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- Maeve McHugh. *The Ancient Greek Farmstead*. viii+198, 58 b/w illustrations. 2017. Oxford/Philadelphia: Oxbow Books. ISBN 978-1-78570-640-0 paperback £36; e-publication £18.**

While Greek farming has received plenty of scholarly attention, this is the first book-length study devoted to ancient Greek *farmsteads*. Given the amount of discussion about farmsteads – ranging from debating their archaeological signature to even questioning their very existence in the Greek world – it is remarkable that such a book was not written sooner. The contribution by Maeve McHugh, therefore, is very welcome because it is the first time that the ancient Greek farmstead is treated integrally, thereby tying together a very fragmented scholarly discourse.

Yet, McHugh's ambition goes further than summarizing the current debates surrounding the ancient Greek farm: she wants to place the archaeological farmstead in its socio-economic context, highlighting the realities for Greek farmers living in the countryside. Her approach is twofold: focusing on the variety of farmstead types, but also placing the farmsteads in agricultural networks using a GIS-based approach.

The first introductory chapter traces the history of the Greek farmstead in modern scholarship: from the discovery of the first houses in the countryside and the realization that they were farms, to the introduction of archaeological surface survey, leading to an 'explosion' of farms throughout many different countrysides. Though this introduction is concise, it takes the reader through the past 70 years or so of scholarship, going over the major advances and discussions in the field, while referring to a multitude of relevant literature. Regrettably, what is missing in this chapter is a placement of the Greek farmstead in space and time. Why, for example, is the colonial Greek landscape in Italy barely discussed, when many farmsteads have been surveyed and excavated there? Generally, the book is based heavily on evidence from modern day Greece, whereas the distribution of Greek farmsteads is much wider, and the introduction might have been the right place to explain why this is so.

With regard to chronology, the Greek farmstead is placed in the mid-Classical to the early-Hellenistic

period, specified as 450 to 250 BC (p. 1). Though this period is indeed considered the heyday of Greek farms, with a dense distribution in various countrysides, earlier Greek farmsteads do exist, such as those found in the Laconia survey project or on the Cycladic island of Melos, not to mention the excavated Archaic farmstead ('villa?') in Kopanaki, Messenia. And what about Roman farmsteads? The reader is left with some questions here, and the chronological delimitation, however sensible, could have been clarified.

The second chapter situates the Greek farmstead in the context of settlement patterns, agricultural production, labour(ers) and land ownership. The chapter is largely text-based and McHugh's conclusion is that the texts demonstrate a high degree of variability of farming practices – dependent on the farmer, the land and the purpose – but also that scholars disagree on the nature of farming systems and habitation on the land. This chapter adequately discusses most of the debates, though I think two topics perhaps deserved some more extensive discussion, for they are important in a socio-economic approach to farmsteads: firstly, the relationship between citizenship and land ownership; and secondly, the supposed isolation of farmstead sites. An inclusion of the latter would also have tied in rather nicely with a mobility approach as taken by McHugh.

The archaeological evidence for farmsteads is reviewed in the third chapter in which a role-based typology of farmsteads is brought forward. Based on the survey evidence, she discerns three kinds of sites: The tower(house), the installation and the 'simple rural site'. Differentiating between them is done on the basis of the location of the site (including soil and slope), the site size, the ceramic assemblage (comprising tiles and pottery) and the presence or absence of agricultural tools. It is the type 'simple rural site' which is most difficult, because it is an umbrella term for several sub-types of sites, that move along a 'rural sites continuum' (mostly related to the intensity and duration of use). Using evidence from surveys in the Akte peninsula, Methana, Atene and Laconia, she shows that there are different kinds of agricultural sites and farmsteads in these landscapes and that they can be meaningfully compared using the role-based typology. More importantly, she demonstrates that agricultural sites can be compared between surveys.

The GIS-based approach that features in chapter four is used to contextualize the Akte and Methana farms spatially, in agricultural networks characterized by mobility and visibility. Because the

maps play such a central role in this book, their size and printing quality could have been increased. It would have been interesting to integrate land use (discussed in chapter three) in the various maps and successive analyses. Relating to land use, the study relies on the CORINE land use dataset, which is questionable because of its low resolution, and moreover, because this is the *modern* status quo, not necessarily bearing much relevance for the past.

Similarly, the significance of the least-cost path accessibility models for the ancient past can be questioned, and the map of the Laconian Eurotas valley that is used as an illustration of its potential (p. 101) is not entirely convincing (though in part it might be due to the printing quality). The visibility maps are difficult to interpret when printed at this small scale. Generally, an evaluation of these GIS models by embedding them more firmly in the archaeology of the countryside could have accentuated their credibility. For example, is there a difference between sites or site types in fertile and more infertile areas, and between more and less accessible areas of the landscape? Why is one tower farm surrounded by no less than four installations, whereas in another part of the landscape a cluster of eight farmsteads has not a single installation? Can we discern a site hierarchy between intervisible sites? This kind of questions would benefit from further analysis, which could confirm the validity of the GIS methods and models.

