491 par rapport à 450 (14). Ont contribué à cet égard la présence des Augustae dans la vie publique urbaine et leur proximité avec la population (218–224); elles font preuve là des vertus de civilitas, de piété et d’humilité. C’est sans doute par ce biais qu’on peut le mieux comprendre les différences d’évolution entre l’Orient et l’Occident. Si, en effet, d’un côté, le cadre urbain par excellence est celui de Constantinople, de l’autre, Rome n’offre plus une opportunité comparable, en raison d’une présence bien moindre désormais de la maison impériale – mais on y note toutefois les actions de Galla Placidia et de sa belle-fille Licinia Eudoxia, épouse de Valentinien III mais aussi fille de Théodose II auquel elle devait son élévation comme Augusta juste avant son mariage (177). Reste Ravenna, et l’on comprend que Galla Placidia y ait manifesté des pratiques évangéliques où l’Auteure décelle une inspiration venue de l’Empire d’Orient (221). En dehors même de la question des ruptures brutales imposées par le cours des événements en Occident, se sont mises en place en Orient des conditions en partie différentes de l’exercice et de la transmission du pouvoir, liées notamment à des modes spécifiques de relations entre la population de Constantinople et la maison impériale; alors même que le sénat de Constantinople gagnait en poids politique, l’accroissement du rôle de l’Augusta s’inscrivait dans cette histoire de longue durée. Il faut remercier Anja Busch d’avoir méticuleusement rassemblé la plus grande partie des pièces éparses de ce dossier difficile et proposé des solutions bien argumentées à des questions qui relèvent à la fois de l’histoire événementielle, de l’histoire institutionnelle et de l’histoire des représentations.

Strasbourg

Alain Chauvot


This book stems from Perna’s postgraduate dissertation defended at the Italian School of Archaeology at Athens (SAIA) in 1993 (p. 15 fn. 1). It represents the companion to ‘sheet A’ of the forthcoming archaeological map of Gortyn, a broader project including 19 sheets in scale 1/500. It is therefore puzzling that the separate folded map uses a 1/750 scale.

In a brief introduction (pp. 15–17), the author states that his aim is to provide valuable information on the history of Gortyn through the study of a «quarter» that holds a central role in the development of the city. It is a commendable goal, but «quarter» is a slippery term even if put in double inverted commas. It is misleading when referring to the non-nucleated pre-Hellenistic city (p. 88), as it increases the difficulty in distinguishing between komai and Stadtvierteln. Further, it is no less confusing with regard to the Early Byzantine period, when the fortified Acropolis probably became the defensive – and perhaps administrative – centre of settlements scattered within the wider area of the former Hellenistic and Roman city (p. 192).

A well-documented history of research leads the reader from the fascinating accounts of early travellers to the resumption of the Italian excavations after the end of the Second World War (pp. 19–26). A geological sketch provides essential information on the physical aspect of the Acropolis (pp. 27–28).

The following chapter ‘Le tracce di occupazione nella preistoria e le leggende formative’ introduces the systematic archaeological study of the Acropolis (pp. 29–30). An updated bibliography on Cretan Neolithic is recommended.1 The brief paragraph on the foundation legends of Gortyn seems to be misplaced in a chapter dealing with the 4th millennium B.C.

A huge chronological hiatus divides this section from the following one, devoted to the history of the Acropolis between the Late Bronze Age and the Archaic period (pp. 31–60). The first part of the chapter consists of a valuable catalogue of archaeological data from early excavations, mainly drawn from the field notebooks kept in the SAIA archives (pp. 31–39). Each identifiable structure has been numbered, sketched and georeferenced (pls. II, III). Nonetheless, stratigraphical accuracy is virtually non-existent. Several statements rather strengthen the impression that no reliable chronological framework can be inferred from mixed unpublished pottery (p. 31, 32, 37) and uncertain stratigraphic sequences (pp. 32, 33, 39). These gaps necessarily weaken Perna’s summary. The author acknowledges the existence of a fortified settlement on the summit of Acropolis from the late LM IIIB/early LM IIIC onward (pp. 40–44). This is a crucial statement for the early history of Gortyn, especially because this view has recently been challenged.2 A systematic analysis of the actual evidence supporting the existence of a settlement would have been more helpful than a risky attempt to outline the features of its domestic architecture (pp. 40–41), especially if we consider that for none of the rooms the whole perimeter is known. Plate II, which shows the LM IIIC–PG settlement, is quite deceptive as structures no. 1–10 are largely hypothetical but drawn with a dotted line that is not fully evident at the map’s scale.3 It is incautious to consider a stretch of curved wall as pertaining to an apsidal house (no. 9) and to take it as proof of the arrival of people from Mainland Greece (p. 46). Moreover, no clues but the application of a well known model4 support the hypothesis that this alleged apsidal Dorian ruler’s dwelling stimulated the birth of a cult at the Acropolis (pp. 58–59). Furthermore, it is not clear when this event would have occurred. LM IIIC kernoí are considered the earliest religious objects from the Acropolis (p. 42), while the bulk of the votives dates to the PG onwards (p. 47). Perna suggests the existence of an open air

