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Cover illustration from Mattia D'Acri & Fredrik Tobin-Dodd in this volume, pp. 105 and 108, figs 10–11 and 17. Photographs by Jonas Tobin.

Neopalatial focus, which marks a trend identified at several other peak sanctuaries.

The wider island of Pelops is a substantial contribution to ceramic studies in the Aegean, highlighting the central role pottery played in the lives of prehistoric people and how fundamental it still is to the discipline. For the ceramic enthusiast, an index allowing for targeted reading would have been a welcome addition and the lack of a contribution concerning the Dodecanese is also a missed opportunity, given Mee's association with the island of Rhodes through his doctoral work. The initial chapter detailing his life ('Professor Christopher Mee [1950–2013]'), however, serves as a poignant and a touching tribute to a remarkable scholar and human being, a sentiment echoed through the combined effort of the contributors to this volume.

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J. Neils & S.M. Dunn, eds, *Hippos. The horse in ancient Athens.*

ΙΠΠΟΣ. Το άλογο στην αρχαία Αθήνα, Athens: American School of Classical Studies at Athens 2022, 288 pp.
ISBN: 978-960-99945-6-9.

<https://doi.org/10.30549/opathrom-17-15>

This handsome bilingual (English and Greek) volume was produced to accompany and document the ambitious exhibition on the horse in ancient Athens organized by the American School of Classical Studies at Athens (ASCSA) in early 2022. The exhibition may be seen on the still functioning site <https://hippos.gr>, and a series of eight lectures held in conjunction with the exhibition is available on the ASCSA YouTube channel. Outside of art history, exhibition volumes are only seldom of much use to the researcher, although once in a while a gem comes along. I still think fondly of the rewarding volume *An obsession with fortune. Tyche in Greek and Roman art* (ed. S.B. Matheson, 1994), based on an art exhibition at the Yale Gallery. Similarly, by drawing together various aspects on the subject of horses in ancient Athens and offering brief bibliographies at the close of each section, the present book can be of use to both researchers and teachers in classics or related fields.

After a brief introduction, we find five thematic parts, each with a varying number of subsections, each bar one with its own introduction. All these introductions are uncredited but may be assumed to be the work of the editors, who also sup-

ply several of the separate articles: Jenifer Neils, at the time Director of the ASCSA, wrote eight of the pieces, Shannon Dunn, a Ph.D. student at Bryn Mawr, wrote two. Most of the other contributors are also Ph.D. candidates, while some are established researchers and teachers, mostly though not all in archaeology. These are: Emmanuel Aprilakis, Will Austen, Jeffrey Banks, Amanda Bell, Anna Belza, John Mck. Camp, Stella Chrysoulaki, Flint Dibble, Paul G. Johnston, Kevin S. Lee, Rebecca Levitan, Luke Madson, Anne McCabe, Mara McNiff, Alessandra Migliara, Joe Miller, Sarah M. Norvell, Olga Palagia, Ioannis Pappas, Rush Rehm, Rebecca A. Salem, Alan Shapiro, Tyler Jo Smith, Peter Thompson and Elena Walter-Karydi. Carol Mattusch is the sole contributor without a university position: she is an equestrian herself and writes essays on horses (here the one on Xenophon). The individual pieces are short, usually 2–3 (A4) pages, although they take up double the space, since each piece is also given in modern Greek (translations by Maria Michalarou and Ioanna Damanaki).

The volume is richly illustrated with photographs; sometimes these are duplicated in the Greek sections, sometimes different ones are included there. The authors are competent within their fields; the volume as a whole seeks to present the work of the ASCSA in archaeology, art history, science and classics. Many of the titles of the individual pieces are framed as questions, sometimes ones that I have asked myself, more usually ones that would never have occurred to me without prompting.

The first and briefest part deals with 'Horse skeletons' in three sections: 'Where did Greek horses come from?' (possibly the Russian steppes), and then two sections specifically about the Phaleron horse skeletons (these could have been better cross-referenced with the later treatment about horse sacrifices): 'About horses at the Phaleron Delta' and 'What does science tell us about the Phaleron horses?' I did not know much about these finds previously, so this section was enlightening to me.

Part 2 is entitled 'Hippotrophia' (horse-breeding) and covers eleven interesting sections: 'What is the first horse in Athenian art?', 'Why do horses serve as handles on Geometric pyxides?', 'What was the meaning of horse-head amphoras?', 'Who was the first Greek to write a book about horses?', 'What does Xenophon tell us about horses?', 'Tack, or what you need to ride a horse', 'How were the Athenian youth involved in hippic culture?', 'What were common horse names?', 'What humans had names with Hippo-/ippos in them and what does this mean?', 'Why do early Attic coins have equine imagery?' and 'A warrior's departure'. The final section deals with a particularly beautiful amphora attributed to the Painter of Munich (from Vulci, c. 530 BC, Karlsruhe, Badisches Landesmuseum inv. 61/89). Parts 2–5 are more or less of this structure: very particular questions in archaeology, history or literature, often ending with a focused piece or pieces more related to art history.

