PYLOS REGIONAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT, PART VII

HISTORICAL MESSENIA, GEOMETRIC THROUGH LATE ROMAN

ABSTRACT

In this article, the authors explore patterns in regional activity in Messenia, the southwest corner of the Greek Peloponnese, from the Geometric to the end of the Late Roman period (ca. eighth century B.C. to seventh century A.D.). The analysis is based on extant historical evidence, the campaigns of the Minnesota Messenia Expedition, and—above all—the results of the Pylos Regional Archaeological Project. These three data sets have been integrated, as far as possible, in order to trace long-term changes in the region and to provide a foundation for further work in this still underexplored portion of Greece’s historical landscape.

Messenia possesses a varied and fertile topography, a unique and checkered history, and a rich, if increasingly threatened, archaeological heritage. The region today is perhaps most celebrated, by scholars and tourists alike, for its Bronze Age remains: the Palace of Nestor and its Linear B archive, the tholos tombs of Peristeria and Nichoria (Fig. 1). But the centuries after the end of the Mycenaean palaces also pose interesting problems for the archaeology of Messenia.

The principal emphasis in the present study is on presenting and assessing the contributions made to the long-term history of Messenia by the work of the Pylos Regional Archaeological Project (PRAP). The goals, methodologies, personnel, and preliminary results of PRAP have been reviewed elsewhere, but two essential aspects of the project will be restated briefly here. First, the study area comprised a large zone (encompassing

1. This study was undertaken as part of the Pylos Regional Archaeological Project, and as such owes thanks to all the organizations that have supported that endeavor. Major funding for PRAP has been provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Geographic Society, and the Institute for Aegean Prehistory. For details of those institutions’ support, and the assistance received from other organizations, see Davis et al. 1997, p. 488. We also thank Rosemary Robertson for her usual excellent work on illustrations; and Jennifer Gates, Patrick Livingood, and—especially—Julie Solemeto for assistance with GIS analyses and data management. We would like to express our gratitude to Richard Catling, Stephen Hodkinson, Nino Luraghi, and Graham Shipley for sharing material unpublished when this report was written, and to the project’s codirectors for comments on the manuscript.

2. For project methodologies and results, see, especially, Davis et al. 1997; Zanger et al. 1997; Davis 1998c. See also Bennet, Davis, and Zarinebaf-Shahr 2000; Lee 2001.
ca. 250 km²) roughly centered around the Palace of Nestor, of which some 40 km² were intensively surveyed, including the Englianos ridge (the site of the Palace of Nestor), coastal areas north of the Bay of Navarino, and valleys east of the Aigaleon range (Fig. 2). Second, PRAP was designed to consider all periods of the past in their changing environmental settings. Although work on post-prehistoric sites and monuments is by no means unknown in Messenia, the investigations conducted by PRAP allow, for the first time, an analysis of a lengthy historical time span on the basis of a rigorously explored sample of the landscape.

It could be ruefully argued that the study of the historical past of Messenia in particular requires such archaeological contributions. While few parts of Greece can boast the documentary richness of detail available for Athens and Sparta, Messenia's peculiar historical trajectory leaves it especially vulnerable to misunderstanding and neglect. The most well-known "fact" about the region, of course, is its unprecedented domination by Sparta in Archaic and Classical times. External observers, such as Plato and Xenophon, tell us something of the fate of Messenia and many of its inhabitants, the famed helots of antiquity. It is difficult, however, to overstate the limitations and biases of these sources, and the complete
HISTORICAL MESSENIΑ

3. Wolf 1982. In the minds of many historians, the domination by Sparta amounted to the “loss” of Messenia’s history: “In effect, Messenia had ceased to have a history of her own before the Greeks had really begun to inquire into their own past” (Lazenby and Hope Simpson 1972, p. 81); see also Pearson 1962; cf. Alcock 1999.

4. The monumental display is best seen in the results of excavations in the Asklepieion at Messene; see, for example, Alcock 2002a, pp. 164–173, and further discussion in this article, below.

lack of independent Messenian testimony from this time period must be appreciated. Those who lived in the region have become, in the famous phrase, a “people without history.”3 After liberation in 370/69 B.C. by Epaminondas and his alliance of anti-Spartan states, the Messenians become “visible” again, in an outburst of civic foundation and monumental display—most famously at Messene, northeast of the PRAP study area—and through the crafting and promulgation of local histories.4 But even the freed Messenia, a minor player in the tangled world of Hellenistic politics, has never attracted a great deal of scholarly attention, and the same is true of Roman Messenia, part of the Roman empire along with the rest of Greece.

Figure 2. Region investigated by PRAP. Areas intensively surveyed and sites defined, 1991–1995. R. J. Robertson
What can an intensive regional analysis, such as PRAP’s, offer to the study of this unusual region? We are in the strongest position to address questions not typically posed in Messenian historical scholarship, revolving as they do around life “on the ground” and not as viewed from an external perspective. For example: What was the nature of settlement and, by inference, of social organization and community structure in the region? How did alterations in political and administrative regimes affect where and how people lived? What economic change can be detected in the region, and how can it be related to the shifting political history? What types of external contact are visible in the region’s material culture and what impact might such exchange have had upon local organization? What evidence emerges for ritual practice in this landscape? And how is Messenia like, or unlike, other parts of the Greek peninsula?

The beginnings of answers to these questions were advanced by the University of Minnesota Messenia Expedition (UMME). This multistage, multidisciplinary project published, in 1972, the results of an extensive surface exploration of a very large area, bounded to the west and south by the sea, to the east by the Taygetus Mountains, and to the north by the Alpheios valley and Triphylia—in all, an area of ca. 3,800 km² (Fig. 3).\(^5\) In later stages, the project moved on to excavation and more localized survey at the site of Nichoria and its hinterland (the Five Rivers survey). Regional data were presented and analyzed in a fashion admirable for its day.

\(^5\) McDonald and Rapp 1972.
and the project has proved highly influential in the field of classical archaeology.\textsuperscript{6} Survey directors were honest, however, about their ability to deal with the historical periods: "the focus of this study and of our earlier publications has been consistently on the earlier material; "our surface search and the general emphasis throughout this book has been concentrated on the Bronze Age."\textsuperscript{7} Moreover, UMME's extensive methods of reconnaissance left room to wonder whether the full spectrum of human activity in the region—from major settlements to small and isolated rural structures—could possibly have been observed.\textsuperscript{8}

Perceiving PRAP as both an "heir" to and as a further stage in the work begun by UMME, PRAP investigators chose to follow a more intensive field methodology, and to involve several ceramicists specializing in historical material, in order to counter these problems and to reassess UMME results. Potential benefits cut both ways, of course; compared with the wide-ranging earlier project, PRAP examined a far more restricted territory, its intensively explored 40 km\(^2\) comprising only some 1 percent of UMME's 3,800 km\(^2\) (see Fig. 3). Both investigations have something, if not the same thing, to offer, and throughout this report, as far as possible, UMME and PRAP results will be compared and integrated.

Before proceeding, we should raise two important caveats about the present study. First, it should be admitted that knowledge of historical Messenian ceramic material—as always with surface survey, our principal source of evidence—remains limited, a circumstance due in part to the relative paucity of relevant excavated sites. Exacerbating this predicament, many of our finds were in poor condition, making identification difficult despite the best efforts of project ceramicists. Pieces that could be dated no more precisely than to the "historical" phase, or that remained simply "unknown," made up, in all, nearly 30 percent of our more than 20,000 catalogued ceramic finds. The presence of large amounts of undatable, or only broadly datable, pottery is, of course, a problem familiar to all Mediterranean surveys, and not all of us believe that these problems in dating entirely invalidate the results presented below. But the issue of chronological imprecision must be borne in mind when considering the data and when employing them in further investigations.\textsuperscript{9}

Second, although PRAP shows promise of a more detailed examination of the regional landscape than has been previously possible, its specific results should not be too readily extrapolated across the entire zone we refer to today as "Messenia." It is necessary to keep in mind the particular, local characteristics of the survey territory: its location at the far western edge of the Peloponnese (Fig. 1), its distance from the dominant Hellenistic and Roman city of Messene, and its more restricted fertility

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{6} For major UMME publications, see McDonald and Rapp 1972; McDonald 1984; \textit{Nichoria} I–III. Spencer (1998) sets the project in historical context; for a recent critique, see Fotiadis 1995.
\item \textsuperscript{7} McDonald and Hope Simpson 1972, pp. 123, 143, respectively. This bias is less marked, but not entirely overcome, in the project's subsequent work; see, for example, Lukermann and Moody's interest in later historical periods (1978, pp. 82, 84).
\item \textsuperscript{8} For assessments of UMME's reconnaissance methods, see Davis et al. 1997, p. 395; Cherry 1983, p. 393. For a comparison of UMME and PRAP methodologies, see Bennet 1998.
\item \textsuperscript{9} For more critical discussion of these matters, see the Appendix, below.
\end{itemize}
TABLE 1. CHRONOLOGICAL SCHEMAS EMPLOYED BY UMME AND PRAP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UMME (McDonald and Rapp 1972)</th>
<th>PRAP (Davis 1998c)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Geometric</td>
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<td>Ca. 900–700 B.C.</td>
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<td>Archaic</td>
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<td>Classical</td>
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<td>Hellenistic</td>
<td>Ca. 323–146 B.C.</td>
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<td>Roman</td>
<td>Ca. 146 B.C.–A.D. 330</td>
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<td>Byzantine</td>
<td>Ca. A.D. 330–900</td>
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PRAP (Davis 1998c)

| Geometric                     | Ca. 900–700 B.C.  |
| Archaic                       | Ca. 700–480 B.C.  |
| Classical                     | Ca. 480–323 B.C.  |
| Hellenistic                   | Ca. 323–31 B.C.   |
| Roman                         | Ca. 31 B.C.–A.D. 700 |
| Early Roman                   | Ca. 31 B.C.–A.D. 400 |
| Late Roman                    | Ca. A.D. 400–700  |

compared with that of other Messenian zones, such as the Pamisos River valley or the Stenycilarian plain.10 If Messenia as a whole has been neglected by historians and archaeologists, the area of the survey has come in for even less remark. M. N. Valmin, one of the few to explore it, observed in 1930:

La côte ouest de la Messénie, entre l’embouchure de la Néda et Mothon, a été toujours traitée d’une façon superficielle. On a prétendu que pendant la domination spartiate elle était restée déserte, qu’elle avait même été utilisée comme pâturage et qu’elle devait offrir peu d’intérêt au point de vue archéologique et topographique.11

For J. G. Frazer, following in the footsteps of Pausanias, the western coast was "of extremely uniform and monotonous character. . . . On all this line of coast Pausanias mentions not a single place."12 The more inland areas of the PRAP study region do not receive even this level of commentary, making any possible archaeological testimony even more desirable.

The time span under study in this article is divided into two parts in the following discussion: Geometric through Classical, and Hellenistic through Late Roman (see Table 1). The first division represents the period after the end of Mycenaean palatial culture and immediately before and during the period of Spartan domination, the second the centuries that followed the region's liberation and its subsequent existence under Roman control. This bipartite structure is admittedly very crude, but it allows the complicated process of landscape change to be related to the region's shifting political and economic circumstances. Both sections of the discussion are organized in the following way. Presented first is a skeletal historical summary of Messenia and of the PRAP study area in the specified time period, designed to establish a framework for the reader and to prompt relevant questions with respect to the survey evidence. An overview of the regional picture, as sketched by UMME, is next reviewed; it should be


noted that the chronological categories employed by UMME are not a direct match for those of PRAP (for the distinctions, see Table 1). An overview of the PRAP data is then presented, highlighting artifact distributions, settlement patterns, and other significant trends; more specific details of many categories of basic information that are presented on the online PRAP site gazetteer are not repeated here. These three categories of evidence are presented in turn so that overlaps and contradictions among them can emerge, and other scholars are encouraged to take the elements provided here and evolve their own reconstructions. The article ends with a consideration of the region’s “sacred landscape” before and after liberation and with some brief remarks comparing the survey evidence for this part of Messenia to one other, very relevant region of Greece—Laconia itself.

GEOMETRIC THROUGH CLASSICAL (CA. 900–323 B.C.)

Historical Background: Messenia

The story of Spartan expansion and Messenian subjugation has been told and retold many times. “Story” is the operative word, since the exact course of the Messenian Wars of Spartan conquest, and, indeed, their very historicity, remain a clouded issue, with all specific points hotly debated. Various causes of the conflict between Sparta and Messenia were adumbrated in antiquity, from mutual accusations of impiety at the border sanctuary of Artemis Limnatis to Spartan greed for the fertile lands of “broad Messene, Messene rich for plowing, rich for planting.” Although dates vary from authority to authority, the First Messenian War is traditionally placed in the later eighth century (in archaeological terms, roughly the Late Geometric period), the Second in the first half of the seventh century (the Early Archaic period). Much later textual accounts tell of desperate conflict, occasional treachery, and great heroism, invoking places and names such as Eira, Ithome, Aristocrates, Aristomenes, and the Battle of the “Great Trench.” In terms of territorial expansion, although certainty is impossible, it seems most likely that Sparta extended control gradually, beginning perhaps with the Kalamata and Stenyclarian plains, then moving to areas further west. With annexation, the land was divided into kleroi, or land allotments, for the convenient organization and manipulation of resources and of manpower.

After Sparta’s final victory, some proportion of the region’s population is said to have fled their homeland, becoming long-term exiles who nonetheless, it is claimed, never lost their sense of Messenian identity. Those who lacked the ability, the resources, or the will to flee remained and were transformed into the famous helots of antiquity, whose labor underpinned the martialistic Spartiate way of life. Helotage existed in both Laconia and Messenia, though it followed quite different trajectories in the two regions. The Messenian helots probably worked principally as agricultural laborers, while their Laconian counterparts, dwelling in closer proximity to their masters, could serve in other, more direct fashions, such as personal

13. http://river.blg.uc.edu/prap/PRAP.html. The online gazetteer, which will be available ultimately in printed form, presents numerous categories of evidence, including site location and description, dimensions, collection strategies, intervisible sites, and an artifact summary, as well as access to online databases of finds and of photographs of the sites and their features.


servants or as military support. The precise status of helots has been bitterly debated and remains deeply obscure, but one ancient suggestion was to place them “between free men and slaves.”

This review, so far, has closely reflected the standard scholarly com-munis opinio, a belief in Messenian “wars” and helot enslavement through Spartan military conquest and annexation. This position has recently been challenged by Nino Luraghi, who argues that a critical examination of our admittedly poor sources signal fails to support any such scenario of mass enslavement of an indigenous united population. Instead, he suggests that helots were created through the less violent, and less glorious, means of their being descendants of slaves, bondsmen, and other dependent laborers. Their “imaginary conquest,” in this formulation, was a tradition invented much later and never made entirely unitary. The debate continues, and is unlikely to be assisted by our particular regional perspective. What is not challenged here, however, is the presence of a dependent population in Messenia in Archaic and Classical times, and the need to investigate their local conditions of existence.

Our textual sources, despite their thinness, do offer some observations relevant to this inquiry. If helots existed in a state of collective servitude to the Spartiate class, they also significantly outnumbered that group—which, notoriously, diminished still more in size over time—though perhaps not to the remarkable degree once envisioned. Helots, most would agree, appear to have possessed some limited rights to property—in particular, links to specific plots of land, perhaps in some cases plots that they had previously owned. They seem to have lived in some form of self-reproducing family units. They could claim the right to asylum, at least at the Sanctuary of Poseidon at Laconian Tainaron, and, under Spartan rule, they maintained certain cults and ritual observances. Finally, many would agree that helots possessed, or came to possess, some shared sense of origins and of heritage, giving rise to a common sense of Messenian identity. All these factors played a part in shaping the helot response to servitude and the ways in which they inhabited and exploited the Messenian landscape.

