. This text appears to be related, significantly, to a passage of the *Iliad* that refers to a bird called Chalkis, by gods, and Kymindis, by men.<sup>48</sup>

Aigaion, on the other hand, is mainly connected to the sea. We have seen the link with Thetis in Homer; Eumelus, in the cited text, says he lives *ἐν τῇ θαλάσῃ*. According to Archemacus, an Euboean author, Aigaion is the first user of a *longa nave*.<sup>49</sup> He is also connected, in several ways, to Poseidon (Briareos married the daughter of Poseidon, Kymopoleia.<sup>50</sup> Moreover, he was defeated by Poseidon in Propontis, where there is, near the mouth of the River Ryndakos, a place named 'the grave of Aigaion'<sup>51</sup>), to the Aigaion Sea and to both of them.

The link between Briareos/Aigaion and Euboea is also dual because there are two cities of the island to which they are connected: Chalkis and Karystos, as recalled in a late but important passage of Solinus (an author from the 3rd century AD)—*Briareo enim rem divinam Carystii faciunt, sicut Aegaeoni Chalcidienses: nam omnis ferme Euboea Titanum fuit regnum*.<sup>52</sup> Following other sources, it is

38. Achilles relates the event in Hom. *Il.* 394-404.

39. On this matter, see Fowler 1988; Kirk 1985, 95.

40. Hes. *Theog.* 147-153.

41. Hes. *Theog.* 713-735.

42. Debiassi 2003, 153. See also de Fidio 1991, 233-263; Janko 1982, 231-233.

43. Eum. f. 2 Kinkel (*apud Schol. Ap. Rhod.* I, 1165).

44. On this matter, see Fowler 1988.

45. Callim. H. IV, 141-147.

46. *P.Oxy.* X 1241 col. IV.

47. Ister f 55 Müller (*apud Schol. Il.* X 439).

48. Hom. *Il.* XIV, 286-291. Both elements are related to metalworking. See Blakely 2006, 93; Mele 1981.

49. Archem. *FGrHist* 424 F5 (*apud Plin. H. N.* VII, 207).

50. Hes. *Theog.* 817-819.

51. *Ap. Rhod.* I, 1165.

52. Solin. XI, 16.

possible to suggest that Solinus misunderstood the matter. Karystos, in fact, was connected mainly to Aigaion: the city was called also Aigaia by the *dynastes* Aigaion (another interesting element), who also gave his name to the Aigaion (Aegean) Sea.<sup>53</sup> Briareos, on the other hand, as we have seen, is related to metalworking, a specific Chalkidian skill,<sup>54</sup> and to the Chalkidian area of Sicily; thus he would seem more appropriate to Chalkis. Moreover, the connection with Euboea is clear on two other occasions: a *scholium* of the already cited text of Apollonius, which describes the escape of Briareos from Euboea to Phrygia,<sup>55</sup> and an entry of Hesychius, which informs us about Titanis Euboea, a daughter of Briareos.

Briareos, Aigaion and Briareos/Aigaion are, therefore, complex mythical elements, perceived by Greeks certainly as *proteroi theoi*<sup>56</sup> and also related to the fundamental conflicts thanks to which Zeus Olympios established his order.<sup>57</sup> However, Briareos and Aigaion are perceived also as *protoi euretai*, inventors of important technologies. They are strongly connected to Euboea and with local traditions of the two main centres of the island, similarly to what happens for Giants, Cyclopes and Titans (due to constraints of space, we cannot examine this last point in detail here).<sup>58</sup>

Briareos is an Euboean mythical element that we can find also outside Euboea, not only in Sicily, as we have already noted,<sup>59</sup> but also in the Far West, at the Straits of Gibraltar. At least two authors, Aristotle<sup>60</sup> and Parthenius,<sup>61</sup> tell us that the stelai of Herakles were first called stelai of Briareos. Three different studies of Michel Gras<sup>62</sup> have analysed this, situating it in relation to three elements: 1) the Euboean materials found at Huelva, the emporion in southern Spain related to the mining zone later called Tartessos by the Greeks,<sup>63</sup> 2) the sources that tell us about Pithekoussai, the Naxikai islands, Hippou Akre on the Tunisian shores, on which Santo Mazzarino already focused many years ago,<sup>64</sup> and 3) the Euboean presence at Carthago (the 'Carthaginian connection' between the Campanian Pithekoussai and the colony of Tyre, brought into focus by Docter and Niemeyer<sup>65</sup>). Also, Moroccan shores may have preserved some toponyms of plausible Euboean origins, such as Pontion, Kephesias and Kotes.<sup>66</sup> According to Gras, the Euboeans followed the Phoenicians along the southern Mediterranean route, from the shores of the Near East to those of the Far West.

