learned from the Argolid are taken forward into the remaining chapters.

Chapter 3 (26–36) demonstrates important findings about the locations, spatial, and social organization of funerary sites, in which the north-western and north-eastern Peloponnese display different characteristics. Perhaps most tellingly, the appearance of continuity between Classical and Hellenistic times masks variation in the degree to which earlier grave sites are reused or overlaid with new ones, which suggests changes in the importance placed on ancestry and local history (35–6). Chapter 4 (37–48) notes the prevalence of inhumation over cremation burial, the latter being relatively rare other than in the Argolid, Achaia, and Triphylia. Again it is the 'growing social divide' (43) that catches the eye. In aspects such as this, the study of burial data has much to say about intra-regional homogeneity and inter-regional variation. Chapter 5 (pp. 49–62) demonstrates the increased use of perfume and oil containers in the Hellenistic era, and examines the varying visibility across both study periods of sub-groups such as women, children, and hoplites. All this has the potential to deepen our understanding of Peloponnesian communities gained from historical sources and epigraphy. Finally, chapter 6 (63–75) considers burial ritual in the context of myths and religious beliefs, and shows the persistence of apotropaic items of material culture and the influence of belief in an after-life. The Conclusion condenses the findings of the main chapters with an emphasis on the shift over time from more communal to more individual ways of approaching funerary ritual.

A review cannot do justice to the range and effectiveness with which this volume covers all conceivable aspects of Peloponnesian funerary culture in the Classical and Hellenistic Peloponnese.[3] It is a remarkable testimony to how the minute and rigorous analysis of archaeological remains, taking account of prior knowledge of landscape and wider historical evidence, can yield real results for our understanding of social relations. It is to be hoped that the lessons delivered by the many important sections within chapters will actively be woven into future historians' reconstruction of Peloponnesian societies and their development. I expect this study to have an extensive legacy—provided both archaeologists and historians are open to understanding each other's approaches as well as this author does.

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[3] The volume is highly readable, though more active copy-editing would have ironed out some slips, typical of Greek-speakers writing in English: for example, in the omission of the definite article in certain contexts, or the evident difficulty of choosing the correct preposition or auxiliary verb. In footnotes where long sequences of author–date citations are grouped by region, it would have helped the eye to put region names in bold (e.g. 6 n. 84; 9 n. 118). An unnecessary 'not' remains at p. 4, col. i, line 24.

Simon Elliott, *Ancient Greeks at War: Warfare in the Classical World from Agamemnon to Alexander.* pp. 288, with 134 col. ills, 8 double-page col. maps, 5 col. battle-plans. Oxford & Philadelphia: Casemate Publishers, 2021. ISBN 978-1-61200-998-8, hardback £30; 978-1-61200-999-5, E-book £12.99.

This book is one of a series concentrating on what is essentially military history, focusing on particular societies (the author has written other books in the series; four are cited in the Selective Bibliography). The Introduction claims that it is a "*tour de force* covering every aspect of warfare in the ancient Greek world" (p. 7 – a rather remarkable claim to make about one's own book), but goes on to state that it covers "military strategy, tactics and technology as they evolved over three millennia", thus apparently bypassing highly important questions such as what part warfare played in Greek society at different periods and why and how often wars were fought. This raises the question, what is the intended readership for this book?

The lavish colour illustrations, which include photographs of painted figurines, often massed in formations, to give an impression of different types of battle array, and many depictions of particular types of warrior, often shown in imagined scenes of fighting at a particular battle, might well suit a wargaming readership. But I cannot help feeling that wargamers would be bored by the detailed coverage in Ch. 3 of the political developments in the 4th century BC during which Philip II of Macedon achieved dominance in mainland Greece, and in Ch. 5 of the struggles of Alexander's successors against each other and, eventually, against the rising power of Rome, although the account of Alexander the Great's career in Ch. 4, with its detailed analysis of his four greatest battles, might well appeal. But I expect that they would like more discussion of the topics covered rather belatedly in Ch. 6, on "The Military Systems of Classical and Hellenistic Greece", where

the armour and tactics typical of hoplite warfare do receive attention, and much is said about the development of the Macedonian phalanx and other innovations of the 4th century BC in the use of cavalry and various types of lighter-armed troops, that led to the fielding of very different types of army by Alexander and his successors. However, it has to be said that in the notably short section on naval warfare little is said about the developments in tactics that contributed so much to Athens's rise to superpower status in the 5th century BC. The focus is rather on the emergence of new types of ship in the Hellenistic period, just as in the section on siege warfare attention is focused on new types of machine.

In all these chapters, as in Ch.1 on "Minoans, Mycenaeans, and the Sea Peoples" and Ch. 2 on "Classical Greece", everything is set out with such confidence and authority that the reader with little or no knowledge of the Greek past might well accept the account unreservedly. Only rarely is it suggested that on any particular topic there are disagreements or conflicting opinions, if not much speculation and uncertainty. But such confidence can give a false impression, as in a particularly notable case, the battle of Marathon (p. 81). The account, following Herodotus closely, states that after five days of stalemate the Persian general decided to withdraw the cavalry and send them by ship to attack Athens, and that they were embarked in a long operation that continued overnight. Miltiades learned of this the following day from scouts and decided to attack, thus winning a famous victory over the Persian infantry. The general reader could be forgiven for supposing that this is indeed what happened, but there is not a word of this in Herodotus's account; he mentions the delay before the battle but never explains the circumstances in which the battle took place. The author's account reflects just one of the *modern* theories produced as an explanation (for a good discussion see Wikipedia), and he should at least have acknowledged that he has chosen to accept this theory.

