General

What better way to open a celebration of the ongoing vitality and ever-increasing diversity of classical scholarship than with Wiseman in his edited collection of essays, *Classics in Progress*?[1] The range of interests and approaches to the ancient world represented in this volume – from classical literature to social history, from philosophy to the interpretation of material evidence – bears witness to the extraordinary breadth of the subject. In spite of their diversity of content, these essays are united by their strongly methodological emphasis. This is a book celebrating the openness to new ways of thinking about mostly old material, which characterizes modern ways of approaching the classical world and underpins the way in which the subject has survived, and indeed flourished, against the odds. But the volume is by no means a mere display-cabinet of methodologies, nor is it complacently self-congratulatory about the state of the subject in the early twenty-first century. Far from being purely resumptive, an opportunity to take stock, the volume pushes the subject yet further forward with a series of essays which are rich in substance as well as in ideas, and which one by one exemplify the intellectual rigour and interest which ensure the progress alluded to in the book's title. The list of contributors provides a roll-call of some of the most influential and lively classical scholars in Britain and guarantees that any reader will be both enlightened and enthused. An entirely different contribution to the history of the subject is offered by *Teaching the English Wissenschaft*,[2] which provides an edition of fifty-five letters written in the first half of the nineteenth century by the English statesman and philhellene, Sir George Cornewall Lewis, to the German Hellenist, Karl Otfried Müller. Dealing with an incomplete set of correspondence is a technique of course familiar to classicists who have read their Cicero or Pliny (indeed, many of the letters concerning drafts of as-yet unpublished work are strikingly reminiscent of Pliny's letters to his literary friends), and, even without Müller's replies, we nevertheless gain considerable insight into the nature and extent of the two-way correspondence and into the literary milieu of the period. In particular, the influence of German classical scholarship on the formation of an English approach to the subject will interest all those who are concerned with the history of our discipline. The importance of the nineteenth century for the development of classics as an academic subject is brought out also in *The Culture of Classicism*,[3] which tells the tale of how American universities in this period adopted classical culture into their curricula, with the essentially moral purpose of finding models for behaviour in the modern world. Intertwined with this use of the classical past for educative purposes in the broadest possible sense came changes in the nature of American classical scholarship itself, which turned its focus from philological matters to a wider study of civilizations and *mores* (see chapter 3, 'From Words to Worlds, 1820–1870). All in all, this makes for an interesting read, illuminating the reasons for the particular direction taken by classical studies in the USA, and encouraging an enhanced

[1] *Classics in Progress*. Essays on Ancient Greece and Rome. Edited by T. P. Wiseman. Oxford U.P. for the British Academy, 2002. Pp. xvi + 451, with 24 figures. Hardback £45.

[2] *Teaching the English Wissenschaft*. The Letters of Sir George Cornewall Lewis to Karl Otfried Müller (1828–1839). Edited with a commentary by William M. Calder III, R. Scott Smith, and John Vaio. Spudasmata Band 85. Georg Olms, Hildesheim, 2002. Pp. xxvi + 120, with a frontispiece. Paperback €18,80.

[3] *The Culture of Classicism*. Ancient Greece and Rome in American Intellectual Life 1780–1910. By Caroline Winterer. John Hopkins U.P., Baltimore, 2002. Pp. x + 244. Hardback £31.

