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Brice L. Erickson, *Lerna, Volume VIII, The Historical Greek Village, Results of Excavations conducted by the American School of Classical Studies at Athens*. pp. 520, 356 b/w figures, 10 colour figures. 2018. Princeton: American School of Classical Studies at Athens. ISBN 978–0–87661–308–5 hardback, \$150.

Brice Erickson's the *Historical Greek Village* is an excellent new addition to the Lerna series and significantly furthers our understanding of the nature and character of the site from circa 970 to 175 BC. Volume VIII in the series follows contributions that detail the fauna, people and prehistoric pottery and architecture of Lerna. Ericson's *Historical Village* not only presents an important and rich corpus of material, it also attempts to interpret the available archaeological data to reconstruct the nature and character of the site and its place within the wider Argolid. In this the book succeeds marvellously and Ericson's work significantly furthers our understanding of village life and culture in Geometric – Hellenistic times.

Lerna VIII is composed of seven chapters and four appendixes. Chapter 1 focusses on the historical and political narratives of Lerna. Chapter 2 discusses the Geometric cemetery. Chapter 3 presents the material recovered from the Late Archaic and Early Classical wells. In chapter 4 and 5 the Later Classical wells and Early and Middle Hellenistic wells are discussed. Chapter 6 presents miscellaneous pottery, figurines, loomweights and coins, and material with no securely dated archaeological context. Finally, chapter 7 draws on the preceding chapters to discuss village society and economy at Lerna. Appendixes on petrographic analysis of table, coarse and cooking wares; Archaic to Hellenistic transport amphoras; faunal remains and architecture, follow the main chapters.

The book's primary audience, as admitted by Ericson himself, are site archaeologists and material specialists working in Greece. The core data chapters of the book, chapters 2 to 6 and the appendixes are indeed most useful for practitioners in the field. The presented pottery in particular represents an important overview of ceramic development/interaction at an Argolid site from

Geometric through Hellenistic times and is as such a valuable addition to our current understanding of the region. For the non-specialist reader chapters 1 and 7, however, are most easily accessible. Chapter 1 discusses Greek village and landscape archaeology and associated Lernian evidence whilst chapter 7, as already mentioned, places the presented archaeological evidence in context. It's important to highlight that this is a study of so-called legacy material. As such it suffers from similar drawbacks as other sites excavated during the middle of the last century. Particularly noteworthy in this context are the very selective ceramic sampling practices by the original excavators, leaving us with an assemblage which in all likelihood bears little resemblance to that originally deposited.

Chapter 1, Historical and Political narratives, provides an overview of the historical and archaeological evidence pertaining to the Greek village. We learn, for example, that villages were generally neglected by the ancient writers and that equally archaeology provides only limited information for the Archaic and Classical periods, with few village sites excavated. Archaeological field survey, however, has made a major contribution in various areas to our understanding of the ancient landscape and the role of smaller scale rural settlements. Ericson also pays attention in this chapter to discussions around how to define a site as a village. Another section of this chapter discusses the historical evidence for Argive domination in Argolid. The final part of the chapter considers the role of Lerna in the Argive territorial system, which is made challenging by the lack of available historical information. All in all chapter 1 is a highly interesting read and covers much ground. In so doing it raises a number of interesting and important questions to which Ericson will come back in subsequent chapters and particularly in his final contextualisation of the presented material.

Chapter 2, is the first of the data-heavy chapters and discusses Lerna's Geometric cemetery. It provides a full description of the burial ground and integrates in the discussion all archaeological evidence attested. The chapter is structured around the various excavated trenches and for each the attested archaeological material is presented in turn. Floor plans, photographs of cist and pithos tombs and other artefacts, plus images and line drawings of attested pottery make the chapter visually very attractive and taken together this approach succeeds marvellously in providing a joined-up overview of the attested remains. In a very sizable final section Ericson discusses and interprets the attested material. Very interestingly the evidence suggests site specific funerary rites

and ritual indicative for a distinct local identity and sense of community. At the same time Lerna appears to partake in a wider Argive ceramic koine, as most tableware cannot be distinguished from Argos or other sites in the region.

