II. RECEPTION WITHIN ANTIQUITY

This chapter is in three sections. The first sets out the proposition that movements in ancient oral, written, and material culture themselves involved reception and refiguration of material from inside and outside the Hellenic and Roman world. The second section looks at some aspects of these receptions, and at the scholarly and critical tools which were developed in association with them, which have often set the parameters for subsequent investigation and evaluation. The third section identifies some important examples of how different aspects of reception within antiquity have contributed to the patterns of reception with which scholars and practitioners have engaged in subsequent periods. Overall, the model used is one which will be taken forward in later chapters of the book. It consists of an axis between reception as activity – as 'doing', 'making', 'responding', and 'creating' – and reception as selecting, analysing, and evaluating. The points of intersection are many, but the more divergent areas of the model are also significant and may also contribute to dialogue between ancient and modern. Many critical terms and categories set out in the ancient world have fed into modern systems; in turn, many aspects of modern practice, of reception 'activity', have prompted further analysis of cultural practices in the ancient world.

Cultural analogues, refigurations, and contests

Reception within antiquity, as well as subsequently, was multi-faceted. It included diverse cultural practices, and the balance between borrowed, traditional, and new perspectives in individual works of art and literature, in philosophy and historical writing, and in broader cultural movements. It is not only is a subject of research and debate for study of the ancient world itself but also often informs studies of later receptions. The examples that follow have been chosen to illustrate this diversity.

Cultural paradigms and analogues

On the Great Sphinx Stela of Amenhotep II at Giza (New Kingdom eighteenth dynasty, *c.*1400 BCE), a narrative passage exalts the achievements and reputation of the young king: 'he had no equal on

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the field of battle. . .there was not his like in this numerous army. Not one among them could draw his bow.'[1] The image of the bow as an instrument of moral and religious retribution is found also in the texts of the Hebrew Bible, for example in Psalm 21:11–12 (quoted here in the Authorized Version [commonly known as the King James Bible], first published in 1611):

> For they intended evil against thee: they imagined a mischievous device which they are not able to perform. Therefore, thou shalt make them turn their back, when thou shalt make ready thine arrows upon thy strings against the face of them.

Book 21 of Homer's *Odyssey* is often known as the book of the bow. The bow, which has a religious genealogy, becomes not only the symbol of Odysseus' wealth and power but also a test.

The image of the bow has a varied cultural provenance. Recent archaeological and anthropological study of the seaborne cultural interaction which took place in the eastern Mediterranean, the Aegean, North Africa, and the Near East from the sixteenth to the sixth century BCE suggests that in the *Odyssey* the specific poetic deployment of the image of the bow was informed and enriched by a network of cultural associations. These saw this particular weapon as an emblem of physical prowess and military achievement, the epitome of craftsmanship, a divinely sanctioned instrument of vengeance and retribution, and a test of the qualities for which heroic figures were to be remembered, preserving their reputations for posterity. In this respect, the poetic development of the *Odyssey* resonates with analogues from cultural contexts which are oriental as well as Greek.[2]

Refigurations

An aspect of refiguration which is important in both ancient and subsequent receptions is the adaptation of a legend or myth by the addition of new features. A good example is Aeschylus' attribution to Clytemnestra in *The Oresteia* of the active role in the killing of her husband Agamemnon on his return from Troy (especially

[1] Lichtheim 1976: 39–43.

[2] See further Burkert 1992; Morris 1992; Hardwick 1995; West 1997; Davies 2002. Davies discusses 'a more realistic discourse which treats Greek and Eastern Mediterranean history as a continuum and thereby begins to dissolve the intrinsically racist distinction between "Greek" and "oriental"' (235–6). Haubold 2013 sets out a dialogic model.

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Agamemnon 1372–98). In some other versions of the story, her lover Aegisthus is the dominant figure. Aeschylus' handling of the myth shifts this part of the story as a paradigm for subsequent receptions.[3] His change intensifies the revenge cycle in the trilogy to include maternal revenge, sharpens the debate about the matricide (when Orestes avenges his father), and brings Clytemnestra to the fore as an active quasi-heroic figure in her own right. This has led to the emphasis in later receptions of the trilogy on the psychology of Clytemnestra, and especially on her desire for revenge because of Agamemnon's sacrifice of their daughter Iphigenia in the hope of ensuring a fair wind for Troy (*Agamemnon* 1525–9). A number of modern productions have emphasized this aspect of the story, either by staging Euripides' *Iphigenia at Aulis* as a prelude to *The Oresteia* (as in Ariane Mnouchkine's 1992 production of *Les Atrides*) or by giving prominence to the chorus's account of the sacrifice, perhaps by including physical representation through mime or by the presence of Iphigenia as a ghost-like figure on the stage (as in Katie Mitchell's production of Ted Hughes's adaptation for the Royal National Theatre in 1999).

