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**D. Graham J. Shipley, *The Early Hellenistic Peloponnese: Politics, Economies, and Networks 338-197 BC*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018. xxxii, 355. ISBN 9780521873697 £90.00. (Hbk) ISBN 9781108702423 £25.99. (Pbk) E-ISBN 9781139034012 <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781139034012> (E-Book, Kindle) £21.00.**

*Reviewed by Amy E. Porter.*

Tossed between war and instability, the Peloponnese was integral to the Early Hellenistic world. Graham Shipley, an Ancient Greek History professor at the University of Leicester, examines the relationship between local, regional and outside powers in the Peloponnese, especially the Macedonian state. The Peloponnese was characterised by regions with individual *poleis* (city-states): Korinthia, Achaia, Eleia, Messenia, Lakonia, Argolis and Arkadia. Shipley assesses the Peloponnese in great detail through different scales of interaction during the ‘long third century’ (338-197 BC): politics, economies and networks. However, these very substantial topics could fill individual books by themselves, and, consequently, Shipley ends up focusing on politics and warfare over economies and networks.

He produces “a completely new look at the early Hellenistic period” (p. 9) in the Peloponnese, beyond traditional arguments on the region which describe it as isolated, depopulated and, most importantly, oppressed under Macedonian rule. The main argument follows Rostovtzeff (1941) that “we should assume broad social and economic continuity”, for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century BC based on the plentiful 4<sup>th</sup> Century BC evidence “to facilitate reasonable extrapolation from better- to less well-documented periods” (p. 9). Shipley approaches “the question of whether the Peloponnese displays historical unity” and, fundamentally, “the relationships and interactions between its regions” at different geographical scales to identify “possible cradles of disruptive pressures” (p. 10).

Kralli’s (2017) book is an in-depth history of the Peloponnese from 371-146 BC, analysing the effects through literary and epigraphic texts. Unable to fully utilise Kralli, due to an 11 month publication gap, Shipley mentions Kralli where possible and notes the more detailed discussions (e.g. p. 31 n. 4; p. 112 n. 40; p. 157 n. 180

etc.). Stewart, also at the University of Leicester, has an excellent book (2013) for Late Hellenistic to Early Roman archaeological surveys, and is a noted archaeological influence in this book.

This book consists of five thematic chapters: I. The Acropolis of Greece (pp. 1-28); II. Warfare and Control (pp. 29-91); III. Power and Politics (pp. 92-158); IV. Economies and Landscapes (pp. 159-242); and V. Region, Network and *Polis* (pp. 243-293). It is well-presented and clear with many, easily navigable, sub-chapters appropriate in physical and E-book formats. Additionally, there is an extensive bibliography (pp. 295-338) and two indexes, 'Locrum' (pp. 339-343), including literary and epigraphic sources, and 'General' (pp. 344-355). Shipley provides a well-rounded and researched analysis of the Early Hellenistic Peloponnese, using literary, epigraphic, numismatic and archaeological survey data, but also secondary literature. The layout is: a theoretical background, research aims, an overall regional history and the individual regions that make up the Peloponnese. The next, extensively analysed, topic is politics, tackled in two chapters: (1) chronological history and the role of external powers, and (2) thematic history of tyrannies and stasis (civil strife) in individual *poleis*. Shipley considers economies through evidence of violence, survey data, epigraphy, built structures, material culture, numismatics and their interactions. The author finishes with networks, cautiously approached, by exploring three scales: peninsula, region and *polis*; and the manifestations of their interactions.

Beek's recent review (2019) states that maps should be split regionally rather than arbitrarily, which I agree with, as the maps are greatly detailed but the book is organised regionally, making it harder to pinpoint *poleis*. The index, compiled partly by Shipley, is not always complete: e.g. 'Phylarchos' requires a manual search (p. 351, for p. 115), and his name appears at several points (e.g. pp. 69, 103, 105, 113 etc.). Despite this, the General Index (pp. 344-355) includes the most prevalent topics. All sub-sections are identifiable in the Table of Contents (pp. vii-ix). "Notes on Spellings" (p. xxvii) references common Anglicised and Hellenised spellings but not Americanised spellings. Special Abbreviations are standardised and easy to reference (pp. xxix-xxxii).

Chapter 1 provides a good overview, starting with his thesis (discussed above). Shipley scrutinises old and defunct scholarship, but it is too old in some cases e.g. Curtius 1851 (although, notably, in the case of Rostevtzeff 1941, this is the most up-to-date analysis on economics) (pp. 2-5). Shipley addresses the lack of 3<sup>rd</sup> Century BC sources (literary: pp. 3, 6, 8; epigraphic: p. 7), and creates a new perspective by including numismatics and archaeology (pp. 7-8). Mostly, Shipley focuses on the complicated nature of the Peloponnese and its individual regions, which is good for those with little prior knowledge (p. 10). The region is generalised (pp. 10-15) before individual areas are tackled, from Korinthia to Arkadia (pp. 15-27). The purpose of this geographical analysis underpins “many discussions of narrative, politics, economy, and scale (including movement)” (p. 27).

