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# Opuscula

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explore the historical circumstances governing the production, form and preservation of letters: the ideological backgrounds, the technological conditions and the functions of letters in ancient Greek society. Chapter 2 begins with a discussion about the origins of letter writing which is quickly expanded to a discussion about the origins of alphabetic writing. Ceccarelli analyses early evidence for letter writing from the 6th and 5th centuries and contrasts it with other forms of written communication in a broad sense, such as epigrams and curses (especially the recently published Orphic *lamellae*). One of her conclusions is that epistolary writing in its familiar form (with formulaic greetings and conclusions, shifts between the first and third person, etc.) stabilized as a genre only in the mid-4th century BC. The material underlying this chapter is presented in greater detail in Appendix 1 and 2. Chapter 3 moves on to the question of how traditions on the invention of writing, and in particular letter writing, were represented from Homer via tragedy to early historiography, but also later representations are discussed (e.g. Lucian's account of epistolary formulae in his *A slip of the tongue in greeting*). These representations are then contextualized within a 5th-century debate on the uses of writing. A recurring conclusion is that letter writing was negatively viewed as untrustworthy and bound up with (Eastern) monarchical power. Chapter 4 is a study of letters in historical writing from Herodotus, via Thucydides and Xenophon to Polybius, but also including some lesser-known historians. In Herodotus letter writing is characterized as oriental, deceptive and connected with tyranny. This is not the case in Thucydides or Xenophon, even if letters are still seen as a problematic mode of communication, especially in the context of the polis. Changes in communicative practices eventually led to new views on letter writing, as can be seen in e.g. Polybius and epigraphical records.

Part II is concerned with letter writing within the polis, both in Athens and in the Hellenistic world. Chapter 5 analyses letters in Athenian tragedy and comedy, beginning a comparison between public speech and letter writing. There is a fine discussion on Euripides, in whose work letters are not only specifically mentioned but their used as dramatic devices to drive the plot forward (*Hippolytus*, *Iphigenia in Tauris*, *Iphigenia in Aulis*). The analysis of letters in public speech taken further in Chapter 6 through a discussion of letters in legal and political speeches of the Attic orators and their modes of quoting letters for purposes of persuasion. The chapter also contains some discussion on the first epistolary treatises. Chapter 7 turns to the Hellenistic period and the various views on letter writing found in various cities, not least inscribed official letters, which are provided in Appendix 3. Here, Ceccarelli suggests that letters were more acceptable in cities accustomed to "an oligarchic, personal way of power". The chapter also continues the typological questions from

previous chapters by addressing the formal contrast between decrees and official letters.

In sum, Ceccarelli's book is an impressive scholarly achievement and highly rewarding. The many seeming digressions and detailed analyses are occasionally demanding but the reader is always taken back to the main track, equipped with a fuller understanding than before and ready to embark on the next journey through other materials and perspectives. An important strength of the study is the awareness of geographical and socio-cultural variety when contexts are explored. In spite of the vast material covered and the broad perspective on letter writing no problems are overlooked and the author admits of no simplification. This book will be an obvious reference point for any further investigations into the ancient letter.

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Edwin Carawan, *The Athenian amnesty and reconstructing the law*. Oxford, Oxford University Press 2013, 310 pp. ISBN 978-0-19-967276-9.

Edwin Carawan's book *The Athenian amnesty and reconstructing the law* is a study of the reconciliation that ended civil strife among the Athenians at the close of the 5th century BC, a few years after their loss in the Peloponnesian War against Sparta. This agreement has traditionally been interpreted as an amnesty relating to all past misdeeds of the conflicting oligarchic and democratic parties. An outline of the Athenian settlement in its connection with the most important historical events surrounding it can be rendered as follows:

An "original settlement" probably came about in 403 BC, following the abandonment of the momentary post-war oligarchic regime of "the Thirty", and the consequent restoration of democracy in the city of Athens itself. During the civil strife, succeeding the war against Sparta, the democratic fraction had its seat in Piraeus while the oligarchs were in command in the city of Athens, but after the democrats regained control of the city the members of the oligarchic party were relinquished to Eleusis. Here they were allowed to continue their alternative regime, until resuming hostilities presumably concluded with the "final settlement" of 401 BC and the resultant redemocratization of the whole Athenian city-state.