Such refigurations are found not only in ancient treatments of myth but also in ancient receptions of earlier texts from antiquity (for instance, Virgil's reception of Homer). They indicate that, just as later receptions need to be considered in comparison with their source texts, so source texts need to be compared with the material which they themselves refigured and with other ancient treatments of the theme. This comparative perspective was used by ancient critics. For example, Dio of Prusa (late first century CE) included as his *Oration* 52 a short essay comparing the treatment of the story of Philoctetes by Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, *Philoctetes in the Tragedians*.[4]

Contests

Contests permeate both ancient and modern receptions and require attention to the socio-political contexts, as well as to the values expressed in the texts themselves. A major area of debate, which has implications for later areas of reception as well as those within antiquity, is the reception of Greek culture by Rome, in both the Republic and the

[3] For discussion of Aeschylus' relation to other ancient sources, see March 1987.
[4] For translation and commentary, see Russell and Winterbottom 1989: 188–91, 241.

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Empire, and especially in the context of the Second Sophistic, the so-called revival of classical models in the early third century CE. Influential research in this field has explored the relationship between acquiescence and dissent, between assimilation and independence, between the discourses of cultural identity and political hegemony, and between private reactions and public allegiance. Increasingly, the pattern which has emerged is one of ambivalence and contradiction, with a particular sensitivity to the multi-vocal aspects of literary texts. G. D. Woolf has summed up the general situation: 'Roman responses to Hellenism consisted of a complex and partly incoherent mixture of adoption, adaptation, imitation, rejection and prohibition, while the rhetorical poses repeatedly struck included assertions of admiration condemnation and of reconciliation.'[5] Such a summary can map literary and philosophical responses as well as social and political ones.[6] It also suggests a framework for examining later receptions of texts which were themselves the product of contested receptions within antiquity, and which provide a skeleton for future contestation.

Routes and tools

Of the mechanisms and channels for reception in antiquity, the most important are transmission, translation, and associated shifts of cultural focus. Sites for this process include educational and religious environments, notions of *exempla* (images or lessons), and related concepts such as *imitatio* (imitation) and *aemulatio* (competition).[7]

Transmission

Transmission is a complex cultural process which involves interplay between accidents of survival of monuments, artefacts, and manuscripts and conscious selection and dissemination – whether of manuscripts or of public and private subjects and styles of art. Transmission has been closely linked to the phenomenon of canon formation, in which certain

[5] Woolf 1994: 120.
[6] For a summary of key scholarship in this area, see Goldhill 2001: 1–25; Whitmarsh 2001: 1–5.
[7] Culture was 'spread', adapted, and exchanged in the literal sense through material activities such as travel, seafaring, trade, and warfare.

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works survived in written form.[8] An example is provided by the processes through which Athenian tragedy was transformed into an art form that was disseminated throughout the Greek-speaking world, translated, imitated by Roman dramatists, and (in the words of P. E. Easterling) 'mutated into various types of balletic and operatic performance, and as a select corpus of classical texts helped to shape the educational system, and inform the culture of later antiquity'. Easterling concluded that, despite the range of inscriptional and material evidence, in antiquity the history of performance was on its own insufficient to ensure the survival of complete tragedies in a form in which they could be transmitted from antiquity to later periods.[9]

The early evidence for 'canon' formation in Greek drama includes an official competition for revivals of fifth-century plays at the Great and City Dionysia festivals held in Athens, which may indicate the emergence of a classical repertoire. Play texts from Greek tragedy after the fifth century BCE survive only in brief fragments and quotations, although study of New Comedy has been informed by papyrus finds. There appears to have been legislation in the fourth century BCE to prevent large-scale adaptation of texts by acting companies (see Plutarch's *Lycurgus*) but in other respects the transmission of a corpus of selected texts depended on the activities of scholars from the time of Aristotle to the Alexandrian researchers who collected, emended, classified, and analysed texts.[10]

There had been a long-established tradition of libraries in the Near East, dating back to inscribed papyrus texts in the temple accounts of Abusir, *c.*2450 BCE. From the same period there survive statues of seated scribes. Most of the attested Egyptian and Near Eastern collections were originally developed for administrative or religious needs. Papyrus or leather was used: papyrus was the main material in the Greek and Roman worlds and is represented on Attic vases, apparently to depict poetry, from *c.*500 BCE, although Herodotus mentions that leather was used by the Ionians when papyrus was scarce (Hdt. 5.58).

[8] *Kanôn* in Greek meant a measuring rod, standard, or model. From the fourth century it was applied to New Testament books accepted as authoritative by the Christian church. Only later was it used to describe the most highly valued works in a particular cultural tradition.

[9] Easterling 1997b, esp. 211, 224–7.

[10] See Easterling and Knox 1985: ch. 1.

