Greece & Rome, Vol. 50, No. 1, April 2003

SUBJECT REVIEWS

(⋆ denotes that a book is specially recommended for school libraries)

Greek Literature

The identity of 'Homer', with all that hangs on it as regards the origins and status of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, is the oldest, most persistent mystery in the history of Western literature. But maybe it is no mystery at all. Reflecting a recent shift of critical attention from authors to audiences (the former being, on this model, constructed by the latter), Barbara Graziosi's book *Inventing Homer*[1] approaches the question of 'who was Homer?' via the Greeks' own quasi-biographical accounts of the supposed creator of their greatest epics. Graziosi examines archaic and classical conceptions of Homer *qua* author as evidence for evolving responses to the poems themselves: 'inventing the poet constituted a powerful means of thinking about the poems'. She traces the idea of Homeric authorship back to the separation between rhapsodes (a term she takes, not unproblematically, to designate only reciters of others' works) and 'poets', i.e. composers, of epic: it is this distinction, evoking the 'absent author' of recited poems, that (together, perhaps, with written texts) brought the issue of Homer's identity alive. Aspects of that identity were then fashioned in accordance with varying evaluations of the poems: disputes over Homer's birthplace and date, for example, reflected a sense of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*'s Panhellenic appeal and lack of connection to any one performance context; the idea of blindness could be used to signify Homer's 'distance' from particular audiences or his possession of quasi-divine insight, and his status as a poor wanderer could convey an image of poetic authority independent of political power; anecdotes about Homer's relationship to other poets mediated arguments over which works were truly, genuinely Homeric. Where does this leave matters in relation to modern conceptions of 'Homer', which have fluctuated, broadly speaking, between the opposite poles of individual genius and impersonal, collective tradition? Graziosi concludes that all 'biographies' of Homer, whether ancient or modern, can be nothing other than ways of projecting judgements of Homeric poetry (whatever gets included in that category), though modern scholars, influenced by Alexandrian scholarship as well as Judaeo-Christian ideas of 'god-like' authors, privilege their own theories over the supposedly naïve fancies of ancient biographers, who had, Graziosi argues, a more open-ended willingness to go on recreating images of the author without claiming to have found the definitive version. This well-documented book (which stays silent, however, about what *may* be the earliest reference to 'Homer', if we accept Callinus fr. 6 West) lucidly demonstrates that it is well worth being interested in what motivated and shaped Homeric 'biography'. Its picture of the emergence of epic authorship depends, however, on a reversible logic: the rise of rhapsodes (in Graziosi's sense) could just as easily have been a symptom as a cause of the idea of epic authors. So one may be entitled

[1] *Inventing Homer*. The Early Reception of Epic. By Barbara Graziosi. Cambridge U.P., 2002. Pp. xiii + 285. £40.

https://doi.org/10.1093/gr/50.1.102 Published online by Cambridge University Press

