To a considerable extent modern historians of Athenian democracy have fallen victim too easily to Aristotle (*Ath. Pol.*), Isocrates, and authors of *Althides*, and as a result they have represented the origin and growth of that democracy in terms of a struggle between the rich and the poor, dominated by ideological considerations. Aristotle himself admittedly occasionally assigned rather pragmatic motives to politicians like Solon and Pericles, but on the whole Aristotle could not resist the influence of his contemporaries. In other, still more concrete terms: it was after ca 355 B.C. that 'our' picture of democratic Athens was born, as a projection of late 4th century B.C. Athenian democracy into the distant past by late 4th century B.C. philosophers, orators and historians.

This is R.'s starting point, shared by other debunking pragmatists like F. J. Frost and R. Sealey, and it is actually the Greek counterpart of a similar pragmatic, anti-ideological current among Roman historians. A priori both extremes, viz. the ideological and the pragmatic, i.e. 'power-politics' or 'politics-without-ideas' approach, would seem to be rather unattractive. Political power has frequently been sought after on the basis of ideological programmes, however vague the latter may have been. Politicians were and are beings of flesh and blood, who but for the most irresponsible (or utopian) types were motivated by a peculiar mixture of egotism and lofty ideology. Frequent, rapid changes in the political behaviour of politicians, whether Roman senators, Greek noblemen or their post-classical counterparts, do not contradict this a priori. On the contrary, such changes can easily be reconciled with, and perhaps even presuppose, the existence of ideological differences, however loose and vague the latter may have been in comparison with the articulated programmes of modern political parties.

In the first part of his book (ch. I-VI) R. argues that the Athenian assembly almost never issued decrees on important political topics but restricted itself to problems of "Verwaltung"; there was no opposition between the nobility and the dēmos. Athens was not bent on establishing democracies in the cities of the Empire. There were hardly any attempts to overthrow the Athenian democracy. All in all, Athenian society and democracy were homogeneous; there was no opposition between poor and rich but merely and occasionally between city and country-side. In the second part (ch. VII-XIV) R. examines specific issues which have been interpreted by many scholars as having been at least partially of an

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ideological nature: the reforms of 487 (allotment of the archons), 462 (Areopagus), 457 (zeugitai in the archonship), Periclean policy (building programm and citizenship law) and the anti-democratic revolutions of 411 and 404. R. denies the ideological aspects of these measures and argues that they were taken for reasons pertaining to foreign policy ("Aussenpolitik" looms large in this book!).

R. unduly polarizes; he suggests that modern scholars think in terms of more or less articulated political ideologies and/or programmes. In this respect it is noteworthy that on p. 42 R. points out that a long series of concrete modern 20th century political issues never troubled the Athenians and that consequently the Athenian democracy was merely a matter of "Verwaltung". But is there not something in between articulated ideology and mere administration? I refer to Momigliano's view of vague, little articulated political notions, a view elaborated by Finley (cf. his Democracy, Ancient and Modern, 1973, 28); these notions were allotment for offices, misthophoria, the dismantling of the Areopagus by taking away the euthyné of magistrates, and the sort of political generalities which Protagoras put forward. R.'s attempts to deprive these notions of ideological substance and to interpret the measures which materialized these general notions as mere pragmatic responses to situations which were brought about by Athens' foreign policy, seem somewhat extravagant.

A few examples. In 461 it certainly was Ephialtes' aim to remove Kimon and to change foreign policy. But I fail to see to what extent the dismantling of the Areopagus was supposed to contribute to the latter; it seems easier to assume that a majority of Athenian citizens felt that Kimon stood for control of the magistrates by the fashionable Areopagus (a control, incidentally, which could easily immobilize the magistrates) and that this control should be abolished. In other words, the Athenian voters had a vague political notion that the majesty of an oldfashioned aristocratic bulwark weighed rather heavily on the magistrates. Ephialtes either sincerely shared that notion or pretended to share it; otherwise it is hard to explain why this issue was raised by him altogether. Apparently Ephialtes held that the issue of the Areopagitan euthyné would bring in more support in his struggle against Kimon, or, phrased differently, the 'foreign policy' aspect (pro- or anti-Sparta) surely was an aspect but not the whole affair.

R. offers a very ingenious but misguided interpretation of the introduction of misthophoria in 458/7 by Pericles: foreign policy disasters (Egypt vel sim.) had brought about serious depopulation in Athens; those left in Athens could make their choice among so many jobs that political payments were indispensable as an in-