

PELOPONNESIAN CITIES UNDER ROMAN RULE: THE NEW POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY AND ITS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL REPERCUSSIONS

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Abstract: The indifference of Rome and the woeful consequences of the civil wars drove the cities of the Peloponnese to economic bankruptcy and social despair during the Republican period (146-31 B.C.). Augustus attempted to overturn this situation with emergency administrative measures that ushered in radical changes to the political geography, the spatial distribution of the population and of wealth, the existing social hierarchy and the relationship between town and country. Roman interventions in the political and social spheres, which were supported by the ruling elites of the cities, set the foundations for a new political and economic course, which started to bear fruit during the Flavian period. The Romans did not intervene in the religious sphere and left the cities free to organise their traditional religious affairs, which underwent a revival in the 2nd c. A.D. They did, however encourage an emperor worship that was systematically associated with Greek traditional divinities at cult places and festivals. The Romanisation of the upper classes in particular was especially apparent in names, architecture and construction techniques, although its effects on institutions, religion and other manifestations of social life were more subtle. The accumulation of public and private wealth, peaking in the 2nd c. A.D., meant increasing investment and construction work that gave many cities a monumental appearance. This system started to crumble from the mid-3rd c. A.D., and the crisis affected not only the cities' political and economic spheres, but also the values upon which the new religion was to invest.

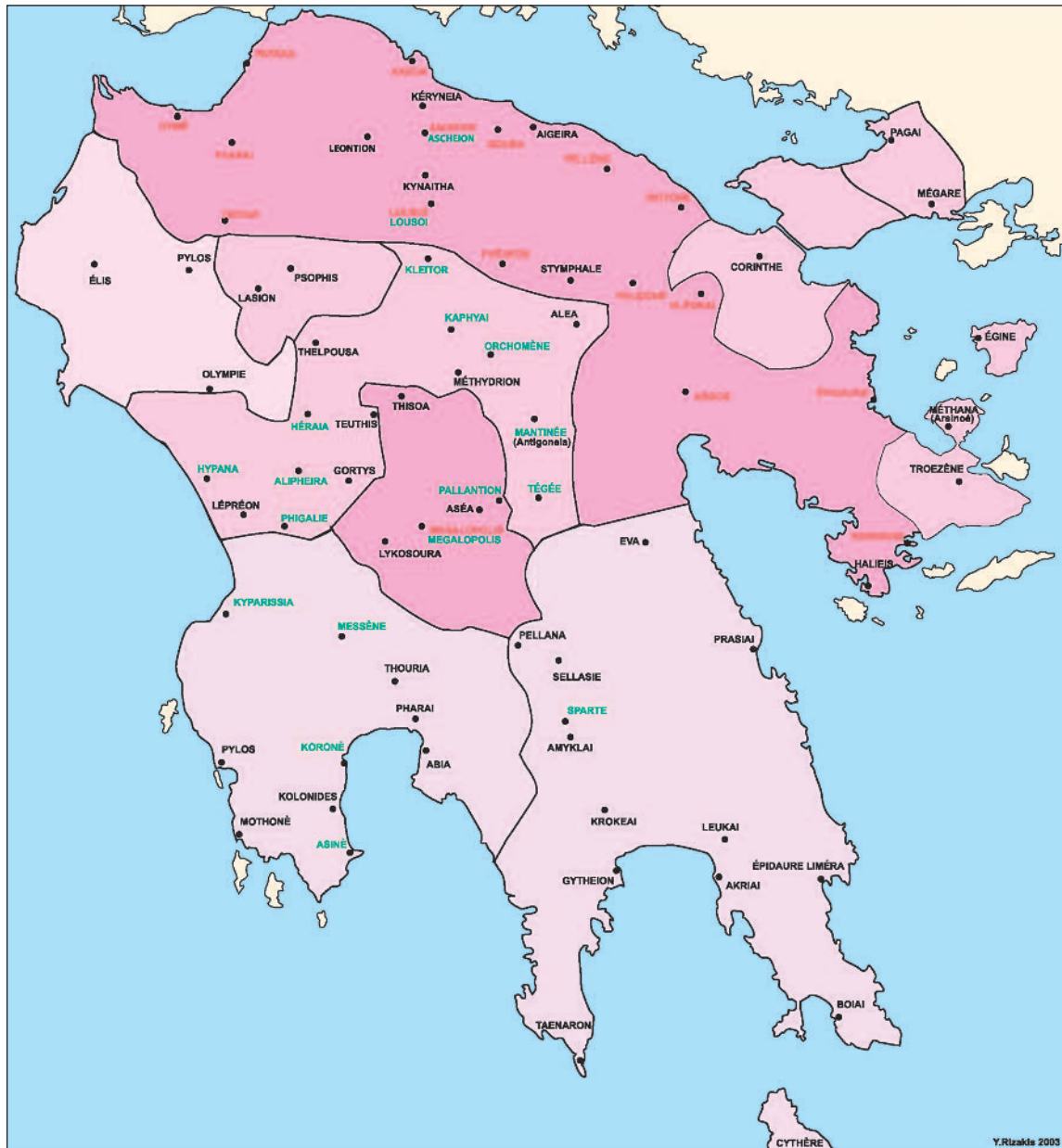
The Roman domination that was imposed on the Peloponnese after the desperate end of the so-called Achaean War (146 B.C.) overturned the political, economic and, in part, social balance that Rome had itself imposed since the early 2nd c. B.C., supporting the expansion of the League throughout the peninsula. As is well known, this expansion took place even at the expense of the most faithful allies (e.g. Sparta, Messene and Elis), since Rome judged that this would better serve its

own expansionist plans in the future (**Map 1**).¹ With the crushing and dissolution of the League, Rome put a definitive end to the political unification of the peninsula, restoring the fragmentary administration shared amongst dozens of small cities that had existed before the foundation of the *koinon*.

According to the new policy, the fate of each city was regulated separately. A section of the *chora* of Corinth and the properties of the resistance leaders were confiscated.² Cities that had been

1. Messene's importance declined, to the benefit of the smaller Messenian cities, which had now gained their autonomy by joining the Achaean League (see Themelis, *infra* p. 92 n. 30 and Rizakis forthcoming a esp. ns 14, 22-24 and 33). On the other hand, Rome did not encourage Sparta's expansionist plans in Laconia, and it appears that the Laconian cities preserved their autonomy (for further developments see *infra* p. 6 n. 30). On relations between the Achaean League and the Romans in this period see the bibliography compiled by A. D. Rizakis in "Αχαϊκή ιστοριογραφία: απολογισμός και προοπτικές της έρευνας", in Rizakis 1991, 54 n. 22. See also H. Nottmeyer, "Römische Gebietspolitik im 2. Jhd. v. Chr. am Beispiel des Achaïschen Koinons", in C. Schubert, K. Brodersen (eds), *Rom und der griechische Osten: Festschrift für Hatto H. Schmitt zum 65. Geburtstag*, Stuttgart 1995, 199-208 and Rizakis forthcoming a *passim*.

2. The largest section of the *chora* of Corinth that had been confiscated (Zonar. IX. 1) was ceded to the *polis* of



- Achaia between 210 and 207 B.C.
- Areas acquired by the Achaean League until 194 B.C.
- Areas acquired by the Achaean League until 191 B.C.

Map 1. The territorial situation in the Peloponnese in 191 B.C. reflecting the expansion of the Achaean League at the beginning of the 2nd c. B.C.

friendly to Rome, such as Sikyon, Sparta, Messene and Epidaurus, were proclaimed free, a status that put them at the top of the peninsula's new political and administrative hierarchy.³ The new organisation, however, also favoured certain other cities which nonetheless paid tribute, for example, Patrai and Argos: the former was perhaps made the centre of the reorganised Achaean League and the latter of the newly-formed *Koinon Argolikon*.⁴ The upgrading, for example, of Patrai, which was the only port of communication with the west after the destruction of Corinth,⁵ was done primarily at the expense of Aegium, the historical capital of the Achaeans, as well as of neighbouring Dyme. This city's feelings of enmity towards Rome, well-known from the past, had been violently expressed just a year after the destruction of Corinth (144/43 B.C.) with an open rebellion, the pitiful result of which

is described in a unique inscription.⁶ Rome showed complete indifference for the fate of the remaining cities, and systematically undermined their political and economic roles.

Roman rule and the administrative reorganisation of the Greek peninsula were not accompanied by changes in the economic organisation of the cities, and the unification of the Mediterranean economy that the Romans had achieved did not – with very few exceptions⁷ – have the favourable consequences envisioned by Polybius in the aftermath of the defeat.⁸ The defeat of 146 B.C. and its dramatic consequences, in combination with Rome's indifference, destabilised the cities that had taken an active part in the military conflict.⁹ There were many reasons for this. Indemnities, if they existed, were not heavy but the stolen booty represented a much heavier burden.¹⁰ Although it was not stable

Sicyon (Strab. VIII. 6, 23), whereas the remaining section still appears in 63 B.C. as public land, the so-called *ager publicus*; cf. Cic., *Leg. agr.* I. 2, 5 and II. 51. The political leaders of the League who had survived and the partisans of the popular faction were condemned to death and their properties confiscated and put up for sale by the *tamias* (*quaestor*); see Polyb. XXXIX. 4; Zonar. IX. 31. According to Pausanias (II. 2, 2) the Isthmian Games were held under the auspices of Sikyon until Corinth took over their organization, cf. Farrington, *infra* p. 422 ns 7-8.

