this book. A similar caution may be entered about Ellen Millender's 'Herodotus and Spartan Despotism' (pp. 1–61), whose thirty-one pages of text, buttressed by 168 notes (many of them paragraph-length) and more than eight pages of bibliography, overwhelm its argument that Herodotus' portrayal of Spartan kingship is influenced by the broader figure of the 'barbarian autocrat' which engages him time and again. A reasonable argument it is too, although even a few lines of justification for labeling the Spartan kingship a 'dyarchy' (was it really?) would have been welcome. Between them, the two contributors (Andrey Eremin and Norbert Mertens) who discuss the status of the perioecic communities sow confusion with their opposing conclusions, the former urging *komai*, the latter *poleis* (to summarize nuanced discussions in a word). Some report of the debate which (one hopes) followed their pair of papers would have been an instructive addition to the book. It is a pity that neither strives to demonstrate why the question truly matters, when both recognize that Greek usage is imprecise anyway (pp. 268, 290); by extension, any inferences to be drawn from such usage about the structure of a community are insecure. Eremin's effort to trace the progress of synoecism on the part of perioecic communities with the help of new maps by survey archaeologists (pp. 269–76) is admirable, but he is surely rash in his evident assumption that all the settlements identified were perioecic in origin, when in fact survey cannot establish their status.

Spartan history, society, and culture have been the subject of more books and papers than ever during the past decade. Michael Flower may remind us yet again that, at best, that there are only a few aspects which we can realistically hope to penetrate (p. 209); we nod in agreement, yet continue to probe many others undaunted despite the frustratingly limited and derivative source materials. Such dedicated optimism is commendable up to a point. At the same time, however, we should recognize that this fixation itself equates to pursuit of a mirage. For all its inventiveness, it cannot be expected to lead to significant progress in every instance; inevitably, there looms the risk of diminishing returns. Moreover it is questionable whether there is a need for the same findings to be presented more than once (as several contributors here admit to be doing, in one way or other). If and when the issue of publication arises, self-discipline and a commitment to concise presentation in an economical format (including electronic) are sure to be universally beneficial.

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ESSAYS ON SPARTA

M. WHITBY (ed.): *Sparta*. (Edinburgh Readings on the Ancient World.) Pp. xx + 275, maps. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2002. Paper, £15.99 (Cased, £47.50). ISBN: 0-7486-1293-9 (0-7486-1294-7 hbk).

This attractive reader collects fourteen pieces, in six parts, each headed by an editorial introduction. Eight shorter excerpts cover aspects of Spartan life compendiously (carefully chosen for their focus); nine longer contributions are substantially reproduced. All these selections nicely invite exploration of the original works. Additional bibliography is provided in the introductions, although some major voices are ignored. An opening introduction encompasses basic information, sources,

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historical outline, and recent scholarship (including a lamentable over-valuation of F. Ollier).

The single offering of Part I, Chester G. Starr, 'The Credibility of Early Spartan History', is the oldest piece (1965). This sensible survey on sources for archaic Laconian history (valuing the witness of Herodotus) discouraged the then-prevailing mythological historicism. Part II is 'Power and Government at Sparta'. Introductory remarks frame the issues (e.g. Great Rhetra) and note recent scholarship, while highlighting disagreements in A. Andrewes ('The Government of Classical Sparta') and G. E. M de Ste. Croix ('Trials at Sparta' from *The Origins of the Peloponnesian War* [London, 1972]). In the latter, the density of cross- references to other sections of *Origins* is distracting.

In Part III, 'The Spartiate World', the introduction undercuts the selections, as it unnecessarily raises the spectre of radical rejection of the evidence because of wholesale contamination from the third-century Spartan 'revolution'. Passing over this overplayed theme or including an example would have been preferable. Next, Stephen Hodkinson reconstructs land tenure and inheritance, in an excerpt from 'Inheritance, Marriage and Demography' (*Classical Sparta: Techniques Behind Her Success* [1989]). This précis on a crucial controversy constitutes an invitation to consider fuller statements of his important views (cf. my reviews in *CW* 1990, 1995). Anton Powell, from *Athens and Sparta: Constructing Greek Social and Political History from 478 BC*[2], explores social integration through messes, marriage patterns, and pederasty, and then incorporates education. An immense social terrain is scanned with admirable concision. Next are longer studies: Hodkinson, 'Social Order and the Conflict of Values in Classical Sparta', and Paul Cartledge, 'Spartan Wives: Liberation or Licence?' The former, covering *agôgê*, *syssitia*, army (where some reservations emerge), and office-holding, contains many insights. Whether 'conflict of values' represents, however, the leitmotif for unifying this dossier is doubtful. These processes blended agonistic behaviour and communal purposes rather successfully (contrast dowering or family planning). Cartledge's piece is one of the most influential Spartan studies of its generation, and a basis for later scholarship. Finally, there is Robert Parker, 'Religion in Public Life', a fine survey, particularly sensible on religion and politics (originally in *Classical Sparta*; cf. *CW* 1990).

