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D. Graham J. Shipley
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I The Acropolis of Greece

This is a wild area which is so mysterious, and of course the very birthplace of all the gods and myths and legends, and everything seemed to happen down here.

Lumley 2011, episode 1

I.1 The Task

I.1.a The Topic

The present study examines an under-researched topic, Peloponnesian history in the round, and a neglected period of that history. It aims to clarify how the peninsula developed during the 'long third century' of Macedonian domination, from the battle of Chaironeia in 338 BC to the end of Macedonian involvement in the peninsula in 197. After a methodological introduction (I.1) and a geographical overview (I.2), it seeks to discover (in Chapter II) how the peninsula fared in wars and under the influence of powers attempting to exert control; next (in Chapter III), the politics of the city-state or *polis*; and finally (in Chapter IV) economic conditions. As a clearly bounded space, the Peloponnese offers great potential for analysis in the light of recent approaches to geographical history; the work therefore ends with an assessment (in Chapter V) of the relative impact of factors operating at different spatial scales – peninsula, region, *polis*, and locality – as well as the interaction between societies within the Peloponnese and the world outside.

I.1.b Previous Work

The present study begins from a neutral position on the question whether – as is implied or asserted in many studies, both older and more recent – the Peloponnese in the late classical and hellenistic periods, and more broadly Old Greece, was a backwater of little interest. Given the military manpower brought to bear upon the peninsula, and the responses

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it evoked, one might expect its history to have attracted close attention. Yet, while individual sequences of events have been examined repeatedly, notably the histories of Sparta and of the Achaean 'league' (*koinon*), it remains the case that since the inspired synthesis of geography and history by Ernst Curtius in the mid-nineteenth century[1] there has been a lack of scholarly focus on the peninsula in a holistic sense.[2] 'Peloponnese' and 'Peloponnesian', for example, are not listed in the indexes to three recent volumes on hellenistic economies,[3] and of the major sites only Corinth, Epidauros, and Olympia appear in one of the three.[4] An influential overview of the period discusses individual states but does not index 'Peloponnese'.[5] Historians seem loath to treat this period of Peloponnesian history head-on rather than from the perspective of individual states or regions; still less from the standpoint of those who were dominated as opposed to that of commanders and kings.

Yet there are many studies of the Peloponnese and its communities in the archaic and classical periods; and Roman Greece has been a lively area of research for several decades. For the intervening hellenistic age, the peninsula and its settlements rarely feature in studies of social and economic change.[6] Historians examine the evolution of democracy, diplomacy, and federalism in Old Greece as a whole; and rarely take a synoptic view of socio-economic change or of the operation and effects of Macedonian power, despite the growing number of comparable analyses of the Seleukid and Ptolemaic empires. This relative indifference may partly reflect the huge expansion of the Greek world, in which scores of cities were founded and the Greeks lived alongside large numbers of people from a multiplicity of ethnic groups to an unprecedented extent. In view of the huge quantities and geographical spread of archaeological, epigraphic, and numismatic evidence from the eastern Mediterranean and western Asia, it is perhaps

[1] Curtius 1851–2. His account owes much to the data provided by Leake and by the Expédition Française de Morée, but goes far beyond them in analysis.

[2] This is not the case for prehistory, or for the Imp and LR periods (see e.g. Baladié 1980; Avraméa 1997). Sheedy 1994 brings together important studies (partly Hl) but does not aspire to a synoptic view.

[3] Archibald *et al.* 2001; Archibald *et al.* 2005; Archibald *et al.* 2011.

[4] Archibald *et al.* 2005, 364–8 ('Korinth').

[5] Shipley 2000b; surprisingly, since S. had written on Laconian landscapes.

[6] To the best of my knowledge, no study of the Hl period has centred upon the Peloponnese as a unitary landscape. A step forwards is represented by papers in Grandjean 2008a, though they form a minority of the volume. See also Grandjean n.d. [2008]. Kralli 2017, published as the present work went to press, is an excellent study focused on Peloponnesian inter-state relations in this period, offering new insight into many episodes and patterns in the narrative covered in Chapter II below, as well as diplomatic networks.

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understandable that historians of this period have rarely turned their gaze upon the Peloponnese. One exception is Baladié's inspiring study of Strabo's portrayal of the peninsula, written in the reigns of Augustus and Tiberius,[7] which though inevitably focused on the late hellenistic period (roughly the first century BC) has important implications for the early hellenistic period because of the manner of Strabo's information-gathering.

