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SOME BRONZE TYPOLOGIES IN SARDINIA AND ITALY
FROM 1200 TO 700 BC
THEIR ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT

During the 1960s, I was writing my doctoral thesis on "Some Bronze Types from Tuscany of the 9th, 8th and 7th centuries BC: the Italic Inheritance, Aegean and Near Eastern Influence", which was basically concerned with the Orientalizing period in Etruria but naturally also involved the study of all the bronze forms present in Italy at that time and what they might tell us of the events, that is the history, during the precolonial and colonial periods. Could the bronzes help to inform us whence came contacts between Italy and her eastern Mediterranean neighbours during that period and at what date? Even during the 1960s, it was clear that some bronze forms of undoubted Aegean or east Mediterranean origin had existed in Italy at a time before the period I was studying and when few other eastern contacts could be demonstrated, that is after the Mycenaean era and before any certain precolonial contacts, broadly between the end of the 11th century, during the 10th century and down to around the middle of the 9th century, in Greece the Protogeometric and Early Geometric periods and in Italy the later 'Bronzo Finale' and the beginning of the Early Iron Age. I should say here that throughout this lecture I shall use the current received absolute datings, though I believe we would all agree that these may well have to be adjusted in the future and add that, until absolute datings do become reliable in the east Mediterranean, Aegean and Italian worlds, we may still confuse the sequence of events and thus misinterpret history.

Now this period from around 1000 to about 850 or somewhat later, a period of some one hundred and fifty years, seemed to me when I was writing my thesis, and still does today, to show very different relationships between Italy and her eastern neighbours than those of either the previous or following eras. In my thesis I came to the conclusion, and today I shall call it my first hypothesis, that if a bronze form common to Italy and the Aegean or east Mediterranean areas, or known from the central European sphere, can be shown to date back to a mutual origin of the 13th, 12th or 11th centuries BC but is found in later Italian contexts, which in all probability predate any certain precolonial contacts, then it is likely that any similarities noted between east and west Mediterranean examples of these bronze types derive from their common origin rather than any contact between the east and west contemporary with the contexts in which they were found. Such similarities may be the expression of the great longevity of some bronze forms, for example the crescent or T-hilted swords or hammered greaves, which I shall mention below. Again, a few bronze objects, or fragments of objects, may be actual survivors or heirlooms, imported to Italy centuries before the date of their Italian context, for instance the disc mirror from Tarquinia and the probable Late Cypriot III fragments included in the Piediluco-Contigliano hoard, to be discussed below, may all be examples of such survivors.

I wish also to express a second hypothesis in my reasoning today. Just as some bronze

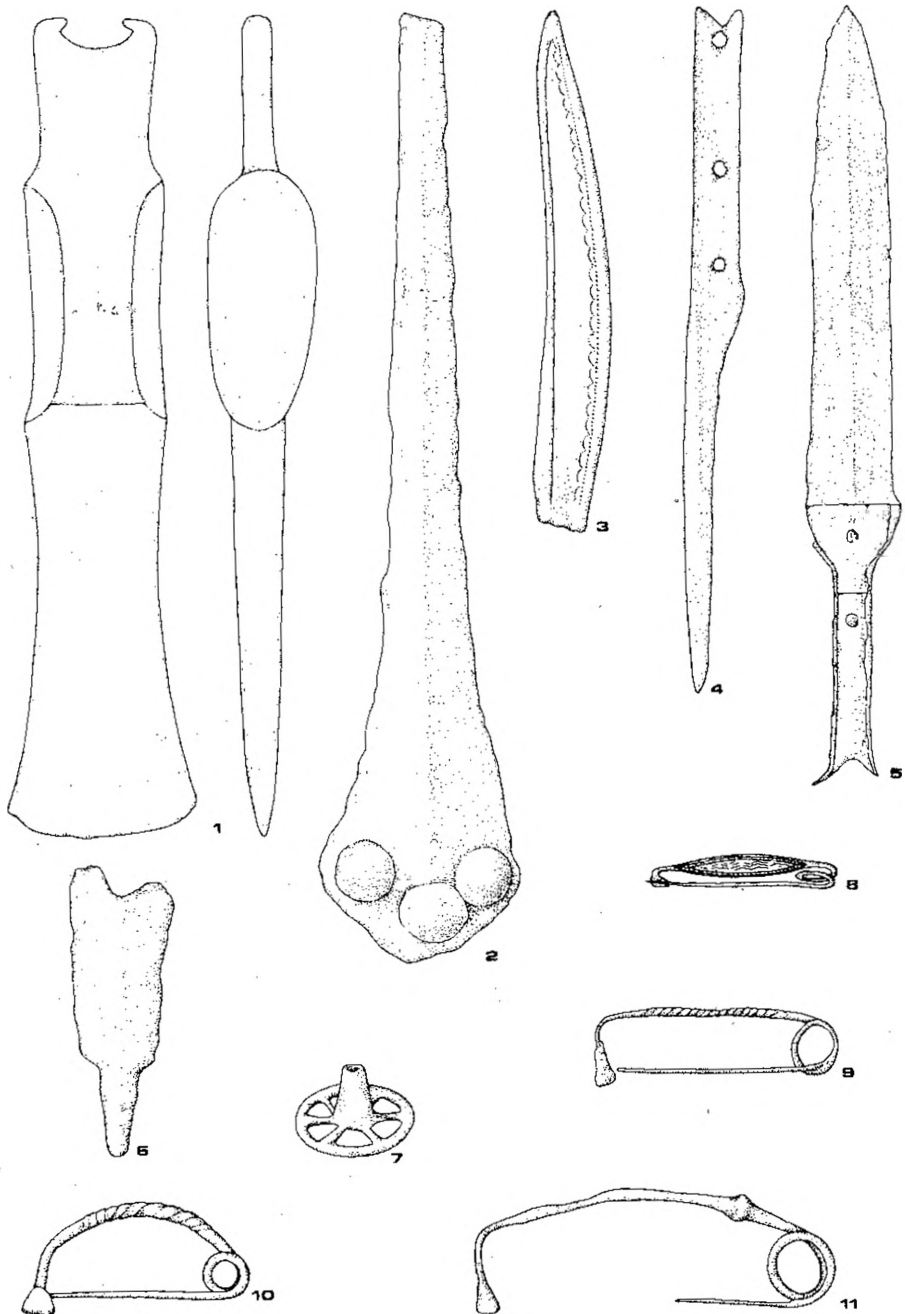


fig. 1 - Violin-bow and early bow fibulae with other bronzes from the Grotta Pertosa, Campania. (After Bietti Sestieri 1983).

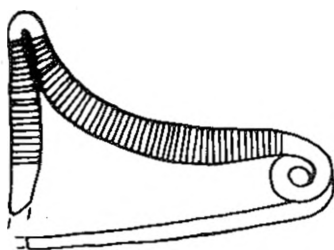


fig. 2 - Elbow fibula from the Modica hoard, Sicily. (Drawn by Judith Toms).

forms deriving from the Late Bronze Age persisted in Italy down to the colonizing age, so, too, did some bronze types continue in the east Mediterranean area, either as survivors or by the continuity of manufacture, often in places peripheral to that of the place of their origin and, as might be expected, in developed forms. In some cases, like that of the tripod-stands, variants of the same original form persisted in both east and west; in this case, I can see no inter-relationship between those of the east and the examples from Italy during the centuries of 'tenuous contact' of which I have spoken and, to complicate matters, I believe that, when tripod-stands and possibly wheeled-stands too, appear in Italy during colonial times, they were inspired by an eastern tradition and not the Italian inheritance.

Here, I feel I should mention the book, *Centuries of Darkness*, written by my fellow countrymen.¹ The authors recognized resemblances between some objects dating to the final centuries of the second millennium BC with others of the Orientalizing period and, amongst many others arguments, concluded that these objects must lie closer in date than is generally accepted. Not so! Yes, there are resemblances and, as we shall see, some among the bronze types, but these spring from the longevity of some Late Bronze Age bronze-working traditions, which were not forgotten and which bronzesmiths of succeeding generations down to the colonizing age justly aspired to emulate.

Now let me try to justify my hypotheses by considering a few bronze typologies; most of the bronze forms I have selected to mention today have from time to time been taken to demonstrate contacts between the east and west Mediterranean during these one hundred and fifty years in which, though I would be foolish to suggest that there was no contact between the east and west Mediterranean, yet I feel it must have been slight. I have little time available to me, so please forgive many generalizations and little detail. I shall discuss the bronze forms in turn.

FIBULAE

Let us look quickly at the evidence of the fibulae, an ever-interesting bronze form. Examples of violin-bow or early bow fibulae, dating from the 13th to the 11th century BC, are known from Scoglio del Tonno² and the Grotta Pertosa (fig. 1),³ where there were also found types of bronze knife, dagger, razor and other forms also known from the Aegean area. Some fibulae from the Grotta Pertosa have a straightening and slight lengthening of the forearm of the bow (see fig. 1, 11), a tendency towards the development of the stilted fibula. This form almost certainly originated in Italy but passed to Crete⁴

¹ JAMES 1991, *passim*.

² MÜLLER-KARPE 1959, pl. 13; PERONI, p. 109, fig. 24.

³ BIETTI SESTIERI 1973, p. 422, footnote 147; BIETTI SESTIERI 1983, pp. 85-92.

⁴ HALI. 1914, pl. XIX from Vrokastro.