3. The greatest privilege that could be bestowed upon a city was to provide it with a treaty defining its relations with Rome in better terms and making them permanent, as it was always uncertain for how long an ordinary grant of freedom or immunity would be recognised. Only Epidaurus (*JG* IV. 1², 63, ll. 5-6) and Troezen (*JG* IV, 791, ll. 5-6) were allied cities (*σύμμαχοι*) of Rome (ca 112 B.C.). Amongst the free cities only the case of Sparta is certain (Strab. VIII. 5, 5) while Mothone in Messenia was granted freedom by Trajan (Paus. IV. 35, 3) and Pallantion in Arcadia was declared a *civitas libera et immunis* by Antoninus Pius (Paus. VIII. 43, 1). Cf. Roy, *infra* p. 60. These good relations with the Romans have led some to postulate that *immunitas* had also been bestowed in the case of Elis, cf. Zoumbaki, *infra* p. 115 n. 30.

4. On the promotion of Patrai, see Schwertfeger 1974, 49-51; Rizakis 1987/88, 28. The information on the various leagues provided by the sources of the Republican and Imperial periods are fragmentary and vague. On the Achaean League in these periods, see Ul. Kahrstedt, "Zwei Probleme im kaiserzeitlichen Griechenland", *SO* 28, 1950, 66-75; Schwertfeger 1974; Martin 1975, 384-410. On the *Koinon Argolikon* as testified in the later 2nd and 1st centuries B.C., see Martin 1975, 438-97 and Piérart 1976, 157-58.

5. On this issue, see Accame 1946, 153-56; Schwertfeger 1974, 28-40, 60-61, 74-75, and Rizakis 1987/88, 27-33. The obvious benevolence shown towards Patrai may also be due to her friendly attitude towards Rome, as alluded to in the letter addressed by the proconsul of Macedonia to the Dymaeans in 144/43 B.C.; see Rizakis 2008, 54-60 no. 5, ll. 10-11. On the upgrading of the port of Patrai in this period, see A. D. Rizakis, "Le port de Patras et les communications avec l'Italie sous la République", *CH* 33. 3-4, 1988, 453-72 = *id.*, "Il porto di Patrasso e la comunicazione con l'Italia durante l'era repubblicana", in N. Moschonas (ed.), *Studi di storia Italo-ellenica*, Athens 1998, 25-38.

6. See Rizakis 1987/88, 23-26 and *id.* 2008, 54-60 no. 5.

7. The new political geography imposed by the Romans, seems to have, at least in the beginning, had a positive effect on the economic life of those cities that were favoured through the reorganization of the old Greek *poleis*. The most renowned examples are Messene (Rostovtzeff 1957, 754; Piérart 1976, 159; W. A. McDonald, G. R. Rupp Jr (eds), *The Minnesota Messenia Expedition. Reconstructing a Bronze Age regional environment*, Minneapolis 1972, 92), Thouria (Rizakis 2001, 81) and Patrai (see *supra* n. 5).

8. Polyb. XXXIX. 5.

9. On the economic consequences of the Achaean War until the end of the Republican era, see Larsen 1938, 304-06, 323-25 and generally pp. 422-35; Baladié 1980, 306-08.

10. Achaëa was obliged to pay a compensation of 200 talents to Sparta although, according to Pausanias (VII. 16, 10), it was exempted from this obligation a few years later. Cf. Larsen 1938, 306; Accame 1946, 147-48.

or permanent, taxation also periodically damaged the cities' weak economies.¹¹ Worst of all, no effort was made to reorganise agriculture and revive industry, which declined rapidly due to the marginalisation of the political and economic roles of the Peloponnesian cities. The dissolution of the Achaean League and the termination of the minting of the League's triobols after 146 B.C.¹² as well as the abolishing of the privileges of land-holding and intermarriage,¹³ which the Achaeans had enjoyed in all the Peloponnesian cities, were doubtless serious blows for regional trade and the economy in general. The destruction of Corinth, an important Peloponnesian commercial and industrial centre, was a heavy blow for international relations and no substitute could be found to play a similar role

since the centre of trade in the Mediterranean had by now shifted to Delos, Alexandria and the large ports of Asia Minor.¹⁴

The economy of the cities of the Peloponnese during this period was based, just as in other Greek cities, on agriculture, which was suffering primarily from a reduction in the number of agricultural workers and the abandonment of the land. This was an old phenomenon, but this time it had explosive consequences, described in all the sources and confirmed by surface surveys as well as by the archaeological finds.¹⁵ The situation worsened even further in the early 1st c. B.C., with the explosion in piracy, the Mithradatic wars and the subsequent civil wars, leading to a deep recession, the main features of which were a gradual reduction in agricultural and

11. On the taxation system in this period, see R. M. Kallet-Marx, *Hegemony to empire: the development of the Roman imperium in the East from 148 to 62 B.C.*, Hellenistic Culture and Society 15, Berkeley - Los Angeles - Oxford 1995, 59-65.

12. The relative indifference of specialists to this issue can be explained primarily by the absence of meaningful sources. See, for example, Chapter Eight ("Roma e la monetazione greca dopo il 146") in Accame 1946, 111-23, cf. the reflections of Martin 1975, 539-41. Interest was raised by Chr. Boehringer's study of the *Poggio Picense* coin hoard ("Zur Geschichte der Achaïschen Liga im 2. und 1. Jh. v. Chr. im Lichte des Münzfundes von Poggio Picense [Abruzzen]", in Rizakis 1991, 163-70), but the discussion which followed has not been concluded, see the bibliography in Rizakis 2008, 288 n. 123 and Zoumbaki, esp. *infra* pp. 116-17 ns 36-39. For the circulation of coins, see A. Giovannini, *Rome et la circulation monétaire en Grèce au IIe siècle avant Jésus-Christ*, Basel 1978; I. Touratsoglou, H. Tsourti, "Συμβολή στην κυκλοφορία των τριωβόλων της Αχαϊκής Συμπολιτείας στον Ελλαδικό χώρο: η μαρτυρία των «θησαυρών»", in Rizakis 1991, 171-84; P. Agallopoulou, *Θέματα νομισματοκοπίας και νομισματικής κυκλοφορίας των Πατρών, 14 π.Χ. - 268 μ.Χ.*, PhD, University of Ioannina, Athens 1994; M. Lacakis-Marchetti, "À propos du monnayage achéen et des trésors qui le font connaître", in *ΧΑΡΑΚΤΗΡ. Αφιέρωμα στη Μάντω Οικονομίδου*, Athens 1996, 147-56; M. Oikonomidès, M. Lakakis-Marchetti, P. Marchetti, "Le trésor de Zougra (*IGCH* 261) et la circulation monétaire dans le Péloponnèse au IIe siècle", in G. Moucharte et alii (eds), *Liber amicorum Tony Hackens*, Louvain-la-Neuve 2007, 370-433; Chr. Flament, P. Marchetti, *Le monnayage argien d'époque romaine (d'Hadrien à Gallien)*, *ÉtPélop* 14, Athens forthcoming; I. Touratsoglou, *infra* p. 239 n. 9.

13. Polyb. XXXIX. 5, 2-3; see also Paus. VIII. 30, 9; cf. A. D. Rizakis, "La double citoyenneté dans le cadre des états-fédéraux: l'exemple du *Koinon* Achéen", in *Citoyennetés multiples dans l'Orient romain, Actes du colloque international organisé à Tours, 6-7 novembre 2009* (forthcoming). Useful information is provided by the letter of the proconsul Q. Fabius Maximus to the Dymaeans, *Syll.*³, 684; Rizakis 2008, 54-60 no. 5; cf. Larsen 1938, 308-09; F. W. Walbank, *A Historical Commentary on Polybius III*, Oxford 1979, 734-35.

14. Cf. J. Rougé, *Recherches sur l'organisation du commerce maritime en Méditerranée sous l'Empire romain*, Paris 1966, 121-22.

15. Polybius (XXXVI. 17, 5-7, cf. Balladié 1980, 308 n. 8) understood this phenomenon and attempted to explain it as the result of social phenomena: selfishness and the low birth-rate led to a general population decline. Strabo (VIII. 7, 3 and esp. on Arcadia VIII. 8, 1. Cf. Baladié 1980, 301-03 esp. ns 5 and 6) and later Plutarch (*Mor., De Def. or.* 413f-414a), however, linked the demographic decline to the continuous wars. On this view see Larsen 1938, 418-19; Höet-van Cauwenberghé 1997/98, 101-03 and Bresson 2007, 233 n. 108 who, *loc. cit.*, 64-65, provides a table with the results of several surveys conducted in Greece which demonstrates, despite some regional variations, an almost general demographic decline during the last phase of the Hellenistic age and the early Imperial period. This interpretation, accepted by the majority of modern historians, has been questioned by S. Alcock (1993, 24-29 and 89-91) who argues that the impression given in the literary sources can be deceptive, simply because here we are not dealing with a demographic haemorrhaging, but with a planned spatial redistribution of the population. This view is not convincing for the late Hellenistic period, although it is valid for the early Imperial period (in respect to Corinth, see *infra*, p. 6 n. 27 and Romano, *infra* pp. 168-71; cf. also M. and P. Vitti, *infra* p. 268 n. 5).

industrial production as well as in trade, on a regional and much broader scale.¹⁶

This decline was not halted by the presence and economic activities in the 1st c. B.C. of Italian and Roman merchants who had settled in many Peloponnesian cities (Patrai, Aegaeum, Argos, Gytheion, Messene, Kleitor, Megalopolis, Elis).¹⁷ The economic activities of these groups revived some sectors and created wealth for the emigrants, but the added value to the economy of the cities was undoubtedly minimal.¹⁸ This was due not only to the non-existent participation of the indigenous population or to the predatory nature of the Roman *negotiatores*, who had exclusive control of the mainly commercial and banking activities in the East,¹⁹ but also to the fact that the Peloponnesian cities did not produce enough of a surplus for large-scale exports. As such, they could not compete due

to size, resources and location with other areas that were more fertile or more active, nor could they benefit from the new markets and opportunities offered by trading within the Mediterranean context, newly expanded by the Roman conquests.²⁰

Within the general climate of instability and decline that prevailed during this period, the cities also had to face the overwhelming presence or passage of the Roman army,²¹ the extra contributions demanded by the generals, misappropriation of all types,²² as well as the profit-seekers and loan sharks amongst the Roman bankers, who exploited the cities' survival needs and contributed to depleting even the last sources of wealth.²³ The economic recession and lack of liquidity²⁴ made lending difficult, and on several occasions became too great a burden for the suffering local economy, which was heading toward bankruptcy.²⁵ The situation was so dire

16. Industrial production and commercial exchanges had shown some signs of recovery by the end of the 2nd c. B.C. in certain commercial centres such as Patrai, where artefacts indicating the existence of workshops for the production of craft objects have been found (see I. A. Papapostolou, *AD* 32, 1977, *A Mel.* 283-84 and *AD* 33, 1978, *A Mel.* 383; Rizakis 1987/88, 32; *id.* 1998a, 23-24; Rizakis, Petropoulos 2006, 18-19, 21 and figs 12-15), as well as artefacts indicating commercial contacts with the west (Rizakis, Petropoulos 2006, 21 and fig. 18).

