Greek History

The study of ethnic and cultural identities and the interactions between communities and cultures in the ancient Mediterranean is one of the most popular topics in current scholarship, and this is well reflected in the volumes reviewed below. Greek culture and identity emerged out of a world without a political, social, cultural, or economic centre; moreover, from the archaic period onwards the Greek world consisted of communities that spread from Egypt to the Black Sea and from Asia Minor to Spain. How did Greek culture and identity emerge despite the lack of a centralizing force and in conditions of constant Greek dispersal to faraway places? In an ambitious and stimulating book, Irad Malkin argues that the two phenomena were directly related.[36] Influenced by the development of network studies in the physical and social sciences, Malkin argues that the convergence and divergence of Greek cultures and identities were the result of a plurality of networks that linked Greek communities together in a variety of ways: networks between 'metropoleis' and successive 'colonies', networks between 'colonies' and the Panhellenic oracle of Delphi, cultic networks linking communities laterally as well as with Panhellenic shrines and festivals such as Olympia, regional networks, networks of exchange and mobility, and so on. Colonization is at the centre of Malkin's network approach; but while colonization is often presented as a unidirectional transfer of populations and cultural practices from the Greek centre to various Mediterranean peripheries, Malkin eloquently shows the importance of the ripple effects of networking interconnections: the formation of a regional Rhodian identity is the ripple effect of the networking activities of the Rhodians across the Mediterranean, while the creation of the Panhellenion at Naucratis shows how distance reconfigures identities at both 'colonies' and 'metropoleis'. Malkin convincingly argues that the old approach of central Greece and peripheral colonies needs to be substituted by a novel network approach of the Greek world as a set of interlinked nodes. Two other books explore the discourses that created and maintained this interconnected Mediterranean world. Lee Patterson[37] examines the peculiar role of Greek kinship myth in interstate relations in antiquity. While previous scholarship has largely examined the epigraphic evidence, this work focuses on the literary evidence: his major argument is that local mythical traditions, often conveyed through literary sources such as Pausanias, formed the background of the kinship myths employed in international affairs. The book ranges widely, exploring the role of kinship myth in creating alliances, eliciting assistance, and justifying conquest, in mediating between Greeks and non-Greeks, and in linking together otherwise unrelated Greek communities; particularly interesting is the detailed exploration of the employment of kinship myth by Alexander. While the book raises many valuable points, its arrangement is not the most lucid, and it often suffers from a misleading distinction between discerning elites and impressible masses. If kinship myth created a Mediterranean world interlinked by the movement and relations of Greek heroes, other intellectual pursuits led to the creation of identities and discourses that moved beyond the distinctions of ethnicity and culture

[36] *A Small Greek World. Networks in the Ancient Mediterranean*. By Irad Malkin. New York, Oxford University Press, 2011. Pp. xx + 284. 14 maps, 4 figures. Hardback £40, ISBN: 978-0-19-973481-8.

[37] *Kinship Myth in Ancient Greece*. By Lee E. Patterson. Austin, TX, University of Texas Press, 2010. Pp. xvi + 255. 3 maps, 20 figures. Hardback £40, ISBN: 978-0-292-72275-0.