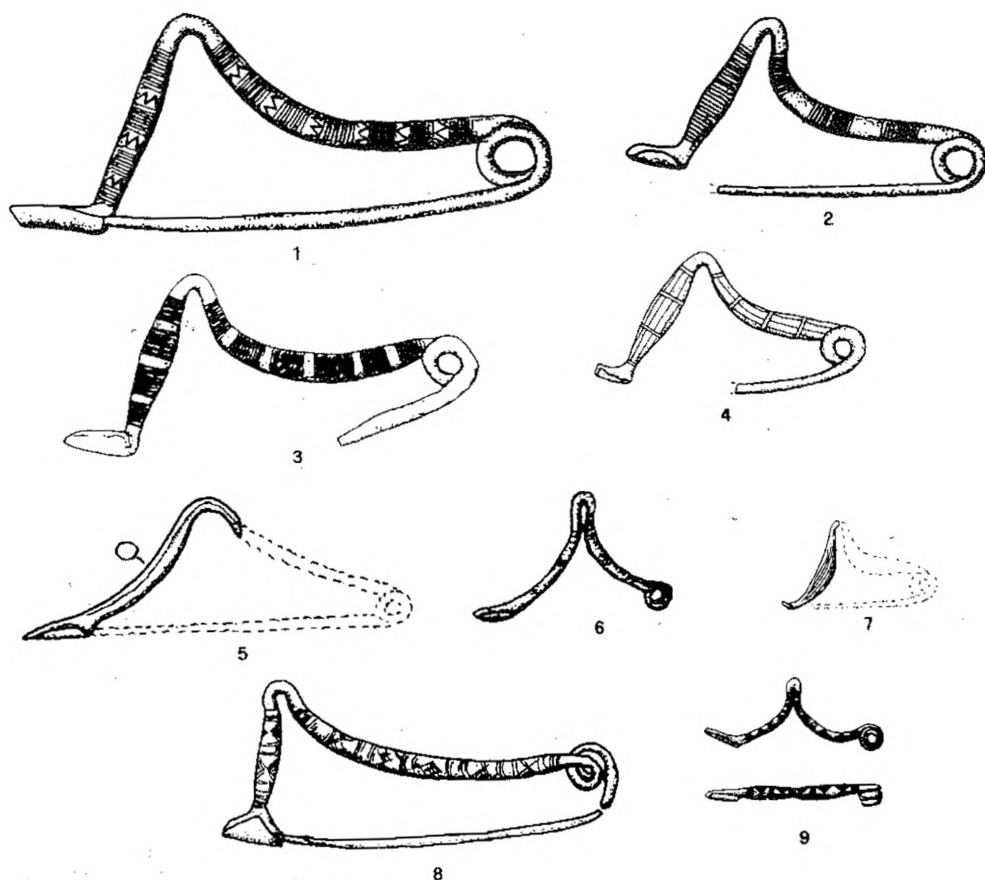


fig. 3 - Elbow fibulae from Sicily, France and Spain. (After Giardino 1995).

and Cyprus,⁵ the type taking local forms on each island. Now fibulae may be said to be the most ever-changing of bronze forms and I find it deeply significant that, with some exceptions, so few subsequent forms of fibulae were held in common between Italy and the east Mediterranean world until precolonial or colonial times.

One of these possible exceptions and a much discussed form is that of the elbow fibulae ('fibule a gomito'), which often have a somewhat elongated catch-plate. I have no doubt that the elongated catch-plate and the elbow form, probably arising from stilted types, originated in Sicily and perhaps by the end of the 11th century BC. There are examples from the Modica hoard (fig. 2),⁶ the Molino della Badia-Madonna del Piano necropolis (fig. 3, 1 and 2)⁷ and elsewhere in Sicily: I believe with Giardino⁸ that the form passed to France (fig. 3, 5) and west to Spain, there to appear in the Huelva hoard around 900 BC (fig. 3, 7). In Spain, a local variant developed, termed 'Huelva fibulae' in the literature (see fig. 7 below).

⁵ BLINKENBERG 1926, p. 54, Type 10 from Enkomi; CATLING 1964, fig. 22 bottom and pl. 42.

⁶ ORSI 1900. See pl. 12; BIANCO PERONI 1970, pl. 78 D.

⁷ ORSI 1905; BERNABÒ BREA - MILITELLO - LA PIANA 1969.

⁸ GIARDINO 1995, pp. 237-240 and 330; see GUZZO 1969.

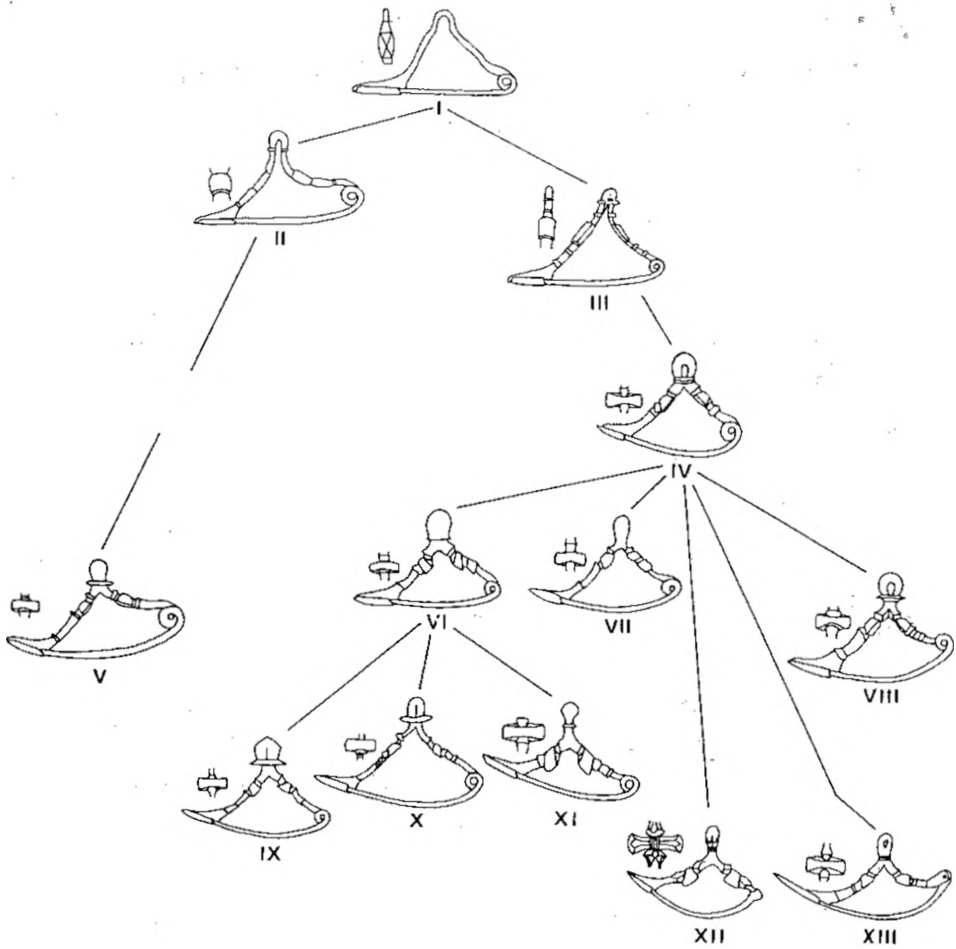


fig. 4 · Typological development of Cypriot fibulae. (After Lo Schiavo 1992).

I also believe that Sicilian elbow fibulae must have passed east to Cyprus and there, too, developed into local forms (fig. 4):⁹ here it is worthy of mention that at least one of the fibulae from the Modica hoard once had a ring or coil of wire twisted round the elbow, a detail recalled in the Cypriot series. The date for the beginning of the Cypriot series of these fibulae must remain open at the present time but there is evidence that the sea lanes between the west and east Mediterranean were still used, probably throughout the 11th century though declining towards its end and even into the beginning of the 10th century, and that occasionally western and Italian objects or types reached the east Mediterranean area. Though most datings for such connections remain indefinite, this is indicated by the distribution of amber beads of 'Tiryns' type which stretches from Sardinia in the west, to Frattesina in the north, to Greece and probably the Levant in

⁹ LO SCHIAVO 1992. See for previous references.

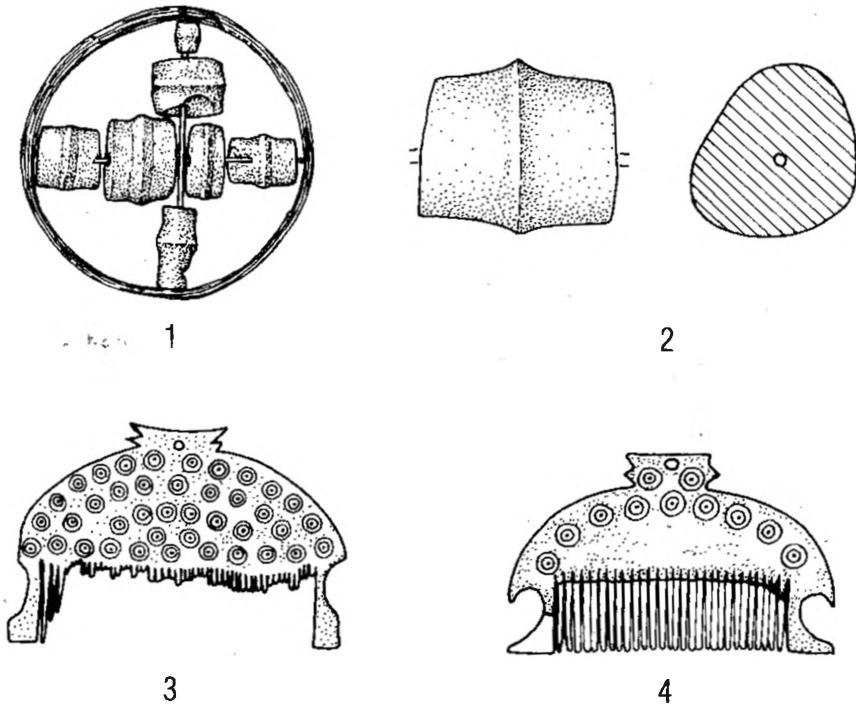


fig. 5 - Amber beads from (1) the Tiryns hoard; (2) Frattesina. Ivory combs from (3) Frattesina; (4) Enkomi, Cyprus. (After von Hase 1990).

the east and by the distribution of the small bone or ivory combs, almost certainly an Italian type and in Italy broadly dated from the 12th to the 10th century, which are known from Frattesina, Lipari, Molino della Badia-Madonna del Piano in Sicily and elsewhere in Italy but with an example from Enkomi in Cyprus, probably from a Late Cypriot IIIB context (fig. 5).¹⁰ Most significantly, bronze articulated spits from the Atlantic west reached Sardinia, where a fragment was included in the Monte Sa Idda hoard, and Cyprus, for an example was found in Tomb 523 at Amathus in a context dated around 1000 BC (fig. 6).¹¹

Now, as I said in my second hypothesis, types of common origin but developed in isolated areas, often show similarities but it is sometimes very difficult to judge whether such similarities reflect their common origin or contacts contemporary with their date of manufacture or the context in which they were found. This is true of the elbow fibulae and the subject has attracted a large literature, much hampered by the lack of firm datings for the east Mediterranean examples. I have suggested above that the Sicilian type of elbow fibula passed both to Spain and to Cyprus and that local variants developed in these areas. The reading of the evidence provided by this form of fibula has been complicated by the fact that examples of both the western 'Huelva type' of fibula (fig. 7, 7) and that of the

¹⁰ VAGNETTI 1986, pp. 210-214. See footnote 45 for amber beads of 'Tiryns' type.

