

## **ABSTRACT**

Before 1891, it was commonly accepted that the most important source for the rule of the Four Hundred in Athens in 411 BCE was Thucydides' description. The situation changed thanks to the publication of the Aristotelian treatise *On the Athenian Constitution*, whose version of events differed markedly from Thucydides' one. There followed many attempts at determining which of the two versions was most reliable, or at combining the two versions. These controversies are the focal point of this thesis, but its ambitions are not limited to them: its ambition is also to reconstruct the chronology of the rule of the Four Hundred as precisely as is possible in context of the Peloponnesian war; and to formulate the limitations that are imposed on us by the character of sources at our disposal. Continuity of the coup with earlier developments and its impact on subsequent events are dealt with more briefly.