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Book production and trading are well attested in Athens from the late fifth and fourth centuries BCE, and the oldest surviving specimens of literary papyrus rolls date from the second half of the fourth century. This development enabled Aristotle and his followers to collect books and establish libraries (Strabo 13.608). The Museum and Library at Alexandria, founded by Ptolemy I Soter, became a vital centre for scholarship and literary criticism which was influential in the transmission and broader reception of texts for many centuries, standardizing layout and format in ways which also grouped works by structure and theme, thus anticipating later genre categories. In addition, Alexandrian scholars developed a system of commentary writing and this facilitated the survival of the selected works both in performance revivals and as material for future translators or imitators. The possibilities for interaction between the preservation of Greek tragedy texts, new performances and adaptations, and their uses in education are shown in surviving fragments of school pupils' exercises, from quotations in anthologies and theatrical handbooks, and from inscriptions attesting honours to later poets such as C. Julius Longianus (Aphrodisias in Asia Minor, second century CE).[11]

The theatrical influences on Roman culture facilitated by the transmission of texts and the transplantation of associated images into other literary forms were considerable. Furthermore, it was the Romans who created the codex, an important development in the shape of the book which led to cheaper pocket editions of literary texts by the first century CE (Martial 14.184–92). The innovation was exploited by Christians for biblical texts from the early second century, and, in general, greater availability and relative cheapness of books was a characteristic of the Roman world.

Christian attitudes to the religious and moral worth of some texts over others greatly influenced transmission patterns in late antiquity (when a new ecclesiastical class took over from the senatorial class as the most powerful commissioners and users) and subsequently into the medieval period, when Latin remained the official language of the Christian church in the West and monks took over the mantle of the Alexandrian scribe. Seneca's tragedies were inimical to Christian theology and by the early Middle Ages were almost lost, although his other works, of greater interest to moralists, prospered. The medieval

[11] Text, translation, and discussion in Roueché 1993: 223–7.

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circulation of the elegists Tibullus, Propertius, and Catullus seems also to have been small. Physical destruction (by violence or the elements) played a part, but selection and neglect were crucial too. Some less-favoured subjects and authors were preserved by transmission via Arab scholars through interaction with the Greek and Aramaic culture of the eastern part of the empire. This has been a particularly important channel for philosophical and scientific writings.[12] Patterns and accidents of selection, transmission, and circulation were as important for the reception of texts in the ancient world as they are in the modern.[13]

Translation

Translation frameworks and trends are also an index to reception shared by antiquity and by subsequent societies. In antiquity there were significant debates about the theory and practice of translation which are closely related to many of the debates in the modern discipline of translation studies. Furthermore, the cultural practices associated with translation in antiquity have equivalents across many of the diverse examples of early modern and modern receptions.

Various layers of bilingualism were present in antiquity. Herodotus knew only Greek and was dependent on Persian and Egyptian interpreters (2.125), but the Old Oligarch alleged that Athens in the late fifth century BCE contained a mixture of customs and languages 'from all the Greeks and barbarians' (2.8). It used to be thought that Greek was always used as the language of administration in the Hellenistic period but this assumption has been challenged, especially in respect of the Seleucid Empire, for which the administration included Aramaic as well as Greek. In Ptolemaic Egypt, although Greek was the language of administration, some individuals had double names – one Egyptian, one Greek – and there were scribes fluent in both demotic and Greek.

As Rome became Hellenized, educated people increasingly became bilingual (from the first century BCE), although there were some negative reactions from figures as different as Cato and Juvenal, and Tiberius is said to have unsuccessfully discouraged the use of Greek

[12] See further Reynolds and Wilson 1974; Bolgar 1981 (esp. 447–9, 'Arab Culture in the Middle Ages'); Rouse 1992.

[13] On ancient criteria and the importance of lists and excerpts, see Easterling 2002.

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in the Senate (Suet. *Tib*. 71). However, there is a contrast between language used for cultural purposes and language employed in public service. The language of administration in the western part of the empire was Latin. This was also the language of law and the army. In the eastern empire, Greek was used and official letters sent from Rome were usually translated into Greek first. Inscriptions such as the *Res Gestae* of Augustus were set up in Greek in the eastern part of the empire. Cornelius Gallus, made prefect of Egypt by Octavian and also an elegiac poet, celebrated his suppression of rebellion, and alliance with Ethiopia, with a trilingual inscription (CIL 3.14147), accompanied by statues of himself. (Inevitably, he was recalled and ordered to commit suicide in 27/26 BCE.)

Translation and adaptation from Greek were important in the development of Latin literature. Livius Andronicus produced versions of Greek plays, a comedy and a tragedy, at the Ludi Romani of 240 BCE, and his prestige was recognized by authorized permission for actors and stage poets to assemble in the Aventine temple of Minerva. His tragedies include titles such as *Achilles*, *Aegisthus*, *Ajax*, *Equos Troianus*, and *Tereus*. There are also fragments of a translation of Homer's *Odyssey* into Saturnian verses (more usually used for epitaphs and commemorations). Cicero wrote disparagingly of the works (*Brutus* 71), but Horace referred to their use in schools (*Ep*. 2.1.69–71). Roman sensitivity to the relationship with Greek is underlined both by the efforts of Cicero and his circle to create a Graeco-Roman cultural awareness and by the view of Lucretius that Latin was limited in its scope compared with Greek (1.139).

