emergence of a collegial mentality' among the élites, suggesting that social stratification is an important element of state-formation. It matters which, because both literary and archaeological evidence suggests that the two processes were not necessarily synchronous, with the former possibly preceding the latter. Also absent is any discussion of demography and its implications. For example, the most generous recent estimate for the total population of eighth-century Argos is around 2,500 (based on a density figure of thirty to fifty inhabitants per hectare, suggested by Marja Vink, in H. Damgard Andersen et al. [edd.], *Urbanization in the Mediterranean in the 9th to 6th Centuries BC* [Copenhagen, 1997], pp. 111–41). Such a population level hardly squares with K.'s picture of states jostling for hegemony at a supraregional level.

In the end, it is a matter of faith. Those who continue to believe that a narrative history, akin to what can be constructed for the classical period, can be pushed back into the early archaic period will find a champion in K. The agnostics will find little here to convince them otherwise.

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ETHNOS OR *POLIS*?

C. MORGAN: *Early Greek States Beyond the Polis*. Pp. xii + 326, maps, ills. London and New York: Routledge, 2003. Cased, £55. ISBN: 0-415-08996-4.

This is a powerful, but somewhat confusing and perhaps a little confused, book. There is no doubting its scholarship. A bibliography of some 1,000 items tells its own tale (though so does the fact that it contains over fifty errata). But the question has to be asked—and M., to her great credit, is fearless in explicitly asking it—whether the whole is as great as the sum of its many excellent parts. On the one hand, the ambition to redraw, literally, the map of early Greek history (*c.* 800–500 B.C.E.) is quite admirable. The gaping blank north of the Corinthian Gulf on, for example, Robin Osborne's map of Greece and the central Mediterranean in his introductory *Greek History* (Routledge, 2004) is one of the gaps that M. aims precisely to fill: her study is fixedly addressed to the large areas of mainland Greece on either side of the Corinthian gulf extending from Thessaly through Phokis and E. Lokris to Akhaia and Arkadia. On the other hand, given the actual state of the archaeological database, and given the instrinsic provisionality of all material evidence (from wherever or whenever), a fundamentally archaeological study such as this could never be anything more than what M. herself calls 'a first small step' (p. 222). But then just a couple of pages later (p. 225) she has convinced herself, and tries to convince us, that her dense, profusely illustrated but not easily readable monograph constitutes not just one but two 'major steps forward' (p. 225). Can she have it both ways?

That depends entirely on what the book's aims and objectives are taken to be. The maximum programme, so to speak, is formulated thus (p. 222):

> The long-term aim must be to document the palimpsest of individual and group identities expressed in a variety of ways, including the acquisition and disposition of material goods, the creation of visual and oral group images (including collective myth-history) and the deployment of names, and to assess their relative weighting in different places, periods, and contexts and from different perspectives.

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I quote at such length because throughout her work M. does nothing if not cover all bases, somewhat heavy-handedly dotting all methodological 'i's and crossing all empirical 't's along the way. Realism, however, kicks in soon with the frank expression of doubt as to whether 'we can do more than highlight ways of looking at the entities and processes involved in the study of early Greek ethne and, in general terms, delineate the shapes of the regional organizations that emerged' (p. 225).

In my view, the latter is what she has achieved, and achieved pretty magnificently, given the unpromising material with which she often has to deal. But then she is used to that. Her Cambridge PhD thesis (supervised by Anthony Snodgrass), 'Settlement and Exploitation in the Region of the Corinthian Gulf, ca. 1100–700 BC', was quite often a case of having to make bricks with little or no straw, and her reworking of it into the 1990 monograph *Athletes and Oracles. The Transformation of Olympia and Delphi in the Eighth Century BC* itself represented a considerably skilful act of transformation, not to mention transposition and reconfiguration. The present book doggedly remains within the same general geographical space, but makes explicit the underlying political-scholarly agenda recently adumbrated in her contribution, on Akhaia, to Roger Brock and Stephen Hodkinson's *Alternatives to Athens. Varieties of Political Organization and Community in Ancient Greece* (Oxford, 2000, corrected paperback 2002). This is to promote the cause of the *ethnos* community-state to something like parity (at least) with the Aristotelian teleological *polis*. Not that she wishes to dethrone or even debunk the *polis*, or rather any *polis*, altogether: she is herself a noted contributor to Mogens Hansen's Copenhagen Polis Centre (CPC) project. Her aim rather is to bring about a proper understanding of what a non-*polis ethnos*, or an *ethnos* that included one or more *poleis*, really was like.

