

larger *aspis*, also with a shoulder-strap, remained in common use (K. Liampi, *Der makedonische Schild* [1998]).

The book is lavishly illustrated with many large colour images. These vary in quality and usefulness. Photographs of period weapons, armour and artwork are welcome, as are a number of Connolly's artistic reconstructions reproduced from *Greece and Rome at War* and new artwork by J. Shumate. The volume's eight large maps, each stretching over two pages, are clear and readable, as are the many smaller battle maps, although these sometimes show less detail in terms of army composition than one might expect. Some of the other image choices seem questionable; a set of frescos from the House of the Vettii in Pompeii are reproduced several times (pp. 11, 87, 125) to represent Greek triremes, despite both dating much later and also clearly showing only two banks of oars. Likewise, images of tabletop wargaming figurines are used to illustrate some panoplies, though these are at best difficult for readers to see, on account of their small size, and lack the detail of the artistic reconstructions.

After four decades an update to *Greece and Rome at War* is surely a *desideratum*, yet it is difficult to recommend this effort. E. does little to incorporate new research or archaeological finds, nor does he break new ground with his arguments. At the same time, the book's organisation and frequent digressions are likely to confuse lay readers, while the book's errors risk misleading them.

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A HISTORY OF *ISONOMIA*

SCHUBERT (C.) *Isonomia. Entwicklung und Geschichte*. (Beiträge zur Altertumskunde 392.) Pp. viii + 329, b/w & colour ills, colour map. Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2021. Cased, £100, €109.95, US\$126.99. ISBN: 978-3-11-071796-9.

doi:10.1017/S0009840X22001846

Long a footnote in the history of political thought, *isonomia* now receives an entire monograph. While most scholars take an Atheno-centric perspective, S. argues that only a far-ranging, diachronic survey of the evidence can help us grasp the concept. Accordingly, S. looks beyond the reforms of Cleisthenes in Athens, during which, according to M. Ostwald, *isonomia* first became a political slogan, to trace its fortunes from its earliest occurrence to late antiquity. Although, per the *TLG*, there are not more than a dozen occurrences before the first century CE, S. takes a magnifying glass to them and seeks to discern commonalities and differences, devoting attention not only to historiography but also to philosophy, medicine and inscriptions. S. shows that *isonomia* was a nuanced and subtle idea, but at its most basic it was a concept of political order ('Ordnungsbegriff', p. 11) that entailed equal participation by all the citizens in the community's political institutions. For S. this goes some way to explain why the embrace of *isonomia* so rarely, if ever, led to calls for *isomoiria*, equal distribution of property/wealth. *Isonomia* was firmly rooted in the political (in the sense of French '*le politique*'), having to do with a collective right to participation in the administration of the community and less with individuals' claims

to particular resources or goods, the negotiation of which is the stuff of politics as most people know it ('*la politique*'). There is thus something abstract and heady in S.'s understanding of *isonomia*, but S. argues that it was also operationalised in concrete situations on the ground, not only in Athens, but also in Magna Graecia and especially in Ionia. Starting in the second half of the sixth century, she argues, isonomic movements rose that fundamentally shaped the course of Greek history as well as the development of democracy.

The first chapter sets the stage for the argument by looking at early sources for political thought, especially Solon and the Ionians Anaximander and Xenophanes, to show that there was a wide concern in the Greek world about good order within a community (Solon's *eunomia* and Xenophanes' *eukosmia*) and what it meant to live in a *polis* (p. 25). The second chapter turns to Ionia. S. argues that before the battle of Lade Ionians experimented in both theory and practice with different forms of community organisation, from Thales' and Bias' pan-Ionian proposals, to epigraphically attested *koina* in Teos and Phocaea, to constitutional regulations in Chios, to Heraclitus' use of the term *xynon*. She suggests that there was, at core, a similarity between the reforms of Cleisthenes in Athens and the Ionian movements. For instance, Thales' suggestion of a central pan-Ionian Council prefigures the centrality of the Athenian Council in Cleisthenes' deme organisation. The next chapter, on Athens, explores this suggestion at greater length, finding in the herms of Hipparchus, which marked the distance from the centre of Athens to the periphery of Attica, another precursor to the Cleisthenic programme. S. follows Ostwald in taking the Harmodius scholion, as preserved by Athenaeus, as reflecting, more or less, a song popular in the last decade of the sixth century. If true, this would make the song not only the oldest attestation of the word before Herodotus (leaving the controversially dated Alcmaeon to one side), but the only evidence for the word *isonomia* current in Athens around the reforms of Cleisthenes. This raises a methodological problem for S.'s argument. While she relies on Herodotus to characterise Ionian politics as tending towards *isonomia*, Herodotus is silent about any connection between Cleisthenes' reforms and *isonomia*. His characterisation of Athens after the tyrants as an *isegoria* is hardly the same thing (pp. 98–101, 141). The next chapter deals with Magna Graecia and seeks to draw a double analogy: between the political upheavals in Sicily, Athens and Ionia; and between Ionian and Pythagorean thought. S. discerns a similar interest in social balance and harmony coinciding with a push for more *koinon*-based polities. The next chapter ranges widely among authors and eras, from Thucydides, Plato, Isocrates and Aristotle to Plutarch and Cassius Dio and even Cicero and Livy. It shows how the concept's meaning started to change, becoming overshadowed by questions about democracy and the nature of equality. A final, short, chapter shows that in late antiquity the metaphoric sense of the term comes to dominate and *isonomia* completely loses the political, revolutionary sense it once had, as Christian writers use it to describe the believer's special relationship with God.

