In summation, with the few reservations noted above, this is a persuasive and helpful book. One feature which continues to appeal is the way in which N takes seriously the idea that popular justice served to reinforce official sanctions in both Republican and Imperial times. For a different view, that popular justice was a kind of unpredictable and frowned-upon survival from an archaic, pre-state period, see Andrew Lintott’s *Violence in Republican Rome* (Oxford, 1968, esp. 6-21) and *Violence, Civil Strife, and Revolution in the Classical City* (London, 1982, esp. 24-31).

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Both these collections of essays (the first by the editor/author, the second with an introduction by the editors and papers by others) celebrate 2500 years of democracy since the democratic reforms of the government of Athens at the end of the sixth century. The focus is on internal government, not on the empire which the democracy subsequently created, though the relations between democracy and empire are sometimes touched on.
Ober’s collection of his own essays (published between 1983 and 1993) is designed to make political theorists and ancient historians more aware of one another’s work as well as to understand the past as a ‘history of ideologies’ and establish the study of classical Greek democracy as a significant sub-discipline within Greek history and political theory. He introduces each essay with an account of what it set out to achieve and how it was received when made public. He is particularly interested in the kinds of paradigms or explanatory models which the history of this area of scholarship has brought to bear on the events, such as the great man paradigm, which would have Cleisthenes mainly responsible for the democratic revolution the late sixth century. He is intent on introducing different political paradigms which are part of modern political theory (‘the wider intellectual marketplace’), thinking that otherwise the classical sub-discipline will become ‘irrelevant’. This is not to say that he ignores the evidence of the ancient source: ‘All historians supplement their narratives with assumptions, models, and theories ... But such supplements (especially those that are widely accepted) must be challenged from time to time, lest they become so deeply entrenched as to block the development of alternative readings that may explain the source tradition as well or better’ (35).

The questions Ober tries to answer are very important ones, even where, by his own admission, his particular answers have not convinced everyone. He is convinced that the Athenian democracy did not mask the rule of the elite, in spite of the paradigm of ‘the iron rule of the oligarchy’, made particularly influential by Syme’s Roman Revolution, and by Thucydides’ remarks about Pericles before him. He prefers the evidence of speeches in the lawcourts, with their more democratic ethos, to those of intellectual individuals like Thucydides. He argues strongly against ‘this elite centred Great Man approach to history’ in his study of the revolution of the late sixth century, stressing in the narrative of Herodotus the uprising of the people of Athens, who, in the form of the boule and demos, without
named leadership, resisted Cleomenes during the absence of Cleisthenes and his supporters in exile. He rejects the patron-client model for Athens that might explain the influence of Cleisthenes over the people. Cleisthenes did not take the demos into his *hetaireia*, but (in a retranslation of the famous phrase) was himself absorbed into the evolving company of the people of Athens. 'In sum Cleisthenes was not so much the authoritative leader of the revolution as he was a highly skilled interpreter of statements made in a revolutionary context and of revolutionary action itself' (52). This particular essay remains extremely thought provoking, but those aware of trends e.g. in understanding the 'propaganda' of the great men of Roman politics will see that Ober's approach is itself a paradigm of his own democratic age, which actively seeks to find the power of the people forming or negotiating the policy which the 'great man' then adopts.

Ober is keen to take on his opponents and his critics and this is done without rancour, and with great energy. M.H. Hansen comes in for particular attention: a meeting of the giants? Ober introduces this piece with the anecdote of how they tried to settle their differences over Athenian democracy by means of arm-wrestling, reaching no clearer a decision in this than in their earlier encounters at a conference. He sees Hansen's interpretations of Athenian democracy as the paradigm of institutions, whereas his own is that of ideologies. Thus on the matter of payment for attendance at the Assembly, Hansen believes it was motivated by the desire to gather a quorum, Ober sees it as a move by the people to ensure that the wealthy did not dominate their politics. He is prepared on other points to criticise Hansen in detail, but mostly wishes to establish the limitations of his paradigm.