¹¹ KARAGEORGHIS - LO SCHIAVO 1989.

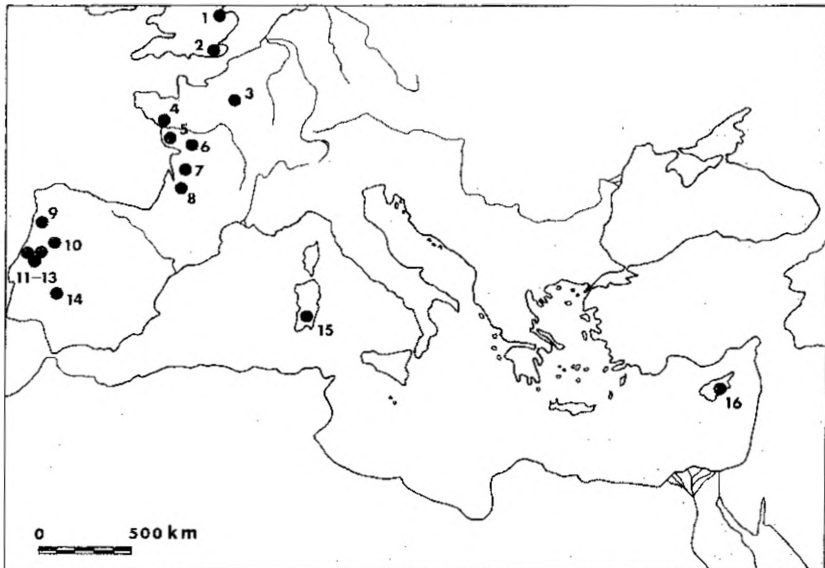
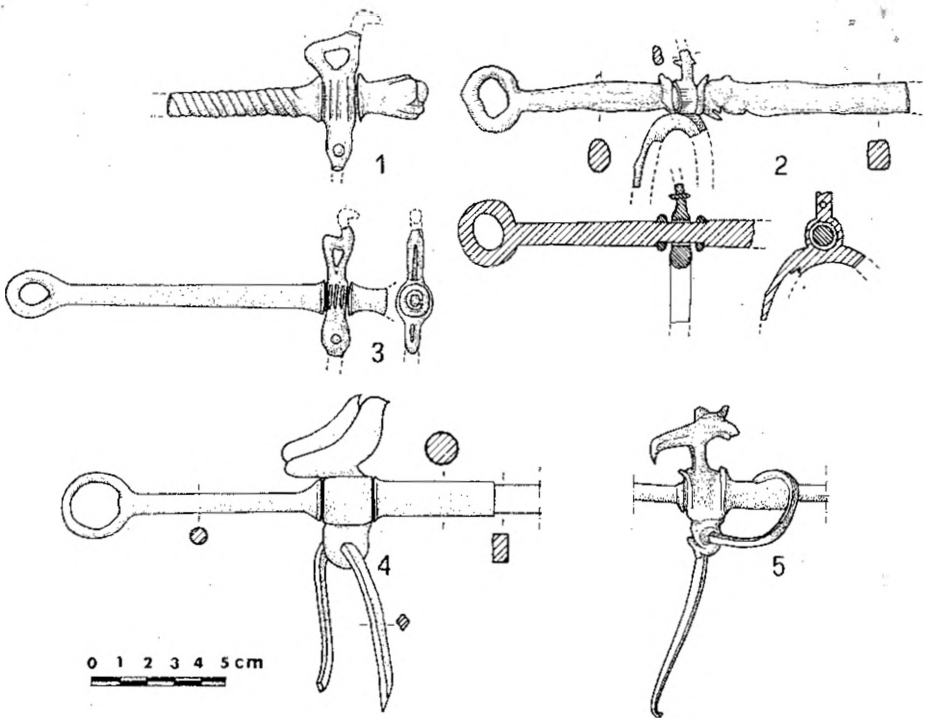


fig. 6 - Bronze articulated spits and a map of their distribution. (1 above) from the Monte Sa Idda hoard, Sardinia; (2 above) from Amathus, Cyprus; (3-5 above) similar articulated spits from France and the Iberian peninsula. (After Lo Schiavo 1990).

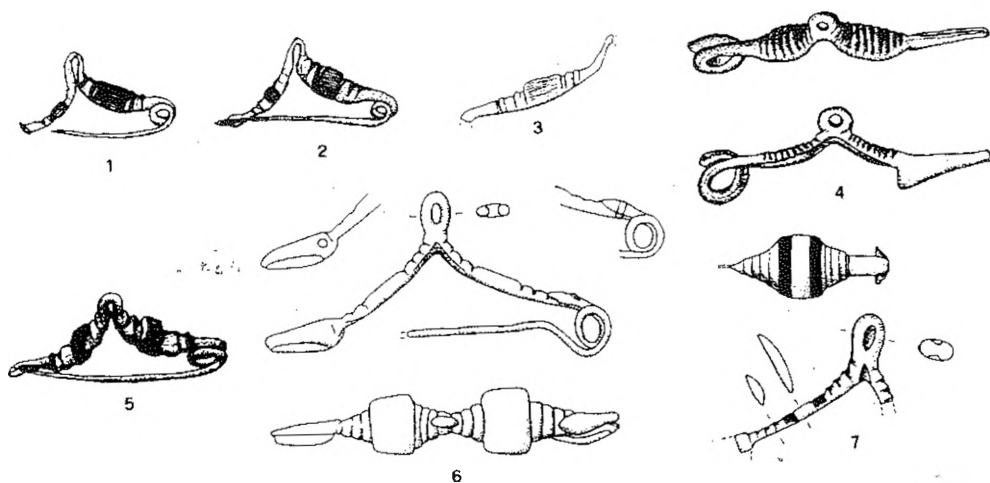


fig. 7 - 'Huelva fibulae' from Spain, France and (7) from Nurdole, Sardinia. (After Giardino 1995).

Cypriot series (fig. 8, 1) reached Sardinia, the latter from Barumini and from an Iron Age context.¹² In my opinion, these examples complete a cycle beginning in Sicily, passing to both the western and eastern Mediterranean areas, to develop there and finally return to Italy. I do not believe the typology of this form of fibula and its variants can be said to prove contact between the east and west Mediterranean areas between around 1000 BC or a little later and the mid-9th to 8th century: others may feel differently but I would emphasize that, if contact is claimed where none existed, then history will be misinterpreted.

A fibula type certainly held in common between Italy and Greece during the centuries under discussion is that of the spectacle fibulae but these have a common Balkan origin¹³ and here we must pause and recall that, however firm my hypotheses may be, to varying degrees Italy always maintained connections with the Balkans and central European world, which received influences from the Aegean area during the Late Bronze Age and, in some cases and sometimes after a considerable interval of time, passed them back to Italy, as for example in the case of bell and crested helmets.¹⁴ To continue with the fibulae: four-coil fibulae with a central rivet joining the two coiled arms and with a plate covering the rivet-head seem first to have developed in Greece,¹⁵ to be brought to Italy during precolonial or colonial times. The type is known from Sicily, Calabria, Campania and Etruria, where it appears at Tarquinia in a context probably dating to Villanovan IC at the end of the 9th century (*tav. I a*).¹⁶ In Campania, the form developed to amazing proportions with designs often associated with small bronze figurines¹⁷ during the 8th century BC.

Now four-coil fibulae are the earliest type of fibula known to me of both Greek and Italian origin to appear in numbers in Greece and Italy since Mycenaean times. They are rather exceptional in so far as few fibula forms of likely Greek origin were adopted

¹² LO SCHIAVO 1992, p. 301.

¹³ LO SCHIAVO 1984, pp. 228-232.

¹⁴ HENCKEN 1971, *passim*.

¹⁵ ALEXANDER 1965, pp. 15-17, Type IV.

¹⁶ See SUNDWALL 1943, pp. 174-176, Type E II b and c; HENCKEN, *Tarquinia*, p. 242, fig. 220.

¹⁷ See JOHANNOWSKY 1983, pl. 59 c and e, from Suessola.

