Cities, states and ethnic identity in southeast Italy

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The populations of southeast Italy are both a rich source of information about cultural identity and the processes of urban development, and a considerable headache for the student of ethnic identity. They have a distinctive and well-documented material culture, showing evidence of intense interaction with their Greek neighbours in the south and the Oscan population of southern Samnium in the north of the region, and also strong linguistic and cultural links with Illyria, but nevertheless they retain their own cultural identity, absorbing and adapting outside influences without being swamped by them. They also have a well-documented history of early urban development, with the beginnings of urban development perceptible from the late sixth century BC and reaching a considerable level of development by the end of the fourth century. They clearly intrigued Greek and Roman writers, some of whom include detailed attempts to name them and map their whereabouts. Yet despite this, their consciousness of ethnic identity, and its links (if any) to the processes of urbanisation and state development remains elusive. The purpose of this paper is to explore some of the ramifications of the links between ethnic and state identity in this region.

The concept of ethnicity is itself difficult to pin down in the context of ancient Italy, where it can all too easily become entangled with the intersecting but not identical issue of state identity, and with numerous layers of cross-cultural influences and cultural plurality. In addition, there is the problem of the nature of our evidence. Much of the written sources available to us for the cultures and population of ancient Apulia[1] comes from outside this society – from Greek and Roman authors – and therefore is a rich source of information about external perceptions of the region and its peoples, but problematic when it comes to evaluating how they viewed and defined themselves and their culture.[2] The archaeological record is extremely rich but the problem of trying to relate ethnic groups and material cultures has long caused methodological difficulties (Jones 1997: 106–27). It is clear that the cultural-positivist approach which seeks to identify archaeological cultures with ethnic groups, either by attributing an ethnicity identified solely by modern archaeologists or by equating an archaeological culture with an *ethnos* attested in the ancient sources, is no longer tenable (Jones 1997: 106–10; Hall 1997: 40–51, 128–31). A viable alternative, however, has remained elusive.

Perhaps the most useful and user-friendly model of ethnic identity for the ancient historian is still that of Antony Smith[3] (with modifications by Colin Renfrew and Jonathan Hall[4]), which defines an ethnic group as one which has a shared history, shared mythology

or genealogy, common language, common ethnic name[5] and shared social structures, religion and material culture. Nevertheless, even with an apparently clear list of possible ethnic identifiers, there remain difficulties, notably the fact that neither ethnicity nor culture are static concepts, but may change over time, and may also intersect (Jones 1997).

The evidence for southeast Italy is a case in point. Here, we have little to tell us what the peoples of this area might have believed themselves. The Graeco-Roman literary sources, naturally, write from their own external viewpoint, and the corpus of epigraphy from the region, while substantial, consists mainly of short texts which tell us something about social structure and representations of personal identity, but little about ethnic boundaries, their construction and their maintenance. In addition, there is evidence that other, possibly competing, forms of identity were evolving during the eighth–third centuries BC and it is highly probable that the relationship between ethnic and state identity was not static. Finally, the region is culturally extremely mixed. Apulian culture divides into a number of archaeologically-identifiable sub-groups, and is also in contact, from an early date, with a rich and diverse range of other peoples and cultural influences, which inevitably play an important role in the development of the region and its identity.[6] This paper will not aim to provide a comprehensive solution to these wide-ranging problems – but will explore a narrower but nevertheless important issue – the development of state identities in the region, the connections (if any) with the growth of urbanisation, and the impact that this may have had on the identity of Apulia as a whole.

EXTERNAL IDENTITIES: THE ANCIENT SOURCES

As with many of the pre-Roman Italic peoples, the identity of the population of southeast Italy is refracted to a very large degree through the viewpoint of Greek and Roman writers, and is subject to their attempts to impose a version of society, organisation, culture, mythology and even name which was comprehensible in their own terms but not necessarily the viewpoint of the indigenous peoples themselves.[7] The literary traditions are also notable for their considerable confusion about the name, ethnic composition and exact geographical extent of the area denoted by Iapygia or Sallentina. Although the convention in modern scholarship is to restrict the term Messapia to the southern part of the region (approximately the region between Tarentum and Leuca), the ancient sources are by no means so clear-cut. Polybius (3.88.6–8) and Strabo (5.1.3, 6.3.1) both make reference to a tripartite division of the region between the Messapi – sometimes equated with the Sallentini – the Peucetii and the Daunii. Strabo (6.3.1) further suggests a division of the region into Apulia, inhabited by Peucetii and Daunii, and the territory of the Calabri and Sallentini – the region more usually known as Messapia. Pliny's inventory of Italy (*HN* 3.101–4) complicates the matter still more by attaching the name Apuli, used by almost all other authors either as a name for the region or as a synonym for the Daunii and Peucetii, to a smaller number of communities in the Gargano area of modern Puglia. In other words, there is little consensus amongst ancient writers – particularly those of the second century BC onwards – about which of these terms indicate geographical areas, which indicate ethnic groups, and how these two categories match up. Earlier writers more generally use the term Iapygia/Iapygian to refer to this part of Italy although it can be difficult to generalise on this, given that it is often unclear how far later authors were dependent on earlier sources.[8]