One particularly intriguing aspect of the helot response, quite different from that of chattel slaves, was their apparent ability to organize resistance. Episodes of Messenian rebellion, though uncertain to us in their frequency and precise nature, are reported in several ancient sources. The best attested instance of rebellion is a major revolt in the 460s B.C., when Messenians rose up, taking advantage of a devastating Laconian earthquake, and defiantly took refuge on Mount Ithome. After a siege—which, in one version, lasted for ten years—the rebel Messenians were allowed to leave, on condition they never set foot in the Peloponnesian again. Some from this wave of exiles were resettled by the Athenians at Naupactus on the Corinthian Gulf. Men from this community later returned to the Messenian homeland as part of the Athenian campaign at Pylos (425 B.C.). During the Peloponnesian War, helot unrest contributed to Spartan troubles, and they rose in rebellion—one final time—when Epaminondas, shortly after his victory at Leuctra (371 B.C.), invaded Laconia and terminated Spartan control of Messenia.

18. For two recent appraisals of helot demography, see Figueira 2003; Scheidel 2003; cf. Cartledge 1987, pp. 37–40, fig. 4.2.
19. For further discussion of helot cults and ritual observances, see “Change in the Ritual and Mortuary Landscape,” below.
20. E.g., Hodkinson 2000, pp. 113–129. For a recent reconsideration of Messenian identity, see Figueira 1999.
21. Ancient references to the fifth-century rebellion: Thuc. 1.101.2–103.3; Diod. Sic. 11.63–64; Plut. Cim. 16.4; Paus. 1.29.8, 4.24.6, 7.25.3; Ael. VH 6.7.
The effect of the “helot danger” was noted by contemporary and later observers: Thucydides (4.80.2) remarked that “most Spartan institutions have always been designed with a view to security against the Helots”; the helots were “like an enemy constantly sitting in wait for the disasters of the Spartans” (Arist. Pol. 1269a37–39). Sources refer to various Spartan tactics, initiated in response, that were intended to maintain order, to instill fear, and sharply to demarcate Spartiate from helot, including arbitrary murders and beatings, humiliation and abuse, and the wearing of distinctive clothing. It has been debated how far such acts were everyday occurrences, and it is likely that Laconian helots were far more vulnerable than those at a greater distance from Sparta. For all that, Sparta’s heavy dependence upon helot agricultural labor suggests that the need to maintain order would have been paramount; strategies of terror are not unlikely for a ruling group attempting to keep control of a large and distant subject population.

The Spartan need for helots to farm and to drudge provides, of course, the reason for their having held such a tiger by the tail. How helots met their obligations is nowhere detailed, but recent reevaluation, by Stephen Hodkinson, of the sparse available data makes a convincing case for a system of sharecropping. Sharecropping, he argues, would have divided between the two parties, cultivator and landowner, the unavoidable risks of farming in a Mediterranean climate, effecting a balance that offered “the more secure arrangement for the Spartiate-helot relationship which was characterized by long-term mutual interdependence.” This model challenges traditional thinking about the relationship between Spartiates and helots, which is usually viewed in entirely negative terms, marked on the one hand by Spartiate depersonalization and humiliation, and on the other by helot willingness to “eat [the Spartiates]—even raw.”

A further implication of this model is the probability of some degree of hierarchy in helot society, given such a system’s need for “middlemen.” Moreover, given the need for articulation and negotiation between helot and master, visions of helot life as entirely egalitarian—with everyone equally helpless—become increasingly implausible. A more nuanced picture, both of helot society and of Spartiate-helot relations, can only emerge from a broadly based understanding of how the relationship between Spartiates and helots played out on the ground, in terms of settlement patterns, community organization, and ritual behavior.

While helots must have constituted the majority of the inhabitants of Archaic and Classical Messenia, the presence of other elements should be noted. For example, periôikic communities, although much more common in Laconia, did appear further west. Periôikoi were a group within the body of Lacedaemonians, separate and not equal to the Spartiates, but at the same time distinct from the oppressed helots. In a recent, thorough review, Graham Shipley identifies, at most, five securely attested periôikic poleis in Messenia: Aithaia, Asine, Aulon, Cardamyle, and Thouria. Only one of these—Thouria—definitely lay inland (see Fig. 1). In the majority of instances, the periôikoi remained loyal to Spartan authority, although in the revolt of ca. 460 B.C., certain communities chose to join the underdog helots in rebellion.

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To round out the picture of the region's population, the communities of Asine and Methoni were supposedly the result of Spartan resettlement of refugees from the Argolid. Asine, at least in the fourth century, also held a Spartan garrison, and Xenophon (Hellen. 7.1.25) alludes to a Spartan colony at Pherae. All these settlements were coastal in orientation.27

From this very bare-bones sketch, certain problems emerge that clearly recommend archaeological examination. Although contemporary and later sources speak to the fate of Messenian exiles, they say almost nothing, apart from reporting rebellion, about those who remained in Messenia under Spartan rule. Yet moments of revolt hardly represent everything there is to understand about the organization of helot life; anthropologists such as Jean Comaroff and James Scott have warned about the dangers of concentrating only on violent moments in a people's ongoing struggle with coercion and exploitation.28 Regional archaeology can contribute further evidence about the day-to-day existence of these people: where and how they lived, what factors enabled communication, what rituals encouraged identity and solidarity. In other words, evidence from the Messenian landscape can outline the structures of life that encouraged helot accommodation and survival, and that allowed helot rebellion.

**Historical Background: The PRAP Study Area**

As has already been suggested above, if historical Messenia as a whole remains little known, the western side of the peninsula might be considered the forgotten of the forgotten. Nevertheless, a few more details can be added about the specific territory investigated by PRAP. From the Spartan perspective, this territory lay at the far end of their Messenian holdings, the modern town of Hora lying some 65 km, as the crow flies, from the modern community of Sparta. This fact of distance no doubt had consequences for this section of westernmost Messenia. For example, if we accept the historicity of the wars of conquest, absorption of this area into Spartan territory probably occurred later than that of areas to the east. There arises, moreover, the question of just how close an eye, or how harsh a hand, the Spartiates could have kept on this particular zone. Distance, not to mention the impressive barrier of the Taygetus mountain range, has often been invoked as a general point to remember when assessing the logistics and practicalities of Spartan-Messenian relations.29

Distance from Sparta certainly played a part in the most dramatic and best-documented events in this particular area: the establishment in 425 B.C. of the Athenian base at Pylos (called Koryfasion by the Laconians), the entrapment of Spartan forces on Sphacteria, and the subsequent guerrilla-style raiding from Pylos until the phourion was finally given over to the Spartans in 409/8 B.C. The arguments of the Athenian general Demosthenes in support of fortifying this particular point on the Messenian coastline had initially met with a marked lack of enthusiasm:

> The generals said that there were plenty of deserted promontories in the Peloponnese, if he wanted to occupy one and put the city to expense; but Demosthenes thought that this place had important differences when compared with any other. There was a harbour

next to it, and the Messenians had been natives of the land in the old days: they spoke a dialect similar to the Lacedaemonians', and would be able to do them a great deal of damage if they used Pylos as a base—also, they would make a reliable garrison for it.  

Demosthenes' predictions proved to be correct.

This nexus of events raises interesting questions about the complex interactions among local inhabitants, anti-Spartan forces, and the Lacedaemonians themselves. Some helots are said to have rebelled and joined the garrison in their harassing activities; others aided the trapped Spartans by bringing food to the island, at personal risk; and “those of the perioikoi who lived nearest” came to help in ejecting the intruder. Precisely where these perioikoi and these helots were coming from is uncertain. The nearest definitely attested perioikic community is Aulon, far to the north by the Neda River; the “refugee” settlement at Methoni lay ca. 15 km to the south.

Of Pylos, Thucydides remarks that “not only the place itself but also the neighboring country for a considerable distance was unoccupied (ere-mos).” It would seem that it was this supposedly undeveloped state that allowed the Athenians so easily to gain a toehold. Much has been built on this observation of Thucydides’. Indeed, the presumed “emptiness” has led scholars to suggest that the western marches of Messenia were left as a pasture and hunting reserve, or even abandoned, left devastated, after the Spartan conquest. While there may well have been a falling off in the intensity of Spartan exploitation the further distance from Laconia, more evidence is required before the PRAP study area can be securely written off as a wild preserve or an empty quarter.

After 409/8 B.C., Pylos/Koryfasion may well have remained in Spartan hands, possibly as a perioikic community, even for a short time after Messenia’s general liberation. We are told that Arcadians took the settlement, and that they gave it over to the Messenians in 365 B.C. (Diod. Sic. 15.77.4). Methoni may have remained outside Messenian control until even later—possibly until the Battle of Chaireoneia (338 B.C.), when it became part of Philip II’s territorial reward to his Messenian allies. Amid this gradual and slightly patchy relinquishing of Spartan control, the mid-fourth century must have been a time of significant social and economic upheaval for the area within the territory investigated by PRAP, as also for the rest of Messenia. An important part of this upheaval would have been the emergence of Pylos/Koryfasion as an independent polis—though not, and never again, as notorious a site as its incarnation during the Peloponnesian War.

33. Valmin 1930, pp. 22–23 (noting the prevailing view, though Valmin himself believed otherwise); Roebuck 1945, p. 151; Kiechle 1959, p. 55; Huxley 1962, p. 60. Thucydides’ grasp of the region’s topography is on other evidence rather suspect; he misjudges the length of Sphacteria by a considerable margin (Thuc. 4.8.6); see Wilson 1979, pp. 52–53.
34. On the actions of the Arcadians, see Roebuck 1941, p. 38 and n. 62; on Methoni, see Shipley 1997, pp. 242–243, 265. In general, on this period, see Lazenby and Hope Simpson 1972, pp. 89–90.
35. For guides to Koryfasion that review archaeological finds in the area, see Baltas 1987, esp. fig. 2; 1997, pp. 115–120.
It remains difficult, based on these pieces of information alone, to answer the most fundamental of questions about this area of westernmost Messenia in the Geometric through Classical periods: who, if anyone, lived in this area at this time? From among the various possible answers, most quickly able to be discarded is that of Spartiate inhabitants. Neither has perioikic settlement been securely attested within the PRAP study region, except possibly at Pylos/Koryfasion for a brief period in the decades immediately prior to Messenian liberation. The possibility that the area was inhabited by satellite populations linked to a community such as Cyparissia or Methoni (both of which may possibly have held perioikic status for part of this time span) is worth considering, but would presume the existence of extremely extensive territories. We are left, by means of a process of elimination that is admittedly less than ideal, with the likelihood that the population in the PRAP study region was of helot status. This suggestion can perhaps be taken as particularly likely for the earlier part of this time span and for the more inland parts of the region.

**Overview of UMME Patterns**

Certain areas within the UMME territory appear consistently utilized from the Geometric through Hellenistic periods, such as the Stenyclarian plain, the Pamisos valley, the Alpheios valley, and Triphylia. The special fertility of these zones may well account for this persistent use, but investigatory bias—for example, the attractive qualities of Olympia—must also be considered a possible factor affecting this observation.

Evidence for the Geometric period (ca. 900–700 B.C.) within the area of UMME investigation comes disproportionately from tombs (for the numbers and locations of the Geometric sites identified by UMME, see Figs. 4, 5). Settlement evidence is more rare: two of the Geometric loci reported by UMME within the overall area of the PRAP study appear to be habitation sites. Closer investigation, through excavation and more intensive work carried out by UMME in the Nichoria environs, likewise testified to sparse occupation; the project directors proposed that Nichoria’s position, within a “buffer zone” to Sparta, acted as a disincentive to activity in this area. Settlement on the Nichoria ridge itself was abandoned before the mid-eighth century, although the presence of Late Geometric graves indicates that the territory had not been entirely given up. The excavators suggest that the positioning of a Late Geometric pithos burial on the ridge, from which there is a fine view to both the east and south, “may reflect a conscious wish by the living to enlist the dead hero’s continued vigilance to help them ward off the incursions of the hated foe from across Taygetus.” Such symbolic use of heroic associations may have been necessary, for—one the whole—the UMME survey evidence fails to support the picture, derived from later literary sources, of a large Messenian population rising up in opposition to invasion.

The Archaic period (ca. 700–500 B.C.) produced a very clear increase in the number of discernible sites (Figs. 4, 5). In the PRAP study region, specifically, site numbers rise from two to five. In the broader area of UMME investigation, a greater proportion of settlements, as opposed to

36. The data presented in Figures 4 and 5 are derived from McDonald and Rapp 1972, pp. 264–321 (“Register A: Prehistoric Habitation Sites”; “Register B: Post-Mycenaean Habitation Sites”). Figures 4 and 5 include all sites, definite and possible, assigned by UMME to the dates indicated. In Figure 5, overlapping dots indicate that a particular site possessed more than one identifiable function.

37. UMME 1 Chora: Ano Englianos, investigated by PRAP as site B07 (Hora Palace of Nestor Lower Town); UMME 3 Koukounára: Katarachi. McDonald and Hope Simpson 1972, p. 144.


40. UMME 504 Ayios Andhrénas: Apollo Korythos; UMME 530 Ayios Flóros: Pamisos.
41. The decrease in size of settlements was suspected to have been particularly characteristic of sites in the Pamisos valley zone, in contrast to other parts of Messenia, including the “more remote areas” of Pylos and Gypos: Lazenby and Hope Simpson 1972, p. 94; McDonald and Hope Simpson 1972, pp. 144–145.
42. This calculation is based on McDonald and Rapp 1972, pp. 264–321, and uses only data for sites with a definite attestation of Archaic material.
43. For a recent discussion of the classical farmstead, see Pettigrew 2001.
44. McDonald and Hope Simpson 1972, p. 145.
45. These distinctions are based on the periods assigned to each site in Registers A and B (McDonald and Rapp 1972, pp. 264–321), corrected where possible against the later work of Lukermann and Moody (1978). The presentation of the data is, however, so telegraphic that this mapping of UMME results, particularly with regard to site function, should be seen as impressionistic rather than exact.

burial sites, is represented, and there is a shift in their distribution across the landscape. By contrast with sites of the Geometric period, 63 percent of which produced traces of earlier, prehistoric occupation, only 36 percent of the Archaic sites show such indications. Establishment of new sites in new locations, coupled with the abandonment of older locales—resulting from whatever cause—is a measure, however crude, of settlement disruption. Another new feature in the landscape is the appearance of recognizable sanctuaries.40

Archaic settlements are described by McDonald and Hope Simpson as being “rather small,” an expected result of the loss of freedom following the Second Messenian War,41 but the characterization is not entirely borne out by the data they themselves present for estimates of site size. Although such estimates must be taken with a considerable grain of salt—for they lump together all surface scatters from occupations that often span a number of periods—the mean size for sites in the UMME study area with reported Archaic occupation is approximately 3 ha (median 2 ha; N = 13).42 Such sizes would normally be interpreted as pointing toward the existence of community dwellings, often denoted as hamlets or villages, rather than isolated structures inhabited by one or two extended families. These latter sites, which might be either permanent farmsteads or seasonal shelters, are usually assessed in a size range of up to approximately 0.5 ha.43

In their synthetic discussion, UMME investigators chose to combine the Classical and Hellenistic results (ca. 500–146 B.C.). As was noted above, they were honest about their lack of confidence in dating and interpreting historical material; moreover, they seem to have believed that the “major cultural and economic changes” resulting from Messenia’s liberation would only gradually have become apparent.44 And yet, despite these disclaimers, the UMME gazetteer of sites and pocket maps do allow for some differentiation between the two periods, and on that basis, we report, below, a number of distinctions between “Classical” and “Hellenistic” UMME data.45 To a great extent, however, Messenia’s liberation from Sparta and
Figure 5. Distribution of UMME sites: Geometric, Archaic, Classical, Hellenistic. R. J. Robertson
the founding of Messene and other poleis—major disjunctions in the regional long-term history—remain masked in the UMME results.