The Romans categorized various translational approaches. Cicero, who himself produced translations of Greek texts as well as transplanting Greek ideas into Roman contexts, drew on his own experience to distinguish between translating word for word (*verbum pro verbo*) and translating in a way which communicated style and effect. Writing in 46 BCE, he discussed this in the context of his own translation of the speeches of the Attic orators Aeschines and Demosthenes:

> And I did not translate them as an interpreter but as an orator, keeping the same ideas and forms, or as one might say, the 'figures' of thought, but in language which conforms to our ways. And in so doing, I did not hold it necessary to render word for word but I preserved the general style and force of the language.
>
> (Cicero, *De optima genere oratorum* 14)[14]

[14] Translation from Hubbell 1949.

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In analysing Cicero's statement, the emphasis is usually put on his rejection of 'word for word' and his development of an interpretative strategy. However, it is equally important to note that he is discussing translation for performance. It must seem as if the orator's words were written in the language in which they were being spoken. This is an approach followed by many other translators for performance (and especially stage performance) up to the present day. An alternative strategy, to distance from the audience by archaizing or foreignizing, would have a completely different impact, which might have a purpose in theatre but in rhetoric would undermine the orator's prime purpose, which is to persuade the audience that his words address their current situation.

Horace also rejected word-for-word translation, but for different reasons. In his *Ars poetica* 133–4 (*c.*20 BCE), he emphasized that translators should aim to produce work which both was aesthetically pleasing and also had a creative impact in the receiving language. The Younger Pliny approached translation in a less creative way, stressing the utility of the exercise for stimulating critical linguistic awareness and precision as well as fluency (*Ep.* 7.9.1). Cicero's approach was cited in a letter in 395 CE by St Jerome as an authority for his own method when translating the Septuagint (the Greek version of the Hebrew Bible) into Latin:

> Now I not only admit but freely announce that in translating from the Greek – except of course in the case of the Holy Scripture, where even the syntax contains a mystery – I render not word for word, but sense for sense. (Jer. *Ep.* 57.5)[15]

Jerome elaborated on the idea of sense-for-sense translation by using the metaphor of the receiving language taking over the source language in the same way that a conqueror takes over a prisoner. However, it is important to note his caveat about the special demands of translating a sacred text. In that case both the meaning and syntax had to be proclaimed as sacrosanct, since altering the sense could lead to a charge of heresy. (One might surmise that, for those who regard classical texts as fixed in meaning, there are secular heresies which may be committed by too great a sensitivity to the receiving language.)

Similar approaches to translation have been identified in the practices of the Arab translators (who were referred to above in the

[15] Translated by P. Carroll in D. Robinson 2002.

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context of transmission). Greek scientific and philosophical texts were translated into Arabic in the Abbasid period (750–1250 CE), often with Syriac as an intermediary language. Two main translation methods have been identified.[16] The first took an extremely literal approach, in which each Greek word corresponded with an equivalent Arabic word; if no equivalent existed, the Greek word was transplanted into Arabic. This method proved difficult and a second approach developed. This was based on translating sense for sense, which aimed to communicate the sense of the Greek while not disrupting the Arabic. Scholars have pointed out that these practices had wider cultural effects in that concepts and thought systems also crossed into Arab culture, resulting in the development of Arab neologisms (rather than transliterations), while the translators also supplied extensive explanatory notes and commentaries.

This framework anticipates several fairly recent developments in translation practices in the languages of the British Isles. One is the increased use of glossed texts in reading ancient drama and poetry. These are texts in which key terms and concepts such as *pius* or *dikê* or *philia* or *aretê* are left in the original because they are thought to be untranslatable, in that their semantic fields are not congruent with those of English equivalents. It is therefore a valuable heuristic activity for readers to consider their scope in each context of use.[17] Another development is the view of some translators of Greek tragedy into Scots that they are broadening and deepening the conceptual range of the various forms of the Scots language.[18] Finally, the stimulus experienced by the Arabic commentators finds an equivalence in the current initiatives towards developing new kinds of editions, translations, and commentaries on classical texts to meet at the same time the basic linguistic needs and the advanced intellectual needs of new generations of classics and classical studies students.[19]

In addition to distinguishing between word-for-word and sense-for-sense translations, Roman critics developed a vocabulary for describing other kinds of relationship between Greek texts and their Latin analogues. Key terms (each had slightly different philosophical, linguistic, and metaphorical fields) included:

[16] For further discussion, see Baker and Saldanha 2009: 328–37.
[17] See further Parker 2000 (esp. ch. 1).
[18] See below ch. 4, pp 68–9; Dunlop 2000.
[19] See further Fitzpatrick et al. 2002.

