
Alejandro Díaz Fernández (ed.), *Después de Mantinea. El mundo griego y Oriente ante el ascenso de Macedonia*, Barcelona, Bellaterra Ediciones, 2023, 371 pp [ISBN 978-84-18723-66-7].

The frontiers of past time, the borders from one age to another, have been a usual stepping stone in the work of the Historians. They have a special matter in the case of Ancient History, where a lot of peoples, scenarios, processes and displays are usually related: the first Olympic Games, the beginning of Democracy in Athens, the Persian Wars or Aegospotami (even if the mark is stressed on defeat or victory in this battle), The King's Peace, Chaeronea (exactly like Aegospotami), and Alexander, if we just think in Greek History, but also Kadesh, Cyrus the Great, the foundation of Rome, the expulsion of Tarquinius, the consulship of Marius, and many others if we want to draw a picture a little more wider. Many of these approaches stress both ideas of change and continuity. In some way, the borders of times are in the Ancient History more likely to the borders of landscape, as F. Holt stressed long time ago¹, as far as they both split up and also connect.

This usual feature of the time borders has also a common aim, to put a focus in a concrete point in order to get a deep scope in what is around, before and after. This is what sometimes I consider as a kind of microscopic perspective in our fieldwork: when Historians take a sample in time and try to guess the origins and causes, and the transformations, allowing even a place to what really remains unchanged. The book that we review now is based clearly in this kind of aim. The explicit will of the editor is driven to observe a point of change in the Ancient Greek Classical Age and observe a world that is already under a complex process of mutation. However, the title is both related with two main processes, the end of a kind of Greek Classical world in Mantinea and what was arising at the same time, the creasing hands of Macedon spreading its power and influence from the north with an highly unchallenging authority.

There is some kind of continuity, or the wish to, in the point where the focus (and the chosen time border) is centred in the book, Mantinea. The prologue explicitly mentions Xenophon's *Hellenica* as a key point to the conception of the book. This, of course, is also a way to relate the scope of this collection of essays in the period of the Classical Greece, with the long shadow Thucydides clearly in the horizon, as it was followed by the book of Xenophon. It also advises the reader about the importance of the facts in the conceptual organization of the book, and even more, in the main presence of war as an historical *daemon* who stages the historical scenarios: every historian related to the study of the ancient world knows well how tyrannical is the presence of information and the attentions on war and warfare from our ancient sources (at least in the Classical Greece) and to forget or dismiss this overrule of the war accounts would be simply unfair with our efforts to understand and our aims for knowledge.

Actually, Fourth Century BC Greece had usually received a clearly different kind of attention that the brilliant, flourishing beautiful history of the glorious Fifth Century.

¹ F. L. HOLT (1988), *Alexander the Great and Bactria*, Leiden: 11-12.

Pericles, Athenian Democracy at its best, epic battles as Marathon or Thermopyles and names of the highest impact as Euripides or Socrates, to quote just a very brief summarily list, are confronted with blood wars, civil wars, destruction, and poverty. Of course, Fourth Century' names deserve a proper line here (from Plato to Aristotle and from Isocrates to Diogenes the Dog, for example, to avoid quoting always just politicians or military leaders). Likewise, Spanish Scholarship concerning the Fourth Century BC Greece is showing a strong interest during the last decade, if we must judge it, and some main recent books can serve as proof of it². So, this book shall be located and understood in the wide context both of reviewing the complexity of the this period like a century of continuity and changes, and as a topic Spanish colleagues seem to be related with in recent dates.

The original idea of the book was, actually, a conference. But Covid-19 Pandemics avoid any chance for a physical gathering. So, the reunion became a collection of papers. However, in my opinion this is not just a usual collection of chapters as a consequence of despair interests from participants in a conference (as it was for example the book from the Ist Reunion of Spanish Fourth Century BC Greece' Scholars in 2011 in Barcelona, which I was co-organizer and lately co-editor), but something different. I mean better: something else. Firstly, the list of contributors included the main names in Spanish Scholarship on the topic, but also many other, international scholars like C. Bearzot, F. Landucci, S. Sprawski or C. Tuplin. This fact can be a clue of the impressive progress of the recent years' research from Spain concerning Ancient Greece and especially Fourth Century BC.

The inner idea of this companion is also to drive the reader around the great themes of this challenging century. From a reflexive and resuming perspective, C. Bearzot introduces the reader to the main problems of the period and its historical understanding. The main voice in Ancient Macedonian Studies of Franca Landucci describes the reality in the realm of the Argeads until Philip II (i.e., during the first half of the century). Athens during the same period is reviewed by Laura Sancho and Esparta by César Fornis, while Thebes is analysed by José Pascual, both well-recognized specialists in each of these *poleis*. Arcadia and Thessaly are at observed by M. Cruz Cardete and S. Sprawski respectively. Here we can trace a line, and the geographical approach is substituted for the rest of the book by monographic, thematic chapters on warfare (F. Echeverría), historiography (M. A. Rodríguez), Geography (E. Castro-Paez and G. Cruz Andreotti). A third phase in the reading is regarded to what we can consider the future after Mantinea, and there we can find the always interesting reflexions of F. J. Gómez Espelosín on the role of Asia in the scope and ideologies of the Greeks of that time, while Alejandro Díaz faces the difficult task of explaining Panhellenism and the different Common Peaces of the period, and Manel García reviews the relationships between Persians and Greeks in a wide perspective. To conclude the reading, Christopher Tuplin closes the book with an interesting proposal: to look at Greece from Persia, a challenging thought that I feel tempted to relate with the influence of what has been recently titled as *Achaemenid Studies*³.

To sum up, the book seems a very useful tool for those able to read Spanish in order to get a wide, complete approach to the changing world of the first half of the Greek

² J. PASCUAL – B. ANTELA-BERNÁRDEZ – D. GÓMEZ (coord.) (2018): *Cambio y pervivència. El mundo griego en el s. IV a. C.*, Madrid; B. ANTELA-BERNÁRDEZ – M. MENDOZA (eds.) (2022): *Filipo II de Macedonia*, Sevilla.

³ M.T. IMANPOUR (2013): "Development of Achaemenid Studies in the West after 1979", *Analytica Iranica* 4: 91-141; (2015): "Re-establishment of Achaemenid History and its Development in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries", *Iranian Studies* 48: 515-530.

Fourth Century BC. One can, of course, miss chapters on regions (mainly Magna Grecia here) or themes (like, for example, philosophy, or even economy). A chapter on archaeology and its relevance in the study of this period can also be noted. However, the book is a huge goal in a context like the Spanish Scholarship on Ancient Greece, a very difficult task sometimes equal to any of Hercules' Works, and opens the way to other future approaches that can follow the path and still go deep in the very difficult questions of the changes of this period. Also, the book can be read as a previous material for another different publication, as it was the recently published Spanish companion to Philip II. Both are similar in their conception and also in their structure, and offer sturdy readings for anyone interested in Classical Greece or simple joy of knowledge. Both books, finally, promote a kind of book, that of the style of international *Companion* or handbook that has not really usual in Spanish Classical Scholarship until now. In my humble, personal opinion, this is the path we must follow, and the goal to pursue.

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