Data from the UMME project attest a marked increase in the number of sites in the area in the Classical/Hellenistic period, with identified habitation sites increasing more than threefold over Archaic numbers. The summary picture sketched by the UMME investigators is, on the whole, cheerful: "The general impression is that, despite the known raids and military campaigns, this was a relatively settled and prosperous epoch."46 In early presentations of UMME results, the investigators appear by and large unwilling to "see" or "read" the fact of Spartan control in the landscape, an avoidance that is somewhat mitigated in the project’s later publications. The richer agricultural zones of Messenia continue to see high levels of activity, and the southwest district, in particular, presents a "striking increase" in the number of sites, a jump from six to twenty-six, an increase of over 4 to 1 (Table 2).47 In the PRAP study area, the number of sites identified by UMME more than triples from the Archaic to Classical/Hellenistic periods, increasing from five to sixteen, of which six from the latter period were intensively reinvestigated by PRAP.48

Apart from this general florescence in site numbers, three other trends can be noted in this Classical/Hellenistic patterning. First is an increasing preference for more accessible, lower or coastal locations, especially along the western seaboard; more stable political conditions and better regulated commerce are the explanations given for this phenomenon.49 The second development is a heavier utilization and occupation of the area around Mount Ithome, the site of Messene. Third, in the Hellenistic period, a slight increase in site numbers has been observed across the region at large and also in the specific PRAP study region, where the number of recognized sites expands from nine to twelve (Figs. 4, 5). Work in the hinterland of Nichoria likewise has suggested an “increased tempo” of activity in Hellenistic times (“no doubt owing to the nationalistic euphoria following the expulsion of the Spartans”), although the acknowledged difficulties in

46. McDonald and Hope Simpson 1972, p. 145.
47. McDonald and Hope Simpson 1972, p. 145. Table 2 presents the numbers reported by McDonald and Hope Simpson (1972, p. 146), which are at points discrepant from the data mined from the UMME gazetteer by the authors of this article.
48. UMME 3 Korifasion: Portes (PRAP 103); UMME 11 Tragana: Viglitsa (I06); UMME 15 Gargaliani: Kanalos (D01); UMME 400 Romano: Viglitsa (I04); UMME 403 Tragana: Tsopani Rachi (I17); UMME 406 Marathopolis: Dhialiskari (G01).
49. McDonald and Hope Simpson 1972, p. 145; see also Lazenby and Hope Simpson 1972, p. 94. While raw percentages of coastal sites do not alter all that much from the Geometric period onward (see Lukermann and Moody 1978, p. 96, figs. 7–12), McDonald and Hope Simpson argue that there is a striking new emphasis on such locations in Classical/Hellenistic times.

### Table 2. Numbers of UMME Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Subregion</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Southwest</td>
<td>South East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geometric</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archaic</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classical/Hellenistic</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HISTORICAL MESSENYA
distinguishing between Classical and Hellenistic surface sherds temper the claim. On historical grounds, all of these developments—coastal settlement, emphasis on Messene, expansion of settlement—make better sense for the period following liberation than for the one before, but more conclusive independent archaeological confirmation remains desirable.

Without directly approaching the question of where Messenian helots lived, UMME investigators leaned generally in the same direction as the majority of ancient historians who had considered this issue: the helots were dispersed, isolated from one another on their individual kleoi. This picture is based on a handful of ambiguous textual references and on the assumption that Sparta would have wished to “divide and conquer” their troublesome populations. The Five Rivers survey of the Nichoria hinterland, for example, stood firmly in this camp:

Given its fertility, the Five Rivers area was probably among those lands initially divided into helot farmsteads. Indeed, under the helot system, it was to Sparta’s advantage to keep the helot population scattered throughout the countryside, perhaps even restricting the size of helot communities to an extended family of ten or fifteen members; ideally this would inhibit the Messenian proclivity to resist and revolt against their Spartan overlords.

Despite such hypotheses, the Five Rivers survey identified few sites of the Archaic to Classical periods, and none of the size of small farmsteads that might be correlated with helot families. In the Nichoria area, sites of such size were dated, though with caution expressed about both date and function, to the Hellenistic era.

The sizes of Archaic sites reported by UMME point away from any model of profound rural dispersal. The evidence, however tentative, for larger groupings of people in the landscape continues in the Classical/Hellenistic period, if less markedly (mean site size 2.2 ha, median 1.7 ha; \( N = 54 \)). These results contrast with those of almost every other survey data set for Greece in the Archaic through Hellenistic periods, which feature the discovery of numerous small farmsteads, if to differing degrees and with differing temporal patterns. The extensive methodology and prehistoric focus of UMME, however, left open the question of whether Messenia represents a genuinely different settlement trajectory, or whether smaller sites had simply been overlooked.

51. Ancient citations include Thuc. 5.34, Strabo 8.5.4, and Livy 34.27.9; see also Lazenby and Hope Simpson 1972, p. 94; Lukermann and Moody 1978, p. 95; Coulson and Wilkie 1983, p. 337. The possibility of helot agglomeration was envisioned by Lotze (1959, p. 38). For a review of these arguments, see Harrison and Spencer 1998, pp. 159–161.
52. Lukermann and Moody 1978, p. 95. Coulson and Wilkie (1983, p. 337) state that “the meager evidence from Nichoria and its environs indicates that throughout Classical times the local population was still mainly rural, with farmsteads and small shrines scattered about the countryside.”
54. Based on McDonald and Rapp 1972, pp. 264–321, these figures employ data for sites identified as definitely occupied in the Classical period, the Hellenistic period, or both. Reported sites specifically identified with Hellenistic material, but not with Classical, tend to be smaller (mean 1.2 ha, median 1 ha; \( N = 13 \)) than those reported for the broader Classical/Hellenistic period, an indication, observed also at Nichoria, that smaller sites emerge only later in this period.
Overview of PRAP Patterns

The figures in Tables 3 and 4 suggest an increase in regional activity following the Geometric period, with relatively constant numbers of sherds definitely datable to the Archaic and to the Classical periods.\(^56\) The major disjunction in this sequence occurs between the Classical and Hellenistic periods, when definitely dated sherds within the PRAP survey area more than triple in number. The nature of that break will be discussed further below. While the area can by no means be characterized as a “deserted” landscape (as Thucydides had suggested was true in the late fifth century), material of Archaic and Classical date is relatively limited in comparison with that of later historical periods. The nature of the ceramic evidence may very well play some part in this apparent change (see the Appendix, below). Palynological evidence, at least for the latter end of this time span, certainly suggests the conducting of active cultivation.\(^57\)

The nine discrete areas intensively surveyed by PRAP include coastal or near-coastal plains and low knolls (areas I, II, III, V, VI), an upland plateau (IV), a ridge structure (VII), and inland valleys (VIII, IX) (Fig. 6). Conditions of bedrock and soil, which affect the stability of ancient surfaces and their ability to reflect distributions of artifacts of the past, vary significantly among these areas, ranging from highly degraded marl ridges to marine terraces that can still preserve Paleolithic artifacts in situ. In very general terms, the coastal transects I, II, III, and V and the inland and upland zones IV, VIII, and IX may be considered relatively stable surfaces for the historical periods, and any absence of Archaic–Classical and later material in these areas cannot automatically be attributed to geomorphological change. Area VI, at least part of which lies on Holocene alluvium, and area VII, which follows the Englianos ridge, are more problematic. The marl zones of area VII, which “have changed significantly as a result of natural landscape instability and anthropogenically accelerated erosion.”\(^58\) may well impede recognition of small, possibly historical sites, such as C01 (Tragana Alafinorema) and C02 (Tragana Aladina) (see Fig. 2), where activity on the ridge is indicated from Archaic through Hellenistic times but where few specifically diagnostic artifacts have been recovered.\(^59\)

Definitely dated Geometric material is found in eight of the nine areas (Fig. 7), in greatest, and fairly equal, amounts in areas I, VI, VII (28, 24, and 29 percent, respectively).\(^60\) The subsequent Archaic and Classical periods—the presumed centuries under Spartan control—show a more distinct “clustering” of sherd scatters, and, by inference, of human settlement and other activities. Area VI, which lies north of the headland of

56. In Tables 3 and 4, a sherd that is counted as “possibly” Archaic was identified by the project’s pottery experts as “Archaic?” or as belonging to a more indefinite chronological category (e.g., Archaic–Hellenistic). Numbers given in these tables for Early and Late Roman, however, exclude material dated “Roman.” Material assigned to overlapping periods (e.g., Archaic/Hellenistic) could belong to any period or periods within the stated time span, and while evidence so broadly assigned provides little help in certain inquiries, it has proven useful in sketching out long-term levels of activity.

57. For further discussion of the palynological evidence in relation to the PRAP study area, see “Pollen and PRAP Patterns,” below.

58. Zangger et al. 1997, p. 568; see, further, pp. 554–576 and fig. 4 (map of the bedrock geology of the study region).

59. For C02 (Tragana Aladina), see Davis et al. 1997, p. 459.

60. Figure 7 presents definitely dated material from both tract and site collections. Raw numbers have been “weighted” to account for differences in the areal extent of the nine surveyed zones.
TABLE 3. NUMBERS OF SHERDS RECOVERED IN PRAP TRACT WALKING

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Period</th>
<th>Definite</th>
<th>Possible</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Geometric</td>
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<tr>
<td>Archaic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classical</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>332</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hellenistic</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>430</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early Roman</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>71</td>
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<tr>
<td>Late Roman</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roman</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>514</td>
<td>809</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geometric/Archaic</td>
<td>48</td>
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<td>300</td>
<td>384</td>
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<td>Archaic/Hellenistic</td>
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<td>Classical/Hellenistic</td>
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<td>501</td>
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<td>Hellenistic/Roman</td>
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<td>Hellenistic/Early Roman</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>348</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roman/Byzantine</td>
<td>740</td>
<td>508</td>
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</table>

TABLE 4. NUMBERS OF SHERDS RECOVERED IN PRAP “OFF-SITE” TRACT WALKING

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<th>Period</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Classical</td>
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<td>Roman</td>
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<td>159</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geometric/Archaic</td>
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<td>49</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geometric/Classical</td>
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<td>58</td>
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<td>97</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hellenistic/Roman</td>
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<td>219</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hellenistic/Early Roman</td>
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<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman/Byzantine</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>304</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ancient Pylos, is strikingly emphasized in these two later periods, producing 55 percent of Archaic and 62 percent of Classical sherds that can be definitely dated. For the Archaic period, another “active” zone is area II. Low-level scatters of Archaic and Classical material were found in most of the other areas, but neither the coastal transect of area V nor the inland area IX produced a single sherd definitely dated to either the Archaic or Classical periods, when these areas may indeed have been “deserted.”

Of two relatively strongly represented Geometric sites, K01 (Gargaliani Ordines) in area I and B07 (Hora Palace of Nestor Lower Town) in area VII, the latter definitely and the former possibly continues in attenuated form
Figure 6. Location of the nine areas intensively surveyed by PRAP.
R. J. Robertson

into Archaic times, though both are then largely abandoned in the Classical period (Tables 5, 6; Fig. 8:a–c). Geometric through Archaic continuity is also visible in area VI at I04 (Romanou Romanou) and possibly in area II at D01 (Gargaliani Kanalos) and in area VI at I01 (Koryfasio Beylerbey). Only one site, I04 (Romanou Romanou), emerges as definitely occupied in both Archaic and Classical times; indeed, this is the only site where activity clearly spans the Geometric through Classical periods. There are only three other definite Classical sites, each of which rates as “possibly” occupied in Archaic times. All in all, Romanou emerges as the most continuously active settlement in historical times (see Fig. 9 for a breakdown of sherd material discovered at this site).

The pattern of “clustering” observed in the distribution of individual finds by area is distinct in the distribution of sites as well (see Fig. 8:b–c). Of the five definite Archaic sites, evidence is particularly strong for occupation

61. The traditional term “site” is used in the present article, in lieu of “Place of Special Interest” (POSI) found in other PRAP publications. The authors fully acknowledge the contingent and relative character of site definition (see, further, Davis et al. 1997, p. 401, n. 27) and that site definition is always a difficult, and usually a controversial, determination. In the following discussion, “definite” sites are those with three or more sherds securely datable to the period indicated; “possible” sites are those with fewer than three such sherds, with six or more sherds definitely dated to two contiguous periods (e.g., Archaic/Classical), or, in exceptional cases, with only a single sherd and no other relevant artifactual material (e.g., Classical B05 [Hora Palace of Nestor Chamber Tombs]). While such decisions inevitably impose arbitrary cutoff points, these concentrations stand out quite clearly from the surrounding level of “background noise” in comparison with overall densities and densities for particular historical periods. Moreover, additional, less precisely dated material is usually found to accompany the more diagnostic artifacts, lending indirect support to period identifications. All sites reported here were noted in tract walking as concentrations of material that stood out against background levels of surface scatter and received further attention through a variety of additional collection strategies; in addition, all are locations where past anthropogenic activity, rather than natural processes, most plausibly led to artifact deposition.

62. For a discussion of material found at Romanou in the PRAP survey, see Davis et al. 1997, pp. 462–467, figs. 23, 24, and for more detailed descriptions of the individual sites discussed below, their estimated size, and a catalogue of their ceramic and other finds, see the online site gazetteer.
at the two sites in area VI, I04 (Romanou Romanou) and E01 (Romanou Glyfadaki), which lie only 1.5 km from each other. Another pairing in Archaic times is visible in area II with D01 (Gargaliani Kanalos) and D03 (Gargaliani Megas Kambos [2]), separated by just over 500 m. Such clustering is again seen in area VI in Classical times, with the two most productive sites being I04 (Romanou Romanou) and 101 (Koryfasio Beylerbey)—intervisible sites approximately only 1.5 km from each other.

Although at this point, the site sizes employed in discussion by PRAP still rely by and large on “overall,” multiperiod assessments, observations can be made about the relative proportion of individual sites. Like UMME, PRAP did not locate a plethora of small, “farmstead-size” sites. Romanou, for example, is notably large. A sense of the site’s size in the Archaic and Classical periods is presented in Figure 10, where the “minimum” maps represent the distribution of material definitely dated to the specified period and “maximum” includes all material that might date to the period.63 A size range from ca. 18 to 22 ha (minimum to maximum) emerges for the Archaic period, 14 to 27 ha for the Classical—dimensions most frequently accorded the label of “village” in survey reports.64 “Large-site” collection strategies, such as the use of microtracts (see Fig. 11), were implemented at this ancient settlement, part of which undoubtedly lies unexplored under the modern village; certainly the digging of graves at an on-site modern cemetery church continues to bring up ancient material.65 Sites D01 (Gargaliani Kanalos) and D03 (Gargaliani Megas Kambos [2]) have been assessed at 0.45 and 0.24 ha, respectively, and these estimates are probably low, given that PRAP could only explore a restricted part of the settlement at Kanalos and a combination of bulldozing and cultivation has severely damaged the sites at Megas Kambos.

The evidence of clustering of sites larger than small farmsteads begins to sketch an answer to the question “Where did Messenian helots live?” For the PRAP study area, in the Archaic period, the answer seems primarily to lie to the north at Kanalos and Megas Kambos (2) or in the vicinity

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63. “Maximum” thus includes, e.g., for the Archaic period, sherds dated Archaic?, Archaic to Classical, Geometric to Archaic, and Archaic to Hellenistic. Distribution maps of this type for other PRAP sites will be made available online.

64. Contiguous and near-contiguous tracts with relevant material were encircled, and the resulting area measured, to determine these sizes.