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vertere	to turn (often reflexive), to turn to account, to transform (also used by Livy in the sense of 'to rout')
mutare	to vary, to change, to shift, and, significantly, to go into another country, to exchange; can be used both transitively and intransitively and has a specific figurative use (*mutata verba*)
transferre	to carry over or across, to transfer, to transport, to convey, or even to turn into; Cicero used this term to indicate translation into another language and also to indicate figurative or metaphorical use (*Att.* 6.2.3), while Quintilian used it to indicate analogues (2.15.21)
(Latine) exprimere	to mould, to copy, to express, to portray; Cicero's usage covers senses of both translation and articulation.

The overlaps and differences between these usages are in some respects analogous to the debates today about the precise relationship to the source text of translations, versions, and adaptations. However, to map a fuller range of interaction between source and new text an additional set of concepts is needed, indicating intersections between values and cultural practices. This range includes *imitatio*, *exemplum*, and *aemulatio*, and analysis of their use brings out the sometimes uneasy relationships between source and receiving cultures.

Cultural forces

The cultural forces that shaped reception within antiquity were encapsulated in a number of key concepts that described various aspects of reception practices. These have also been influential in subsequent receptions, partly because of the cultural authority they acquired in the ancient world and partly because they describe aspects of the relationship between culture and power which scholars and critics have continued to apply to both ancient and modern receptions. I have selected five of these concepts because, considered together, they map the most important aspects of reception practices, within antiquity and subsequently, and because the relative crudity or relative refinement with which they have been used (in practice and in criticism) opens up areas of reception that are discussed elsewhere in this study.

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Exemplum

Exemplum is a Roman concept, originally used to refer to an image or object lesson presenting a precedent from the past. Livy (59 BCE–17 CE) referred to these in his preface to *Ab urbe condita libri* (literally *Books from the Foundation of the City*). This vast work covered Roman history from the origins of Rome to 9 BCE, originally in 142 books, of which only 1–10 and 21–45 survive (and of these Books 41 and 43–5 have lacunae because of damage to the fifth-century manuscript which was the sole transmission for Books 41–5). In the preface Livy commented that

> the especially healthy and fruitful element of the study of history is this, that you contemplate object-lessons of every type of model set up on a conspicuous monument: from there you can choose for yourself and for your State what to imitate and what to avoid, if loathsome in its beginning and loathsome in its outcome.
>
> (Livy, Preface 9–10)[20]

The conjunction of the precedent and the guide to moral behaviour is an influential feature of Roman attitudes to the past. It was a constituent part of the desire for conformity to ancestral tradition which characterized values of the ruling class of the Roman Republic and was appropriated and adapted by the emperor Augustus and his successors in order that the authority of the Republican past should serve as a sanction for the imperial constitution and that they could claim to have 'restored the Republic'.

In a culture which values the receiving and adaptation of *exempla*, the patterns of choice of individuals or episodes as *exempla* have a particular significance. Livy himself focused in Book 1 of his history of Rome on the episode of the rape of Lucretia, which was supposed to have prompted the overthrow of the tyrannical dynasty of the Tarquins in 509 BCE, when she was avenged by her brothers after her rape by Tarquinius Superbus. Livy's representation of this *exemplum* has several layers, including idealization of Lucretia as a Roman wife (she is surprised by her rapist while working at her loom and commits suicide to restore her reputation and, of course, that of her family). His narrative also serves to equate the abuse of Lucretia with an attack on Rome, and to lend support to the calls for the end to civil war and

[20] Translated and discussed in Braund 2002: 21.

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the restoration of Republican values at the time at which he was writing, in the 30s BCE.[21] The Lucretia episode was explored by other writers in antiquity, notably Ovid in *Fasti* ('Roman Holidays') 2.721–852, and also subsequently by both poets and artists (Shakespeare, Titian, Gentileschi, Tiepolo) and in opera, including Benjamin Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia*.[22]

The end of the monarchy in early Rome and the foundation of the Republic by Lucius Junius Brutus, who was elected as first consul, together with Lucretia's husband, likewise provided *exempla* for development by writers and artists. Thus Brutus became legendary for his strict sense of justice, which including putting to death his own sons when they were shown to have been involved in the attempt to restore the Tarquins. This was discussed not only by Livy but also by Plutarch (*c.*46–126 CE). The episode provided the inspiration for J.-L. David's painting *The Lictors Returning to Brutus the Bodies of His Sons*, which was in its final stages of completion for a royal commission in 1789. (David had already had popular success with the exhibition of his *Oath of the Horatii* in 1785. In this *exemplum* from the legends surrounding early Roman history of the seventh century BCE, three Roman brothers, the Horatii, fought for Rome in single combat against three Latin brothers, the Curiatii, in the struggle between Rome and Latium.) David's addition of the return of the bodies to the family home, an element not mentioned by Livy or Plutarch, was thought to address the conflict between political duty and family allegiance which was so acute at times of political change.