17. Hatzfeld 1919, 76-82 and 149-50; Hoët-van Cauwenberghe 1992, 106-27; S. Zoumbaki, "Die Niederlassung römischer Geschäftsleute in der Peloponnes", *Tekmeria* 4, 1998-99, 112-59; Rizakis 2001, 83-84.

18. It is, however, difficult to estimate the importance of their activities and their impact on the local economies, even in the cases of cities such as Delos, for which we have rich source material (Larsen 1938, 359).

19. Hatzfeld 1919, 197-256; Larsen 1938, 359; Andreau 1999, 48-49.

20. There was no single empire-wide market for all goods, but local markets were connected together around the Mediterranean, see P. Temin, "A market economy in the Early Roman Empire", *JRS* 91, 2001, 181. Unfortunately the absence of regional studies does not allow us to know to which extent exchanges were based on reciprocity.

21. The marching through and especially the sojourn of Roman troops in a town was so economically disastrous that the cities did everything in order to avoid it. In some cases even the possibility of such an unwelcome visit could provoke great agitation. See, in this respect, an inscription from Epidaurus (*IG* IV 1², 66), dating to 74 B.C., because of the reference in l. 25 to M. Antonius as τοῦ ἐπὶ Κρητῶν στραταγῶ.

22. Even free cities were not excluded from contributions and exactions; see Larsen 1938, 310-11.

23. See P. Garnsey and R. Saller, *The Roman Empire. Economy, society, and culture*, London 1987, 43-44; Hoët-van Cauwenberghe 1992, 99-101; Rizakis 2001, 83.

24. Although coins were generally used for transactions throughout the Roman empire (see C. Howgego, "The supply and use of money in the Roman world 200 B.C. to A.D. 300", *JRS* 82, 1992, 1-31) many cities ceased to mint coins, something which had a negative impact on the circulation of goods. It was not possible to compensate for this problem of the domestic market by the extraordinary issuing of bronze coins, as several cities did from the beginning of the 1st c. B.C. onwards (to the bibliography gathered in Rizakis 2001, 81 ns 117-18 we should now add J. A. W. Warren, *The bronze coinage of the Achaian Koinon. The currency of a federal ideal*, London 2007). As a result, citizens resorted to the use of older coins which had to be countermarked by the city's own issuing authority in order to be revaluated for the new era. These practices reflect, according to I. Touratsoglou (*infra* pp. 239-40) the lack of sufficient metal and the economic difficulties faced by the cities in general. The coin hoards which were discovered in the Peloponnese demonstrate that here, just as throughout the whole of Greece between 146 and 31 B.C., Athenian tetradrachms were used for international trade, until they were entirely substituted by the denar, brought into general use at the beginning of the imperial period (*FD* III 2, 139; Rizakis 2001, 81 and n. 116; Touratsoglou, *infra* p. 242 ns 19-21).

25. Although the interest rate in the mid-2nd c. B.C. had been about 7%, in the 1st c. B.C. it rose to 24% or even 48% mainly due to the great financial difficulties of the cities and consequently doubts as to their ability to pay off loans. J. Andreau (1999, 90-94) does not believe in the existence of legal restrictions (legal limits on the interest

that the generosity of the elite had no long-term effect.²⁶ By the end of the so-called republican period the demographic and economic crisis in most Peloponnesian cities was to take on such dramatic dimensions²⁷ that it would require the direct political intervention of Rome in order to prevent the collapse that was threatening its own system.

The first measures for the demographic and economic revival of the Greek peninsula were to be taken by Caesar (44 B.C.) although their completion was made possible by Octavian, whose victory at Actium (31 B.C.) ushered in a long period of peace and stability. Rome expressed, for the first time, a genuine interest in the fate of these cities and attempted a new administrative and economic reorganisation in order to facilitate a rapid exit

from chronic decline and their successful integration within the new imperial class. The recipe was simple. In place of the political fragmentation of the previous period a more centralised model was now introduced, which favoured certain large regional centres (Corinth, Patrai, Argos, Messene, Sparta and, to a much lesser degree, Megalopolis, Mantinea, Tegea, Sicyon and Elis), which were granted political and economic privileges in order to respond better to their new role (**Map. 2**).²⁸ Their demographic growth was encouraged or even imposed²⁹ as was the expansion of their territory and, as such, their cultivable land. Cities such as Corinth and Patrai as well as Sparta benefitted in particular, and the latter two were endowed with territorial possessions,³⁰ which were obliged to pay an annual tax

rate). The most characteristic example is the extremely high interest rate on the loan the *polis* of Gytheion received from the *Cloatii* brothers in 71 B.C. (*Syll.*³ 748; cf. Larsen 1938, 373 and Rizakis 2001, 83). For the economic consequences of the lack of liquidity, see Larsen 1938, 328-30 and 333-34.

26. Many civic honorary decrees, especially from Laconia and the Argolis, shed light on this situation; see the comment on such inscriptions in honour of individuals who have distinguished themselves by their benefactions in Lafond 2006, 56-58.

27. Depopulation affected the urban and, most of all, the population outside the urban zone, resulting in the gradual desolation of many regions. On this process, see Rostovtzeff 1957, 254; Larsen 1938, 465-67; Baladié 1980, 307-21. The rare archaeological finds from this period confirm this picture (Piérart 1976, 159). Also indicative is the situation that prevailed, according to Servius Sulpicius Rufus (Cicero, *Fam.* IV. 5, 4), in the cities of the Corinthian Gulf three years after Julius Caesar's victory at the battle of Pharsala in Thessaly (48 B.C.). His description, regardless of any exaggerations (he compares the towns to corpses: *oppidum cadavera*), portrays a gloomy reality. This image became a commonplace one which did not correspond to reality and was repeated in dramatic tones, as can be seen, for example, in a passage by Seneca (*Ep.* 91. 10) who wrote in the mid-1st c. A.D.: *Non vides, quemadmodum in Achaia clarissimarum urbium iam fundamenta consumpta sint nec quicquam exstet, ex quo appareat illas saltim fuisse?* Such statements have led to an excessively pessimistic picture of the situation in the Peloponnese during the late Hellenistic period, which recent archaeological excavations suggest should be partly revised or, at least, evaluated in a more nuanced way. See *supra* p. 4 n. 15 and *infra* p. 10 n. 47.

28. Larsen 1938, 471-72; Alcock 1993, 129-31 and 143-45; Rizakis 1996, 256-57; *id.* 2009, 17-18.

29. Through the synoecism of the adjoining *komai* or redistribution of the population by transferring inhabitants from one region to an urban nucleus in another region. See Larsen 1938, 469-71; Alcock 1993, 96-105; Lafond 2006, 291; Rizakis 2009, 19.

30. This expansion far exceeded the dimensions of an average Greek *polis*. The *territorium* of the *Colonia Patrensis* comprised the entire western part of Achaia and part of Southern Aitolia and the cities of Western Locris except for Amphissa. See Ul. Kahrstedt, "Die Territorien von Patrai und Nicopolis in der Kaiserzeit", *Historia* 1, 1950, 549-61; Alcock 1993, 160-64; Rizakis 1996, 279-85; Höet-van Cauwenberghe 1997/98, 51-53; Rizakis 2009, 20-21. The Emperor Augustus honoured his ally and personal friend Eurycles, *ob virtutem*, with the bestowal of the *civitas Romana*. He also entrusted him with hegemony over Sparta (Strab. VIII. 5, 1 and 5, 5; cf. Baladié 1980, 293), simultaneously vesting both Eurycles and Sparta with a set of privileges and territories that had, except for Kythera, previously formed part of Messenia (see Cass. Dio LIV. 7, 2 on Kythera and Paus. III. 26, 7 and IV. 31, 1-2 on Kardamyle and Thuria; cf. G. W. Bowersock, "Eurycles of Sparta", *JRS* 51, 1961, 112-13; S. E. Alcock "Archaeology and imperialism: Roman expansion and the Greek city", *JMA* 2.1, 1989, 87-135, esp. 110-11; Chr. Böhme, *Principes und Polis. Untersuchungen zur Herrschaftsform des Augustus über bedeutende Orte in Griechenland*, Munich 1995, 78 n. 5; Cartledge, Spawforth 2002, 97-98, 101, 139 and in particular G. Steinhauer, "The Euryclids and Kythera", *Archaeology* 19-20, 2006/07, 199-206 and Steinhauer, *infra* p. 81). At the same time, however, Augustus separated from Lacedaemon the Laconian cities, to form the so-called League of the Free Laconians (κοινὸν τῶν Ἐλευθερολακόνων), see Steinhauer, *infra* p. 84. See also Martin 1975, 438-97.



