

This is the social and religious background against which the accusation of 'acknowledging new deities', brought against Socrates in 399 B.C., makes its appearance. As P. has shown, this accusation as such cannot be regarded as sufficient justification for the trial. In spite of the general negative attitude on the part of the state, individuals did in practice 'introduce new gods' with some freedom, and by no means every case of such unauthorized religious innovation was prosecuted by the state. Socrates' prosecution for kainotheism was in fact 'only a counterpoise to that other and much more damning one of "not acknowledging the gods the city believes in." And it was as a priestess in what we have called an "elective" cult, a "leader of lawless revel-bands of men and women", that Phryne was attacked' (pp. 216-17). That is to say, it was above all what was grasped by the Athenians as the antisocial character of the religious activities of Socrates and Phryne rather than the issue of 'theological orthodoxy' as such that brought both to trial.

To be sure, the phenomenon which P. calls 'the totalitarian side of the classical city and its religion' (p. 50) ('communitarian' seems to be a better term) was not a fifth-century Athenian invention. It can be discerned already in the legislative activities of Solon, and it was far from unfamiliar to other city-states of Archaic and Classical Greece. Yet, as P. himself puts it, 'The great attraction of studying the religion of classical Athens is not so much that it is either Athenian or classical as that it can indeed be studied, in some detail' (p. 280). The bulk of literary, archaeological, and epigraphic evidence relating to the religious life of classical Athens inevitably makes this city a representative of the Greek city-state as such. This certainly justifies P.'s proposal to regard his 'Athenian religion' as an abbreviation for 'Greek religion as practised in Attica' (p. 4). P.'s book makes it clear that no treatment of Greek history can be comprehensive if it does not take into account the religious framework of Greek society, and it is this that makes his work indispensable not only to the student of Greek religion but also to the student of Greek history in general.

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Nicolas Richer, *Les Éphores, Études sur l'histoire et sur l'image de Sparte (VIIIe-IIIe siècles avant Jésus-Christ)*, Histoire ancienne et médiévale-50, Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1998. 636 pp.

The ephorate was a subject much in vogue during the second half of the 19th century: this period witnessed the publication of at least seven monographs (in Latin and German), including G. Dum's, *Entstehung und Entwicklung des spartanischen Ephorats* 1878, repr. 1970, by far the most influential of them all. The first half of the 20th century was less prolific in this respect, but still the subject was honoured with monographic or quasi-monographic treatment (mostly in Italian and German), especially through remarkably large sections of books and journals, e.g. L. Pareti, 'Origine e sviluppo dell' eforato spartano', in *Studi spartani* 1910, repr. in *Studi minori di Storia antica* I, 1958, 101-220; W. Norvin, in *C&M* 3, 1940, 47-118. There is nothing comparable for the second half of our century, and this despite two important contemporary trends: the growing interest in Spartan history on the one hand and the publication of seminal monographs (most of them in English) on all of

Athens' major political institutions on the other. To be sure, various aspects of the ephorate have been dealt with in separate articles, and most studies on Sparta inevitably contain discussions of the subject, some of them quite elaborate. But only now, at the end of the century, are we witnessing a revival of the *genre* as far as Sparta is concerned: a new *opus magnum* on the ephorate has at long last seen light, this time in French. (Note, by the way, the absence of any monographs in English). Like many of his predecessors, Richer has based the book on his doctoral dissertation (presented at the Université de Paris I, Panthéon-Sorbonne, in 1994).

Since Sparta can be viewed as the 'State of the Ephors', as Victor Ehrenberg put it (*From Solon to Socrates* 1967, 40), in many ways a history of the ephorate will tend to coincide with a history of Sparta and the image of Sparta. This coincidence is illustrated by the sub-title of the new monograph.