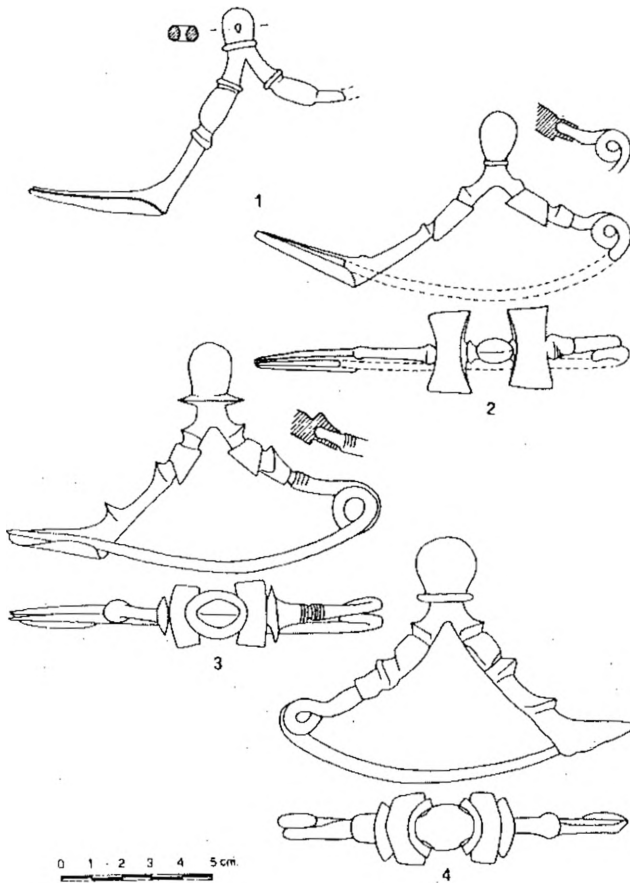


fig. 8 - Cypriot fibulae from (1) Barumini, Sardinia; (2 and 3) said to be from Italy; (4) Baune, France. (After Lo Schiavo 1992).

by the Italic peoples during the precolonial or colonial times but rather Greek colonists, especially at Pithecusa, adopted and adapted Italic forms of fibula. For example, in Tomb 550 at Pithecusa of Late Geometric I date, there was an Italic bronze fibula of serpentine form and with a long catch-plate and also a composite fibula with a long catch-plate and with two lengthened bone segments surviving upon the bronze bow (fig. 9).¹⁸ The elongated catch-plates of these forms are a culmination of a tradition already old in Italy, the beginning of which we have already noted in Sicilian elbow fibulae of around 1000 BC and whose development may be followed in Italy down through the subsequent centuries, and both the serpentine fibula form and that of composite fibulae with bone, amber or other materials threaded upon their bows are of undoubted Italic origin. However, Greek colonists in Italy adapted the latter form, creating a distinctive variant type, often with somewhat lengthened segments set upon the bow.¹⁹ Many Italic fibulae,

¹⁸ BUCHNER - RIDGWAY 1993, p. 547 and pl. 164.

¹⁹ CLOSE-BROOKS 1967, p. 328; GUZZO 1982.

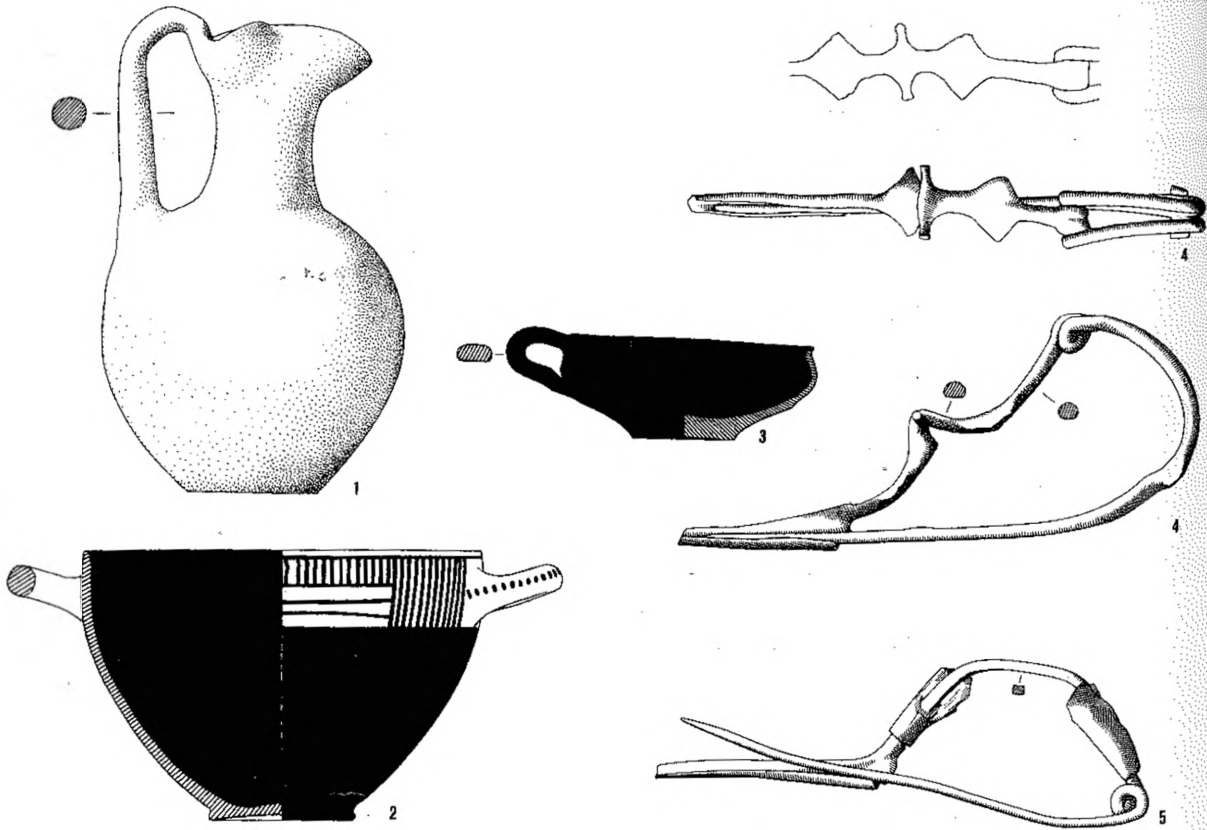


fig. 9 - Serpentine and composite fibulae and pottery from Tomb 550 at Pithecusa. (After Buchner - Ridgway 1993).

as well as Greek colonial adaptations of Italic fibula forms, were carried to Greece and there often dedicated in the great sanctuaries.²⁰

So I would propose that the fibulae show a mutual central European origin with several early types held in common in Italy, the Aegean and east Mediterranean area from the 13th to the 11th century. Sometimes Italian innovations appear in these forms and a Sicilian type, the elbow fibula, passed east to Cyprus by about 1000 BC or a little later and also west to Spain. Subsequently, I can see no discernable mutual developments in the fibula types of the east and west Mediterranean and few exchanges or commonly held forms, apart from that of the spectacle fibulae of Balkan origin, until the coming of the precolonial and colonial period.

²⁰ STUBBINGS 1962, pp. 439-441 and pl. 187 from Perachora; VON HASE 1979, p. 69 and footnotes 33 to 36 for further references.

SWORDS

Let us go back to the 13th and 12th centuries and consider the swords. It is well known that flange hilted swords of central European origin were widely adopted in Italy, Greece and further east. That is one major sword type held in common between Italy and Greece during the Late Bronze Age and which was to affect the subsequent typology of swords in both countries. A second form of sword, Nancy Sandars Type F, is well known in the Aegean area and one example reached Italy to be included in the Surbo hoard from Apulia, associated with hammer heads and a chisel of Greek or perhaps Cypriot type (fig. 10).²¹ The crescent or T-hilt form of sword hilt was adopted in Italy, on present evidence at first in Sicily, where it appears on the hilts of dirks from the Modica hoard (fig. 11).²² This type of hilt next is known from Calabria and thence crescent hilted swords spread northwards up the Tyrrhenian coast, to become the dominant sword type from Campania to Etruria throughout the 9th and 8th centuries.²³ Thus this bronze form demonstrates an ultimately Late Bronze Age Aegean type continuing in a developed form in southern and central Italy down to the colonizing age.

GREAVES

Possibly of European origin, hammered greaves with embossed decoration and holes or attachments for lacing are another bronze form held in common between Italy, Greece and Cyprus during the 12th or 11th centuries.²⁴ The type reached Sicily to appear in Tomb 26 at Molino della Badia-Madonna del Piano, which included a stilted fibula and has been dated to the 11th century.²⁵ Here it is only possible to say that, though similar greaves are known in the Balkans and elsewhere in Europe at a later date²⁶ and thus might have influenced Italian forms, it seems likely, as with the crescent hilted swords mentioned above, that this type of greave survived in southern Italy from the 11th century into Early Iron Age times, when examples are known from Calabria and Campania.²⁷

MIRRORS

Another interesting bronze type is that of the small disc mirrors. We know mirrors of Aegean or Cypriot type reached Sicily and Sardinia between the 13th and 11th century (fig. 12).²⁸ In Sardinia mirrors were given fine handles, cast in the splendid lost-wax technique of that island.²⁹ Mirrors are not known elsewhere in Italy until the 9th century, when an example comes from a Villanovan IA or B grave, Poggio Selciatello 77, at Tarquinia (*tav. I b*).³⁰ Hencken, seeing some resemblance between the tang of this disc mirror with the handles of Villanovan rectangular razors, believed the mirror to be «a local product of ultimate Aegean inspiration», thus suggesting the longevity of the form but not why Villanovan bronzesmiths should create this unique example of a type so

²¹ MACNAMARA 1970; BIETTI SESTIERI 1973, pp. 388 and 406.

²² See footnote 6 above.

²³ BIANCO PERONI 1970, pp. 79-96.

²⁴ BOUZEK 1985, pp. 111-116.

²⁵ ALBANESE PROCELLI 1994, pp. 155-158.

²⁶ BOUZEK 1985, pp. 116 and 226, footnote 131.

²⁷ From Torre Galli: ORSI 1926. From Pontecagnano: D'AGOSTINO - GASTALDI 1988, pp. 79-80.

²⁸ LO SCHIAVO - MACNAMARA - VAGNETTI 1985, pp. 28-30.

²⁹ See LO SCHIAVO 1990, fig. 2.

³⁰ HENCKEN, *Tarquinia*, pp. 47-48 and 533.

