Levant, the Peloponnese, central/northern Greece and the eastern Adriatic coast. Such a wide range is commendable, but it should be noted that these comparisons are interspersed throughout the volume. There has been no clear effort to present a coherent overview of the situation of Corinthian pottery within the wider Mediterranean world, which would have lent more credence to the argument of participation in a Hellenistic *koine*.

The final chapter brings together chronological arguments made in earlier chapters to present a concise chronological evolution of the Corinthian Hellenistic fine ware assemblage. The chapter can be read as the conclusions of the volume and presents a useful short overview of the main chronological patterns.

The catalogue presents a systematic overview of mostly complete vessels, in the main from the Panayia Field deposits. Each catalogue entry includes previous bibliography, dimensions (diameter and height), fabric, shape description, and context date. The only remark regarding this part is that the choice to give all measurements in meters but up to three decimal places seems rather odd in the context of vessels which are mostly small in dimension.

The first appendix provides additional information on the secondary contexts included in the study, following the same standards as the primary contexts in chapter three. Appendix 2 contains a matrix of similarity coefficients used to refine the relative position of contexts in the frequency seriation. The results of this analysis are described only very summarily. It would have been more interesting to see these types of analyses included in the main body of the argument presented in the volume. Finally, the third appendix consists of a table with concordances between the dates of vessel shapes in Edwards' Corinth VII.3 and the Panayia Field chronology. This provides a useful overview of the results of the study, and will surely turn out to be one of the most consulted pages of the volume.

To conclude, James' study on the fine wares of Corinth is a monumental work which will undoubtedly become one of the seminal volumes in Hellenistic pottery studies. It provides a much-needed update of the pottery chronology of an important centre in antiquity. The unequivocal focus on vessel shape at the expense of detailed fabric analysis, as well as the lack of detailed study of the imports, are regrettable, but are only minor faults in light of the merits of the volume. Once the follow-up work with a more detailed study of the imports of Corinth is published, these volumes will contribute enormously to the establishment of more reliable chronological sequences across the Peloponnese and the wider Hellenistic world.

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D. Graham J. Shipley, *The Early Hellenistic Peloponnese: Politics, Economies, and Networks 338-197 BC*. pp. xxxii+355, 1 ill., 9 maps, 7 tables. 2018. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. ISBN 2018978-0-521-87369-7, hardback $120.

The 'decline' of the *polis* in the late Classical and early Hellenistic periods numbers among the stock elements of historical narratives of ancient Greece. In the conventional rendition baked into old textbook descriptions of Greek civilization, the aftermath of the Peloponnesian War marked the end of a golden age as city-states devolved into a downward cycle of power play, hegemonic contest, and warfare that ended only with the conquests of Philip II and Alexander. The *polis* thereafter lost its autonomy, political directive, and ideological essence. As one popular textbook of western civilization put it recently: 'With the advent of Macedonian control, once-independent *poleis* became subject cities whose proud political traditions were no longer relevant.'[1] This picture of decline, decay, and irrelevance remains common today despite a range of recent scholarship reappraising the early Hellenistic period in Greece.

The Early Hellenistic Peloponnese: Politics, Economies, and Networks 338-197 BC (hereafter *TEHP*) is an important and compelling historical revision of this common picture of decline. The heart of the book is an analysis of continuity and change in the social and political conditions and interactions of Peloponnesian *poleis* under Macedonian dominance over the 'long third century' (338-197 BC). Shipley approaches the problem through a synthetic survey of the development of dozens of city-states in the core of the Greek peninsula, examining a variety of evidence that includes literature, inscriptions, coins,

[1] Cole, J. and Symes, C. 2020. *Western Civilizations: Their History & Their Culture*: 130. Twentieth edition. Volume A. New York, W.W. Norton & Company: New York, 2020.

and diverse material culture. By taking different 'passes' through the source material and examining the subject from the various angles of political agency, external control, economy and material conditions, elite identity, and networks, the author makes a convincing case that Macedonian control was usually light and that the *polis* remained 'the primary agent' of its own history (p. 288).