shrine during this time span. This would have been focused on the so-called bothros, later enclosed by the temple. The bothros would have pre-existed the temple, as its different orientation would demonstrate (p. 57–60). In interpreting the structure as a link between Olympian and Chtonian deities, it is regrettable that the author does not even quote D’Acunto’s convincing arguments for recognizing the bothros as a thesauros.¹ I agree with Perna about the multifaceted character of the cult at the Acropolis, which virtually satisfied all the desiderata of an early society: fertility/kourotrophia, control of natural powers, favour in war. Nonetheless, I do not believe that the available evidence points to the existence of an odd triad formed by Athena, Hellotis, Kore, possibly assisted by Artemis (p. 59).

Once set into the broader context of Early Iron Age Gortyn, the role of the Acropolis is not clearer (pp. 45–46). Perna’s account contains several inaccuracies that may lead non-habitual readers of Gortynian bibliography to draw an incorrect picture of the birth of the city (p. 45). The settlement of Profitis Ilias does not date back to the PG but rather to the end of the 2nd millennium B.C.² No early Geometric cemetery existed on Armi hill, as the depositions in crevices near the ‘Building A’ were votive and not funerary.³ Pottery from the western slopes of the Acropolis (unspecified amount of ‘geometric’ potsherds), from chandax 1978 (five LPG-EG potsherds), and from chandax 1979 (unspecified amount of ‘pre-Classical’ potsherds) are simply insufficient to demonstrate the existence of a number of scattered hamlets (p. 45). The only habitations we can confidently attribute to the ‘Gortynian cluster’ are Profitis Ilias, Charkia Pervoli, and the Acropolis, although their respective economic, social, and political relations are still unclear. According to Perna, the settlement on the Acropolis underwent a sudden destruction between LG and EO, likely due to an earthquake (p. 42). Archaeological evidence is once again ambiguous: no intact destruction layers have been identified, and several rooms have yielded Byzantine pottery mixed with LBA and EIA potsherds.⁴

Nevertheless, the 7th century B.C. marks a phase of major changes for the Acropolis, and Perna rightly decided to address it in another section. ‘La monumentalizzazione del santuario e l’acropoli in età greco-ellenistica’ is the last chapter devoted to the pre-Roman period (pp. 61–90). It contains a detailed catalogue of archaeological data (pp. 61–83) followed by a historical and archaeological summary (pp. 83–90). Perna is the first to state that two temples stood on the Acropolis during the 7th century B.C. (p. 69). Based on the construction technique, he dates the westernmost one slightly later than the collapsed one located