The extent to which these populations perceived themselves as ethnically distinct is also a matter of uncertainty. Nicander, writing in the second century BC, and several other later writers (Antoninus Liberalis, *Metamorphoses* 31; Polyb. 3.88.3–4; Plin. *HN* 3.9) emphasise similarities and a common origin, citing a common genealogy and descent for all three peoples of the region. He ascribes the establishment of the Messapi, Peucetii and Daunii to Iapyx, Daunios and Peucetios, the three sons of Lykaon. Strabo (6.3.11) likewise emphasises the linkages by stressing that the Apuli, Daunii and Peucetii speak a common

language – something borne out by the epigraphy of southeast Italy (Parlangèli 1960; Santoro 1982). Despite the attempts to identify and analyse the ethnic composition of this part of Italy and sub-divide it into a number of distinct *ethnoi*, it seems to have been recognised even in the ancient world that there were strong cultural and ethnic similarities between these various groups. A useful analogy may be drawn with the way in which the migration of Oscan-speaking peoples from the central Apennines at the end of the fifth century BC gave rise fairly rapidly to a number of different *ethnoi* – Bruttii, Lucani, Campani, etc. – many of which retained strong cultural similarities and had in common many of the features of a single ethnic group, such as a common language, and common religious cults, but nevertheless began to develop a distinct ethnic and political consciousness of their own (Dench 1995; Cerchiai 1985; Greco Pontrandolfo 1982).[9]

However, the fact remains that there are few ways into the ethnic world-view of the population of southeast Italy from the literary sources. The very names assigned to them are those of a later period and another culture. The group usually known as the Messapi have a Greek name (Theopompus *ap*. Steph. Byz. *sv* Μεσσαπεαι; Catling & Shipley 1989: 193–7; Lombardo 1991: 107–9), possibly derived from that of a sanctuary dedicated to Zeus Messapios in Lakonia; the Peucetii and Daunii are named after the eponymous Greek heroes assigned to them (Antoninus Liberalis, *Metamorphoses* 31), and there is a strong tradition of attribution of Greek myths and cults to them, emphasising the extent to which their identity was refracted through Greek perceptions. What these peoples called themselves is open to question. Some sources give an indigenous rather than Greek suggestion for the origin of the term 'Iapygia', deriving it from a Hellenisation of the Italic name 'Apulia' rather than from the eponymous Greek hero Iapyx (Hdt. 7.170), while Strabo indicates his belief (6.3.1) that the Peucetii were known in their own language as 'Poediculi'. However, in his attempt to unravel the Italian and Greek names for the peoples of Apulia, he comes to the conclusion that they were uncertain (Strab. 6.3.8, 6.3.11). Nevertheless, there is no certain way of recovering the common ethnic name(s) of the populations of ancient Apulia, and thus we are lacking one of our most fundamental indicators of whether a common ethnic identity existed or not. The extent of the difficulty is highlighted by Strabo's statement (6.3.8) that the population of northern Apulia did not call themselves Daunii or Peucetii and had not – in his view – done so other than in their early history.

The ancient sources attribute the origins of the population of southeast Italy – as they do the origins of many other Italian peoples – to migration from elsewhere. A strong strand in this is a tradition is that the population of this region were in fact Greek, being the result of a migration from Crete to the southern part of Apulia led by Iapyx, who gives his name to the Iapygians (Hdt. 7.170; Strab. 6.3.6–7). This tradition – which relates primarily to the most heavily Hellenised southern part of Apulia – is known from a relatively early date, but there are also other migration traditions which interleave with it. A similarly Greek emphasis can be found in sources on Daunian origins, which feature the hero Diomedes founding cities and sanctuaries in the region after the end of the Trojan war (Strab. 6.3.9; Plin. *HN* 3.104; Musti 1988: 173–95). There is, however, a later tradition, appearing for the first time in the second century BC, and taken up by Roman writers, notably Varro, that the populations of Apulia were not in fact of Greek origin but were the result of a migration from Illyria (Plin. *HN* 3.102; Lombardo 1991: 59–61).