Shipley organizes the work into an introduction and four substantial chapters, each of which hammers away at the notion of stagnation and decline. The introduction ('The Acropolis of Greece', pp. 1-28) lays out the problem, reviews scholarship, discusses sources, and outlines parameters. Shipley draws attention to the absence of good synthetic work for the social and economic history of the early Hellenistic Peloponnese as a unit, reflecting especially the nature of written sources (which portray the peninsula in obscurity and decline) and outdated assumptions of modern scholars about the demise of the *polis*. The introduction also delineates the historical geography of the Peloponnese in terms of nine main culture regions into which *poleis* were often grouped in antiquity: Argolis, Korinthia, Sikyonia, Achaea, Eleia, Triphylia, Arkadia, Messenia, and Lakonia. The author notes the absence of sharp topographic divisions between them and underscores that *poleis* were more connected than they were divided through interdependent economies, travel, and social ties—a point that will be taken up again in a later discussion of networks and interactions (Ch. 5).

Chapter Two ('Warfare and Control', pp. 29-91) considers the question of how Macedonian power affected the Peloponnese. Shipley's aim here is to create a new overarching narrative of the principal patterns of *polis* interactions from immediately after the Peloponnesian War to the end of Macedonian control (197 BC). Archaeologists will be disappointed by the near absence of material culture in this presentation (archaeology is largely discussed in a later chapter) and the scarce attention to topography (considered at length in other chapters). The text, rather, comprises a traditional historical narrative based on a rereading of literary sources such as Xenophon, Polybius, Diodorus, and Plutarch and the modern scholars who have read them (especially W.W. Tarn). The constant run of names, dates, and actors feels at times overwhelming and tiresome, but the review is valuable for subsequent chapters, and the picture and patterns that Shipley outlines are significant: the destabilization of a dominant power (Sparta) in the early fourth century and the decline of hegemony led to a condition of multipolar power, conflict, and violent warfare that Macedonian dynasts sought (and failed) to control; delegation through patronage (the preference) or force (when necessary) were opposing strategies that kings adopted at times to promote stability. Following a decade-by-decade narrative presentation of political action and conflict, the author concludes that the control of the Peloponnesian *poleis* was a constant problem for Macedonians throughout the third century, which was complicated further by the persistence of Sparta as a viable power and the eventual development of federations. The end point is important: the picture of endemic conflict itself demonstrates that 'individual *poleis* retained a considerable degree of 'agency', of practical freedom to act as they chose' (89).

Chapter 3 ('Power and Politics') considers the question of political control at ground level—the individual *poleis*—from the perspective (again) of literary sources and, occasionally, inscriptions. Shipley's interest in this chapter surrounds the question of the nature of Macedonian power and its effects on political constitutions, power, and interactions. Important to the discussion is a view of the *polis* as a citizen society dominated by particular elite parties. Whether the constitution of a city-state was oligarchic or democratic, Shipley argues that *stasis* remained the essential element of political life and elite-run political parties the primary agents of change. The Macedonian installation of 'tyrants' (or 'governors') and garrisons in the third century, for example, only occurred through the support of particular aristocratic factions within individual cities. Likewise, the rule of kings in the Peloponnese was more pragmatic than oppressive because authority could be delegated to local elites with a view to maintaining power and peace. The advent of Macedonian rule in Greece brought changes, but elite competition and group rivalry remained essential elements of Greek political life. Rereading old evidence through this lens, Shipley concludes that even political division shows the continuing vitality of the *polis*.