The history of *exempla* demonstrates several recurrent features of reception history. First, the *exempla* may be drawn from legend or remote history. This allows features to be adapted or added, and there may be elements of the 'invention of tradition'. For instance, Regulus, the Roman commander against Carthage in the First Punic War of the third century BCE, was heroized by Horace in *Odes* 3.5, in which Regulus is represented as returning to Rome to negotiate peace after his capture by the Carthaginians, advising Rome to continue the war, and then keeping his oath to return to Carthage where he faced torture and death.[23] Secondly, reception of *exempla*

[21] See further Braund 2002: 25–36.
[22] See further Donaldson 1982.
[23] Polybius does not refer to the episode, and the story may have been invented to excuse the killing of prisoners from Carthage in Rome after Regulus' death (Diod. Sic. 24.12.).

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can involve a mixture of artistic, verbal, and political elements. Thirdly, the cultural politics of the receiving context shape the reception, which may contain an ambivalence or double-edged critique about contemporary matters or may be a blunt appropriation to sanction contemporary authority or values (see further in Chapter 3).

Aemulatio and *imitatio*

The use of *exempla* may carry a suggestion of the need to emulate. The ancient concept of *aemulatio* took this further and could imply competition. The concept has been most fully discussed in the context of the relationship between Greek and Roman literature, where it represents an alternative to an emphasis on *imitatio* (imitation of Greek models). *Aemulatio* suggests a more culturally confident approach by Roman writers and artists who feel that they can take their places alongside those of Greece.

The uneasy relationship between Greek culture and Roman conquest was most prominently addressed by Horace, who inverted the force of cultural and military power:

> When Greece surrendered she took control of her rough invader
> and brought the arts to rustic Latium. (Hor. *Ep.* 2.1.156–7)[24]

However, although Greek literature remained as a yardstick for comparison, ancient authors certainly challenged by precept and in practice its claims to inevitable superiority. Quintilian referred directly to the merits of Latin literature and its challenge to the supremacy of the Greeks (*Training of the Orator* 10.1.93). Propertius commented in the 20s BCE, alluding to Virgil's development of the epic genre, 'give way, writers of Rome, give way, writers of Greece! Something greater than the *Iliad* is coming to birth' (2.34.65–6). The comment perhaps reflects Virgil's claim at the beginning of *Aeneid* 7 that he was 'setting about a greater work' as he moved onto the Iliadic battles of the second half of the poem. Philip Hardie has pointed out how Virgil's *imitatio* of Homer challenges the reader to compare and contrast source and imitation, and how knowledge of the Homeric texts not only acts as a filter in reading the *Aeneid* but also enables the *Aeneid* to be read as a commentary on Homer. In addition, Hardie showed how *exempla* are

[24] Translation from Rudd 1979.

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used competitively by characters within the *Aeneid* to enhance their status.[25]

Poetic practice also involved reworkings and transplantations of poetic techniques into new contexts, perhaps best described as a development of intertextuality rather than as simply *imitatio* or *aemulatio*. Examples include transplantation of images from Athenian tragedy into Roman epic (often mediated through allusions to Hellenistic writers). Servius, the fourth-century CE scholar, noted this in his commentary on Virgil's *Aeneid* when he observed that *Aeneid* 4 draws on Apollonius' treatment of the Medea theme. Virgil used Greek material on Medea even more creatively in his exploration of Dido's misery and rage when Aeneas leaves her.[26] And he comments directly on his adaptation of the approaches and fields of reference of the Hellenistic poets at the beginning of his *Fourth Eclogue*:

> Sicilian Muse, I would try now a somewhat grander theme.
> Shrubberies or meek tamarisks are not for all: but if it's
> Forests I sing, may the forests be worthy of a consul. (Verg. *Ecl.* 4.1–3)[27]

The allusion indicates that he is drawing on Theocritus, who came from Sicily and used Sicilian settings, but also that he is extending the private boundaries of the genre to include the public and the political.[28]

Thus it is clear that *exempla*, *imitatio*, and *aemulatio* are not self-contained categories. Even an apparent 'imitation' is not just an attempt at reproduction but in various ways involves transplantation, transformation, and sometimes critique, as when literary forms both use and challenge the excellence of the past. The representations and innovations involved are reflected in the debates about the concept of *mimesis*, which covers both imitation and artistic representation of literature from the past. Ways in which these processes were performed in the ancient world reveal contests for cultural supremacy, and shifts in what was thought to constitute 'Hellenism' and '*Romanitas*', together with a high degree of fluidity and overlap, especially in philosophy, literature, and historiography.[29]

[25] See Hardie 1998: 53–7.
[26] See Virg. *Aen.* 4.522–32, and discussion in Braund 2002: 248–50.
[27] Translation from Day Lewis 1977: 18.
[28] For further discussion see Hardie 1998: 5–10; Braund 2002: 254–7.
[29] For discussion of the politics of imitation and its relationship to *paideia*, with extensive references and bibliography, see Goldhill 2001: 8–17; Whitmarsh 2001: 3–17.

