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Review

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found of a forest? It is as if the authors do not themselves believe in one of their most important conclusions, namely, that large regional and local variability exists in the history of soil erosion.

The third chapter is a well-written and surprisingly frank discussion on survey methodology coauthored by Mee and Forbes. This chapter reads like a thriller where every vital decision taken in the field is documented. The pragmatic approach taken to solve methodological problems can occasionally be called into question. Mee and Forbes use "different sampling procedures" for sites of different sizes in the area; the one used for multi-period sites, however, has never been explained in detail. The size of the area walked during the first season, when no counts of off-site distribution were made, is not given. Without this information we are left wondering whether the high off-site density figures for Methana would have been different had off-site counts been made in 1984. The reason given for not collecting off-site artifacts that year—namely, that the artifacts are "damaged"—must surely also apply to on-site artifacts (40). Despite criticisms like these, this section is appealing not least for the straightforward and honest presentation of the problems encountered.

Prehistoric Methana is presented by Mee and Taylor (ch. 4). A rather cursory look is given to the Neolithic period, whereas the EH period for natural reasons is described in more detail. The scarce finds of MH and LH date are dealt with in two short paragraphs, while a long detailed discussion on the chipped stone has rather surprisingly been hidden away between the EH and MH sections. Here the reader could ask for a text that integrates the chipped stone more closely with the pottery: as it stands, it is not a homogeneous part of the prehistoric chapter. The discussion on EH pottery is exhaustive, but I do not agree at all with the main conclusion that "the decline in EH II seems unlikely" (45) and therefore that site numbers were the same in EH I and EH II. This is built on a preconceived idea, rather than factual data gathered in the survey of Methana, and is rather surprising to find in an otherwise generally sound scholarly report. Once again, it is as if the authors do not believe in their own conclusion that "the sequence of events is not precisely the same in every region" (53).

Chapter 5 presents Early Iron Age and Archaic Methana and is admirably well written by Gill and Foxhall. In this chapter frequent comparisons with other survey results have been made, which enhances the usefulness of the text. From this point on, five different chapters deal with Classical and Hellenistic, Roman, Late Roman, medieval, and finally Turkish and modern Methana. These are all well written and are clear presentations of the new information gathered by the Methana survey. Vital contributions to this report are also a catalogue of churches (ch. 12), written by Koukoulis, and appendices 1–3, which conclude the material presentation from Methana. Once again one can only marvel at the impressiveness of survey results in general.

A richly illustrated catalogue of sites using photographs, sketches, and drawings occupies close to 100 pages (118–210) and has been compiled by Mee and others. This catalogue is clear, succinct, and relevant, and it sets an example for other directors of survey projects who are on the verge

of writing up their final reports. The main criticism of the layout of the book is that the information on individual artifacts has been placed in three different places: the drawings are at the end of the catalogue (175–210, in general printed too dark), while the discussion and comparanda, if any, of the artifacts are to be found in the different chapters (42–117), and a large artifact catalogue, including all registered artifacts, constitutes appendix 4 (282–343). In addition, the text of the report is unnecessarily compressed, especially considering how much empty space there is at the bottom of each page.

Overall, despite these criticisms, Mee and Forbes have made an important contribution to our understanding of the history of the Methana peninsula in the Argolid. It is not a small undertaking to carry out and edit a final report of an archaeological surface survey. In *A Rough and Rocky Place*, massive amounts of data have been processed and given a clear presentation, for which the coeditors are to be applauded.

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LES CITÉS ANTIQUES DE LA HAUTE VALLÉE DU TITARÈSE: ÉTUDE DE TOPOGRAPHIE ET DE GÉOGRAPHIE HISTORIQUE, by *Gérard Lucas*. (Collection de la Maison de l'Orient méditerranéen 27; Série épigraphique et historique 4.) Pp. 248, pls. 13, figs. 16, tables 4. Maison de l'Orient méditerranéen, Lyons 1997. 150 FF. ISSN 0985-6471; ISBN 2-903264-19-8.

In view of the rate at which major changes take place in the Greek countryside, the need to make detailed records of concerted field observations is paramount and every publication of such material has its indisputable importance. For nearly 20 years, a team from the Institut Fernand-Courby (CNRS—Université Lumière Lyon 2) has conducted (and continues to do so) such a program of intensive survey in Thessaly. The book under review is but one of the products of that work, and the volume must be seen in its context to appreciate its whole, considerable value.

The Lyons team comprises Bruno Helly as its leader, together with Jean-Claude Decourt, Laurence Darnezin, and the author of the present study, Gérard Lucas. In addition to the actual team, the project has the very considerable logistical and practical support of everyone at "Courby," a team spirit reflecting the continued influence of the Institute's founder and former director, the late Jean Pouilloux, and, through him, that of the late Louis Robert, for so many decades the leading authority in Greek epigraphy.