A fourth chapter on 'Economies and Landscapes' (pp. 159-242) turns finally to material evidence to evaluate the economic effects of Macedonian rule and the conditions of life in the Peloponnese in the third century. The treatment of material culture as a consequence of political rule, and the cursory evaluation of local contexts, make the discussion seem undeveloped, but the overall effect is compelling. The author looks summarily at new building foundations, rural survey data, epigraphy, pottery, coins, and small finds to make a broad (albeit coarse) argument for widespread continuity. He recognizes that the constant wars and conflict—

outlined in detail in the previous two chapters—must have been detrimental to local communities (how could they not be?), but emphasizes that such effects were generally localized, occasional, and short-term, and were balanced by interventions that stimulated civic economies through building projects and the injection of capital through payments to soldiers and garrisons. If anything, Shipley suggests, widespread building activity and commercial activity indicate strong economies and the presence of elite involved in trade and production. The author concludes that material culture 'tends to disprove claims of widespread impoverishment' (p. 244) and highlights continuity and even improvement. That conclusion seems justified despite shortcomings in the author's treatment of the evidence, a point to which we will return below.

A final chapter ('Region, Network, and *Polis*', pp. 243-293) considers the reasons for continuity and modest improvement of the *polis* in the Hellenistic Peloponnese by thinking through issues of space, geography, and regional interactions. The author reiterates a point noted in earlier chapters, namely, that Macedonian kings had limited ambitions in their dominance of the Peloponnese, seeking neither tribute nor conscription, but mainly geopolitical security against Seleucid and Ptolemaic powers (systematic control was difficult, in any case, in light of the realities of topography and distance, even when garrisons were stationed at Corinth). Given the constraints and limited aims of Macedon's monarchs, the important question is how elite identities were forged and how change occurred. The author considers the question from several spatial frames—the broad culture regions (noted above), intra-regional and inter-regional interaction, and *polis*-to-*polis* exchange—and concludes that the fundamental unit of change remained individual city-states rather than federations or broad regions which were, after all, 'still agglomerations of separate *poleis*' (268). The *polis*, in this view, remained the agent of its own making at least until the direct involvement of Rome in 197 BC.

There is so much to appreciate in this study. Well-written and clearly presented, the author's overarching argument for the continuity of the *polis* in the Hellenistic Peloponnese is persuasive and important. Synthesizing political conditions at the level of an entire peninsula that encompasses as many as 132 separate *poleis* offers a unique and significant contribution to a body of scholarship characterized more commonly by studies of individual regions and city-states. Shipley's broad view of Greek *poleis* allows him to incorporate the historical trajectories and interactions of notably smaller communities like Halieis and Phleious that typically receive less attention in historical narrative than the big guns at Argos, Sparta, Corinth, and Sikyon. His working assumption of continuity from late Classical times (unless there is good evidence otherwise) also solves a problem of the lack of sources for the third century and provides an even wider chronological catchment and context for reading the Hellenistic period.

The book also has much to offer scholars whose work intersects with the Greek *polis*, the Hellenistic period, or the Peloponnese. The text is packed full of interesting discussions about political interactions and the physical character of the regions of the Peloponnese. Shipley provides both original analysis and state-of-the-field overviews of evidence for one-man rule ('tyrants') under the Macedonian dynasts, the meaning of *stasis* in the early Hellenistic era, the implications of coin production and monetization for understanding the economy, and the nature of regions and networks of *poleis* in the Peloponnese, among others. Any archaeologist who carries out fieldwork in southern Greece will benefit from dropping into the book in different places. I appreciated the thought-provoking discussion on region, network, and *polis* (Ch. 5) which considers the regions and territories of the Peloponnese from a range of vantage points that connect with issues of interest to archaeologists: the nature and definition of a region, topographic boundaries and connectivity, interdependent economies, and regional and local identities. One notable section is a discussion of connectivity and routes that imagines the structure of communication and travel that must have facilitated flows of information, people, and resources within and between territories (pp. 271-282). Whether or not these have left distinct archaeological signatures,[2] Shipley rightly emphasizes the relationship between a dynamic network of communication and travel and broader historical contingencies and geopolitical factors. Connectivity and remoteness are contingent and fluid.