Despite the wealth of literary information, this leaves a major gap to be filled. These sources tell us much about the perception of the ethnicity and origins of the inhabitants of southeast Italy amongst the Greeks and Romans, who naturally had their own set of preconceptions and ideas about defining other peoples, and provide a fascinating insight into how identity can be externally constructed and imposed. However, they tell us little about what the inhabitants of the region actually thought themselves about where they came from and how they defined their own identity. Modern archaeology has somewhat compounded the problem, but looking to test out the possibility of migrations into the

region from either the Aegean or (following the later Hellenistic and Roman tradition) from Illyria, and by seeking to map the ethnographic patterns of Strabo and other ancient geographers onto the archaeology of the region. While there is evidence (De Juliis 1988b: 594–606; D'Andria 1988: 653–8) that the late ninth–eighth centuries BC were a period in which the early Iron Age cultures of the region were rapidly diversifying into a number of regional sub-groups, there is no direct evidence that this is the result of a division into politically discrete and culturally conscious *ethnoi*, rather than a response to changing social structures, economic pressures or opportunities, and a greater range of external contacts with the emergent Greek settlements to the south and the cultures of central Italy to the north and west. The essential problem with the literary evidence is that it produces a classic circular argument. Greek and Roman authors, many of them writing in the Hellenistic period or later, clearly perceived and sought to rationalise and explain a cultural pattern within this region – regionalised sub-cultures roughly corresponding to northern, central and southern Apulia, a linguistic and cultural connection with Illyria, a strong element of Hellenism – but this does not mean that their ethnic perceptions or myths of ethnogenesis necessarily correspond to reality within the region.

URBANISATION, SOCIAL CHANGE AND THE EVOLUTION OF STATE IDENTITY

One of the key features of southeast Italy in the eighth–third centuries BC is that it develops a relatively dense settlement pattern, at least in parts of the region, and also shows signs of growing urbanisation at a relatively early date.[10] Archaeologically, the pattern of urban development is a complex one and shows some considerable variation across the region. However, it is clearly a result of changing indigenous social and political structures, not the product of Hellenisation (Herring 1991; Lomas 1994), or of Roman conquest – despite the high level of colonisation in the north of the region in the third–second centuries BC.[11] By the middle of the sixth century BC, there are perceptible signs of growth in the size of settlements throughout the region, and also signs of growing social complexity and changing social structures, which culminate in the emergence of fully-urbanised settlements by the end of the fourth century. This process represents a series of profound changes to the social structures, economy, and possibly the political consciousness of both individual communities and the region. Thus the ethnic identity of the peoples of southeast Italy must be examined in the light of these major changes to society and consequently to the identity of individual states and communities.

In the southern part of the region, identified by the ancient sources as the Messapic area, the groups of smaller sites which were characteristic of Bronze Age and early Iron Age settlement patterns began to coalesce into larger units by the sixth century BC – probably large villages rather than cities at this stage (La Genière 1979). Patterns of habitation within the settlement areas are characterised by nuclei of houses and associated burials rather than by a single nucleated habitation area and spatial separation between burials and habitation. However, there are also sites – Monte Sannace and Cavallino being perhaps the best investigated examples – which show evidence of a considerable degree of social and economic complexity (Scarfì 1962; De Juliis & Ciancia 1989; Pancrazzi 1979). On both of these sites, we have substantial fortifications enclosing a large area, and evidence of a regular street plan, tombs with great differentiations of wealth, and some large and elaborate houses (Pancrazzi 1979; De Juliis 1988b), and at Monte Sannace evidence of a separately fortified acropolis (De Juliis & Ciancia 1989). By the middle of the fourth century, many sites were nucleated settlements of significant size, characterised by impressive stone fortifications, an organised street layout, monumental buildings of probable religious or civic function, and in some case Greek-style temples – in other words most of the characteristics of a city.[12] Surveys of the surrounding areas of some examples also suggest their emergence as a central place and a growing role in organising the

economic activity of the adjacent territory and acting as a distribution centre for any economic surplus. The Valesio survey, for instance, indicates that the number of sites in the area surrounding the city drops sharply as the settlement of Valesium grows in size and dominance within the area (Boersma & Yntema 1987), as do similar studies of the territory of Oria (Yntema 1986) and other sites in the hinterland of Brundisium and Tarentum (Burgers 1998).