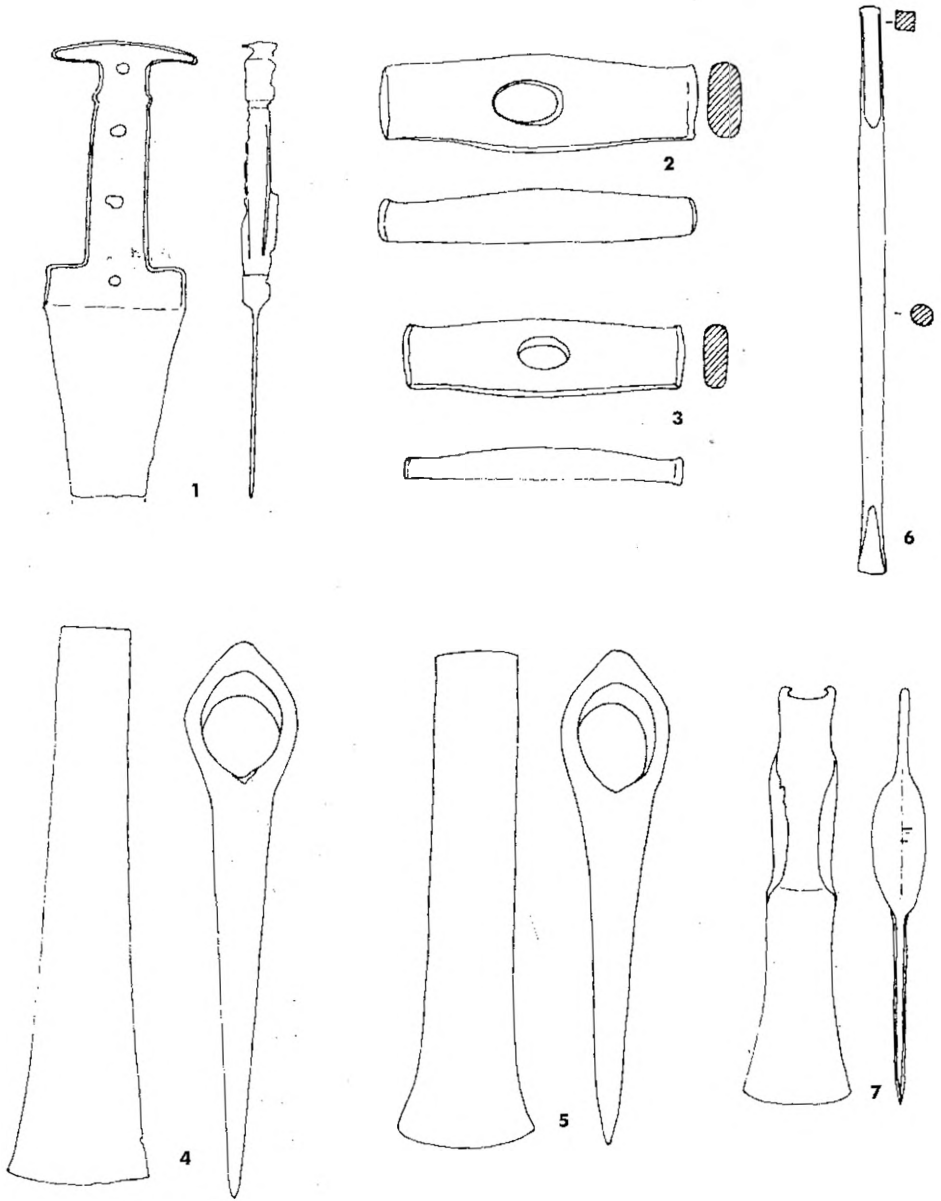


fig. 10 - Bronzes from the Surbo hoard, Apulia. (After Bietti Sestieri 1973).

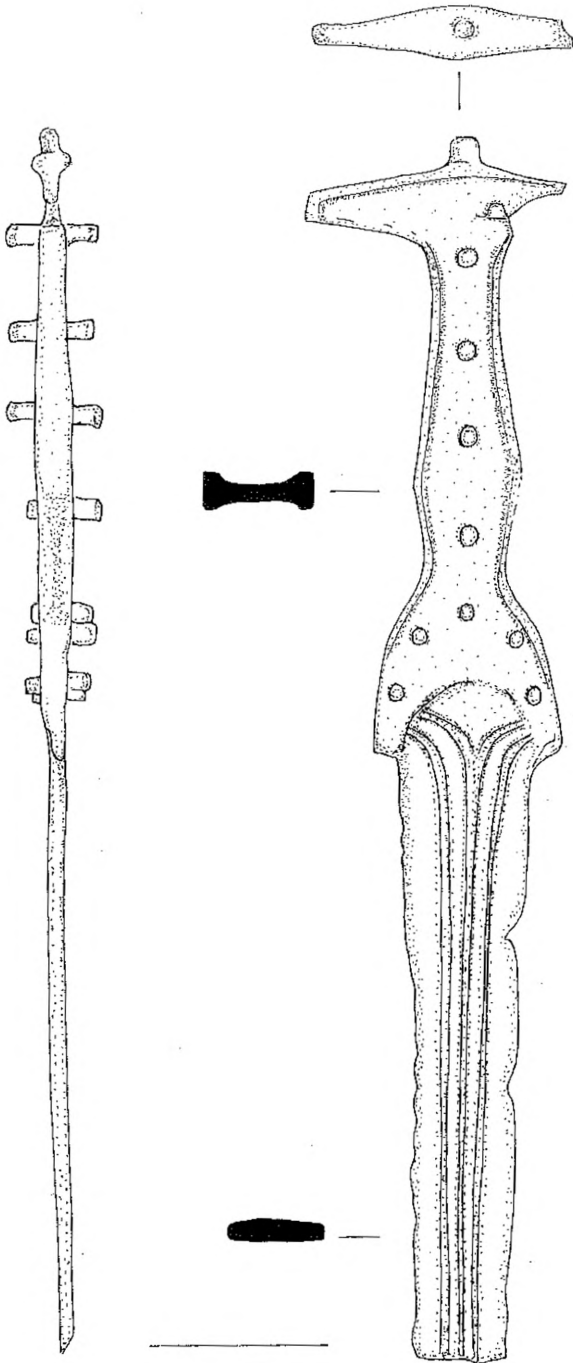


fig. 11 - Hilt and part of the blade of a bronze dirk from the Modica hoard, Sicily. (Drawn by V. Ryder).

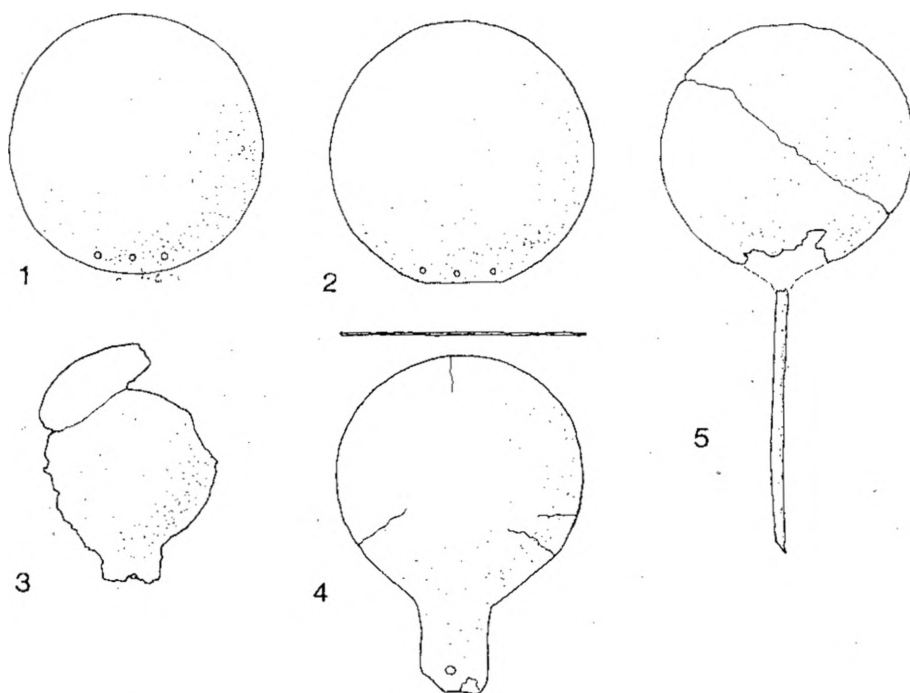


fig. 12 - Bronze mirrors from (1-3, 5) Pantalica, Sicily and (4) Grotta Pirosu su Benatzu, Santadi, Sardinia. (After Lo Schiavo - Macnamara - Vagnetti 1985).

unfamiliar to them. Lucia Vagnetti wondered whether this mirror might represent a 2nd millennium Cypriot or Aegean influence preserved in peninsular Italy, possibly reaching the peninsula via Sardinia.³¹ I am indebted to Filippo Delpino for discussing this mirror with me and allowing me to read his recent research on the object.³² Unfortunately, the mirror has not been traced since the 1966 floods in Florence and consequently now can only be studied from previous records and publications. Largely based upon the triangular arrangement of the three rivets attaching the tang to the disc and the form of the tang itself, which might suggest it once had a handle-grip of ivory, bone or wood, Delpino has put forward the hypotheses that the disc is of Peloponnesian origin and of Late Helladic II date; that the disc might have reached Italy during the 14th to 13th centuries or somewhat later to be preserved there and the tang added or repaired at an unknown time and place. Whatever may be the final consensus concerning this puzzling object, it seems likely that it is an actual survivor or heirloom from the period of Mycenaean contacts with Italy. If not, it represents a continuity in Italy of a probable Aegean form dating back to the 'Bronzo Recente' times, which survived down to the 9th century BC.

³¹ LO SCHIAVO - MACNAMARA - VAGNETTI 1985, p. 30, footnote 28.

³² DELPINO 1998-99 (2001) and DELPINO 2000.

TRIPODS AND OTHER STANDS

This is not the place for a full discussion of the evidence for the importation to Italy of Late Cypriot III tripods and other stands or of their imitations there. Suffice it to say that Late Cypriot III stands and/or Cypriot bronzesmiths, familiar with and capable of creating such objects, reached Sardinia during the 12th or 11th century (*fig. 13*).³³ Tripod-stands were imitated in Sardinia, some in a very distinctive Sardinian style (*fig. 14*),³⁴ presumably sometimes long after the date of the original influence from Cyprus. Other examples known to be from Sardinia or thought to be of Sardinian manufacture are very much in the Cypriot manner, though with a firm emphasis on decorative birds; these examples may represent a group of imitations made in Sardinia, which are close to the Late Cypriot III originals (*tav. II a*).³⁵ It is possible that the fragments from a tripod-stand with decorative birds from the Piediluco-Contigliano hoard from Umbria may come from such a Sardinian example but in view of the other probable Cypriot imports from that hoard, which included a cauldron handle and miniature wheel (*fig. 15*),³⁶ I still prefer to believe that the tripod-stand fragments are Cypriot imports, which reached Umbria via Sardinia to be deposited in a founder's hoard of about 900 BC.³⁷ This seems likely for Sardinia was undoubtedly the focus of Late Cypriot III imports to Italy and many bronze objects were circulating between Sardinia and the Italian peninsula, indeed round all the west Mediterranean, at this time.³⁸ Thus the tradition of Late Cypriot III tripod-stands long continued in Sardinia and probable actual imports, though fragmentary, survived to be deposited in Umbria around 900 or a little later.