This general neglect is, of course, due in part to the sparse and mostly later historical sources. The inadequate literary sources for the two generations after 301, and the dominant voice of Polybios at the end of the third century, tend to make the early hellenistic period seem a relatively obscure and unhappy interlude between classical grandeur and regrettable, but grudgingly admired, Roman rule. Still more influential have been the claims by Polybios and some later authors that the Peloponnese, and Greece as a whole, were in decline as a result of the actions of Philip II and Alexander III, and of oppression on the part of their successors.[8] But a region that may have been the victim of imperial domination surely deserves our attention no less than any other. The Macedonian takeover was the most important military–political event in Greek history up to that date, and may have marked a watershed for the Greek city-states system, even if few today would see it as bringing about 'the end of the city-state'.[9] It also gained retrospective importance, for with hindsight it could be seen as the prelude to the Roman takeover, which would last far longer than Macedonian hegemony. The 'long third century' could almost be termed an *Achsenzeit*. Furthermore, the Peloponnese had been earlier, and remained, central to the construction of Greek identity.

The view that the Peloponnese, or Old Greece more generally, was in a somnolent or depressed condition needs careful examination. In his classic 1941 study, for example, Rostovtzeff declares that there was little change in the third century and that Macedonian rule had little impact:

> Old Greece, in its hundreds of cities, remained outwardly unaltered. … No extensive rebuilding was carried out … Nor did the daily routine change … Political and religious duties were regularly discharged by the body of citizens, lively discussions took place in the popular assemblies … war interrupted from time to the peaceful flow of events … internal conflicts arose within the cities … The young frequented the schools and received there their mental, artistic, religious, and physical training.

[7] Baladié 1980.
[8] The idea first surfaced in the LHl period: Pretzler 2005, 144.
[9] Gomme 1937, 233–4, 247, etc., identifies 'decadence' in the Greek states from C3m.

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> Business and social pursuits followed their normal course … It is unnecessary to describe in detail the daily life of the Greek cities … It would show much the same aspect as in the fifth and fourth centuries BC.[10]

Rostovtzeff's insight that elites remained dominant agrees with recent studies. He is also right to point out that in social and political life much will have remained unaltered; historians have been too ready to assume that periods – essentially arbitrary constructs – have distinct social and cultural characteristics. Immediately after the passage quoted, however, he mentions striking innovations: a national Hellenic consciousness, the increasing frequency of diplomatic agreements and recognition of inviolability, grants of citizenship and proxeny, international arbitration, public protests against war crimes, and acts of public and private charity.[11] Contemporary philosophers began to question the cleavages in identities and entitlements between different status-groups: slave and free, barbarian and Greek, male and female.[12] Recent research confirms that relations between the sexes, and between free and slave, became more open,[13] though perhaps only within certain educated groups, just as Rostovtzeff claims. On the other hand, he minimizes such changes, dismissing them as 'partial, the outcome of special circumstances, palliatives to counteract the dominant characteristic of Greek institutions, the city particularism'.[14] It may be true that such unification of the wider Greek community as occurred took place chiefly among the elite or, in Rostovtzeff's now dated terminology, the 'bourgeoisie'.[15] 'Palliatives', however, implies a degree of deceitful manipulation by the dominant groups that would be surprising in the politically open societies characteristic of Old Greece.

Rostovtzeff seems to be working with a hard and fast divide between daily life and other aspects of society; this, too, is unhelpful. Public life and wider processes have an impact on social and personal life. Diplomatic and ceremonial networks, grants of citizenship, arbitration, and so on must have had practical and often beneficial consequences for all classes. As for rebuilding, archaeology since Rostovtzeff's day has revealed the grid-planned layouts of a number of towns, as well as extensive building or replanning of older ones. His unbalanced viewpoint presumably reflects a wish to present nascent capitalism as the motor of change, a process he situates chiefly outside Old Greece.

[10] Rostovtzeff 1941, 1109 (ellipses mine).
[11] Rostovtzeff 1941, 1109–12.
[12] Some scholars see parallels between the Hl age and our own: e.g. J. Ferguson 1973.
[13] e.g. Houby-Nielsen 1997, esp. 243–7; cf. earlier Schneider 1967–9, i. 78–117.
[14] Rostovtzeff 1941, 1114.
[15] Rostovtzeff 1941, 1115.

