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Carmine Collina, Le Néolithique ancien en Italie du Sud. Evolution des industries lithiques entre VII^e^ et VI^e^ millénaire. Archaeopress Archaeology, Oxford 2015. £ 75.00. ISBN 978-1-78491-186-7 (printed version). £ 19.00. ISBN 978-1-78491-183-6 (E-Book). xvi + 510 pages, numerous figures.

The study of the Neolithic chipped stone assemblages of northern Italy has greatly improved during the last 30 years. More precisely, during the 1980s they started to be framed into the general picture of the lithic studies of those times, to contribute to the study of the beginning of the Neolithic in Europe (see J. K. Kozłowski / S. Kozłowski [eds], Chipped Stone Industries of the Early Farming Cultures in Europe [Warsaw 1987]). In those years the definition of the most important characteristics of the lithic industries of northern Italy, the typology of the tool shapes and their manufacturing processes, function and also the provenance of the raw material employed to produce them, started to attract the attention of archaeologists. Unfortunately, we cannot say the same for most of central and southern Italy, a territory, the latter in particular, that played a key role in the Neolithisation process of the peninsula. This is the main reason why the volume by Carmine Collina is most welcome. It fills a gap in our knowledge of the lithic studies of peninsular Italy, and opens new perspectives to the interpretation of the way the Neolithic developed and spread, at least during the two millennia considered by the author.

His impressive work regards mainly the Early Neolithic in Sicily, Calabria, Basilicata, Campania and Apulia. It begins with a brief look at the Mesolithic period, and continues with an introductory discussion on the current debate on the Neolithisation process in this important Central Mediterranean territory and the eventual role played by the Castelnovian Mesolithic in this process. Moreover, it presents and discusses the theories put forward by different authors and analyses the results provided by the material culture remains resumed during excavation, according to their radiocarbon chronology and cultural attribution.

Important is Chapter 2 of Part I (pp. 42–58) regarding the methodology the author employed to analyse the lithic assemblages of southern Italy, and the terminology he utilised throughout the whole volume. Here he stresses the importance of the characteristics of the *chaîne opératiore*, the employment either of the indirect percussion technique or pressure flaking, the characterisation of the chert sources exploited for the manufacture of tools, and the typometrical, typological and statistical analyses of cores, artefacts, implements and debitage residues.

Regarding the sites, the author focused his attention mainly on the assemblages from four important Neolithic sites excavated in different regions of south Italy, Uzzo Cave, Ripa Tetta, La Starza and Rendina. The sites show variable characteristics and research was carried out with different methods and purposes, though they all yielded quite interesting, rich lithic assemblages, never analysed in detail before.

The first site discussed in Chapter 1 of Part II (pp. 61–169) is the Grotta dell'Uzzo. The chapter consists of a complete and detailed study of the chipped stone assemblages from the Late Mesolithic and Early Neolithic horizons brought to light from the thick, multi-layered stratigraphy of the cave in north-western Sicily. It is unfortunate that, discussing the sequence, he did not consider the AMS dates recently obtained by single specimens of the *Monodonta turbinata* marine gastropod that greatly contributed to refine the radiocarbon chronology of this important cave site (M. A. Mannino et al., Fine-tuning the radiocarbon chronology of the Grotta dell'Uzzo [Trapani]. Atti Soc. Preist. Friuli-Venezia Giulia XV, 2006, 17–31).

Chapter 2 of Part II (pp. 170–224) regards the study of the lithics from Ripa Tetta, a multi-layered Neolithic settlement with over-imposed impressed and painted ware horizons, the lowermost of which yielded a rectangular hut-structure with Guadone-style Impressed Wares, attributed to the beginning of the seventh millennium BP. The site is located in the Apulian Tavoliere, a region from which aerial photography revealed the presence of an impressive number of Neolithic villages already in the 1940s (J. Bradford, Buried landscapes in southern Italy. Antiquity 23, 1949, 58–72). Chapter 3 of Part II (pp. 225–286) presents and discusses the chipped stone industries from two other important open-air sites: La Starza, in Campania, and Rendina, in Basilicata. The first is located on a terrace at c. 405 m of altitude, near the villages of Casalbore and Savignano, not far from Ariano Irpino. The site was excavated between 1957 and 1963 (D. Trump, Excavations at La Starza, Ariano Irpino. Papers Brit. School Rome 25, 1963, 1–32). It yielded evidence of a complex sequence covering many periods of occupation, from the Early Neolithic to the Bronze Age. Rendina is an Impressed Ware site located in the Ofanto Valley, c. 6.5 km north-east of Melfi. It showed different periods of Early Neolithic occupation, which the author attributed to the 6th millennium cal BC (M. Cipolloni Sampò, Scavi nel villaggio neolitico di Rendina (1970–1976). Relazione preliminare. Origini 11, 1982, 183–254).