A rather similar sequence of events occurred in the east Mediterranean world: a Late Cypriot III tripod-stand survived to be buried in a grave of Geometric date on the Pnyx at Athens and another was dedicated at Olympia.³⁹ Moreover, the tradition of creating bronze tripods and other stands, ultimately inspired by Late Cypriot III forms, did not cease in areas adjacent to the Levant nor in Crete and perhaps elsewhere in the Aegean from the 10th down to the 8th century BC.⁴⁰ Most relevant to my present theme, bronze four-sided stands, with figural decoration and with or without wheels, of Geometric date are known from Crete and an example reached the Greek mainland.⁴¹

So we have the situation of an outstanding Late Cypriot III bronze form, or fragments from such a form, surviving for two or more centuries both in Italy and further east and that the tradition of manufacturing tripods and other stands continued, probably down to colonizing times, both in Italy and the east Mediterranean world. However, I would submit that, during the time of 'tenuous contact' between the east and west Mediterranean worlds from around 1000 to about 850 or somewhat later of which I have spoken, neither tradition influenced the other. When tripod-stands again appear in peninsular Italy, mainly in Etruria in the hammered bronze technique so characteristic of the Villanovan II period (*fig. 16*), these tripod-stands do not follow any tradition formerly known in Italy but almost

³³ LO SCHIAVO - MACNAMARA - VAGNETTI 1985, pp. 35-42. VAGNETTI - LO SCHIAVO 1989. See for fragments of tripod-stands from S'Arcu 'e is Fortas, Nuoro.

³⁴ LILLIU 1973; MACNAMARA - RIDGWAY - RIDGWAY 1984, pp. 2-7; LO SCHIAVO - MACNAMARA - VAGNETTI 1985, pp. 42-51.

³⁵ See the Oristano tripod-stand, *fig. 13*, 1. Two further examples are now known in Switzerland. One is in the Ortiz Collection, see *tav. II a*. The second is in the Archaeological Collection of the University of Bern: see CARNES 1994.

³⁶ VAGNETTI 1974; LO SCHIAVO - MACNAMARA - VAGNETTI 1985, pp. 31-32.

³⁷ VAGNETTI - LO SCHIAVO 1989, p. 231 and footnote 5; MATTHÄUS 1983, pp. 306-309.

³⁸ LO SCHIAVO - RIDGWAY 1986; GIARDINO 1995, *passim*.

³⁹ CATLING 1964, pp. 194 and 223.

⁴⁰ MATTHÄUS 1998, pp. 129-131.

⁴¹ MATTHÄUS 1998, pp. 131-133.

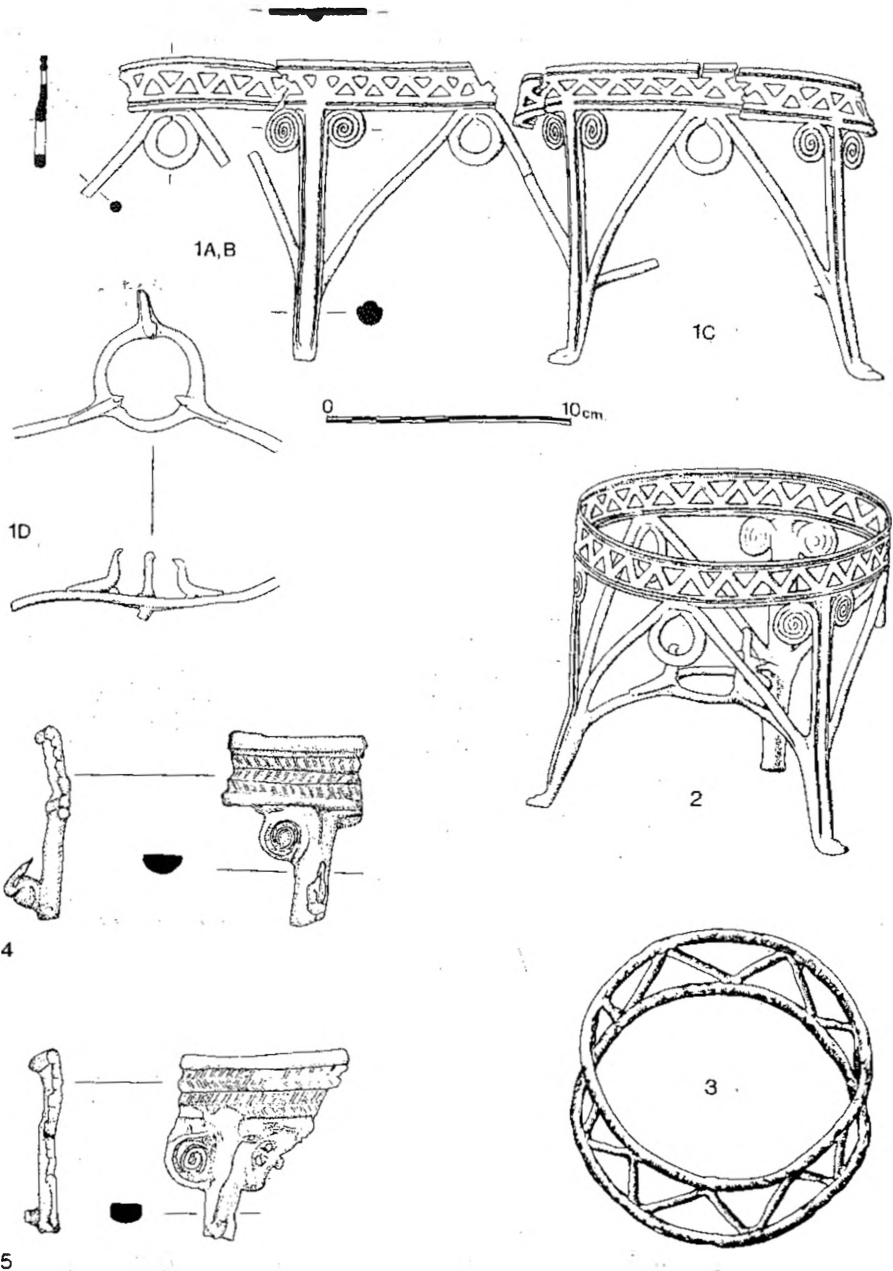


fig. 13 - Fragments from Italy probably from Late Cypriot III tripods or other stands. (1A, B, C, D) fragments now in Oristano, Sardinia; (2) a reconstruction of the Oristano tripod-stand; (3) ring from the Samugheo hoard, Sardinia; (4 and 5) fragments from the Piediluco-Contigliano hoard, Umbria. (After Lo Schiavo - Macnamara - Vagnetti 1985).

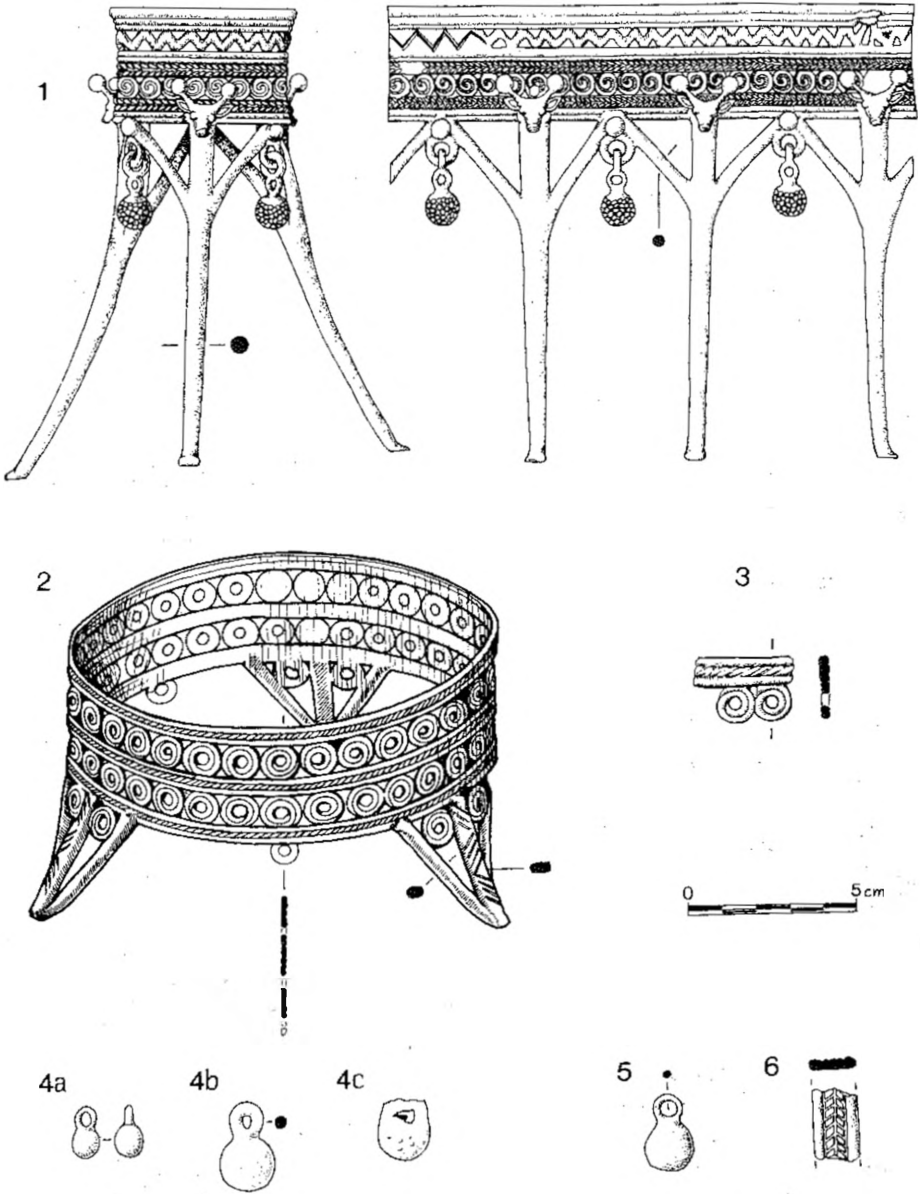


fig. 14 - Sardinian imitations of Late Cypriot III tripod-stands. (1) from the Grotta Pirosu su Benatzu, Santadi; (2) from the Santa Maria in Paulis hoard, Ittiri; (3 and 4a, b, c) fragment and pendants from S. Vittoria di Serri; (5 and 6) fragment and pendant from Oliena. (After Lo Schiavo - Macnamara - Vagnetti 1985).