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Strabo (8. 1. 3) describes the Peloponnese as the acropolis of Greece, as the more famous of its two mainland divisions, and as deserving the role of leadership among the Greeks for the splendour of its inhabitants and of its topography.[16] While he could be reiterating a rhetorical trope from the classical period, the assertion conveys the esteem in which the Peloponnese was held despite the, by now, deeply embedded hegemony of Rome and the recent creation of the province of Achaia under Augustus.[17]

The peninsula was rightly seen as one of the chief arenas, perhaps even the heartland, of the world of Greek states,[18] and as the setting for key legends: it was the home of Nestor, Agamemnon, Orestes, Menelaos, and Helen; the scene of Telemachos' journey; the location of some of Herakles' labours. Sparta, the *polis* with the greatest military reputation in Greece, had dominated the Peloponnese down to 371, while other venerable and populous centres included Argos and the international port of Corinth. The peninsula was home to three of the four Panhellenic religious festivals, at Olympia, Nemea, and Isthmia. It contained many of the best-known cities and sanctuaries, which carried huge ideological weight in the construction of Hellenic identity, as they did later for hellenistic benefactors, philhellene Romans, and indeed modern archaeologists. As I have written elsewhere, 'Certainly it was densely inscribed with history and (real or fictive) memory; and, as Tuan puts it, habitual routes acquire "density of meaning"'.[19] Given the importance of the Peloponnese in both earlier and later periods, its hellenistic history is surely a worthy focus of our attention.

All in all, we can observe that the lack of previous focus on the hellenistic Peloponnese as an entity is partly a legacy of outdated views about the 'end' of the *polis* and about Greek social relations, and ignores the central importance of the Peloponnese to Greek culture and identity even after the classical period.

I.1.c The Sources in Brief

The shortcomings of the sources have perhaps deterred scholars from attempting to reconstruct the socio-economic make-up and political complexion of the communities of 'Old Greece', outside Athens and Sparta, in the early hellenistic period.

[16] There may, however, be a problem with the text, as Jones notes in the Loeb: it is possible that a phrase such as 'and Greece is the *acropolis* of the world' has fallen out. (Baladié 1980, 283–5, does not discuss this possibility, perhaps regarding it as unfounded; neither does he mention it in Baladié 1978.)

[17] Baladié 1980, 283–5.

[18] For the notion of a city-states system, see e.g. Hansen 2000a with Hansen 2002.

[19] Shipley 2006b, 34; Tuan 1977, 182.

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As already noted, for the military–political narrative of a large part of the period the literary evidence is poor in comparison with the preceding period: either derivative or fragmentary. Down to 301 we rely chiefly on Diodoros (books 18–20), writing in the first century BC but using fourth-century authors; for these episodes, probably the excellent Hieronymos of Kardia above all.[20] One might speculate whether the non-survival of the third-century portions of Diodoros and other authors is due to conscious deselection (on whatever basis) or to chance,[21] or reflects some real historical change at 301; but the Peloponnese was hotly contested by Alexander's successors until the 260s, and wars continued to occur with distressing frequency in the second half of the century.

The importance and inherent interest of the period 301–229 is proved by the partial preservation of Latin history of Trogus Pompeius, written in the late Republic, in the form of tables of contents and Justin's later summary of the work. Occasional mentions by Pausanias, writing in the second century AD, fill some gaps. Happily, surviving writers sometimes draw upon third-century sources. This is true, for example, of Plutarch's *Lives* of seven men whose actions had a heavy impact: the Macedonian king Demetrios I; Pyrrhos; the Achaean leader Aratos of Sikyon, partly based on the subject's own memoirs (and, unusually among Plutarch's *Lives*, not paired with a Roman);[22] the Spartan kings Agis IV and Kleomenes III (in a single *Life*), preserving material from the sympathetic eyewitness Phylarchos; the later Achaean leader Philopoimen; and the Roman general Flamininus. From 229 onwards we have, first, Polybios' mid-second-century account of events; broadly anti-Spartan, as one might expect from an Arkadian, a citizen of both Megalopolis and the Achaean league. Strabo's portrayal of the Peloponnese, composed under Tiberius, has been mentioned, but does not offer what we might expect from a geographical handbook today; rather, he presents a historical tableau based on a mixture of classical literature (notably Homer and the Attic tragedians) and hellenistic geographers such as Artemidoros whose interests do not extend to economic or demographic questions.[23]

[20] On Hieronymos, see J. Hornblower 1981; he is the best Hl source after Polyb. in the view of Bosworth 2012b. Only books 1–5 and 11–20 of Diod. are preserved intact, the rest in fragments (i.e. later quotations). Green 1998, criticizes Stylianou 1998 for adhering excessively to the view that D. slavishly follows one source at time. The latter is the current orthodoxy, but G. points out the consistency of D.'s style throughout his work (see Palm 1955).