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to embrace cosmopolitanism. Daniel Richter[38] argues that the democratic critique of aristocratic birth in late classical Athens prompted thinkers such as Plato, Isocrates, and Zeno to formulate discourses that redefined community and culture in terms that surpassed the narrow circle of birth; these discourses were further adopted and adapted in the novel context of the early Roman Empire. Richter presents a fascinating argument covering a wide range of issues, including the nature of community and its membership, the role of language and culture in fashioning a cosmopolitan community of participants in Greek culture (*paideia*), the relationship between Greek and 'alien' wisdom, and the universality of the divine world. While standard accounts have traced a passage from ethnic to cultural perceptions of Greek identity, Richter successfully shows how Second Sophistic authors constantly explore the tension and complementarity between ethnic and cultural aspects of Hellenicity and between Hellenicity and cosmopolitanism. Richter's chronological argument will certainly create debate: the dialogue between classical texts and the Second Sophistic is undeniable, but the intervening Hellenistic debates will have to be taken into account as well. It is rather a pity that this otherwise very stimulating book is marred by numerous misspellings, mistakes, and misinterpretations, which require a very cautious reading. Other important studies focus on the interaction between Greek culture and different cultures of the Mediterranean and the Near East. The interaction between Hellenism and Egypt is the focus of a very important and penetrating book by Ian Moyer.[39] While recent scholarship has tended to stress the alterity and polarity in Greek representations of Egypt, and to situate them within a long-term Western discourse of Orientalism, Moyer makes an eloquent case against both assumptions: the historical interaction between Greeks and Egypt is a much more complex story than the simplistic colonialist perspective employed in modern studies. Even more important, though, is Moyer's second argument, illustrated through the exploration of four dialogic encounters between Hellenism and the class of Egyptian priests, who played the most prominent role on the Egyptian side of intercultural communication: the encounter between Hecataeus and the Theban priests in Herodotus, Manetho's retelling of Egyptian history in Greek, a Greek aretalogy to Sarapis composed by an Egyptian priest in Hellenistic Delos, and the encounter between an Egyptian priest and a Greek physician in Thessalus' work on astrological botany. All these encounters involve, in a variety of complex ways, both Greek and Egyptian concerns and ideologies, and are expressed in literary genres and through tropes that are informed by both Greek and Egyptian traditions. Moyer's argument that the uni-dimensional perspective of Western Orientalism needs to be substituted by an approach that takes into account context, time, and the dialogic form of intercultural communication deserves very wide attention in future research. The interaction between Greeks and Parthians in Mesopotamia in the Hellenistic and Roman periods is the topic of a short book by

[38] *Cosmopolis. Imagining Community in Late Classical Athens and the Early Roman Empire*. By Daniel S. Richter. New York, Oxford University Press, 2011. Pp. xii + 278. Hardback £45, ISBN: 978-0-19-977268-1.

[39] *Egypt and the Limits of Hellenism*. By Ian S. Moyer. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2011. Pp. x + 347. 4 b/w illustrations, 1 map, 1 table. Hardback £65, ISBN: 978-0-521-76551-0.

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Wolfram Grajetzki.[40] This consists of a brief chapter devoted to the history of the Seleucids in Mesopotamia and the Parthian Empire and its Mesopotamian vassal kingdoms of Charakene and Elymais, and a longer chapter presenting the primarily archaeological evidence from important Mesopotamian sites. Although the book is largely a summary presentation and does not present a synthesis of cultural interactions, it is a stimulating collection of evidence, which shows the importance of further research in these areas and periods. The emergence of Greek communities in old Mesopotamian centres such as Babylon and Susa, and the complex triangulation between the old Mesopotamian traditions, Greek material culture and practices, and the Parthian glocalization of Greek and other cultures, as illustrated in the pages of this book, could one day tell a very fascinating story. Classical Athens is always one of the major areas of scholarly interest. Andrew Wolpert and Konstantinos Kapparis[41] have produced a volume of fifteen translated Athenian legal speeches, which provides an excellent sourcebook for any course involving Athenian legal, political, economic, and social history. The selection includes Antiphon 6: 'On the Chorister', Lysias 1: 'On the Murder of Eratosthenes', Lysias 12: 'Against Eratosthenes', Lysias 16: 'For Mantitheus, 'Lysias 23: 'Against Pancleon', Lysias 24: 'On the Suspension of Benefit', Isaeus 12: 'On Behalf of Euphiletus', Dem. 21: 'Against Meidias', Dem. 32: 'Against Zenothemis', Dem. 41: 'Against Spoudias', [Dem.] 53: 'Against Nicostratus', Dem. 54: 'Against Conon', [Dem.] 59: 'Against Neaira', and Aeschines 1: 'Against Timarchus'. The selection succeeds in managing to include in a single volume essential speeches of great length alongside shorter but equally interesting ones, as well as in presenting sources that cover topics from homosexuality and adultery to drama, trade, and slavery. The volume includes a general introduction, a glossary of terms, and a bibliography, while each speech, translated in an accessible and yet faithful manner, is preceded by introductions that give the background, explain the legal procedures, and present the various social, political, or economic aspects that the speech raises. Lecturers and students will benefit immensely from this well-thought and well-produced sourcebook. Nikolaos Papazarkadas discusses the subject of public and sacred land in classical and early Hellenistic Athens.[42] The book provides an exhaustive treatment of the ownership, administration, and use of the revenue from sacred and public lands owned by the Athenian *polis*, by tribes and by *demes*, as well as by other Athenian kinship and cultic groups such as *phratries*, *gene*, and *orgeones*. The author argues that the distinction between sacred and public land was significant, with sacred land belonging clearly to the gods and providing the revenues for various cult activities, while revenues from public lands could be used for more diverse purposes. One of the most interesting findings is that, contrary to other Greek cities, the Athenian *polis* did not own any public arable lands, sacred arable lands apart; it was instead the *demes* that, in the aftermath of Cleisthenes' reforms, maintained ownership of public arable