The three main theses set forth by Carawan regarding this Athenian reconciliation are 1) that the original settlement of 403 was in fact not a blanket pledge of forgiveness, i.e. not an unconditional amnesty, 2) that the accommodations of the

final settlement of 401 BC gave the impetus to the conception of the "Athenian Amnesty" acclaimed by the later tradition and 3) that the ultimate success of the reconciliation had much to do with the more rigorous legislation, i.e. the new sense of contractual obligation, reinforcing the agreement between the parties previously at war with one another. In the Chapters 2–8 of his book Carawan aims to substantiate and defend his theses by a detailed study of the relevant evidence relating to the reconciliation.

Chapter 2 introduces the most important ancient documents dealing with the reconciliation and acquaints the reader with the main lines of the scholarly history surrounding the settlement. Here a definite dividing line is drawn between the 1891 discovery of the London papyrus containing the *Athenaion Politeia* and the scholarship before that, which mainly had to rely on the somewhat conflicting accounts of the second book of Xenophon's *Hellenica* and the defence of Andocides from 399 BC. It was after the revealing of the pseudo-Aristotelian account that the necessity was made clear of breaking down the reconciliation into the two phases of a flawed original settlement of 403 BC and a final agreement ending the conflict in 401 BC.

In the next two chapters (3–4) Carawan takes on the challenge of examining the evidence provided by the *Athenaion Politeia*, as well as some relevant comparanda, to gain knowledge of the nature of the original settlement of 403 BC. The overview throws clear light on the partitive nature of the first agreement regarding the different jurisdictions, pertaining, on the one hand, to the oligarchic rebel community henceforth located at Eleusis, on the other hand, to that of the restored democracy in the city. It also aims to show why this original agreement had to miss its mark: arguably it was unsuccessful in establishing limits to the possibilities of prosecution against old liabilities in the new situation, as well as inadequate for acknowledging the need for new legislation over and against the principle of restoration.

Chapters 5–7 contain a presentation of court procedures from the transitional phase between the two settlements of 403 and 401 BC, cases showing the consequences of the flaws of the original agreement as well as hinting at the legislative development leading up to the final settlement. Chapter 5 offers an example taken from Isocrates' *Against Kallimachos*, pinpointing the measures which had to be taken during this time to limit predatory lawsuits related to private property rights. Through a pair of orations ascribed to Lysias chapters 6 (*Against Agoratos*) and 7 (*Against Eratosthenes*) then focus specifically on cases displaying evidence of baring of the public remedies against wrongs conceived of as affecting the whole polis (i.e. public offences on the basis of which the delinquents could be judged as *atimoi*). The development of

the legal system referred to in this connection is the evolving criminalization (also) of complicity in cases of e.g. bloodshed.

Finally Chapter 8 analyses the important evidence contained within Andocides' defence against the charges of ungodliness (*asebeia*), directed against him in 399 BC for trespassing the sacred precincts of the Mysteries as an infidel. It is here that Carawan attempts to definitely establish the first of his main theses. He does this by showing that Andocides is not arguing with a view to a general amnesty for all past offences committed before 403 BC, but is in fact urging on something quite opposite: rather than forget the jury should remember the reprieves resulting from the recent crisis (i.e. from the civil strife and its aftermath). Carawan then assumes that the rationale behind this strategy employed by Andocides was that a "scrutiny of the laws", taking the form of a cancellation of old liabilities (i.e. of criminal acts for which a sentence had already been given) for public offences going back to the time before 404 BC, had followed upon the final settlement of 401 BC, as a means of preventing a flood of litigation based on old offences. According to Carawan's interpretation then, as his third main thesis states, the "Athenian Amnesty" would not involve as much of forgiveness as a new sense of contractual obligation, pertaining to the writing and upholding of laws.

It may be surmised that the Athenian settlement (or settlements) does not strike very many people as one of the more noteworthy events in Graeco-Roman history. Though commented upon with admiration by later authors of antiquity, such as Cicero (*Phil.* 1.1.), in modern scholarly literature the reconciliation would probably have been relegated to the status of a historical peculiarity, would it not be for the fact that the "Athenian Amnesty" has bearing on the question of why Socrates died. As we know Socrates, like a few months earlier in the same year Andocides, faced trial for a charge of *asebeia* in 399 BC. Unlike Andocides, however, Socrates was sentenced to death, and as long as it was assumed that a time limit (post 403 BC) for the application of all laws against criminal offences had been applied with the reconciliation, i.e. that a blanket amnesty had been introduced, a problem was posed for the otherwise most plausible explanation for the causes of the indictment and trial against Socrates: that they were motivated by and fronted with his alleged connection with the oligarchic fraction (most notably with Kritias).

