'an implicit criticism of his own Greek tradition, to which ritual human sacrifice . . . was not alien (*wesensfremd*)' (p. 166).

B.'s treatment of Xerxes' War and its prehistory in Section VII 1–3, to which, in good unitarian fashion, the preceding chapters are connected as if they constitute integrally related prolegomena, is basically a rehearsal of Herodotus punctuated with portentous asides. His treatment of the epochal moment, Xerxes' decision to invade Greece (pp. 318ff.), is disappointingly simplistic and perfunctory. The influence of Aeschylus is overrated; his discussion of the central and much discussed dream sequence (pp. 320–2) veers to all points, and ends, in effect, with a bland dismissal of its significance: 'Xerxes' plans for world conquest teach us to see in him no guiltless sacrificial victim of a higher design but rather a haughty but also fickle Machtmenschen' (p. 322). It is deplorable that the book lacks an index of subjects.

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THUCYDIDES ON THE *POLIS*

H. LEPPIN: *Thukydides und die Verfassung der Polis. Ein Vertrag zur politischen Ideengeschichte des 5. Jahrhunderts v. Chr.* (Klio: Beiträge zur Alten Geschichte 1.) Pp. 253. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1999. Cased, DM 112. ISBN: 3-05-003458-0.

Thucydides and the *polis* are two topics that have received a fair amount of scholarly attention in recent years. So a book dealing with his conception of the *polis* comes as no surprise. L.'s interest is not in how Thuc. distinguished a *polis* from, say, a *kômê* or even a *polisma*: that topic has already been treated by the Copenhagen Polis Centre. Rather, his work is a study in intellectual history, focusing on Thuc.'s ideas about constitutional forms and about the social structures of the *polis*. Justification for the work can be found in the bewilderingly broad range of notions that have been held about Thuc.'s preferred form of constitution: Hobbes famously thought that Thuc. was a defender of monarchy, but others have regarded him as an oligarch, or a democrat, or as someone who eludes such rigid definitions—a thinker who valued good political behaviour but did not see such behaviour as the preserve of any one type of constitution (see L.'s review of past scholarship at pp. 11–14).

What Jacqueline de Romilly did in *Thucydides and Athenian Imperialism* (Oxford, 1963; French original 1947) for Thuc.'s treatment of external affairs, L. does for his treatment of internal affairs—but with a more cautious methodology. Like de Romilly, he traces connections between Thuc. and his contemporaries, and resists the temptation to speculate too much about influences. Where he is more cautious is in his use of Thuc.'s speeches. He rigidly observes the separation of speech and narrative, while making good use of the speeches as evidence for contemporary strands of thought. He also insists that Thuc. is not a political theorist, and accepts that a complete picture of Thuc.'s notions about the *polis* cannot be expected from his history.

What topics does L. cover? He first sketches the development of ideas about constitutional forms (e.g. the use of the word *dêmokratia*) in tragedy, Herodotus (with a rather superficial treatment of the function of the Constitutional Debate in the narrative as a whole), Protagoras, Democritus, and the *Anonymus Iamblichi* (a threesome classified as 'Demokratienahe Denker'). Analysis of Thuc.'s speech and narrative then shows how it is the opposition between democracy and oligarchy, not

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that between equality and monarchy, that is dominant; and how the misuse or limited usefulness of constitutional concepts is frequently revealed. In Part II, L. explores the impact of Thuc.'s notion of human nature on his understanding of constitutions; his negative presentation of the masses; and his positive presentation of some élite leaders. In Part III, L. turns to analyse Thuc.'s narratorial claims about good forms of ordering within the state. Especially welcome here is the focus not just on the notorious remarks about the 5,000 at 8.97, but also on the praise of Sparta at 1.18 and of Chios at 8.24. In his conclusion, L. includes interesting remarks on the relation of Thuc.'s analysis to fourth-century developments.

It will be evident from this sketch that L. goes over some much-covered ground. But his comments are sane, and the work is valuable for its overall treatment of a large body of material. Of particular interest are his conclusions that Thuc. does not see the few as morally superior; that he sees some similarities between democracy and oligarchy (e.g. the problems of the masses are not confined to democracy); and that there are great limits to what even the best state can achieve. It is a not totally pessimistic Thuc. who emerges. But L. is himself perhaps too optimistic about what conclusions can be drawn from Thuc.'s narrative. L. stresses Themistocles, Pericles, and Hermocrates as examples of the sort of leaders that democracy can throw up (the forced nature of the Syracuse/Athens parallel could have been further explored). But Thuc.'s more extensive analysis of democratic leadership is governed by his explanatory needs: he has to explain how Athens could be so successful, and yet be undone by internal weakness. He did not need to subject the internal affairs of, say, Sparta to the same level of analysis. As for the weakness of oligarchy, the prime exhibit is 8.89.3; but this applies only to oligarchies in a given position (those that have been recently formed from democracies).

This is a book that deserves to be looked at by anyone interested in Greek political thought; perhaps, though, some of the more ambitious recent scholarship, such as that of Ober on mass and élite, deserved more detailed discussion (but note the remarks on Ober at e.g. pp. 53 and 186 n. 4). Thucydidean scholars will also find many interesting observations on recent scholarship (e.g. p. 117 n. 2 on Erbse on the Greek/barbarian dichotomy; p. 154 on Strasburger and Flashar on the portrayal of Pericles). The book is attractively produced, and has a good bibliography and excellent indexes.

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JOSEPHUS AS HISTORIAN

G. MADER: *Josephus and the Politics of Historiography: Apologetic and Impression Management in the* Bellum Judaicum. Pp. X + 172. Leiden, etc.: Brill 2000. Cased, $65. ISBN: 90-04-11446-7.

Gottfried Mader's essay is representative of a new angle in Josephan studies taken by scholars recently. Rather than assume Josephus' Jewish background as more dominant and central to the understanding of his vast work, the evolving new approach tends to read and analyse his historical compositions as part of the Greco-Roman historiographical tradition, while acknowledging the unique character achieved by the fusion of the Jewish and the Greco-Roman elements.

Alongside the strong Jewish notes in Josephus, modern scholarship has traced influences, allusions, and rhetorical borrowings from Greco-Roman historiography,

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