Chapters 3 to 6 form the real meat of this volume. Chapter 3, the late Archaic and Early Classical Wells, discusses a series of ten wells and one pit. It follows a similar structure as chapter 2 in that it presents the evidence for each well in turn. As chapter 2 it is lavishly illustrated. In chapter 4, the evidence from a series of wells dated to the Later Classical period is discussed. Well A:1 is particularly important as it covers the early 5th–early 3rd centuries BC a period not well attested in the Argive ceramic record. The chapter traces ceramic developments through discussion of each well in turn and is again visually very pleasing and informative. In chapter 5 Early and Middle Hellenistic material is discussed. Again ceramic developments are traced through discussion of a series of excavated wells. As with the two preceding chapters the author has refrained from making any significant attempt at interpretation and has restricted himself to highlighting noteworthy observations, particularly those associated with selection of studied material by past excavators. Finally, chapter 6 discusses pottery, figurines, loomweights and coins from poorly documented contexts. This material has been included to supplement the evidence from the more closely dated deposits. Hellenistic pottery in particular has received attention in this chapter as this period is in most need of an enhanced understanding. The chapter is structured chronologically from Geometric to Hellenistic.

The final chapter, chapter 7 is Ericson's main *tour de force* with regards interpreting and making sense of the material so lavishly presented in the preceding chapters. It discusses in turn Lerna's place in the Argolid during the Geometric period and the wells attested at Lerna datable to the Archaic, Classical and Hellenistic periods. Ericson indicates that the material recovered seems domestic in nature and potentially represents household debris. However, the absence of associated architectural structures and a quantifiable ceramic assemblage make it impossible to confirm this. A subsequent section focusses on potential rationales for why the wells discussed were filled in at certain moments in time. A number of historical events significant to the area are highlighted but the difficulties in connecting specific historical events with the archaeological record are stressed. The subsequent section is one of the most interesting of the volume. It focusses on local drinking habits and traditions, discussing the role

of the symposium at Lerna. Interestingly few table amphoras were attested. Ericson argues, however, that this does not mean the absence of formalized drinking practices. Various more domestic looking jugs and pouring vessels could have fulfilled a similar role. 5th century transport amphoras from Northern Greece, Chios, the South-Eastern Aegean and Mende appear to demonstrate according to E. access to foreign luxury goods and evidence for conspicuous consumption. Interesting also is that during the 5th century Lerna was importing Aeginetan cooking pots. The character and provenance of the ceramic material attested contradicts, according to the author, traditional views of ancient villages as conservative and economically self-sufficient backwater places. Indeed, throughout this volume Ericson has focussed on discussing both the specific nature and character of Lerna and its connections and interactions with the wider region, highlighting that 'village' sites like Lerna are fully-fledged members of local, regional and even extra regional political, economic and religious networks.

In sum, Ericson's work is a highly engaging and thought provoking contribution which furthers our understanding of a 'village' type site in the 'historical' Argolid. Ericson has shown, through a lavish presentation and discussion of various deposits, that traditional interpretations of the Greek village are in need of revision. Lerna certainly does not appear to confirm to this image. As always, however, the evidence presented in this volume presents only a limited snapshot and as Ericson admits seemingly unconnected to identifiable domestic structures. Going forward, therefore, surface survey archaeology has an important role to play in furthering our understanding of 'village' like sites in antiquity. Targeted excavation and intensive field walking of the surrounding 'territory' of community seems like a winning combination.

To finish, a minor criticism to Ericson's landmark study. The scope of interpretative sections is very wide-ranging and ambitious. It makes for a highly engaging and interesting read but sometimes some of the themes discussed do not get the space required to fully blossom or in the opinion of the reviewer can appear a tad disconnected. It equally can be difficult for the reader to establish some of the rationale of what is covered and how it connects with the material discussed in the data-heavy chapters. Luckily in an excellent preface to the work Ericson sets out the rationale of his approach and the main questions he attempts to cover. These are, however, minor issues and should not detract from an excellent piece of work on which many others will undoubtedly build to further our understanding of

Argolid archaeology and village life in the Ancient Greek world.

