

Greek History

This is the first review of books in Greek history after a year, as the Coronavirus crisis last spring made it impossible to submit a review for the *G&R* volume of autumn 2020. I apologize to readers and editors for the resulting delay in reviewing two books published in 2018. The multi-volume *Lexicon of Greek Personal Names* has been a tremendous tool of research that one day could hopefully revolutionize the study of Greek history. The volume under review is the eighth in the series; edited by Jean-Sébastien Balzat, Richard Catling, Édouard Chiricat, and Thomas Corsten, it is devoted to inland Asia Minor, covering Pisidia, Lycaonia, Phrygia, Galatia, Paphlagonia, Cappadocia, Pontus, and Armenia.¹ The onomastics of these areas are complex owing to the various historical processes in which they were enmeshed: centuries of migration, conquest, and cultural change meant that, in addition to the ‘native’ cultural traditions of inland Asia Minor, the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman empires, as well as migratory movements like that of the Celts, left a deep onomastic impact. The issue is further complicated because the majority of the evidence comes from the Roman Imperial period, making diachronic comparison more difficult. This excellent volume offers a new documentary basis for studying social, cultural, and economic processes of change in these important areas of the ancient world: the full collection of the evidence makes it easier to classify names into different linguistic groups, an issue that has bedevilled the study of onomastics in Asia Minor for a very long time; it will also be possible to study regional divergences in the onomastics of different areas.

Pedro Barceló’s latest work is the sort of book that few people are any longer able to write and even fewer ever attempt to write: a magisterial overview of the ancient world, organized around a number of key themes, and covering more than a thousand years chronologically and the whole of the Mediterranean and the Near East geographically.² The eight axes are land and sea; myth and history; cult and salvation; rulers and servants; war and violence; forms of rulership; monotheism as a political problem; and the iconography of power. Under each rubric, Barceló uses a wide range of examples in order to explore a number of common factors, as well as the divergences and differences in space and time. The book is of course highly idiosyncratic and meandering, and, despite its size, anything but systematic. Furthermore, it is based on a highly eclectic bibliography, which is sometimes illuminating, and sometimes quite old-fashioned; finally, the lack of an index makes consultation more difficult than it should be. But this is a highly enjoyable work, full of insights that come from its rich palette of cases and examples. I found the first chapter exploring the historical geography of the ancient world from various perspectives particularly stimulating, in particular regarding maritime issues; equally fascinating was the last chapter, on the iconography of power, which is the only one which follows a systematic chronological order.

¹ *A Lexicon of Greek Personal Names. Volume V.C. Inland Asia Minor*. Edited by Jean-Sébastien Balzat, Richard W. V. Catling, Édouard Chiricat, and Thomas Corsten. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2018. Pp. xlix + 477. Hardback £140, ISBN 978-0-19-881688-1.

² *Die Alte Welt. Von Land und Meer, Herrschaft und Krieg, von Mythos, Kult und Erlösung in der Antike*. By Pedro Barceló. Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2019. Pp. 703. 71 figures, 10 maps. Hardback €29.95, ISBN: 978-3-8062-3822-8.

Another long-term account of ancient history is presented by David Small.³ It is a history of the evolution of Greek social structures from the Neolithic period to the Roman Imperial period. Despite the wide chronological coverage, the book's main focus of interest is in the prehistoric periods of the Bronze Age and the early Iron Age; and, while it uses examples from the whole of the Greek world, it pays particular attention to the peculiar history of ancient Crete and its divergence from wider Greek patterns. Small bases his perspective on complexity theory, which views societies as open systems with institutional parts related in non-linear ways, passing from phases of stability through creative chaos into new phases. He uses the practices of feasting as a red thread through which to study the evolution of Greek social structures, though it is not clear why feasting stops being such a structuring institution from the historical periods onwards. This is a book written by a non-specialist in Greek history and archaeology addressing the wider archaeological community and trying to extract theoretical lessons that can be employed in other fields and periods of archaeology; unsurprisingly, it is a highly idiosyncratic book, which mixes clever insights with outdated views and outright mistakes. But it is worth reading precisely for the outsider's perspective on things we often take for granted.