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self-consciousness among classicists from any tradition of the strong determining factors underlying modern approaches to the ancient world. While we are looking across the broad time-span from antiquity to the modern world, several other recent publications deserve note. The extent to which reception studies and comparative literature have flourished in recent years is testimony not only to the extraordinary influence of classical literature, ideas, and visual images on later artistic production, but also to the increasingly broad horizons of classical and other scholars who lift their gaze beyond the boundaries of their own period or discipline. *Grafting Helen*[4] represents one such attempt to span the centuries, or rather to investigate the way in which one of the most evocative of classical figures, Helen of Troy, was snatched again from the Homeric epics and carried through ancient Greek literature, through French literature of the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and on to the modern era. The continued abduction of Helen is seen by the author as in some sense emblematic of the way in which the whole of classical antiquity has been appropriated, adapted, remodelled, and re-used throughout the subsequent history of the Western world. The tone is occasionally extravagant, and one wonders how the story might have read had it included a wider range of 'reception' literature – German is an obvious candidate here – but this is an undeniably bold and stimulating work. If *Grafting Helen* takes a single tale and explores its role as a symbol for the culture which produced it and as a metaphor for the transmission of that culture through time, *Ariadne's Thread*[5] occupies the other end of the spectrum in terms of its ostensibly comprehensive range. It is described on the dust-cover as 'a mini-encyclopedia', containing more than one hundred 'international oral tales', which occur in the literature of Greece and Rome, and which are in this volume arranged according to type (dragon-slayer stories; home-coming husband; Potiphar's wife) with ancient and modern variants set alongside each other. The subject-matter is fascinating, and it is striking to see how commonly shared many well-known tales from antiquity are. A wealth of such material gathered together is likely to prove a helpful reference-work for those who wish to take the subject further. The exercise is, however, fraught with difficulties: what is the relationship between 'oral tales' and the tales preserved in written form in literature from different periods of history? The distinction seems rather blurred in this volume. To what degree are tales embedded in and produced by particular times and places, and reflective of their own societies? To what degree is it therefore helpful to extricate and synthesize across place and time commonly shared narrative shapes and themes? Beyond the mere identification of a similarity, what further illumination can be gleaned from such comparisons? The same kind of critical questions concerning comparability and context should also be asked by readers of *The Edge of Meaning*.[6] This is not a book which classicists will automatically pick up, given the enigmatic title. However, there are chapters devoted to the *Odyssey* and to Plato's *Phaedrus*, and another which provides a rather curious word-by-word analysis of the first sentence of *Odyssey* 14. It does indeed, as the author concedes (50), seem 'an enormous jump from *Huckleberry Finn* . . . to the *Odyssey*',

[4] *Grafting Helen*. The Abduction of the Classical Past. By Matthew Gumpert. University of Wisconsin Press, 2001. Pp. xiv + 338. Paperback £18.50.

[5] *Ariadne's Thread*. A Guide to International Tales found in Classical Literature. By William Hansen. Cornell U.P., Ithaca and London, 2001. Pp. xv + 548. Cloth £29.50.

[6] *The Edge of Meaning*. By James Boyd White. The University of Chicago Press, 2001. Pp. xiv + 301, with 10 figures. Hardback £19.

