although it must be said that few historians nowadays would handle the speeches in such a ham-fisted way. What distinguishes P.'s account from much other recent work is her belief that the orators' ideas transcend their particular contexts and, taken together, amount to a systematic set of reflections on democratic politics (pp. 105–9, 169–70). Not all will agree with such a strong formulation, which, in the event, produces a plausible, if not altogether novel, picture: orators must promote the common good, self-interested élites must be controlled, the past provides a model for the present, the generals use too many mercenaries instead of citizens, individuals must be subordinated to the law, and external success and internal health are mutually reinforcing.

All that said, however, P. does firmly and convincingly make the case that the orators developed substantial conceptual resources to meet the challenges to political stability presented by fourth-century politics. Through recourse to the past, they created an ideal characterized by unity within the *polis*, widespread citizen participation, the primacy of political over other interests, responsible office-holding, and the rule of law (e.g. p. 131). This ideal, as P. shows in the *Vergleich* (pp. 179–86), is importantly similar to Aristotle's in its emphasis on the primacy of politics and its criticisms of the élite, and importantly different in its convictions about popular government and its understanding of the 'rule of law'. Despite the schematic quality of some of her conclusions, P. demonstrates that the Attic orators articulated powerful, pragmatic justifications for the democratic way of life, and helped to create patterns of thought that occupied center stage in Aristotle's own dissenting political views.

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THE FOUR HUNDRED

H. HEFTNER: *Der oligarchische Umsturz des Jahres 411 v. Chr. und die Herrschaft der Vierhundert in Athen. Quellenkritische und historische Untersuchungen*. Pp. viii + 395. Frankfurt am Main, etc.: Peter Lang, 2001. Paper, £42/€69. ISBN: 3-631-37970-6.

H.'s monograph has two objectives: to establish a chronology for the events of the 411 oligarchic coup and to evaluate modern interpretation by critical reference to the sources. This is a well-worked topic, but the clarity of H.'s structured overview, divided into five chapters and two excursuses, makes a contribution, even if not a revolutionary reassessment.

H. first analyses the impact of the Sicilian disaster on Athenian democracy: the destruction of the majority of the fleet and the thousands of enslaved or killed soldiers might have shattered the beliefs of proud Athenians in their democratic system. But did it really? H. C. Avery proposed (*Prosopographical Studies in the Oligarchy of the Four Hundred* [Princeton dissertation, 1959]) that the *strategoi* elected in spring 412 were moderate or even antidemocratic politicians, but H. carefully reconstructs their individual to remove any evidence for this as a pro-oligarchic election. Having established the background to the oligarchic *coup d'état*, H. inserts his first excursus, on the coup's chronology; this critical reflection of the sources, with an explicit and systematic methodology for interpretation, will be useful for students even if the conclusions do not substantially differ from the *communis opinio*.

The second chapter covers the overthrow of democracy and the establishment of the

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400. H. follows Dover and Andrewes in identifying a couple of contemporary allusions in Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazusae*, probably performed only weeks before the coup, and then the constitutional college of thirty, the proposal for a council of 5000 and finally the disempowerment of the *ekklesia* in favour of the 400. This introduces the second excursus, on the so-called 'present constitution' and 'future presentation' (*Athenaion Politeia*, Chapters 30 and 31), which have to be related to the 'political reality' described by Thucydides. H. accepts that both documents came into existence at the same time and as part of one concept, a rather conservative 'present constitution' with the oligarchic 400 in control and a more moderate 'future constitution' with the 5000 including the two upper classes with the element of sortition for office to satisfy the disempowered *demos*. The downfall of the 400 is followed in the third chapter, through the failure of oligarchic agitation on Samos, the establishment there of a strong democratic consensus, and the repeated peace-missions from oligarchs at Athens to Sparta. This too is standard fare, but H. does show how Thucydides' scheme to explain the Peloponnesian War, through opposition between convinced democrats against oligarchs, is too simple: Athenians changed political sides to seek their own advantage, with independence as preferable to agreement with a regime. Alkibiades is the classic example, but the overthrow of the 400 is also relevant since it was not their political views but the treasonable construction of the fort at the Piraeus, a bridgehead for the Spartans, which prompted Athenians to rise against them.

The last chapter finally discusses the character of the constitution of the 5000, and whether it was ever implemented. H. weighs the different scholarly views carefully and analytically, tending to side with the *communis opinio* of Rhodes, Andrewes, and Bleckmann against the arguments of de St Croix and Gallucci, with the 5000 as a rather conservative *Hoplitespoliteia* rather than a *de facto* restoration of democracy. Finally, he tries to reconcile the two camps by seeing the council of 5000 as the governing institution, but with the *demos* retaining sovereignty by having the right to take a vote on the proposals.

H.'s conclusion is a clear and elegant summary of the previous discussions, so that the reader who wishes to avoid the density and technicality of some of the earlier chapters might focus on this part. Here H. also places the 400 in its historical context, making connections with the oligarchic coup in 404 when the distinctness of the political views were more developed and oligarchs as well as democrats had learned from their 'mistakes'.

H. has not come up with any revolutionary ideas on the 400, but has produced a thorough and competent overview over the state of research on all aspects of the 400. It is the comprehensiveness of his treatment which gives it value, since other scholars have tended to focus on specific aspects. His treatment of evidence is meticulous and his review of scholarly debates judicious.

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ADOPTION IN ATHENS

P. Cobetto Ghiggia: *L'adozione ad Atene in epoca classica*. Pp. vi + 371. Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 1999. Paper, L. 45,000. ISBN: 88-7694-372-2.

G. addresses the origins, history, procedure, and complications of adoption in classical Greece, mostly in fourth-century Athens, where forensic speeches yield by far

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