
This is an extremely well written, well organised book, full of interest. Kate Adshead begins by demonstrating the potential of the geography of the Northeast Peloponnese for political unity. She finds this potential in the main highway that ran through the area from the south of the Peloponnese to the Corinthian isthmus, and examines the position of each city in the region relative to this road in the first chapter (pp. 1-18).

Yet this potential was never fully exploited, nor unity achieved for any significant length of time even before the growth of Sparta to the south offered its own inhibiting influence. The author finds the explanation of this in the very different cultural, especially religious, identities of the major areas of the region: Arcadia, the Argolid, and Corinth, which she defines in the second chapter (pp. 19-26). Because religion was a very real force in the politics of the Archaic Age, the different religious outlooks of the Arcadians, Argives and Corinthians in themselves inhibited moves toward political unity in the period under investigation.

In the light of this tension between the potentiality and the actuality, and the suggested explanation of it, the author investigates episodes from Arcadian, Argive and Corinthian politics that reveal the separatist tendencies of their different identities at work; for Arcadian history: the coalition against Sparta during the Second Messenian War, the Battle of the Fetters, the recovery of the bones of Orestes, the activities of Cleomenes of Sparta; for Argive history: the activities of Pheidon, the relationship with Cleisthenes of Sicyon; for Corinthian history: the period of the Cypselids, and just before (pp. 26-45).

The next chapter is an extended study of the Archaic Crown Games, Olympian, Pythian, Isthmian, and Nemean (pp. 46-66). The author agrees convincingly for their essentially religious and cultic character, focussing on the central figure of the Hero. She emphasises the amount of ritual connected with the Games, the fixed nature of the 'programme', even its archaising features, and the violence implicit in the nature of the contests, to support the notion of the games as 'Kultakt' rather than mere sport or entertainment. She is surely right. The existence of these Games in the region are offered as further evidence of the religious identity of those who controlled them.

The attitude of Corinth to such Games in the context of her bid for control of the region in the period is the subject of the following chapter (pp. 67-85). The author argues that the period after the Persian Wars saw a Corinthian attempt to extend her power over part of the NE by means of military force combined with a takeover of the Nemean Games. She took Cleonae, the city in charge of the
Nemean Games, and usurped its authority, but by changing the
crown awarded at her own Isthmian Games at Corinth, from the
traditional pine to the celery characteristic of the Nemean
Games, it is argued, at the same time she also announced a
policy of championing the traditions of the Dorian
Peloponnese. This was an attempt at a secular use of
religion for political unification. The argument is then
extended to encompass a Corinthian attempt to Dorianise the
whole Isthmian Festival, going beyond the mere adoption of
the celery crown. The failure to achieve it is put down to
the inability of Corinth to devitalise her religious life
and put it at the service of secular politics, and the
external appearance of new determinants in politics.

These new determinants are seen in the spread of the
secular style of politics developed at Athens and in the
figure of Themistocles, who exported it to the Peloponnese,
especially Argos, setting off yet another attempt at
political unification of the region. This attempt, which
failed again, for the same reason as earlier ones, is the
subject of the final chapter (pp.86-103).

Kate Adshead is undoubtedly right to emphasise the
importance of geography and of religion in politics, and her
argument that in this case there was a tension between
groundational potential and religious reality is particularly
fascinating. She is very well aware that the evidence is
not plentiful and often very slight.

This is always a problem with the history of Archaic
Greece. It would be churlish to dwell on it. She is also
aware that she is arguing a thesis and therefore inviting
challenges: exceptions to the general array of evidence she
presents, or the charge of special pleading. She suggests
the reader keep in mind the weight of the evidence and its
general direction rather than specific pieces in isolation.
I am convinced to this extent by her thesis, that religion
in this period may well be a separatist influence.

The book does run the risk of appearing to suggest that
the bones and games style of politics, essentially religious
in its nature, was eclipsed in the fifth century by the new
secular style. Yet the final chapter sees the new secular
politics eclipsed by the old. Games, if not bones, clearly
kept their place in the politics of the Peloponnese. It
would be rewarding, I think, to investigate what is going on
in the fourth century, as Arcadian and other nationalism
asserts itself in the Peloponnese, particularly the
struggles Xenophon describes in his Hellenica, between Argos
and those they exiled from Corinth, for control of the
Isthmian Games, as part of the political unification of
those two cities, and between the Eleans and the Arcadians
for control of the sanctuary at Olympia, and eventually
within Arcadia between the Arcadians and their leaders over
the religious implications of the use of the treasures of
Olympia for military ends, and over the proper control of
the sanctuary. It would be of great help to me to know
whether the religious identities of the states in this
interesting region remained the same, and how they affected this late period of their history. But it is perhaps too much to ask the author to write a further study, as if I had not already profited enough from this one.

The book has full notes, bibliography and index. I warmly recommend it.

V. J. Gray


Traversagni wrote his Epitoma in 1480, ostensibly abridging an earlier work, completed in Cambridge in 1478, and generally known by the title given in its printed form, the Nova rhetorica. Both works are heavily reliant upon the Ad Herennium and Cicero's De inventione.

Ronald Martin has already produced in the same Proceedings (1971), in collaboration with Jean Mortimer, a transcript of Caxton's (often very faulty) edition. Now we have the first accurate text of the Epitoma as preserved in MS Vaticanus Latinus 11441, brought to light in 1953 by Jose Ruysschaert—Traversagni's original copy (though not, it seems, the MS from which Caxton worked).

The book enables us, therefore, to judge somewhat more precisely the accuracy of Caxton's edition. Martin provides also a short introduction, outlining Traversagni's career and summarizing the work, in particular by relating it to its classical sources. The translation is straightforward and carries the reader easily through technical exposition.

But it would be a mistake to suppose that the usefulness of this edition rests in that account. Traversagni was a Franciscan, and clearly intent upon instructing the preacher above all. It is dangerously easy to confront, in our accounts of the fifteenth century, anti-religious humanists with outmoded, ill-educated pastors. Traversagni was scarcely original, but a humanist nevertheless. And his adaptation of Cicero and of the anonymous rhetor has constantly in mind the orator whose task is to persuade to virtue. His examples come straight from the pulpit.

So we venture usefully upon a middle ground, clutching what is indeed a handbook for the incipientes, the rudiores: hic libabunt que ibi (in the fuller work) uberius hauriant. The text suggests a humdrum world, remote even from the stamping-grounds of Traversagni himself in Vienna, Cambridge, and Paris: a world in which men of less learning