Map 2. Major urban centres in mainland Greece with an indication of important Greek cities and the Roman foundations in Achaea, Epirus and Macedonia.

(*vectigalia*) to the metropolitan city upon which they were dependent (*civitates adtributae*).³¹

The new metropolitan cities, which competed against each other,³² were the backbone of the new administrative organisation of the province of Achaëa, the engines upon which the economic revival and prosperity of the province were based, as they were located along the maritime and land trade routes, thus securing Roman domination and facilitating administrative and economic control from Rome (**Map. 3**).³³ The nucleation that took place at the beginning of the imperial period was not long in bearing fruit. This recovery became more apparent during the Flavian period, specifically during the reign of Domitian, and concerned all sectors of the economy.³⁴ For the first time after many decades there was an increase in agricultural output that was due not only to an increase in cultivable land but perhaps also to the introduction of new crops and the specialisation or intensification of production primarily in the suburban zones.³⁵

These latter practices are observed primarily in the context of the colonies, where the presence of a large number of *villae rusticae* served the food supply needs of the new urban colossi in the best possible way.³⁶ The presence of cellars with *pithoi*, agricultural tools and storage and auxiliary spaces (wells, oil- and wine-presses) which were found in each farmstead indicates that their basic destination was rural and that there was specialised production connected to the domestic market. A similar organisation of production can be observed in Sparta where, despite the differences in the planning model, intensification of agricultural activities can also be observed in the countryside near the city with the aim of providing a better food supply with a shift of agricultural production from a small single farmstead-based one to estate-based structures run by human labour dependent on an elite that was resident in the *polis*.³⁷

The economic revival of the cities permitted the concentration of wealth and a further rise in de-

31. On the nature of this dependency, see P. Biundo, "Terre di pertinenza di colonie e municipi fuori del loro territorio: gestione e risorse", *CG* 14, 2003, 131-42; *ead.*, "Agri ex alienis territoriis sumpti. Terre in provincia di colonie e municipi in Italia", *MÉFRA* 116, 2004, 371-436. On the dependency of the Aetolian and Locrian towns on Patrai and for its legal character, see Rizakis 1996, 279-85.

32. The competition between the cities to be first in rank created, as elsewhere, tensions or even overt enmities, considerably disturbing the harmonious coexistence between these *metropoleis*. The most renowned controversy is that between Argos and Corinth as to how the imperial cult should be financed. See A. J. S. Spawforth, "Corinth, Argos and the imperial cult: Pseudo-Julian, Letters 198", *Hesperia* 63, 1994, 211-32 and esp. 223 sqq. As far as the Peloponnese is concerned, the province's central points of administration and commerce were Patrae, Corinth, Sparta and Argos which is most obviously reflected by the density of population and the expansion of their *chorai*, which far exceeded the dimensions of an average Greek *polis*. See, for example, Rizakis, 1992/93, 440-41.

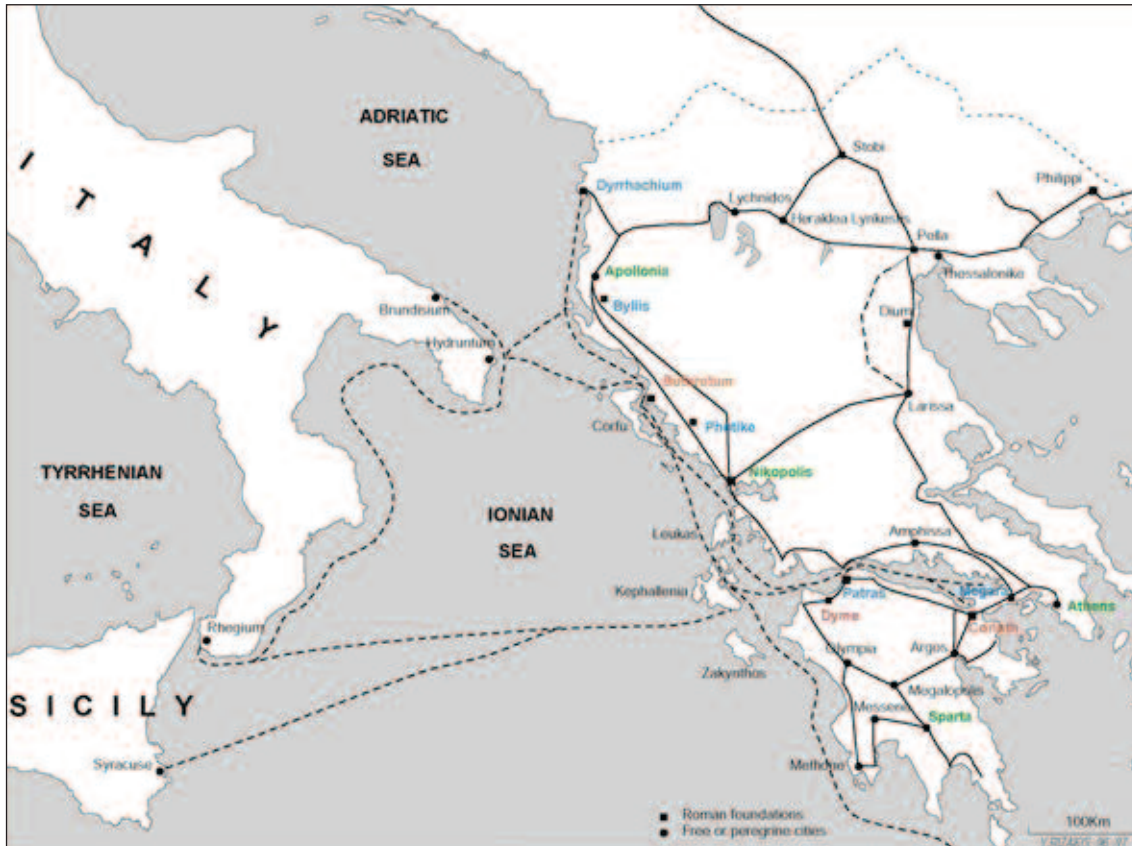
33. The list of predominant cities remained nearly unchanged until the end of late antiquity. See A. and M. Levi, *Itineraria picta: contributo allo studio della Tabula Peutingeriana*, Rome 1967; G. D. R. Sanders, I. K. Whitebread, "Central places and major roads in the Peloponnese", *ABSA* 85, 1990, 333-61 and esp. fig. 2, p. 339 and pl. 4, p. 433; A. Avramea, *Le Péloponnèse du IV^e au VIII^e siècle. Changements et persistances*, Paris 1997, 107-19.

34. On the effects of nucleation, see Alcock 1993, 96-117; on recovery under the Flavii, Rizakis, *infra* pp. 135-39.

35. Piérart 1976, 160-61; Alcock 1993, 80-85. On crops, see Baladié 1980, 175-85. Economic rationalism was not unknown in some provinces (e.g. Egypt; see D. Rathbone, *Economic rationalism and rural society in third-century AD Egypt: the Heroninos archive and the Appianus estate*, Cambridge 1991), but we do not know to what extent technological advances made agriculture more profitable; cf. K. Greene, "Technological innovation and economic progress in the Ancient world: M. I. Finley reconsidered", *Economic History Review* 53, 2000, 29-59.

36. The best-known example is that of Patrai (Petropoulos 1994). On the *villae rusticae* discovered in the *territorium* of Corinth, see R. M. Rothaus, "Urban space, agricultural space and villas in Late Roman Corinth", in P. N. Doukellis, L. G. Mendoni (eds), *Structures rurales et sociétés antiques, Actes du colloque de Corfou, 14-16 mai 1992*, Paris 1994, 391-96 and recently Aslamatzidou forthcoming and, more generally, Alcock 1993, 59-60.

37. Cartledge, Spawforth 2002, 170; G. Shipley, "The Survey Area in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods", in W. G. Cavanagh, J. Crouwel (eds), *The Laconia survey. Continuity and change in a Greek rural landscape I, Methodology and interpretation*, *ABSA Suppl.* 26, London 2002, esp. 288-97 and 326-337. For farms and *villae rusticae* of this period, see Rizakis, forthcoming b. It is generally believed that the yield and productivity of the agricultural economy during both antiquity and the Middle Ages were relatively low (1:4); see Bresson 2007, 176-78. Even so, it is certain that in some periods, e.g. the imperial period, profit was much higher than at other times.



Map 3. The main land and maritime routes in the Ionian Sea in the Imperial period.

mand for various essential goods as well as luxury goods. This enabled the development of a variety of industrial activities, some of which were not focused solely on the city population but were also intended for export.³⁸ One example was the flourishing textile industry in Patrai, which, according to Pausanias,³⁹ was concentrated in the hands of women, who used the flax grown in the plains of Elis as their raw material. The archaeological finds in-

dicate that a part of the production was carried out in factories in the city, and another part in the *villae rusticae*.⁴⁰ Similar and other types of activities were developing in many cities,⁴¹ which once more found themselves engaging in regional and international trade and, of course, producing a profit,⁴² contributing in this way to the development of transactions in the Mediterranean area. The concentration of wealth from various agricultural, industrial and

38. The discovery of a number of coins in some *villae rusticae* is the best proof that they were integrated into economic networks and the money-based economy. In this respect an analogy can be made with the large *villae rusticae* in Macedonia during the classical and Hellenistic periods, in contrast with those in Attica and the Peloponnese in previous periods (Bresson 2007, 158-59).