65. On “large-site” collection methods, see Davis et al. 1997, p. 405. McDonald and Rapp (1972, pp. 310–311) report the presence at Romanou of an Archaic pithos burial, Classical and Hellenistic statuettes, Roman graves, and a medieval column.
### TABLE 5. DEFINITE AND POSSIBLE PRAP SITES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geometric</th>
<th>Archaic</th>
<th>Classical</th>
<th>Hellenistic</th>
<th>Early Roman</th>
<th>Late Roman</th>
<th>Roman</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Definite</strong></td>
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</table>

| **Possible** | | | | | | |
| A02 | A06 | A04 | B01 | A03 | A03 | A03 |
| A03 | C01 | B02 | B07 | A06 | B02 | A06 |
| D01 | C02 | B07 | C01 | B01 | B07 | B02 |
| D02 | G01 | C01 | C02 | B07 | C01 | C01 |
| D03 | I01 | C02 | D02 | C04 | D02 | E01 |
| E01 | K01 | D01 | I03 | D02 | E01 | I19 |
| L02 | L05 | D03 | L06 | E01 | G02 | I24 |
| M02 | M02 | E01 | M02 | G02 | I01 | K05 |
| | | | | I02 | G03 | I04 |
| | | | | L23 | I01 | I19 |
| | | | | K01 | I03 | K01 |
| | | | | L05 | K01 | K05 |
| | | | | M04 | K05 | L03 |
| | | | | | L02 | L04 |
| | | | | | L03 | M05 |
| | | | | | L04 | |
| | | | | | M02 | |
| | | | | | M05 | |

### TABLE 6. DISTRIBUTION OF PRAP SITES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRAP Area</th>
<th>Geometric</th>
<th>Archaic</th>
<th>Classical</th>
<th>Hellenistic</th>
<th>Early Roman</th>
<th>Late Roman</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>8</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
of Romanou, and habitation at Romanou seems to continue into the Classical period as well. A handful of other Archaic and Classical sites were, however, identified outside such clusters. Limited amounts of Archaic material were found at B07 (Hora Palace of Nestor Lower Town), a very heavily investigated portion of the study region, and in the southern end of K01 (Gargaliani Ordines), which ranks as a “possible” site. For the Classical period, outside of the dominant area VI, we find M02 (Gargaliani Kalantina [2]) and A06 (Metamorfosi Ayios Konstadtnos [2]), measuring 0.75 and 0.56 ha, respectively. Kalantina (2) is an unusual site that can, very tentatively, be proposed as a possible cult place, a suggestion made on the basis of the limited range of finds (including fine wares, cups, and a krater of Classical date) and their concentration at the lip of a natural sinkhole (min. D. 2.5 m) on the Gargaliani plateau.66 Ayios Konstadtnos (2) also exhibits cut blocks and a possible column fragment, but such finds accord better with the subsequent Hellenistic epoch, which boasts the principal ceramic presence on the site.

Some of the “definite” sites in the survey territory—such as Classical Ayios Konstadtnos, represented by the minimum number of closely datable sherds—and the various “possible” Archaic and Classical sites might be explained as the product of seasonal dwellings or other forms of “off-site” rural activity (see Table 4). This patterning contributes to our sense of shifting levels of human activity in the Archaic and Classical landscape. Indeed, visible variations—in the number and distribution of individual artifacts and of “definite” and “possible” sites—very clearly make the point that southwest Messenia, even under Spartan control, was no static landscape. Nevertheless, it would appear that, when it came to choosing their principal places of residence, the inhabitants of the PRAP study area in Archaic and Classical times followed more communally oriented preferences.

66. Davis 1998a, pp. 277–278. A very few fine wares belonging to the Geometric/Archaic period were found at this site.
Evidence derived from a rescue excavation in the village of Kopanaki, in the northern Soulima valley (see Fig. 1), introduces an additional piece of evidence for the question of where the Messenian helots lived. A large building (some 30 x 17 m) originally thought to be a Late Roman villa, on the basis of its size and sturdiness, has been reassigned, on the basis of ceramics, to a period of occupation from the sixth century B.C. to the second quarter of the fifth century. The excavator, Nikolaos Kaltsas, proposed that the site was the substantial home of a Spartan landlord supervising
helots who lived in attendance, and the structure’s violent destruction has been subsequently associated with the helot rebellion of the 460s. Whether Kaltsas is correct about the identity of the householder, the image of helot workers living in aggregation can be related to the patterns of communal dwelling derived from survey data cited above.

Results of the surveys by UMME and PRAP, and of the excavations at Kopanaki, provide no sign, however, of a general Messenian pattern of scattered helot residence on individual kleroi, and this lack of evidence for helot dispersal remains far less than ideal evidence for the phenomenon’s absence. Our uncertain understanding of the relevant ceramic sequences, first and foremost, might leave some hesitant to accept this negative evidence: how sure are we of recognizing the material world of presumably poor and relatively isolated helots? The indications from PRAP data, when coupled with the UMME data, do suggest, on the other hand, that communal dwelling was the preferred option under Spartan rule, at least in this more distant portion of Messenia.

Why the Messenians would have preferred such an arrangement is clear when one considers the vulnerability of helots in times of agricultural shortage. Even though many parts of Messenia are famously fertile, bad years were inevitable, especially given the constant drain of foodstuffs to Laconia. Lacking civic structures, and lacking easy-to-hand or friendly access to Spartan patrons, Messenians would of necessity have had to generate other systems of mutual support, and local networks—facilitated both by aggregated living and by communication between settlements across the region—would have become especially vital. Living in communal groups, or in close proximity to others, would also have allowed the fostering of group identity, providing helots with potential opportunities and means by which to transmit their own histories and memories. Such communicative sharing and mutual support, in turn, would have reinforced collective sentiments in all their potentially incendiary force.68

Why the Spartans would have allowed this course of action, which would have posed a potential risk to themselves, is less apparent. If, how-

Figure 9. 104 (Romanou Romanou). Sherd numbers, Geometric–Late Roman. R. J. Robertson

67. For the original publication of these data, see Kaltsas 1985; for a more recent assessment, see Harrison and Spencer 1998, pp. 161–162 and fig. 75.
68. Ritual complements to this settlement pattern are further discussed in “Change in the Ritual and Mortuary Landscape,” below.
ever, their “bottom line” stipulated the survival of helot workers and the continued influx of helot-grown products, then they may have had to accept nucleated residence and the local support networks that it sustained. The settlement patterns observed by UMME and by PRAP are, in this sense, somewhat akin in effect to Hodkinson’s proposed system of sharecropping discussed above. The nature of sharecropping, as he stressed, involves shared risk between cultivator and landowner. Sharecropping maximized labor inputs, keeping the helots too busy to cause trouble, yet it also kept them alive; it allowed Spartiates to monitor agricultural activity, but it would not have forced helots into revolt over rents. Communal settlement worked in a similar fashion, allowing essential Spartan needs to be adequately met, while also providing helot families with some measure of

Figure 10. 104 (Romanou Romanou). Minimum and maximum areal extent, Archaic and Classical. J. Solemeto and R. J. Robertson
security. Community dwelling would also have contributed to the establishment of some form of helot authority, or hierarchy, much as sharecropping would have required the existence of "bailiffs" or other middlemen by means of which helots could be controlled, to a great if not total extent, without requiring massive investments of Spartiate time and effort. When coupled with our new regional evidence, these considerations provide nuances to bitterly polarized perceptions of Spartan-Messenian interactions. Patterns of settlement and patterns of economic exploitation suggest that risks and benefits were shared in a balancing act that, periodically and ultimately, broke down in rejection and revolt—but the system worked for a very long time.

**Pollen and PRAP Patterns**

These observations about settlement and other traces of human activity can be brought into dialogue with results from detailed palynological coring in the Osmanaga Lagoon (see Fig. 2). A post–Bronze Age increase in deciduous oak and a decline in olive pollen led Sergei Yazvenko to conclude that "during the Early Iron Age the landscape experienced the least intensive human impact of the last 4,000 years." That decline was reversed ca. 800 B.C.:

The palynological data argue for a dense population and a high level of agricultural production during the Classical/Hellenistic period. Human control of the landscape seems to have reached its maximum at that time, with a strong emphasis on olive cultivation at ca. 500–100 B.C. (220–160 cm). The peak of olive pollen coincides with a high C/N ratio, which indicates increased erosion due to higher pressure on the landscape.

The fossil data cited are dominated by olive pollen; cereal and grapes were also undoubtedly important, but are harder to trace by these means. There is a lack of pollen indicators, as well, that would point to widespread herding or grazing in the region, forms of economic activity that had been previous explanations for the presumed "emptiness" of the Messenian land-

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70. For an explanation of the applicability of the results of this research to the PRAP study region, see Zangger et al. 1997, pp. 576–585.
scape. In general, assumptions about the desertion of western Messenia in the years of Spartan domination, based largely on a single remark of Thucydides, are countered by the evidence of survey and pollen studies.

The date ranges of periods of cultivation that are obtained through this type of palynological analysis are of necessity crude, and the temptation to force them too neatly into existing historical periodizations must be avoided. It would be tidy, perhaps overly tidy, to correlate the reclamation of land by olive cultivation with the inception of Spartan control. The span of olive cultivation highlighted by Yazvenko, ca. 500–100 B.C., embraces the Classical/Hellenistic break as defined by PRAP, presented here as a period of limited settlement activity. The palynological argument for “dense population and a high level of agricultural production” might seem incompatible with that break.

Two suggestions might help to reconcile the evidence. First, the relative lack of dispersed settlement should not be correlated automatically with a severely underexploited countryside; nucleated settlement makes intensive cultivation a more onerous task but by no means precludes it. Second, much of the palynologically attested increase in cultivation could be assigned to the Hellenistic period, when—as shall be seen—high levels of agricultural production are more readily compatible with the settled landscape. Supporting this hypothesis is the fact that the all-time peak in olive pollen can be assigned an absolute date of 230 B.C., though the date is admittedly dependent on regular sedimentation rates and radiocarbon error margins.\(^73\)

**Summary: Geometric through Classical**

This regional review of Messenia in Geometric through Classical times, or, in other words, for the epoch encompassing the phenomenon of Spartan control, yields various summary points. Some are relevant to the entire region, others to the more specific area of PRAP study.

1. Far from presenting a static landscape, areas studied by UMME and PRAP show clear signs of variation among Geometric, Archaic, and Classical settlements and patterns of land use.
2. The failure of UMME to locate numerous small and isolated sites (potential “farmsteads”) was echoed in the PRAP results.
3. In the PRAP study zone, there appears to be a preference for “clustering” of settlement, area VI presenting the greatest traces of activity as measured by overall number of sherds and number of sites.
4. The dominant settlement of the PRAP study region in the Geometric through Classical periods is IO4 (Romanou *Romanou*), the surface scatter for which suggests an agglomerated community throughout these periods.
5. While by no means “deserted,” as was formerly hypothesized, the portion of southwest Messenia investigated by PRAP cannot be characterized as densely populated.
6. Shrines were identified at several places by UMME, and a hint of ritual activity was observed by PRAP at M02 (Gargaliani *Kalantina* [2]).\(^74\)

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73. Zangger et al. 1997, p. 594, where, reporting his calibration and correction of the UMME pollen cores that suggested an “olive spike” between 1100–700 B.C., Yazvenko redates the spike to the period 540–140 B.C., thus coinciding with PRAP results.

74. For further discussion of ritual activity in these survey areas, see “Change in Ritual and Mortuary Landscape,” below.
HELENISTIC THROUGH LATE ROMAN (CA. 323 B.C.–A.D. 700)

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: MESSENA

The end of the Spartan control of Messenia that, by the time of Leuctra, had been in place for three centuries or more must have led to profound, if largely unrecorded, transformations in all dimensions of Messenian life. The helots were freed; at least some portion of the Messenian diaspora returned home; perioikic communities gradually shook off Spartan control; existing systems of land tenure were terminated; a new and mixed population was settled in a new and dominant city—Messene, on the slopes of Mount Ithome. Piero Treves rightly alludes to the situation’s “revolutionary novelty.”

Messene would long remain the region’s leading polis. According to Pausanias, the choice of Ithome for its setting was oracularly inspired, but the city’s strategic role was also obvious. Epaminondas founded Messene, together with Megalopolis, to serve as a bulwark against future Spartan aggression, and its remarkable wall circuit was a visible proclamation of the Messenians’ new ability to defend themselves. At least in its description centuries later by Pausanias (4.27.5–9), the civic foundation celebrated the reemergence of the Messenians as a people with their own gods, their own heroes, and their own history.

Pausanias reported that “to the capital they gave the name of Messene, but they founded other towns also.” By his time, the later second century A.D., the poleis of Messenia included Pherae, Thouria, Korone, Abia, Colonides, Asine, Methoni, Pylos, and Cyparissia, some of which were former perioikic settlements. Since, in written accounts from the early centuries of liberation, “the Messenians” tend to be referred to as a single unit, it is generally assumed that they formed some type of federal league under the dominance of Messene. The Hellenistic period saw boi Messenioi engaged in a variety of external alliances, almost inevitably with polities larger and more powerful than themselves and almost always in opposition to Spartan interests. Among other bedfellows, the Messenians allied with Philip II of Macedon, remaining neutral at the Battle of Chaironeia and being rewarded with grants of Spartan territory including Methoni and the Ager Dentheliates on the west slopes of Taygetus. Fierce hostility between Messenia and Laconia long endured, the competition often taking the form of territorial disputes, most famously over the Ager Dentheliates and its border sanctuary of Artemis Limnatis. This competition continued well into the Roman period, with rulings generally made in favor of the Messenians.

Although Messenia remained somewhat isolated from much of the military activity of the age, its position adjacent to Sparta, and more particularly the strategic location of Mount Ithome, did not go unrecognized. For example, the mountain formed one of the “horns” that Philip V of Macedon was advised to seize if he wished to control the “ox” of the Peloponnese (Polyb. 7.12.2–3). Conflict with Philip V first brought the region into contact with Roman authority, which, in 191 B.C., would order a reluctant Messenia to join the Achaian League. Playing a minor part in the

75. Treves 1944, p. 103. Roebuck 1941 and 1945 remain the most comprehensive treatments of Hellenistic Messenia; see also Alcock 1998. On this period from the Spartan perspective, see Cartledge and Spawforth 1989; Kennell 2003.
78. On Artemis Limnatis and the boundary disputes surrounding the sanctuary, see Paus. 3.7.4, 4.4.2, 4.31.3; Strabo 8.362; Tac. Ann. 4.43; Kolbe 1904; Valmin 1930, pp. 12–13, 27–32; Cartledge and Spawforth 1989, pp. 138–139; Malkin 1994, pp. 34–35.
League’s war with Rome in 146 B.C., Messenian troops remained at home to guard against possible attacks from the sea. In the aftermath of the war, Messenia regained its independence. It is unclear, however, whether Messene reasserted political supremacy over other communities.

Together with much of the rest of Greece, Messenia then passed under de facto Roman control. Roman officials became involved in local decision making, and inscriptions testify to friendly contributions to Roman coffers, most famously the financial levy (octobolos eisphora) assessed on Messene in the early first century A.D.\(^79\) In the civil strife of the first century B.C., Messenia had not suffered as much as other portions of the mainland, but neither did it go untouched. Comments are recorded about collections of booty in the Peloponnese (Plut. Pomp. 24); Agrippa attacked Methoni during the Actium campaign (Strabo 8.359).\(^80\) Messenia sided with Antony in that particular conflict, paying the price in territorial losses to Sparta. It was, in all likelihood, soon after his victory that Augustus formally constituted the province of Achaia. From this point, Messenia formed just one portion of a larger provincial entity, and individual poleis—with their administrative and ritual functions—remained the principal political units in the peninsula.\(^81\)

Epigraphical and archaeological evidence, together with the testimony of Pausanias, suggests that—despite undoubted vicissitudes—Messenae and other Messenian towns survived and even thrived during Hellenistic and Imperial times. Long-running excavations at Messene, by far the best-explored historical site in the region, demonstrate clear signs of civic prosperity, most notably in the construction of the Asklepieion in the first half of the second century B.C. This impressive complex has been closely linked to Damophon of Messene, the man entrusted with repairing the Zeus of Pheidias at Olympia. The career of Damophon, whose family tree can be traced in Messene’s prosopography, offers just one sign of the region’s renewed status in the cultural life of the Greek world.\(^82\)

Strabo (8.362), describing the region as a whole, remarks that Messenia was deserted in his day, that is, around the time of Augustus. His comment, however, can be taken as a rhetorical exaggeration typical of much of Early Imperial literary production.\(^83\) In fact, in the Imperial period, Messenia seems to have been one of the areas of Greece most popular for immigrants, including Italian businessmen (negotiatores) and Roman citizens. The presence of negotiatores in Messenia is first detected in the later Hellenistic period, and inscriptions, such as the octobolos eisphora mentioned above, attest that Rhomaioi owned considerable properties in the

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79. IG V.1.1432–1433; see Giovannini 1978 for the date and details of the decree.