Chapter 9, which because of its relevance beyond scholarly minutia clearly forms the climax of Carawan's book, draws out the consequences with regard to the trial and death of Socrates of the account of the reconciliation presented in the preceding chapters. Carawan maintains that the law under which Socrates was prosecuted, and its application in his case, may very well have been unaffected by the scrutiny of the laws taking place as a consequence of the final settlement, since the

law was still valid, and Socrates as yet unpunished for his alleged offences.

Before the conclusion of the book the highly interesting Chapter 9 is followed by two further chapters (10–11), dealing with the emerging effects of the original settlement and the fulfillment of these with the final settlement of 401 BC. Both chapters build on speeches preserved in the Lysianic corpus and are clearly meant for drawing out the consequences of the third of the book's main theses regarding the reconciliation: that it brought with it a new sense of contractual obligation pertaining to the law. Chapter 10 deals with the speech against the law-inscriber Nicomachus and is intended to offer a glance of "the emerging regime of the laws", while Chapter 11 is working through Lysias's epitaphic oratory to establish the awakening of the awareness of laws understood as a "binding agreement".

All in all, Edwin Carawan's book stands as a sincere effort to resolve the problems connected with the "Athenian Amnesty". As already mentioned, however, in most chapters scholarly detail clearly outweighs questions of more general interest. Another way of approaching the same topic would have been, for example, to focus more clearly throughout the book on the developments in "legal thinking" merely hinted at in the majority of the chapters. Chapter 9, however, can be highlighted as an outstanding example of scholarship pertaining to the ever-relevant question of why the Athenians put Socrates to death.

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*Daughters of Hecate: Women and magic in the ancient world*, ed. Kimberly B. Stratton with Dayna S. Kalleres, Oxford: Oxford University Press 2014. 552 pp. ISBN 0-19-534271-2.

*Daughters of Hecate* is a collection of 15 chapters examining the social, political, literary, and cultural forces that inform the construction of gender and the practice of magic in the ancient Eastern Mediterranean. The contributions range from ancient Greek and Roman examples to Biblical Jewish and Early Christian ones. In her introduction, Stratton writes that she began exploring the subject with "the expectation that women were more often represented and accused of magic than men were in ancient writings, and [she] sought an explanation for this bias" (p. 1). But as the work developed, she found that the evidence did not support this at all. The notion that when men do it, it is medicine and religion and is to be

lauded, but when women do, it is witchcraft and magic and should be punished, turned out not to hold. What emerges over the course of the 15 chapters is a relationship between women and magic that defies easy categorization, stereotypes, or binary power relationships; the value of the collection, then, lies not only in its insights for those interested in the historical, literary, and social construction of women and magic, but also as a case study for how to reappraise source material when it no longer lends itself to outdated ideas.

The principal evidentiary source for ancient culture in the Eastern Mediterranean is the written record, a record composed, preserved, and, until recently, analysed exclusively by men. The application of feminist theory to these texts has rightly shown how the ingrained misogyny of ancient writers (and, if to a lesser degree, modern scholars) warps their perceptions of both women as represented in the texts and also of their actual lived experience. Consequently, previous scholars have made the mistake, in Stratton's words, of "accept[ing] the representation of women's magic at face value and us[ing] it to reconstruct women's actual ritual practices" (p. 5) while ignoring the inherent unreliability of such sources in speaking about women's lives. Rather than offering an actual picture of women's practice of magic, then, scholarship after feminism reveals that what such texts actually offer is a picture of how male writers imagined women's practice of magic. Each of the three sections in this volume provide a different methodological corrective to this practice.

Part I, 'Fiction and fantasy: Gendering magic in ancient literature', examines how, because of their own ideological biases, ancient authors distorted the picture of actual magical practices. In the opening chapter of the section, 'From goddess to hag: The Greek and Roman witch in classical literature', Barbette Stanley Spaeth makes clear the limits of the literary sources: "It is important to recognize that these representations do not necessarily reflect reality; they probably do not tell us much about actual witches ... we should not read these literary portraits naively, as pointing towards the reality of the practice of magic" (p. 43). Rather, she argues that they "can reveal much about how the societies of classical antiquity thought about the cognitive category of 'witch'" (p. 43). A feminist perspective sheds light on the patriarchal ideologies which define the term and the position of those to whom it is applied. The witch can help us understand how the categories of "woman" and "magic" operate in the male imaginary. A similar subject is addressed in the second chapter, Rebecca Lesses's "'The most worthy of women is a mistress of magic': Women as witches in *I Enoch* and Rabbinic sources". Though dealing with the Biblical Jewish tradition, Lesses asks similar questions: "What do we learn about these sources' discourses of women from the way they refer to them as witches? Do these discourses bear any relation to women's actual use