some ways of looking are *better* than others, it is not clear (as it is not with Protagoras) by what standard one is to be judged better than another. Still, Protagoras was a humane, wide-ranging, and thought-provoking thinker: the comparison works largely to Osborne's advantage. But I end on an anti-Protagorean note, by affirming the possibility of error. In my review of Arnold Hermann's book on Parmenides, *To Think Like God* (*G&R* 53 [2006], 129), I made him the founder of Parmenides Publishing. I am happy to note that Parmenides Publishing was in fact founded by his wife, Sara Hermann.

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General

One of the most thought-provoking series of books to have been published in recent years is without doubt that on 'Roman Literature and its Contexts' (edited by Stephen Hinds and Denis Feeney). This has showcased some of the very best theoretically-informed writing on Roman literature (including Martindale's *Redeeming the Text*, Hardie's *Epic Successors of Virgil*, Hinds' *Allusion and Intertext*, Feeney's *Literature and Religion at Rome* and Edwards' *Writing Rome*). In their one hundred and fifty or so pages, the books show – in true Callimachean style – the benefits of concision and at the same time have turned the humble footnote into something of an art form. The latest volume is no exception. Richard Hunter's *The Shadow of Callimachus. Studies in the Reception of Hellenistic Poetry at Rome*,[1] invites us to rethink the way that we construct the relationship between Roman poets and the Hellenistic literary tradition. Keying into recent wider developments in Postcolonial theory, the book presents an exciting interrogation of the old certainties about the colonizing literary power of Rome, from the point of view of the colonized territory of Hellenistic literature. Hunter recasts the importance of lost Greek poetic material for our understanding of Roman poetry (something that has been rather downplayed within Latin literary criticism in recent years). With characteristic subtlety he shows how Greek cultural production was not a remote and discrete category for the Romans, but something far more immediate, ambivalent. From the reception of Callimachus to *Pastoral Palimpsests. Essays in the Reception of Theocritus and Virgil*.[2] This is the third volume of Rethymnon Classical Studies to come out of the University of Crete in the last five years under the editorship of Michael Paschalis. After *Horace and Lyric Poetry* (2002) and *Imperial Epic* (2005) now comes a work devoted to the reception of Theocritus and Virgil. This is a stimulating collection of essays (first presented at a conference in 2006), by a strong cast of academics, that gives some sense of the ways in which reception studies are expanding and enriching our worldview. The essays take us from Pseudo-Theocritus and Aesop via Milton, Wordsworth, and Thomas Hardy, through to the aesthetics of pastoral melancholy in Virgil and Bob Dylan. A literal not literary palimpsest is the subject of R. Netz and W. Noel's *The Archimedes Codex*.

[1] *The Shadow of Callimachus. Studies in the Reception of Hellenistic Poetry at Rome*. By Richard Hunter. Roman Literature and its Contexts. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2006. Pp. xi + 162. Hardback £45; paperback £15.99.

[2] *Pastoral Palimpsests. Essays in the Reception of Theocritus and Virgil*. Edited by Michael Paschalis. Rethymnon Classical Studies Volume 3. Heraklion, Crete University Press, 2007. Pp. xi + 216. Paperback €25.