80. On first-century troubles in Messenia, see Lazenby and Hope Simpson 1972, pp. 92–93. Epigraphical evidence from the Augustan period at Messene points to a program of building and restoration, presumably following a period of neglect and disrepair; see SEG XXIII 207; Migeotte 1985.


area. The fertility of the region no doubt contributed to its attractiveness, but its western orientation may have been a factor in its popularity as well. Special marks of imperial favor were garnered by communities and individual families. Pausanias (4.35.3) tells us, for example, that Methoni received the rare gift of freedom and tax immunity under Trajan, and one family from Messene boasted a high priest of the provincial imperial cult and, under Hadrian, reached senatorial status, a relatively rare event for the Greek elite in the Early Empire.

If the fertility of Messenia, coupled with the conditions of the pax Romana, appear to have provided at least some of the region's inhabitants with prosperous times, this security began to be more threatened in the later Empire, the fourth to seventh centuries A.D. By the late sixth century, a combination of barbarian invasion, plague, and natural disasters is reported to have struck the land. Although the exact sequence of events in this portion of the Peloponnesian remains unclear, and although such generalized catastrophes manifestly need to be analyzed in their specific regional context, it has been argued that, toward the end of the Late Roman period, the Peloponnesian "no doubt suffered a real decline from its material and demographic level in the 2nd or 3rd century A.C." Another trend that can be monitored over these centuries is the region's conversion to Christianity, signaled by the appearance of Messenian bishops and the construction of Christian monuments such as the basilica at Ayia Kyriaki near Filiatra. What happened next, in the ensuing Dark Age and Byzantine period, are matters for another analysis.

**Historical Background: The PRAP Study Area**

Specific details about the PRAP study region in the Hellenistic through Late Roman periods are relatively rare, but suggest that in these centuries, too, this western zone followed its own course in comparison with more central parts of Messenia. Messenia's entanglements with larger political structures are well illustrated by the Achaean League's incorporation of Pylos in the later third century, ca. 220 B.C. Despite Messene asking for Rome's intervention in the matter, Methoni and Cyparissia would also soon (in 191 B.C.) join the League as independent units, essentially cutting off the west coast, and several good ports, from the control of Messene.

In the second century A.D., Pausanias traveled through this area, either following a coastal route or possibly moving by sea. He says little about the area, treating only Pylos/Koryfasion in any detail (4.36.1–6). In

86. Topping 1972, p. 65; for similar sentiments, see Gerstel 1998, p. 212.
88. We can report, however, 16 definite and nine possible Byzantine sites: A03, A04, A06, B01, B02, C01, D01, E01, G01, G03, I01, I04, K01, L04, L07, M05 (definite); B03, B04, D02, D03, I08, K03, K05, L02, M04 (possible). For presentations of these sites and their material, see the online site gazetteer. See also Davis et al. 1997, pp. 474–482; Gerstel 1998; and the references in Davis 1998c, p. 313.
89. Polyb. 4.16.7, 4.25.4, 9.38.8; Livy 36.31.9; Roebuck 1941, p. 69, n. 12.
his remarks on that site, Pausanias pays greatest attention to the heroic past: to Neleus, Nestor, and their associated monuments, including the “Tomb of Thrasymedes,” usually identified with the tholos tomb at Voidokilia. This focus on a distant past at the expense of the living present, while typical for Pausanias’s treatment of Roman Greece, is especially pronounced in book 4 (Messeniaka), in which his neglect of many aspects of Messenian history, not least the period under Spartan control, has done much to dictate the course of subsequent scholarship on the region.  

Where can archaeological evidence illustrate or amplify this outline of events? The astonishing nature of Epaminondas’s foundation—especially in its implications for local patterns of demography and land use—should have clear material correlates. By extension, we should be able to explore the degree to which Messenia, on being liberated and assuming a more “normal” political organization, returns to normal in other ways as well, and how far it comes to resemble other parts of the Greek landscape. The fertility and westward orientation of Messenia make it a particularly interesting zone to monitor, and while archaeological perspectives on the passage of Greece into the Roman empire have begun to be explored, further detailed regional studies are needed to nuance the currently generalized picture.  

**Overview of UMME Patterns**

Issues raised for the Hellenistic period by UMME findings have been discussed above (pp. 159–162). The Roman period, in UMME’s chronological scheme, began with the defeat and temporary dissolution of the Achaian League in 146 B.C. and ended in the fourth century A.D. (see Table 1). In almost all instances, this five-century-long span is treated by UMME as a single unit. Sites reported as Roman by UMME (Fig. 12) are significantly fewer than those of the Classical and Hellenistic periods (Figs. 4, 5). Weighting these raw numbers by length of period would make these discrepancies even more marked.

Within that overall pattern, however, there exists a degree of variability. The northern zone of the UMME study area, for example, suffered a more dramatic site loss than other subregions (Table 2). By contrast, the Five Rivers region around Nichoria experienced a net gain in settlement during Roman times, a circumstance attributed to the area’s fertility and to the proximity of the region to the town of Korone (modern Petalidhi), where “many ancient foundations have been found, also marble sarcophagi, pointing to the existence of a thriving and art-loving population in imperial times.” Yet a third trajectory can be traced in the southwestern zone, where, in UMME’s estimation, the number of sites drops only from 26 to 22 (Table 2), and, in the overall PRAP study region, from sixteen to fifteen. McDonald and Hope Simpson connect this relative stability to an external orientation, observing that “it was, of course, the southwest that retained closest contact with the outside world in medieval times.” Preference for coastal locations, already noted to have increased in earlier periods, hits its peak in Roman times.
Another development clearly indicated in both the UMME and Five Rivers results was the appearance of impressive structures appointed with baths, mosaics, marble elements, and other "villa-like" accoutrements. "Villas" are reported in some number in Roman Messenia, reaching a total of seven in the hinterland of Nichoria alone. This phenomenon, seen by no means everywhere in Greece, is observed also in Achaia, to the north, where numerous such complexes have been reported in recent work along the Gulf of Patras. In the UMME view of Roman Messenia, coastal towns (e.g., Korone, Asine, Methoni, Cyparissia, and Pherae) were the main settlements, to which villas and farms formed a background. The common assumption that Greece in Imperial times was a quiet backwater not surprisingly colors their interpretations: "Pausanias' account shows that although the area may have been a 'backwater,' it had a romantic appeal to cultured Romans."99

Distinguishing changes in settlement distribution on the basis of UMME reports is complicated by the project's use of the term "Roman." Reexamination of Five Rivers sites suggests that many of them continued in use in the Late Roman and Early Byzantine periods (ca. A.D. 330-600); so, as J. Rosser and W. A. McDonald have noted, "it is probable that much of the 'Roman' occupation in the Nichoria environs lasted down into the 6th century, i.e., until the period of the Slavic invasion."100 Other UMME "Roman" sites presumably followed a similar course, but the data precludes greater precision.

100. Rosser and McDonald 1983, p. 354.
Overview of PRAP Patterns

In the landscape of the PRAP survey area, PRAP traced a florescence of settlement and other signs of activity datable to the Hellenistic period. As noted above, between Classical and Hellenistic times, the number of definitely dated sherds more than triples (see Table 3), and it nearly doubles in the off-site locations (see Table 4). Sixteen “definite” sites of Hellenistic date can be defined, compared with four for the Geometric, five for the Archaic, and four for the Classical period (Table 5; Fig. 13:a). This “increased tempo” of activity matches Classical/Hellenistic patterns reported by UMME.101 Expansion of such magnitude in both site numbers and off-site data points toward more intensive cultivation and exploitation of this countryside in Hellenistic times and, less directly, to a larger resident population. These observations can be connected with the palynological evidence, discussed above, which pinpointed the years ca. 500–100 B.C.—and, particularly, later years in that span—as a period of “higher pressure on the landscape.”102

Area VI, now containing several sites of different function, continues in the Hellenistic period to produce the majority of material (Figs. 7, 14), as it had in the Archaic and Classical periods (Fig. 7), but, throughout the area of the PRAP survey, sites are much more scattered across the landscape (Fig. 13:a; Table 6). Settlement hierarchies also appear to become more complex in post-liberation times, with the development of “normal” poleis (noted above). In the PRAP region, sites ranged from the asty of Pylos/Koryfasion to large, ancillary villages such as Romanou, elite residences such as Glyfidakí (see below), and smaller, less impressive rural habitations that, in some cases, likely deserve the label “farmstead.”

Examples of this last include two small sites in area IX, an area newly inhabited in Hellenistic times: L02 (Maryeli Farfa ti Rabi [1]) and L07 (Ayioi Apostoloi Palaiopitía). Site L02 measures ca. 0.09 ha, and lines of walls at the site, the longest preserved to a length of nearly 21 m, may represent old field boundaries or terrace walls; at L07, measuring 0.88 ha, the Hellenistic and Early Roman components were confined almost entirely to approximately one-third of the area. Whatever political or institutional transformations accompanied the liberation of Messenia, there was a decided impact upon the rural landscape in this southwestern zone.

An increasingly visible emphasis on coastal settlement is another spatial development occurring in the area in Hellenistic times. Three new coastal or near-coastal sites appear in areas that were all but empty in historical times, areas III and V (Figs. 7, 14), sites G01 (Marathopolis Dialiskari), G02 (Vromoneri Ayia Sotira), and G03 (Vromoneri Pigadia) (see Fig. 13:a). This accords with UMME’s observation about an increasingly coastal orientation in Classical/Hellenistic times, which they attributed to more stable political conditions and better-regulated commerce.

A closer examination of the highly productive area VI, and its one possible and five definite Hellenistic sites, offers another perspective on change in Hellenistic Messenia. Romanou (I04) and Beylerbey (I01) appear as larger settlements, Romanou in particular maintaining its considerable size and increasing its volume of relevant material (see Fig. 9). By

102. See the extract from Zangger et al. 1997 on p. 172, above. The possibility that this development in Hellenistic Messenia reflects instead a change in ceramic usage, following on “Mediterranean-wide shifts in commerce, travel, and/or production,” is raised in the Appendix, below; such material changes would, of course, reflect altered status and circumstances.
contrast, research at Glyfadaki (E01), which lies only some 250 m inland from the present shoreline, reflects the existence of only a single, impressive dwelling. Geophysical prospection at the site recovered a linear anomaly, some 45 m in length with perpendicular offshoots, that suggests the corner of a sizable building with interior cross-walls. The weakness of the electromagnetic signal, together with the results of coring, suggests that the walls have been robbed out, leaving only foundation trenches. Found
in close association with this anomaly was “a recognizably domestic assemblage” of Hellenistic and, especially, later Hellenistic date. Among the finds were amphora and lamp fragments, loom weights, and fine wares that included pottery—such as moldmade bowls—reminiscent of examples from Hellenistic Messene (see the Appendix, below). The density of ceramic finds had a distinct “fall off”; for example, three adjacent grid squares held, respectively, 285 sherds and 395 tile fragments, 127 sherds and 362 tile

fragments, and 14 sherds and one tile fragment, the higher densities of material being located inside the area delineated by the proposed lines of walls. specifics of the site, including maps of the anomalies and ceramic densities, have been presented elsewhere,\textsuperscript{105} what we stress in the present context is Glyfadaki’s apparently elite status and relatively short life.

Also of Hellenistic date both in and near area VI are wealthy graves; for example, at the tumulus of I17 (Tragana Tsopani Rahi) (Fig. 15) in area VI and in the cemetery at Divari near Yialova on the Bay of Navarino, some 5 km southeast of Glyfadaki (see Fig. 2).\textsuperscript{106} Little could be seen at site I17 by PRAP investigators, but excavations in the 1960s had recovered gold diadems and other jewelry, a silver vase, glass bowls, coins, and much pottery. The tumulus lies less than two kilometers from Glyfadaki, and was intervisible with that complex and with the settlement at Romanou. While we had previously hypothesized some measure of differentiation and hierarchy in helot society, this stratification only becomes manifest in the regional landscape in the Hellenistic period, as witnessed by the appearance of these rich tombs; this accords well with our historical understanding of the region’s social and economic transformations. Finally, this area also displays signs of Hellenistic ritual activity, at I06 (Tragana Viglitsa/Tragana Tholos Tombs) and I02 (Koryfasio Haratsari [Osmanaga Tholos]). Both sites have yielded signs of votive offerings in the setting of prehistoric tholos tombs, I06 definitely evincing evidence of Hellenistic activity, specifically at Tragana tomb 2 (Fig. 16). Evidence at I02 is less clear, and the site is better considered a “possible” example.\textsuperscript{107}

Many of these Hellenistic patterns appear to endure, and strengthen, in Roman times. Six sites can be identified as “definite” Early Roman sites, eight as “Late Roman,” and fifteen as undifferentiated “Roman” (see Table 5). These sites, as those of Hellenistic date, are widely distributed, and, for the first time, in at least one of the three chronological divisions, each of the nine surveyed areas is represented by at least one site (see Figs. 13:b–d, 14; Table 6). Area VI continues as the most active zone of settlement, and


\textsuperscript{106} Divari (UMME 401); Tsopani Rahi (UMME 403): McDonald and Rapp 1972, pp. 310–311. For more information on the material from these sites, see below, pp. 198–200.

\textsuperscript{107} It should be noted that the Tragana finds have also been interpreted as a Hellenistic habitation; for references on Tragana tomb 2, see Antonaccio 1995, pp. 79–80. On Osmanaga, see Alcock 1991, p. 466; Antonaccio 1995, pp. 72–73. For further discussion of Messenian cult places, see below, “Change in the Ritual and Mortuary Landscape.”
coastal locations remain popular. Palynological evidence presents an instance of change, indicating “diminished human land use”—an increase in deciduous oak and a decrease in olive pollen—for the broad period from ca. 100 B.C. to A.D. 1200. A possible explanation for this development is change in patterns of land tenure in favor of larger and less intensively utilized estates, a hypothesis supported by the appearance at G01 (Marathopolis Dialiskari) of a villa presumably associated with a substantial estate. The presence of villas elsewhere in Messenia had been reported by UMME, as noted above.

Dialiskari, which lies in the northern coastal area III, was known long before its investigation by PRAP, and has been suggested as a possible candidate for the elusive site of Erana, which Strabo (8.348, 361) locates somewhere along the coast between Cyparissia and Pylos/Koryfasion, near the island of Proti. Strabo’s remarks on Erana are brief, but appear to refer to some manner of community—perhaps of polis status, though this
is never explicitly stated. Arguments about where to assign this toponym continue. PRAP investigations discourage its application to Dialiskari, finding that, although there is an initial, delimited Hellenistic component to the site, by far the bulk of the material is dated Late Roman and Roman (see Fig. 17), when the site’s identification as a villa complex seems clear.