to believe that reports of the death of the author are still premature. If Graziosi exposes some of the biases of modern Homeric scholarship, the same is true, from a different angle, of Jonathan Burgess's *The Tradition of the Trojan War in Homer and the Epic Cycle*.[2] Burgess seeks to correct what he sees as the imbalance of prevailing views about the poems that eventually (but only, he believes, after editorial manipulation in the Hellenistic period) formed the Epic Cycle. Those poems, Burgess maintains, were not originally produced in response to the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* but embodied an older, independent mythological tradition of the Trojan War; the scope of the poems is misleadingly represented by the surviving summary in Proclus. Moreover, on the basis of a valuable reconsideration of both literary and visual evidence (including putative illustrations of the Cyclops episode from the *Odyssey*), as well as the difficulties of disseminating such lengthy works within archaic culture, Burgess argues that the allegedly early influence of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* (whose textual 'crystallisation' he is inclined to date to the seventh century) has been greatly exaggerated; traces of their impact do not appear much before 600. All in all, the traditions of the Trojan War continued to be multifarious and fluid in the archaic period, with a 'Homeric' strain of epic poetry (expanding elaborately on individual episodes) coexisting alongside the 'Cyclic' type (which used a different narrative strategy to give more of an overview of events) – the latter being indeed occasionally present within the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* themselves. This is a bracingly sceptical treatment of some important issues. It is successful in casting doubt on the orthodoxy of the Cyclic poems as 'spin-offs' from the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, though the same uncertainties which Burgess rightly exploits for his negative arguments could be used to question some of his own more conjectural claims about the pre-Homeric character of Cyclic material; by positing a tradition that was 'fluid yet stable', Burgess allows himself to some extent to have it both ways. But this is a fresh, engaging exercise in heterodox scholarship. Michael Crudden's **Homeric Hymns*[3] was reviewed in the last edition (*G&R* 49 [2002], 239) as a stylish, accurate translation particularly well supplied with notes; this is the anticipated World's Classics edition, which appears with admirable promptness and deserves to be widely used. Stanley Lombardo, whose translator's pedigree already includes Homer, Hesiod, and Callimachus, has produced a new version of seventy-three fragments of *Sappho*.[4] Lombardo mostly abandons Sappho's own forms and replaces them with the resources of modern verse for the reading eye: spacing on the page is exploited in all its varieties to highlight rhythmical phrases that foreground Sapphic nuances and emphases – as well as evoking some of the lacunae in the texts, since Lombardo, influenced by a modernist aesthetic that goes back to Ezra Pound, celebrates Sappho's remains as a set of 'beautiful, isolated limbs'. While inviting the reader to dwell on individual words and images, Lombardo's translations do not overelaborate Sappho's language, though they occasionally engage in wishful thinking ('you came and you did it', for example, involves an unlikely view of the start of fr. 48, here no. 61). Lombardo has a penchant for gestural

[2] *The Tradition of the Trojan War in Homer and the Epic Cycle*. By Jonathan S. Burgess. Johns Hopkins U.P., Baltimore, 2002. Pp. xvi + 295. 24 illustrations. £31.

[3] *The Homeric Hymns*. Translated with introduction and notes by Michael Crudden. World's Classics, Oxford U.P., 2002. Pp. xxviii + 159. £7.99.

[4] *Sappho: Poems and Fragments*. Translated by Stanley Lombardo, edited by Susan Warden, introduction by Pamela Gordon. Hackett, Indianapolis, 2002. Pp. xxvii + 68, with 1 illustration. Hardback £24.95, paper £5.45.

https://doi.org/10.1093/gr/50.1.102 Published online by Cambridge University Press

expressions: in the famous fr. 31 (here no. 20) he renders two occurrences of the verb *phainesthai* by 'Look at him' and 'Look at me'. His versions are attractively unfussy, and complemented by an introduction from Pamela Gordon that gives the general reader some sense of how such broken fragments of Sappho have reached us, suggests that we might try to read each one 'as though we were reading a note in a bottle', and concludes that the patterns of desire expressed in the poems are not reducible to modern sexual categories. Rush Rehm has already made notable contributions to those theatrically orientated approaches that have bulked large in recent work on Greek tragedy. In his new book *The Play of Space*[5] he investigates the multiple significance of space in the original Athenian experience of tragedy. Others, including David Wiles (see *G&R* 45 [1998], 88) and Lowell Edmunds (see *G&R* [1997], 220), have brought modern theories of theatrical space to bear on Greek tragedy. Rehm shares with them the conviction that space has been neglected by text-based schools of criticism, but he differs from them (sometimes with polemical sharpness: those jostling for space use their elbows) in rejecting attempts to turn spatial meaning into a 'text' with its own semiotics. Instead, he regards theatrical space from a phenomenological viewpoint, as a medium of firsthand lived experience, though one with many aspects both physical and imagined – from the 'landscape architecture' of the Theatre of Dionysus in which performance was embedded, to all the places where plays can carry their audiences in the mind's eye. Rehm divides up his thoughts on space into a series of thematic chapters dealing with homecomings (Orestes and Heracles), 'eremitic' isolation (Antigone, Ajax, Philoctetes, Prometheus), the drama of the body (Hecuba, Euripides' Electra, the *Bacchae*), time and memory (*Oedipus Tyrannus*), and barbarian 'otherness' (*Persians*, *Medea*); but his approach throughout is eclectic rather than ideologically driven, weaving together consideration of stagecraft, imagery, dramatic geography, and much besides. The writing is constantly stimulating, almost brimming with ideas and suggestions (some more compelling than others: I would take some persuading that fifth-century actors were illiterate). No one studying Greek tragedy could fail to find things of great interest in Rehm's rich text and hundred pages of endnotes. But it must be said that Rehm's approach would collapse without that thing called the 'text' of the plays: that's where he finds all his material, and he would do well to drop the idea that it is somehow a separate object of attention. James Morwood's ⋆*The Plays of Euripides*[6] is a brief guide that draws together thoughts partly generated by Morwood's work in recent years on some of the World's Classics versions of Euripides. Morwood adopts the very simple approach of providing a short section (three to five pages) on each of the plays (including *Rhesus*); there is a brief overview in the Epilogue. In keeping with the series' target audience of Classical Civilization classes in schools, Morwood eschews most kinds of technicality (though it doesn't help that misprints appear in terms like *parodos* and *hamartia*). His book's most appealing features are an enthusiastic advocacy of Euripides (every single play a masterpiece, he claims . . .) and a nice use of comparative references to Shakespeare and other later playwrights. But covering so many plays in so little space induces Morwood to fall back on basic paraphrase, some clichéd critical suggestions

