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Raffaele D’Amato and Andrea Salimbeti. *Early Iron Age Greek Warrior 1100–700 BC*. pp. 64, 49 colour + 13 b&w ill. 2016. Oxford and New York: Osprey Publishing. ISBN 978-1-4728-1560-0 paperback £11.99.

This is the third booklet in this format concerned with ‘warriors’ of Greece by the same authors, the others being *Early Aegean Warrior 5000–1450 BC* (2013) and *Bronze Age Greek Warrior 1600–1100 BC* (2011). All include among their illustrations many colourful reconstructions by Giuseppe Rava, which considerably enhance the quality of these booklets by their imaginative if often over-enthusiastic liveliness.

The Osprey series to which these booklets belong is designed primarily for wargamers (though teachers

and even academics might find them useful summaries of a specific topic). They aim to give a brief, authoritative account of matters with which wargamers are primarily concerned, such as the equipment, training, and organisation of the group being covered, and to place them in their historical and social context. Almost inevitably, this narrow focus, when applied to early societies, will give the impression that weapons and armour were more common, and warfare was more prevalent, than may seem likely on other grounds, but this bias can be allowed for. The account should be based on good academic sources, listed in a bibliography that might include suggestions for more extensive reading, and should contain plenty of good illustrations of the material. The reviewer would like to mention Trevor Bryce's *Hittite Warrior* (2007), in the same series, as an ideal example of the type.

But Trevor Bryce is a well-known academic specialist in Hittitology, and the authors, whatever their qualifications as military historians, are not specialists in Greek prehistory and early history – and it shows. They have undertaken to summarise three areas in which the academic literature is immense – the archaeology of the Greek 'Dark Age', more often called the Early Iron Age nowadays, the beginnings of Greek history in the standard sense of notable events and political developments, and the relevance to both of these of the earliest Greek poetry, especially the *Iliad*. The 52 items in their bibliography barely scratch the surface of the available material, and have a notably wide scatter, ranging from 'modern' academic studies (some quite old, in fact) to articles in the wargaming periodical *Ancient Warfare*. It is important to note that the reference given on p. 60 to a full bibliography, on the authors' website, simply repeats what is said in *Bronze Age Greek Warrior*, and is erroneous; entering the link given produces no result. Entering <https://www.salimbeti.com/micenei> will reach a button for 'Links'. Clicking on this, then on Art/Links etc., at the top of the page reached, does produce a link for 'Bibliography'; but this is almost entirely concerned with Bronze Age material, and is an unsorted jumble of references.

There are notable omissions, including Desborough's *The Greek Dark Ages* (1971), Morris and Powell's *A New Companion to Homer* (1997), and Crouwel's two books on chariots and other wheeled vehicles of the Bronze and Iron Ages (1981, 1992), and the authors' reading has clearly not taken in J. Forsdyke's *Greece Before Homer* (1956), which would have shaken their implicit faith in the value of supposedly historical references to the remote past of Greece in anything written in Greek, down to the work of Pausanias (mid-2nd century AD). Of course, this includes

treating the Greek mythical corpus, supposedly the embodiment of 'tradition', as a valuable source of historical information, much as Thucydides did (but he drew on it to paint a picture of early Greece as a whole, not merely the final phase of the Bronze Age as the authors suggest). Indeed, it is firmly stated that the *Iliad* gives a faithful account of Late Bronze Age warfare, because it is 'not an 8th-century BC text, but a combined text formed by an unbroken oral tradition directly descending from the late Bronze Age, and then transcribed in written form in the 8th or 7th century BC' (p. 46). This distorted account of the theories concerning the oral composition and transmission of early epic poetry leaves one wondering what part 'Homer' (treated as an individual in the text, who according to the *Chronology*, p. 9, lived around 850 BC, a dating that no specialist would now accept) is supposed to have played in this process.

This is just one example of the sad fact that, however much the authors may have read, they have not digested it, to make a coherent and consistent whole. They have not even perceived where they are contradicting themselves, as on the date of Hesiod, placed variously within a range of c. 920–820, the 9th century, and the 8th century, even at its end, at different points (pp. 6, 9, 12, 30 – clearly ignorant of the modern scholarly view that *The Shield of Herakles* is 6th century – and 48). This is one piece of evidence suggesting that the authors wrote different sections separately and did not harmonise their texts. There was clearly little if any copy-editing, for there are other errors of varying importance throughout (e.g. p. 26, where Lefkandi is clearly stated to be in Crete, though correctly placed in Euboea elsewhere), and various misspellings, some perhaps typos, especially in the captions. Editorial influence might have forced clarification of an extremely obscure reference to 'the 'proto-phalanx' formation of the fresco from Thera' (p. 46); the reference is presumably to the warriors on the Ship Fresco in Room 5 of the West House at Akrotiri, who on an interpretation incorporating more of the fresco are not in battle, but marching in procession to another city.