The site of Dialiskari boasts a significant number of imported and luxury materials, several standing architectural components, and other remains. These elements include a bath structure with hypocaust piers (Fig. 18), two bedrock quarries, a probable fishpond (less likely an evaporation tank for salt production) (Fig. 19), a black and white mosaic floor (long incorporated within a modern house), stone and brick walls, a polygonal structure of mortared brick, several column fragments and capitals of nonlocal stone, and a cemetery.\(^{110}\) Several of these features, notably the hypocaust, were revealed in bulldozing operations related to cultivation and house construction, and subsequent geophysical study has detected possible additional traces of subterranean chambers of the hypocaust system. Although a map of all these various elements (Fig. 20a), some separated by a distance of 100 m or more, fails to reveal the presence of a single, unified structure, the distribution of surface finds suggests that most should be considered part of a unified complex.\(^{111}\) Artifacts observed at the site, including imported fine wares (e.g., African and Phocaean Red Slip), amphoras, mosaic tesserae, slag, and circular hypocaust tiles, map in close

110. The mosaic floor has recently been transported to the Olympia Museum for restoration; it will be placed on public exhibit in Messenia, quite possibly in Kalamata. We thank Xenia Arapogianni, director of the 7th Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities, for this information. The structure identified as a fishpond, based on comparanda from Greece and Italy and on the luxury nature of other features at the site, comprises beachfront rock-cut channels running from a rectangular basin (ca. 9 x 3 m), one (L. ca. 34 m) extending west–southwestward and a second (L. 13 m) extending northwestward; for comparanda, see Higginbotham 1997, figs. 16, 19, 21, 73–77, 79, 81.

Figure 18. G01 (Marathopolis Dialiskari), exposed hypocaust chamber. PRAP Archive

Figure 19. G01 (Marathopolis Dialiskari), probable fishpond complex. PRAP Archive
Figure 20. G01 (Marathopolis Dialeiskari), "core zone": (a) location of major architectural and structural components; (b) location of finds, by category. R. J. Robertson
association with the majority of these structures (compare Fig. 20:a, b).\textsuperscript{112} This close correlation of the structures and artifacts suggests the existence of a "core zone" to the site, which has been estimated at some 6 ha in extent.\textsuperscript{113} This core zone is coastal in nature, and borders an unmodified natural harbor.

The impressive finds at Dialiskari, which clearly distinguish it from other sites in the PRAP study area, perhaps attest an intended conspicuousness: the site's architectural complexity and multiple functions strongly suggest elite ownership and consumption. Few elements at the site could be explicitly associated with agricultural productivity; no olive or wine presses, for example, were found. Millstones were, however, and fragments of three rotary querns may even suggest grain processing on a reasonably large scale. On present evidence, we can say little about the impact of Dialiskari on its surrounding hinterland, or about its reflection of patterns of land tenure, beyond arguing that such a "power residence" surely indicates the presence, in west coastal Messenia, of a substantial property holder—an observation that lends support to the textually derived reconstruction of trends in the area, as well as to our palynological patterns. While its scenic coastal setting has made the site vulnerable, not least to the ongoing construction of modern beach villas (Fig. 21), Dialiskari has recently been registered as an archaeological site by the Hellenic Ministry of Culture.\textsuperscript{114}

\textsuperscript{112} For details of the pottery recovered at site G01 (Marathopolis Dialiskari) and at other sites in the PRAP survey area, see the Appendix, below, with Tables 7–9.

\textsuperscript{113} Cooking wares, glass fragments, lithic finds, and nonhypocaust tile fragments were found more generally across the 35 ha extent of the site. For a map of overall sherd densities at Dialiskari, see Stone and Kampke 1998, p. 196, fig. 91. The two outlying features, the cemetery and one of the quarries, presumably constitute subsidiary foci of activity or date to a different period than the other remains; the small rock-cut cist graves of the cemetery had been completely denuded of finds, and neither it nor the quarry can be precisely dated.

\textsuperscript{114} We thank Xeni Arapogianni for this information.
**Summary: Hellenistic through Late Roman**

Various points can be summed up from this regional review of Messenia in Hellenistic through Late Roman times, from liberation to reconquest. Some are relevant to the entire region, others to the more specific PRAP study zone.

1. The data from PRAP reveal significantly increased numbers of individual artifacts and sites during this time span. UMME results for the Roman period, apart from those of the more intensive reconnaissance of the Five Rivers survey, do not conclusively agree with that picture.

2. Across the PRAP study area, the distribution of individual artifacts and sites, characterized by “clustering” in the previous epoch, is more widespread.

3. A long-term trend toward coastal emphasis in site location now becomes markedly apparent.

4. There is a greater differentiation in site sizes and site types, from large settlements (e.g., Romanou) to small locales (e.g., Farfa ti Rahi [1]), to individual elite dwellings or wealthy complexes (e.g., Hellenistic Glyfadaki and Roman, especially Late Roman, Dialiskari); UMME had acknowledged this change in its enumeration of Roman “villa” structures in Messenia. Visible social stratification emerges for the first time in the regional landscape.

5. Hellenistic ritual activity at prehistoric tholos tombs—at Tragana tomb 2, and possibly at Osmanaga—together with other developments, such as more visible sanctuary placement and ritual practice (discussed below, pp. 189–191), raise the possibility of related developments in the sacred landscape.

**Change in the Ritual and Mortuary Landscape**

The possibility was earlier raised that at least one PRAP site, M02 (Gargaliani *Kalantina* [2]), may have been a rural shrine in the years of Spartan control. From both textual and archaeological evidence, it is clear that the inhabitants of Messenia, helots and *perioikoi* alike, maintained cult places in that era. Important locales include the cult of Zeus at Ithome, the newly discovered Sanctuary Ω-Ω at Messene, the Sanctuary of Apollo Korythos on the Messenian Gulf, and possibly the site of mysteries at Andania in the Stenyclarian plain. Inscribed votives from “the Messenians” have been found, such as a spear butt dedicated to Apollo Korythos, possibly in the wake of the helot rebellion of the 460s.

Other less impressive cult places have been tentatively identified, including two shrines (one Archaic, one Classical) noted in the Five Rivers survey work in the Nichoria region. Additional scenes of ritual activity include ancient Bronze Age tombs where, as in many parts of Greece,

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115. For specific references to these cult places, see Alcock 2002a, pp. 143–146 and nn. 23–27.
Geometric practice of tomb cult has been observed. More unusually, Messenian tomb cult seems to have continued, if intermittently and at a low level, throughout the years of Spartan control, the best-explored example being Tholos F at Nichoria, published under the subtitle “the hero cult in the tholos” and dated to the end of the fifth and the early fourth century B.C.118 Shrines and tombs provided meeting points in the landscape, much in the way of residential clustering, and may well have served the same communicative and supportive functions. All this activity, however, remained small-scale and unobtrusive in character relative to post-liberati

The Messenian-wide results from UMME are indecisive on the point of the obtrusiveness of ritual activity in the Hellenistic period, when the number of unquestioned shrines, which held more or less steady (at 10 or 11) through Archaic and Classical times, decreases to seven (Fig. 4). Evidence from the hinterland of Nichoria is also modest; one shrine continues from the Classical period, to be joined by another in Hellenistic times.119 Change occurs more definitely in the practice of post-Classic tomb cult, which undeniably becomes more frequent—registering 10 definite and 11 possible Hellenistic instances in Messenia—and its manifestations more visible. This development is perhaps witnessed most spectacularly at the “Tomb of Thrasyomedes” at Voidokoilia, lying on the prominent headland opposite the polis center of Pylos/Koryfasion and only some 3.5 km from Romanou, and, in the specific areas intensively surveyed by PRAP, at Tragana tomb 2 (Fig. 16) and Osmanaga.120

Other indications of a more public display of ritual behavior in the Hellenistic period can also be posited on the basis of PRAP investigations. In their reconnaissance of the region, McDonald and Hope Simpson had reported at Kanalos (UMME 15) “several good squared, hammer-dressed poros blocks,” and thus the existence of a likely temple, on one of the two flat-topped knolls of the site’s “acropolis” (Fig. 22).121
In our work at the site some thirty or so years later, which included an intensive gridded collection of surface material from the entire ridgetop, we recorded significant damage resulting from bulldozing and found three ashlar blocks. Near these blocks, and around a roughly circular mound of earth at the site's highest point, we located numerous tile fragments painted black and red; these have been assigned to the Hellenistic period, and seem to indicate the creation of some manner of ridgetop cult structure at that time.

Another Hellenistic cult construction can be proposed, if with less assurance, for M04 (Gargaliani Ayios Konstadinos), located on a ridge overlooking the Gargaliani plateau (Fig. 23). In 1994, the site was greatly disrupted by the demolition of a church, in which PRAP team members had observed possibly ancient blocks, and by the construction of a new church in its place. In subsequent investigations in 1995, two cut ashlar limestone blocks, other possibly ancient building material, and Late Classical and Hellenistic fine wares were found—though no material indisputably of votive character.122

Finally, within the ruins of an early modern structure at site A06 (Meta-morfosi Ayios Konstadinos [2]), which also exhibits characteristics of a “special purpose” site, PRAP has reported an apparent column fragment—of very battered limestone, with a dowel hole—and at least two well-cut limestone blocks.123 The apparent column fragment is not necessarily in situ, and may have been transported for use as an olive crusher or threshing-floor roller. As at M04 (Gargaliani Ayios Konstadinos), no explicitly votive material was discovered, and the site’s assemblage, which is dominantly Hellenistic, possibly points toward a domestic function.

These observations of more elaborate religious structures in Hellenistic Messenia, at least in some cases at relatively elevated points, suggest that ritual visibility was no longer to be avoided. Indeed, the prominence of such sites may have become increasingly important as Messenian communities sought to mark territory as their own, in a manner familiar for

122. Davis 1998a, pp. 278–280.
centuries in other parts of Greece. This more “normal” patterning of Greek ritual practice can be observed at Romanou, for example, where several carved blocks, including a significant architectural piece that is probably an epistyle, have been found (Fig. 24); in the emergence of civic temples in Messenia’s Hellenistic and Roman poleis, known in part through Pausanias; and, ultimately, in the appearance of shrines and dedications to the imperial cult, most remarkably the Sebasteion at Messene itself.

Although we possess strong hints that the Messenian sacred landscape underwent change after the Classical period, unfortunately little can be said about contemporary developments in mortuary patterns. Rock-cut cist and tile graves located by PRAP at various sites are largely unable to be assigned to specific historical periods. The sites at which evidence of possibly Hellenistic mortuary activity has been observed, and the characteristics of that evidence, are:

A01 (Metamorfosi Ayios Konstadiinos [1]): cist and tile graves (roughly Hellenistic–Byzantine)
A03 (Metaxada Kalopiana [3]), Locus 2: human bone, found with a small Roman glass vessel
B01 (Hora Kalianesi): worked slabs, apparently spolia from the Palace of Nestor, reused in graves of possibly Hellenistic–Roman date (Fig. 25)
D01 (Gargaliani Kanalos): one tile grave (uncertain date) (Fig. 26); three rock-cut graves (uncertain date, though Late Roman African Red Slip ware may be associated)
G01 (Marathopolis Dialiskari): rock-cut cist graves, completely denuded of finds
G02 (Vromoneri Ayia Sotira): sherds (Hellenistic and Roman) clustered about a possible catacomb or cistern/storage facility
I04 (Romanou Romanou): traces of graves

125. PRAP SF 0574; now in the Hora Museum.
127. I04 (UMME 400): see McDonald and Rapp 1972, pp. 310–311, for references to their own and previous work at the site.
I19 (Pyrgaki Tsouka): human bone and tiles, uncovered in bulldozing of a knoll (possibly Hellenistic and Roman, possibly Byzantine–Turkish)

I23–27 (Lefki Kaldtamou [1–2, 4, 5, 3]): prehistoric tumuli; the accompanying graves cannot be securely dated

L03 (Maryeli Ayios Ioannis): an enigmatic stone structure, comprised of three upright slabs, perhaps the remains of a burial monument; ceramic artifacts, found in a nearby bulldozer cut; among these, a bowl (Hellenistic–Roman)

The chronological indications provided by this evidence point to a late date (e.g., Hellenistic–Roman) for the mortuary activities described. That inference accords with the chronology, proposed above, of greater visibility and prominence in ritual behavior, and of greater social and economic differentiation in the landscape.

CONCLUSION

This report has attempted to build some baseline arguments about a region that presents a complicated and unusual post-prehistoric history, a history that has contributed to its frequent archaeological neglect. How far our reasoning and contentions are an artifact of our present understanding will, of course, be tested by time and further research. At present, Messenia appears to display certain patterns of regional activity somewhat out of step with those observed in other parts of the Greek mainland and islands. The relatively late advent of small “farmstead” sites in Messenia, by comparison with the dates of their appearance in other regions reported in survey results, is one example of this difference, aligned here with the peculiar history of Messenia in Archaic and Classical times. Another is the apparent proliferation in Messenia of Roman villa sites, which are reported in relatively few numbers outside of the regions of Messenia and her near neighbor, Achaia. Such observations underline the need for constant comparison of regional data sets and for sensitivity to local trajectories and idiosyncrasies, as well as to more overarching, shared patterns of development.129

To conclude, we can briefly illustrate the usefulness such a comparative approach has had in studies of the difference in settlement patterns of Laconia and Messenia at the time of Spartan domination. The Laconia Survey, operating in an area adjacent to Sparta, recovered a pattern of dispersed, small-scale settlements where, it has been argued, helot cultivators dwelled in a mixture of isolated farmsteads and hamlets—quite the reverse of the Messenian picture. As Richard Catling has noted, comparing settlement patterns of Laconia and Messenia with reference to these results, “a clear distinction begins to emerge in the ways in which these two groups were distributed in the landscape, and presumably the ways in which the two regions were farmed.”130 Stephen Hodkinson takes the implications of these findings a step further: “In short, those helot farmers under the closest degree of supervision by their Spartiate masters were settled in a pattern of residence less conducive to collective coordination of agricultural production by the helots themselves.”131 The ramifications of these differences remain to be completely explored, but their implications for illuminating a very obscure area in Greek history and archaeology are crystal-clear.

129. The need for such comparative approaches, as well as the difficulties they entail, are discussed in the papers in Alcock and Cherry 2004.
APPENDIX

CERAMIC OBSERVATIONS,
HELENISTIC THROUGH
LATE ROMAN

QUESTIONS AND PROBLEMS

Pottery constitutes by far the lion's share of the abundant and wide-ranging data retrieved by PRAP. Pottery was collected assiduously, in part for the information that sherds encode about their origins and functions—and so about the local and foreign connections and activities of the region's ancient inhabitants—but primarily for intrinsic chronological information. It is more than a little disappointing, therefore, that the collected pottery of the Hellenistic and Roman periods—during which fundamental political, religious, and economic shifts occurred—provides more questions and problems than answers and insights.

The first question is a simple one of quantity. Why is there relatively so little pottery from the Hellenistic and Roman periods? Far more pieces of definitely dated pottery were found dating to the Late Helladic period (ca. 1680–1060 B.C.) than to the roughly equivalent Hellenistic–Early Roman period (ca. 323 B.C. to A.D. 400).133 Two possible explanations may be offered. One is that there was significantly less settlement, at least within the PRAP survey area, during the later period. If true, this would be an important and interesting aspect of long-term patterns of settlement in the region.

Another, more troubling explanation may also be offered, however: that we simply cannot recognize the vast majority of the region's locally produced Hellenistic and Roman pottery. A fundamental problem with pottery picked up in survey is that it is bereft of its single most vital chronological clue: a specific depositional context. Without the surety of other

132. The production of this article has been a team effort, but it should be noted that this appendix is the work of two individuals only: Andrea Berlin (Hellenistic through Early Roman, submitted March 1999) and Sebastian Heath (Later Roman). The views expressed at points here, concerning the quality of the survey data set and the nature of the interpretations that can be drawn from it, are not shared by all the authors.

133. Given the variation in collection methodologies among the sites, the most unbiased way to measure quantity is on the basis of material recovered in the initial tract collections. Roughly four times as many sherds discovered in these collections can be reliably dated to the Late Helladic period (565 sherds) as to the Hellenistic and Early Roman periods (142 sherds). The known presence of Mycenaean remains in the study area, not least the Palace of Nestor, was of course a chief reason for the selection of the survey area.
associated remains, it is impossible to assign a secure and specific data range to ambiguous or unidentifiable sherds. Surveys in regions where there has been long study of local, stratified assemblages may successfully avoid this problem, because a relatively small percentage of their finds are unrecognizable.134 In Messenia, the Bronze Age constitutes such a well-studied period, and in fact only a small percentage of the material picked up by PRAP in areas of known, heavy Bronze Age occupation (e.g., around the Palace of Nestor) was considered unidentifiable. That was not the case for material of the Hellenistic and Roman periods, however.