[40] *Greeks and Parthians in Mesopotamia and Beyond 331 BC–224 AD*. By Wolfram Grajetzki. London, Bristol Classical Press, 2010. Pp. x + 113. 68 figures. Paperback £16.99, ISBN: 978-0-7156-3947-4.

[41] *Legal Speeches of Democratic Athens. Sources for Athenian History*. By Andrew Wolpert and Konstantinos Kapparis. Indianapolis, IN, Hackett Publishing, 2011. Pp. xxxii + 299. Hardback £32, ISBN: 978-0-87220-928-2; paperback £12.95, ISBN: 978-0-87220-927-5.

[42] *Sacred and Public Land in Ancient Athens*. By Nikolaos Papazarkadas. Oxford Classical Monographs. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011. Pp. xii + 395. Hardback £75, ISBN 978-0-19-969400-6.

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lands. The book will not be an easy read for those not initiated into the *arcana* of Athenian epigraphy, as it assumes a lot of prior knowledge from the reader, but it has much to offer, apart from its central topic, on scholars interested in various aspects of Athenian politics, administration, and religious and economic life. The study of Athenian democracy has long remained a major preoccupation of ancient historians, but few works have so far examined democracies outside Athens, and this is the focus of an important book by Eric Robinson.[43] Three chapters are devoted to an exhaustive collection and a balanced discussion of the evidence for democracies in mainland, western, and eastern Greece respectively. This provides an invaluable database for future research, but even more important are the two chapters devoted to the spread of democracy and its nature in classical Greece. While previous scholarship attributed to Athens an overwhelming role in the spread of democracy, Robinson convincingly argues for the importance of other regional powers, such as Syracuse and Argos, and imperial powers, such as the Persians and Alexander the Great, in spreading democracy; but he also argues that the spread of democracy should be linked to wider processes of peer-polity interaction, and he provides an interesting exploration of the role of the sophists in this regard. Finally, Robinson shows the fallacy of the claim that Athens was the only 'proper' ancient democracy or the most radical, by examining commonalities and variations between Athens and other Greek democracies. The political history of the Greek world is the main topic of a collection of nineteen essays by George Cawkwell.[44] All essays have been previously published, between the early '60s and the late '90s: four concern the archaic period, another four fifth-century Athens, and the remaining eleven fourth-century Greek history, which forms the book's nucleus. The collection clearly illustrates one of the major arguments of Cawkwell's fourth-century essays: whereas until the '80s it was common to see the fourth century as a period of decline and crisis, whether of the Greek *polis* in general or of Athens and Sparta in particular, Cawkwell has systematically argued against such assumptions, and has claimed instead that the defeats of Athens and Sparta were due to military reasons and to having worthy opponents (Epaminondas, Philip). Few historians nowadays think of the fourth century as a period of the crisis of the *polis*, although Cawkwell's arguments against a crisis in fourth-century Sparta have not fared as well as his arguments concerning Athens. We still lack an overall study of the fourth century that would co-examine structural continuities and changes alongside the conjuncture and the role of individuals and their networks; but these essays are food for thought for those willing to embark on such a project. The publication of the third volume of the *Hellenistic Economies* project[45] is a welcome addition to the growing output of innovative work on ancient economic history. The volume includes nineteen essays, alongside an introduction by Archibald and Davies and an afterword by Gabrielsen. The essays range widely: many focus on aspects of the economy of Ptolemaic Egypt

