

# Das Heiligtum der Artemis Hemera in Lousoi: Kleinfunde aus den Grabungen 1986–2000

By Veronika Mitsopoulos-Leon (Sonderschriften 47). Pp. 224, figs. 4, pl. 53. Österreichisches Archäologisches Institut, Vienna 2012. €89. ISBN 978-3-900305-61-1 (cloth).

Reviewed by Joannis Mylonopoulos

The volume under review is the second monograph dedicated to the Sanctuary of Artemis Hemera in Arcadia, following a study of the Hellenistic cups with relief decoration published in 2008 (C. Rogl, *Die hellenistischen Reliefbecher aus Lousoi: Material aus den Grabungen im Bereich Phournoi 1983–1994*. *Ergänzungshefte zu den Jahresheften des Österreichischen Archäologischen* 10 [Vienna 2012]). It focuses on the small finds from the excavations conducted at the site by the Austrian Archaeological Institute between 1986 and 2000. The author structures her study in 14 unequally lengthy chapters. Bibliographical references (11–28) and numerous black-and-white plates frame the analytical parts of the volume. While the surprisingly brief chapters 1–4 discuss more general aspects, such as the presence of the sanctuary in ancient literary and epigraphic sources, the topography of the sanctuary and its possible associations with the surrounding cities and the history of the excavations, chapters 5–11, represent the main part of the study and are entirely dedicated to the analysis of the small finds. Chapters 12–14 are summaries in German, English, and modern Greek.

The book opens with a very brief overview of the sanctuary's topography and the history of its exploration since 1898. Lousoi and the Sanctuary of Artemis Hemera are referenced in the works of several Greek authors, such as Kallimachos, Bakchylides, Phylarchos, Polybios, and Pausanias (Pausanias calls the deity Artemis Hemerasia). Inscriptions attest to the existence of games under the name Hemerasia between the third century B.C.E. and the first century C.E.; they included footraces and equestrian competitions. Although the author admits that the exact nature of the relationship between the sanctuary and the city of Lousoi is still a matter of debate, she nevertheless suggests that at least from the fifth century B.C.E. onward the cult site belonged to Lousoi, which could have been a city already in the sixth century.

The majority of the small finds originated in the areas around the so-called East Building and the Hellenistic temple on the upper terrace. According to the first excavators of the site, Wolfgang Reichel and Adolf Wilhelm, bronze artifacts were unearthed near the so-called Bouleuterion and the so-called Propylon on the lower terrace. The author suggests, however, that these finds originally came from the upper terrace as well (38). The small finds constitute a conglomeration of locally produced products, such as the Hellenistic pottery, and of imported objects, such as Lakonian bronzes. The author attempts with caution to identify the origin of outside visitors to the sanctuary on the basis of the imported small finds. In my view, in default of a dedicatory inscription, it is methodologically impossible to establish whether an object was imported and then purchased by a local, or taken to the site by a foreign visitor, or brought back by a local after a journey.

The author divides the material into three categories: (1) objects made primarily of bronze (here she discusses also objects made of silver or electrum, iron, lead, bone or ivory, marble, gold, carnelian, and amber); (2) terracotta figurines, masks, and protomes; and (3) two fragments of marble statues, which, based on their format, cannot be considered "small finds." It is not quite clear why the author decided to include the statue fragments in the volume.

It seems that most of the bronze votive offerings date from the eighth to the sixth centuries B.C.E. They become rather rare in the fifth and fourth centuries. Ten small bronze caskets, two of which were dedicated by men, belong to the Hellenistic period. There is no evidence for the dedication of weapons and mirrors. Among the few bronze figurines, a small scarab from the mid eighth century is of particular interest, since all other examples with known provenance have been found in Olympia. Two open hands represent the most significant examples of dedications made of bronze

sheet. The vast majority of bronze objects is, however, jewelry: mainly pins, fibulas, amulets, earrings, rings and signet rings, armlets, and beads. Among the objects made of other materials included in this category, a small triangular sheet of gold, which could have belonged to a Hellenistic wreath, fragments of marble pyxides, and the figure of a griffin made of lead are worthy of mention. The latter piece has a twin in the archaeological collection of the museum in Karlsruhe, which has been attributed to a Lakonian workshop by Sinn ("Ein Fundkomplex aus dem Artemis-Heiligtum von Lusoï im Badischen Landesmuseum," *Jahrbuch der Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen in Baden-Württemberg* 17 [1980] 31 n. 30, fig. 8), despite an absence of comparable objects from Lakonia. Mitsopoulos-Leon is probably right in suggesting that the two pieces were produced with the same mold.

Together with the objects discovered in the older excavations, about 450 terracotta figurines have so far been unearthed at Lusoï. There exist both handmade and moldmade examples. It should come as no surprise that most of them depict female figures, although there are some animal figurines and one or two male figures. While most terracottas can be dated to the Geometric and Archaic periods, there are at least 70 Classical and Late Classical examples. Several terracotta objects are either Corinthian imports or imitate Corinthian prototypes, but the author argues convincingly that most were produced locally. The author associates the fragments of five standing naked female figures with rituals (*rites de passage*) that took place in the sanctuary. The female protomes date to the sixth and fifth centuries. Eight fragments that originally belonged to under-life-sized female and male statues are of particular interest. The author hypothesizes that at least two fragments (nos. 529, 531) belonged to an archaic standing male figure that reached 50–60 cm in height and was probably created in a local workshop.

The two small fragments of marble statues (part of a garment and part of a left foot) cannot be dated securely. According to the author, the fragment of a left foot could have been part of a statue of Artemis.

In the catalogue (ch. 10), Mitsopoulos-Leon discusses 589 artifacts. Each entry offers a brief description of the artifact and informs the reader about its findspot (if known), size, possible parallels (if such exist), and relevant bibliography. It is rather unfortunate that the author decided not to include dates in the catalogue. In an appendix, the author provides information about the previous excavations at the site, including some of the "non-official" ones, objects from Lusoï kept in various museums around the world, and the inscriptions found in 1901. Two inventories arranged by material and votive type list the findspots of offerings from both the old and the new Austrian excavations. There are no indices. Although the plates occasionally include photographs that are far too small, their quality is excellent. Oddly enough, references to the plates are made only in the catalogue.

The volume's main contribution is the significant advancement of our knowledge of an important Peloponnesian sanctuary. Its strengths lie in the clear presentation of a variety of materials, meticulous photographic documentation, and the placement of the material within a network of trade relationships. From a religious perspective, the analyses of the votive offerings tend, however, to be at times simplistic. That said, they do open the way for a better understanding of the sanctuary as a cult site and its place within the religious fabric of the Peloponnese.

Joannis Mylonopoulos  
Department of Art History and Archaeology  
Columbia University  
New York, New York 10027  
jm3193@columbia.edu