Material culture forms an important and valuable component of the overall argument of *TEHP* as outlined earlier, but one cannot escape the feeling that it plays a supportive and secondary role when set aside the evidence of ancient literature. Archaeological evidence is absent in the second

[2] 'Archaeological evidence is not yet in hand in sufficient quantity to allow us to reconstruct networks of routes in detail' (p. 272).

chapter, which is designed to frame the study by presenting 'a new, comprehensive narrative for the Peloponnese' (p. 87). Nor does it play much of a role in the third chapter on power and the *polis*. When material culture is fully introduced in the fourth chapter, it serves as a base denominator for measuring the economic effect of Macedonian rule rather than as a factor or force that itself shapes those interactions. The value of archaeology, in short, lies in its empirical support—its confirmation—of a narrative established from literary sources, rather than as a component that might shape an integrated narrative. The compartmentalization of material evidence to a single chapter may be justified for its heuristic simplicity, but its effect is to separate bodies of evidence that might be read together to create a more original synthetic narrative. *TEHP* is more a history that makes use of archaeological evidence than an integrated archaeological study that builds from the ground up.

Shipley's review of archaeological evidence shows consistent awareness of underlying archaeological source problems but is necessarily cursory as author and reader are constantly on the move through great swaths of bodies of evidence in the interest of full synthesis. The reader will need to consider the details on a case by case basis. Shipley's treatment of rural survey (pp. 183-199), for example, summarizes interpretations of scholarship surrounding seven intensive field surveys (supplemented with consideration of other kinds of survey) against a sharp discussion of the meaning of terms like 'decline' and 'upturn' and the problems of estimating population growth from pottery. The author rightly emphasizes the variety of rural conditions evident between regions and within regions that suggest continuity of settlement in Hellenistic era, but some details warrant a revisit.[3] The discussion of patterns of epigraphic evidence—an apparent uptick in the third century—is all too brief (pp. 199-201) and, as Shipley notes, invites further questions about preservation and dates. An encyclopaedic overview of the abundant evidence for built landscapes and building projects of late Classical and early Hellenistic date (pp. 201-215) surely demonstrate the 'evidence of many undertakings' (p. 212) even though our confidence in the exact chronology of buildings must be dependent on the character of the underlying investigations. A section on material culture, especially pottery (pp. 215-24), supports the view that elites were tied to production and commercial networks throughout the Peloponnese, but some elements of Shipley's story need adjustment in light of ceramic studies.[4] The ever-growing body of archaeological evidence, which is selectively summarized in this chapter, will surely confirm the author's positive view of economic intensity but invites more study to finetune the picture.

TEHP is solidly produced with few errors or stylistic infelicities. The nine detailed maps at the start are well-produced and useful, but a map key or more consistent font style would have helped to differentiate regions, *poleis*, sanctuaries and landforms (is there significance to the place names in italics and bold?). Maps could be better connected with the text so that the reader can follow along to locate the named sites and landforms.

The density of the text and total absence of figures and images may make the book unsuitable for most undergraduate courses, but the work is a must read for graduate students of ancient history and all who teach regularly on the history of the *polis* or engage in fieldwork in the Peloponnese. The optimistic picture of the continuing vitality of this ancient institution—built on a large corpus of more specialized regional studies—offers a forceful correction to lingering pictures of the city-state in decline and neglect after Philip's conquest. Let us hope that this work generates sharper, more sensitive accounts of the late Classical and early Hellenistic Peloponnese, grounded in different kinds of evidence, and encourages us to spotlight the nuances and complexities of continuity and change in whatever periods of Greek history are still burdened by narratives of decline.

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Pettegrew, D.K. 2016. *The Isthmus of Corinth: Crossroads of the Mediterranean World*: 102-112. Ann Arbor MI: University of Michigan.

[3] Cf. Shipley's observation (p. 188) that in the eastern Korinthia 'we cannot see any effects of the destruction of Corinth in 146 in the wider *chōra*' with a more measured view of continuity and change in Pettegrew 2016.

[4] A picture of a drop of imports in the Korinthia and Sikyonia (p. 218) and of 'declining interaction in parts of the northern Peloponnese' (221) must now be revised to take into account new ceramic studies from these regions that point to a much wider involvement in international trade from the mid-third century. See, for example, James 2018.