In northern Apulia, the area identified by the ancient sources as Daunia, the development of cities is different again. The eighth and seventh centuries BC are characterised by compact, nucleated hill-top settlements, but by the sixth century, larger settlements with a more dispersed type of internal organisation were becoming the most characteristic form of settlement (De Juliis 1988b: 605–9). Its leading centres – Arpi, Teanum and Asculum – were inhabited from the eighth century BC, and begin to emerge as centres of considerable local importance by the sixth century. Their most striking characteristic is their size, being much larger than the sites of the central and southern parts of the region. Arpi, perhaps the largest and best documented of the northern Apulian cities, was defended by a massive wall and ditch 13km in length; the fortifications at Teanum are of similar size. As in the Brindisi area, the settlement patterns of the sixth–fourth centuries show the population living in groups of houses with associated nuclei of burials, rather than in a single nucleated settlement. Finds dating to the sixth–fifth centuries include bucchero, imported black figure and a wide range of local Greek and Daunian pottery types, indicating contact with Etruscan Campania and the Greek world as well as a local network of contacts. By the fourth century however, there are traces of organised street plans at Arpi and also evidence of some substantial peristyle houses, painted terracottas of Greek type, and some possible traces of public buildings (De Juliis 1988b: 615–20; Guzzo, Labellarte & Mazzei 1991: 151–5; Russo Tagliente 1992). Burials indicate a highly stratified society; élite chamber tombs, sometimes painted, contain prestige goods in significant quantities. Both the material culture of the region and the evidence of architecture and architectural decoration shows evidence of cultural influences from outside the region, suggesting a wide range of external contacts. Greek influence seems to have been considerable, ranging from imported Greek pottery to Greek-influenced architectural terracottas and Greek influence on forms of architecture, notably the adoption of peristyle houses similar to Greek models, and the development of a less elaborate house-type similar to the Greek *pastas* house (Russo Tagliente 1992; Burgers 1998). Elsewhere, there is evidence of a Greek influence in the form and decoration of a temple of Athena at Canusium (Pensabene 1990). Illyrian influence on material culture, and in particular pottery types, is also present (De Juliis 1988b; Nava 1990) from an early date, although it is possible that this was increasing in the fourth century.

Central Apulia has a broadly similar pattern of development, with the emergence of settlements characterised by a dispersed pattern of habitation and burial, followed by the enclosure of the area with extensive fortifications, the emergence of evidence for monumental buildings, possibly with a public or communal function, and the eventual nucleation of the settlement area, typified by the evolution of Herdonia from the sixth–fourth centuries BC (Mertens 1995). However, despite the apparent similarities of the evolution of urban settlement in these three regions of Apulia, and the probable underlying social and political structures, there has been a tendency by some scholars to dismiss the settlements of this region as less fully-developed and more characteristic of a chieftain society than an urban one (D'Andria 1988: 663–4, 692–3, 710–12), with a lower level of urban development, a later chronology for that which does take place, and fewer external contacts.

Despite this strong evidence for a considerable level of urbanisation and a high density of urban settlement from a relatively early date, the internal structures of Messapic society and the impact of urbanisation on ethnic perceptions are complex issues. Urbanisation, by analogy with the Greek world, is often assumed to imply the development of *polis* type

social and political systems, based on citizenship and participation in the life of the community. It is also – again by analogy with the Greeks – frequently assumed to imply political autonomy on the part of these cities. However, neither the archaeological nor the literary evidence for southeast Italy is straightforward on either point. The literary sources – again mainly Greek – paint a picture of a highly stratified society and also imply the persistence of the *ethnos* as the main political unit. They focus on powerful individuals, who are named as kings or as *tyrannoi*, some of whom are said to be rulers of the Messapians, rather than of specific cities.[13] This sits rather uneasily with the archaeological evidence for urbanisation, and for a contrary trend in some sources which also emphasises Messapia as a region of many *poleis* (Strab. 6.3.5; Lombardo 1991: 59–61). One possibility is that the Greeks were in fact misreading powerful and dominant local aristocrats as kings (Lombardo 1991: 68–70). This is not at all unlikely; the political and social domination of communities by a small number of *gentes* or individuals is not at all uncommon in archaic Italy, and even persists into the Roman period. The behaviour of Arpi in 216 BC, for instance is determined almost entirely by the leading man of the city, Altinius Dasius, who instigates a revolt from which he then attempts to reverse (App. *Hann*. 31–32; Polyb. 3.88, 118; Livy 24.45–7).

Both archaeology and epigraphy provide support for the idea that society in Messapia was highly stratified and that close-knit kinship groups were an important element in this society, persisting long after the formation of urban centres. One of the most persistent characteristics of settlements in all areas of southeast Italy is the tendency for them to be organised as clusters of habitations, each with their own associated cemeteries, rather than as a single nucleated habitation area, and for substantial areas of open or cultivated ground to be included within the settlement area (De Juliis 1988b; Lomas 1994: 65–70; Burgers 1998: 196–7, 218–21). This form of spatial organisation seems to reflect a society based on close-knit kinship groups, in which the living space, and burial space of each *gens* is clearly reflected in the topography of the community. In the archaic period, this is accompanied by disparities in the wealth of grave goods which have been compared by some scholars to the phenomenon of princely burials in other areas of Italy, notably Latium and Etruria (De Juliis 1988b: 609–11); Burgers (1998: 218–20, 241–6) further notes that in the settlements of the Brindisi region, most concentrations of burials only contain small numbers of wealthy examples, presumably the burial of the head of the *gens*. By the end of the fourth century BC, these structures are changing to a more familiar pattern of fully-nucleated settlements with a separation between the cemetery areas and the inhabited areas, and less marked variations in the wealth of grave goods. This may, in itself, be a reflection of a shift towards a stronger state identity, with the communal organisation and identity beginning to take precedence over that of the individual *gentes* (Burgers 1998: 259–63, who also notes that it mirrors some of the social and economic changes of Hellenistic Tarentum).