[43] *Democracy Beyond Athens. Popular Government in the Greek Classical Age*. By Eric W. Robinson. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2011. Pp. ix + 275. 4 figures. Hardback £60, ISBN: 978-0-521-84331-7.

[44] *Cyrene to Chaeronea. Selected Essays on Ancient Greek History*. By George Cawkwell. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011. Pp. xii + 485. Hardback £80, ISBN 978-0-19-959328-6.

[45] *The Economies of Hellenistic Societies, Third to First Centuries* BC. Edited by Zosia H. Archibald, John K. Davies, and Vincent Gabrielsen. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011. Pp. xviii + 460. 2 maps, 31 figures. Hardback £85, ISBN: 978-0-19-958792-6.

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(Criscuolo, Manning, Thompson, von Reden), the Seleucid Empire (Aperghis, Hannestad, van der Spek), or particular Greek *poleis* (Cyrene: Bresson, Ephesos: Davies, Olbia: Müller). The remaining essays examine thematic issues: particularly notable are the first tentative explorations of how to apply network theory to the study of Hellenistic economies (Archibald, Manning, Oliver). Others examine the concept of the region (Reger), the role of monopolies (Gabrielsen), the use of transport amphorae as an index of economic performance (Lund), the impact of warfare (Chaniotis), the economic role of cults (Chankowski), aspects of land management (Chandezon), and the role of slave labour (Descat). A fascinating overall thread is supplied by how various essays, from a range of different perspectives, approach the role of coinage, monetization, and monetary circulation (Chankowski, Criscuolo, Gabrielsen, Müller, Reger, van der Spek, von Reden). To close, four books exploring diverse issues address wider audiences. Paul Cartledge contributes a short but lively volume on ancient Greece[46] to the Very Short Introduction series of OUP. Writing a history of ancient Greece is a notorious problem: Greek communities were dispersed across the Mediterranean, and Greek history attests radical changes from the Bronze Age to the end of antiquity. Cartledge provides a successful answer to this problem by presenting Greek history through the history of eleven Greek cities. The selection of cities aims primarily to illustrate different periods and different aspects of Greek history. Cnossus and Mycenae exemplify Greece in the Bronze Age; Massalia, Syracuse, and Miletus the expansion of Greek culture in the wider Greek world; the great cities of Argos, Sparta, Athens, and Thebes the major signposts of archaic and classical Greek history; while Alexandria and Byzantium represent the Hellenistic and Roman periods of Greek history. But Cartledge craftily manages to explore the diverse long-term histories of each Greek city, and to incorporate into the city histories discussion of various aspects of Greek culture, from myth and philosophy to political thought and art. In 1764 Winckelmann's pioneering *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums* argued that it was Greek freedom that accounted for the development and importance of Greek art. This line of argument was followed by Hegel and other famous thinkers, and Christian Meier has felt it necessary to offer a restatement for the twenty-first century.[47] In a nutshell, his argument is that ancient Greece was unique in terms of the absence of political unification and of a dominating monarchy or other institution. Greek *poleis* were independent and were run by their own citizens, and Greek culture developed as a means of dealing with the challenges and opportunities created by Greek freedom; the dynamism and importance of the Greek culture of freedom constitutes the origins of Europe (which is, of course, quintessentially dynamic). Some lines of the argument are undoubtedly correct: G. E. R. Lloyd has shown in various studies how the culture of open debate and disagreement had a profound effect on the nature of Greek science. But Meier's overall argument that other cultures were created in order to dominate, whereas Greek culture was created as a result of freedom, is far too simplistic. He does not seem to think through the implications of how easy it was for Greek culture to