The book is divided into three parts. Part One is concerned with 'early Sparta'. Though he is aware of Moses Finley's scepticism about the possibility of reconstructing in detail Spartan history prior to the mid-sixth century BC on sound methodological grounds (cf. p. 11, n. 4, with references and p. 507), Richer courageously devotes about one third of his book (the first ten chapters) to that period. This part deals with the origins of the ephorate, i.e. the analysis of the traditions ascribing the foundation to different personalities (Lykourgos, King Theopompos, Cheilon), historical contexts and political reasons, as well as an evaluation of modern hypotheses concerning the original character, aims and development of the institution. His conclusion (or, as he puts it modestly and carefully, 'Essai de conclusion') considers the office as old as the *polis*, dates the origins of its political powers around 700 BC, and envisages a gradual growth of these powers in the 7th and 6th centuries. Since the nature of the evidence is extremely fragile, any such attempt at historical reconstruction can hardly hope to be more than reasonable speculation, and Richer's patient and meticulous scrutiny has this merit. I must confess, however, that I am not always convinced by the conclusions he draws: e.g., I am not inclined to follow him where he attempts to ascribe King Pausanias' alleged intention to abolish the ephorate to an unknown event of the period 404-394 (which, incidentally, happens to be one of the best documented periods in all Spartan history). The traditional view, which sees a connection between that intention and the king's controversial pamphlet (on the grounds that it quoted among other oracles the text of the Great Rhetra, where the ephors did not figure, at least explicitly) still appears to me preferable. And it would not have affected Richer's identification of the *demotai andres* in Tyrtaios as the ephors, nor his sharing of the view that their existence is also implied in the deliberative process depicted by the Rhetra. *À propos* this text, there is a slip in the way the author presents it: 'Le texte de la Grande Rhètra nous a été transmis à la fois par Plutarque et par Diodore de Sicile' (p. 95) — of course, only Plutarch gives this document, and Richer certainly means to say that the two authors provided what is usually considered to be the Tyrtaian paraphrase.

Part Two concentrates on the religious aspects of the ephorate. This section opens with a long and learned discussion (Ch. 11) of the ritual according to which the ephors periodically gazed at the stars on a clear night to make sure that the kings had done nothing to provoke the anger of the gods (Plut. *Agis*, 11. 4-5). But since this is the only instance when the ritual is mentioned, and that at a time when it was eminently apt to be politically manipulated, can we exclude the possibility that we are

faced with an ingenious and convenient invention? (Cf. Richer's warning against a sceptical approach: 'Mais ce n'est pas parce que l'astéroscope n'est pas attestée dans *tous les cas* [my italics] où des procédures sont engagées contre les rois qu'il faut nier sa réalité.' — 510). This part of the book offers a stimulating discussion of the *pathemata* (translated as 'cultes d'abstractions'), with a special, and justified, emphasis on Phobos and Eros (Ch. 14), and an analysis of the significant role of the ephors as representatives of the community *vis à vis* the gods (especially in Ch. 16), as reflected *inter alia* by the annual declaration of war on the helots. The discussion of the *pathemata* is particularly important because of the implications it has for the way institutional history and the *histoire des mentalités* can intersect.

