

The City of Corinth and Urbanism in Late Antique Greece
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This is a history of the city of Corinth in Late Antiquity, an examination of urban life on the Isthmus between the third and sixth centuries after Christ. Published histories chart earlier periods of Corinthian civic life, but few extend into Late Antiquity, though Corinth was then still central to political, economic and cultural life in the Roman province of Achaia, modern southern Greece. Beyond this regional importance, Corinth forms an important benchmark for other Mediterranean cities in its mix of Ancient Greek, imperial Roman and developing Christian institutions. Many relevant Ancient authors have only recently been analyzed by archaeologists, however, while published material culture is organized separately from history in most archaeological field reports. This evidence has varying utility for the writer of history, and the genre and biases of Ancient authors, the conditions of the early excavations at Corinth, and recent academic work on Late Antique Greece all receive mention.

Beyond an organized account of urban life in the Agora, city and countryside of Late Antique Corinth, this work also asks why such life shifted so dramatically in Late Antiquity, and explores some of the factors responsible. In Achaia, as elsewhere in the Later Roman Empire, political, economic and cultural conditions were undergoing significant change, resulting in new leaders at Corinth, new products for sale, old buildings abandoned or reused, and a new religion with its own new buildings. Some of these changes happened abruptly in the fifth century, but most were gradual, and emerged from institutions which existed in the third century. Finally, many elements essential to urban life such as local leaders, roads, water supplies and a capacity to recover after disasters are still present in Late Antiquity, and confirm that Corinth was a city throughout that era.