[5] *The Play of Space*. Spatial Transformation in Greek Tragedy. By Rush Rehm. Princeton U.P., 2002. Pp. xi + 448, with 12 illustrations. £29.95.

[6] *The Plays of Euripides*. By James Morwood. Classical World Series. Bristol Classical Press (Duckworth), London, 2002. Pp. vii + 99, with 6 illustrations. Paperback £8.99.

https://doi.org/10.1093/gr/50.1.102 Published online by Cambridge University Press

(Heracles 'must discover for the first time what it really means to be a man'), and a chirpy style that sometimes lurches into the demotic ('Well, yes, but hang on a minute', 'punchily in-yer-face', and the like). The result is perhaps all too eminently useful for students, some of whom will find ready-quarried blocks for their essays here. If Euripides remains one of the most controversial figures in Greek literature, the name of a possible friend of his, Timotheus of Miletus, no longer does much for the pulse of most Hellenists (Wilamowitz, exactly a century ago, called him 'boring'). Yet Timotheus was himself a great, even notorious, poetico-musical innovator in the late-fifth and early-fourth centuries, a central figure in the so-called 'New Music' (harmonically daring, verbally circumlocutory) of the period, and one whose work may have continued to be performed well into the Hellenistic period. J. H. Hordern's *The Fragments of Timotheus of Miletus*[7] undertakes a close analysis of Timotheus's scanty remains, above all the fragments of his *Persians*, a 'nome' (or lyric narrative) whose account of the battle of Salamis shows marked Aeschylean influence, gives us our fullest sense of the baroque convolutions of Timotheus's language, and also contains an important passage in which the poet boasts of his novelty but defends himself against accusations of poetic iconoclasm. Hordern's introduction carefully reappraises Timotheus's life and poetic activity, while the commentary provides detailed explication of linguistic, metrical, and thematic points. This is a work of meticulous philology (though let down by a pair of lamentably perfunctory indexes), and one which helps one to glimpse how Timotheus's writing was simultaneously enmeshed in earlier poetic traditions yet proto-Hellenistic in its self-conscious artifice. We move into realms of still more esoteric scholarly rescue work with Giuseppe Morelli's *Teatro attico e pittura vascolare*.[8] This book sets about the work of reconstructing the tragedy *Achilles Thersites-Slayer* by Chaeremon (first half of the fourth century), which dealt with Achilles' killing of Thersites after the latter, on one account, had mocked him for (supposedly) having been in love with the Amazon Penthesileia. Morelli starts by assembling and sifting the evidence for various versions of the Achilles-Penthesileia episode, from the Cyclic poem *Aithiopis* to imperial Greek epic; he then proceeds to re-examine the testimonia to Chaeremon's play against the background of other ancient material on the death of Thersites, including an Apulian crater in Boston which shows a beheaded Thersites, Menelaus restraining an angry Diomedes (kinsman of Thersites), who appears to be drawing his sword to attack Achilles, and a large number of other Greeks, as well as several deities. Relying on a posited link between the vase and the play, Morelli attempts to piece together the latter's plot. This book contains convenient collections of material on the Penthesileia and Thersites myths; its arguments form a vigorous contribution to a debate, above all, on the interpretation of fourth-century Italian mythological vases in relation to Attic theatre. There is much here for specialists to chew over, but the subject is fraught with speculative assumptions. New Oxford Classical Texts are a relative rarity these days. Mervin Dilts' *Demosthenis Orationes*,[9] appearing ninety-nine years after the equivalent volume of the original Demosthenes OCT (misdated on the dustjacket),