Part Three, the largest, is concerned, as one would expect, with the political role of the ephors. Two relatively brief chapters (17, 18), one on their number (cf. also Part One, pp. 140-3), the other on the terms used to designate the pentad, are followed by a detailed and convincing treatment of their election (Ch. 19). Minor problems do appear here and there: e.g., the election of Antalkidas as ephor after Leuktra can perhaps be explained by a temporary decline in the popularity of his political opponent, Agesilaos, rather than recompense for an old diplomatic action — pp. 278, 300 (why would the Spartans have waited seventeen years to compensate him for his role in the negotiations leading to the King's Peace?). Richer is justified in devoting a substantial discussion to the role of the ephors in the shaping of politics in the State (Ch. 21) and, within this context, in elaborating on their responsibility for raising the military levy and their involvement in the probouleutic process. But the same chapter contains assumptions and conclusions, some of them clustered on pp. 362-3, which may appear somehow dubious: e.g., the attempt of Hetoimaridas (a member of the *gerousia*) to persuade the Assembly to abandon its bellicose intentions towards Athens (Diod. 11.50) need not signify that the *gerousia* could not block taking a decision; the theory advanced in 242 BC, after Leonidas' deposition (when the kings were faced with a new board of ephors, hostile to the reforms), that as long as they were in accord, the kings were entitled to ignore the ephors, since the power of these was relevant only in case of a divergence within the dyarchy (Plut. *Agis*, 12.3), has the obvious flavour of an *ad hoc* political innovation rather than an authentic constitutional norm; the argument for a fourth-century constitutional reform (hesitatingly ascribed to Agesilaos and dated after 371), assumed to have deprived the Assembly of an allegedly previous power to vote on motions which had not received a majority in the *gerousia*, must remain in the realm of unnecessary speculations (pp. 364-8). The executive powers of the ephors are the main subject of Ch. 22, while the next four chapters are concerned with the ephors as watchdogs of the Spartan *kosmos*, i.e. with the supervising powers from which they drew their name ('overseers'): supervision over the kings and the citizens, their judicial, disciplinary, policizing and censorial powers.

Although the discussion throughout these important chapters, as elsewhere in the book, is usually marked by *akribeia*, there are cases where, again, I am not persuaded by the conclusions: thus, it is difficult to accept Richer's view that Spartan kings were tried by the *gerousia* and ephors when capital charges were at stake, by the Assembly in other (i.e. minor) cases (pp. 411-12; 440 and nn. 64, 65). It appears to me more accurate to assess, on the basis of the evidence, that the privilege to try kings belonged to the Assembly, but this could, and sometimes did, confer its power on a

tribunal composed of the *gerousia* and ephors — cf. *RIDA* 32, 1985, 131-40. On the other hand, in the case of Kinadon and his accomplices, Richer takes it for granted that they were tried and condemned to death by such a tribunal (pp. 441, 446) although, in fact, *gerontes* are mentioned by Xenophon (*Hell.* 3.3.8) only with respect to the emergency consultation the ephors held after they had been informed about the conspiracy. At times the author appears too hasty in drawing *en passant* inferences as, for instance, when he refers to the ephors' order to the women upon receiving the news of the Leuktra disaster: 'ils ordonnent aux femmes de ne pas pleurer leurs morts: *c'est à dire qu'ils leur ordonnent d'être gaies*, ce en quoi elles obéissent' (p. 464, my italics). The inference is out of place: even in Sparta such an order (as contained in the italics) could not be given; those relatives (including the women) who on the following day appeared in public with a cheerful face went beyond the ephors' order.

The 'Conclusion' of this part is actually an additional chapter, and a very significant one. It is concerned with 'la nature du pouvoir des éphores' through a comparison with the Cretan *kosmoi*, an analysis of the ancient sources comparing the ephors to tyrants and the evaluation of the ephors' place in the 'mixed constitution'. In addition to the texts regarding them as tyrants (from the viewpoint of their powers), Richer adduces references to the ephors as an oligarchic and especially as a democratic element in the constitution. The discussion would have benefited from more emphasis on this 'mixture within a mixture', which is symptomatic of the ephors' position as true representatives of what may perhaps be regarded as a totalitarian democracy of oligarchs. The 'Conclusion' touches also on the comparison between the ephors and the *tribuni plebis* of the Roman Republic. Here I would have added some remarks concerning the basic differences between these magistrates, despite their sharing a popular character: thus, e.g., every Spartan citizen was eligible for the ephorate, while the tribunate was accessible only to plebeians. In the same context I missed a reference to the similarity between the later development of the two offices as *mancipia nobilium* notwithstanding their original character, an aspect of the intersection between social and institutional history. All in all, more than any of the others, this chapter contributes to what is defined in the sub-title as '*l'image de Sparte*'. Still, in the light of the sub-title one could expect, on the thematic level, a more elaborate treatment of the '*image*' and the '*mirage*'; and, on the chronological level, more attention to 'late Sparta' (even after the introductory confession: 'Paradoxalement... nous avons eu relativement moins à dire sur les éphores de l'époque hellénistique' — p. 9). Thus, for instance, the figure of Areus and his figuring with the other members of the political establishment, including the ephors, in some lines of the Chremonides' decree, could have been added, at least briefly, to Richer's presentation of other remarkably influential kings, Kleomenes and Agesilaos, and their relationship with the ephors. However, the relationship between kings and ephors generally receives a satisfactory treatment throughout.