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a few meters to the East. Conversely, the latter has been dubiously dated to the Classical period. However, masonry cannot be regarded as a reliable chronological indicator, especially if considered in isolation. According to this criterion, the temples on the Acropolis would date earlier than the more refined temple of Apollo Pythios (p. 79). This fragile chain of building activities forms the spine of Perna’s historical account, which sometimes appears far removed from the actual archaeological evidence. This is the case, for example, with the proposed ‘role shift’ between the sanctuary on the Acropolis and the Pythion soon after the end of the 7th century B.C. (p. 87). In Perna’s opinion, this marked the definitive success of a brand-new aristocracy based upon citizenship over an old-fashioned elite founded on ties of kinship (p. 86). This idea is hardly acceptable. A sharp drop in the number of votives is a widespread phenomenon in Crete since the end of the 7th century B.C. Therefore it cannot demonstrate any abandonment or even crisis of the sanctuary of the Acropolis, as Perna suggests. Indeed, the same lack of evidence affects the Pythion itself, i.e. the new aristocrats’ temple according to the author. Moreover, despite the difficulties in providing a coherent picture of the Gortynian Archaic society, studies in ancient epigraphy did not detect any polarity between old and new aristocracy. Finally, the view of the Pythion as the ‘centre of one of the main villages’ recalls Stephanus’ statement Πύθιον, τὸ πάλαι μεσαίτατον τῆς ἐν Κρήτῃ Γόρτυνος. Nevertheless, the centrality of Pythion could confidently be referred only to the Roman town. This is unlikely in the context of the Greek polis settled kata komas, i.e. organized according to ὁ παλαιὸς τῆς Ἑλλάδος τρόπος οἰκισθείσης and not to a «Corinthian-Peloponnesian» pattern (p. 84). Within this scattered settlement pattern the Acropolis would have functioned as a residential area even if the top of the hill was in part reserved for religious purposes. A full analysis of the elements in support of the existence of an habitation would have been extremely useful, far more than the attempt to recognize possible references to it in the ambiguous literary (p. 85) and epigraphic (p. 90) sources.

On the other hand, Perna’s effort is commendable to recollect the disiecta membra of minor building activities that took place in the sanctuary during the Classical and the Hellenistic periods (pp. 87–90). Unfortunately, this does not provide new data regarding the thorny issue of the topographic relation between the Acropolis and the fortified Hellenistic town (p. 89). Perna highlights the

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4 St. Byz. s.v. ‘Πύθιον’.
5 Thuc. 1.10.2.
external position of the hill in respect to the perimeter of the fortifications, while also pointing out the long-lasting link between the Acropolis and the underlying agora. [R.M.A.]

The long chapter ‘L’età romana’ (pp. 91–144) can be considered the core of the volume and it has the same structure as the previous chapters. A detailed catalogue of the available archaeological evidence (pp. 91–142) is followed by a concise section providing a historical and archaeological overview of the Acropolis in the Roman period (‘Conclusioni: l’età romana’, pp. 142–144). Archaeological evidence is split into two sections, although the reason for this division remains unclear to the reader. The first section (‘I dati archeologici’, pp. 91–100) deals only with the so-called Kastro and with a chamber tomb on the western slope of the Acropolis. The following section ‘Grandi strutture lineari di età romano-bizantina, gli acquedotti’ (pp. 100–142) is entirely devoted to the description and commentary of the so called ‘linear structures’, namely those features of the Roman and (Early) Byzantine aqueduct of Gortyn surveyed by the author on the Acropolis hill.

With the exception of the tomb on the western slope, tentatively dated to the Early Imperial period (p. 99), none of the Roman structures is earlier than the second half of the 2nd century AD (p. 135). The most prominent extant feature on the Acropolis of Gortyn is the huge rectangular structure known as Kastro. It was already known in literature since the 19th century and scholars had formulated different hypotheses about its function. Here, these are examined by the author only in footnotes (e.g. p. 91 fn. 338, 342, 343, p. 98 fn. 363). Perna bases his analysis on the results of the fieldwork and survey carried out in the ‘90s for his aforementioned postgraduate dissertation, already presented in two previous papers. 1 His work sheds new light on the Kastro and clarifies some constructive and planimetric details. In particular, he resolves the relationship between the walls of the central space (in opus latericium) and the smaller walls in opus vittatum on its Northwest side (pp. 93–95). I agree with Perna’s statement that the entire Kastro is the result of a single building project and that the aforementioned walls are contemporary notwithstanding the different building technique (p. 96). Nonetheless, more detailed images and a proper plan of the Kastro would have helped readers gain a better understanding of such an important monument for the topography of the Acropolis.