## Conclusions

Our brief summary permits us to make some concluding remarks. Regarding Poseidon and his cult, as underlined above, the periphery provides us with information concerning the core. Of course,

53. Steph. Byz. s.v. Κάρυστος; *Schol. Ap Rhod.* I, 1165. In a passage of Hesychius, Aigai is instead an island near Euboea where a sanctuary of Poseidon is situated (Hsch. s.v. Αιγαί). The Aigaion Sea, Briareos and Poseidon are associated in Hsch. s.v. Αιγαίων.

54. See Mele 1981.

55. *Schol. Ap. Rhod.* I, 1165. The source recalls the late opinion of Lucius Tarrheius.

56. The definition goes back to Hesiod, with reference to the Titans (*Theog.* 424; *RE* XXXIII, 1, s.v. πρότεροι θεοί).

57. They tend to be confused sometimes, by ancient authors, with similar primordial elements as Giants, Cyclopes and Titans. See Debiasi 2004, 86.

58. Hsch. s.v. Τιτανίδα.

59. At Mount Aitne is attested also the presence of another primordial element: Typhaeus (Pind. *Pyth.* I, 16-20). Aesch. *PV* 366-372.

60. Arist. *Fr.* 678 Rose (*apud* Ael. *VH* V, 3).

61. Parth. *Fr.* 31 Maineke (*apud* Schol. Dionys. *Per.* 456).

62. Gras 1990; 1992; 2000. See also López Pardo 2004.

63. Aubet 2002a; 2002b; Fernández Jurado 2002.

64. Mazzarino 1947, 116-117; 263-267. Gras was followed by Antonelli 1997; 2006; and Debiasi 2004; 2008. The main sources are Hecat. *FGHist* 1 F 343 (*apud* Steph. Byz. s.v. Κύβος); Ps. Scyl. 111; Steph. Byz. s.v. Πιθήκων κόλπος; Solin. XXVIII.

65. Docter and Niemeyer 1994.

66. Ps. Scyl. 112.

we have noted that the features of the cult in Mende and in Eretria may not match perfectly, but this should not surprise us. As highlighted by de Polignac,<sup>67</sup> the cults of their metropolis could be modified by settlers due to the new *status* of colonizers; therefore, the functions of a particular deity may have become more articulated. Moreover, there is a very large part of Euboea about which we still know very little, and Poseidon could well have been worshipped in this part.

The presence of Briareos in the Far West is probably due to the maritime activity of the Chalkidians. This allows us to highlight the importance of Chalkis within the relationship between the Euboean context and the Mediterranean web of long-distance contacts and trades. This role, at present, does not emerge clearly from the archaeological data, contrary to what happens in the case of Lefkandi and Eretria.<sup>68</sup> The presence of Briareos has multiple meanings, but it was mainly used to connote an uncharted territory. In a similar manner, we can read the use of the name Pithekoussai (as shown by Torelli and Cerchiai<sup>69</sup>) as a mythical mark for a liminal environment. Due to the double link with metalworking and with the sea and his primordial nature, Briareos appears particularly suitable to connote the Tartessian area from the Chalkidian point of view.

Karystos, by virtue of the connection with Aigaia, Aigaion/Briareos, the Aigaion Sea (though we had no time to dwell on the elusive relationship among Karystos, Geraistos and Poseidon), serves as a kind of convergence point of mythical and religious elements connected with the sea.

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67. de Polignac 1998, 1-4.

68. Huber 1998.

69. Cerchiai 1996; Torelli 1994.

## Abbreviations

- FGrHisto = *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*  
 IG = *Inscriptiones Graecae*  
 SEG = *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*

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