ANCIENT AMBASSADORS

L. PICCIRILLI: *L'invenzione della diplomazia nella Grecia antica*. (Rapporti interstatali nell'antichità 1.) Pp. 150. Rome: 'L'Erma' di Bretschneider, 2002. Cased. ISBN: 88-8265-197-5.

Acknowledging the value of past scholarship on diplomacy in ancient Greece L. Piccirilli sets as his target first, the illumination of certain characteristics of ancient Greek ambassadors, and secondly, the analysis of the language of diplomacy, or, to be more specific, the arguments and common themes recurring in the speeches of envoys, since in his view 'l'arma vincente' of diplomacy in antiquity was the art of persuasion. Accordingly, the monograph is divided into two parts: Part I comprises eleven sections, while Part II contains fourteen.

Part I very sensibly starts by stressing the differences in status and authority between ancient envoys and the ambassadors of our time: most notably, that being a *presbys* in antiquity was not an actual office and that he did not enjoy diplomatic immunity. There follows a survey of a series of topics (in the following order): the differences between the various words denoting an envoy (*keryx*, *angelos*, *presbys*); physical appearance and its relationship with authority; age as a prerequisite, rightly seen by P. in the light of the prevailing ideology. Arguing against a recent article, P. discusses the vexed term *tritos autos* (and the like) agreeing with K. J. Dover ('Dekatos autos', *JHS* 80 [1960], 61–77) that it does not indicate prominence over one's colleagues and certainly not possession of the generalship. Another theme is garments and (in P.'s interesting view) the apotropaic function of purple. With regard to the envoys' duties, he cites numerous violations of the time necessary for completion of a mission, as well as notorious cases of misconduct. The ambassadors' status in their own state, accusations, and rewards form another thread. Referring to the factors determining the election of an envoy, P. emphasizes the amicable relations (guest-friendship mostly) with citizens of the receiving state and adds bilingualism as an ulterior motive lying behind the election of an envoy to Persia. P. gives a new dimension to the mission of Alexander I of Macedon to Athens, on behalf of Xerxes and Mardonios, presenting it as an example of the limitations encountered by an envoy when on a double mandate. The final and lengthiest section of Part I, on deception, highlights the point that cunning was instrumental for the implementation of certain goals; deception with regard to one's wealth forms a substantial part of P.'s analysis.

Speeches of envoys dating to the Peloponnesian War and to a lesser extent to the fourth century B.C. constitute P.'s case studies in Part II. After a lengthy presentation of methodological problems, there follows a survey of ancient authors' views on the principles guiding insertion of speeches in historical works. Inevitably P. tackles the issue of the credibility of the speeches in Thucydides (since for the most part the information relating to the language of envoys is found there: p. 70). As to the importance of rhetorical skills P. stresses the fact that renowned orators were dispatched as envoys, a practice to be observed until the end of the second century A.D. P. presents one by one the arguments and recurring themes put forward by envoys: *syngeneia* (ethnic affiliation); appeals to a preceding alliance; appeals to one's interest when the first two did not work; justice, rightly presented by P. as inferior to interest. The obligation to return a favour and the call on liberty and autonomy complete the list. With regard to the envoys' requests, P. enumerates help, a truce, friendship, peace, and war; defection, return of prisoners, or surrender of orators/politicians; and permission for an army to pass through a foreign country. P. does not fail to notice the

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frequent absence of diplomacy in the speeches. Rather abruptly, he adds a notice on Spartan laconism and another on symbolic messages.

The book concludes with a subchapter on the relationship between embassies and espionage, and finally an appendix on the inviolability of envoys and the *ius gentium*.

The monograph discusses a wide range of topics, most of which are familiar to students of ancient Greek politics. Given its limited length, less than an analysis, it is more of a survey where there is hardly any room for original ideas, particularly in Part II. But apparently P. does not aim at modifying past scholarship; what he does is to present already scrupulously studied events (particularly by F. Adcock and D. J. Mosley, *Diplomacy in Ancient Greece* [London, 1975]) and concepts from the standpoint of an envoy. Thus he offers the reader a picture of what an ambassador in antiquity would have experienced, his qualities, and what an official mission might consist of. Nevertheless, in this perspective the title of the monograph is rather ambitious: diplomacy was not (and is not) solely ambassadorial, that is, pursuing of a policy by an official representative of a certain state. Furthermore, 'l'invenzione' at least partly calls for a study of the initial stages of diplomacy and then its development, if there was any. In P.'s book, things are presented as if hardly anything changed from the archaic to the end of the classical period (with the exception of the *ius gentium*), or even in the Hellenistic period, which is not in itself objectionable and is actually interesting. If this was precisely the point, it is nowhere argued or made clear. One could remark, for example, that P. does not comment on the fact that symbolic messages belong to the archaic period, that is in the early stages of diplomacy, and the narratives which include them have a strong anecdotal flavour; possibly, they could serve as an introduction.

To the monograph's credit, documentation is meticulous, and the footnotes indicate wide scholarly reading and provide the reader with substantial bibliography. Equally helpful is the index of Greek terminology, as well as that of names of envoys and notable cases.

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THE FINANCES OF THE ATHENIAN EMPIRE

L. J. Samons II: *Empire of the Owl. Athenian Imperial Finance*. (*Historia* Einzelschriften 142.) Pp. 358. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2000. Paper, DM 168. ISBN: 3-515-07664-6.

There can be few topics in Greek history quite as intractable as the finances of the fifth-century Athenian empire. The literary evidence is scant, whilst the relevant inscriptions are generally either fragmentary or of disputed date, or both. Despite (or maybe because of) a mass of specialist epigraphic publications on these texts, there remains much disagreement about their restoration and dating. When so much is uncertain, it is virtually impossible to write a financial history of Athens' empire, as Samons acknowledges. Even so, it is surprising that there has been no full-length study of the subject since the third volume of *Athenian Tribute Lists* (*ATL*), a work of more limited scope than the present volume and now more than fifty years old. S. has therefore performed a most valuable service in presenting a mass of complex material in such a lucid and comprehensive manner.

The book starts (Chapter 1) with a useful discussion of the different roles of the main Athenian treasuries during the Pentekontaetia—those of Athena Polias and

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