What these analyses clearly testify to, is that farmsteads are not isolated, but part of agricultural networks. Though some level of connectivity is already borne out by the ceramic evidence from these sites – that was not made at the farmstead itself – this spatial approach does shape a framework for how such interactions with the wider world could have worked in practice. It emphasizes the practical constraints, concerns and options that farmers might have had, and their choices that shaped the countryside. Considering the stress on isolation in the farmstead debate<sup>1</sup>, this connectivity approach does provide food for thought.

The next chapter (chapter five) is an exploration of the ancient economy and the role of farming therein, more specifically discussing if and how farmers engaged in trade. Complete self-sufficiency was an ideal in Greek society, but as McHugh rightly states, some involvement in trade must have been unavoidable, though the farmers could still be primarily subsistence farmers, reliant on their own produce. On the other hand, there is also evidence for

<sup>1</sup> See for example Osborne 1985.

market-oriented landowners. The degree to which farmers were integrated into the ancient economy is difficult to establish archaeologically. A careful look at, for instance, coins found on farmstead sites and the origin of the pottery present (especially amphorae), could perhaps shed some light on who the farmers were interacting with economically. See for example the study by Lin Foxhall and David Yoon, in which the authors conclude that even though the material evidence from the excavated farmstead 'Umbro Greek site' shows some degree of involvement in trade, its interaction with markets was limited and not frequent.<sup>2</sup> In the absence of such analyses for the survey regions studied, currently, the only very general conclusion that McHugh can understandably draw is that engagement in the market was scalable and dependent on the individual farmer's needs (page 152).

Perhaps the discussion in this chapter relies a bit heavily on owner-occupied farmsteads and the opportunities for these kind of farmers. What is less clear is the position of tenant farmers, while they probably relied on the market to attain the cash needed to pay their rent (all rents mentioned in leases are in cash). For sharecroppers, for whom extraction in kind is the norm<sup>3</sup>, there might have been less incentive or fewer possibilities to participate in trade. It remains difficult to differentiate between these different kinds of farmers archaeologically, but a detailed study of the finds assemblages from farmstead sites could indicate various levels of integration in polis trade, potentially suggesting different groups of farmers.

In the conclusion (chapter six), I read that the inhabitants of the countryside of Methana moved to live in the larger nucleated settlements after the fourth century (page 154). This does not correspond with McHugh's catalogue in the appendix (tables 10 to 14), according to which many of the sites continue into the Hellenistic period. In fact, Foxhall notes that of 17 Classical farmsteads, the majority (14) were still in use in the Hellenistic period, with seven new sites added. Then, the total of Hellenistic farmsteads (21) would even surpass the Classical amount (17).<sup>4</sup>

On a more general level, one goal of the book was to formulate criteria for the identification of different farmstead types, which were indeed brought forward in the book. The other ambition was to place the farmsteads in their socio-economic context by focusing on their agricultural role. This,

understandably, is much more difficult, but McHugh has set the social and economic parameters for situating the ancient farmer. She rightly emphasizes that variety is key, and that we should imagine a diversity of farmers together in a single landscape. She is perhaps a bit too pessimistic when she states that: '...it is impossible to draw clearly defined distinctions between the completely self-sufficient farmer, on the one hand, and the market-driven farmer on the other' (p. 155). Earlier in the book (on pp. 71–73) she connects farmsteads with a tower, to more prosperous classes of society engaging in agriculture. Though maybe not all wealthy landowners will have built a tower or towerhouse, the fact that some of the study areas contain proportionally many more of these elite buildings, does confirm a more pronounced elite-presence in the landscape (though it remains doubtful if this was their primary residence). Contrasting the figures from the appendix, the proportion of tower sites in the total of habitation sites (thus excluding installations) is 34% in Atene, 20% in Methana and 6% in Akte. In the Eurotas valley, on the other hand, they have not been found in the survey at all. These prosperous landowners most likely did engage in wider economic networks, and therefore, I think McHugh's classification does show different social classes in the agricultural landscape. But, at the very least the farmstead classification offers a tool to further investigate social and economic differences in the countryside.

This farmstead classification is the main asset of this book that, notwithstanding some of the critical remarks in this review, offers the prospect of comparing and contrasting surveys and study regions with one another. In addition, it also emphasizes connectivity in the countryside, the agency of the farmer as well as placing the farms in a realistic landscape, thereby shaping the parameters for socio-economic participation for its inhabitants. This first book on the ancient Greek farmstead also offers an overview of the debates, issues and questions related to farmsteads, questions that hopefully now will start to be addressed more so that we can begin to answer them.