Part IV deals with inferior classes. While the introductory pages are helpful, I would question whether the degree of Helot mistreatment is correctly framed *vis-à-vis* chattel slavery. First is an excerpt of Graham Shipley, who has established himself as the leading authority on the *Perioeci*, with an emphasis on the archaeological contributions to controversies on socio-economic rôles. Another tiny selection from de Ste-Croix's *Origins* assesses the Helot threat, characteristically learned and forceful, sound on many basics, but now quite dated. More substantial is a chapter translated from *Les Hilotes* (Paris, 1990) of Jean Ducat. It illustrates his process of 'worrying' the sources, unravelling hidden difficulties, sometimes fruitfully, sometimes idiosyncratically.

Part V, 'Sparta and the Outside World', is too abbreviated, although the brief introduction and selections on foreign policy (de Ste-Croix, *Origins*) and on the Peloponnesian League (Cartledge, *Agesilaos*) are generally unobjectionable. Part VI, 'The Decline of Sparta', contains an essay of Cawkwell focusing on Aristotle's identification of *oliganthrôpia* as a key factor. His demography was inadequate in 1983 and has not improved with age. It compounds a failure to isolate episodes of population decline and their causation by introducing a wrong-headed discussion of marginal classes, as though greater mobilization could have meaningfully offset

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Spartiate decline. Leuktra is maladroitly explained by reference to improvement in training and Epaminondas' generalship. Whitby urges Hodkinson's *Wealth and Property* to supplement Cawkwell, but I doubt their views are ultimately reconcilable. Rather, I would have abbreviated Cawkwell and added selections from Hodkinson and from Cartledge or Charles D. Hamilton.

A glossary of Greek terms is helpful for non-specialists, as are the three maps. The volume ends with an 'intellectual chronology', further readings, bibliography, and short indexes.

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THE CORINTHIAN GULF

K. FREITAG: *Der Golf von Korinth. Historisch-topographische Untersuchungen von der Archaik bis in das 1. Jh. v. Chr.* Pp. 504, maps. Munich: tuduv, 2000. Paper. ISBN: 3-88073-574-3.

The gulfs of Corinth and Patras (collectively here the Corinthian Gulf) form a geographically and culturally complex zone of interaction which, despite scholarly attention to surrounding regions, has been surprisingly neglected since the pioneering work of German historical geographers in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In connecting the mountain zones of the Peloponnese and central Greece to western sea routes, it links some of the most socially and politically complex regions of Greece with each other and with the wider Mediterranean world. A single monograph cannot fully capture the richness and continuous development of such interconnections over the long timespan here covered. Nonetheless, Freitag's attention to detail and sense of the right questions have produced an admirably thorough and well researched book, which is both a fundamental work of reference and a pointer to future research. Bibliographical omissions are mostly insignificant—no small acheivement, given the growing body of historical and archaeological research conducted in this area.

The book is divided into four parts. A brief introduction presents the history of scholarship on this and similar regions, emphasizing their dual nature as a homeland and a window on wider and different worlds. In Part II, varying perceptions of the region are sensitively explored through analysis of the use of toponyms over time. Part III, the core of the book, is a catalogue of forty-five major sites (and their neighbours) running geographically from west to east and back (an order which imposes an unusual and useful maritime perspective). Attention is paid to the relationships between different site types, with particular regard to the setting of ports and harbours. But when this discussion is pursued in Part IV, difficulties of classification are clear: the distinction between *limen* and *epineion* is particularly problematic, and there is a risk of imposing an overrigid typology. Nonetheless, individual site discussions are well focused. Consideration of Kirrha in relation to Delphi, for example, rests on thorough analysis of published evidence, with sensible conclusions about the comparative evolution of Delphic and outside economic interests in the 'sacred port'. Had F. pursued discussion with those actively engaged in field research in the area (on Corinthian stone export, for example), he might have developed these conclusions still further. More frustrating is the absence of photographs which would easily have conveyed the necessity of Delphic control of this area. Topography cannot easily be

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