

BOOK REVIEW

Stephen Mitchell: Cremna in Pisidia: an ancient city in peace and war. xv + 244 pages. 1996. London: Duckworth and The Classical Press of Wales. ISBN 0 7156 2696 5. H/B. £48.00.

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This book is the product of three seasons of survey work undertaken between 1985 and 1987 at the site of Hellenistic and Roman Cremna, a city located in the Taurus Mountains of southern Turkey. The author's stated objective is to make the survey results accessible to a wide range of interested parties and to avoid the pitfalls of delayed publication and what he regards as the 'earnest aridity' of most archaeological reports. Of course, in presenting the result of what was exclusively a campaign of field survey, Professor Mitchell is fortunate in being able to avoid those 'burdensome' appendices that are often 'clutter' excavation reports, and which he apparently regards with such distaste. This quibble aside, the book successfully marries an easy literary style with a detailed treatment of the surface remains of the surviving archaeology, to provide a useful overview of this interesting site.

However, it would have been very helpful if the book contained some better maps. The location of the site in relation to the modern road network of Turkey (Fig. 1) is of doubtful relevance, whereas a better topographic representation of the surrounding region would have been much appreciated. This deficiency leads to a substantive criticism of the author's assertion that the 'second blockading wall' of the Roman siegeworks was not an outer circumvallation designed to protect the besiegers against external attack. The otherwise admirable interpretative plan of the works of investment does not extend beyond the line of this second 'wall', and readers are therefore denied any opportunity to assess the tactical position of the same *vis-à-vis* the terrain beyond. A topographical map of the immediate vicinity of the city would also have served to bring out its distinctive siting on a precipitous promontory, and would have assisted in understanding the tactical significance of the substantial artillery position emplaced on the southern perimeter. Also, it is suggested that there may be evidence for sapping activity carried out against the city wall, but the description of the same would certainly have been improved by even a rudimentary sketch of the feature in question.

Unfortunately, a number of production errors do detract from the overall appeal of the volume, which, given that this represents the first work in a planned collaboration between two publishing houses, should certainly have been remedied. Although the work is generously illustrated, the quality of many photographs seemingly scanned in at a poor degree of resolution, leaves much to be desired. For example, the photograph of the central theatre in Plate 27 is unintelligible, as indeed is the collapsed aqueduct arch apparently visible in Plate 86. Several proofing errors also mar the text, with the misattribution of figures an all too common occurrence (again, for example, the reference to an illustration of a peristyle house (p. 163) in fact produces a plan of an aqueduct and plate 101 is a rolling missile, not a catapult as claimed on p. 187). At this sort of price the reader is entitled to expect better.

Despite these criticisms, Cremna in Pisida does serve as a useful introduction to the world of the 'second division' of Hellenistic/Roman cities whose remains are all too

often neglected in favour of those of their more illustrious neighbours.