39. Paus., VII. 21, 14; cf. Alcock 1993, 80.

40. This can be seen in the large number of shuttles found in the *villae rusticae* in the territory of Patrai; see Petropoulos 1999, 42; Rizakis, Petropoulos 2006, 27. For other handicraft activities in the colony of Patrae and the corresponding workshops, see Petropoulos 1994 and *id.* 1999.

41. For handicraft production and workshops in Sparta, Argos and Corinth, see Piérart 1976, 160-61 and the bibliography cited in Rizakis, *infra* p. 148 n. 117. For the economic resources of Arcadia and Messenia under the Roman Empire, see Roy, *infra* esp. p. 71 and Themelis, *infra* pp. 89-106 *passim* respectively.

42. This transpires from the literary and epigraphical sources as well as from the circulation of coins and the archaeological finds in a certain region, and calls for further research.

commercial activities for the first time made it possible to implement large-scale urbanistic interventions, water supply installations, and construct roads and fine public and private buildings,⁴³ all contributing to the improvement of urban and regional infrastructure which gave the Peloponnesian *metropoleis* a monumental aspect unknown before.⁴⁴

The impressive picture of the Peloponnesian *metropoleis* during this period is reflected in Pausanias' descriptions – he visited them just after the middle of the 2nd c. A.D. – and is confirmed by the surviving remains and the more recent archaeological finds. This image of grandeur and wealth, reflecting the ostentatious nature of the local ruling class as well as the prosperity and generosity of the empire,⁴⁵ is in complete contrast to the picture of abandonment and decline presented by the small Peloponnesian centres. This contrast is clearly due to the downgrading of their political and economic role since the beginning of the imperial period. This fact further widened the chasm that separated them from the large centres with their privileges,⁴⁶

impressing Pausanias who was nostalgic for their glorious past, and exacerbated the phenomenon of *agri deserti*, in areas such as Arcadia, where Dio Chrysostom observed huge territories empty of people where the only activity was animal husbandry.⁴⁷ The pastoral economy indeed characterised many areas, primarily in Arcadia and Laconia. This primarily involved the rearing of sheep, goats and cattle for both dairy products and wool; we do not, however, know who processed or traded this wool.⁴⁸

The political and spatial reorganisation initiated by Augustus and his successors did not usher in any changes in land ownership, or the political and social rights of the free and tributary Peloponnesian cities. This, of course, was not the case in the context of the colonies (Corinth, Dyme, Patrae), whose foundation not only changed the political and economic geography of the broader region but undermined the traditional social hierarchy and the status of land ownership, as a large area of land was confiscated and divided amongst the colonists (**Maps 4 and 5** and Romano, *infra* p. 163 **fig 9** and p. 165

43. Although there is a vast range of individual studies on such development, we lack an overall critical assessment of it and its consequences for the local economy. See in general Piérart 1976, 161.

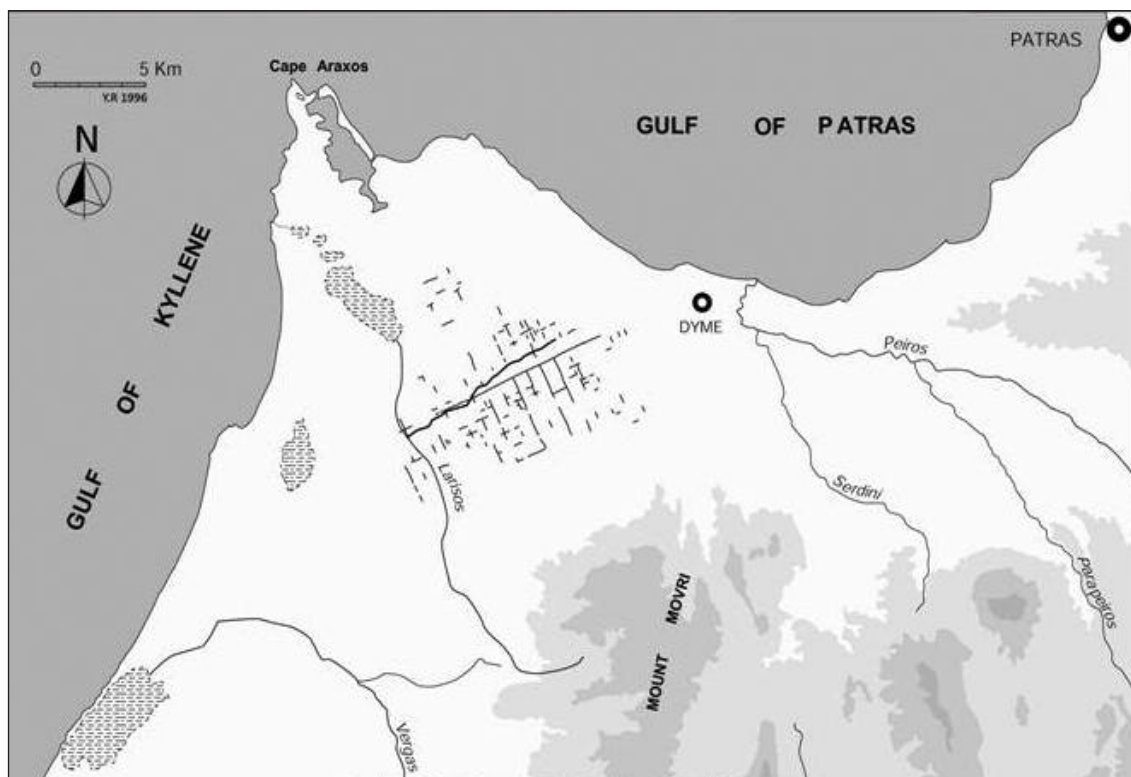
44. A. G. Vlachopoulos (ed.), *Αρχαιολογία. Πελοπόννησος*, Athens 2010 (forthcoming).

45. The wealthy, powerful families would gather in the large urban centres, which benefitted primarily from the redistribution of land and wealth (Alcock 1993, 114-15 and 160-64). Imperial generosity was most evident under Hadrian and his immediate successors, see Piérart 1976, 163-64. The ideal of the *princeps euergetes* (see Aristid., *Or. to Rome* 98-99) functioned as a prime example to be followed by local aristocrats. For the moral concepts which characterized the *ethos* of a commendable citizen, see for instance F. Quaß, *Die Honoratiorenschicht in den Städten des griechischen Ostens. Untersuchungen zur politischen und sozialen Entwicklung in hellenistischer und römischer Zeit*, Stuttgart 1993, 77-78. For the reference to moral values from the late Hellenistic period until the Severan period, see Lafond 2006, 55-73.

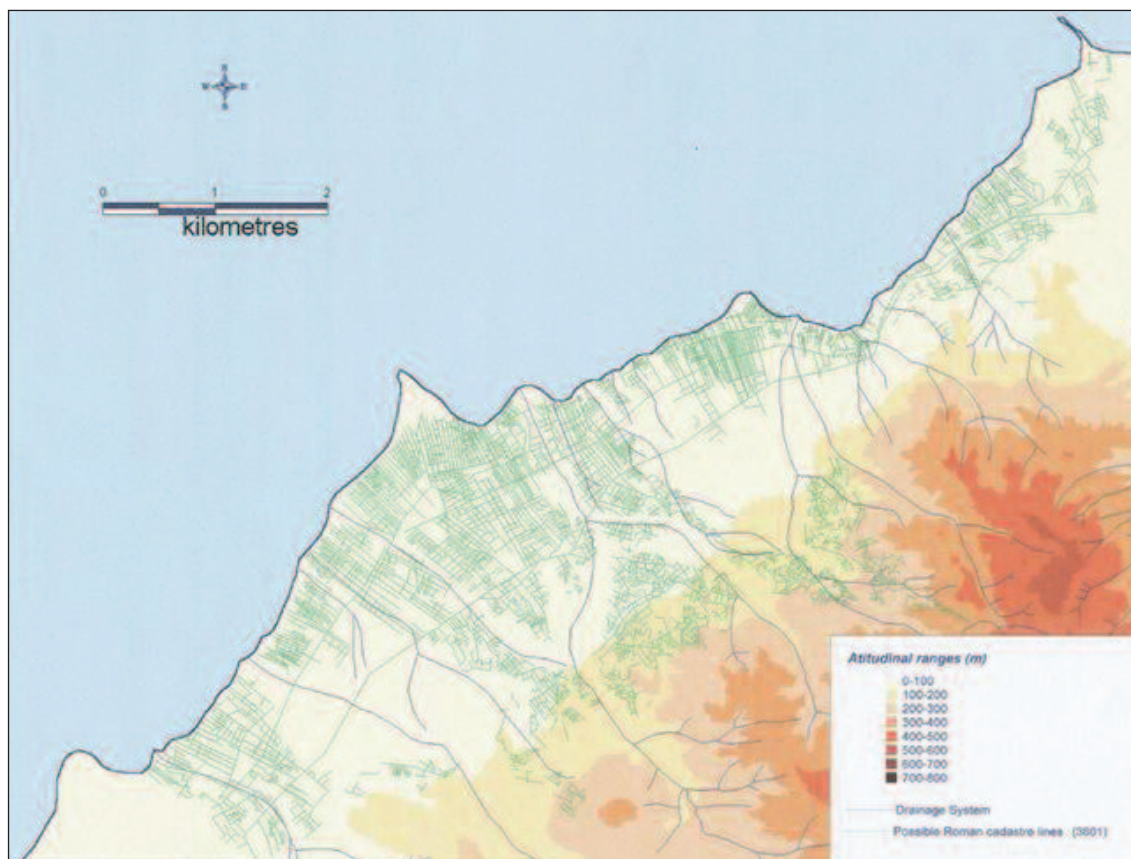
46. Only Megalopolis, Mantinea and Tegea in Arcadia stood out, although they never developed into centres of major economic importance, see Roy, *infra* pp. 62-65. On the depopulation of the territory of many Peloponnesian towns, see the critical approach to the literary sources taken by Alcock 1993, 24-32. For the devastation of Arcadia in particular, see Larsen 1976, 472-74; Baladié 1980, 316-20 (towns which disappeared and those which survived on the basis of numismatic evidence from the period).