The study of crisis, collapse, and survival has long been at the forefront of historical research; usually, however, historians tend to direct their attention to the large-scale processes that are considered as causes of such phenomena, as well as their macro-scale consequences. The volume edited by Elisa Perego, Rafael Scopacasa, and Silvia Amicone is particularly interesting from two different points of view.⁴ On the one hand, it is primarily concerned with the reflection of such phenomena on material culture and the archaeological evidence it generates; on the other, it focuses on the micro-scale and the local. The case studies of the six chapters are derived from first-millennium BCE Italy and Sicily, with one chapter looking at Macedonia after the Roman conquest. The chapters examine themes like the consequences of adversities such as flooding on local cemeteries; the extent to which abnormal funerary practices can be connected with wider crises; and the disparity between the image of crisis and collapse generated by literary sources and the archaeological evidence that points in different directions. Linking together most of the chapters is an interest in the survival strategies of individuals and communities in the aftermath of crisis and collapse. While the volume as a whole and the particular contributions are highly stimulating, it is worth pointing out that the phenomena examined here concern primarily local crises, rather than the large-scale phenomena of the collapse of states and civilizations. This does not, of course, invalidate the utility of studying local crises; but it would be very interesting as a matter of future study to determine whether the archaeological reflection of large-scale crises leaves a similar archaeological footprint, or produces very different evidence.

³ *Ancient Greece. Social Structure and Evolution*. By David Small. Case Studies in Early Societies. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2019. Pp. xvi + 270. 51 figures, 16 boxes. Hardback £74.99, ISBN: 978-0-521-89505-7; paperback £26.99, ISBN: 978-0-521-71926-1.

⁴ *Collapse or Survival. Micro-Dynamics of Crisis and Endurance in the Ancient Central Mediterranean*. Edited by Elisa Perego, Rafael Scopacasa, and Silvia Amicone. Oxford, Oxbow Books, 2019. Pp. xxx + 175. 32 figures, 4 tables. Hardback £45, ISBN: 978-1-78925-100-5.

I move on to two books dealing with the Persian wars. The first is a splendid little book by Chris Carey devoted to the Battle of Thermopylae.⁵ The volume commences with a lucid presentation of the major interpretative problems that scholars have faced in their attempts to reconstruct the battle, as well as a topographical commentary based on autopsy. Carey moves on to examine the battle from both the Greek and the Persian viewpoint, in the process treating the various myths concerning motivation and interpretation that had already begun to appear in the immediate aftermath of the battle. He argues convincingly that Thermopylae was not a merely symbolic sacrifice, as later mythology had it, but a real, if failed, attempt to stop the path of Persian advance. The story continues with a chapter examining later and lesser-known battles that took place at Thermopylae, as well as two chapters devoted to the reception of the battle. The first looks at the consequences of the battle and its reception and ideological representation among the Greek states in the classical period, as well as in later period of antiquity. The second presents an overview of the reception of Thermopylae in modern times, with interesting comments on the changes in how Thermopylae has been memorialized during the last century; the coverage is obviously patchy, but it could have benefited from considering how the Greek neo-Nazis of Golden Dawn have engaged with the current monument celebrating the battle.

The second volume is P. J. Rhodes's translation of and commentary on the fifth book of Herodotus for the Aris & Phillips series.⁶ It covers the Persian conquest of Thrace, overviews of sixth-century history for Athens and Sparta, and the history of the Ionian revolt. Rhodes's Introduction is a very good short overview of Herodotean scholarship and textual history, and provides a standard synopsis of the Persian wars. The translation is also very successful, as one would expect. Where there is more scope for misgivings is on the commentary. Rhodes's commentary is very good on literary matters and the folkloric elements in Herodotus' narrative, but I found seriously wanting his commentary and bibliographic suggestions regarding the historical issues narrated in Book 5. Thrace covers a major part of the text, and yet there is not a single bibliographical suggestion for the reader regarding Thracian history, despite a number of stimulating works having appeared over the last two decades; the same applies to Cyprus, Sicily, and, to a lesser extent, Persia. I was quite surprised that the commentary and bibliography gives no hints to recent work on, for example, the reforms of Cleisthenes or the Ionian revolt. If this volume will be of value to a new generation of students, these are serious problems. I leave without comment the last paragraph of the Introduction, which takes it as fact that the modern West is the inheritor of the Greeks, while the Muslim world stands for the Persians.

This review includes two works on the Athenian Empire and the Peloponnesian War. Thomas Figueira and Sean Jensen have edited an important volume on the

⁵ *Thermopylae*. By Chris Carey. Great Battles. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2019. Pp. xxvi + 233. 30 figures, 6 maps. Hardback £18.99, ISBN: 978-0-19-875410-7.