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Mimesis

The fourth and fifth concepts which frame discussion of reception within antiquity are both highly contested terms. *Mimesis* was a concept with which ancient literary criticism was directly concerned, and the debates that ensued are both part of reception within antiquity and a shaping force in the later history of classical criticism and thus also in subsequent receptions. Indeed, much of the critical vocabulary and many of the concepts used in modern literary criticism have been inherited and adapted from ancient critics. Of these the most influential have been Plato (especially *The Republic* Books 2, 3, and 10, and *Ion*), Aristotle (*Poetics*), Horace (*The Art of Poetry*), Longinus (*On the Sublime*), and Plutarch (*On the Study of Poetry*). However, from Homer, Hesiod, and Pindar onwards, poets self-reflexively commented on the nature of poetry, on the function, fame, and authority associated with it, and on its power to affect the emotions and so potentially effect change.[30] These early discussions emphasized that poetry was a craft as well as the product of inspiration, and accepted that it was part of the competitive ethos of Greek society.

The emergence of comedy as a theatrical form intensified allusion to poetic practice and competition and also saw the development of aesthetic criticism. The first known use of the term *mimesis* occurs in Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazusae* (411 BCE), where it is used to indicate cross-gender dramatic impersonation. Further debates about *mimesis* are closely connected with those on the power of language and the moral standing of poetry. The Sophists, especially Gorgias, discussed the power of poetic language. His rhetorical display oration *Encomium of Helen* examined the effect of speech on the mind, likening it to that of drugs on the body – sometimes beneficial, sometimes harmful. Gorgias' description of the impact of poetry on the emotions anticipated Plato's analysis of the dangerous effect of poetry and drama on audiences, and also raised issues about the creation of pity and fear which were later taken up by Aristotle.

[30] For discussion of this aspect, with examples, see Murray and Dorsch 2000. Translated extracts from Plato, Aristotle, Horace, and Longinus are included, together with specialist bibliography and chronological tables of authors and events. There is a slightly wider selection, with explanatory notes (also including Horace's *A Letter to Augustus*, Tacitus' *Dialogue on Orators*, Dio of Prusa's *Philoctetes in the Tragedians*, and Plutarch's *On the Study of Poetry*) in Russell and Winterbottom 1998.

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From the late sixth century BCE, poetry was already under attack from philosophers and moralists: for example, the Ionian Xenophanes criticized poetry on the grounds that Homer and Hesiod attributed to the gods 'all things that are shameful and a reproach among mankind: theft, adultery and mutual deception' (fragment B11).[31] Critics also drew on the capacity of poetry to deceive – a tradition based partly on the fluidity of myth and partly on the discussion of deception in poets from Hesiod onwards, some of which anticipates notions of fiction as a genre. A related development to the exploration of poetry's capacity to deceive was the concept of allegory, which started as a defence of poetry's fluidity of meaning and developed into a systematic critical approach which, especially in the context of Stoic and Neoplatonist thought, could be aligned with a sense of moral and social insight.

In contrast, Plato's critique of poetry was based on its alleged failure to lead to worthwhile knowledge. He argued that poetry encouraged hearers to emulate the degrading actions and emotions which it purported to represent and (somewhat paradoxically) that such representations were in themselves a sham. Since poets and dramatists had such contempt for truth, he wished to have them excluded from his ideal state. Critics have commented on the paradox that Plato himself was a highly poetic and theatrical writer, and have speculated that his fear was based on the fact that these were popular art forms permeating Greek education and including all sections of society in their transmission of shared cultural horizons and values.[32] Plato's discussion of *mimesis* initially centres on the way in which the poet or performer adopts the guise of a character and almost becomes that person, thus acting as a role model for the audience. Subsequently, he extended the scope of his critique to other art forms, focusing on the way in which images and representations are unsubstantiated reflections of objects and have no true existence. This emphasis on triviality rather detracts from his alternative view of *mimesis* as influential and potentially dangerous, and this ambivalence has been reflected in a wide variety of responses, including a defence of poetry by the Neoplatonist Plotinus (third century CE), who argued that the poet can improve on the imperfections of nature.

The most influential work of literary criticism from the ancient world is Aristotle's *Poetics*. In contrast to Plato's stress on the inspired and the

[31] Translations from Freeman 1962: 22.
[32] For discussion, see Murray and Dorsch 2000: xxiii–xxix.

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irrational, Aristotle concentrates on the rational principles underlying the poetic craft. His treatment of *mimesis* stresses that the poet is a maker of likenesses, refashioning rather than copying. So, for example, the tragic poet would represent what might happen, rather than communicating the reality of what did happen, which would be the task of the historian. The poets' reality is, according to Aristotle, the reality of the imagination, although it must be plausible.[33] Aristotle discusses epic briefly; a section on comedy is lost, and the bulk of the *Poetics* focuses on tragedy, with special attention to formal elements and conventions and on the effects on the spectators. His discussion of tragedy's association with the emotions of pity and fear and their catharsis (or healing) has been endlessly debated, sometimes as a precursor of psychoanalytical theory and sometimes as an attempt to depoliticize and neutralize the effects of theatre.

