DALSOGLIO (S.) **The Amphorae of the Kerameikos Cemetery at Athens from the Submycenaean to the Protogeometric Period**. Oxford: BAR Publishing, 2020. Pp. 219, illus., tables. £64. 9781407315676.
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This publication focuses on the amphora, a single vase shape in the Athenian ceramic repertory, during the Submycenaean and Protogeometric periods. These two phases incorporate the critical period of upheaval, migration and resettlement that attended the transition from the Bronze to the Iron Age. In Athens it was a non-literate period, with minimal traces of settlement, no formal architecture, elemental minor arts and traditions that are rarely given much credence. Modest burials equipped with pottery and a few weapons are the main evidence for the cultural level of the era.

This age has been considered one of the least salutary Athenian timespans but is now getting more attention as earlier 20th-century publications become outdated and new techniques of analysis are brought into play. Simona Delsaglio's monograph joins the increasing number of publications furnishing new data and perspectives: Florian Ruppenstein's extended publication of the Kerameikos Submycenaean burials (*Kerameikos* 18, 2007), Evelyn L. Smithson and John K. Papadopoulos' early Agora burials (*Agora* 36, 2017), Eirini M. Dimitriadou's monumental study of Athenian archaeology, *Early Athens: Settlements and Cemeteries in the Submycenaean, Geometric, and Archaic Periods* (Los Angeles 2019) and the broader sweep of Alex R. Knodell's *Societies in Transition in Early Greece: An Archaeological History* (Oakland 2021), which cites Protogeometric Athens as the most considerable area of settlement in the entire Hellenic region. These publications help define a more significant Athens in this nascent phase of Greek civilization. If there is any substance in the surviving traditions, much was happening at this time, including the replacement of a failing Theseid monarchy by the more proactive Melantho-Codrids and an Athenian-inspired migration to Ionia.

Delsaglio's contribution is concerned with the Kerameikos, the prime prehistoric burial ground of Athens. The early publications of this site include a wealth of valuable information for the period, but they are couched in a format that is not easily assimilated. They are a laborious read even for the specialist, with dense prose punctuated by too few paragraphs and subheadings. Delsaglio's new publication complements these earlier studies with more contemporary analysis presented in a well-organized format that caters to the expectations of the modern scholar. Greatly appreciated are her extensive visuals and charts, many in colour, which occupy one third of the 219 pages of this lavish publication. For the first time there are numerous high-quality section drawings of the Kerameikos amphorae. The evolution of the amphora is detailed in its four basic types, based on the handle attachment, belly, neck, rim and shoulder. Especially welcome for cultural assessment are the plates which depict the amphorae together with their related burial contexts in a single illustration. To focus on the cultural setting and funerary rituals Delsaglio has also assembled photographic documentation of the layout of some of the most critical grave contexts. She covers the various sub-cemeteries, tomb construction, burial mode, inhumation or cremation, skeletal material, questions of gender and ceramic analysis. Most helpful are summaries of scholarly debate in several areas of controversy, for instance the 'Submycenaean Question' and chronology, which is significant not only for Athens but also the various regions of Mainland Greece that are dependent on the Kerameikos sequence.

One might query a whole volume devoted to a single prehistoric vase shape, a criticism that was lodged against my own monograph on a single shape, the prehistoric pyxis (*Kerameikos* 13, 1988). Such typological studies have proven a useful entrée into an era devoid of literacy. The amphora and the krater in their various roles are the foremost shapes in the Athenian prehistoric repertory, used in both settlement and burial ground.

In grave cult the amphora may have been used following ritual cremation, possibly as a holder for dousing the embers or ritual libation. It was singled out as a carrier of rare figural ornamentation. Both amphora and krater shapes and their decorative systems descend from Bronze Age antecedents, supporting that in Athens there was no sharp break between the two eras.

Before the termination of the Protogeometric period, these two prime vessels, krater and amphora, were erected on elite burials as memorials, the amphora for female burial, the krater for male. There are scant remains of amphorae and kraters beyond funerary contexts but signs of wear on those found in burials support active use in the missing settlements. There they likely served in elite commensal activities as containers for water, wine and other liquids. Traditional shapes, they carried forward into the Iron Age and beyond. They were now refined vessels marking the increasing status of the Athenian elite as they sidelined the rule of kings. Their sidewalls became the prime canvas for the evolving Greek aesthetic. The sequence of their evolution was continuous. The unremarkable banded amphora of the Submycenaean era eventually culminated in the prime Geometric masterwork of the eighth century BC, the Dipylon Amphora ANM 804, adorned with some of the earliest panoramic Greek figural art.

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DEWALD (C.) and MUNSON (R.V.) **Herodotus: *Histories* Book I** (Cambridge Greek and Latin Classics). Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2022. Pp. xix + 536, maps, plan. £99.99. 9780521871730.
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Book 1 of Herodotus' *Histories* covers a wide array of topics, including the rise of the Lydian empire, the reign of Croesus, Croesus' subsequent defeat by Cyrus of Persia, the rise of the Persian empire, Persia's conquest of the Ionian Greek city-states, Assyria and Babylon and finally the death of Cyrus the Great at the hands of Tomyris, Queen of the Massagetae. Along the way there are lengthy digressions on Athenian and Spartan history, the customs of the Lydians, Persians, Babylonians and Massagetae, and a variety of intriguing excursuses, whose relevance to the main thread of discourse is not always clear. Carolyn Dewald and Rosaria Vignolo Munson do a remarkable job of making sense of this unwieldy and confusing subject matter, beginning with their Preface, in which they explain that Book 1 'introduces both the world in which the Persian imperial war machine began to operate and then expanded, and also H's own procedures in undertaking the ambitious task he has set himself' (ix). Dewald and Munson continue to clarify and contextualize the varied aspects of Herodotus' *Histories* throughout their commentary, making it both pleasurable and edifying to read.

Because Book 1 introduces both Herodotus' chief subject (the reasons why the Persians wanted to conquer the Greeks and the reasons why they failed, 13) and his historiographical methods, Dewald and Munson's Introduction is more comprehensive than others in this series, including valuable sections on Herodotus' life, his historiography and ethnographies on all the major nationalities discussed in Book 1, as well as sections on Herodotus' dialect and the text and critical apparatus.

Dewald and Munson's discussion of Herodotus' life is thorough and judicious, guiding the reader through the complexities of the biographical tradition and Herodotus' own self-referential statements. They present the fraught topic of the publication date of