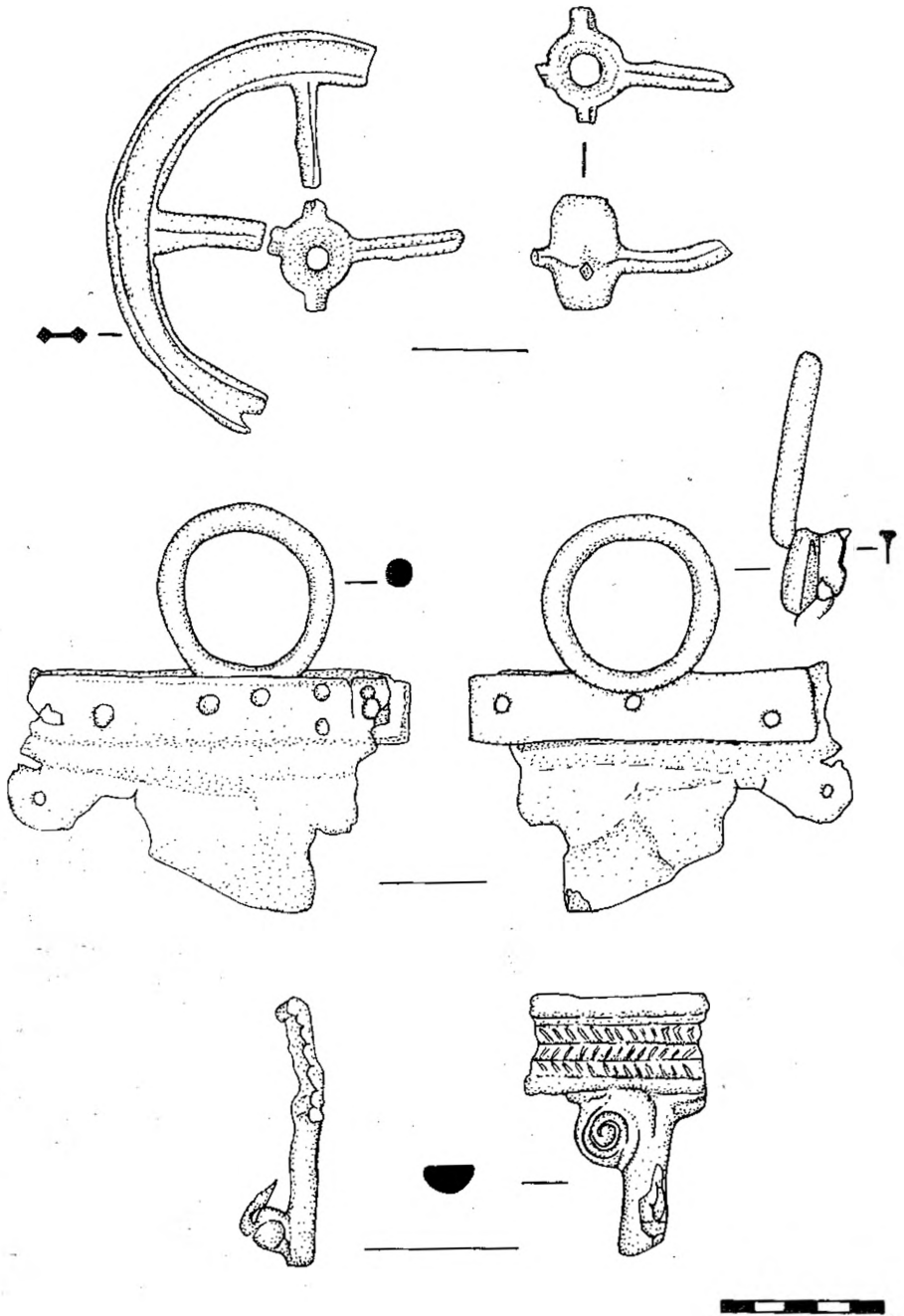


fig. 15 - Bronze miniature wheel, cauldron handle and fragment from a tripod-stand from the Piediluco-Contigliano hoard, Umbria. (Drawn by V. Ryder).

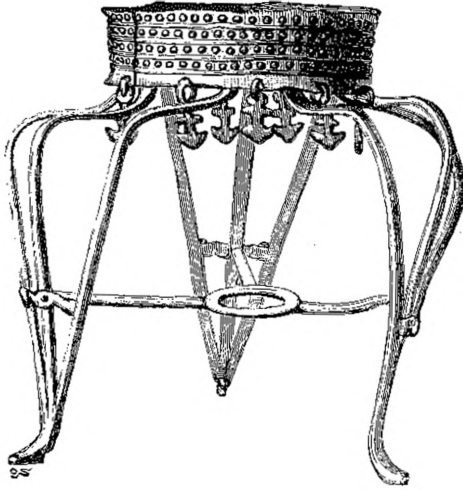


fig. 16 - Hammered bronze tripod-stand from Falerii. (After Montelius).

certainly were inspired by imported ceramic prototypes of a form common during the Geometric period in Cyprus and the Aegean,⁴² and which themselves were ultimately derived from traditional bronze forms.

WHEELED STANDS

Though I have mentioned a miniature wheel from the Piediluco-Contigliano hoard, which might once have formed part of a wheeled four-sided stand of Late Cypriot III type, to date there is no indication that this form was adopted in Italy until precolonial or colonial times. Then an example of a four-sided wheeled stand with some figural decoration surviving is known from Tomb 232, S. Marzano, Campania, which has been dated around the mid-9th century or somewhat later.⁴³ Mention should be made here of a strange wheeled object with attached figurines of humans and animals, which often is thought to have been made in Campania.⁴⁴ The style of these small figurines is in startling contrast to those of Sardinia; they represent the first sustained attempt in peninsular Italy at casting small bronze figurines in groups and, like those on the Campanian four-coil fibulae mentioned above, I believe their inspiration must largely derive from contemporary Greece. Other examples of four-sided wheeled stands with figural decoration appear further north; one is said to be from Rome, which does seem to show a general resemblance to those of the Cretan school of Geometric date⁴⁵ and another is the extraordinary wheeled stand from Bisenzio, which must have been manufactured locally and towards the end of the 8th century (*tav. II b*).⁴⁶ I do not doubt that the design of these four-sided wheeled stands ultimately derived from Late Cypriot III forms. However, on current evidence, the question must remain open whether the

⁴² COLONNA 1977; COLONNA 1980; MACNAMARA - RIDGWAY - RIDGWAY 1984, p. 6.

⁴³ GASTALDI 1979, p. 24 and fig. 31, 1.

⁴⁴ Found at Lucera, Foggia. WOYTOWITSCH 1978, no. 125 and pl. 23.

⁴⁵ See footnote 40 above. WOYTOWITSCH 1978, no. 170 and pl. 35.

⁴⁶ WOYTOWITSCH 1978, no. 127 and pl. 24.

direct inspiration for such Italian wheeled stands reached Italy from the Aegean during precolonial or colonial times or whether it could have sprung from a tradition surviving in Italy; it may be that elements of these wheeled stands represent a mingling in Italy of both these possibilities, together with elements derived from other Italic wheeled objects. In any case, for the purposes of my present theme, the manufacture of four-sided stands with figural decoration and with or without wheels in Crete and Italy during the 9th and 8th centuries demonstrates another example of the longevity of Late Cypriot III forms.

PILGRIM FLASKS

I shall end with a brief glance at the evidence of the bronze pilgrim flasks. From the point of view of my present theme, there used to be no problem with this form and I, with Marzoli, believed that some east Mediterranean, perhaps Cypriot, ceramic examples (*fig. 17*) must have reached west central Italy during the 8th century, there to be imitated both in pottery and in hammered bronze (*tav. II c*).⁴⁷ I still believe this to be correct and that the hammered bronze pilgrim flasks, like the hammered bronze tripod-stands, of Etruria and neighbouring areas of the 8th and 7th centuries were imitations in bronze of contemporary ceramic imports to Italy from Cyprus or elsewhere in the east Mediterranean world.

However, now Fulvia Lo Schiavo and her colleagues in Sardinia have recognized that some small cast Sardinian pendants are miniature replicas of pilgrim flasks of east Mediterranean origin and the resemblance is so close that this cannot be doubted. Such pendants are known in Sardinia from contexts before 900 BC and examples were exported to Etruria during the 9th century.⁴⁸ Thus an east Mediterranean form of pilgrim flask must have reached Sardinia before 900 but how long before? The form seems to have had a very long span of use in the east Mediterranean area, both in metal and other materials. Here we reach vital problems in the discussion of my hypotheses: if a bronze form known from Italy is judged to have had east Mediterranean prototypes but those prototypes are ill dated in the east Mediterranean area, how can we know when the form reached Italy? Again, is it reasonable to require scholars, who propose contacts between the east and west Mediterranean area between around 1000 or a little later and 850 to 825 BC, based on the bronzework found in western contexts between those dates, to demonstrate that any similarities in the bronzework known from the east and west cannot date before about 1000 BC?

CONCLUSIONS

During the 1960s, when I was writing my thesis, I was vastly puzzled concerning the date of arrival of the knowledge of iron in Italy; now we know of its presence in Sardinia during the 12th century. Again, I was puzzled by the presence of glass in Italy during the 10th and 9th centuries; now we know it was worked at Frattesina as early as the 11th century, so both those potential anomalies to my current hypotheses are solved. I also searched for any Protogeometric or Early Geometric pottery imports to Italy or contemporary examples from the east Mediterranean area and found few, very few, possibilities. This situation, to my knowledge, holds true to this day and despite the vast increase of

⁴⁷ MARZOLI 1989, pp. 8-14.