Despite this evidence for social change, the *gens* or kinship group seems to have retained some importance. Even in the later history of the region there is evidence from many cities of substantial chamber tombs, many of them painted (De Juliis 1998b; Mazzei & Lippolis 1984; Guzzo, Labellarte & Mazzei 1991; Mazzei 1995), which seem to indicate that even if the high degree of social stratification and primacy of the *gens* which is found in the archaic period was disappearing, élite families still formed a central element in the urban society of southeast Italy. There is also some corroborative evidence from literary sources. One of the factors which is consistently highlighted in the literary sources for Italian communities in the fourth–second centuries BC is the extent to which élite kinship groups remain both socially and politically important.[14] It is striking that the politics of pre-Social war Italy – and even more so Italy before the Hannibalic war – hinge largely on the behaviour of élite families and individuals (Cornell 1995). The actions of leading men in particular cities, and the interaction between powerful individuals across state and ethnic boundaries remains an important factor in determining social developments, political decisions and inter-state contacts (Ampolo 1976/77; Cornell 1995: 122–45; Lomas 2000). Set against this

background, the case for a growth in importance of state identity can be inferred from the changes in habitation structure and burial customs identified by Burgers, but it would be dangerous to infer the disappearance of kinship groups – in the form of élite families – as an important feature of the social and political landscape of these communities.

There is also a significant quantity of epigraphic evidence for the importance of kinship groups in the society of southeast Italy. This material carries its own set of interpretative problems, since Messapic inscriptions tend to be short and formulaic, and occur almost exclusively in ritual contexts, being either funerary or votive in nature. Studies of the personal names contained in them, however, again point to the persistent importance of kinship groups. A significant number of texts contain only a single name, but there are equally a significant body of texts in which the names of both men and women have a complex construction involving two (or sometimes three) elements. This latter group seems to divide between names which are composed of a name and patronymic, placing an emphasis on the immediate family in the Greek manner and those which seem to consist of a personal name and a family name, in the manner of the *praenomen* + *nomen* construction familiar from other areas of Italy (Däube 1991: 326–7). Some of the more complex examples have multiple elements including both male and female names, which some studies interpret as names of slaves or freedmen/women, thus indicating ownership or clientship rather than a familial relationship (Däube 1991). Whatever the precise details of name-forms in southeast Italy, it is clear that a significant number of people used their kinship group as an element in this and thus as an important element in their personal and social identity.

STATE IDENTITIES AND ETHNIC IDENTITIES IN SOUTHEAST ITALY

The balance of the evidence – both archaeological and epigraphic – seems to show that in the cities of southeast Italy, as in many other Italian cities, society was highly-stratified and that close-knit kinship groups remained central to the social and political organisation of the city well into the Hellenistic period, with evidence for a decrease in the steepness of the social hierarchy only apparent from the late fourth/third centuries BC. It also seems to point to the emergence of an urbanised society, with evidence of increasing levels of spatial systematisation within settlements and increasing emphasis on investment in the public areas of the city – agoras, monumentalised public buildings, etc. These factors all point to the growth in importance of state identities and civic consciousness, albeit in the context of an élite-dominated society which retained a strong emphasis on kinship groups, but still leave the question of the nature of ethnic identity, and the extent to which there was a unifying consciousness of Messapian, Peucetian, or Daunian identity unanswered.

