

BOOK REVIEWS

Polis and Revolution: Responding to Oligarchy in Classical Athens. By Julia L. SHEAR. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011. Pp. xv + 368. Hardcover, £60.00/\$99.00. ISBN 978-0-521-76044-7.

Julia Shear was one of a group of scholars assembled by Robin Osborne to work on “The Anatomy of Cultural Revolution, Athens 430–380 B.C.,” in Cambridge between 2001 and 2005, and this book embodies her contribution to the project. Her theme is the responses of the restored democracies to the oligarchic régimes of 411–410 and 404–403, designed to reclaim for democracy sites in the city to which the oligarchs had laid claim, and to establish democracy as the traditional constitution (*patrios politeia*), and indeed as the only legitimate and possible constitution. She is knowledgeable about the literary and epigraphic texts and the archaeology, and she weaves a rich tapestry.

Shear starts with the oath sworn in 409 according to the decree of Demophantus *ap. Andoc.* 1.96–8, and the decree of Theozotides for the sons of those killed fighting against the oligarchy, *SEG* xxviii 46, which she dates *c.* 402 (on both of these texts see further below). These allow her to introduce the themes of the chapters which follow. Ch. 2 discusses the régimes of 411–410, in particular the ways in which they enlisted the past in support of their innovations and made political use of particular locations in the city. Then chs. 3–5 look at aspects of the democratic response in and after 410: documents emphasized the regular functioning of the democratic machinery, including Cleisthenes’ council, and the revised code of laws published in the Stoa Basileios claimed Draco and Solon for the democracy; the acropolis was reclaimed with the resumption of work on the Erechtheum, and the building of a new *bouleuterion* after the old had been contaminated by the submissive council of 412/1 and the Four Hundred began, together with the publication of the law code, a development of the agora as a space for citizens; oaths and the Dionysia were used to unite the people as democrats and to display the power of the *demos*.

The second period of oligarchy and restoration are given comparable treatment. Ch. 6 discusses the Thirty, stressing that they wanted not only power but a reform of the laws in ways congenial to them, and that they too laid claim to the

acropolis and agora, and also the Pnyx (Shear accepts Plutarch's attribution of Pnyx II to them). Ch. 7 focuses on the reconciliation, the oaths and the attempt to reunite the citizen body, and the problems in making the settlement work. Chs. 8–10 look at the aspects of the democratic response which were studied for the first restoration in chs. 3–5: inscriptions (including the resumed revision of the laws), their formulation and their location; further developments in the agora, including the court buildings in the north-east, the mint in the south-east, and the statues of Conon and Evagoras set up after the battle of Cnidus in 394; rituals to reunite the *demos*, in which the recent struggle was represented as a *polemos* against foreign enemies (thanks to Spartan support for the Thirty) rather than *stasis* in which citizens were opposed to citizens, and the reenactment of the rituals as people read the inscribed texts; constitutional changes such as the distinction between laws and decrees, to make another overthrow of the democracy more difficult. Ch. 11 sums up the main points, noting that the second restoration had to respond not only to the second oligarchy but also to what had worked in the first restoration and what had not.

There is a great deal here to enlighten and stimulate, even if one does not accept all of Shear's claims. In particular, her discussion of the architecture of the two phases of the revision of the laws makes a major advance. However, those who seek are apt to find, and to this reader the book seems to contain a certain amount of wishful finding. No text states when and why, or even that, the new *bouleuterion* was built: Shear's view that it was begun as a response to 411–410 and was in use by 404–403 relies on an inference from its dimensions and from Xen. *Hell.* 2.3.55 that it had no vestibule (but it still has a vestibule in the latest agora *Site Guide*, and indeed in Shear's fig. 2). The dating of the court buildings and the mint immediately after, and in association with, the restoration of 403 is speculative. Given that already before 411 the *basileus* and the council worked in the agora, and some of the courts met in the agora though not in dedicated buildings, I do not see as great a change of emphasis as Shear in the developments there of the late fifth and early fourth centuries. Guesses, indeed attractive guesses, once advanced are used as building-blocks: that the Athenians swore the reconciliation oaths of 403 at Agrae, organized by tribes and demes; that Theozotides' decree was set up in front of the Stoa Basileios (this is qualified by "probably"). In the statues of Conon and Evagoras I see an Athenian over-reaction, to appropriate what was in fact a Persian victory over Spartans who claimed to be fighting for the Greeks, rather than a continuation of the democratic restoration by representing them as democratic heroes.

Whenever one publishes, one risks the misfortune of being too early for important new material. Theozotides' decree for the sons of dead democrats (but not his proposal attacked in a speech by Lysias) is attributed to the first restoration rather than the second by A. P. Matthaiou:¹ in one footnote Shear notes the forthcoming publication and expresses doubt but does not know Matthaiou's arguments. Shear builds a good deal on the decree of Demophantus and other documents quoted in *Andoc. 1*, but a strong attack on the authenticity of those documents will be made by E. M. Harris and M. Canevaro,² and if that attack is judged successful some of her points will be undermined.

There is still room, then, for further discussion, but this is a good book which contains much worthy of discussion, and it deserves a warm welcome.

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Roman Landscape: Culture and Identity. By Diana SPENCER. *Greece & Rome* New Surveys in the Classics, no. 39. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press for the Classical Association, 2011. Pp xvi + 236; figs. 1–20 (6–20 in color). £14.99/\$21.99.

Diana Spencer's new contribution to this on-going Classical Association series combines broad topical coverage of her subject with searching theoretical inquiries into its conceptual meaning within the culture of Roman intellectual and practical life. As a term for the verbal comprehension of space and environment Spencer's "landscape" is not a simple equivalent of either entity, but, more broadly, a perceptual interaction of ancient Romankind with nature and the inhabited world. Roman landscapes meet us in a variety of written and pictorial forms, alternatively urban and rural, some wild and untamed, some strictly ordered, some as the obvious products of idealizing fantasy, some advertizing their laborious cultivation. Many seem infused with symbolic values that bear upon current political ideology, cultural memory, Roman self-fashioning. Spencer's six chapters develop these ideas through examination of literary representations drawn from

¹ A. P. Matthaiou, *Τὰ ἐν τῇ στήλῃ γεγραμμένα* (Athens, 2011) 71–81.

² E. M. Harris & M. Canevaro, "The Documents in *Andocides' On the Mysteries*," *CQ* n.s. 62 (2012), forthcoming.