47. Dio Chrys., *Or.* XXXIII. 25 (cf. Baladié 1980, 303 n. 11). On the *agri deserti* and the desolation of the Peloponnesian countryside, see the results of surface surveys in Alcock 1993, 40-46 (see also *supra* p. 4 n. 15, p. 6 n. 27 and n. 46). The impression of devastation that one gains when studying the ancient literary sources is, however, exaggerated. See Roy, *infra* p. 59 and Stewart, *infra* esp. pp. 220-21 who, inspired by S. Alcock (*supra* p. 4 n. 15), stresses that the picture which results from the evidence gathered in field research is not uniform for all regions of the Peloponnese and by no means corresponds to the impression garnered from the literary sources, which portray the situation in overly simplistic terms. In certain areas, primarily Arcadia and Laconia, the expansion of cattle-raising at the expense of the agricultural cultivation (Piérart 1976, 161; Baladié 1980, 186-95; Rizakis 1992/93, 444) is explained either by the abandonment of the land and a lack of manpower or by the concentration of landed property, the anticipated profits from this activity and perhaps also by tax relief (Alcock 1989, 27-28; *ead.* 1993, 87-88).

48. At the *Theoxenia* games in Pellene, held in honour of Apollo, celebrated woollen chitons were awarded as prizes (see the bibliographical references in Rizakis 2008, 259 and 348 n. 72). Although in imperial times these chitons were replaced by a monetary sum (Strabo VIII. 7, 5), this should not be taken to mean that the pastoral economy of Pellene had declined in importance. On the pastoral economy of this period see C. R. Whittaker, *Pastoral economies in Classical antiquity*, Cambridge 1988; *id.*, *Land, city and trade in the Roman Empire*, Aldershot 1993.



Map 4. Cadastral traces in the plain of the colony of Dyme.



Map 5. Superimposition of Patras' linear elements over the altitudinal ranges and the draining system.

fig 10).⁴⁹ Within the new Roman order of the colonies the old inhabitants were downgraded politically, economically and socially to second-class free individuals with no political rights. In legal terms they were classed as part of the inferior category of *incolae* who all of a sudden had become, so to speak, *peregrini* in their own homeland.⁵⁰ These political and social consequences were alleviated in the 2nd c. A.D. with the extension of Roman citizenship rights, mixed marriages, and the decline of upper-class families. An interesting case in this respect is the social mixture of the colony of Patrae during the time of Pausanias' visit.⁵¹

The new order favoured the rich families in all instances, strengthening the trend towards large land ownership and widening the social gap between the haves and the have-nots, a tendency which had become apparent already in the Hellenistic period.⁵² At the same time they sought to gain the rights of the Roman citizen (*civitas Romana*) which, until the early 3rd c. A.D., comprised the most important social distinction between the free inhabitants of the empire. The granting of this right, done sparingly at first, was made easier after Claudius' reign,⁵³ so that gradually throughout the 2nd c. A.D. most members of the leading class of each city were

49. This was achieved through land surveys for cadastral registers, with the aim of facilitating control in general and in land taxation procedures by the Roman administrators in particular, especially from the Late Republican period onwards. In 44 B.C., at the foundation of a colony of veterans by Caesar in Corinth, the land was divided into rectangular units (*centuriatio*) and the lots attributed to the colonists; see Romano, *infra* esp. pp. 155-58. A different example of the reorganisation of an urban space and its surrounding *chora* is that of Dyme. Here, the first structural reorganisation according to the Roman pattern took place in response to the needs of settling defeated pirates by Pompey in 67 B.C. The foundation of a colony by Caesar at Dyme in 44 B.C. and the *deductio* of Patrae by Augustus called for further land planning procedures which were carried out by land surveyors, (*agri*)*mensores* or *gromatici*. Confiscations resulted in the downgrading and social marginalisation of the old inhabitants. For the cadastres of Patrae and Dyme, see A. D. Rizakis, "Cadastres et espace rural dans le nord-ouest du Péloponnèse", *DHA* 16.1, 1990, 259-80; P. N. Doukellis, "Ρωμαϊκές επεμβάσεις στο αγροτικό τοπίο της Αχαΐας", in Rizakis (ed.) 1991, 223-24; Rizakis 1992/93, 444-46; *id.*, "A G.I.S. Database to process Roman Cadastre and Settlement", in F. Vermulen, M. de Dapper (eds), *Geoarchaeology of the Landscapes of Classical Antiquity, International Colloquium Ghent, 23-24 October 1998*, Leiden 2000, 161-65 (in collaboration with M. Petropoulos, A. Vasilopoulos and N. Evelpidou); *id.*, "Étude géo-archéologique et détection de cadastre par des technologies software", in M. Clavel-Lévêque, A. Orejas (eds), *Atlas historique des cadastres d'Europe II*, Commission européenne, Action Cost G2, Luxembourg 2002, Dossier 6T (in collaboration with N. Evelpidou, A. Vassilopoulos and E. Verikiou).

50. On the different status of *coloni* and *incolae* equivalent to ἄποικοι and πάροικοι, see the remarks of the mid-2nd c. A.D. Roman jurist Sex. Pomponius in *Dig. L.* 16, 239.2; further Hyg. *grom.* 45 n. 37 (Th. 140) and 59 n. 53 (Th. 143); cf. A. D. Rizakis, "*Incolae-paroikoi*. Populations et communautés dépendantes dans les cités et les colonies romaines de l'Orient", *REA* 100, 1998, 599-617.

51. Only from the 2nd century onwards and especially through the *Constitutio Antoniniana* did the Greek *paroikoi* become Roman *cives* and gain the same judicial status as the *coloni*. Despite the interpretation offered by Pausanias (VII. 18, 7: "He [Augustus] granted freedom to the Patraeans, and to no other Achaeans; and he also granted all the other privileges that the Romans are accustomed to bestow on their colonists", transl. W. H. S. Jones, Loeb) in an enigmatic passage on the adaptation of the social roles in Patrai, there is no doubt that this testimony reflects the social structure of the colony of Patrae in Pausanias' day rather than at the time of the Emperor Augustus (Rizakis 1995, 167 no. 252, 4; *id.* 1996, 309-10; *id.* 2009, 10).

52. The presence of this urban elite can be identified in the literary sources and is confirmed archaeologically by the impressive *villae urbanae* that have been discovered in the urban context and the *villae rusticae* in the countryside, as well as by the imposing tomb monuments (for the example of Patrae, see Rizakis, *infra* pp. 139-40 n. 63). For large land properties in Peloponnesian cities, see R. Baladié, "Les grands domaines dans le Péloponnèse sous le Principat d'Auguste", in *Acts of the Eighth International Congress of Greek and Latin Epigraphy II, Athens 3rd-9th October 1982*, Athens 1987, 35-38; Alcock 1993, 55-56, 71-80 (landholding families), 85-88 (wealthy families); Rizakis 1995b, esp. 226-27.

53. On the spread of Roman citizenship throughout the Peloponnese, see Höet-van Cauwenberghe, *infra* pp. 173-90 *passim* and on Argos see also Marchetti, *infra* pp. 43-56 *passim*; more generally J.-L. Ferrary, "Les Grecs des cités et l'obtention de la '*civitas Romana*'", in P. Fröhlich, Chr. Müller (eds), *Citoyenneté et participation à la basse époque hellénistique*, Geneva 2005, 51-75.

Roman citizens.⁵⁴ Thanks to their great wealth, prominence and their political connections, the most prominent members of this class were able, from the mid-1st c. A.D., to exercise the important office of the high priest of the imperial cult, and to extend their political activities beyond the narrow limits of the city⁵⁵ to the Province and even the empire by being able to enter the equestrian class and, two or three generations later the senatorial.⁵⁶

The aristocratic families held the monopoly of wealth and power as they formed, until the 1st c. A.D. at least, the municipal council, the *ordo decurionum*. The survival of distinguished families from the Peloponnesian cities for a duration of greater than one century is a particularly rare phenomenon.⁵⁷ The renewal of the members of the *ordo decurionum*, despite the obstacles presented by the leading classes of the cities, was unavoidable and was done sometimes at a faster and other times

at a slower pace. The composition of the *ordo decurionum* was expanded after the Flavians, when we encounter new families who did not belong to the original core. Renewal of membership was sped up from the mid-2nd c. A.D., as new members were being proposed for the *ordo decurionum* who were not nobles of aristocratic lineage but belonged to the newly rising social classes. This change in the social composition was done gradually and with no external interventions. On the one hand, the decline and disintegration of the old families led to their biological ageing and death, whilst on the other hand the dynamism and adaptability of the new elite helped bring them to the forefront.

The influence of Roman conquest and rule on the religious and political life of the Peloponnesian cities is indisputable. Of course, the Romans did not intervene in the religious sphere and left the cities free to organise their traditional religious life.

54. See Chr. Höet-Cauwenberghe, “Diffusion de la citoyenneté romaine: notes sur les gentilices impériaux en Laconie et en Messénie», in A. Chastagnol, S. Démougin, C. Lepeley (eds), *Splendissima civitas. Études d’histoire romaine en hommage à François Jacques*, Paris 1996, 138-39 and *ead.*, *infra* esp. p. 189.