When literary sources are added to the equation, we once more have a conflict. Most Greek sources treat the Messapians, in particular, as a political unit as well as an ethnic group, describing a tribal or *ethnos*-based society in which the primary form of identification and political unit was the ethnic group. They are described as being ruled by a king, variously referred to as *basileus*, *tyrannos* or *dunastes* (Paus. 10.13.10; Thuc. 7.33; Strab. 6.3.4, Justin 12.2.5). At one level, it is easy to see how Greeks, coming from a very different political tradition, might choose to describe socially and politically dominant Messapic aristocrats as kings (Lombardo 1991: 68–70), but it must be remembered that this is fundamentally an external perspective. It still leaves the problem of reconciling an etic literary tradition which emphasises political unity of the Messapian *ethnos* under a single ruler with emic archaeological evidence of the growth of urban identity and evidence for the increasing predominance of statehood as an important form of self-definition.[15]

Apart from the archaeological evidence for urbanisation and the growth of civic identity, there are also some other indicators of the increasing emphasis on state identity by the fourth century BC. This takes a variety of forms, some of which appear to involve adaptations of Greek forms of expression. By the fifth century BC, there is epigraphic evidence, in the form of Greek inscriptions, that some of the communities of southeast

Italy were identifying themselves by a communal name, but this is very clearly the name of the state or individual community, not an ethnic name. A bronze caduceus, dating to the fifth century BC and found at Brindisi carries the Greek inscription "δημοσιον Βρενδεσινον | δημοσιον Θουριον" – "demos of Brundisium | demos of Thurii" (De Simone 1956). It appears to have been a formal state gift from the people of Thurii to the people of Brundisium, something which appears to indicate a sophisticated level of state identity and sense of political community. Although the literary sources routinely prioritise the ethnic names over those of the individual communities, referring to these collectively, the epigraphic evidence generated by these communities themselves at the same period, in contrast, shows the opposite pattern – an emphasis on the state rather than the *ethnos*.

A similar pattern can be seen in the coinage of the region. A number of mints have been identified in Apulia, mostly issuing coins from c.325 BC and, apart from a small number of exceptions, stopping production after the Roman conquest (Siciliano 1991). Many of the coins issued show considerable Greek influence in their weight standard and in the coin types, but most of them also carry an assertion of state identity in the form of the name of the issuing city, in either Greek or Messapian. Thus we have coinage from Oria carrying the Messapic legend ORRA, coins of Arpi and Herdonia carrying the Greek legends ARPANON and ORDONON and coins of Valesium carrying the legend BALETHAS (Head 1911; Siciliano 1991; Rutter, forthcoming). In the case of Arpi, some coins carry the names of the individuals issuing the coinage, all Messapic but in Hellenised form. Whichever the language chosen, these are all powerful assertions of statehood and a conscious state identity by these communities. Essentially, these coin issues are using forms and symbols borrowed from the Greeks to affirm their own identity and statehood.

We seem, therefore, to have a mutually contradictory pattern emerging, with an emphasis on a level of ethnic integration and unity in the literary sources which seems to run contrary to the assertions of statehood and state identity generated from within the communities themselves. One possible explanation for the tension between literary sources for an apparently ethnically-based monarchy and the strong material evidence for the emergence of strong state identities may lie in a habitual Greek tendency to elide groups of associated states together. Greek historians frequently fail to specify 'the Athenians and their allies' or the 'Lacedaemonians and their allies', using 'Athenians' and 'Spartans' as a convenient shorthand. Similarly, accounts of the history of Magna Graecia focus on the deeds of the Tarentines, even when circumstantial detail suggests that there were other allies, or the Italiote League as a whole, involved (Lomas 1993: 32–3, 49–52). It is possible – by analogy – that the Messapian 'kings' were in fact leaders of a league or alliance of associated but otherwise independent states (Lombardo 1991: 69–70). Burgers (1998: 222–3, 258–61) suggests that this evidence indicates a level of co-operation between groups and adoption of a single leader for specific and limited purposes, principally war and religious ritual, but, paradoxically, sees this as evidence for the fundamentally 'tribal' nature of Messapic society. Given the evidence for the emergence of state identities in the fourth–third centuries BC there does not seem to be a pressing case for necessarily assuming a tribal or ethnic basis for this behaviour.

Burgers (1998: 216–18) has argued that some of the larger rural sanctuaries in Apulia may have functioned as centres for ethnically-based activity of either a cultural or political kind, but this is largely speculative. It is true that there are possible parallels with the role of sanctuaries in Samnium as centres which were important in reinforcing Samnite ethnic identity by providing a setting for communal rituals and which were also the centres for declarations of peace and war and the nomination of a single war leader when necessary (Salmon 1967; Dench 1995). On the other hand, there are also strong parallels from a much more immediate source which indicate that the existence of a communal organisation with an ethnic element to it is not incompatible with strong emphasis on state identity. The Greeks of southern Italy also had a communal organisation – the Italiote League – which existed to provide a common focus in times of war, which may have

appointed a single war leader, and which was centred on a religious sanctuary, one of the functions of which was to serve as both an affirmation of ethnic and cultural Greekness and to act as a political centre (Polyb. 2.39; Strab. 6.3.4). Despite this, the evidence for the importance of state identity to the Greeks is incontrovertible, and much more persistent than evidence for the rather shadowy and ill-attested Italiote League. In the light of this, it would seem reasonable to assume that sanctuaries of importance to the *ethos*, with some political function as well as significance for the sense of ethnic identity could co-exist with well-developed state identities.