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Francesco Collura with contributions by Sergio Cascella, Emiliano Arena and Benedetto Caroccio, *Studia Calactina I. Ricerche su una città greco romana di Sicilia: Kalè Akté – Calacte*. pp. Vii+452, 16 color plates. 2016. Oxford: BAR International Series 2813. ISBN 978-1407314808 paperback \$144.00

The Tyrrhenian north coast of Sicily is in its eastern part, and apart from Tyndaris and Alaesia, archeologically far less explored than the south and east coast with its numerous Greek settlements. The new publication about Kale Akte is therefore very welcome. The city is located about 100 km west of Milazzo and about 60 km east of Cefalù, the ancient Kephaleodium. In the immediate vicinity are Halesa, about 20 km west, Apollonia (San Fratello) 20 km, Aluntium (San Marco d'Alunzio) 30 km and the villa of Patti Marina 60 km east.

Literary sources confirm its foundation for 446 B.C. by Duketios and a looting by Verres (pp. 11–18). After the 496 B.C. foundation of Tyndaris by Dionysios of Syracuse and the nearer Aluntium, which apparently developed in the course of the northern expansion of Syracuse in the 4th century BC, the Kale Akte was probably one of the places settled on the north coast of Sicily in this later phase.

In recent years Carmela Bonanno carried out excavations in the Roman and late antique districts following a Swedish project in Caronia Marina.¹ The present volume gives a broad overview of the archeology of the present-day town of Caronia on the heights and the coastal settlement of Caronia Marina as well as the surrounding area. The material was compiled by Francesco Collura, an economist and administrative expert, interested a lot in antiquity. The foreword by Professor Dario Palermo of Catania University (p. V) gives the book its scientific blessing as well as the publication in the prestigious BAR International Series in Oxford.

The history of the settlement site is traced back to far earlier times than the written sources allow

(pp. 49–68). The author gives a critical review of the published material and at the same time compiles his own inspections and observations. Because of this, he can make out two ancient settlements, one on the site of Caronia on the height above the coast, a second with a port on the coast at Caronia Marina. Between the foundation of Himera (648 BC) and of Kale Akte (446 BC), a smaller settlement between Himera and Messina must have been located here.

Collura is likely to exceed the borders of knowledge when he reconstructs an orthogonal road system on the steep hill of the Upper Town from limited remains, which he even compares with the urban planning of Solunt (pp. 120–123). Here, the plans and autopsy on site do not seem to reveal even right angles between the few excavated walls, apart from significant differences in level on the extremely steep slope, which are hardly suitable for such a grid shaped urbanistic system.

In the coastal town of Caronia Marina, the author bases his reconstruction on surface finds, sometimes of private land owners, and well-preserved cisterns on private land. The results are in agreement with those published by C. Bonanno in 2009 (see above). Some Greek ceramics prove a small settlement between the 6th and the 3rd century BC. There had been a more extensive settlement between the 2nd and 4th century AD, for which even a harbor was reconstructed and a wall stretch in the water off the coast was believed to be a mole. However, no geological studies have been done on the assumed erosion of the coastline, which therefore cannot be considered confirmed (pp. 187–232).

The author mentions three necropolises, one from late Antiquity to Byzantine times adjoining the coastal settlement and two near the Upper Town, which are mainly dated to the 4th and 3rd centuries BC. (pp. 233–250). These observations are primarily based on chance finds and finds on private land. The whereabouts of the finds, which are published in the book, are often not specified.

While the two settlements on the coast and on the mountain are already experiencing a decline after the 4th century AD, a possible repopulation of the height in the Arab period is not confirmed. There are, however, medieval majolica ceramics from the Norman–Hohenstaufen period and a Norman fort. The author also reconstructs the course of a fortification wall of the 12th–13th. century AD (P. 251–274), whose existence however remains questionable.

A chapter about the surrounding territory under the headline 'La Chora Calactina' mentions Bronze Age to Late Roman finds, including some Bronze Age settlement traces (p.280 Figs. 4–6) and the mosaic of

¹ Bonanno 2009.