⁶ *Herodotus. Histories Book V*. Edited, with an Introduction, Translation, and Commentary, by P. J. Rhodes. Aris & Phillips Classical Texts. Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 2019. Pp. xiii + 263. 3 maps. Hardback £75, ISBN: 978-1-789-62014-6; paperback £22.99, ISBN: 978-1-789-62014-6.

finances of Athenian domination in the classical period.⁷ The study of the Athenian Empire, the tribute, and its other financial instruments and practices has started to change significantly, after a series of challenges to the old orthodoxy that took place from the 1990s onwards. This volume, which includes an introduction and eight chapters, attempts to broaden these debates through the re-examination of epigraphic and literary sources and the adoption of new perspectives. The most significant common theme among a series of chapters concerns the attempt to substitute the Athenocentric perspective of the Athenian hegemony with the significance of local and regional perspectives. Jensen examines changes in regard to whether communities paid the tribute together or separately from the point of view of local and regional power struggles; Malcolm Wallace examines the interrelationship between Karystos and the Athenian hegemony; while Grégory Bonnin looks at the financial relationship between the Cyclades and Athenian hegemony in the fifth and fourth centuries. A second theme concerns new ways of dealing with and interpreting the sources: William Bubelis offers a fascinating exploration of the computational systems employed by the Athenian hegemony and their implications; Aaron Hershkowitz points out the difference between small contributors, which saw little variation in the amount of their tribute payment, and large contributors with major changes; and Figueira offers a tour de force on the link between tribute assessment, diplomatic rhetoric, and the Peace of Nicias. Finally, Loren Samons rightly argues that Athenian imperialism was not a novel phenomenon of the fifth century, but needs to be set in the context of its sixth-century pre-history. While the chapters in the volume are highly stimulating, it is quite perplexing that they do not engage with the radical implications of recent work by Kallet, Davies, and van Wees, even where their findings are largely compatible with the views expressed in this volume.⁸

Johanna Hanink has edited a selection of the speeches from Thucydides in translation.⁹ The volume includes, alongside an introduction, the two deliberative speeches by Pericles and his Funeral oration, the Mytilenean debate, the Melian dialogue, and the debate on launching the Sicilian expedition. Each speech is preceded by a short introduction and is translated in elegant English. The volume is part of a series on ‘ancient wisdom’, and its very title indicates that it has lessons to teach about foreign policy. This is precisely how the text has been used by the realist school in international relations, Straussians, and American neocons. Hanink rightly warns her readers to guard against such assumptions; but the very abstraction of the speeches from the rest of Thucydides’ text leads straight to such an outcome, and her general introduction

⁷ *Hegemonic Finances. Funding Athenian Domination in the 5th and 4th Centuries BC*. Edited by Thomas J. Figueira and Sean R. Jensen. Swansea, Classical Press of Wales, 2019. Pp. xx + 278. Hardback £58.50, ISBN: 978-1-910589-72-4.

⁸ J. K. Davies, ‘Corridors, Cleruchies, Commodities, and Coins: The Pre-History of the Athenian Empire’, in A. Slawisch (ed.), *Handels- und Finanzgebaren in der Ägäis im 5. Jh. v. Chr.* (Istanbul, 2013), 1–24; L. Kallet, ‘The Origins of the Athenian Economic Arche’, *JHS* 133 (2013), 43–60; H. van Wees, *Ships and Silver, Taxes and Tribute. A Fiscal History of Archaic Athens* (London, 2013).

⁹ *Thucydides. How to Think about War. An Ancient Guide to Foreign Policy*. Selected, translated, and introduced by Johanna Hanink. Ancient Wisdom for Modern Readers. Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 2019. Pp. lvi + 276. 2 maps. Hardback £13.99, ISBN: 978-0-691-19015-0.

and speech introductions do not do enough to eschew such readings. At the very least, readers should have been alerted to the fact that, for example, Thucydides never gives a counter-speech to Pericles' Athenian opponents, thus presenting his views as the only game in town, or to the revisionist perspective of Thucydides' post-war account of Athenian defeat and international politics.