Finally, we have some small but interesting insights into the question of ethnic *versus* state identity from the Roman period. The second century BC poet Ennius, a central figure in the development of early Roman literature, came from Apulia. He was a native of Rudiae and there is evidence (albeit indirect) that he retained a strong sense of local identity, but again the nature of this identity is unclear. Although some of the fragments of his work which have survived seem to indicate an interest in his Messapic origin (e.g. *Ann.* 12. fg. 7), the most specific piece of evidence we have indicates the precise opposite. Cicero (*Orat.* 3.162) quotes Ennius as having said "Nos sumus Romani, qui fuimus ante Rudini" ("we who were previously Rudians are now Romans"), a statement which seems to stress his citizenship and city of origin as his primary form of identity.

CONCLUSIONS

We therefore have a very mixed set of indicators of the ethnicity of southeast Italy. It is clear that cultural variations and localised cultural identities were visible to outsiders, but it is far from clear that these add up to conscious ethnic identities in the eyes of the indigenous inhabitants. There was great uncertainty even in Antiquity about whether any of the groups identified had their own ethnic name, and even more uncertainty about what the ethnic names of the populations of the region might have been. The same language is demonstrably in use throughout the three regions of Apulia, and evidence that the sanctuaries of the region were the focus of specific ethnic groups rather than functioning as political meeting places or centres of economic activity is thin on the ground. In contrast, the evidence for an early evolution of urbanised state identities is stronger, with indication as early as the fifth century BC that at least some of the developing urban communities were starting to develop a consciousness of statehood, and increasing emphasis on this during the fourth and third centuries.

The common ethnic identity, which seems to prevail throughout the history of the southeast of Italy appears to be a largely etic one. The Messapi, Daunii and Peucetii seem to correspond to Smith's ethnic categories, or Ardener's "hollow categories" (Smith 1991: 20–21; Ardener 1989: 69–71), in other words populations identified by external observers as constituting a separate ethnic group, but showing little clear evidence of identifying themselves as such. It appears to be a region where ethnic/cultural groups are clearly perceived by external observers, but from which we have relatively little evidence of a strong internal sense of ethnic self-definition. Having said this, however, the possibility of geographical variation and chronological development must be taken into account. Herring (this volume) points out that the development of regional styles of Matt-Painted pottery in the eighth century BC may indicate the formation of local cultural identities or even ethnic consciousness, which then disappear from view again when Matt-Painted pottery is supplanted by other – possibly less durable or visible – indicators of cultural identity. State identity, on the other hand, seems to become increasingly evident from the late fifth century BC onwards, perhaps indicating that it is a later development.

The growth of state identities in the southeast of Italy is in itself an interesting process. The early phases of urbanisation in the region are characterised by very steeply stratified social hierarchies, and an spatial organisation of settlements which suggest that kinship groups are central to the structure of the community. There has been a tendency in

archaeological scholarship to see a deep division between chieftain societies, characterised by this type of steep social stratification and strong gentilicial structure, and often equated with a 'tribal' or ethnic identity, and urban societies in gentilicial groups no longer have a paramount role (Earle 1991; but cf. Ferguson 1991 for the view that chiefdoms and states do not represent stages on an evolutionary ladder). In Italy, however, this division is starting to become blurred. The identity of the *gens* is becoming recognised as being central to the early development of the city in many regions of Italy, including Etruria (D'Agostino 1990; Cornell 1995: 163–5; Ampolo 1976/77: 333–45), and this seems to be also the case in Apulia, and even in the development of the Greek cities of Italy. The equation between a chieftain society with a strong gentilicial structure and a tribal or ethnically-based identity is in need of reappraisal. In point of fact, the emphasis on the *gens* rather than the state may facilitate blurring of ethnic boundaries. As Cornell (1995: 163–5) has pointed out, mobility across ethnic and political boundaries, particularly at the élite level of society, is characteristic of communities in Latium and Etruria in the archaic period, and can be a significant phenomenon as late as the fourth century BC. It is looking increasingly likely that the same was true of parts of southern Italy (Lomas 2000: 167–85).