Aristotle was writing a century after the main developments in tragedy; thus, in relation to these and in his response to the writing of Plato, his work is itself a reception text. It lacked critical influence in antiquity but subsequently has played a major part in setting the conceptual framework for discussion and evaluation of tragedy. After its rediscovery by Italian humanists in the sixteenth century, the *Poetics* was disseminated throughout Europe, where it was particularly influential in seventeenth-century French classical theatre. Even in the twentieth century, Aristotle's categories of discussion were often projected back on to Athenian tragedy, as though the *Poetics* was a work of contemporary analysis rather than a reception which drew on several strands of cultural history.[34]

Paideia

Paideia was and is a controversial concept. It can imply not only a process of acculturation and education but also access from this to a prized and sometimes exclusive body of texts, artworks, and values. It thus draws on the routes of transmission and translation and is framed by the key concepts of description and evaluation which have been summarized above. Its status as the locus of Greek cultural identity provided a field for contest both within Hellenic culture and

[33] For discussion, see Murray and Dorsch 2000: xxxii.
[34] See further Halliwell 1989.

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in that culture's interactions with the Roman. From at least the fifth century BCE, the forms and content of education had a definitive role in constituting what it was to be Greek, and those who sought cultural hegemony also sought to appropriate *paideia* as a sanctioning force. Thus Pericles was represented by Thucydides in the Funeral Speech as putting forward Athens as an 'education' for Greece (Thuc. 2.41.1) in a context which exploited the language of education to present democratic Athenianism as the equivalent of Hellenism. The anti-democrat Plato had to radically revise the concept for his ideal state. In the fourth century BCE, Isocrates, writing for a more concrete situation, used Athenianism and its power as the basis for opening up Hellenism to elites who shared in its education and culture, rather than necessarily being Greek by descent (*Panegyricus* 50). He used Hellenism as a cultural sanction for a panhellenic alliance to conquer the 'barbarians' of the East. Later the notion was further modified by the Alexandrians, who presented themselves as 'educators of all the world, of both Greeks and barbarians'.[35]

In Rome's progressive conquest of the Greek world, however, *paideia* could no longer be viewed as a defining quality of Hellenism alone. In the values of the Roman Republic, Greece was seen as a source not only of culture and learning but also of luxury, trickery, and military weakness.[36] In contrast Rome's traditional virtues were, if rustic and uncultured, as Horace observed, at least perceived to be sources of rectitude and military success. Virgil overcame Horace's queasiness: in *Aeneid* 6.847–53, Anchises, in an epilogue to the Parade of Heroes, elevated Roman achievements to equal status, telling the Romans to practise the arts of empire, just war, and the maintenance of law and order, and to leave excellence in sculpture and oratory to others (i.e. Greeks). In an analogous move, Cicero, an apparent promoter of Greek learning, stressed the need to use Greek culture to serve the ambitions of the Roman elite (*Tusc.* 1.1–3).[37] This imperative underlay his transplantations of Greek philosophy into Roman political contexts (as in *De officiis*). The association of appropriation of Greek *paideia* with political shifts was exemplified

[35] *FHG* 246.1 Andron = Athenaeus *Deipnosophistae* 184b. For further discussion and bibliography, see Whitmarsh 2001: 7–9.

[36] For the variety of forms taken by these stereotypes, see the precepts of the Elder Cato, the rejection of Greek philosophy in the second century BCE, and, in Imperial literature, Juvenal's *Satires*, especially *Satire* 3.

[37] For further discussion, see Swain 1996; Whitmarsh 2001: 12–20.

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when, after the end of Domitian's regime (in 96 CE), Trajan deployed Greek associations to signal the change from Domitian's tyranny, which had been characterized by the rejection and exile of philosophers. The cultural shift was taken further by Trajan's successors Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius.

The contested field of *paideia* within antiquity in some respects serves as an analogue for contests in subsequent receptions. In his discussion of the Second Sophistic, Simon Goldhill has pointed out that apparent nostalgia for the classical past was

> also veined with a complex dynamic of attraction and rupture, affiliation and dismissal. The question of whose past is to count and the ambivalence, redefinition and desire which inform such historicising pictures, mark such genealogies as the sites of contest as much as tradition.[38]

Struggles over the provenance of *paideia* and its values and political associations (from democratic to oligarchic to imperial), awareness of its potential for facilitating assimilation across cultures, and successive shifts in the status of the aesthetic and educational practices from which it was constituted all serve to prefigure the struggles for selective appropriation, accretion, and redefinition of classical culture which recur in the debates surrounding modern receptions. It is these debates which are the concern of the chapters which follow. It would be complacent to assume that the ethos of *exempla* and *imitatio* associated with reception in antiquity has been unproblematically superseded by shifts to *topoi* (which can be adapted and debated), or by mutations in the intellectual contexts in which classical material is examined and in the theoretical frameworks that have been developed. The cultural, political, and aesthetic power and the enduring agency of the ancient texts and their associations continue to generate ethical and hermeneutic challenges for classicists, ancient historians, and reception scholars, and that aspect will form a thread in the ongoing discussion.

[38] Goldhill 2001: 8.

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