[7] *The Fragments of Timotheus of Miletus*. Edited with an introduction and commentary by J. H. Hordern. Oxford U.P., 2002. Pp. xxii + 266. £45.

[8] *Teatro attico e pittura vascolare*. Una tragedia di Cheremone nella ceramica italiota. By Giuseppe Morelli. Spudasmata 84. Georg Olms, Hildesheim, 2001. Pp. 179 + 7 illustrations. Euros 32.

[9] *Demosthenis Orationes*. Volume 1. Edited by M. R. Dilts. Oxford Classical Texts. Oxford U.P., 2002. Pp. xxxiii + 318. £33.50.

https://doi.org/10.1093/gr/50.1.102 Published online by Cambridge University Press

and containing speeches 1–18, is the first of a set of four that will replace the older, imperfectly reliable, edition. In addition to an apparatus based on a scrupulous reinspection of both the medieval manuscripts and ancient papyri, Dilts provides an apparatus of testimonia (as late as the fourteenth century): since Demosthenes was much quoted by rhetoricians and others, this garners useful information not only for the text but also for the reception of the speeches. All in all, this well executed edition should rapidly establish itself as standard. Space prohibits more than a mention of the only comic item in the present batch, *Menandro: La Samia*,[10] a school edition produced by two Italian teachers with the express aim of supplying both linguistic support and a lively introduction to the theatrical and cultural character of New Comedy. The editors' enthusiasm is commendable; the book is very clearly presented, though there are numerous Greek misprints in the commentary. On the Hellenistic front, R. J. Clare's *The Path of the Argo*[11] offers a close reading (though a deliberately selective one: he is lightest on book 3) that teases out a variety of complexities in the texture of Apollonius's epic: topics investigated include the self-reflexive allusiveness, but also the calculated silences, of the prologue; the constantly shifting frames of reference, including tensions between the ideas of quest, wandering and return (*nostos*), involved in the outward voyage in books 1–2; the competing pulls of Odyssean/fantastic and Hellenistic/realistic geography in the journey home, and the difference that Medea's presence makes to that journey; the imagistic strands that connect various parts of the story (especially descriptions of crowd behaviour) but also sometimes involve incongruity disconcerting to the reader (as e.g. in the bee simile for the Lemnian women at 1.879–85); and Apollonius's concern with the nature and problems of communication, as reflected in interplay between the language of the poem's narrator and characters. Clare opens no grand new perspective on an epic whose episodic multiplicity he repeatedly stresses, but a measured blend of linguistic, thematic and narrative criticism that integrates many approaches already well embedded in the subject. Like many Apollonian critics he sometimes strains to convince the reader that every kind of complexity is intrinsically worth pursuing. But he does succeed in drawing out a wealth of detail that will repay study by anyone who wants to reexamine the *Argonautika* patiently and at close quarters. The modern resurgence of critical interest in the Greek novel, together with Imperial Greek literature more generally, is reflected in the merits of Tim Whitmarsh's new translation of Achilles Tatius, *Leucippe and Clitophon*,[12] a novel in which erotic permutations and geographical displacements are interwoven in constantly shifting patterns of pursuit and desire. The translation is generally less florid and sensuous, but also less fanciful, than Winkler's widely used version; its poise and high level of reliability are backed up by helpful notes as well as by Helen Morales' crisp introduction, which outlines the cultural and literary setting of Achilles Tatius' work (including its Phoenician character, elements of Platonic pastiche, sophistic mannerisms, and sexual ambiguities). This welcome volume will presumably be paperbacked in World's Classics; if so, that will

[10] *Menandro: La Samia*. With introduction, translation, and commentary by Nicola Pice and Rosanna Castellano. Edipuglia, Bari, 2001. Pp. 224, with 16 illustrations.

