desire did not make a significant difference in the theme or style of the narratives. The examples of love and desire found in these stories illustrate histories of desire not regulated according to the sex of the participants—a regulation which contemporary readers would generally expect in stories of sexual desire—and such stories can demonstrate for modern readers the historical construction of their belief in the naturalness of our conceptions of sexual desire.

According to *Ephesian Tale*, vision made the lover an object of attention. When Habrocomes sees Anthia she 'uncovered as much of her person as she could for Habrocomes to see. And Habrocomes gave himself wholly to the sight; the god's bound prisoner was he' (p. 9). Interestingly, in the anonymous Christian novella *The Acts of Paul and Thecla* desire was not created by vision but by language. Thecla first desires Paul when she hears him speak, 'for she had not yet seen Paul in person, but only heard his word' (p. 56). Thecla was 'gripped by a new desire and a fearful passion; for the maiden hangs upon the things he says, and is taken captive' (pp. 56–7). This transformation in the language of desire suggests interesting connections with the eloquent first line of the *Gospel of John*, a Greek work written in the city of Ephesus *c*. 150 C.E.: 'In the beginning was the word'. Perhaps Christianity contains under-exploited elements to dislodge the hegemony of vision in desire.

H., like Thecla, was taken captive by the power of words to create their object of reference, in this case, the linguistic difference between 'popular' and 'élite' literature. In one priceless moment found in pseudo-Callisthenes' *The Alexander Romance*, Alexander writes to his mother and Aristotle describing his defeat of Darius. In an example from the battle, Alexander describes, in what has to be a little joke against his teacher, how he used sensual deception to win the battle—undercutting in at least a small degree Aristotle's accounts of the validity of the senses. Alexander tied torches to the horns of goats to make his army appear much larger than it was in reality. When Darius and his troops saw what they perceived to be a much larger army, they lost the will to win.

This book is an excellent collection. H. has done a very careful and thoughtful job in collecting and discussing the work. Only a greater suspicion of the historical consistency of categories such as desire (or 'high' and 'low') could have improved his account. A little closer attention to Alexander's jibe at Aristotle should have served as a reminder to H. that just because appearance tells you one thing, it does not mean that you know what is there. 'Low' literature is, like Alexander's goat-soldiers, possibly not what it appears to be: it could easily be much more complex or 'high' than even very watchful readers suspect.

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PERSONIFIED VIRTUES

E. STAFFORD: *Worshipping Virtues. Personification and the Divine in Ancient Greece*. Pp. xiv + 274, ills. London: Duckworth, 2001.Cased, £40. ISBN: 0-7156-3044-X.

This book identifies a significant aspect in the study of ancient Greek religious thought for which there has been a pressing need for fresh, updated approaches. S. provides a useful critical review of the scholarship up to date, challenges earlier views and interpretations, and attempts to present new insights into the theme, par-

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ticularly with regard to an apparent preference for the female gender for personified abstractions (pp. 27–35).

Chapter 1 (pp. 1–44) sets a useful frame for the study of personifications by addressing issues of definition and context to the use of terms (pp. 1–17), as well as establishing criteria for the attribution of divine identity to a personification (pp. 17–27). This is all in accordance with the promises made by the title and the blurb, which specify the main issues for examination as 'the logic, the psychology and the practice of the Greeks who worshipped these personifications'. S. states explicitly that her work aims to provide 'a synthesis dealing with the general problems associated with the cults of abstract ideas' (p. 3), and outlines some relevant research questions. Alongside these lines of general questions and considerations, S. chooses to focus on six case studies of personified abstract ideas through which she intends to 'test her subsequent theoretical discussion' (p. 3).

Yet there is an element of contradiction in the way that S. uses this selected material of six divinities. The broad questions about the nature, definition, cult, and gender of personifications raised in the first chapter clearly need to be addressed using a much wider base of material than these six cases, and this is precisely what S. does in the introduction, though still in a somewhat restricted way. In her discussion of the criteria for her selection of study cases, S. admits that each of them 'exemplifies to some extent one of the more theoretical questions raised' in the chapter (p. 35), and also promises to 'suggest answers to the general question of the place of deified abstract ideas in the Greek pantheon and their reality for the worshipper' (p. 36). In the conclusions, however, S. arrives at what a reader may suspect at a much earlier stage in the reading of the book (p. 227): that no single figure or group of personifications, or indeed any divinity, may serve as a 'sample' of its 'category' with regard to its nature, development, popularity, or history. Time and locality will always be significant factors in the shaping of these divine *personae*. The approach followed here is indeed a compromise, as S. admits herself in her final concluding statement (p. 232), where she also suggests two valid 'remedies' to her treatment.