Ivan Jordović and Uwe Walter have edited a highly stimulating volume on Athenian democracy and its intellectual critics.¹⁰ The volume seeks to examine the extent to which critics and critiques of Athenian democracy were influenced and shaped by Athenian democratic ideology and practices. This, of course, begs the question whether there was anything that could seriously be called democratic ideology in ancient Athens. While the subject is not new, the extensive Introduction by the editors offers a systematic and penetrating examination of the issues that should be required reading for a long time to come. Particularly useful is their distinction between internal critiques, aiming to reform the system, and external critiques, aiming to subvert it. Most of the ten chapters focus on different genres or authors: oratory (Claudia Tiersch), Pseudo-Xenophon (Kurt Raaflaub), Xenophon (Sven Günter), Plato (Jordović, and Kai Trampedach), and Aristotle (Karen Piepenbrink), while two chapters take a thematic perspective, by examining the purported internal critics of democracy in the fourth century (Thomas Blank) and the critics of democratic decision-making (Marian Nebelin). Finally, two interesting chapters by Egon Flaig and Hans-Christof Kraus bring the study to critiques of democracy in the modern world.

Nicolas Siron's book on witnesses in Athenian law-court speeches is a valuable contribution to the study of Athenian legal practice.¹¹ The anthropological turn in the study of Greek law in the 1970s and '80s often ended up giving the impression that trials were merely shows of strength between the adversaries, in which law or truth played almost no role; witnesses were accordingly often seen merely as supporters of one side or the other. In line with recent developments that retain the valuable aspects of the anthropological turn, while shedding its more questionable assumptions, Siron offers an exhaustive analysis of the various ways in which witnesses functioned in the Athenian courts. He persuasively argues that witnesses played a crucial role in 'the domain of truth' employed by the speakers: the range of evidence and arguments that were deemed plausible by an Athenian jury. Witnesses confirmed the authenticity of documents presented by the adversaries and had to undertake various rituals for establishing their reliability. I found particularly interesting Siron's analysis of the concept of 'oral witnesses', who acted as intermediaries between events and the jurors, as well as his exploration of the rhetorical strategies employed by the speakers in order to turn the jurors themselves into witnesses.

The late, and sorely missed, Anton Powell had designed a series of volumes examining various ancient authors as sources for Spartan history and the role of Sparta in

¹⁰ *Feindbild und Vorbild. Die athenische Demokratie und ihre intellektuellen Gegner*. Edited by Ivan Jordović and Uwe Walter. *Historische Zeitschrift Beiheft* 74. Berlin, de Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2018. Pp. 343. Paperback £82, ISBN: 978-3-11-060507-5.

¹¹ *Témoigner et convaincre. Le dispositif de vérité dans les discours judiciaires de l'Athènes classique*. By Nicolas Siron. *Histoire Ancienne et Médiévale* 166. Paris, Éditions de la Sorbonne, 2019. Pp. 382. 7 figures, 48 tables. Paperback €30, ISBN: 978-10-351-0328-6.

their literary works. The volume under review is the first one to be published, and rather deservedly devoted to Xenophon.¹² The twelve chapters range widely. Some focus on a particular Xenophonic work, like the *Anabasis* (Ellen Millender), the *Agésilas* (Noreen Humble), or the *Cyropaedia* (Vincent Azoulay); others compare the image of Sparta across different Xenophonic works and their genres, in particular trying to identify their various audiences and their implications for how Sparta and Spartans are presented: Richer examines the non-historical works, Giovanna Daverio Rocchi the three works that focus on Sparta (*Hellenica*, *Lak. Pol.*, *Agésilas*), while Powell offers a new reading of the major Xenophonic works by assuming that they were addressed to a Spartan audience. Finally, various highly stimulating papers examine various Spartan themes across the Xenophonic corpus: law (Vivienne Gray), the economy (T. J. Figueira), the myth of Lycurgus (Ephraim David), and the selection of *hippeis* (Jean Ducat). This is a very rich collection of papers with serious implications for the study of ancient Sparta and Xenophon. It is only to be hoped that the other planned volumes will also see the light.