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Revealing the Secrets of the World's Greatest Palimpsest.[3] The inside cover blurb catches the 'excitement' of the tale: 'Part detective work and part adventure, part romance and part science, this story is like no other' – except perhaps the *Da Vinci Code*(*x*)? This is the story of the rediscovery of a palimpsest of a work by Archimedes (along with fragments from the Athenian orator Hyperides that emerged along the way) that was subsequently recycled into a medieval prayer book. Though the Archimedes palimpsest was identified and analysed in 1906, the book subsequently disappeared, only to reappear at auction in 1998, where it sold for $2 million. In the intervening century, palaeographic analysis has been revolutionized by techniques such as ultra-violet imaging, and now here was a chance to look again at the palimpsest with fresh eyes. The scholarly dimension of the work – which underpinned the whole project – is not, however, the focus of this book and there is, for example, no published text of the codex to be found within its pages; instead, the focus is on the thrill of the palaeographic chase and the exhilaration of discovery, which may well help to inspire a new generation of scholars in their search for the next holy grail of palaeography. Ultimately, however, the book itself is something of a literary palimpsest – the following is, perhaps, pure Dan Brown: 'The sky was blue over Jordan; the land every-where was burnt ochre. Below, about a mile further down a gravel path, I saw two towers. I had seem them before, in black and white, in a nighteenth-century engraving above the desk of my friend Patrick Zutshi in Cambridge. They looked exactly the same and I knew them to be the towers of the Monastery of St Sabas…' (124–5). We come now to *Ancient Rome in So Many Words* by Christopher Francese.[4] An alternative title for this book might well have been *A History of Rome in Ninety-three Words*. The words in question are all in Latin and grouped into themes that take us from 'childhood' to 'final moments' via 'debauchery' and 'madness'. Along the way we are guided past familiar sights such as the *forum* and *atrium* to the decidedly less familiar *ergastulum* ('slave prison and workhouse') and *cucullus* ('a rough hooded jacket worn by slaves…and by aristocrats in disguise (later by monks)'). Each entry is supplemented by apposite quotations from Classical authors and brief bibliographic pointers for further exploration. Though there are certainly things of interest in here to encourage the general reader to delve more deeply into Roman culture, the lack of illustrations is keenly felt. More importantly, *caveat lector*: the entries often fall into the trap of over-generalization and an insufficient sensitivity towards sources. In the entry on the *forum*, for example, the author states that one might 'get married there, hire a wet-nurse, consult a freelance diviner…or even be cremated.' Such an account fails to point out that you could only be cremated in the forum if you were Julius Caesar and takes no account of important changes in layout, use, and function of the space between the Republic and the Late Empire. A rather more imaginative and successful attempt to engage the general reader is *Ancient Rome on Five Denarii a Day* by Philip Matyszak,[5] a sort of fantasy *Rough Guide*, with sections on 'Getting there' ('it is a good idea to carry only the minimum amount of

[3] *The Archimedes Codex. Revealing the Secrets of the World's Greatest Palimpsest*. By Reviel Netz and William Noel. London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2007. Pp. ix + 305. Hardback £18.99; paperback £8.99.

[4] *Ancient Rome in So Many Words*. By Christopher Francese. New York, NY, Hippocrene Books, Inc., 2007. Pp. 248. Paperback $12.95.

[5] *Ancient Rome on Five Denarii a Day*. By Philip Matyszak. London, Thames and Hudson, 2007. Pp. 143/CXLIII. Hardback £12.95.

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money required for the journey, and collect the rest in Rome' [7], using an ancient version of the *Western Union Credit Transfer*); 'Where to stay' ('The ideal apartment is on the first floor, secure from thieves but easy to bring water and goods to. It is also low enough for occupants to jump to safety in the event of fire…' [(34]); 'Dining Out' ('Guests are expected to bring their own napkins, usually a large one' [42]); 'Shopping'; 'Entertainment'; 'Must See Sites'; and, of course, 'Useful Phrases' (itself divided into sections such as 'In the Bar' ['*vinum bellum iucundumque est, sed animo corporeque caret* – it is a nice little wine, but lacks character and depth']; 'Dating' ['*Scorpio sum – quod signum tibi es* – I'm a Scorpio, what sign are you?']; and 'Domestic Harmony': ['*Cara, domi adsum* – I'm home, darling']). This is a good example of a book that wears its scholarship lightly. The conceit of a travel guide allows the author to give a social history of Rome that is both amusing and instructive, hinting at an awareness of the diversity and complexity of the evidence and the subject. One niggle and a question: it is only in the author's note (140) that we are told when the guide is set (about AD 200); and why five denarii? One thing that every traveller to Rome in AD 200 would have been well advised to check before arriving in the city was the level of the river Tiber. *Floods of the Tiber in Ancient Rome* by Gregory S. Aldrete sets out three primary aims.[6] The first, to gather the literary and hydrological data about Roman flooding, shows that the Tiber flooded more frequently than hitherto appreciated: it suffered minor deluges every four to five years, and catastrophic deluges, where the water reached fifteen metres above its usual height and inundated large areas of the city, every twenty to twenty-five years. A series of helpful maps shows the extent of the city that would have been submerged at different levels of flooding. The second aim of the book is to discuss the effects of flooding on the city. These ranged from short-term effects such as drowning (possibly long-term?), injuries, loss of property, and the destruction of buildings, to long-term effects such as weakened structures, food shortages, psychological trauma, and disease. Finally the book aims to consider Roman attitudes to flooding – the most interesting but weakest section of the book. After a brief attempt at trying to discern patterns between areas of flooding and what the floods covered, a few conclusions are put forward: that baths were located in order to avoid being flooded; that the elite lived on hilltops, again avoiding being inundated. There is little discussion of the textual data presented in the first chapter in terms of what it reveals about how Romans discussed the flooding of their city. Instead, discussion is weighted towards a question of why the citizens of Rome did so little to prevent the flooding, say by diverting the Tiber or its tributaries away from the city (which might anger the river god), or by building embankments (too costly, although Aldrete is aware of the expense and enormity of other Roman public works, such as the construction of aqueducts and the draining the Faucine Lake). This question forms the basis for the conclusion to the book, the answer proposed being that the effects of flooding, despite their frequency and severity were not too gravely felt in Rome. The reasons for this were five-fold. First, the hills in the city gave people and animals somewhere to run, thus limiting the number of deaths and injuries. Second, the building materials used in Roman construction (marble, fired brick, concrete) are highly resilient to flood damage (here, the restriction of these materials to important public buildings needs

