

Ottima lettura, dunque, corredata in aggiunta da una chiara documentazione delle fonti. Tuttavia si poteva dare qualche accenno in più ad altre località, quale Delfi, dove nei periodi arcaico e classico si incontrano fenomeni del tutto simili a quelli olimpici (dediche di trofei, annunci di trattati ecc.).

Mika Kajava

ANNA MISSIOU: *Literacy and Democracy in Fifth-Century Athens*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge – New York 2011. ISBN 978-0-521-11140-9 (hb), 978-0-521-12876-6 (pb). XVI, 211 pp., 23 figs., 3 maps, 2 tables. GBP 50, USD 85 (hb), GBP 17.99, USD 29.99 (pb).

In this study, Anna Missiou examines literacy in fifth-century Athens from a socio-political perspective. The main issue of the study is the interaction of literacy with democratic ideals and practices. Missiou challenges the generally accepted view that relatively few citizens were fully able to read and write, arguing instead that the Athenians managed to achieve extensive functional literacy. She questions William V. Harris's account according to which Athens lacked the necessary preconditions for mass literacy, and argues that the development and spread of literacy were both preconditioned and stimulated by democratic ideals – such as transparency, equity, equality, objectivity, fairness, and unity – and democratic functions.

Missiou states that literacy was adopted after Kleisthenes' reforms as a means of facilitating communication and exchange of information. She argues that ignorance on political matters and decisions would have been contrary to the democratic ideals and anti-elitist spirit. According to her, the geographical distance between the newly established demes and tribes encouraged extensive literacy: if citizens were illiterate the remote demes would not have been able to gain information about the most important issues and decisions made by the political bodies. In her opinion, the ability to read and write was integral to all citizens as participants in the political decision-making process. The agendas of the Council and the decrees of the Assembly "were made publicly available to as many people as possible through writing" (p. 145).

Missiou discusses Kleisthenes' reforms in Chapter 1. In Chapter 2, she gives a fresh account of the procedure of ostracism as a communication process, arguing that the ostraka mediated between senders (those who voted) and receivers (those who counted the votes). It is traditionally assumed by scholars that there were no candidates in the *ostrakophoriai* and citizens were entitled to vote for whoever they wished. Missiou points out that this assumed absence of a list of candidates rests solely on the silence of the literary sources. She interestingly points out that given the number of namesakes in fifth-century Athens, there would have been a major risk of confusing the "candidates" with each other during an *ostrakophoria* had there not been a list of candidates before an *ostrakophoria*. She then makes a tempting suggestion of a "fixed list" with the full names of the candidates. According to Missiou, this would explain the amount of ostraka with only the single name of a person instead of his full name. The list would also have made the cumbersome task of counting the votes less difficult. She also argues that the list was a means of protecting freedom of speech and opinion and thus was in accordance with democratic values.

The prevailing scholarly consensus seems to be that citizens were allowed to give their ostrakon to someone who was literate and let him write the name of the candidate. Chapters

3 and 4 set their sights on this "literacy through intermediaries". One case usually given as an example of literacy through intermediaries – Missiou calls this "second-hand literacy" – is the famous Aristeides anecdote (quoted on p. 59) according to which the righteous politician Aristeides wrote his own name on an ostrakon because an illiterate citizen who was not aware of who he was talking had asked him to do it.

Missiou further investigates "second-hand literacy" by re-examining the 191 "Akropolis ostraka" all but one of which have the name Themistokles inscribed. According to Oscar Broneer's traditional account, these ostraka were produced in 14 different handwritings by the opponents of Themistokles and were intended to be given to citizens who were either illiterate or did not have time to prepare their own ostrakon. This view supports the assumption of illiterate citizens. According to this view, the citizens did not necessarily have to be literate but they might have had professional scribes.

Broneer's assumption has so far gone unchallenged. Missiou refreshingly re-analyses ten of the Akropolis ostraka. She questions the predominant view of 14 hands, calls this assumption a "myth" (p. 58) and concludes, quite convincingly, that "almost as many [hands] as the ostraka produced the Akropolis ostraka" (p. 9). Missiou also notes that the Akropolis ostraka are not as well written as one would expect from a professional scribe. She argues that it was the individual citizens themselves who prepared the ostraka and the purpose of the makers of the Akropolis ostraka was to influence their fellow voters and make it easy for them to vote for Themistokles.

In Chapter 4, the material consists of longer official inscriptions such as the *horoî* and the archaic "owls". Missiou also attempts to find out what the "primary working material" was and who wrote the administrative documents. She argues that since writing on stone was a slow process and information could not have been transmitted rapidly enough, *leleukômena grammateia* (whitened wooden tablets) must have been in use. There are no direct sources but, as Missiou points out, we know from literary sources that the laws of Solon, for example, were written on wooden *axones*.