[11] *The Path of the Argo*. Language, Imagery and Narrative in the *Argonautica* of Apollonius Rhodius. By R. J. Clare. Cambridge U.P., 2002. Pp. x + 301. £45.

[12] *Achilles Tatius: Leucippe and Clitophon*. Translated with notes by Tim Whitmarsh; introduction by Helen Morales. Oxford U.P., 2002. Pp. 40 + 164. £40.

https://doi.org/10.1093/gr/50.1.102 Published online by Cambridge University Press

greatly help Achilles' novel to find its way onto more undergraduate syllabuses.

Finally a curiosity which gives a novel twist to the traditions of the picture-book of Greek mythology. Andrew Calimach's *Lovers' Legends*[13] intersperses a loose rendition of extracts from pseudo-Lucian's *Erotes* with indulgently free re-tellings of Greek myths involving male homoeroticism (Zeus and Ganymede, Apollo and Hyacinthus, etc.) and a number of triste black-and-white illustrations. There are basic notes on 'sources' for the myths, but the whole venture is flimsy: characteristic is a (reversed) image from the Briseis painter's name vase, captioned 'Achilles and Briseis' but showing only the heavily swathed hero and a well-bearded male, making one think that Calimach misidentifies the former as Briseis.

STEPHEN HALLIWELL

[13] *Lovers' Legends*. The Gay Greek Myths. Restored and retold by Andrew Calimach. Haiduk Press, New Rochelle, 2002. Pp. v + 179. $25.

Latin Literature

I am uncertain how to react to our first book, *Oxford Readings in Menander, Plautus, and Terence*[1] edited by Erich Segal. After a wide-ranging and rather elegant essay by the editor on the history of ancient comedy and the scholarship it has inspired, there follow 21 articles by 21 authors, and 'Acknowledgements' which reveal (in an order slightly different from that of the collection) that all but one of them (J. C. B. Lowe's 'The Intrigue of Terence's *Self-Tormentor*') were published earlier elsewhere over the years from 1969 to 1998. Monica Gale's ⋆*Lucretius and the Didactic Epic*[2] is an attractive booklet which should readily achieve its stated aim (page viii) 'to make this book accessible both to readers approaching the *De Rerum Natura* in the original Latin, and to those reading it in translation.' More importantly, the book is written in a style both attractive and readily accessible but not, in any way, patronizing. Sadly, even though it is likely to bring real benefit to the profession, it is the sort of book that the RAE has made harder and harder for those on this side of the Irish Sea to write. David Slavitt's *Propertius in Love*[3] is a translation of the Propertian corpus with very sparse notes. Paraphrase would, however, be a more accurate term. A translator is entitled to paraphrase or modify or bowdlerize or 'improve' in any way at all. However, prospective readers should know what the translation is doing and, in this case, should be warned that this is not a translation suitable for teaching Propertius in translation. One example must suffice. At 3.4.11, Propertius invokes *Mars pater, et sacrae fatalia lumina Vestae*, which Slavitt renders: 'I pray to the reverend Mars and the Vestal Virgins pregnant with fate'; 'the reverend Mars' instantly demotes from god to man, the prayer is transferred from Vesta to her virgins and 'pregnant' is a concept not only absent from Propertius but, in juxtaposition to 'Virgins', one that creates a highly suggestive oxymoron which students would inevitably seize on and attribute to Propertius. Griffin's ⋆*Virgil*,[4]

[1] *Oxford Readings in Menander, Plautus, and Terence*. Edited by Erich Segal. Oxford U.P., 2001. Pp. xxviii + 280. Hardback £50, paperback £19.99.

[2] *Lucretius and the Didactic Epic*. Classical World Series. By Monica R. Gale. Bristol Classical Press, 2001. Pp. viii + 70. £8.99.

[3] *Propertius in Love The Elegies*. Sextus Propertius. Translated by David R. Slavitt. University of California Press, 2002. Pp. xxxvi + 277. Hardback £29.95, paperback £10.95.

[4] *Virgil*. By Jasper Griffin. Bristol Classical Press, 2nd edition, 2001. Pp. vi + 114. £8.99.

https://doi.org/10.1093/gr/50.1.102 Published online by Cambridge University Press