[21] On reasons why the great C3 historians did not survive 'epitomization' in the R period, see Shipley 2000b, 5.

[22] On the limits of accuracy afforded by these memoirs, see Meadows 2013.

[23] Baladié 1980 is fundamental. Lack of 'geographical' sources in a modern sense: Shipley 2006b, 34–5.

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Despite the patchy nature of the epigraphic record, the incomplete coverage of *Inscriptiones Graecae* (*IG*) – only Laconia, Messenia, and parts of the Argolid were ever completed – has been gradually rectified since 1923 by the updates in *Supplementum epigraphicum Graecum* (*SEG*) and by publication of corpora from excavated sites such as Olympia and Corinth, complemented more recently by the massive haul of documents from Messene (particularly from later hellenistic phases) showing the continued pursuit of politics by the civic elite. There remains plenty of scope for new syntheses. As for epigraphy away from cities and sanctuaries, archaeological field surveys have yielded occasional finds, which in some cases have been used to generalize about the extreme non-rural bias of the epigraphic habit.[24]

The interpretation of numismatic data has recently taken several steps forward. Studies of Spartan coins,[25] Messenian issues,[26] and Achaean bronzes[27] have put money, rather than coinage, in the front of historians' minds; while the publication since the early 2000s (through auction catalogues) of the comprehensive haul of bronzes and small silver denominations by the collector known as BCD[28] has begun to have a profound influence upon the economic history of late classical and hellenistic Greece (some of the implications are examined in Section IV.7).[29]

The Peloponnese may not yet have produced hellenistic material culture on the scale of, for example, Alexandria with its tens of thousands of stamped amphora handles; but in aggregate there is a growing body of data that deserve to be brought together. Yet despite field survey publications and several series of excavation volumes (notably for sites in the northeast such as Corinth, Isthmia, and Kenchreai), little has been done to provide the study of settlement archaeology or of the social uses of material culture with adequate theoretical underpinnings[30] – though it is only fair to acknowledge the difficulty of distinguishing certain classes of hellenistic pottery clearly from late classical and early Roman, let alone dating it closely. There are, however, important new data from published field surveys including those carried out in Methana, the southern Argolid, Nemea, western Achaea, Messenian Pylos, and Laconia (discussed in

[24] Landuyt and Shipley 2003 (Laconia).
[25] Grunauer-von Hoerschelmann 1978.
[26] Grandjean 2003.
[27] J. A. W. Warren 2007.
[28] Now revealed as Basil C. Demetriadi; see e.g. his *Festschrift*, Wartenberg and Amandry 2015.
[29] See esp. Walker 2006 and the new catalogues of types by Hoover 2011 (Peloponnese except Korinthia); Hoover 2014 (Korinthia and central Greece).
[30] On this point see Shipley 2013b.

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more detail at Section IV.3). These gain particular value when archaeological fieldwork is integrated with a close restudy of written and epigraphic sources.[31] Problems of interpreting survey data abound, however, and have been brought into focus by recent studies.[32] The signals are not uniform or always clear. The 'reading' of site size and duration is a vexed issue, while estimates of population at a given epoch have purely heuristic value; at best suggesting orders of magnitude which themselves rest on very problematic assumptions about the nature of rural occupation and use of the landscape. Different survey projects operate with different chronological boundaries: the classical period may be supposed to end at a 'round' date such as 350 or 300, or the date of a specific event such as Chaironeia (338), the death of Alexander (323), the end of the Lamian war (321), the battle of Ipsos (301), or even later.[33] Some surveys posit a combined 'late classical–early hellenistic' or 'late classical–hellenistic' phase. In the present study the simple conventions of the Laconia Survey are generally adopted: 'early hellenistic' denoting approximately the third century (sometimes including the late fourth), 'middle hellenistic' the second, and 'late hellenistic' the first.[34]

Despite inadequate literary sources (especially for 301–229), we now have enough epigraphic, numismatic, and archaeological evidence to justify a new construction of the early hellenistic Peloponnese. The present study cannot resolve all the problems of the archaeological evidence, but offers some initial interpretative patterns. It attempts to synthesize and generalize from archaeology in the context of written evidence (literary and epigraphic) for the Peloponnese, having in mind particularly questions of regional and other 'scales'. In ancient history it is often necessary to use inference and extrapolation to bridge gaps in the written record. Like other humanities subjects, both archaeology and ancient history rarely if ever have the luxury of dealing with complete data sets. But the undertaking is vital in order to understand the forces promoting and limiting change in the landscapes and societies of the Peloponnese, so that we may do justice to a group of Greek societies that deserve attention, not only in their own right but also because of their place in the earlier construction and later reception of Greece.

