

## BOOK REVIEW

*Land of Sikyon: Archaeology and History of a Greek City-State.* By YANNIS A. LOLOS. Hesperia Supplement 39. Princeton: The American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 2011. Pp. xxviii + 635, 6 maps in back pocket. Hardcover, \$75.00. ISBN 978-0-87661-539-3.

This much-awaited book by Yannis Lolos is a detailed survey of the history and archaeology of ancient Sikyon. It represents a tremendous amount of work: the archaeological field survey alone took place over 6 years, covered an area of some 360 km<sup>2</sup>, and yielded 225 sites of different types. The survey is complemented by introductory chapters on Sikyon's physical environment and history. All in all, then, Lolos provides in this book a rich study of what is known about a key region of the Peloponnese from prehistory to the Ottoman period.

Lolos' survey is not of the modern, intensive type. Rather it is informed by traditional topographic and historical approaches made famous by Vanderpool, Pritchett, and others. Lolos' work is clearly influenced by the strong tradition of topographic studies at Berkeley, and by the "*kafeneion*" method of Yannis Pikoulas, which involves close collaboration with locals to find ancient sites. In contrast to his predecessors, however, Lolos systematically and intensively documents each of his sites. The extensive technique allows the researcher to examine a large territory—an intensive survey would require significantly more time, money, and personnel to achieve the same coverage—and, by tapping into the memories of local inhabitants, has the potential to include sites that have been destroyed by modern construction, like asphalt roads built over ancient cart roads. There are drawbacks to this method, however. Extensive surveys are less systematic, find fewer sites, and produce less robust data than their intensive counterparts. The payoff is that Lolos is able to talk about the entirety of the Sikyonia, in contrast to the increasingly small territories of modern surveys.

The book's organization is clear and logical. A short introduction focused on methodology is followed by two chapters that detail the Sikyonia's environment (Chapter 1) and history (Chapter 2). Four thematic chapters report the results of the survey and provide an analytic framework for understanding the territory

of Sikyon. These chapters treat land communication (Chapter 3), defenses (Chapter 4), settlements (Chapter 5), and sanctuaries (Chapter 6). A brief synoptic conclusion describes the limitations of the evidence and paints in broad brush-strokes a long-term history of the Sikyonia. The register of sites (Appendix I) provides a catalog of all the sites investigated by the survey. Other appendices deal with special topics: roof tiles, aqueducts, three inscriptions, and excavations at the cave of Lechova.

Lolos treats the archaeological and historical sources carefully and sensibly, although he has a tendency towards relating historical texts and material remains in a very direct way. Many may be uncomfortable with his argument (pp. 318–19) that very small sites discovered in the archaeological survey can be identified as the habitations of *κατωνακοφόροι*, a class of Sikyonian serf sharecroppers. Lolos' attention to the ancient sources can also result in the privileging of military interpretations over socio-economic ones. For instance, while the military functions of cart roads are considered at great length, other potential purposes are largely dismissed (p. 96: "This is not the place to discuss at length the impact of these various [non-military] activities on road construction; indeed, in most cases our evidence is too fragmentary to be conclusive.") While ancient sources on road construction, and indeed on movements through the landscape, certainly do emphasize military activities, it is also the case that there is unambiguous evidence for road-building and road repairs for industrial and sacred purposes (e.g., Plut. *Per.* 12.7, *IG II<sup>2</sup>* 1126.40–3). Lolos himself presents evidence for non-military uses for roads: for instance, he plausibly hypothesizes that a mountainous road in the southwest Sikyonia may have been used to acquire and transport timber (p. 166, cf. p. 416).

This book occupies a distinctive place in the literature on Greek landscape archaeology. On the one hand, it clearly draws inspiration from topographic approaches and makes use of extensive methods for locating sites. On the other, the influence of intensive survey is evident from the use of the region as the lens of analysis and the detailed documentation of individual sites. These observations raise interesting questions about the wider impact of Lolos' work. Certainly it will be crucial for historians and archaeologists of all types who are interested in Sikyon, and more broadly, the northeastern Peloponnese. This is already a significant achievement. But *Land of Sikyon* should have a much more far-reaching influence. Increasingly, archaeologists are interested in integrating data from different survey projects as the basis for regional and inter-regional studies. The

northeastern Peloponnese is fertile ground for such work, thanks to the density of survey projects that have made it one of the best understood areas of Greece. Lolos' work adds an important piece to this puzzle—the Sikyonia—and thus has the potential to contribute to comparative studies into Greek landscapes. Integrating Lolos' extensive results with those from intensive surveys will be far from straightforward. Yet both intensive and extensive surveys are necessary if we are to understand the complexities of ancient settlement across time and space. By shedding new light on an important region of Greece, Lolos' book takes a big step forward towards achieving that goal.

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