Part 3 deals with horse-racing, including the unusual apobates race in which the charioteer jumps off and runs the last part to the finish-line: 'What constitutes an ancient chariot and how was it used?', 'Who were the Athenian victors in competitive horse racing?', 'Some unusual hippic events at the Panathenaia', 'What was the apobates race?', 'After the race: An historic chariot' and 'A victorious horse'.

Both parts 4 ('War horse') and 5 ('Religion') have ten subsections each (including introductions). Part 4 deals particularly with military matters and especially the Athenian cavalry as we know it from archaeological and historiographical sources. (By the way, the modern Greek word for horse—άλογο—arose from the military usage distinguishing human soldiers from irrational beasts in the armed forces.) I especially appreciated the treatment of the cavalry inspection (*dokimasia*) and squires—the latter not least for the reproductions of a splendid lekythos from a grave in Eretria. Topics covered are: 'Horses and Athenian archaeology', 'What do Attic cavalry inscriptions tell us?', 'What do we know about Athenian archers on horseback?', 'Why do you Athenian horsemen wear Thracian dress?', 'What was the role of the squire?', 'The cavalry inspection', 'Cavalry battles beyond Dexileos', 'A cavalryman as hero' and 'Bronze equestrian statues and the Medici–Riccardi horse head'.

Part 5 offers short discussions of Athena Hippia and Poseidon Hippios, the Dioscuri and Hippothoon, but also of narrower questions such as the possible appearance of horses in Athenian theater, horseheads featured on hero reliefs and the multitude of horses decorating the Parthenon. The headings are: 'Who was Athena Hippia?', 'Who was Poseidon Hippios?', 'Who was Hippothoon?', 'What was the role of the Dioscuri in Athens?', 'Did horses perform in Athenian theater?' (yes, apparently), 'Why are horse heads featured on hero reliefs?', 'Were horses sacrificed in ancient Greece?' (answer: rarely), 'Why do so many horses decorate the Parthenon?' and 'Monkey business'. This last deals with a very particular object: a 6th-century BC black-figure lekanis showing an ape riding a horse.

On the whole this is a very satisfying volume, with beautiful reproductions of the objects shown at the exhibition. Perhaps, the introduction could have provided a better summary and overview of the contents, pointing out the major differences between ancient horsemanship and that which developed from the Middle Ages on (i.e., there were no stirrups, saddles, horseshoes or even proper agricultural yokes in antiquity making for a great difference in the usefulness of horses in combat and daily life). There is no index, but a one-page glossary and a general bibliography are included at the end. The focus, of course, is entirely on Athens, so the reader knows from the start that there will be no general discussions of (for example) the cavalry throughout Greece. I was somewhat surprised that there is no reference (unless I missed it) to perhaps

the most famous statue of a horse and rider at the National Museum of Archaeology in Athens: the Jockey of Artemision. This may be due to the Athenian focus, although there is a section on the Medici–Riccardi horse head of unknown provenience but preserved in Florence. (Its photograph adorns the cover of the exhibition book *A cavallo del tempo. L'arte di cavalcare dall'antichità al medioevo*, Florence 2018).

But these are merely the kind of quibbles a reviewer is expected to make. After all, who would not love a book about horses in ancient Greece? As Xenophon writes in *On horsemanship* (*Περὶ ἱππιας* 11.9): "a prancing horse is a thing so graceful, terrible and astonishing that it rivets the gaze of all beholders, young and old alike." This is a splendid combination of lovely reproductions of ancient works depicting these captivating creatures with clearly written scholarly explanations of a wide variety of ancient hippic matters. What is there not to like? The editors, particularly Jenifer Neils, are to be commended for a fine volume, useful both to the general public and to teachers and researchers in the field.

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R. Rönnlund, *The cities of the plain. Urbanism in ancient western Thessaly*, Oxford: Oxbow Books 2023, 180 pp.
ISBN 9781789259926.

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Identifying conditions for the development of urbanism in ancient Greece continues to captivate historians and archaeologists alike. Strides have been made over the years in historical and archaeological scholarship: while Thomas D. Boyd and Michael H. Jameson (*Hesperia* 50:4, 1981, 327–342) identified the "restless energy of Greek civilization" as one of the forces behind the "constant founding of new communities and the reorganization of old ones", later perspectives have emphasized factors such as significant locations, population expansion, environmental circumstances, food availability, geographies, colonization and resource control to explain the evolution of communities, and the corresponding architectural landscapes as manifestations of authority and cultural identity. Many of these discussions focused on establishing a linear narrative, seeking to recognize the emergence of Greek communities in the early 1st millennium BC and charting their development into urbanized Greek regions. However, interpreting the evolution of *poleis* as directly reflecting the emergence of urbanism in the form of centralized built en-