⁴⁸ LO SCHIAVO 1996.

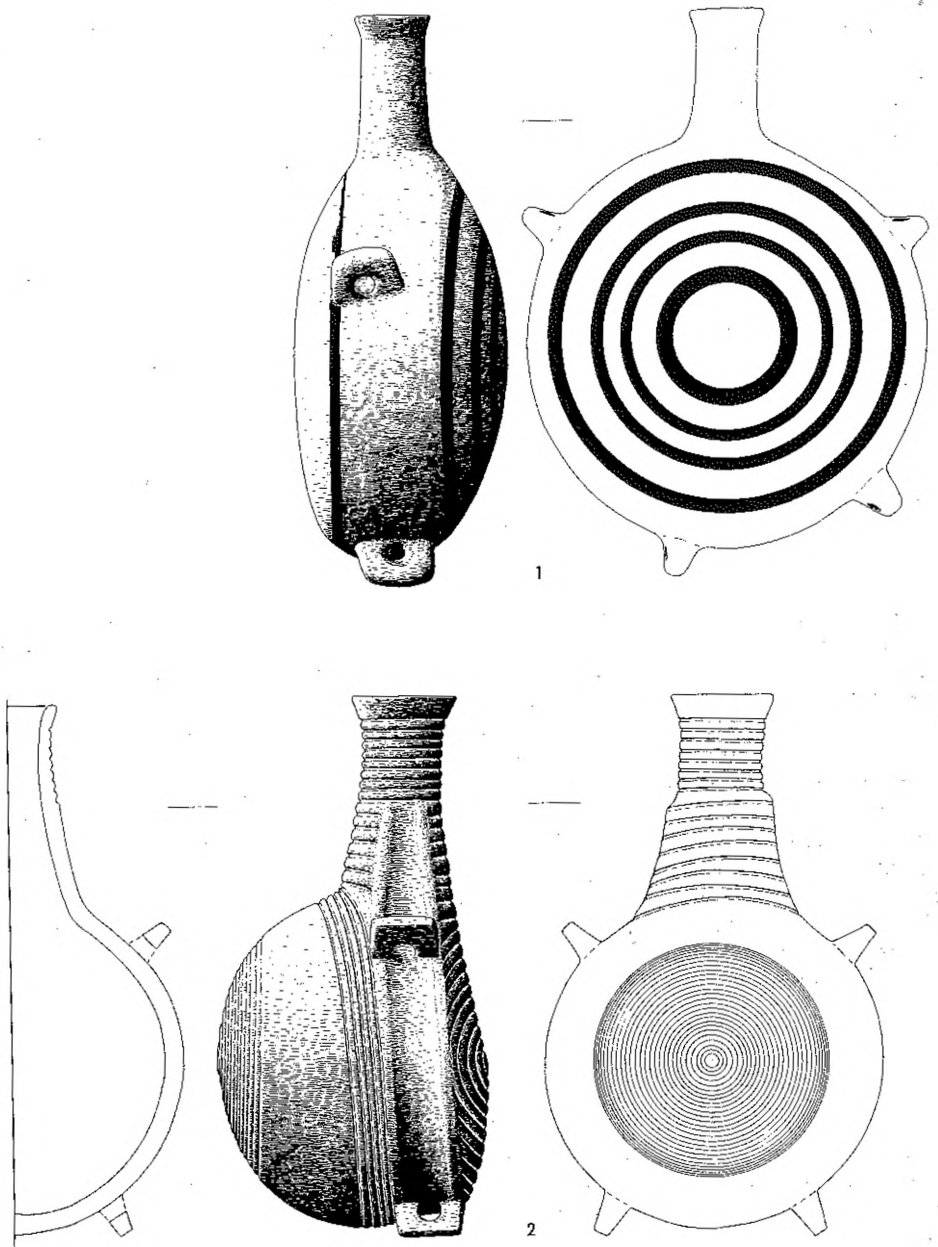


fig. 17 - Ceramic pilgrim flasks from Cyprus: (1) Nicosia, Tomb 4, Cypro-Archaic I; (2) Amathus, Tomb 222. (After Marzoli 1989).

the evidence for ceramic imports to Italy of the Mycenaean period and precolonial and colonial times. This lack of pottery imports from the Aegean or east Mediterranean area from say around 1000 down to 850 or 825 BC must be of great significance and lead us to question just how much contact there was at this time between Italy and her eastern neighbours.⁴⁹ Some Italian bronzes may have reached Greece at this time and I have tried to show when the typologies of bronzes from Italy may indicate influence from the east during this period, but such indications are few and still largely unproven.

Otherwise, and following the hypotheses set out at the beginning of this paper, the bronze types I have discussed today demonstrate the many common elements held between Italy and her eastern Mediterranean neighbours down to around 1000 and after about 850 to 825 BC but indicate few exchanges or influences passing between the west and east Mediterranean areas between these dates. I would submit that, when similarities are noted among bronze forms of the west and east Mediterranean areas from contexts assigned to the some one hundred and fifty years between these dates, direct contact can only be proved beyond reasonable doubt if it can be shown that such similarities cannot spring from a common inheritance dating before 1000 BC or a little later. As has been shown above, similarities in the bronze forms, or those of other materials, of the east Mediterranean or the Aegean and Italy from contexts dating after the first precolonial contacts of the later 9th century may arise from contemporary contacts or be the result of much earlier traditions, which survived in both the east Mediterranean world and in the west.

Though no doubt there were exceptions to my general hypotheses and new finds may alter the balance of probabilities and though present evidence suggests that the sea routes to the west Mediterranean, together with the resources to be found there, were never forgotten in the Aegean or east Mediterranean area, at the time of writing I still cannot accept that current evidence shows any major or continuous contact between Italy and the Aegean or east Mediterranean area for some one hundred and fifty years between about 1000 and 850 to 825 BC.

Acknowledgements

I wish to express my gratitude to Professor Giovannangelo Camporeale for inviting me to take part in the XXI Conference of 'Studi Etruschi ed Italici' held at Sassari in October 1998 and to Doctor Fulvia Lo Schiavo for encouraging me to undertake the theme of my lecture on that occasion.

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⁴⁹ ALBANESE PROCELLI 1995, *passim* and p. 34, where she writes that Aegean imports to Sicily are «missing altogether between the mid-eleventh to the beginning of the eighth century BC».

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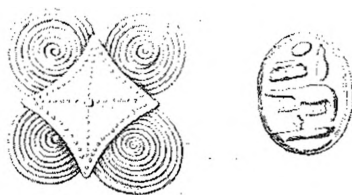
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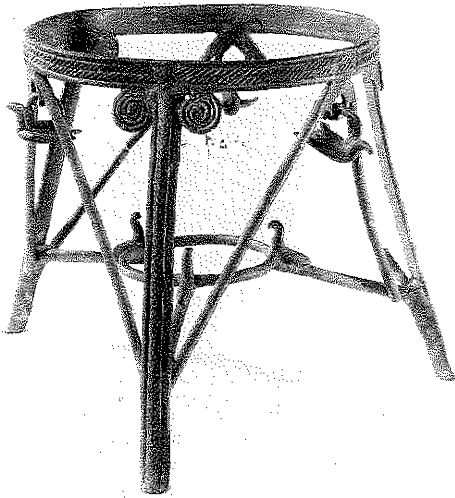


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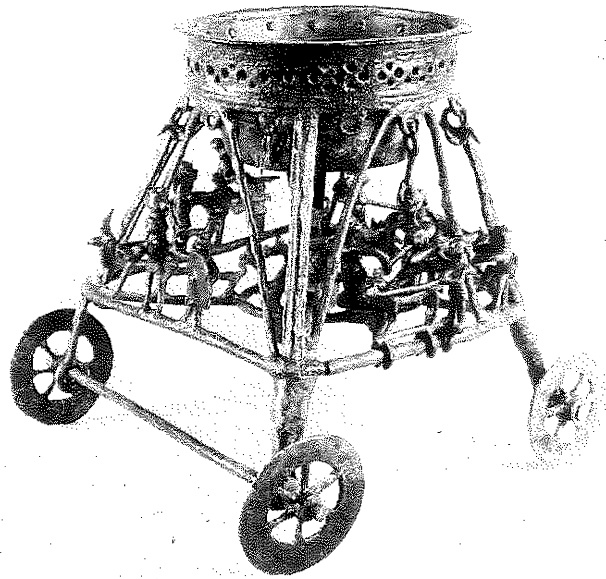


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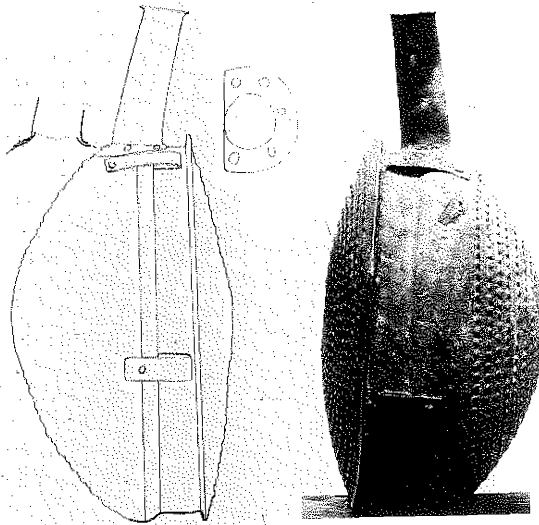
a) Four-coil fibula and other objects from two communicating 'pozzi' of Monterozzi, Tarquinia. (After Hencken, *Tarquinia*); b) Bronze mirror and other objects from Grave 77, Poggio Selciatello, Tarquinia. (After Hencken, *Tarquinia*).



a



b



c

a) Tripod-stand in the George Ortiz Collection, Geneva. (After *The Art of the Italic Peoples from 3000 to 300 BC*, Catalogue of the Exhibition held in Geneva and Paris, 1993-1994, no. 251); b) Bronze four-sided wheeled stand from Bisenzio, Olmo Bello, Tomb 2; c) Hammered bronze pilgrim flask from the Warrior's Grave, Tarquinia. (After Marzoli 1989).