The lithic assemblages retrieved from the aforementioned sites are carefully illustrated with high-quality colour pictures in the final part of the volume (Chapters 1–3 of Part IV, pp. 343–508). The images are often magnified, sometimes at great resolution, the knapping technique and its characteristics are marked with clear symbols that make their interpretation easy to the reader. The same can be said for a number of specific tools, bladelets and cores from the sites of Grotta dell'Uzzo, Latronico (Basilicata) and Piazzana, an Apennine sequence in north-western Tuscany, which are especially important in the following discussion regarding the first appearance of pressure obtained artefacts. According to the author, this technique started to be employed by Castelnovian hunter-gatherers during the Late Mesolithic (Chapter 1 of Part III, p. 290), both in the study region and other territories of the western Mediterranean. However, this technique is not represented at Torre Sabea, an open-air Impressed Ware site located along the sea shore of the Salento peninsula near Gallipoli in Apulia, which is considered to be one of the most ancient sites of this culture in southern Italy, radiocarbon-dated to the first century of the seventh millennium BP. According to the authors who analysed the lithic technology, the trapezes and blades recovered from the site were manufactured by indirect percussion (M. Barbaza / F. Briois, L'industrie de pierre taillée de Torre Sabea. In: J. Guilaine / G. Cremonesi [eds], Torre Sabea: un établissement du néolithique ancien en Salento. Collect. École Française Rome 315 [Rome 2003] 109–129).

It is regrettable that the author provides little information about Cave Latronico, the most important Atlantic lithic series of peninsular Italy. The Latronico sequence yielded evidence of over-imposed Early Late Mesolithic and Impressed Ware layers. The eventual continuity between the two complexes needs to be discussed in better detail, mainly because of the problematic distribution of the radiocarbon results, which are partly reversal within the Late Mesolithic sequence

(see C. Franco, La fine del Mesolitico in Italia. Identità culturale e distribuzione territoriale degli ultimi cacciatori-raccoglitori [Trieste 2011]).

To sum up, the volume by Carmine Collina is the first important attempt to study the Early Neolithic chipped stone assemblages of southern Italy in a systematic way. It provides new information on the topic, especially regarding a few still unstudied lithic complexes, among which that from Grotta dell'Uzzo plays an important role given the thickness and chronology of the sequence from which it has been retrieved. In his conclusions (Chapter 1 of Part III, pp. 289–308) the author points out the complexity of the lithic factor and refers to the four different techniques (hard direct percussion, soft direct percussion, indirect percussion, pressure flaking) that were employed throughout two millennia to manufacture blade and bladelets. Moreover, the author suggests that the origin of provenance of pressure-made large blades is to be searched within an Aegean-Anatolian centre of diffusion. He discusses the Mesolithic-Neolithic transition on the basis of a very limited number of Mesolithic evidences available at present, and proposes the detailed mapping of the lithic resources available from the Gargano promontory and the southern Apennines, the two most important raw material supply areas. Moreover, once again he points out the eventual presence or absence of cultural relationships between North Africa and the southernmost regions of peninsular Italy, and discusses its central Mediterranean role, midway between the eastern and western sea regions.

Following a chapter of references, five tables of Epipalaeolithic to Early Neolithic radiocarbon dates, followed by 193 plates of colour illustrations, conclude the volume.

This is a very useful, well illustrated volume representing the first systematic approach to the study of the Early Neolithic chipped stone assemblage of southern Italy, and is worth reading and considering for further research to be carried out in the area.

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Luc Amkreutz / Fabian Haack / Daniela Hofmann / Ivo van Wijk (Hrsg.), Something Out of the Ordinary? Interpreting Diversity in the Early Neolithic Linearbandkeramik and Beyond. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Cambridge 2016. £ 62,99. ISBN 978-1-4438-8604-8. 515 Seiten, 116 s/w-Abbildungen, 10 Tabellen.

„Diversity in Uniformity" – dieses *dictum* Pieter J. R. Moddermans hat wohl jeder, der sich mit der Bandkeramik beschäftigt, verinnerlicht. Doch was genau ist darunter eigentlich zu verstehen? Obwohl die prägnante Formulierung immer wieder zur Charakterisierung der Bandkeramik herangezogen wird, bleibt sie bei genauerer Betrachtung sehr vage und unbestimmt. Versuche, die Formel „Diversity in Uniformity" mit Leben zu erfüllen und als kulturhistorisches Konzept zu konkretisieren, wurden bislang erst wenige unternommen – der von Luc Amkreutz, Fabian Haack, Daniela Hofmann und Ivo van Wijk herausgegebene Band „Something Out of the Ordinary?" macht sich genau dies zur Aufgabe. Er ist das Resultat einer Session bei der Jahrestagung 2013 der European Association of Archaeologists in Plzeň und versammelt einen großen Teil der dort gehaltenen Vorträge, ergänzt durch einige zusätzliche Artikel. Der Blick ins Inhaltsverzeichnis gibt überraschenderweise zu erkennen, dass nicht nur Beiträge zur Bandkeramik enthalten sind, sondern auch solche zu ganz anderen Räumen und Zeiten. Sie sind aber inhaltlich ebenfalls mit dem Thema