The idea of paradigms is addressed in a different way in the study of the nature of the criticisms of the Athenian democracy; this is offered as a contribution to the debate about the failure of the modern criticisms of modern democracy (liberalism and socialism). Athenian democratic ideology is taken to be so
dominant that it is not in need of defence. It was constantly expressed in public speech in the Assembly and lawcourts of Athens (the Funeral Speech is also a notable expression). Through publicly performed speech acts, democratic institutions were implicated in an on-going process of defining and re-defining the truths used in political decision making and of assimilating local knowledges into an over-arching democratic knowledge' (154). Among the critics, Thucydides and Plato attack the knowledge base of the democracy, even though it never claimed to do more that 'what seemed good' to the collective. Ps. Xenophon attacked the gap between the interests of the elite and the interests of the democratic regime, but the democratic voice, in Ober's opinion, proves too dominant. Isocrates meanwhile borrows the vocabulary of democratic discourse and translates it into aristocracy. The questions, what were these texts meant to do? and, what did they do? remain unanswered because they are 'complex and multivocal'. Yet they maintain 'discursive space outside the dominant regime' for the opposite view.

The second collection sparkles with even more confrontation. The contributors have responded to one another's papers at conferences and the responses have been incorporated in the final versions here published. Most of the authors are from institutions in the USA, with some few honourable exceptions, and there is a strong focus on comparison of ancient Athenian democracy with the modern American version. This will limit the appeal of the collection for some classicists, though not of course for political theorists, for whom it is equally, if not more so, intended. The essays are largely comparative (e.g. Ostwald on 'Citizenship' Greek Style and American Style, Hansen on the ancient Athenian and modern liberal view of liberty as a democratic ideal, Wood on Freedom and Democracy Ancient and Modern).

Out of a wealth of possibilities, I choose for special comment, because of their mainstream intellectual interest, the penultimate two essays which argue for and against a democratic interpretation of Platonic dialogue/Socratic dialectic in the
context of the education of the democratic citizen ('Reading' and 'Misreading' Democracy). Euben argues first that debate is the essence of democracy and that this makes Plato/Socrates a democrat. 'What is challenging for us is Socrates' assumption that everyone can be thoughtful, that the ability to be self-aware and self-critical emerges out of, and is a pre-requisite for, the practices of democratic citizenship' (330). He argues that the anti-democratic sentiments Socrates expresses in Gorgias are directed at those who misconstrue the true nature of democracy within the dialogue and those who identify with them in the audience. Socrates 'remains a teacher of how to politically educate a democracy democratically' (335). Barber, in a witty but barbed response to this, argues that democracy is a constant negotiation between points of view exhibiting varying degrees of ignorance, and that this was not the aim of dialectic, which sought rather to work toward a single view of the good and the right. There are some good lines on the comparison of Plato's debate with 'genuine' democratic debate: 'Getting other men to hang themselves with their own words is not exactly what democratic deliberation means to those who believe it discloses genuinely common ground' (363). The heart of his criticism is that 'to think that philosophical discourse somehow provides an analog to democratic talk is to quite misunderstand the true character of democratic talk, as well as of democratic decision-making and democratic action' (364). His response to Euben's assertion that 'Both philosophy and politics ... seek a "collective triumph over ignorance and confusion"' is that 'it may be that philosophy does, but politics surely does not. Indeed it is no exaggeration to say that politics embraces and lives with confusion ...' (365). The philosopher, he concludes, is not a democrat but one of 'Truth's jealous lovers' (374). I found this pair of essays extremely thought-provoking. The final essay discusses the applicability of defined principles of Athenian democracy to a modern business
organisation, proving the long life of the product of Cleisthenes (or should I now say the demos?).

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I approached this book with some reservations. It seemed at first glance another general book from a broadly-conceived series. Will it be much of a contribution? Will beginners be able to use it?

It now pleases me greatly to report that I enjoyed the book, and believe both that it is a significant contribution and that, with reservations, beginners should derive considerable benefit from it. For a start, it didn't take very long to read (a tribute to the engaging, succinct prose), and I was impressed by the wealth of colour illustrations. The publishers are to be congratulated for having produced a handbook-sized, paperback introduction to the topic with so many quality illustrations for the price. By the same token, I would perhaps recommend it as a supplementary text for beginners, to be read in conjunction with general surveys by writers such as Martin Robertson, John Boardman or Susan Woodford.

The readability of the text is assisted by double spacing between the lines, along with the absence of unexplained technical terms (for further support there is a 'Glossary' at the back [420-22], in conjunction with 'Brief Biographies' of 'Mythical and Divine Figures' [423-27] and 'Artists and Other Historical