55. Eurycles and his descendants, for example, saw to the extension of their sphere of influence not only to adjacent towns in Laconia but also to neighbouring regions such as Arcadia (see Baladié 1980, 329; Alcock 1993, 78; A. D. Rizakis, “Supra-civic landowning and supra-civic euergetic activities of urban elites in the Imperial Peloponnese”, in *Being Peloponnesian. Cohesion and diversity through time, International conference, University of Nottingham, 31 march-1 april 2007*, forthcoming ns 11-16 (electronic version published in http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/csp/events/pelo09_abstracts.php). Eurycles’ extraordinary ambitions provoked the vehement reaction of the old aristocratic families, in particular the descendants of Brasidas, who did all they could to ensure that Eurycles and his sons fell into disfavour with the emperor by accusing them of being responsible for the *stasis* or *tarache* that broke out at Sparta, resulting in their exile. See G. W. Bowersock, “Eurycles of Sparta”, *JRS* 51, 1961, 115-17; *id.*, “Augustus and the East: the problem of the succession”, in F. Millar, E. Segal (eds), *Caesar Augustus. Seven aspects*, Oxford 1984, 176-78; Cartledge, Spawforth 2002, 100-01, 107 and Steinhauer, *infra* p. 83 n. 35, p. 84 n. 40, p. 85 n. 43.

56. The members of the equestrian and senatorial classes were exceptionally few in number; see A. D. Rizakis, “Ηγετική τάξη και κοινωνική διαστρωμάτωση στις πόλεις της Πελοποννήσου κατά την αυτοκρατορική εποχή”, in V. Mitsopoulos-Leon (ed.), *Forschungen in der Peloponnes. Akten des Symposions anlässlich der Feier »100 Jahre österreichisches Archäologisches Institut Athen«*, Athen 5.3.-7.3.1998, Athens 2001, 188 ns 53-56; S. Zoumbaki, “The colonists of the Roman East and their leading groups. Some notes on their entering the equestrian and senatorial ranks in comparison with native elites”, *Tyche* 23, 2008, 164-69. As R. Syme (“La richesse des aristocraties de Bétique et de Narbonaise”, *Ktéma* 2, 1977, 373-80; cf. M. Corbier, “City, territory and tax”, in J. Rich, A. Wallace-Hadrill [eds], *City and country in the Ancient world*, London - New York 1991, 211-39 esp. 223) observed, rich cities with vast territories at their disposal were the first to send senators to Rome while Roman colonies where land had been allocated originally in equal plots did not create the right conditions of social differentiation for the emergence of a very rich elite.

57. Characteristic examples are those of the family of C. Iulius Eurycles (see Spawforth 1978, 261; cf. also *RP* II, LAC 455; LAC 460-62; LAC 468-70; LAC 509 and *stemma* VIII on p. 586), the Memmii Pratoles at Sparta (see Spawforth 1985, 194 tab. 1; cf. *RP* II, LAC 560; LAC 573-577 and LAC 579 and *stemma* VII on p. 585; see also Balzat, *infra* pp. 346-48), the family of Claudius Aristomenes (*RP* II, MES 130-31 and MES 136), the Claudii Saethidae in Messene (*RP* II, MES 142; MES 145; MES 150; MES 156-57 and *stemma* XVI on p. 592; for both families see moreover Themelis, *infra* pp. 89-106 *passim*) and the Vettuleni in Eleia (see S. Zoumbaki, “Zu einer neuen Inschrift aus Olympia: Die Familie der Vettuleni von Elis”, *ZPE* 99, 1993, 227-32; *ead.*, *Elis und Olympia in der Kaiserzeit. Das Leben einer Gesellschaft zwischen Stadt und Heiligtum auf prosopographischer Grundlage*, Meletemata 32, Athens 2001, B 6-13 with *stemma* on p. 248; *RP* I, EL 332-40 and *stemma* XV on p. 540).

They did not react to the introduction or reorganisation of certain religious phenomena, such as the Mysteries at Andania in Northern Messene,⁵⁸ and neither did they prevent the introduction of new cults, of which we can distinguish the Roman cults found only in the colonies as well as the eastern ones which flourished everywhere and became much more widespread.⁵⁹ One of the cults which developed as a reaction to the new political context was emperor worship. The rich and varied evidence, above all epigraphic, of the imperial cult in the Peloponnesian cities reveals how the Roman emperors were systematically associated with Greek traditional divinities in cult places and festivals, in an effort to represent imperial power in a more intelligible way through the integration of the emperors into the religious and cultural world of the Greek cities. The political and social significance of the imperial cult is also revealed in the Peloponnesian cities by the family extraction and social standing of those individuals, members of the

civic aristocracies, who assumed the office of priest of the emperors and *agonothetes* of the imperial contests, as well as by the privileged links some of them had with Roman power. These links were made manifest by the possession of the *civitas* and also by admission into the equestrian or senatorial order, although this was only in very few cases.⁶⁰

The hypothesis that during this period the great panhellenic *agones* declined and were downgraded to purely local events is not at all confirmed.⁶¹ On the contrary, there is much evidence to indicate that the Romans showed particular interest in the continuation of the agonistic festivals, such as the Isthmian, Nemean and, of course, the Olympic *agones*⁶² and that they took particular care to preserve the privileges of “the artists of Dionysus from the Isthmus and Nemea”.⁶³ In addition to the three most celebrated *agones* of the so-called “ancient circuit” (*archaia periodos*), other agonistic festivals, both traditional and new, were celebrated in several Peloponnesian cities.⁶⁴ Sparta, for exam-

58. On the cults and agonistic festivals connected with Greek deities worshipped in Peloponnesian *poleis* in the Hellenistic and also in the Imperial period, see Lafond, *infra* pp. 407-18 *passim*. On the mysteries see Paus. IV. esp. 1, 8-9; 2, 6; 17, 10; 33, 6 (in his day they were celebrated at the *Karneiasion*, whereas Andania itself was in ruins). The most important epigraphic evidence is *IG V 1*, 1390, a detailed regulation of the cult practices drafted in about 91 B.C. on the occasion of a reform; cf. N. Deshours, *Les Mystères d'Andania. Études d'épigraphie et d'histoire religieuse*, Bordeaux 2006; N. Luraghi, *The Ancient Messenians. Constructions of Ethnicity and Memory*, Cambridge 2008, 92-94, 264, 299; Themelis, *infra* esp. p. 93 n. 34. A revival of many old cults and cult practices can be observed in the 2nd century during a time of vague nostalgia, as we can see in Pausanias' description and the numismatic and figurative iconography, cf. the evidence of Melfi, *infra* esp. pp. 331-39. On the sacred landscape of the cities in this period, see the interesting remarks of Alcock 1993, 172-214.

59. Piérart 1976, 164. Some were already known from the Hellenistic period, see e.g. Jost, Höet-van Cauwenbergh, *infra* p. 301 ns 102-03. For evidence on the imported cults of oriental deities such as Isis, Sarapis, Cybele and Mithras in Corinth and Patrae, see Hoskins Walbank, *infra* p. 368 n. 58 and Rizakis, *infra* p. 148 n. 115 (Sarapis); Palagia, *infra* p. 435 n. 19 (Mithras) respectively. The worship of Mithras and Isis is testified for Aigion, see E.-I. Kollia, “Eine Kultgrotte des Mithras in Aigion. Aspekte der Mithras-Verehrung in Achaia”, *MDAI(A)* 118, 2003, 397-447; A. G. Vordos, E.-I. Kolia, *Αιγιάλεια. Αρχαίες πόλεις και μνημεία*, Patras 2008, 66-67 figs 33-34 (a small subterranean cult chamber which was interpreted by the excavator E.-I. Kolia, on the basis of the archaeological evidence, as a *Mithraeum*, so far unique in Greece. This belonged to a private house and was dated to the end of the 2nd or first half of the 3rd c. A.D.). For a private dedication to Isis attributed to the 2nd/3rd c. A.D.), see Rizakis 2008, 183-84 no. 124. The identification of a large building in front of the theatre at Argos has been interpreted by P. Aupert as a Domitian temple for the cult of Sarapis-Asklepios, although this is doubted by Piérart, *infra* pp. 33-34 ns 129-30; cf. also M. and P. Vitti, *infra* p. 268 ns 6-7. On Egyptian influence on the cult of Asklepios in Epidauros in the Hadrianic period, see Melfi, *infra* pp. 334-35 n. 44.

60. Alcock 1993, 181-88 and 198-99; Camia, Kantiréa, *infra* esp. pp. 389-97 ch. IV. On the Peloponnesian *equites* and *senatores*, see also *supra* p. 13 n. 56.