To that end M. begins with a long, throat-clearing introductory chapter, emphasizing two programmatic points above all others: first, the dynamism of *ethnos*-type political communities (e.g. p. 229 n. 59), and second, that 'far from being distinct and alternative forms of state, poleis and ethne were . . . tiers of identity with which communities could identify' (p. 1). She may, however, be a little overenthusiastic in declaring that 'the construct of Greekness owes as much to nineteenth-century Europe as to the Greeks themselves' (p. 3), and 'clans' (p. 30) should surely have been subjected to the same strictures as 'tribe' (p. 13). The second chapter is devoted to the nature of mainland 'big sites' (though size is not everything—pop. only 500–2,000) in the early Iron Age and archaic period, to the social and economic implications of their development, and to the ways in which they acted as focal points for the expression of identity. Thessaly is featured especially, and helpful comparisons/contrasts are drawn with Corinth, Argos, and Athens. Inscriptions and coinage are given their due where relevant.

Chapter 3 concentrates on matters of religious cult, particularly in Phokis (and, of course, *imprimis* Delphi) and Arkadia. M. contends that changing political circumstances might be reflected—or legitimated—in cult activity, but she sees cultic communities as complex entities both reinforcing and transcending other political boundaries and interests, and sanctuaries as acting as 'focuses for a wide range of economic activities' (p. 153). The fourth chapter is addressed to the question of how the concept of place-identity was constituted. 'Culture' and 'community' are both carefully defined, with a sharp warning about the need to take theoretical account of the modern observer's own culture-bound standpoint. Here Akhaia, M.'s special subject, is featured most prominently, but her informative pages on the Thessalian Penestai (pp. 190–2) should not go unmentioned. Lastly, in a both summarizing and prospective fifth chapter she moves 'Beyond the Polis'.

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The bibliography, though as noted error-strewn, is as complete as it could well be. Room might have been found for Jeremy McInerney's useful article on 'Ethnic Identity and *Altertumswissenschaft*' in David W. Tandy (ed.), *Prehistory and History. Ethnicity, Class and Political Economy* (Montréal etc., 2001), which shares M.'s view of *ethne* as sophisticated and adaptable; and since the book was finished, Mogens Hansen and his CPC collaborators have been at it again, in T. Heine Nielsen (ed.), *Once Again: Studies in the Ancient Greek* Polis (Copenhagen, 2004). At a quite different level, it may be worth mentioning Tom Gidowitz's popular presentation of recent excavations at ancient Helike (in *Antiquity*, Jan./Feb. 2004), just to show that current and future work in M.'s study regions will surely modify her picture in interesting and important ways. For, as Robin Osborne has soberingly commented of this study and of I. S. Lemos's *The Protogeometric Aegean: The Archaeology of the Late Eleventh and Tenth Centuries B.C.* (Oxford, 2002), 'necessarily a partial synthesis is no synthesis at all' (*AJA* 108 [2004], 96). Yet, as it is, *Early Greek States Beyond the Polis* is both timely and of its time.

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HESIOD'S VILLAGE

A. T. EDWARDS: *Hesiod's Ascra.* Pp. xii + 208, map, ills. Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 2004. Cased, US$45, £29.95. ISBN: 0-520-23658-0.

The book is pleasingly written and carefully arranged. Edwards has read thoroughly in recent writings about small communities, but there is no theoretical overload. Instead, he works outward from the text of Hesiod to explain the status of Ascra as a village distinct from the *polis* system. Firm arguments are presented with a becoming modesty. The Ascra of E. is seen to be an entity similar neither to the Homeric *polis* nor to Solonian Athens.

Hesiod tries to dissuade Perses from going before the rulers of Thespiae, but, E. maintains, there is no evidence that Thespian *basilēes* exercise regular authority over the village of Ascra. They have jurisdiction in disputes at Ascra only when one of the disputants has brought his complaint to them at Thespiae (p. 67). Hesiod's Ascra is autonomous and he wishes to keep it so.

Within the village each household has to take responsibility for its own survival. The autarkic *oikos* may benefit from having good neighbours, but there is no explicit social obligation upon neighbours to help each other. Eris, indeed, is an 'elemental force' in dealings between neighbours (p. 92). Hospitality may induce a sense of reciprocity, but there is, as with Perses, a limit to sharing even with kinsfolk. Status within the village is linked to success in farming and abundance of storage, but the difference between poor and prosperous is small. Ascra therefore is not likely to have had a village headman (p. 117).

E. has studied surveys in the locality of Ascra, but artifacts dating from about 700 B.C. are sparse in comparison with those from the classical and early Hellenistic periods; he is therefore cautious in inferring historical results from field-walking. There

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