[46] *Ancient Greece. A Very Short Introduction*. By Paul Cartledge. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011. Pp. xxvi + 184. 24 b/w illustrations, 6 maps, 8 plans and figures. Hardback £12.99, ISBN: 978-0-19-923338-0; paperback £7.99, ISBN: 978-0-19-960134-9.

[47] *A Culture of Freedom. Ancient Greece and the Origins of Europe*. By Christian Meier. Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 2011. Pp. xxiv + 315. 4 maps, 17 figures. Hardback £18.99, ISBN: 978-0-19-958803-9.

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flourish in contexts without freedom: tragedy was composed in the courts of Macedonian rulers such as Archelaus, while science flourished in the Museum of the despotic Ptolemies. Furthermore, Foucault's examination of the link between knowledge and power does not seem to have yet entered Meier's mental horizon forty years later. He does not wonder that one of the Greek definitions of freedom was that of dominating others; unsurprisingly, the connections between Greek culture and slavery and imperialism do not enter his account. Fortunately, studies like those of Malkin and Moyer examined above show more promising ways of understanding the peculiarity and uniqueness of Greek culture. While everyone recognizes the importance of the Athenian navy, nobody has yet written a narrative history of Athens from the point of view of her navy. This is the subject of John Hale's book,[48] covering the period from the creation of the first large-scale navy in 483 BC to the final destruction of Athenian naval power in 322. Hale argues that the navy contributed everything that was important in Athenian political, military, economic, and cultural history; and some of the best parts of the book concern, for example, how naval terminology had penetrated even the sexual vocabulary of the Athenians. The narrative is gripping, often interspersed with lively details, but the account is rather unbalanced, as the fourth century occupies less than a quarter of the book. Moreover, there are various misunderstandings (e.g. Hales thinks that most of the 20,000 Athenians of the lower class (*thetes*) were hired labourers in agriculture, manufacture, or transport), there are various Orientalist and modernist platitudes, and the book is rather cavalier with sources (for example, inscriptions concerning fourth-century metics are used as evidence for conditions in the mid-fifth century). Most importantly, however, the fruitful research concerning the relationship between class, warfare, and democracy and the role of slaves and metics in the Athenian navy has been completely elided by the author. Finally, another book dealing with Athenian political and military history is Peter Rhodes' contribution to a series of military studies of a biography of Alcibiades,[49] the notorious fifth-century Athenian politician. While addressing a wider audience, Rhodes makes an excellent job of putting the ancient sources at the forefront and explaining to the reader the divergences among the ancient sources and how the modern historian can decide, when possible, which account to trust more and how to combine separate pieces of evidence. The book is more an exploration of the political and military history of the Aegean in the late fifth century through the career of Alcibiades than strictly speaking a biography of the man himself. Given the nature of our sources, this is a wise choice, and the reader will certainly benefit from this up-to-date account of the later stage of the Peloponnesian War.

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[48] *Lords of the Sea. The Epic Story of the Athenian Navy and the Birth of Democracy.* By John R. Hale. London, Gibson Square, 2010. Pp. xxxiii + 395. 21 maps, 6 diagrams. Hardback £25, ISBN: 978-19-0-614263-6.

[49] *Alcibiades*. By P. J. Rhodes. Barnsley, S. Yorks, Pen and Sword Military, 2011. Pp. xvi + 143. 3 maps, 20 figures. Hardback £19.99, ISBN: 978-1-84884-069-0.

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