



BOOK REVIEW

EXECUTION BY STYRAX IN ANCIENT THASOS

Anagnostis P. Agelarakis, Archaeopress Publishing Ltd, Summertown Pavilion, Summertown, www.archaeopress.com, 2019. ISBN 978-1-78969-213-6 (e-Pdf).

Execution by StyraX in Ancient Thasos records the outcome of the excavation at the extensive necropolis of ancient Thasos. The author, Anagnostis P. Agelarakis, is a professor of Anthropological Archaeology and Physical Anthropology at Adelphi University and has worked at archaeological sites throughout the world.

Archaeo-anthropological studies can readily contribute to encompass major questions about past cultural practices, such as diet (Hill, Price, & Rowan, 2016), treatment of the dead (Croucher, 2012), and the prevalence and severity of violence (Garfinkel, 2001). Agelarakis' book, which expounds the findings of the archaeological excavations at Myroni site, provides equivalent information.

The book begins with the demographic analysis of the population, providing data on life expectancy. However, it focuses primarily on one human skeleton of particular forensic/bioarchaeological interest. It is a male individual, who displays a foramen at the sternum caused by mechanical forces. A thorough analysis, which is well described in the book, reveals that the foramen is a perforating injury caused by a sharply projecting weapon tip component, more precisely a spear. According to the indications, the Thasian was executed and Agelarakis' book provides information regarding the manner in which the execution was carried out, the possible reasons leading thereto and a comprehensive evaluation of the cause of death.

Agelarakis' book is well documented. He describes in detail the anthropological approach to the study of past populations as well as the methodology used in this research. Readers, especially historians and archaeologists, will be interested in Agelarakis' book, as he gives some insight into the population of ancient Thasos and provides valuable information about the handling and interpretation of the findings from an archaeological excavation. Execution by StyraX in Ancient Thasos may not answer all the questions regarding the death of the Thasian but advances our knowledge of this ancient population.

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References

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