S. deserves praise for writing the first book-length history of the word *isonomia* as well as for going beyond Athens to pay careful attention to all the available instances of the term and their historical contexts (as best as they can be recovered). For me, the book also raises some questions along the way that it does not address. S. does not try to revive the suggestion of P. Vidal-Naquet and P. Lévêque that Cleisthenes might have been a Pythagorean (which even they hesitated to more than suggest), but then what is the connection between Ionian or Pythagorean speculation and Cleisthenes' political reforms? Surely the political situation in Ionia was very different from Sicily and very different from Athens. So why should we see the same ideas in response? And how does an intellectual concept become a political slogan, or vice versa? Such questions are hardly answerable on

the state of our evidence, but the book's juxtapositions make asking them inevitable. On the other hand, when a book spans nearly 1,000 years of history, it feels petty to criticise it for not going on; still, I would like to know, if *isonomia* lost its political sense in late antiquity, how and why did it get it back in the seventeenth century? As F. Hayek pointed out (*Constitution of Liberty* [1960], pp. 164–7), that was when the term started appearing in print, notably in Philemon Holland's 1600 translation of Livy. By 1875 the term had become so trite that a brewer-turned-sportsman could name a horse 'Isonomy' (who would go on to belie his name by becoming one of the most successful British racehorses of the era). For Hayek, as already for G. Vlastos (*AJP* 74 [1953]), and presumably for Isonomy's owner, the term signified nothing less than the rule of law. S. devotes scarce attention to this sense of the term; yet a history of the concept should make clear why it was that meaning that resonated throughout the centuries, and, if it is wrong, how the error came about.

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THE PERSIAN VERSION OF PERSIA'S HISTORY

LLEWELLYN-JONES (L.) *Persians. The Age of the Great Kings*. Pp. xvi + 432, ills, map. New York: Basic Books, 2022. Cased, US\$35. ISBN: 978-1-54160034-8.

doi:10.1017/S0009840X22002736

The Iranian past has consistently featured in the histories of others, penetrating into Mesopotamian, Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Islamic and, more recently, Middle Eastern narratives of the past. It may not be wrong to say that these in some sense are given meaning as well as form by the Iranian presence. Yet our understanding of the pre-Islamic cultures of Iran especially is limited and traditionally founded on outside literary sources. The premise of L.-J.'s book is that the writings of these (mostly Greek) ancient authors are products of their prejudices and agendas and leave us with an unrealistic picture of our subject. Compounding this is said to be a comparative slowness in the development of the modern discipline of Persian studies and a Western-driven historiographical smear campaign, which paints the Persians as the tyrannical oppressors of the free world. L.-J.'s book aims to redress this imbalance and to provide the 'Persian Version of Persia's history' (p. 5).

The book sets about the task by highlighting the different cultural dynamics driving ancient Near Eastern conceptions of the past. L.-J. rightly asserts that the absence of a historical narrative, such as we get in the Greek context with Herodotus, Thucydides and Xenophon, does not equate to the idea that the Persians did not respond to their history. Their way of remembering was different, transmitted through song, poetry and legend, though of course that was not in itself so different to pre-Herodotean engagements with the past. An important distinguishing factor in their case was the centrality of divine-sanctioned kingship, a reality that afforded little room for contested versions and rendered details of historical events and dates only of peripheral importance. Those details are, however, mostly discoverable by the contemporary Achaemenid historian drawing on the full range of available resources.