

takes place: while the *supra*-network of the philosophers appears as a subset of the 'smaller level' networks, the greater network of believers in the *Acts of Thomas* calls for a radical abandonment of the smaller social networks. We get here a glimpse of an area worthy of further investigation: the interaction between networks. After having thus travelled along literary roads, the reader can move on to real roads, with Y. Lolos's study of the *uia Egnatia* and of the change that being thus networked brought to the cities it connected. Finally, after an ambitious but rather unstructured detour through Hadrian's *Panhellenion*, the volume is brought to a close by D. Rathbone's masterful discussion of merchant networks in the Eastern Mediterranean in the first and second centuries A.D., highlighting the role played by networks of different strengths and dimensions (tightly closed ones, wide weak ones, professional ones), formed by *publicani*, soldiers and veterans, the imperial *familia*, and banks in the organisation of maritime commerce.

'Networks are everywhere. All we need is an eye for them.' So the Editors in their introduction (p. 7), quoting from A.L. Barabási, *Linked: the New Science of Networks*, (2002), p. 7; and indeed, the studies here collected look at all sorts of networks, with quite different eyes. The challenge is possibly not so much to find networks as to see how they are structured, and even more, how the various networks to which an individual simultaneously belongs interact. For this, the volume under review offers an excellent point of departure.

Durham University

PAOLA CECCARELLI
paola.ceccarelli@durham.ac.uk

THE SPARTANS

KENNEL (N.M.) *Spartans. A New History*. Pp. viii + 218, ill., maps. Malden, Ma and Oxford: Wiley–Blackwell, 2010. Paper, £19.99, €24. ISBN: 978-1-4051-3000-4.

doi:10.1017/S0009840X11001429

K. has produced an excellent introduction to ancient Sparta that many ancient historians will be more than happy to use as required reading for their BA modules. As is inevitable in a survey of Spartan history, however, it poses more questions than it answers. And while on the whole this is a commendable feature in any handbook, K. could at times have been somewhat more considerate especially to those readers new to the subject.

The reason that it can be a tough read for fresher-Spartans is its slow start. Chapters 1 and 2 make good attempts to supply essential background information, but they are also the most fragmentary and least readable. The lack of any secure information about archaic Sparta is, however, more to blame for this defect than the author. K. begins with a chapter in two parts, the first being a geographical overview of the area, the second an introduction to the literary sources. Although K. laments the archaeological 'underexploitation' of Laconia, his comments contain some fascinating insights on the effects of archaeological publications on the image of Sparta.

K.'s archaeological enthusiasm has a side effect: the second part of Chapter 1, an introduction to the literary sources, appears as an afterthought. K. aims to explain how these have contributed to the 'Spartan Mirage', but his arguments would have benefited from a more detailed discussion, perhaps in a separate chapter. His

introduction to the various authors is adequate and well written, but leaves open the main question how the Mirage was constructed and for what reason. Mostly, from K.'s idea of the Mirage 'through which the image of the historical city gradually became transformed through the work of philosophers, biographers, historians and romantics' it appears as a purely non-Spartan construction. A more explicit attempt to answer this question would have assisted K. in Chapter 2, which addresses different versions of the myth of the Dorian wanderings. K. concludes, 'this is what the Spartans evidently believed about their past'. In light of K.'s interpretation of the Mirage as a non-Spartan construction, however, that statement loses much of its apparent certainty. As in Chapter 1, K.'s forte is his use of archaeology to express severe doubts about the historicity of the myth. His discussion in the context of the end of Bronze Age civilisation in Greece is well balanced. K. suggests that the archaeological record refers to a continuing population in Amyclae and Sparta. Having effectively dispelled the myth, his discussion of the functionality of it is, as he admits, speculative. An understanding of the Mirage as being produced by Spartans and non-Spartans could have made it less so. Nevertheless, I find the idea that the myth originated from attempts to consolidate and legitimate the dual kingship system persuasive. K. sketches a context in which questions about the Spartan Constitution may be better understood.

Chapter 3 deals with the development of the Spartan Constitution in relation to the Messenian Wars and portrays Tyrtaeus dealing with the issues of land shortage and distribution as a kind of Solon. Was the conquest of Messenia part of the crisis or part of the cure? K.'s posing of this question is innovative and important. His treatment of the difficult texts of the *Rhetra* and the *Eunomia* is highly enlightening. Especially for newer students of Spartan history, the line-by-line commentary on the *Rhetra* is essential reading.