Since archaeological excavations have never been carried out in the Kastro, Perna’s dating of the structure to the second half of the 3rd century AD is only based on masonry typology and its similarity to already known building phases from the Praetorium area and other monuments in the lower city (p. 97). These are, in turn, only tentatively dated. 2 Perna does not take into account the results


of a 2002 survey (except for a brief footnote, p. 97 fn. 362), according to which the Eastern wall of the Kastro cuts the nartex of the Christian basilica at the Acropolis and should therefore be later than the first phase of the church. Since other evidence for chronology is so scanty, a more thorough discussion on this topic would have been welcome here, as well as on the relation between the Kastro and other (later) structures of the Acropolis (e.g., the fortification wall). Similarly, the discussion about the different functions proposed for the Kastro in previous literature is very concise (pp. 98–99), partly limited to footnotes. Nonetheless, Perna leans towards the function as a water reservoir (or, in his words, this function «can not be excluded»).

Perna’s original contribution is more evident in the following section, devoted to a sector of the hydraulic system, namely aqueduct segments, pipelines, cisterns and fountains identified by the author in the ‘sheet A’ area of the archaeological map of Gortyn. Each feature has been numbered, listed and described in the catalogue (pp. 101–128), and for a number of them drawings and images are also supplied. The author identifies three main aqueduct branches in the surveyed area («Ramo Superiore» or Branch 3, «Ramo Inferiore» or Branch 4, «Ramo Sud» or Branch 5). Furthermore, all the recorded features have been classified into 10 groups («tipi») by their building technique (pp. 134–138). Through comparison with the masonry of other Gortynian monuments, in particular of the building phases of the Praetorium complex, these branches have been dated from the second half of the 2nd («tipo I») to the 7th century AD («tipo X»). Such a circular dating method can be hard to understand for a reader not familiar with the archaeological literature of Gortyn.

Due to the wide chronological range, these features are split into two different plates (pl. VIII, ‘L’acropoli in età romana’, and pl. IX, ‘L’acropoli in età bizantina’). The catalogue is enriched by technical details (pp. 128–133), although some of them (e.g., the proposed figures for grade and discharge of the aqueduct) could be incorrect due to the fact that Perna does not consider the Gortynian aqueduct as a whole, but only the section found in the Acropolis sector. This is only a small part of a much larger hydraulic system that originated in Zaros, 15 km from Gortyn (p. 101).²

In the light of the evidence recorded in this chapter, Perna’s opening statement in the concluding section (pp. 142–144) is fairly surprising. According to the author, the sanctuary on the Acropolis was not only still in use through the 2nd–3rd century AD (p. 142). Unfortunately this potentially interesting clue, drawn from scanty epigraphical evidence briefly mentioned in the footnotes (p. 142 fn. 467–468), is not further debated. On the following pages, the author appears to


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Das Erstellen und Weitergeben von Kopien dieses PDFs ist nicht zulässig.
have changed his mind while describing the Acropolis of middle/late Imperial times like an almost deserted extra-urban area, as inferred from the presence of the aqueduct branches on its north-west slopes and the subsequent construction of the Kastro. In his opinion, the aqueduct itself marked the Northern border of the inhabited area, and supplied the dwellings lying South, between the foot of the hill and the modern road (p. 143). The author offers us two juxtaposed and contrasting images of the Acropolis, without examining the transition from one to another.

The last chapter (pp. 145–193) deals with post-Roman evidence from the Acropolis, although the title ‘La prima età bizantina’ is a bit misleading, since the ‘early Byzantine period’ in Crete is commonly supposed to end with the Arab conquest of the island in 823/827 AD, whereas here later evidence is presented as well. A catalogue of archaeological data with commentary is followed by a concluding overview. The author’s main contribution to our knowledge of Gortynian topography lies in the first part of this chapter (pp. 145–167), dedicated to the extant sectors of the Early Byzantine fortification of the Acropolis.

The valuable catalogue (‘Analisi delle fortificazioni bizantine’, pp. 145–159) counts 21 features, mainly wall segments and towers. Each of them has been numbered, georeferenced and described; photographs and drawings (either from the Archive of Italian School of Archaeology or drawn for this purpose) are given for a selection of records. A graphic reconstruction of the layout of the irregular polygonal enclosure as defined by Perna on the base of the surveyed wall segments (p. 159) would have been helpful.

