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978-0-521-57081-7 - Kosmos: Essays in Order, Conflict and Community in Classical Athens

Edited by Paul Cartledge, Paul Millet & Sitta Von Reden

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'Kosmos' is the word the ancient Greeks used for human social order. It has therefore a special application to the Greeks' peculiar social and political unit of communal life that they called the 'polis'. Of the many hundreds of such units in classical Greece (c. 500–300 BCE) the best documented and the most complex was democratic Athens. The purpose of this collective volume, which is based closely on a seminar series held in the Faculty of Classics in Cambridge, is to re-evaluate the foundations of classical Athens' by-and-large highly successful experiment in communal social existence. Topics addressed include religion and ritualisation, political friendship and enmity, gender and sexuality, sports and litigation, and economic and symbolic exchange. The book aims to make a major contribution, theoretical as well as empirical, towards understanding how the social order of community life may be sustained and enhanced, a subject currently of primary interest to a wide range of disciplines – history, sociology, political theory, and cultural anthropology – as well as to classics and ancient history.

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*Essays in order, conflict and
community in classical Athens*

edited by

PAUL CARTLEDGE

PAUL MILLETT &

SITTA von REDEN



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Preface and acknowledgements

Kosmos: Essays in order, conflict, and community in classical Athens is out of the same stable as *Nomos: Essays in Athenian law, politics, and society* (Cambridge University Press 1990) and will, we trust, prove to be no less of a stayer and winner. This new collection of specially developed and thematically linked essays arose out of the second Cambridge Ancient History Seminar series co-directed (in the Lent and Easter Terms 1994) by Paul Cartledge and Paul Millett. As before with Stephen Todd, so here with Sitta von Reden, the seminar co-directors were most fortunate in being able to harness onto the editorial troika a third member sympathetic in general intellectual formation and approach but blessed also with a distinctive outlook and expertise. All the original seminar speakers, happily, agreed to publish their papers in a more or less, and usually more than less, revised form.

The seminar's aim was to explore the range of relationships that bound together the individuals and groups of which the *polis* was composed – or that threatened to tear the *polis* apart. As in the case of *Nomos*, seminar contributions were originally invited to address the entire wider Greek world in the period from *c.* 700 to 150 BCE, and it was especially hoped that papers would be not only comparativist in method but also interdisciplinary in orientation. Actually, and realistically, most of the offers of contributions that we were disposed to accept chose to focus on the city and community of Athens, and even more specifically on the Athenian democracy of the fifth and fourth centuries. Hence the subtitle of the book.

The title *Kosmos*, apart from its euphony and the parallel with *Nomos*, recommended itself as constituting the ideal of interpersonal social conduct – good behaviour, decency, honour, and trust in the interests of an ordered and orderly society – towards which Greek civic communities aspired in both their public and their private self-presentations. Further discussion of the term's aptness may be found in Cartledge's Introduction, chapter 1, below.

Coincidentally (perhaps), in July 1993 the University of Exeter had hosted an international conference on 'Reciprocity in Ancient Greece', the

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proceedings of which are forthcoming as we write. Even closer to our concerns were the papers delivered to a conference held at Brown University and published as Boegehold & Scafuro 1994: see General Bibliography, p. 230. Clearly therefore we were hitting a common chord in our choice of interpersonal relations and social order as the seminar's twin themes. Nevertheless, our conception and treatment differ appreciably from others': the Exeter conference did not apply its study of the ethical and economic dimensions of reciprocity specifically to the *polis*; the Brown conference did not address in as rounded a manner either the philosophical or the spatial dimensions of Athenian civic ideology.

The explanation of this coincidence of scholarly concern probably lies more in our surrounding society than it does within purely disciplinary confines. We live in an era of galloping atomisation at home and impersonal globalisation abroad. As the distinguished American playwright Arthur Miller has graphically put it, 'We are now one individual and another individual and another in the face of the fact that it is perfectly obvious that there is a society, that we are all in the grip of various forces that are raging around us.' Or, in the words of Noam Chomsky, we are experiencing an unprecedentedly 'general effort to privatise aspirations, to eliminate solidarity, the sense that we're all in it together, that we care for one another'. Contemplation of classical Athens, a complex and sophisticated ancient society that not only was but saw itself as a strong community, has its own powerful attractions.

Finally, all such books arising out of seminars are likely or even bound to result in heterogeneity of subject-matter and approach, lacunae, and a certain unevenness in execution. Our readers, too, will have a variety of alternative agendas to promote. We do not in any case believe it to be either possible or desirable to produce a volume with definite, let alone definitively agreed, 'conclusions' on the nature of Athenian society and the modes of its personal interaction and social (dis)integration. Rather, this volume is consciously intended to be exploratory and heuristic. We thus value positively, and wish to make a virtue of, the diversity that is on offer here, and we remain sanguine that the whole will be found to be as great as, or greater than, the sum of its parts.

It remains only for us to thank all those (too many to name individually) who have made this volume possible: first, of course, our ever-patient contributors; next, those who attended, intervened at or otherwise participated in the original seminar series, especially those who officially responded to the paper-givers but whose responses have for one reason or another not found their way as such into the published volume; penultimately, our two notably frank but rarely less than bracing anonymous referees; and lastly, though not least, the Cambridge University Press Syndicate.

P.C., P.M., S. v. R.

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Abbreviations

Note: Abbreviations of periodicals follow the convention of the relevant volume of *L'Année philologique*, the scholarly annual of record.

- CAF** KOCH, T. (1880–8), ed., *Comicorum Atticorum Fragmenta*. 3 vols. Leipzig.
- CGFP** AUSTIN, C. (1973) ed., *Comicorum Graecorum Fragmenta in Papyris Reperta*. Berlin & New York.
- DK** DIELS, H. & KRANZ, W. (1951–2, 1954) eds., *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*. 5th–7th edns, Berlin.
- FGH** JACOBY, F. (1923–58) ed., *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*. Berlin & Leiden.
- Harding* HARDING, P. (1985) *From the End of the Peloponnesian War to the Battle of Ipsos*. Cambridge.
- IG** *Inscriptiones Graecae* (1873–)
- KRS** KIRK, G. S., RAVEN, J. E., AND SCHOFIELD, M. (1983), *The Presocratic Philosophers*. 2nd edn, Cambridge.
- LSJ** LIDDELL, H. G., SCOTT, R., AND JONES, H. S. (1940), eds., *A Greek – English Lexicon*. 9th edn, Oxford (with supp. 1968 incorporated with add., 1996).
- OCD** HORNBLOWER, S. & SPAWFORTH, A. (1996) eds., *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*. 3rd edn, Oxford.
- RE** PAULY, A. F. von, WISSOWA, G. & KROLL, W. (1894–1972), eds., *Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*. 66 vols. in 34.
- SEG** *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum* (1923–)
- Tod** TOD, M. N. (1948) *A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions*. Vol. II., Oxford.