[6] *Floods of the Tiber in Ancient Rome*. By Gregory S. Aldrete. Baltimore, MD, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007. Hardback £40.

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more careful attention). Third, the concentration of elite housing on the hills meant that those who suffered in floods were of the wrong class to do anything about it (here attention to chronology would take into account the presence of elite houses in the early *Forum Romanum*). Fourth, the impact on food supply may have been mitigated by the architectural peculiarities of *horrea*, which, Aldrete argues, were as effective against the intrusion of water as they were against the other, more widely acknowledged, threats to the security of their contents. Finally, the water supply of Rome was almost exclusively derived from aqueducts bringing water from long distances, and was thus largely unaffected by the flooding of the Tiber. Although these arguments are convincing as far as they go, perhaps the most important clue lies in the story of the inauguration of the theatre of Balbus in 13 BC, which took place despite recent flooding. The flooding meant that, for the inauguration, Balbus could only enter the theatre by boat – a sign that the ceremony went ahead despite the flooding. Romans appear to have been so little affected by flooding that life carried on regardless. In addition to the helpful maps, the book contains some excellent photographs of floods in Rome, showing not only the severe (though apparently not to ancients) impact of the Tiber's flooding, but also giving a splendid idea of what the areas around the *Forum Romanum* looked like before the interventions of Mussolini. The value of the book lies in raising consciousness of the severity, frequency, and manifold impact of flooding for the citizens of the city.

It is now nearly thirty years since the first publication of *Reading Greek*, the Joint Association of Classical Teachers' one-year reading course for students and adult learners. Now comes an excellent second edition* – under the continued directorship of the indefatigable Peter Jones – that keeps all the best no-nonsense features of the first, whilst making it substantially more accessible and user-friendly. The texts used remain the same but, at last, vocabulary can now be found on the same page as the Greek to which it refers and background material is more sensitively integrated. This volume also reproduces the Greek–English vocabulary previously found only at the end of the Grammar and thus allows the text to be used as free-standing course book.[7] The volume of *Grammar and Exercises* has itself been entirely rewritten and redesigned.[8] The use of colour for headings and shaded boxes might be regarded by some as an unnecessary gimmick but, in contrast to the rather undifferentiated presentation of material in many other grammar books, this represents a particularly well thought out and successful innovation: never has the first aorist optative middle looked so enticing! It is, of course, a shame to have lost the compact form of the first edition, although the larger print is a definite improvement (though the new Greek typeface is rather disappointing). It is hard to tell how this edition will look by 2037 but, in its current guise, it can face the future with confidence.

By coincidence, 2007 saw the publication of the second edition of another guide to Ancient Greek that also first appeared in the 1970s, again pitched at the same student/adult learner market: *An Introduction to Ancient Greek. A Literary Approach*, revised by C. A. E. Luschnig and

[7] *Reading Greek. Text and Vocabulary*. Joint Association of Classical Teachers' Greek Course. Second Edition. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007. Pp. xxvii + 289. Paperback £17.99.

[8] *Reading Greek. Grammar and Exercises*. Joint Association of Classical Teachers' Greek Course. Second Edition. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007. Pp. xv + 543. Paperback £19.99.