61. On panhellenic sanctuaries during this period, see Alcock 1993, 189-91.

62. Piérart 1976, 164; on Olympic Games see the bibliography cited by Zoumbaki, *infra* p. 119 n. 54.

63. Piérart 1976, 158; Ferrary 1988, 189 n. 228 (Dionysiac *technitai*); Spawforth 1989.

64. Cartledge, Spawforth 2002, 184. A useful catalogue per region is to be found in Y. Lafond, “Les concours locaux dans le Péloponnèse”, in *Preliminary Publication of the XIth International Congress of Greek and Latin Epigraphy, Rome, 18-24 September 1997*, Rome 1997, 235-41; cf. also Lo Monaco, *infra* pp. 309-26 *passim* and for Arcadia Jost, Höet-van Cauwenbergh, *infra* pp. 291-307 *passim*.

ple, emerged as an important agonistic centre, where next to traditional festivals such as the *Carnea*, the *Hyacinthia* and the *Gymnopaediae*,⁶⁵ new contests were reorganised, such as the *Leonidea*, or introduced *ex novo*, such as the *Urania* in honour of Zeus *Uranios*,⁶⁶ and the *Euryclea*, named after the famous Spartan notable and Roman senator C. Iulius Eurycles Herculanus.⁶⁷ The introduction and diffusion of imperial festivals as well as gladiator fights and wild-beast shows was a direct consequence of Roman domination. While the former were celebrated in several places throughout the whole of the Peloponnese,⁶⁸ *munera gladiatoria* and *venationes* are attested only in the Roman colonies of Corinth and Patrae.⁶⁹

If we exclude the colonies, the Romanisation of the cities of the Peloponnese was limited to the field of personal names,⁷⁰ architecture and construction techniques. The colonies of Corinth and Patrae played a major role in the spread of western architecture, with the construction of amphitheatres intended for Roman spectacles, baths and

aqueducts, which offered hitherto unknown comforts, as well as temples with crepidomas raised on podiums and to which only one stairway led, from the east.⁷¹ These colonies also played a leading role in spreading the techniques of Roman architecture throughout Greece and the Peloponnese in general.⁷² The results are well known, and concern the mass prevalence of brick wall construction (*opus testaceum*) as opposed to stone structures.⁷³

In contrast with architecture and building techniques, the effects of Roman rule were less noticeable in other aspects of the social life of the Greek cities and, in particular, on their internal structure. In general, the Peloponnesian cities – with the exception of the colonies, which used Latin⁷⁴ and whose institutions imitated the Roman prototypes – preserved as a rule their traditional cults, traditional customs and traditional institutions and offices⁷⁵ and essentially also their particular artistic identity.⁷⁶ Yet, as M. Piérart observes,⁷⁷ the survival of the ancient institutions does not mean that they were preserved in full. The cities had a limited au-

65. These, all linked to the worship of Apollo, were “Classical Sparta’s three principal religious festivals, all three of which were still celebrated in the Imperial age”, see Cartledge, Spawforth 2002, 193.

66. Cartledge, Spawforth 2002, 185-86, 192.

67. Cartledge, Spawforth 2002, 110-11, 186-87; *RP* II, LAC 462. See also Lafond, esp. *infra* p. 413.

68. See Camia, Kantiréa, *infra* pp. 382-88 ch. IIIa.

69. Corinth: Dio Chrys., *Or.* XXXI. 121; Apul., *Met.* X. 18. See also Camia, Kantiréa, *infra* pp. 588-89 ch. IIIb. Patrae: Rizakis 1998, no. 53 (2nd-3rd c. A.D.); cf. *RP* I, ACH 190. Corinth was the only city in the province of Achaëa known to possess a proper Roman amphitheatre, while gladiatorial games in the colony of Patrae were carried out in the so-called stadium-theatre, see Di Napoli, *infra* p. 258 n. 37 and p. 259 ns 40-41; Rizakis, *infra* p. 137 n. 49.

70. *RP* I, pp. 40-41 and II, pp. 26-29 Introduction; Chr. Hoët-van Cauwenberghe, “Onomastique et diffusion de la citoyenneté romaine en Arcadie”, in A. D. Rizakis (ed.), *Roman Onomastics in the Greek East: social and political aspects, Proceedings of the International Colloquium on Roman Onomastics, Athens, 7-9 September 1993*, Meletemata 21, Athens 1996, 207-14; S. Zoumbaki, “Choosing a new name between Romanisation and persistence: the evidence of Latin personal names in the Peloponnese”, in C. Grandjean (ed.), *Le Péloponnèse d’Épaminondas à Hadrien, Actes du Colloque de Tours, 6-7 octobre 2005*, Ausonius Études 21, Bordeaux, 145-59; see further Hoët-van Cauwenberghe, *infra* pp. 173-90 and Salomies, *infra* pp. 193-202.

71. Piérart 1976, 161; M. and P. Vitti, *infra* esp. p. 278 ns 44-47.

72. Roman influences on the countryside were much smaller. This is not, of course, due to any resistance that may have arisen to a presumed attempt at Romanisation, but simply to the lack of interest on the part of the elite, who channelled the necessary economic funds that they had to the urban centres, as their political and social status could better be promoted here.

73. Piérart 1976, 162; Rizakis, *infra* p. 145 n. 133. M. and P. Vitti, *infra* p. 267 n. 1 provides a list of the most important Peloponnesian sites where brickwork has been traced.

74. On the spread of Latin, see A. D. Rizakis, “Le grec face au latin. Le paysage linguistique dans la péninsule balkanique sous l’Empire”, in H. Solin, O. Salomies, U.-M. Liertz (eds), *Acta colloquii epigraphici latini, Helsinki 3-6 Sept. 1991, CommHumLitt* 104, 1995, 373-91.

75. Cf. here the evidence for the maintenance of the *ephebeia* and its significance in the context of Roman military service in Kennell, *infra* esp. pp. 215-16 ns 106-13.

76. For the artistic aspect cf. for example, Palagia, *infra* pp. 231-43.

77. 1976, 163.

tonomy and their every move had to be approved by the Roman governor or the emperor.⁷⁸

Epilogue

The administrative measures of Augustus and his successors brought change not only to the political geography of the peninsula, imposing the dominance of certain *metropoleis* as well as the spatial distribution of the population and wealth, but also the prevailing social hierarchy and the relationship between *polis* and *chora*. Although during the period of freedom this relationship was relatively equal, a new hierarchical structure was now established, with the aim of transferring the agricultural surplus of the *chora* to the areas where power was concentrated and where the privileged social groups resided.⁷⁹ The creation of large, over-concentrated urban centres of consumption changed the structure of economic production as well as the strategy of agricultural production, as the main aim of agricultural and industrial production was to supply the city. This intensified the already existing trend for urbanisation and the gradual abandonment of the countryside, exacerbating the phenomenon of the *agri deserti* for small marginalised communities in particular and the growth of animal husbandry.

The Romans showed an interest in the continuation of the traditional panhellenic agonistic contests and encouraged the creation of new ones that would respond to the new conditions. The Romans did not intervene in the religious sphere, and left the cities free to organise their traditional religious life, which underwent a renaissance in the 2nd c.

A.D. They did not react to the introduction or re-organisation of certain religious festivals, such as the Mysteries at Andania in Messene. The Roman cults stood out amongst the new imported cults, which were to be encountered only in the colonies, as did the eastern cults, which flourished everywhere and became much more widespread.

One of the cults which developed as a reaction to the new political context was emperor worship, which was systematically associated with Greek traditional divinities at cult places and festivals. Emperor worship privileged the links between civic elites with the emperor and the imperial cult whose priesthoods they performed, increasing the prestige of the leading men and their families within their local contexts and setting the conditions for one's career beyond the civic frontiers.⁸⁰ Romanisation, in particular of the upper classes, was undoubtedly felt in the field of personal names,⁸¹ architecture and construction techniques. The effects were less noticeable on institutions and aspects of social life. In general, the Peloponnesian cities – with the exception of the colonies, which used Latin and whose institutions imitated the Roman prototypes – preserved their traditional cults, customs and institutions.

Social organisation everywhere copied the Roman model of a pyramidal structure at the top of which were the members of the local aristocracy, who formed the membership of the municipal council, the *ordo decurionum*, and who sought, from the beginning of the imperial period, to acquire the rights of Roman citizenship, which would help them advance politically and socially. The limited eco-

78. The encounter between tradition and novelty and the combination of both elements as observed in all aspects of human life in the Peloponnese during the period covered by this collective volume were decisive in the selection of its title. Cf. the remarks of G. Steinhauer, “Παρατηρήσεις στην πολεοδομία της Ρωμαϊκής Σπάρτης”, in W. G. Cavanagh, C. Gallou, M. Georgiadis (eds), *Sparta and Laconia from prehistory to pre-modern. Proceedings of the Conference held in Sparta, organised by the British School at Athens, the University of Nottingham, the 5th Ephoreia of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities and the 5th Ephoreia of Byzantine Antiquities 17-20 March 2005*, BSA St. 16, Exeter 2009, 276-77 with n. 46.

79. Alcock 1993, 117-18. This claim is valid in principle, but the view of the “parasitic polis”, which operates merely as a consumer centre and exists at the expense of the countryside beyond the urban area, is no longer tenable and should be abandoned. Various manufacturing activities were developing during this period (metallurgy and textile processing, leather, clay, production of luxury goods such as perfumes) and it is likely that this range of production did not supply only the territory around the town but was distributed within a broader network of exchange. This brought enough profit in order to pay for those basic goods that had to be imported, above all grains and oil (cf. Bresson 2007, 199). On the concept of the “consumer city”, see J. Rich and A. Wallace-Hadrill (eds), *City and Country in the Ancient World*, London - New York 1991, chap. XV-XVII.

80. Lafond, *infra* pp. 412-18; Camia, Kantiréa, esp. *infra* pp. 379-88.

81. See *supra* p. 12 n. 53.

conomic abilities of the cities, however, explain the small number of individuals from them to enter the equestrian or senatorial ranks. The decline of the traditional local aristocracy coincided with the general decline of the system and general prosperity, which had started to break down in the 3rd century when the continuous military clashes and political and economic instability further slowed production, encouraged profiteering and intense inflationary pressures, and undermined social cohesion. The destruction of the Peloponnesian cities by the Herulian invasion (A.D. 267) was the final blow. The crisis affected not only the political and economic spheres (definite end to minting coins) but also the values (in which the new religion was to invest), something which had a negative effect upon efforts to put an end to the decline. The transient recovery noted in many Peloponnesian cities during the 4th c. A.D. was not to last long, and the 6th century brought the final end to antiquity, as after this period most Peloponnesian cities were to disappear forever from the political map of the peninsula.

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