The study cases include well-informed discussions which adeptly tame a wealth of information available for each of them. It has to be noted that the six cases selected represent some of the best studied personifications in recent scholarship, as well as being well attested in ancient literature. They include Themis, Nemesis, Peitho, Hygeia, Eirene, and Eleos. Chapter 2 (pp. 45–73) is devoted to Themis, an early personified abstraction whose mythical personality is discussed with reference to both early Greek literature and iconography. Long sections are devoted to the presentation of the cults of Themis in Athens, Attica, Delphi, and Thessaly, where the local cult connotations and associations of the divinity are explored. Nemesis is discussed next (Chapter 3, pp. 75–110), beginning with her appearance in early Greek poetry, and moving on to discussion of major cults of the goddess at Rhamnous Attica and Smyrna. A similar structure is followed in the discussion of Peitho (pp. 111–145), whose mythical associations are explored before more detailed appreciations are made of the evidence available for her cult both outside and inside Attica. Unlike the earlier case studies of Themis and Nemesis, an extensive account is offered of the cult of Peitho outside Attica, at places such as Thasos, Paros, Lesbos, Knidos, Pharsalos of Thessaly, and Olynthos. In addition, there are short discussions of Plutarch's and Pausanias's testimonies about Peloponnesian cults of Peitho. Chapters 5 (pp. 147–171), 6 (pp. 173–197), and 7 (pp. 199–225) deal with the cults of Hygeia, Eirene, and Eleos respectively, with the latter being the only male personification discussed in the book. In all cases, due links are drawn between the social and political context of the

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communities who worshipped the divinities at different times and places, and extensive surveys of their cult are made.

The instructive value of the book would have been significantly enhanced, particularly for those who may be using it for research purposes, if full and updated lists of primary material were collected and listed. An index of ancient authors or inscriptions is absent, as is a list of iconographic evidence which could have included full references to the visual material used. With regard to the latter, S. is not always consistent, as too often crucial details are omitted such as inventory numbers or names of painters.

Overall, the book updates earlier studies, such as Shapiro's (1993) and Hamdorf's (1964), and at the same time adds new depth to their perspectives, particularly in S.'s discussion of the six selected figures. S.'s attempt to define the 'broader picture' of personifications as a whole is less successful, mainly due to the limitations that she imposes on the extent of material discussed. Finally, the reader will find in this book not only clear discussions and a wealth of information, but also a user-friendly structure with conclusions at the end of each chapter, and frequent subdivisions of chapters which would have otherwise been long and awkward.

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IS THERE A TEXT IN THIS CLASS?

H. G. SNYDER: *Teachers and Texts in the Ancient World: Philosophers, Jews and Christians. Religion in the First Christian Centuries*. Pp. xv + 325. London and New York: Routledge, 2000. Paper, £16.99. ISBN: 0-415-21766-0.

In the modern world, the use of books as texts in the classroom is so common that the practice rarely receives comment. In the ancient world, things were much different. Books and texts were not produced in large numbers, nor was education a universal phenomenon, particularly at advanced levels of study. Generally, students did not have ready access to books for study purposes, but learned by rote or simply by taking notes at the lectures of their teachers, who were presumed to have accurate knowledge of the important writings. In short, the text was not necessarily a feature of the classroom, or not always a prevalent one. In this book based on a doctoral dissertation, S. examines a range of relationships between teachers, texts, and students. Though the title does not specify, the material is largely drawn from, and the discussion largely focuses on, the Roman imperial period; that may be evident from the series title, but it is worth noting that the book does not treat the ancient world as a whole, as its title, *prima facie*, implies.

After an introduction outlining the principles underpinning his further discussion, S. considers the practices evident in the source material for some schools of philosophy (Stoic, Epicurean, Peripatetic, Platonist) and religious groups (Philo, Qumran, Judaism in Palestine, Christian groups). While each philosophical school receives a chapter on its own, the religious material is gathered into a single, long, four-part chapter, a structure whose merits are not immediately apparent, for S. himself points to variation among religious groups as wide as, or even wider than, that between philosophical schools. Nor does the design adequately distinguish the use of texts in philosophical teaching from that in religious schools: these Jewish and Christian groups did not offer a more uniform and coherent approach than a philosophical school on its own or the schools as a group. The material on philosophical schools is no

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