[31] As excellent set of studies is Dalongeville *et al.* 1992; Rizakis 1995b; Rizakis 1998; Rizakis 2000.
[32] Notably Stewart 2013.
[33] Dreyer 1999 sees the Cl period at Athens as continuing well into C3.
[34] Visscher 1996, 91 n. 1.

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I.1.d Outline of the Work

Despite the shortcomings of the literary evidence that was the primary foundation of earlier work, the copious epigraphic evidence and especially the increasing quantity of numismatic and archaeological evidence justify a completely new look at the Peloponnese in the early hellenistic period.

As already outlined, the investigation begins in Chapter II, a narrative of political–military events which attempts to draw out recurrent features and trends. Like other parts of this book, the chapter also looks at the period immediately before the one on which we are focusing, particularly the generation between Sparta's loss of hegemony after the battle of Leuktra (371) and Philip II of Macedonia's victory over the southern Greeks at the battle of Chaironeia (338). Such a move is necessary because many details of the narrative are uncertain; and while the Peloponnese as an entity has not been the subject of detailed scrutiny in recent decades, the study of certain individual communities (both city-states and larger entities) has moved on. Here and elsewhere, one aim of the 'backward look' is to facilitate reasonable extrapolation from better- to less well-documented periods.

The argument depends partly on the principle that, as Rostovtzeff claims, we should assume broad social and economic continuity in the medium term unless we have evidence to suggest otherwise. If we can broadly characterize the social and economic structures of fourth-century *poleis*, we can address the succeeding period, for which we have fewer sources, with a general presumption of continuity. Likewise, since there is a compelling case that in the fourth century members of elites in a range of Peloponnesian city-states were in contact with major cultural centres such as Athens – as, for example, the military writer known as Aineias Taktikos (probably Aineias of Stymphalos, an Arkadian league general) may have been with Xenophon after he returned to Athens from exile – then it is hard to imagine that such contacts were any less frequent after Alexander's death. Warfare between states that happened to be dominated by rival dynasts need not have interrupted normal travel or communication.[35] Our watchword might be, 'We Arkadians, too, have televisions.'

Thus, in Chapter III, an outline of politics before Chaironeia permits a clearer assessment of the subsequent condition of Peloponnesian communities. The chapter compares the occurrence of non-democratic regimes, garrisons, and *stasis* (civil conflict) in the fourth century and later. It uses

[35] For a similar point about travel by intellectuals between Hl kingdoms hostile to another, see Shipley 2012; also Shipley 2017b.

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a 'backward glance' to explore those conflicts that are presented as being between groups with different political ideologies, which leads on to the investigation of the democracy–oligarchy polarity.

Chapter IV makes a similar move in order to show that despite the prevailing orthodoxy (or, as it may be, prejudice) the Peloponnese as whole cannot reasonably be judged to have been in decline or economic depression before 338; from there, the investigation moves into the long third century.

Partly as a result of the problems of chronology and fragmentary evidence, too little attention has been paid to the question of whether the Peloponnese displays historical unity. Even in books or chapters whose titles refer to it, little or no thought has been given to the relationships and interactions between its regions, which tend to be treated separately and juxtaposed like a row of postage stamps. At times this book itself contains discussions arranged by region, but in Chapter V and elsewhere it attempts to synthesize and integrate them into a bigger picture. This chapter explores possible different 'scales' at which change and continuity can be identified: locality; region; collection of regions; and the outside world. Having considered the geographical and other constraints upon change that an external hegemon may have tried to impose, it examines the degree to which the Peloponnese behaved as a 'bloc' (giving a sceptical answer), and then moves on to consider in turn the 'region', the *polis*, and local structures within the *chōra* (rural territory) of a *polis* as possible cradles of disruptive pressures. Finally, it identifies the importance of networking between *poleis*, rather than between other spatial entities, and asks *cui bono?* The importance of internal political dynamics within Greek communities is shown to be paramount.

I.2 Historical Geography

I.2.a General Observations

The overall geography of the Peloponnese is described surprisingly rarely in current English-language scholarship. Since the present study concerns itself chiefly with political landscapes, it is appropriate to postpone the narrative sections briefly, in order to present readers who may be less well acquainted with the Peloponnese with a selection of key characteristics of each region. The reader wishing to focus on the narrative may skip to Chapter II.

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