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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is as yet no archaeological reason to regard Ascra in Hesiod's time as a dependency of Thespiae (p.78).

When did Thespiae take Ascra? Thespians killed inhabitants of Ascra, and survivors were given a home at Orchomenos (Aristotle Fr. 565 Rose). Relics of Hesiod were also taken to Orchomenos for reburial. E. uses the notice ('if it is genuine', p. 171) to set tentative limits to the conquest of Ascra—after Hesiod's death and not later than Aristotle. The capture may, however, have happened in the archaic period: an elegiac couplet of Philiades of Megara concerning Thespian dead in the Persian War (Steph. Byz. s.v. *Θέσπεια*) says that they lived *ὑπὸ κροτάφοις Ἑλικῶνος*. The description, I venture to suggest, is better suited to Thespian domains extending through Ascra to Mount Helikon than to the vicinity of the city of Thespiae.

In treating the annual cycle of the agricultural regimen E. has much of value to say about short-fallow cultivation of ploughland, but he is aware that the testimony of the poem may not be applicable to other parts of Greece. Short-fallow cultivation requires the frequent use of draft animals, and Hesiod's agronomy is to a great extent *ἔργα βοῶν*, though the oxen may have to be put on half-fare in off-season (*W.D.* 559–60, with E. p. 144). Hesiod has few instructions about husbandry (the ox takes precedence), but the *Theogony* (22–3) shows him shepherding on the slopes of Helikon. It may be true that the absence of descriptive references to herding in *Works and Days* 'cannot be argued away', but to say 'husbandry was not a central element of the subsistence economy' (p. 149) may be too insistent.

The prescriptions for seafaring and maritime trade prompt many questions. Creusis on the Corinthian Gulf is not easily reached from Ascra, and boat-ownership for an inhabitant of Ascra 'seems prima facie improbable' (p. 59). E. asks: 'Do we imagine that the Ascran farmer just left his boat idle on the shore in Creusis for most of the year? Or did he haul it back and forth between Ascra and the sea?' Hesiod gives answers: the boat is to be drawn up on shore with the plug out and to be propped with stones; the gear is to be placed at home (*W.D.* 624–9). When Perses is given nautical advice, he is still called childish (633), but he is no longer destitute. He has become a 'satisfactory person' (*W.D.* ed. West, p. 40). Therefore the question as to how a man facing ruin can still own a boat need not trouble us. Nor are we required to suppose that the precepts of seafaring are delivered at Ascra. There is strong textual evidence for *τῇδε* in l. 635; this means not 'here' (at Ascra) or 'hither' (to Ascra), but 'through here'. The scene, then, may well be on the coast facing Euboia. Hesiod's father, having failed in trade, passed this way when he sailed to the Boeotian coast from Kyme before he went on overland to Ascra. It is not clear that he immigrated to Ascra (E. p. 52); he may have returned thither, as Wade-Gery supposed (*Essays in Greek History*, p. 5). *νάσσατο* in l. 639 could mean 'dwelt' rather than 'settled'.

The book confers many blessings. There are, for example, fine discussions of the poet's attitude to *kerdos*. The status and function of *dmōes* is diligently examined. The prime moral purpose of Hesiod is emphasized. There are few blemishes. Computer-induced errors mar transcribed Greek words in the index. Amphitryon, not Herakles, is to burn villages in *Aspis* 18 (p. 166). Mycenae, though small, was a *polis*, not a 'village' (p. 167; see Diodorus 11.65.3).

Much thought has lately been directed to the origins of the *polis*. This meritorious book now compels thinking also about the self-sufficient *oikos* within the early Hellenic *kōmē*. Aristotle showed how to begin (*Politics* 1.2).

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