Stratified pottery has only recently been the object of study at the region’s largest site, Messene, and little has yet been published. Of the few stratified or narrowly dated assemblages from elsewhere in the Peloponnese, however, one fact is quite clear: the pottery of the Hellenistic and Roman periods is very “local” in its varieties, styles, and decorative effects.135 Bailey’s comments on the Hellenistic and Roman pottery recovered at Sparta apply equally well to Messenia: “as always in the early stages of the study of locally produced pottery . . . [t]he dates suggested are all rather uncertain and comparatively wide; most of the pottery . . . is little known archaeologically.”136 It is likely that many sherds currently identified in the PRAP databases as Hellenistic and Roman are not at all from those periods; and conversely, it is likely that significant quantities of unidentified sherds within the PRAP database derive in fact from Hellenistic or Roman times.

This fundamental aspect of the ceramic database necessitates a heavy, almost an exclusive, reliance on securely identified and dated imported wares, especially fine table wares and amphoras.137 In fact, Hellenistic and/or Roman-period occupation at any site within the PRAP study area could be attested only if such imports existed. This in turn leads to another crucial quandary: PRAP simply cannot recognize or account for those times in which imported wares were few, rare, or absent. As it happens, such times constitute the majority. Local production of table wares was always more, rather than less, common, and the importation of wine and oil—carried in transport amphoras—was generally unnecessary given Messenia’s agricultural productivity.138 There were, in fact, only three relatively narrow periods of time in which Messenians turned to outside producers.139 One was the later Hellenistic period (the second and first centuries B.C.); the second was the Early Imperial period (first century A.D.); and the third was the Late Roman period (fifth—seventh centuries A.D.).

134. The Sydney Cyprus Survey Project is a good example of such surveys (Given et al. 1999), as are any of the grids surveyed under the auspices of the Archaeological Survey of Israel (e.g., Frankel and Getzov 1997). John Hayes offers general but apt comments on the problems of “reading” survey pottery: “As surveys have become more methodical, so the demands made on specialists . . . have become more exacting. Computers demand the answer ‘yes’ or ‘no,’ and dislike . . . ‘maybe,’ ‘perhaps.’ . . . Hence the pottery expert is expected to identify every ware of every period. We can do that, of course, if you don’t ask us how we reach our conclusions. . . . As we know, survey work is extremely good for getting people’s noses to the ground, but without supporting excavation we have no chance of classifying our finds with the necessary degree of detail” (Hayes 2000, pp. 105, 107).

135. Much of the pottery from Hellenistic Corinth (Corinth VII.3; Corinth XVIII.1; Romano 1994), Argos (Brunaud 1970), Mycenae (Rudolph 1978), and Sparta (Bailey 1993) is unique to each site.

136. Bailey 1993, pp. 221, 249.


139. See “Imported Wares,” below.
Only the last of these three periods, the Late Roman, corresponds precisely to a specific part of the PRAP chronological schema (Table 1). The first two—later Hellenistic and Early Imperial—fall within periods that are defined by PRAP much more broadly. The PRAP schema considers Hellenistic settlement to represent roughly the years from ca. 323–31 B.C., and Early Roman to represent roughly the years from 31 B.C. to A.D. 400. This leads to the last large question that the ceramic data inspire: what exactly does it mean to talk about “Hellenistic” and/or “Early Roman” settlement within the PRAP study area?

PRAP’s period dates are clear and defensible from a political and military point of view; in other words, they are “historical” dates. They are not, however, “archaeological” dates, which is to say, they are not congruent with the known production dates of the imported pottery. Since it is the pottery that comprises the “facts on the ground” and so testifies to the period of activity represented, it is important to articulate precisely what the pottery dates are (for which, see Tables 7–9). Given this discrepancy in chronological divisions, shifts in quantities of material—such as the increase in numbers of sherds from the Classical to Hellenistic period—should be understood to indicate, for example, “150 years of local production (difficult to recognize and not closely datable) followed by the appearance of identifiable imports in the second century B.C.” The shift may indeed indicate an “increased tempo” of activity, but may instead indicate that only then did Mediterranean-wide shifts in commerce, travel, and/or production leave traces on the Messenian landscape.140 In sum, the quantitative and chronological ambiguities of the ceramic evidence recovered by PRAP are so profound that its utility for identifying the amount and date of Hellenistic and Roman activity is, it would seem, very questionable.

Local Wares
Imports account for an extremely small percentage of the total number of sherds retrieved by PRAP. Most of the pottery represents “local” production from a site, or sites, within Messenia, as yet unidentified. While specific dates or forms could rarely be assigned, three wares commonly appearing could be isolated. None of these three have been sampled by petrographic or neutron activation analysis, and so none can be firmly assigned to mineralogical or chemical groups. It is notable, however, that these three PRAP wares find ready correspondence with the three Messenian wares that Frederick Matson identified for UMME.141 We have termed these as follows: Messenian Household Ware, Messenian Utility/Cooking Ware, and Messenian Coarse Ware.

Messenian Household Ware
This is the fabric most commonly found for both slipped and plain pottery of the Hellenistic–Late Roman periods. The paste is fairly dense and fine-grained, slightly micaceous but otherwise with little visible temper. It is quite soft, chalky in texture, and consequently does not hold a slip well at

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140. See below for discussion of Late Hellenistic and Early Roman import patterns.
all. The color ranges from an even, light reddish yellow (5YR 7/8) to a more warmly hued light orange (5YR 6/8). Pieces of a paler light brown occasionally occur (7.5YR 7/6–8/6). Vessels are almost always fully fired. Most forms are somewhat thick walled (0.4–0.6 cm), and are generally finished simply, even cursorily, with few extraneous details or surface treatments. This fabric would seem to correspond to UMME sherds with “fine texture, pale yellow, pink, and light red in color,” and with “few visible inclusions except occasional bits of limestone and ochre, and minute flakes of muscovite,” although the description is given in the context of Late Helladic ceramic remains.142

**Messenian Utility/Cooking Ware**

This fabric occurs most commonly among vessels intended for cooking and kitchen tasks, such as basins and jars. It is of the same color as Messenian Household Ware, but differs in having a profuse amount of sand inclusions. The sand may have occurred naturally within the clay or have been a deliberate addition intended to harden or strengthen the vessel walls. This ware is fairly soft, despite the sand, and the surface has generally weathered away. The fabric corresponds to UMME sherds that are described as “coarse textured, made from a naturally sandy clay,” about which Matson said further, “it is not possible to speak of this group as intentionally tempered without better knowledge of the textural variations in the local clays.”145

**Messenian Coarse Ware**

This term is reserved for a distinctive, exceptionally coarse ware used to manufacture pithoi and some large basins. It shares the same color range as the Household and Utility/Cooking wares, from light yellow brown (7.5YR 7/6) to light pink (5YR 7/6). Vessels are very thick walled (up to 2 cm), and there is almost always a light firing core. The paste seems clearly to have had a variety of added tempering agents, which appear visually as small, medium, and large, rounded and angular, red, white, gray, and brown inclusions. Most of the small and medium rounded inclusions are probably sand. Matson identified this ware as “intentionally tempered pottery, e.g., for pithoi,” and proposed some possible identifications for the inclusions.144 The red may be red shale, which breaks into hard, angular grains up to 5 mm in length. The gray, white, and brown inclusions may be chert, and the small and medium rounded lighter brown may be mudstone.

**Imported Wares**

While the specific output and production dates of many Hellenistic and Roman-period pottery manufactories are known, imported pottery still presents problems of identification, primarily due to a tremendous amount of “copy-cat” production through which black- and red-slipped table vessels of similar shapes were produced throughout the Mediterranean basin. A single apt exemplum illustrating the magnitude of these problems is the
bowl with incurved rim. Beginning in Early Hellenistic times, and continuing at least through the fifth century A.D., almost every known fine table ware manufacturer in the central and eastern Mediterranean produced a similar version of this shape.\textsuperscript{145} Meanwhile, the all-purpose utility of the form, perhaps coupled with the ubiquity of imported models, inspired myriad "local" versions as well.\textsuperscript{146} Regrettably, Messenia’s alkaline soils cause most imported pottery to lose its surface slip over time, while the vessels manufactured in the friable local clays do not hold their original slips well to begin with. Moreover, the interior clay color (that is, the color of a sherd that has lost its surface slip) of Messenian Household Ware is quite similar to the interior clay color of many different imports. As a consequence of these conditions, it is sometimes impossible to identify an unslipped rim fragment of an incurved rim bowl—one of the most common forms of table ware—in terms of specific ware, origin, or even period. This circumstance further narrows the field of informative survey sherds: not only to imports alone, but to those pieces among the imports that are at present sufficiently distinctive.

**Late Hellenistic**

A small but interesting array of imported fine wares and amphoras dating from the mid-second through the first century B.C. is attested from Messenia. PRAP recovered a Campana A plate, a Campana B bowl, and a first-century B.C. Eastern Sigillata A (ESA) bowl, as well as two fragments of Dressel (Dr.) 1A amphoras (see Table 7). Other finds from the immediate region fill out this picture considerably. From the Divari and Tsopani Rahi cemeteries come black-glazed moldmade and hemispherical bowls, grayware (Attic?) unguentaria, white-ground lagynoi, and amphoras from Brindisi, as well as coins dating between 280 and 146 B.C.\textsuperscript{147} From Messene itself comes a tremendous amount of Hellenistic Eastern Sigillata A, including a fishplate (the very earliest shape, dating 150–100 B.C.), grayware unguentaria, Graeco-Italic and Dr. I amphoras, and Aegean lagynoi.\textsuperscript{148}

The imported pottery found at Messene, Divari, and Tsopani Rahi, and by PRAP at sites throughout the survey area, reflects one point of outstanding interest: by the middle of the second century B.C., Messenia received table wares from both eastern and western producers, but practi-


\textsuperscript{146} Bailey 1993, p. 227, no. 33 (Sparta); Rudolph 1978, pp. 228–229 (Mycenae); Brin 1970, pp. 522–523 (Argos); Corinth VII.3, pp. 29–33, pls. 2, 43, 44 (Corinth). In fact, we do not know of any site where “local production” of this form is not identified. We have examined vessels at Messene that surely fall into the category of “local production” as well.

\textsuperscript{147} The contexts of the Messene finds are pit XVI/2/ΧΩΠ I 0, and the second of three successive floor fills from XVI/2Ω5. We thank Petros Themelis for showing us this material, and for allowing us to discuss it here.


TABLE 7. SELECTED LATE HELLENISTIC IMPORTS AND IMITATIONS RECOVERED BY PRAP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ware</th>
<th>Shape</th>
<th>Form/Type No.*</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>PRAP Artifact or Site No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Campana A</td>
<td>Plate</td>
<td>Morel 2233b</td>
<td>Ca. 250–200 b.c.</td>
<td>E93-901312-06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campana B</td>
<td>Bowl</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>E93-901122-01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESA</td>
<td>Bowl</td>
<td>EAA form 22B</td>
<td>Ca. 110 b.c.—a.d. 10</td>
<td>I04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>—</td>
<td>Amphora</td>
<td>Dressel 1A</td>
<td>Late second—mid-first century b.c.</td>
<td>E01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Form and type numbers for Campana ware are derived from Morel 1981; for Eastern Sigillata A (ESA), from Hayes 1985 (= EAA).


dically no eastern Mediterranean commodities—for example, transport amphoras. Taken in a Mediterranean-wide context, the variety of table wares is not remarkable; a similar picture appears at, among other sites, Sabratha, Berenice (Benghazi), Athens, and Delos. In neighboring Laconia, however, there are practically no imports at all in the Hellenistic period, neither table wares nor amphoras, and only in and after Augustan times does there appear a scattering of both eastern (Eastern Sigillata B and Pergamene relief ware) and western (Italian Sigillata) table wares, along with both eastern (Cretan Dr. 43) and western (Dr. 6) amphoras. The wide range of imported table wares attested in Messenia demonstrates, in contrast, at least some connections with the wider Mediterranean world.

Several scholars have suggested that the appearance of Italian table wares and amphoras at Athens and Delos reflects the latter’s Athenian takeover, its attendant economic transformation, and the consequent involvement of Italian businessmen on the island. Elizabeth Lyding Will has termed this development “economic Romanization.” Comparable influences could account for the specific and various imports attested in Messenia, for the near absence of Late Hellenistic eastern Mediterranean amphoras, and for the few examples of western (Dr. 1) amphoras: Italians traveling to and from the Aegean, who may well have visited Messenia on occasion, would have been more likely to convey commodities on their way over than on their way back. The specific types of Late Hellenistic imports found in Messenia are more suggestive of such circumstances of casual acquisition than of deliberate commerce.

149. Fulford and Tomber 1994, pp. 2–4 (Sabratha); Kenrick 1985 (Berenice); Agora XXIX, pp. 221–223 (Athens); Rotroff 1997, p. 98 (Athens); Morel 1986 (Delos).
150. Bailey 1993, pp. 221–222. The single nonlocal Hellenistic vessel firmly identified at Sparta is a white-ground lagynos (Bailey 1993, p. 232, no. 79, fig. 8). Since, however, a great many have been found at Argos (Brunneau 1970, pp. 513–518), the Spartan example may have arrived from there via local transit.
152. Will 1997, p. 120. Nicholas Rauh (1999, p. 171) points out that interpreting these finds is not so simple: “As with Campanian ‘black glazed’ table ware [found in the Aegean], evidence capable of demonstrating that Italian wine exports were intended for commercial redistribution to Aegean natives, and not for resident Italian domestic consumption seems wanting.”
153. The Italian predilection for the Campanian wine carried in Dr. 1 amphoras is well illustrated by the vessels that Roman surveyors and/or soldiers left at Corinth at the end of the second century b.c. See Romano 1994, pp. 63, 86–88, nos. 63–69.
**TABLE 8. SELECTED EARLY ROMAN IMPORTS AND IMITATIONS RECOVERED BY PRAP**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ware</th>
<th>Shape</th>
<th>Form/Type No.*</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>PRAP Artifact No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thin-walled</td>
<td>Beaker</td>
<td>Moews XLVIII</td>
<td>Augustan</td>
<td>I93-9041611GR-05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESA</td>
<td>Bowl</td>
<td><em>EAA</em> form 42</td>
<td>10 B.C. – A.D. 20/30</td>
<td>I93-9040321GR-05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESA</td>
<td>Bowl</td>
<td><em>EAA</em> form 46</td>
<td>A.D. 1–25</td>
<td>I93-9041611VC-09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imitation ESA</td>
<td>Plate</td>
<td><em>EAA</em> form 33</td>
<td>A.D. 1–30/50</td>
<td>I93-9040453GR-02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thin-walled</td>
<td>Beaker</td>
<td>Moews XLVII</td>
<td>Tiberian–Claudian</td>
<td>G94-9011021GR-02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imitation Cypriot Sigillata</td>
<td>Bowl</td>
<td><em>EAA</em> form P5/6</td>
<td>Early–mid-first century A.D.</td>
<td>I93-9040551GR-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imitation ESA</td>
<td>Plate</td>
<td><em>EAA</em> form 34</td>
<td>A.D. 40–70</td>
<td>I93-9040563GR-01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imitation ESA</td>
<td>Bowl</td>
<td><em>EAA</em> form 48</td>
<td>A.D. 40–70</td>
<td>G94-9011021GR-03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imitation ESA</td>
<td>Bowl</td>
<td><em>EAA</em> form 49</td>
<td>A.D. 40–70</td>
<td>G94-9010991GR-04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESB</td>
<td>Plate</td>
<td><em>EAA</em> form 8</td>
<td>Mid-first century A.D.</td>
<td>D93-901121-02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESA</td>
<td>Bowl with stamp: XAPIC</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>Mid-first century A.D.</td>
<td>I92-027-09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imitation ESB</td>
<td>Plate</td>
<td><em>EAA</em> form 17A</td>
<td>Ca. A.D. 50–100</td>
<td>I93-904053VC-04, G93-097-01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imitation Cypriot Sigillata</td>
<td>Bowl</td>
<td><em>EAA</em> form P12</td>
<td>Ca. A.D. 50–150</td>
<td>I93-904041GR-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESA</td>
<td>Plate</td>
<td><em>EAA</em> form 36</td>
<td>A.D. 60–100</td>
<td>I93-9040471GR-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESA</td>
<td>Bowl</td>
<td><em>EAA</em> form 50</td>
<td>A.D. 60/70–100</td>
<td>I92-057-02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESA</td>
<td>Bowl</td>
<td><em>EAA</em> form 51</td>
<td>A.D. 70–120</td>
<td>G94-9010991VC-05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESA</td>
<td>Bowl</td>
<td><em>EAA</em> form 52</td>
<td>Hadrianic</td>
<td>I92-045-08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Form and type numbers for thin-walled ware are derived from Moews 1973; for Eastern Sigillata A (ESA), Eastern Sigillata B (ESB), and Cypriot Sigillata, from Hayes 1985 (*EAA*).

