novel fictions of the gods as ancient kings are central to Euhemerus' legacy. There are some omissions in W.'s list of euhemeristic historians, most importantly Castor of Rhodes, who introduced a euhemeristic narrative into his influential chronography. While W.'s discussion of Euhemerism in Jewish literature is brief but solid, I can by no means concur with his statement that euhemerism plays only a minor rôle in second- to fifth-century Christian apologetic. Only eight Church Fathers might refer to Euhemerus, but the idea that the gods were in fact deified men is absent from very few patristic works. W.'s treatment of mediaeval Euhemerism is spotty and derivative.

W. has laid the groundwork for all future study of Euhemerus. There is small chance that his conclusions will become canonical, and he himself, to his credit, is responsible for this. His presentation of the views of other scholars is thorough and fair. On the whole, his book is a comprehensive guide to the research on an intriguing subject.

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COI SACRA PHILITAE

K. SPANOUDAKIS: *Philitas of Cos*. (*Mnemosyne* Suppl. 229.) Pp. xxviii + 454. Leiden, Boston, and Cologne: Brill, 2002. Cased. ISBN: 90-04-12428-4.

Nowacki's commentary on the poetical fragments of Philitas appeared in 1927, and in the following year Kuchenmüller dealt with these together with the grammatical fragments in 117 pages of entertaining Latin. History has repeated itself. Hot on the heels of the two-volume Italian edition of Philitas' poetical and grammatical remains by L. Sbardella and E. Dettori (Rome, 2000) comes S.'s independent treatment of the complete works. It started life as a doctoral thesis on the poetical fragments, and most of the book (pp. 1–345) is devoted to them; Dettori's edition of the grammatical fragments is almost five times as long as S.'s, which takes up only fifty pages.

Philitas is a tempting but frustrating subject for research. He was highly regarded both by Hellenistic Greek poets and by Augustan elegists, and his presence has been detected or suspected in a wide range of ancient writing. It is unfortunate, therefore, that the pathetically exiguous poetic fragments, amounting to about forty lines, provide so little material towards an assessment of his work.

Philitas would have admired the πόνος with which S. has set about his researches. He has amassed a great deal of material relevant to the fragments (including much on their diction and lexical range) and an even greater amount which is likely to be irrelevant. He has striven to go beyond earlier scholars in reconstructing, for example, the plot of *Demeter*, Philitas' most famous poem. On pp. 244–303 he examines in detail the seventh *Idyll* of Theocritus and the Callimachean hymns to Apollo and Demeter in the hope of detecting there the influence of Philitas. Most of this speculation, it has to be said, is very tenuous. Conjecture is cheerfully piled upon conjecture until the reader forgets just how little is actually known about the poem. Here is the chief problem with this long and learned book: after reading S.'s extensive discussions, one can hardly remember where probability ended and imaginative reconstruction began. At times the work seems almost to be an exercise in the association of ideas.

Sbardella's edition of the poetical fragments is for the most part compendious, usefully gathering together and assessing conjectures about the text, context, and meaning of what little survives. S. is prepared to chance his arm much more often. One

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example will characterize the main difference between them. Fr. 14 S. (17 Sb., 22 Powell, 18 Kuchenmüller) reads *βουγενέας φάμενος προσεβήσαο μακρὰ μελίσσας*. Sbardella prints the line in this form, and in a note of two-and-a-half pages records the views of various scholars, concluding that the reference to bugonia was probably made in passing. S., in a note of seven pages, sees here part of an aition for apiculture on the island of Cos (famous for its honey), an aition which could have been narrated at a feast given by Chalcon (Theoc. 7.6) and attended by Demeter, who may well have been offered the *κυκεών*, and whose arrival in disguise might perhaps have been heralded by the appearance of bees or bee-nymphs, *Μέλισσαι*. Moreover, the generation of bees from the rotting flesh of an ox is said to be reminiscent of Demeter's association with putrid pork at the Thesmophoria. S. adopts the conjecture *φθάμενος*, which Sbardella calls 'imprudente'. (Kuchenmüller, by contrast, sees no reason even to attribute this line to *Demeter*. 'Tamen non defuere', he adds, 'qui nesciendi impatientes multum terrae viderent.')

S. would have benefited from the services of a native speaker of English as copy-editor: there are numerous mis-spellings and unidiomatic expressions. He provides good indexes, but no translation of the testimonia or fragments. He is able to print one important testimonium unknown to Sbardella: an epigram in the recently published Posidippus collection (no. 63 Austin-Bastianini, ed. min.) sheds more light on the erection on Cos of a bronze statue of the poet. Until such time as a similarly lengthy sample of Philitas' verse is discovered, his meagre fragments will continue to raise unanswerable questions. S. must view the prospect of such a discovery with a mixture of excitement and apprehension.

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HELLENISTIC POETRY AND PROPAGANDA

A. COPPOLA: *Il re, il barbaro, il tiranno. Poesia e ideologia in età ellenistica.* (Saggi di antichità e tradizione classica 23.) Pp. 159. Padua: Esedra editrice, 2002. Paper, €18.10. ISBN: 88-86413-60-2.

Coppola's book focuses on one of the hottest issues for historians of the ancient world, the relationship between poetry and power. In spite of its subtitle, the book is not a comprehensive treatment of the rôle of poetry in the 'propaganda' fostered by Hellenistic kings and by their opponents, but is rather a collection of short and independent chapters, which could just as well have been published as separate articles.

The first one is a brief survey on some of the key themes in the Ptolemies' self-representation: the king as a conqueror of the east (Sesostris); the opposition between Greeks and barbarians; the concept of *Homonoia*. Unfortunately the author was unable to take account of some recent works on the same topics, such as Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy. Studies in Ptolemaic Propaganda* (Toronto, 2000), especially for the analysis of Philadelphos' *pompe*; for *Homonoia* in a fragment of Alexis (p. 39) use can be made of Di Marzio, *MD* 42 (1999), 167–86; for the chronology of Nicander (p. 50) see also Massimilla in *La Letteratura ellenistica. Problemi e prospettive di ricerca* (Rome, 2000), pp. 127–37; on Daphitas (p. 51) add Braund, *CQ* 32 (1982), 350–7. In the second chapter, after a short presentation of the *status quaestionis* on the chronology of Lycophron and his work, C. offers an interpretation of some passages of the *Alexandra*, mostly related to western Greece

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