The book ends with a substantial 'Conclusion générale', which is followed by three useful appendices. The first two are catalogues (one in chronological order, until 227/6 BC, the other alphabetical) of the 76 ephors, including the *eponymoi*, known to us; significantly, the vast majority of the ephors have remained anonymous, and of half of those who have not, we know nothing but their names. The third appendix consists of a chronological table of landmarks in Spartan history. Incidentally, the (dis)proportions between the periods in this appendix are symptomatic of the

treatment they receive within the text: the Hellenistic period is given less than half a page, the Archaic and Classical together — 14. The book also contains two helpful indices, an index of passages cited and a general index. The presentation of the main sources throughout in Greek is followed by French translations, making the tome accessible to a large audience and an efficient tool in academic teaching, especially in the francophone world. The text is generously and pedantically annotated (on the basis of a respectable and updated bibliography); some footnotes are almost brief articles in themselves: e.g., n. 12 on pp. 76-8, nn. 56, 58 on pp. 253-4, n. 173 on pp. 416-7. All this, together with the very nature of the subject, the author's predilection for systematically detailed analysis, and a certain amount of reiteration, help explain the monograph's impressive length. One can only imagine that the ephors would have liked it shorter.

Despite my critical comments, some of which may well be too idiosyncratic, this is, on the whole, a valuable and important book, with many merits: diligently researched, copiously documented, well organized, clearly written — a comprehensive and perspicacious survey of the evidence, a major contribution to the study of Spartan history and an indispensable tool for further research in the field. It will certainly become a standard work of reference for the Spartan academic community.

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B. Bar-Kochva, *Pseudo-Hecataeus On the Jews. Legitimizing the Jewish Diaspora*, Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1996. 396 pp.

In this study Bar-Kochva plunges into the problem of the passages attributed to Hecataeus of Abdera in Josephus' *Contra Apionem*. On the basis of an extensive and well-argued discussion he comes to the conclusion that these passages are not to be considered authentic. Bar-Kochva focuses on some major issues in order to refute the claims made by scholars in the past concerning the authenticity of the passages in question. He analyses at great length the motifs within the fragmentary text against the background of pagan literature from the Hellenistic era dealing with *ethnē*. He rejects the possibility that Josephus used a Jewish adaptation of Hecataeus of Abdera. Bar-Kochva's argument that there exists a distinction between the 'real' Hecataeus (Diodorus Siculus 40.3) and Pseudo-Hecataeus (in Josephus' *CA*) seems quite convincing. However, one has always to bear in mind the possibility that since we have two different 'summaries' of Hecataeus' *On the Jews*, made by two different authors in two different periods, either author might have placed a different emphasis on certain topics.

Bar-Kochva argues convincingly that the passages in Josephus' *CA* which are not authentically Hecataean can be dated to the later years of John Hyrcanus or the first years of Alexander Jannaeus, the period of the expansion in Transjordan and the swift invasion by Ptolemy Lathyrus into Palestine in 103/2. From the little we have of the so-called Pseudo-Hecataeus document (cited at the beginning of the book), Bar-Kochva comes to the ingenious conclusion that its author was a Hellenistic Jew from Egypt who had some knowledge of his Jewish tradition, but lacked a broader education in mythology and philosophy. According to Bar-Kochva this Pseudo-Hecataeus