Among the technical remarks following the catalogue, emphasis is put on the towers (pp. 160–163), especially the pentagonal one. Dimensional analysis of the angle and the ratio between the projecting triangular part and the quadrangular body of the tower are compared with similar features from a wide sample of pentagonal towers from all the Mediterranean area (from 6th century Amida to 9th century Genoa, notwithstanding the tentative chronology known for all of them). This analysis leads the author to develop a chrono-typology and allows Perna to date the fortification between the end of 7th and the 8th century (pp. 165–167). Thus the Author rejects the traditional chronology, which dates the tower to the reign of Heraclius, convincingly showing that the 7th century lead seal found near the foundation of the fortification walls cannot be a reliable chronological clue, since its stratigraphic relationship with the walls is uncertain (p. 165 and fn. 330).

Another important issue tackled by Perna is the correlation between the fortification and the lower city and in particular the function of the fortification itself, whether it was just the seat of a military garrison or a proper fortified settlement. Perna seems to prefer the latter hypothesis, and he devotes the entire section to describing evidence that could point to the presence of a settlement. He catalogues a number of walls, which were either brought to light during old and unpublished excavations or identified and surveyed by the author himself, and

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considered part of Byzantine houses (‘Abitato bizantino’, pp. 167–176). Unfortunately no accurate stratigraphic data is available and the recurring term ‘Byzantine’ is inevitably ambiguous. Two or three phases are suggested for these structures, from the first half of the 7th century onwards, but the chronology of each phase remains unclear (p. 177). Combining this evidence with the water supply features (presented in the previous chapter) Perna argues that the hilltop was resettled permanently in the 6th century AD and later fortified.

The last major features discussed by Perna are the Christian basilica and the so-called fortified monastery (pp. 178–186). The results of excavations carried out in the ’50s are reconsidered and a new interpretation is proposed. As far as the monastery is concerned, Perna convincingly identifies it as a tower and suggests dating it to the second Byzantine period, as part of the defensive system of the island built by Nikephoros Phokas immediately after the reconquest of 961 AD (pp. 178–179). The hypothesis is interesting, but recent bibliography concerning this large-scale defense and territorial reorganization project is not considered.

The review of the excavations of the ’50s and the analysis of the few remaining traces allow the Author to formulate new hypotheses about the plan of the Christian basilica, as well as to call the traditional chronology into question, although he does not reach a definitive conclusion (pp. 179–187). Furthermore, among the Early Christian walls Perna identifies an 8th century (?) building. Considering the Arab coins and pottery found in the excavation, the author identifies it as an Islamic place of worship (p. 186). This is surprising, as it would be the first of its kind known in Crete for this period.

Finally, the absence of the so-called Kastro in the general map of the Acropolis in the Byzantine period (pl. IX) is striking: even acknowledging the chronology proposed for this huge structure (3rd century), its bulky presence must surely have influenced the later topography of the area, even if it did not remain in use. The volume ends with a short conclusive chapter on the Byzantine period (pp. 190–193), which deals hastily with the wider historical context and leaves the reader with a number of open questions. A deeper reflection on the Byzantine settlement on the Acropolis hill and its relation with the surrounding territory, touching upon the relation with the lower city and the evidence for contemporaneous occupation in the wider area of the Mesara plain would have greatly enriched this final chapter.

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Perna’s book is welcome as it marks an improvement in our knowledge of a crucial area of ancient Gortyn. Scholars can now take advantage of a broad archaeological framework and of an updated cartographic support. In fact, every future study of the Acropolis of Gortyn should not ignore Perna’s work. Thanks to it the Acropolis will again be a central issue of scholarly interest in Gortyn.

Nevertheless, a number of improvements could have made this work both more manageable and accurate. The lack of an index makes it an onerous effort to consult the book. Moreover, a methodological preface would have been necessary to illuminate the criterion according to which structures are numbered, and to explain why they are not all included in the separate folded map (‘sheet A’). As regards the contents, we had the overall impression that the line between conclusions and assumptions was to some extent scarcely marked. Perna’s hypotheses do not always seem to be supported by strong evidence or to be well motivated. The bibliography is rich but not always updated. It misses some important works concerning both the 1st millennium B.C. and the 1st millennium AD. References in footnotes are sometimes vague (e.g. p. 21 fn. 13) or not strictly pertaining the issue addressed in the text (e.g. p. 44 fn. 106; p. 90 fn. 335; p. 97 fn. 361). Editing also deserved more care, as a lot of misprints affect both the text and the bibliography.

[R.M.A. & E.T.]

Athens

Rosario Maria Anzalone/Elisa Triolo

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