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<sup>2</sup> Foxhall and Yoon 2016.

<sup>3</sup> As perhaps the Laconian helots, see Hodkinson 1992.

<sup>4</sup> Foxhall 1997: 258.

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**Jasna Jeličić Radonić and Miroslav Katić. *Faros – osnivanje grčkog grada – I, (Pharos - the foundation of the ancient city – I)*. pp. 233, c. 160 illustrations. 2015. Split: Književni krug Split and Odsjek za povijest umjetnosti Filozofskog fakulteta Sveučilišta u Splitu. ISBN 978-953-163-419-9 (Književni krug Split / Literary Circle at Split) and (Filozofski fakultet u Splitu / Faculty of Philosophy at Split) ISBN 978-953—7395-85-8 paperback 200,00 kunas (c. € 27)**

This review would not have been necessary if this book did not have an extensive English summary, almost as long as the entire text in Croatian (the book's cover lacks the English title).<sup>1</sup>

The aim of Jeličić-Radonić and Katić's book is to introduce us to ten years (1994–2004) of archaeological excavations conducted at Stari Grad on the Adriatic island of Hvar in Croatia, where the remains of Pharos (a Greek *polis* founded in the early 4th century BC) are located. Their book has fourteen unnumbered chapters as well as an Introduction, Conclusions, a Bibliography and an Index. I will only mention here some of the problems found in this book, whose publication has long been announced and awaited.

It should be pointed out that some chapters had already been published as separate articles, which is not unusual. What raises eyebrows is that the authors have not mentioned any recent studies that have appeared since those works were published. Such studies deal with various problems concerning the Greeks' emigration outside their homeland, their relations with the native populations, and the

presence of native pottery within Greek *apoikiai*.<sup>2</sup> They also include the recent numismatic analysis of Paros' coins,<sup>3</sup> and criticism of the claim made by the authors that a purple workshop existed at Pharos.<sup>4</sup> It is interesting that the authors do not even refer to the book by Marie-Christine Hellmann 'L'architecture grecque, I-III', published in Paris in 2002, 2006 and 2010 and comprising 1008 pages (!).<sup>5</sup> The authors have assembled most of their already published papers and turned them into a book without trying to update their bibliography. They have not used the new results of other studies and integrated them into a coherent monograph.

It is thus difficult to assess the value of this book, although one reviewer has described it as a scientific work. Namely, one cannot say that it is a scientific publication, not even a work of popular science, i.e. a book written for those who are not professional archaeologists, ancient historians, classicists or ancient art historians. The impression is that the authors' aim is to impose an unconditional acceptance of what they say, with a strong bias towards the superiority of the Greeks, and without mentioning other interpretations of the circumstances that are connected with the foundation of the Parian settlement on Hvar.<sup>6</sup>

At the end of the Introduction (pp. 9 and 159) the authors state the aim of their publication: '...in this place the results of research that relate to the foundation of the Greek city of Pharos in the 4 century BC, when the Greek colonists from the Aegean island of Paros founded their polis (385/4 BC) will be discussed.' And in footnote 8 (the English section of this book has no footnotes!) they state that 'due to the vast amount of material....the pottery finds will be published in a separate publication: Pharos – the foundation of the ancient city II'<sup>7</sup> (my translation). This is standard practice. However, some chapters, such as 'Chthonic deities on the Pharian coins', 'Traces of ceramic production',<sup>8</sup> or 'Purple workshop' are not related to the foundation

<sup>2</sup> I.e. Carter 2006; Yntema 2011; Handberg and Jakobsen 2011; Vlassopoulos 2013.

<sup>3</sup> Tully 2013.

<sup>4</sup> Popović 2010b: 145.

<sup>5</sup> One could say that the authors sent their book to press before the publications I have mentioned became available. Yet this is not the case, because their bibliography (pp. 207–217) includes works published in 2015.

<sup>6</sup> Kirigin 2004, 82–88; 2006, 64–67.

<sup>7</sup> Such a publication was already in print: '...see KATIĆ (The Pre-Grecian Settlement and the Beginning of Greek Colonization in Stari Grad on Hvar, in print' (Jeličić-Radonić 2005, p. 316 and footnote 3). The authors do not mention where the other finds such as the coins, the metal and bone objects, the faunal remains, and so on, will be published.

<sup>8</sup> It is noteworthy that a discussion of the Pharian pottery production is announced for the second volume, see p. 9, footnote 8.

<sup>1</sup> The Croatian version of this review was published in *Vjesnik Arheološkog muzeja u Zagrebu* 49, 2016: 305–311.