This must also be set against fact that recent scholarship has emphasised the ethnically mixed nature of communities in the areas where Greek settlement took place. This seems to have applied equally to the communities which eventually evolved into Greek cities and those which ultimately did not. There are indications that some of the later Greek cities were both ethnically and culturally mixed during the early years of their existence (cf. Osborne 1998 on this as a general trend; Carter 1998 on Metapontum; and Wilson, this volume, on Pithekoussai) and that the same may have been true of some of the communities of the hinterland (Burgers 1998). The implications of this are that ethnic and cultural boundaries are in a process of constant renegotiation and that the ultimate adoption of either a Greek or an Italic identity is something which only develops over time. However, the profound level of Hellenism adopted by the peoples of southeast Italy in the fifth–third centuries BC is not necessarily a reflection of an attempt to 'become' Greek. As noted above, some aspects of Hellenism – such as coinage, Greek epigraphic forms, Greek forms of architectural decoration and building styles for both public buildings and élite private houses – are closely linked to expressions of state identity. As Herring has noted (this volume), there is a strong possibility that contact with other groups is the factor which hardens the boundaries of identity (cf. Hall 1997: 46–8, who notes that identity can also be defined from within a community but tends to crystallise more when reacting against a different culture). However, by the fifth century BC at least, there are signs that the boundaries around which a sense of identity is crystallising are not ethnic but those of the individual state. However, this increasing level of state definition does not seem to have been the product of Hellenisation. It is perceptible before the point at which Hellenism reaches its peak in the fourth century, and it is more likely that it was the product of a common strand of development shared by both the Greek and non-Greek cities of the region. As noted in an earlier paper (Lomas 1994), and also discussed in detail by Burgers (1998) the urbanisation processes and social structure of the Greek cities of the southeast – Tarentum and Metapontum – share a remarkable number of features with the non-Greek cities of the region, perhaps pointing to shared process of development. Rather than a sharp crystallisation of ethnic boundaries, or of a phase of urbanisation imposed on the indigenous population by more advanced Greek communities, we perhaps need to think in terms of a process of regional development taking place against the background of a cultural *koine* which included Greek and Italic elements, as well as possible Illyrian influences, but which included a process of social development which resulted in the emergence of state identities. The ultimate outcome of this process can be seen in the Roman period. Many of the usual indicators of ethnic identity – language, some aspects of material culture, and a common ethnic name – wither away, but a strong sense of identification with the city of origin remains.

NOTES

1 For the sake of clarity, the language of the region will be referred to as Messapic, but the region itself will be referred to throughout as Apulia – the ancient geographical term which comes closest to the area studied.

2 A sensitive attempt to interpret these in a way which places the indigenous populations centre-stage has been made by Lombardo (1991; 1992); see also Musti 1988.

3 Smith 1986; 1991.

4 Renfrew 1987; Hall 1997.

5 But cf. Bradley 1997: 53–5, highlighting problems with this model of the interface between state and *ethnos* in Umbria and in particular the lack of evidence for a common ethnic name amongst a people which otherwise displays most of the characteristics of an ethnic group. Communal names which occur in Umbria are those of states until a relatively late date, cf. also Bradley, this volume.

6 On the internal divisions within the region, see De Juliis 1988a; 1988b; D'Andria 1988.

7 Discussed by De Juliis 1988a; Lombardo 1991; for a comprehensive collection of source material see Lombardo 1992.

8 See Musti 1988 and Desy 1993: 135–66, for contrasting views of Strabo's dependence on fourth century source material for his chapters on Apulia.

9 For a similar interpretation of Messapian, Peucetian and Daunian origins, see De Juliis 1988b.

10 The process begins later than the urbanisation of central Italy (Cornell 1995) and the date at which it can be regarded as fully urbanised is still a matter of debate (cf. Lomas 1994), but it is clear that major changes of economic and social organisation begin by the sixth century BC.

11 Luceria (314 BC), Venusium (291 BC) Brundisium (244 BC), Sipontum (192 BC).

12 E.g. Gnathia: porticoed agora and Greek temple (Donvito 1988; Lattanzi 1974); Valesium: agora and monumental buildings (Boersma & Yntema 1987), Caelia Peucetia: street plan and monumental tombs (Marin 1982).

13 Opis, king of the Iapygians (Paus. 10.13.10), Artas, king of the Messapians (Thuc. 7.33), kings of the Daunians and Peucetians (Strab. 6.3.4), king of the Apulians (Justin 12.2.5).

14 e.g. the influence wielded in many cities by a small number of leading individuals or families such as the Trebii and Mopsii of Compsa (Livy 23.1.1–2), the Vitruvii of Privernum (Livy 8.19.1), the Roscii of Ameria (Cic. *Rosc. Am.*), the Caecinae of Volaterrae (Cic. *Caecin.*), etc.

15 This tension between the *ethnos* and the *polis* is also present in the ancient sources. Lombardo (1991: 59–61) points out that Strabo and others (Strab. 6.3.5; Plin. *HN* 97–105) depict southern Apulia, in particular as a heavily urbanised region, describing it in terms of having many *poleis*.

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