interest in theory and a taste for the adventurous, the Cambridge Companion will provide with good quality, and food for further thought.

Radboud University Nijmegen (NL) v.hunink@let.ru.nl


No visitor of the current archaeological record at Sardis will notice substantial buildings from the Achaemenid era, evidencing two hundred years of Persian presence in this city. In a well-balanced review of (part of) the available archaeological and literary material, however, Dusinberre (henceforth D.) argues that those traces are manifestly present and form compelling proof for the importance of this site as a Persian regional capital. She makes, moreover, a case that Sardis was the home of a polyethnic blend, consisting of Iranian, Greek, and local Lydian traditions, simultaneously drawing on and legitimizing Achaemenid imperial ideology. D. does so in a comprehensive, amply illustrated, survey, consisting of nine chapters and five appendixes.

In the first chapter, “Sardis in the Achaemenid Empire” (pp. 1-30), D. introduces the reader to the Achaemenid Empire, stressing its multicultural identity as well as the problems and solutions involved with this situation. D. acknowledges that the picture regarding Sparda (the Achaemenid name of both the city of Sardis and the satrapy of which it was the capital) is still incomplete, since, until now, only a minor part of Achaemenid Sardis has been excavated: the picture may, therefore, still alter. The chapter ends with a concise preview of the remaining chapters of the book, a useful tool for hasty readers.

Chapter 2, “Textual Sources and the Effects of Empire” (pp. 31-45), deals with the written evidence. Greek material is enhanced with Persian and other Near Eastern documents, including several texts from Persepolis. So far, no Achaemenid archive has been found at Sardis. Also this chapter is, more or less, of introductory nature, showing Sardis’ importance as a stronghold at the western border of the empire, protecting it from frequent attacks and uprisings.

Chapter 3, “The Urban Structure of Achaemenid Sardis: Monuments and Meaning” (pp. 46-77), examines the social implications of the city’s layout and architecture. During the Achaemenid period the fortifications of the city were renewed. On the one hand these fortifications stressed the importance the Achaemenids attached to the city (offering shelter to its inhabitants and protection to the administration), on the other
they served as divides to segregate different social classes and offering different levels of protection to different groups. The presence of specifically Persian influences is suggested by the construction of formal gardens, the *paradeisoi* (however only attested in literary sources and not yet in the archaeological record); the local population, however, appears to have continued its own building traditions. As for illustrations, this chapter lacks an elementary map, clearly showing the urban features during the Persian period. Neither the master urban plan, fig. 4, p. 12, nor the sector plans, e.g. fig. 9, p. 50; fig. 13, p. 54; fig. 14, p. 55; or fig. 15, p. 56, are in this respect anything but sufficient. As it is, the limited actual extent of excavated remains from the Achaemenid era is cleverly camouflaged.

Chapter 4, “The Urban Structure of Achaemenid Sardis: Sculpture and Society” (pp. 78-112), should be read in combination with appendix 1, “Sculpture” (pp. 218-27). The size of the appendix betrays the problem D. encountered with this topic as well, i.e. a rather limited amount of material. Moreover, most objects were not found in their original context but as part of other structures. This circumstance should have made D. more cautious in drawing conclusions, e.g. on the custom of depicting a reclining banquet as part of the mortuary treatment as “apparently a phenomenon of the Achaemenid period” (p. 95): D. tends to neglect with such conclusions the same strong and long-present local traditions which she also describes.

The fifth chapter, “Inscriptions: Sardians in Their Own Words” (pp. 113-27), is combined with appendix 2, “Datable Inscriptions” (pp. 228-38). The appendix provides the reader with a number of, not exclusively Sardian, datable inscriptions from the pre-Achaemenid period until the Hellenistic period, translated into English, and originally written in Greek, Aramaic, but predominantly in Lydian. Essentially, the problem with most inscriptions is, again, that they largely have been found out of their original context. As far as D.’s comments are based upon the translation of the Greek inscriptions I can follow her conclusions. As for the amount of inscriptions in Lydian (all taken from R. Gusmani, *Lydisches Wörterbuch: Mit grammatischer Skizze und Inschriften- sammlung* (Heidelberg 1964)) and D.’s conclusion on “... the ability of the Achaemenid regime to prosper while allowing local customs to continue” (p. 126) I will have to believe her, since I am not familiar with Lydian. In combination with D.’s assertion regarding their importance it is striking to notice that the Lydian texts appear to offer little to go on, as they mostly are of limited to very limited length. A minor anomaly is, on p. 118 line 3, the description of no. 37 as a votive tablet (be it with a question mark): the appendix refers to this number as a potsherd.