The accumulation of errors does not lead one to have high expectations of the quality of the text, and it would take a whole review article to discuss the various misstatements, misunderstandings, outdated interpretations, etc. in the account of historical development and social conditions. It is a blend of some passages that are clearly following some piece of modern discussion and may cite authorities, and others that appear to ignore modern scholarship altogether, as in the repeated assertions that the Homeric poems are largely if

not entirely a reflection of Mycenaean (or, as the authors would have it, 'Achaean') civilisation. No serious scholar would maintain this today, even if some still believe in a historical reality behind the story of the Trojan War. Sometimes there are acknowledgements that horizons were limited and resources in short supply, until quite late in the period; but the overall impression, enhanced by the illustrations, is that until the 8th century the warrior 'basileis' and 'aristocrats' lived and fought very much in the style of the Homeric heroes, supposedly in deliberate emulation of the 'Achaean' past, a wholly questionable interpretation.

The text is better when it is dealing with specific types of weapons and armour. But there are significant omissions in the sources used – for instance, in the discussion of the bronze ancestor of the standard Naue II type for iron swords and daggers, there is no suggestion of the significant part played by Italian links in this type's Aegean development (indicated as long ago as A.F. Harding, *The Mycenaeans and Europe* (1984), pp. 164–5). An over-emphasis on the importance of iron fails to deal with the problem of how the technology involved in forging iron weapons, totally different from that of casting bronze ones, came to be adopted, and there is no consideration of how supplies of the metals needed for weapons and armour were obtained in a period when evidence for trade and external contacts is so scanty in most regions. Also, although there are many good photographs of extant items and some well-chosen figures (but often reproduced on a rather small scale), there are some extremely dark and indistinct photographs, which is a problem when these items are referred to in the text, as the Palaepaphos-Skales dish (p. 11) is, more than once.

Finally, it must be considered symptomatic of the authors' rather unsophisticated approach that they end the booklet with an account of the First Messenian War, supposedly dated in the late 8th century. This is essentially based on Pausanias's account, which is treated as if it was reliable history instead of (in all probability) largely fictional, influenced by Spartan and Messenian claims made in the context of much later political developments.

Overall, this booklet is not worth buying; it is internally inconsistent and too likely to mislead the uninformed.

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Coulié, Anne 2013. *La céramique grecque aux époques géométrique et orientalisante (XIe–Vle siècles av.J.-C.)*. pp. 304, 29 coloured plates + 279 numbered ill. (b/w pls., many including subsidiary pictures, also drawings, plans etc.), 2 pp. of maps. Paris: Picard, Les Manuels d'Art et d'Archéologie Antiques. ISBN 978-2-7084-0926-2 hardback €88.

This is a finely produced volume, but the title of the series to which it belongs is significant. It is a manual, written in clear, uncomplicated French, which provides information in a succinct way, but includes more detail than most people will need about these interesting phases of Greek pottery, even (from the reviewer's experience) if they are teaching them as part of a university course in Greek art. But it will be generally useful as an up-to-date source of information and comment, and should be of considerable value to Ph.D. students specialising in the field.

It covers much of the ground also given detailed treatment in Boardman 1998, but is less comprehensive, not intended to go far beyond the 7th century and so ignoring the development of Black Figure outside the early stages at Corinth and Athens that is covered in Boardman, and to a great extent developments in much of mainland Greece outside these centres (for example, Laconia, where Boardman considers the Orientalising development that preceded Black Figure worth some attention). Here the concentration is very much on Aegean Greece, and so, after Athens and Corinth, on the major Cycladic islands, Eastern Greece (Ionia and adjacent areas) and to some extent Crete. The discussion updates Boardman in places, and contains useful comment on the way that the distinctive styles and special shapes seem to express the feelings of independence and local pride that were typical of the developing city states. The illustrations are on a larger scale than Boardman's, and the colour plates, mostly but not all well-known pieces, form a very fine series. Overall, they provide a good idea of the best that Greek vase-painting of these periods can offer, while in the black and white illustrations there are salutary reminders that it was not always inspired or, even when ambitious, very competent technically.

The rarity of references to Magna Graecia is explicable, because developments in pottery here are covered in a separate volume, but there is surprisingly little general reference to the north Aegean. Admittedly, this region has not produced any very remarkable local material, except on Thasos (a particular interest of the author's), but