Chapter 2 provides the chronological and historical dialogue, which even contextualises events pre-338 BC and post-197 BC. 404-338 BC is covered in much detail, detracting from the main argument (pp. 31-40); the book formally starts at 338 BC, not 404 BC. This could be shortened to reflect the inclusion of 197-146 BC as a one page epilogue (pp. 90-91). The author sometimes breezes through particular important events (e.g. Battle of Chaironeia 338 BC, p. 38; non-involvement with Galatai p. 58; effects of the Social War p. 79) without clear reasoning, which muddies the argument. Sometimes additional ancient sources could be cited, including epigraphy where available (beyond pp. 42, 61), as sometimes only one author is cited when other authors, who might not be contemporary, have also commented on it (e.g. Polybios pp. 41-42, 58, 74-78; Livy p. 91).

Chapter 3 is more thematic and focuses on regions and their individual, independent *poleis*, including their inner workings and influential players, instead of the role of outside powers. This is described as a “generalized discussion” of 4<sup>th</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> Century BC politics (p. 92). Americanised spelling is used elsewhere (e.g. democratization pp. 80, 129, 139 etc.; dioikized pp. 58, 140; alternatively defence is anglicised pp. 104, 118). One type of English, UK or US, should be used consistently to avoid confusion. Shipley regularly assesses century-old scholarship (Tarn 1913), primarily for scrutiny (e.g. pp. 56-58, 118-120), which sometimes detracts from the main argument (e.g. Ch. 2 cited 42 times and Ch. 3 31 times).

Chapter 4 is the longest (pp. 159-242) and most evidence based chapter, going beyond the literary and epigraphic evidence. Many evidence types are well-examined, although due to lack of evidence, epigraphy is under-analysed. However, general trends are discussed (pp. 199-200).

Chapter 5 draws together all the evidence and, overall, concludes the book using the three scales of the Peloponnese, i.e. as a whole, as a region and as a group of *poleis*. Certain examples are overly used, for example Philip V's surprise back route into Lakonia (218 BC) (pp. 252, n. 19 252, 274-5, 276) and additional examples would be preferable. Shipley finishes with the key importance of *polis* individuality but the final sentence is, instead, a premonition for the Roman period where the *polis* system did not "survive" (p. 293).

All the tables are very clear and, mostly, easy to follow. Table I.1 (p. 17) compiles select Peloponnesian *poleis*' size data but is arbitrary and hard to utilise in more unique regions e.g. Korinthia and Sikyonia (pp. 19-20) and Arkadia (pp. 22-24). Table III.1 (p. 95), "Gehrke's classification of Peloponnesian poleis", details *polis* size, type and status. The provided *polis* categorisation is limited and Shipley does not give an alternative, superior model. Table III.2 (pp. 99-103) details 4<sup>th</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> Century BC tyrannies, and the only personal suggestion is to add *polis* region, to aid readers with specific locations. Table IV.1 (pp. 184-85) provides Rural Survey Data, framed within a good structure, and contrasts the rest of Shipley's discussion: the notable exclusion is Antikythera, which may be a useful addition due to its location on the major trade route between Crete and the Southern Peloponnese. Table IV.2 (p. 202) is badly placed, as it appears in the section after epigraphy. Table IV.4 on 4<sup>th</sup>-1<sup>st</sup> Century BC Peloponnesian historians (p. 241), includes Ancient Greek phrases without transliteration, making it inaccessible for non-language readers.

This book is thought-provoking, evoking many questions for a wide readership. It is highly accessible to undergraduates, to the graduate community, and higher-level readers with little prior knowledge, but is also a resource for reference to events or topics, especially in the tables. This book has some problems, such as the use of archaeological excavations, as there are many, and they are not used apart from built structures. Photographs would have been beneficial, especially for archaeologists, as these could have displayed specific examples of material culture.

The book provides a good, broad range of material in less than 300 pages, but there is too much material covered: some topics are not examined thoroughly enough to introduce readers to this region; for example, more detail would be appreciated for less-studied topics especially. Also, further examination of localised issues would be advantageous. In the future, this book could act as a springboard for further study of Peloponnesian economic and network analysis. This book is a fantastic addition to scholarship on the Peloponnese, is highly accessible and acts as a gateway for both future work and researchers.

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