This context makes clear the reality of the teamwork by which alone this sort of project can be brought to fruition, the sort of teamwork that has characterized many

of the undertakings of "Courby" since the 1960s. It also explains the academic approach as long advocated by Robert and his disciples; the end product is intended to be the constitution of a new type of epigraphic corpus, in this case for the cities of Thessaly. This new concept of corpus is a holistic approach to the ancient world in which the results of fieldwork, both producing new topographic and epigraphic material and reevaluating old observations of both categories, are confronted with the more strictly "historical" record of Greek literary texts—so lacunary in most areas of the Greek world; to this picture is added the result, where appropriate, of numismatic study of related coinage. It might seem that there is little original in this, but the originality lies in both the application of it to as vast an area as that of Thessaly and in the further application of the theories of spatial analysis, particularly central place theory.

Many aspects of the total project, especially the overall concept and the geographic approach, can best be appreciated by reading a collective work of the team (I. Blum et al., *Topographie antique et géographie historique en pays grec*, Paris 1992). The enormous territory of Thessaly has been divided into geographically coherent subunits, of which the author has taken responsibility for the upper valley of the Titaesios, just as his colleague Decourt dealt with the valley of the Enipeus (*BCH* Suppl. 21, 1990), and it is hardly surprising that the two volumes follow similar methods and presentation and that both are subtitled "studies in topography and historical geography." The present work formed part of Lucas's doctoral thesis; the epigraphic dossier that was also included in the thesis will appear separately. Other publications by the author (e.g., in *ZPE* 1991 and 1995) show that his work has also extended to the south and east of the area treated here.

The aim of these topographic studies is first to present the actual geography of each area, with its limits clearly defined; next comes the collection of ancient and recent testimonia; the third part consists of the results of the fieldwork itself, with a description (and appropriate illustrations) of each site, followed by attempts to identify the sites, especially the major ones, with their ancient names; finally, a synthesis of what can be said about the history of each city is drawn up.

Given the conservation value of such projects, some readers may be disappointed—as this reviewer was at first sight—by the comparative rarity of site plans and even photographs; but it must be remembered that this monograph is not intended as the final word on this area of Thessaly. Fuller documentation of each site has been collected by the author and is on file in Lyons; it is thus available for incorporation in further publications and study by him and other members of the team. What is more, the permanency of this sort of documentation is enhanced by the system used by the team of storage on CD-ROMs and in the image bank (SGBI) developed at the Université de Lyon 2; the latter gives different levels of access to such documentation, according to its publication and copyright status. In fact, the book does contain plans of the major sites, but not of the minor ones; it is the latter that are on file.

Those maps and plans that are in the book are of great clarity and good conception, but the few plates at the end of the volume are mostly lacking in contrast. This is a com-

mon enough problem with photographs taken in summer heat in the Mediterranean, but proper use of filtration on the camera itself could have enhanced the appearance; on the other hand, given the rightful emphasis on computerization of the whole project, one is left to wonder whether some improvement could not have been made by scanning and treating the images by a graphics application. One misses the sharpness of the plates in the companion volume by Decourt already cited. This comparison leads to another question: why was the present study not accepted in the same series of *BCH* supplements that housed Decourt's book? Not that this is intended to decry the value of the publication series put out by the Maison de l'Orient, but presentation in the same series as the previous volume might have ensured greater consistency in the quality of illustrations.

Apart from several inconsistencies in bibliographic presentation (pages missing; sometimes place of publication is given, other times publisher only), there is little to criticize in this book. It is a very valuable treatment of a part of Thessaly and forms an important portion of the results of this team investigation of a hitherto largely neglected, major area of Greece. Thessaly, apart from some important work on its prehistory, has not been fully treated since the monograph of F. Stählin (*Das hellenische Thessalien: Landeskundliche und geschichtliche Beschreibung Thessaliens in der hellenischen und römischen Zeit*, Stuttgart 1924), which dates back to the early years of the 20th century.

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GREECE IN THE MAKING, 1200–479 B.C., by *Robin Osborne*. (Routledge History of the Ancient World.) Pp. xx + 396, figs. 88, tables 7. Routledge, New York 1996. \$24.95. ISBN 0-415-03583-X.

In writing the book that several others previously undertook to write, Robin Osborne acknowledges that "this book has been a long time in the making" (xvii). This is true even beyond the author's immediate meaning; an understanding of the depth of Greek antiquity has been centuries in the making and only very recently has the continuity between once-divided "periods" been recognized. Osborne reconstructs the development of Classical Greece out of the chaos that ended the Bronze Age Aegean civilization.

Both author and publisher are to be congratulated on the accomplished way the story unfolds of how "the impoverished and relatively isolated groups of ninth-century Greeks grew into the flourishing and vigorous Greeks of the fifth century" (17). Divided into eight chapters and a short epilogue, the narrative proceeds chronologically. The study is not for beginners; although basic definitions regularly accompany technical terms, readers must have some knowledge of early Greece to follow the sweep of the narrative and to understand the evidence.