Scholars disagree on the social composition of the Council. Missiou argues that the Council was organised according to the democratic nature of Kleisthenes' tribal reforms and that the Council consisted of members who "belonged to all social classes and came from all the demes" (p. 147). According to Missiou, all the Solonian classes, including the *thêtes*, were literate: in Chapter 5, Missiou argues that Kleisthenes also gave access to the Council to the *thêtes* class. Against the generally accepted view, Missiou also argues that all the public tasks required literacy and that the people that assisted the councillors in literary tasks, maintained the record, and were responsible for other routine work were not skilful public slaves but Athenian citizens. She bases this argument on a comparison of the meanings of the words *dêmosios* and *hypêretês* that occur in the sources. According to Missiou, Kleisthenes gave the power to the "*dêmos* as a whole". There are demographical grounds for the argument: according to Missiou, the 500 places in the Council could not have been filled without the *thêtes* class that formed two-thirds of the adult male citizenry in Athens.

The starting point of the study is the democratic nature of Kleisthenes' reforms and the general anti-elitist spirit of Athenian society. These assumptions are familiar from the vast literature concerning democratic Athens and remain here undisputed by Missiou. In sum, however, the material consists of primary documents and there are numerous fresh and tempting arguments regarding ostracism and the Akropolis ostraka, as well as the access of the *thêtes* class

to the Council. All in all, the challenge is that the material is sometimes hardly sufficient; especially the suggestion of whitened or waxed wooden tablets as "primary working documents" is based on rather little evidence. On the other hand, Missiou admits herself that the evidence is relatively insufficient. However speculative it might be, Missiou has managed to provide a persuasive argument that literacy was part of the social and political history of democratic Athens.

Suvi Kuokkanen

CHARLOTTE LEROUGE: *L'image des Parthes dans le monde gréco-romain. Du début du I^{er} siècle av. J.-C. jusqu'à la fin du Haut-Empire romain*. Oriens et Occidens 17. Franz Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart 2007. ISBN 978-3-515-08530-4. 427 pp. EUR 62.

Nella sua ricca monografia, l'autrice rintraccia e illustra le caratteristiche e immagini riservate ai Parti nella letteratura romana dall'inizio del I sec. a.C. fino alla fine della dinastia arsacide nel 224 d.C., immagini queste che venivano influenzate anche da eventi storici quali il disastro di Carrhae nel 53 a.C. o l'incontro a Roma tra Nerone e Tiridate nel 66 d.C. Oltre al panorama dell'evoluzione "storica" dell'immagine partica a Roma, viene offerto un ampio spettro di informazioni sulla civiltà partica tratte dalle fonti antiche (organizzazione statale e istituzionale, l'arte di guerra, estensione geografica, religione [e.g., Mitra], usi e costumi, tradizioni sull'origine, ecc.). L'immagine complessiva sembrerebbe di duplice carattere, frutto di due tradizioni etno-storiografiche fra loro distinte: agli occhi greco-romani, da un lato, i Parti rappresentano ricchezza e mollezza orientale (mondo persiano), mentre sono efferati e temibili barbari dall'altro (mondo scito), caratteristiche, ambedue, irrimediabilmente inferiori ai valori romani. Riguardo alla restituzione sotto Augusto dei *signa* di Crasso nonché all'esistenza di un tempio rotondo di Mars Ultor in Campidoglio (pp. 105 sgg.), colgo l'occasione per notare che la vicenda probabilmente risulta più complicata di quanto qui sostenuto; si vedano, a proposito, le mie osservazioni in "Vesta and Athens", in *The Greek East in the Roman Context* (Proc. Coll. Finnish Inst. Athens, 1999), Helsinki 2001, 81 sgg. L'opera di Lerouge rimarrà senz'altro basilare per tutti i futuri studi sul regno arsacide, ma è anche destinata a diventare lettura obbligatoria per chiunque si occupi delle varie percezioni presso i greci e i romani di altri popoli e culture.

Mika Kajava

The Oxford Handbook of Social Relations in the Roman World. Edited by MICHAEL PEACHIN. Oxford Handbooks in Classics and Ancient History. Oxford University Press, Oxford – New York 2011. ISBN 978-0-19-518800-4. XVI, 738 pp. GBP 95.

The scope of this volume, as indicated in its title, is outright daunting. One might well ask whether there is any human activity (beyond mere physiological processes) that does not entail reciprocal interaction – and thus, by very definition, social relations – between individuals and groups of individuals. True, there is a scholarly tradition to cite. Ramsay MacMullen's classic