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D. Mitchell.[9] Like *Reading Greek*, it confronts readers with 'real Greek' right from the start, though this is not to be mistaken for a reading course; rather, its fourteen 'lessons' provide learners with the essentials of grammar, supplemented by short literary quotations, practice exercises, and brief digressions into word derivations. The solid grammatical emphasis will appeal to many students, though mostly North American, since the (admittedly rather sensible) convention of placing the genitive after the nominative in tables of declensions inevitably restricts its appeal for the British market where NVAGD still rules. *Latin Alive and Well. An Introductory Text* by P. L. Chambers is another textbook geared for the North American market of learners at both high school and university.[10] Again, the simple fact that declensions run NGDAAV will severely restrict the uptake of this book on this side of the Atlantic. It offers a familiar mix of grammar, linguistic exercises, and graded unseens, leading in a short time towards the translation of 'real' Latin. Although it has a great cover picture of the Pantheon, it feels rather dated inside, with a handful of grey illustrations and a curious – and not entirely successful – diagram of key prepositions based on a goldfish in, on, over, and out of its bowl. *Reading Ovid. Stories from the Metamorphoses*⋆ by Peter Jones has been designed as a stand-alone collection of Ovidian stories for intermediate readers of Latin (based on the beginners' courses *Reading Latin* and *Wheelock's Latin*).[11] It provides a very good introduction to the literary sophistication of this most playful of poets, which engages well with recent work in the field, and quite sensibly refuses to impose a single meaning on Ovid's transformative epic: 'as soon as one attempts to pin the poem down by means of e.g. an over-arching structure or dominant theme, it promptly wriggles free' (1). A running vocabulary (including occasional notes on grammar and stylistic features) is complemented by a full vocabulary list at the end of the book. Jones also provides a running commentary for each episode, blending paraphrase and literary criticism with a distinct touch of Ovid's own narrative bravura. In his discussion of the Echo and Narcissus episode, for example, at the point where the young man falls for his own reflection, we read: 'This is a brilliant *tour de force*, prevented (just) from becoming a *tour de farce* because of the pathos and human sympathy that Ovid evokes' (120). It is no surprise that Ovid features as a prominent source in Paul Murgatroyd's *Mythical Monsters in Classical Literature*.[12] The book grew out of a first-level myth course taught by the author at McMaster University, Canada and is aimed both at students on similar courses and at that mythical chimaera: the interested general reader. The modest aim of the book – along with the task of introducing a role-call of mythical monsters – is to allow students to develop, chapter by chapter, 'a basic grounding in literary criticism' (1). What this means is that, by the end of the book, we should be able to appreciate that literary monsters have a literary ancestry that informs and enriches our understanding (as illustrated in the final chapter on the figure of Polyphemus). But this is as far as it goes. Although the book blurb claims

[9] *An Introduction to Ancient Greek. A Literary Approach*. Second edition. By C. A. E. Luschnig; revised by C. A. E. Luschnig and D. Mitchell. Indianopolis, IN, Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2007. Pp. xiv + 374. Paperback £23.

[10] *Latin Alive and Well. An Introductory Text*. By P. L. Chambers. Norman, OK, University of Oklahoma Press, 2007. Pp. xv + 350. Paperback $24.95.

[11] *Reading Ovid. Stories from the Metamorphoses*. By Peter Jones. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007. Pp. x + 272. Paperback £15.99.

[12] *Mythical Monsters in Classical Literature*. By P. Murgatroyd. London, Duckworth, 2007. Paperback £16.99.