Finally, two important recent works concern Macedonian history. Elizabeth Carney's new book focuses on Eurydice, the wife of the Macedonian king Amyntas III and mother of three Macedonian kings, including Philip II.¹³ I have to admit that I was barely aware of her existence, and Carney's book makes a splendid effort to bring attention to the role of a royal woman in the narrative of the transformation of Macedonia into a major power in the course of the first half of the fourth century BCE. This is a period with limited and contradictory sources concerning Macedonian history, in which even basic events or the succession of kings are in dispute; Carney discusses the evidence sensibly and manages to reconstruct a plausible narrative within which to situate the role of Eurydice. She also considers extensively the dedications made by Eurydice and her connection to various buildings at Vergina, emphasizing the fact that she is mentioned on her own, without reference to her male royal relatives or husband. But perhaps the best chapter in the book is the comprehensive examination of the afterlife of Eurydice: Carney provides a lengthy discussion of the tomb at Vergina associated with Eurydice and the ambiguous evidence on which this association rests, as well as the Philippeion at Olympia and the meaning of the inclusion of Eurydice among the members of Philip II's family who were represented in the sculptural monument.

Innumerable books have been written about Alexander the Great, but most of them look at his history from the point of view of Alexander and the Macedonians. Waldemar Heckel's latest work considers Alexander's campaigns from the point of view of those who resisted him: military resistance to the conquest, revolt against Alexander's rule, insubordination by Alexander's officials and soldiers.¹⁴ This fascinating attempt to

¹² *Xenophon and Sparta*. Edited by Anton Powell and Nicolas Richer. Swansea, Classical Press of Wales, 2020. Pp. xvi + 378. Hardback £65, ISBN 978-1-910589-74-8.

¹³ *Eurydice and the Birth of Macedonian Power*. By Elizabeth Donnelly Carney. Women in Antiquity. New York, Oxford University Press, 2019. Pp. xxii + 178. Hardback £41.99, ISBN: 978-0-19-028053-6.

¹⁴ *In the Path of Conquest. Resistance to Alexander the Great*. By Waldemar Heckel. New York, Oxford University Press, 2020. Pp. xvi + 348. 8 maps. Hardback £22.99, ISBN: 978-0-19-007668-9.

address the story from a subaltern point of view is beset by two major challenges: the limits posed by the sources in establishing the experiences and motives of those who resisted Alexander, and whether the various forms of resistance to him can be seen as a useful overall category, or merely a hotchpotch that only makes sense from Alexander's point of view. Notwithstanding these challenges, Heckel has managed to produce a convincing answer that rests on three major premises. The first premise is that military resistance to Alexander was strongest in the periphery of the Persian Empire, in particular in Greece and the Indus lands. The second is that the best way to conceptualize Alexander's conquests is as a 'hostile takeover': for most people within the core areas of the Persian Empire there was little at stake apart from changing task-masters. The third premise is that the very success of the Persian Empire in its military and administrative structures was a major reason that a hostile takeover could succeed by taking advantage of them. This is undoubtedly a highly stimulating book, which will provoke significant reflections on many aspects of fourth-century BCE eastern Mediterranean history.

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Roman History

A bumper edition this time, by way of apology for COVID-necessitated absenteeism in the autumn issue. The focus is on three pillars of social history – the economy (stupid), law, and religion. First up is Saskia Roselaar's second monograph, *Italy's Economic Revolution*.¹ Roselaar sets out to trace the contribution made by economics to Italy's integration in the Roman Republic, focusing on the period after the 'conquest' of Italy (post 268 BCE). Doing so necessitates two distinct steps: assessing, first, how economic contacts developed in this period, and second, whether and to what extent those contacts furthered the wider unification of Italy under Roman hegemony. Roselaar is influenced by New Institutional Economics (hereafter NIE), now ubiquitous in studies of the ancient economy. Her title may be an homage to Philip Kay's *Rome's Economic Revolution*, but the book itself is a challenge to that work, which in Roselaar's view neglects almost entirely the agency of the Italians in the period's economic transformation.² For Roselaar, the Italians were as much the drivers of change as the Romans; indeed, it is this repeated conviction that unifies her chapters.³

After introductory matters, Chapter 2 traces the increase in actual contacts between Romans and Italians, both directly economic – in colonies (both Roman and Latin),

¹ *Italy's Economic Revolution. Integration and Economy in Republican Italy*. By Saskia T. Roselaar. Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 2019. Pp. xi + 297, 8 b/w figures, 2 maps. Hardback £70, ISBN: 978-0-19-882944-7.

² P. Kay, *Rome's Economic Revolution* (Oxford and New York, 2014).

³ Cf. here N. Terrenato, *The Early Roman Expansion into Italy. Elite Negotiation and Family Agendas* (Cambridge & New York, 2019), reviewed in *G&R* 67.1 (2020), 96–7.