This might not be thought to be so very bad, but it is a reflection of a general trend which is particularly evident in Chs. 1 and 2, where much is said that cannot be based on any ancient authority. Here the very short Select Bibliography does not give many clues to the sources of what is set out with characteristic confidence, for it is heavily dominated by works on the careers of Philip II of Macedon and Alexander the Great and the struggles of Alexander's successors against each other in the Hellenistic period, and includes some on purely Roman topics. There are some general works, like the Oxford Classical Dictionary (1996 edition, not the latest), but the extent to which these have been treated as authoritative can be gauged by comparing what is said of the Minoan and Mycenaean civilisations in Ch. 1 with what is written in the OCD by A.A. Peatfield and myself in the 2012 edition. Ch. 1 in fact contains the most extraordinary collection of outdated interpretations, apparent misunderstandings, and completely garbled information that I have ever read. To choose just a few examples, in a period placed pre-1700 BC it is stated that warfare was endemic between the Minoan "city-states", and "control of the sea was the most important aspect of Minoan conflict with frescos at some sites showing amphibious assaults" (p. 28). The Mycenaeans, "far more warlike than their early Greek and Minoan neighbours," by 1650 BC ruled "the entire Balkans Peninsula" (the author commonly use this term or just "the Balkans" to refer to what seems to be simply ancient mainland Greece and Macedonia) through a series of large cities, which all had cyclopean walls by c. 1500; through trade with Crete and the Aegean they adopted the Linear A script, which they used to write their own proto-Greek language, and by 1450 BC it had evolved into Linear B (p. 38). By this time they had conquered all their major regional rivals, including the Minoans (p. 39). The Trojan War is thought to have been a historical event, though its date is a bit unclear, and in contradiction of all Greek tradition from Homer onwards, as well as all modern commentary (to my knowledge), is described as a "crusade to rescue Helen", who had been abducted by Paris (p. 40). Our information about it derives from the Homeric poems, which provide plenty of detail, down to "a fairly exact numbering of the chariots, ships and men available to each ruler" (p. 41).

Ch. 1 also contains an unnecessarily detailed excursus on the notorious "Sea Peoples", who are supposed in a very old-fashioned way to have overrun the Near East in massive migrations, but not to have destroyed Mycenaean civilisation as once thought; this is attributed to a perhaps climate-related event, the Late Bronze Age Collapse, dated around 1250 BC, following which there was a true Dark Age until the arrival of the Dorian Greeks c. 1100 BC, bringing a new culture including the use of iron (p. 40). With an unnecessarily detailed and, I suspect, outdated list of the Greek dialects in Ch. 2 (p. 55), we are told that Doric was the "earliest dominant form of true ancient Greek" which soon replaced most forms of proto-Greek. When semi-historical times are reached, the comments become slightly less eccentric, but still often questionable (the foundation of colonies is all to do with the expansion of trade). But the general description,

in a glossary of unfamiliar terms provided, of "oligarchy" as "a form of autocratic rule by a few individuals" (p. 18) suggests no understanding of the principles on which the majority of Greek states were organised. The background account of Sparta on p. 63 displays no real understanding of the status and role of *perioikoi* (consistently misspelt *periokoi* in the book) or helots in Spartan society, and there is no reference to the highly significant Spartan conquest of Messenia or the development of the Peloponnesian League. The background account of Thebes (pp. 62-3) is even worse: described as a "Mycenaean foundation", abandoned and re-founded in the Dark Age/Geometric period, it came to dominate not just Boeotia, but Aetolia and Thessaly. "It then played a crucial role in both the Greco-Persian Wars and the Peloponnesian War, initially being part of the Delian League in the latter. However, ultimately it sided with Sparta ...". It is really disturbing that someone who has supposedly used Herodotus and Thucydides as sources should get historical commentary so wrong.

One gets the impression that the author is not really interested in the earlier periods, nor even the 5th century BC, where his account of Greek history goes directly from the battle of Plataea to the background to the Peloponnesian War and thus omits any account of the Delian League and the growth of Athens into a superpower that could face the Persian Empire on equal terms. Similarly patchy coverage is to be found in Ch. 3, which focuses far more on what was happening in Macedonia in the 4th century BC than on the admittedly complex political developments in Greece. On a more general level, there is no recognition of the argument advanced by van Wees (2004) that the ancient sources' account of warfare is highly selective and idealised, and a more critical study of the evidence might lead to radically different conclusions – nor, in the particular context of hoplites, is there any indication that the topic remains a centre of lively debate, on which a major collection of discussions by leading specialists appeared not too long ago (Kagan and Viggiano 2013), with an even more up-to-date study this year from Konijnendijk and Bardunias (2022).

It must finally be said that the good quality of the arresting cover and interior illustrations is not matched by the text. This is full of misspellings, particularly of proper names, even on the maps (see especially that on pp. 66-7), and typos, to the extent that it is hard to believe that the book was proof-read at all (AD for BC on p. 93!). The Index is patchy, so that although the Delian and Peloponnesian Leagues and Messenia are all mentioned in the text at least once, there are no listings for them, and page-references in it can be wrong (e.g. for Marathon, Battle Of) or incomplete (e.g. for *perioikoi*). A list of page-references for the many illustrations, maps and battle plans would have been helpful, but none is offered.

Overall, this book simply does not match up to the claims made for it on the back cover. It may give reasonably reliable information on the careers of Philip II, Alexander the Great and the Hellenistic dynasties, but it is simply too patchy and riddled with questionable, often outdated or wildly eccentric, comments on the earlier periods of Greek history for it to be recommended as useful to anyone with a serious interest in its topic.

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