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that this is an 'impeccably scholarly investigation', it is telling – and illustrative of the work as a whole – that the chapter on Ovid (104–118) contains only a single reference to any secondary work on the author and that is to G. K. Galinsky's 1975 *Ovid's Metamorphoses. An Introduction to the Basic Aspects*. This may be all that a student in a first-year class on myth wants, but it is hard not to feel disappointed in a book that sets its sights at such a level. *Inside Ancient Lucania. Dialogues in History & Archaeology* by Elena Isayev brings together literary and material evidence in a discussion of one region of Italy.[13] In doing so it sets out on a well-trodden, though still difficult, path. It is particularly successful in its analysis, partly because the way that questions and material are discussed is thematic. The region under study is Lucania – a roughly triangular area in the instep of Italy, bounded by Paestum, Metapontum, and Sybaris. This area is now remote and increasingly sparsely populated. What the book shows so effectively is that, rather than being a remote backwater waiting for the Romans to bring 'civilization', this region was densely populated in the second half of the first millennium BC, and that its numerous settlements were integrated into networks of exchange that extended into the rest of the Italian peninsula and beyond. After a brief introduction, the second chapter examines the identity (both literary and material, both internal and external) and culture of the region. Like the rest of the book, the writing is clear and theoretically well informed – outdated approaches are dealt with quickly, and alternative models deployed effectively. Chapter three interrogates the wide range of data in order to discuss the socio-political organization of the region. Unlike most of Italy and the Mediterranean, communities in Lucania were not organized into city-states (an instructive parallel is found in the results of the Bifferno Valley survey in Samnium: Barker [1995] *A Mediterranean Valley*). These were dispersed, fortified, or unfortified settlements, with a complex economic structure and sophisticated culture. The fourth chapter considers the period of interaction with Roman culture, at various levels and in various ways, which ultimately resulted in the abandonment or destruction of many of the sites in the third century BC. The final chapter outlines the vacillating fortunes of the region further with a second-century resurgence, followed by a first-century erosion of settlements. The chapter ends with the establishment of Roman villas in the area, and we feel (wrongly!) that we are back onto *terra cognita* again. The findings of the book are in accord with much of the recent work on 'pre-Roman' cultures in Italy in giving a distinct identity to a particular set of communities, and embedding them in far more complex cultural activities, on a local, regional, and trans-regional level, than we had hitherto appreciated. The Cambridge Companion series now runs to over one hundred and seventy titles on individual authors from Homer to Rushdie and topics such as 'The Actress' and 'The Harlem Renaissance'. *The Cambridge Companion to Greek and Roman Theatre*, edited by Marianne McDonald and J. Michael Walton, is the latest Classical contribution.[14] The excellent *Companion to Greek Tragedy* (edited by Pat Easterling) was published in 1997 and the potential overlap between these volumes is flagged up as an explicit

[13] *Inside Ancient Lucania. Dialogues in History & Archaeology*. By Elena Isayev. BICS Supplement 90. London, Institute of Classical Studies, University of London, 2007. Pp. xvii + 284. Paperback £50.

[14] *The Cambridge Companion to Greek and Roman Theatre*. Edited by Marianne McDonald and J. Michael Walton. Cambridge Companions to Literature. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007. Pp. xvi + 365. Hardback £45; paperback £17.99.

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concern by McDonald and Walton in their introduction. In their own words, the 'justification for this second Companion…is only in part that this one looks at comedy as well as tragedy, the Roman world as well as the Greek. More important is an acknowledgment…that the surviving written playtexts…form only one element of a broad theatrical tradition. The emphasis here is less on texts than on occasion, on the nature of a performance culture, on the religious thought underpinning every aspect of life…; all of this is reflected through the theatre of the times' (1). Performance culture theory has clearly gained momentum over the last decade, as is reflected in the volume, although it does not seem quite right to suggest that the earlier volume did not acknowledge the breadth of theatrical tradition that exists beyond the texts. This does not, however, diminish the strength of this book, including Fritz Graf on 'Religion and Drama', and interesting discussions of, *inter alia*, 'Lost Theatre and Performance Tradition in Greece and Italy' by Hugh Denard, theatrical space (enhanced by an array of computer models) by Richard Beacham, and an investigation into the materiality of classical theatre (from make-up to stage props) by Graham Ley. Ley is, in fact, the author of two recently published books of his own. First is a revised edition of his 1991 *A Short Introduction to the Ancient Greek Theater*.[15]* It is accessible for a reader coming to the subject without any familiarity with the Classical world and ranges widely within its 126 short pages. More in-depth coverage of a specific aspect of ancient theatre is supplied by a second book: *The Theatricality of Greek Tragedy. Playing Space and Chorus*.[16] Emphasis is given to the physical setting of the performance (Ley is professor of drama and theory at the University of Exeter), in particular the orchestra, which is shown to have been not the exclusive domain of the orchestra, but rather a location for the playing of scenes by actors. The quality of production is very high, in particular the illustrations (photographs, reconstruction drawings, and schematic plans – the latter a sort of theatrical version of the game 'battleships'). A list of the surviving plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides is appended (112–3), which usefully lists the plays not author by author but in chronological order.

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[15] *A Short Introduction to the Ancient Greek Theater*. By Graham Ley. Second edition. Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2007. Pp. xii + 126. Hardback £20.50; paperback £8.

[16] *The Theatricality of Greek Tragedy. Playing Space and Chorus*. By Graham Ley. Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2007. Pp. xx + 226. Hardback £25.50.

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