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BOOK REVIEW

Mensch und Umwelt im Spiegel der Zeit: Aspekte Geoarchaeologischer Forschungen im östlichen Mittelmeergebiet

By Torsten Mattern and Andreas Vött (Philippika: Marburger Altertumskundliche Abhandlungen 1). Pp. 197, figs. 19, tables 30, plan 1, maps 5. Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden 2009. €48. ISBN 978-3-447-05877-3 (paper).

Reviewed by [Eberhard Zangger](#)

Thanks primarily to the ceaseless efforts of Helmut Brückner at the University of Marburg, Germany, now has a master of science program in geoarchaeology. Two years ago, when this course was introduced, classical archaeologist Torsten Mattern, then at the University of Marburg, and his former colleague, geographer Andreas Vött, invited a number of German researchers involved in geoarchaeological investigations in the eastern Mediterranean to submit nine articles to this volume. As a result, we now have a fine panorama of projects, led by German researchers, that were conducted to illuminate the historic interrelations between humans and the environment. Naturally, such a multiauthor volume cannot even attempt to offer a complete overview; for instance, the many interdisciplinary initiatives taken under the auspices of the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut (DAI) are only mentioned in passing. However, in 2007, the DAI and the University of Marburg agreed to collaborate on future geo-archaeological research. Fully aware that they were addressing a multidisciplinary audience, all the authors chose to write lucidly and avoid unnecessary jargon. Three of the papers are in English, and the others are in German.

One quarter of the entire volume is taken up with Lohmann's tour de force on the sources, methods, and aims of settlement archaeology. Lohmann subsumes spatially distributed monuments and artifacts under the term "settlement archaeology" and separately discusses settlements, cemeteries, agriculture (including terraces), hydraulic engineering, roads, mining, and industry. He considers the physical scientific aspects of the interrelation between humans and the environment to be geoarchaeology in the stricter sense. Numerous important publications, even some that have appeared in more unusual places, are named here. Completeness is impossible to achieve in such a pursuit, so individual specialists may want to see more emphasis on certain topics. From this reviewer's perspective, junior geoarchaeologists may want to look more closely at hydraulic engineering and the synthesis of intensive surveys provided, for instance, by Alcock. Also, while Lohmann's compilation of the relevant literature is fairly complete for the time between Vita-Finzi's *The Mediterranean Valleys* in 1969 (London) and the publication of *Mensch und Landschaft in der Antike*, edited by Sonnabend in 1999 (Stuttgart), few publications are mentioned that have appeared since then, and he quotes a conference from 2000 "to reflect the latest research in this area" (43) (L. Lazzarini, *Interdisciplinary Studies on Ancient Stone: Proceedings of the Sixth International Conference of the "Association for the Study of Marble and Other Stones in Antiquity," Venice, June 15–18, 2000* [Padua 2002]). Nevertheless, students who study the literature mentioned in this paper will be well prepared for field projects in the eastern Mediterranean. In addition to being acquainted with the major survey projects of the past 30 years, they should be well versed in the discussion surrounding extensive vs. intensive surveys, including the limits and possibilities of each, and be informed about the debate on the definition of "site." Only in the last few pages does Lohmann briefly discuss his own work in southwest Attica (1981–1989), Miletus (1990–1999), and Mycale (since 2001). This substantial paper puts the emphasis on reviewing and is a valuable contribution as such.

Palynologist Jahns reports on the third pollen core from Greece (after those from Lake Lerna and Osmanaga Lagoon) with a continuous vegetation record, which stretches in this case over the past 10,000 years. This core was taken from Lake Voulkaria, near ancient Palairos in western Greece. Jahns' work on this data previously appeared in the journal *Vegetation History and Archaeobotany* ("The Holocene History of Vegetation and Settlement at the Coastal Site of Lake Voulkaria in Acarnania, Western Greece" [14 (2005) 55–66]). But it was wisely included here to demonstrate in how much detail the historic interrelations between people and the environment can be reconstructed when sediments with high preservation potential—and an excellent palynologist—are at hand. Jahns interprets a rise in evergreen oaks after 3500 B.C.E. as a clear sign of intensified human impact. She also finds—and this is a first—a regeneration of deciduous oak forests during the later