**Early Roman**

As is the case for PRAP’s Late Hellenistic imported pottery, that of the Early Roman period is helpfully augmented by finds from the Divari cemetery and Messene itself. PRAP finds include many Eastern Sigillata A bowls and plates and an Eastern Sigillata B plate, imitations of Eastern Sigillata A and B and Cypriot Sigillata, and Italian thin-walled ware (see Table 8). The imitations imply knowledge of imported origins and, in fact, the Divari tombs did contain Augustan-period beakers of Italian thin-walled ware. At Messene, an enormous pit contained a great deal of Augustan- and Tiberian-period Eastern Sigillata A bowls, Italian cooking ware, and local versions of first-century A.D. thin-walled and Eastern Sigillata B forms, all covered in black glaze.154 Notably absent are Italian fine wares, as well as transport amphorae from both the eastern and western Mediterranean.

Eastern Sigillata A table wares represent the majority of the region’s Early Roman imports, and this is surely a meaningful manifestation. Whether or not the much-reduced number of Italian products in Messenia indicates reduced traffic from the west, the increase in eastern products certainly reflects more activity from the east. In order to evaluate the significance of this increase, Messenia’s import patterns should be compared with those elsewhere in the Peloponnese. The comparison reveals, again, a

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154. The context of the Early Roman-period finds from Messene is again pit XVI/2/ΧΩΡΤΟ."
dramatic difference between Messenia and Laconia—more specifically, Sparta. Excavators at Sparta have identified a few pieces of Italian Sigillata, a couple of Eastern Sigillata B bowls, and, exceptionally, one Pergamene relief-ware bowl, but not a sherd of Eastern Sigillata A.\textsuperscript{155} This evidence indicates that Sparta acquired some few luxury goods from Italy and from Asia Minor, but not from the southeastern Mediterranean.

At Corinth, on the other hand, Eastern Sigillata A comprised 24 percent of the imported table wares in late Augustan and Tiberian times, while Italian Sigillata accounted for almost the entire remainder.\textsuperscript{156} The range and quantity of Italian Sigillata found at Corinth represents active and deliberate commerce, supplied specifically from Arezzo. The city’s economic vitality during this period has been explained as a direct outgrowth of its new colonial status and of its favorable position astride the isthmus, which was able to accommodate traders from east and west.\textsuperscript{157}

The significant disparities among the Early Roman imports attested at Corinth, at Sparta, and in Messenia reveal regional idiosyncrasies in trade and in the acquisition of imported luxury goods that are explicable according to the locales’ specific situations and settings. In the Early Roman period, for example, Corinth’s political fortunes affected its economic ones; and it may be the case that inland cities, such as Sparta, received some “trickle-down” activities and benefits. Messenia, on the other hand, seems to have been cut off from the west—perhaps because traffic from Italy, which in Late Hellenistic times had sailed around and sometimes stopped in Messenia, now aimed instead at Corinth and sites north.

While Italian traders ignored Messenia in the Early Roman period, the region’s inhabitants received, in quantity, the products of the southeastern Mediterranean potteries. The spread of large quantities of Eastern Sigillata A into the central Mediterranean at this time is well attested by the finds from Knossos, Berenice, Sabratha, Carthage, and even Pompeii.\textsuperscript{158} Explanation of this spread has been sought in the circumstances of the supply of Egyptian grain to Rome.\textsuperscript{159} Shippers sailed north from Egypt to Phoenician and north Syrian ports, where Eastern Sigillata A was produced, and thence to Puteoli.\textsuperscript{160} Redistribution from Italy may account for the notably privileged position of Eastern Sigillata A at sites in southern Italy as compared with other eastern fine wares, as well as for the unusual import patterns that now appear in North Africa—abundant Eastern Sigillata A alongside Italian-made amphoras, mortaria, and cooking vessels.\textsuperscript{161} In Messenia, the large amount of Augustan- and Tiberian-period Eastern Sigillata A—along with the telling absence of other contemporary eastern fine wares—suggests that Egyptian grain ships may have stopped in the southwestern Peloponnese on their way toward Italy. The contemporary absence from Messenia of the widely distributed Italian fine table wares—such as Arretine, then so common at Corinth—may be explained by Messenia’s agricultural prosperity, which exempted her from the imperial redistribution of grain carried out, for example, at Carthage, Sabratha, and Berenice.

The contrast between the admittedly scanty imports of the later Hellenistic and Early Roman periods in Messenia presents an ironic picture.

\textsuperscript{155} Bailey 1993, p. 222.
\textsuperscript{156} Slane 1987, p. 193.
\textsuperscript{157} Slane 1987, p. 200; Corinth XVIII.2; Wright 1980; Slane 1986.
\textsuperscript{158} Sackett 1992, pp. 150–152 (Knossos); Kenrick 1987, pp. 141, 144 (Berenice); Fulford and Tomber 1994, p. 3 (Sabratha); Hayes 1976, p. 77 (Carthage); Pucci 1977 (Pompeii).
\textsuperscript{159} Fulford and Tomber 1994, pp. 3–4.
\textsuperscript{161} Riley 1981a, pp. 74–75.
In later Hellenistic times, Messenia’s few foreign visitors seem likely to have come from Italy, and insofar as Messenia enjoyed international connections, they may be characterized as western, or at least central, Mediterranean. In Early Imperial times, however, Messenia became a region bypassed by Rome and linked instead, albeit ephemerally, to the east. Augustus may have transformed the Mediterranean into a “Roman sea,” but Messenia’s inhabitants seem not to have benefited thereby.

**Later Roman**

The second and early third centuries a.d. in the PRAP study area of Messenia are not easily defined in terms of ceramics, not least owing to the absence of imported fine wares. In the western Mediterranean, this is the period when African Red Slip (ARS) becomes dominant; in the Aegean, it is the period of the so-called “Çandarlı monopoly,” a term that highlights the dominance of Çandarlı among red fine wares at many sites, including Athens and Knossos.162 Çandarlı is also known at Berenice and Ostia.163 Its absence from the PRAP study area further suggests that the region was not served by the main routes of long-distance trade that were conveying cheap, well-made fine wares to tables around the Mediterranean.

We are on firmer ground with the evidence of later ARS (see Table 9). Tract walking and site collection in the PRAP survey territory recovered a total of 94 sherds of this ware. The “villa” at G01 (Marathopolis Dialiskari) and the large settlement at I04 (Romanou Romanou) produced 34 and 45 such sherds, respectively. The only other relatively large recording of ARS is that of 11 sherds at D01 (Gargaliani Kanalos), perhaps to be associated with rock-cut graves. Sites A04 (Metamorfosi Skarminga) and G02 (Vromoneri Ayia Sotira) each produced an unclassified body sherd, and areas VII and VIII each contained an off-site LRP 53A rim (late fourth–early fifth century a.d.). Romanou and Dialiskari are the enduring features in the Roman landscape, and their access to these imports is presumably both a cause and a symptom of this stability.

The range of ARS forms in the PRAP study area, while covering the main categories of the ware, is hardly comprehensive. Of the 94 sherds recorded by PRAP, 40 were diagnostic. The most common form was the LRP 50 plate, of which eight rims and three possible bases were found. In the absence of stratified deposits, the form can be difficult to date more precisely than to the early third to early fifth centuries. Sherds recovered by PRAP include extremely thin-walled and highly polished vessels that can be of early-third-century date, and an LRP 32/58 and an LRP 58A, from Kanalos and Dialiskari, respectively, are also broadly datable from the late third into the fifth century. Two LRP 67 and a single LRP 104B complete the series of large plates found by the project. The rest of the identified ARS from Romanou and Dialiskari consists mainly of LRP 80A and LRP 99 bowls of the fifth and sixth centuries. The only additional piece of note, found at Dialiskari, has exterior rouletting and is near in form to Bonifay type 76.164 In general, then, the range of ARS forms is relatively incomplete—with mainstays of the series such as LRP 61, LRP 87, and LRP 91 missing or not securely identifiable—but nonetheless indicative of sustained access to North African products.


163. Kenrick 1985, pp. 257–265 (Berenice); Martin and De Sena 2003, p. 44 (Ostia).

The other Late Roman fine ware found in the PRAP study area is Phocaean Red Slip (PRS), of which surface collection recorded 16 rims and two bases. The predominance of diagnostic pieces can be explained by the fact that the thin slip of most PRS sherds may not have survived in the acidic soils of the region, in contrast to the sturdier slip of ARS that allows even small body sherds to be confidently identified. Comparison of the 18 PRS diagnostics to the 40 ARS diagnostics is thus a better indicator of the relative amounts of these wares than comparison of the total sherd counts for each. One also needs to account for the fact that the identified PRS forms—one LRP 1D, a maximum of eleven LRP 3, one LRP 5B, and five LRP 10—one range in date from the early fifth to the seventh century A.D. Given this chronology for PRS, any allocation of the broadly dated ARS forms to the fourth century will decrease the proportion of ARS to PRS during the time when PRS was imported.

The imported amphoras suggest limited contact with the Mediterranean-wide market for transported foodstuffs in the early centuries A.D. but growing access to imports in the fourth century and later. The third century may be represented by a so-called Forlimpopoli amphora and by one or two Africano Grande rims, which can, however, date substantially later. The discovery of numerous combed body sherds, as well as 13 rims, of Late Roman Amphora 2 (LR 2) from the Aegean basin indicates that trade may have increased in the fourth century. In general, however, the Late Roman amphora assemblage is poor. A single LR 5/6 Palestinian rim and a single LR 4 Gaza rim indicate at least minimal access to these relatively common forms, but the absence of the easily recognizable LR 3,

*Form and type numbers for African Red Slip (ARS) are derived from LRP and Bonifay 2004; for Phocaean Red Slip (PRS), from LRP; for amphoras, from Riley 1981b.

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**Table 9. Selected Late Roman Imports Recovered by PRAP**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ware</th>
<th>Shape</th>
<th>Form/Type No.*</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>PRAP Site No. (No. of Examples Recorded)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ARS</td>
<td>Deep plate</td>
<td>LRP 50</td>
<td>Early third–early fifth century A.D.</td>
<td>D01 (2), G01 (2), I04 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARS</td>
<td>Deep plate</td>
<td>LRP 32/58</td>
<td>Late third–early fifth century A.D.</td>
<td>D01 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARS</td>
<td>Deep plate</td>
<td>LRP 58A</td>
<td>Ca. A.D. 290–375</td>
<td>G01 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARS</td>
<td>Deep plate</td>
<td>LRP 53A</td>
<td>Late fourth–early fifth century A.D.</td>
<td>Off-site (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARS</td>
<td>Deep plate</td>
<td>LRP 67</td>
<td>Ca. A.D. 360–420</td>
<td>G01 (1), I04 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARS</td>
<td>Bowl</td>
<td>LRP 80A</td>
<td>Mid–late fifth century A.D.</td>
<td>G01 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARS</td>
<td>Deep plate</td>
<td>Bonifay 76</td>
<td>Mid–fifth–early sixth century A.D.</td>
<td>G01 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARS</td>
<td>Bowl</td>
<td>LRP 91?</td>
<td>Mid–fifth–early sixth century A.D.</td>
<td>I04 (1) (base only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARS</td>
<td>Bowl</td>
<td>LRP 104B</td>
<td>Late fifth–mid–sixth century A.D.</td>
<td>G01 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARS</td>
<td>Bowl</td>
<td>LRP 99</td>
<td>Late fifth–mid–seventh century A.D.</td>
<td>G01 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRS</td>
<td>Deep plate</td>
<td>LRP 1D</td>
<td>Early–later fifth century A.D.</td>
<td>I04 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRS</td>
<td>Deep plate</td>
<td>LRP 3C</td>
<td>Ca. A.D. 460–490</td>
<td>G01 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRS</td>
<td>Deep plate</td>
<td>LRP 3D</td>
<td>Late fifth century A.D.</td>
<td>G01 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRS</td>
<td>Deep plate</td>
<td>LRP 3F</td>
<td>Early–mid–sixth century A.D.</td>
<td>G01 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRS</td>
<td>Deep plate</td>
<td>LRP 5B</td>
<td>Ca. A.D. 500–550</td>
<td>I04 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRS</td>
<td>Deep plate</td>
<td>LRP 10</td>
<td>Ca. A.D. 570–660</td>
<td>A04 (1), G01 (3), I04 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>—</td>
<td>Amphora</td>
<td>Africano Grande</td>
<td>Third–fourth century A.D.</td>
<td>G01 (1 or 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>—</td>
<td>Amphora</td>
<td>LR 2</td>
<td>Fourth–sixth century A.D.</td>
<td>D03 (1), G01 (9), G03 (1), I04 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>—</td>
<td>Amphora</td>
<td>LR 4</td>
<td>Fourth–sixth century A.D.</td>
<td>G01 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>—</td>
<td>Amphora</td>
<td>LR 5/6</td>
<td>Fourth–sixth century A.D.</td>
<td>G01 (1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Form and type numbers for African Red Slip (ARS) are derived from LRP and Bonifay 2004; for Phocaean Red Slip (PRS), from LRP; for amphoras, from Riley 1981b.

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165. PRAP artifact no. D93-901352-01; similar in form to Corinth XVIII.2, p. 116, no. 252, fig. 29.
166. For the LR typology, see Riley 1981b.
from southwestern Asia Minor, places a firm limit on the characterization of this region's integration into the Mediterranean economy.

How does this Late Roman assemblage compare with that of other predominantly rural regions known from systematic surface collection? The Laconia survey recorded almost no Roman fine wares of any period, though imports are known from Sparta itself.\textsuperscript{167} The publication of an excavated late-fifth- to early-sixth-century ARS bowl at Megalopolis further confirms the availability of imports in urban areas.\textsuperscript{168} Published material from the Northern Keos survey provides a selection of fifth- and sixth-century ARS roughly comparable to that recovered by PRAP, but its fourth-century assemblage is more substantial than the Messenian, and its Pontic Sigillata, Late Roman Athenian fine ware, and LR 1 indicate a more complex set of economic interactions.\textsuperscript{169}

Looking at comparanda from further afield, the assemblage recovered in the Biferno valley survey in Italy generally matches the PRAP assemblage, though it contains the important addition of two sherds of late-fifth- to early-sixth-century Cypriot Red Slip.\textsuperscript{170} These two centuries have been recognized as a time of active long-distance trade in the Mediterranean. Participation of the PRAP study area in this network is certain—perhaps even regular—but by no means impressive when compared with that of other regions.\textsuperscript{171}

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\textsuperscript{167} Lawson 1996, p. 111.

\textsuperscript{168} Gans 1998.

\textsuperscript{169} Sutton et al. 1991. Vroom (2003) shows that ARS, PRS, and LR 2 are also present in rural Boeotia.

\textsuperscript{170} Barker 1995; see especially sites A198 and A248.

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