Chapters 4, 7, 8 and 9 provide a chronological overview of Spartan history from Cleomenes to Nabis centred round the actions and motivations of the Spartan kings. This approach results in an exceptionally readable illustration of the uniqueness of Sparta's dual kingship system. Through focussing on the kings' domestic and foreign policy and how these are related, K.'s account of major historical events such as the Persian Wars and the Peloponnesian War has a firmly Spartan perspective. My one problem with K.'s approach is that it occasionally leads to speculative psychologising, as in the case of Pausanias who received conflicting treatments from Herodotus and Thucydides and whom K. compares to the American traitor Benedict Arnold. Another example, in Chapter 7, is K.'s explanation of the breach between Agesilaus and Lysander on the basis of their both having dominant personalities.

K. has a good excuse for his interest in personality. Chapter 6 explains the dual kingship system in more detail and concludes that the king's power ultimately 'derived from his personal skill in exploitation of the potentialities of the resources at his disposal, not directly from the kingship's position in the Spartan governmental hierarchy'. Considering the unique role of the dual kingship, and K.'s excellent illustration of it in the chronological chapters, it is not entirely logical that he waits until Chapter 6 to introduce the system. At this point K. has already broken up the chronological narrative for a discussion of helots and perioeci in Chapter 5. Providing useful information about the origins of helotage, the status of helots and the differences between helotage and chattel slavery, the chapter sometimes has an introductory feel and might have worked better as Chapter 4, allowing K. to connect it more clearly to his discussion of the Messenian Wars.

The fall of Sparta is the key issue of Chapters 8 to 10. As in the other chronological chapters, K.'s account of the reign of Agesilaus II is a combination of his domestic and foreign policy motivated through his personality. Agesilaus, 'a competent but not a brilliant general' according to K., had to deal with increasing military threats on multiple fronts and a decreasing availability of manpower. The combination of short-term solutions and inflexibility towards the now freed Messenia could not turn the tide. Sparta's 'navelgazing' (K.'s word) continued during subsequent regimes from Archidamus II to Nabis. The last chapter treats Sparta's troubles under the Achaean League and its partial recovery under the Roman Empire.

K.'s overview of Spartan history is an insightful and refreshing read. The first two chapters can be demanding and the structure of the book as a whole is occasionally confusing, but the persistent reader is well rewarded with the entertaining narratives of the chronological chapters.

Groningen

LYDIA LANGERWERF
l.langerwerf@gmail.com

LANGUAGE AND DEMOCRACY IN COLONIAL SICILY

WILLI (A.) *Sikelismos. Sprache, Literatur und Gesellschaft im griechischen Sizilien (8.–5. Jh. v. Chr.)*. (Bibliotheca Helvetica Romana 29.) Pp. xviii + 477. Basel: Schwabe, 2008. Cased, €47.50. ISBN: 978-3-7965-2255-0.

doi:10.1017/S0009840X11001430

Colonies continue to haunt our postcolonial imagination, even when the setting is in the future. The 'off-world colonies' in *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* by Philip K. Dick (1968) or the semi-mythical 'twelve colonies' of *Battlestar Galactica* have a notable political significance for those who live in the homelands, or 'non-colonies'. The Greek colonial experience is the centre of attention of W.'s *Sikelismos*.¹ The work focusses on four Sicilian literary figures, Stesichorus, Epicharmus, Empedocles and Gorgias. However, in locating the authors in their context the work acquires more significance for our conception of many linguistic, literary, social and political aspects of Greek colonisation. There is more politics here than meets the eye.

The theme of the work, as defined by W. in Chapter 1, is the Sicilian *Sprachkultur* from the eighth to the fifth century (p. 2), that is, how Greek developed in Sicily and how it was put into use in the literary evidence of Sicilian culture (p. 9). The methods of philology and linguistics are used, as well as those of literary criticism and cultural history. The decision to focus exclusively on Sicily seems well founded, as there is no reason to see Magna Graecia and Sicily as an undifferentiated area. Of the methods of literary criticism, some useful concepts of structuralist (postcolonial) literary theory are presented and used occasionally throughout the work. W. emphasises at the outset (pp. 8–9) the ambivalent position of the colonists between the centre (the homeland) and the indigenous natives

¹The title word, not attested in Greek, is a plausible form coined by W. (compare *σικελίζειν* and *Ἑλληνισμός*).