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though strenuous attempts are made to show that the combination of works addressed in this book does make sense in analytical terms. At times the selection may strike the reader as just a little too eclectic to stomach, when alongside the literary studies appear chapters on Vermeer's paintings, a legal case from the modern world, and the poetry of Frost and Herbert. However, the undertaking is bold and the range of the selection is at least germane to the author's attempt to explore deep structures of human meaning and significance. Two further volumes span the centuries, but within a more generically bound framework. *The Death of Comedy*[7] traces the comic genre from the sixth century BC right through Aristophanes, Plautus and Terence, to Marlowe, Shakespeare, Molière, and Samuel Beckett. It might seem inevitable that such an undertaking must descend into superficial survey. It is perhaps true that dedicated experts in any one of the authors treated would be better directed to more specialist literature. However, the book is by no means lacking in important insights, and the sweep across the longue durée, undertaken as it is with an eye open to points of correspondence, provides additional illumination to each part. Above all, the author's enthusiasm for his theme makes the work readable and enjoyable, surely appropriate given the subject-matter. *Iambic Ideas*[8] offers a rich selection of essays from a range of international experts on topics from early Greek lyric poetry through the Hellenistic period with Callimachus, on to the Latin iambics of Catullus and Horace, and finally into late antiquity. Each contribution is of considerable value on its own merits, and the collection as a whole reveals both the coherence and the diversity of the 'genre'. Of course, one might object that it is hardly surprising that a work of this kind should unearth such a tension, but that would be to oversimplify. The various elements in the execution of the plan are full of insights and are underpinned by the most serious scholarship; and the revelation that a particular, and apparently unified, verse form might change according to time and circumstance is not, after all, so obvious that it is not well worth making, especially when it is done in so detailed and engaging a fashion. *Who Needs Greek?*[9] rounds off this group of publications on reception and classical tradition(s). Goldhill's dynamic study of the potency of Hellenism provides a real contrast with *The Culture of Classicism* (above). The latter's concern with the classical ideal as a model for the creation of American university curricula and social *mores* is replaced in Goldhill's book by the use and appropriation of Greekness at moments of revolution and conflict. The quiet halls of academe are overtaken here by an altogether more passionate world of scandal on the stage, heresies, and burnings at the stake. All of this is illustrative of the ongoing power of all things Greek in the modern world, and Goldhill neatly uses his study of their reception further to illuminate the nature of the Greek world itself, both through reflections back from later times and through an examination of ancient visions of Hellenism, those of Lucian and Plutarch (clearly playing off the author's recent work on the Second Sophistic). This is a book that will make the reader sit up and think hard about the more turbulent aspects of the

[7] *The Death of Comedy*. By Erich Segal. Harvard U.P., London, 2001. Pp. xi + 589. Hardback £23.95.

[8] *Iambic Ideas*. Essays on a Poetic Tradition from Archaic Greece to the Late Roman Empire. Edited by Alberto Cavarzere, Antonio Aloni, and Alessandro Barchiesi. Rowman and Littlefield, Oxford, 2002. Pp. xiv + 263. Paperback £20.95.

[9] *Who Needs Greek?* Contests in the Cultural History of Hellenism. By Simon Goldhill. Cambridge U.P., 2002. Pp. vii + 326, with 20 illustrations. Paperback £15.95.

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Hellenic legacy. Next, some books on less well-worn themes: *Ptolemy's* Geography[10] provides not only a translation of the theoretical chapters of this important but little-consulted work, but also a helpful introduction in which such issues as the manuscript tradition and later reception of the work are set alongside discussion of Ptolemy himself, the production of the *Geography*, sources, and intellectual background. Such information is crucial in facilitating the appreciation of what follows, which will be unfamiliar to most readers. However, the text is an important one, not only for geographers and scientists, but also for all classicists who claim to be interested in intellectual history. Ptolemy's undertaking was an extraordinary one: it was unsurpassed for its topography and its map-making methods for more than one and a half millennia. For these reasons alone, the *Geography* would deserve to be brought to greater prominence. But readers will also delight in the beautiful illustrations provided by this volume – a feast for the eyes if ever respite is needed from the lists of coordinates. Alexander K. Nefedkin's *Chariotry of the Ancient Greeks*[11] traces the history of chariots and chariot warfare from the four-wheeled war wagons of third-millennium BC Mesopotamia to the scythed *quadrigae* of Mithridates VI at the end of the second century BC. The author is a scholar from St Petersburg and the book is in Russian, and will not therefore be accessible to the majority of *G&R* readers (although there is a 9-page English summary and an English index), but it is a pleasure to record the publication of such a thoroughly documented and illustrated history of a relatively neglected area of the ancient world. The sources used include not only familiar classical ones, but others such as late Babylonian cuneiform tablets and the Mahabharata as Nefedkin traces the evolution and development of the first chariots, their dominance on the battlefield in the second half of the second millennium BC, their gradual replacement by cavalry, and finally their reduction to service as the military vehicle of the commander. Medieval Latinists will be pleased by the appearance of two fascicules of the *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources*[12] – volumes VI and VII, covering M and N respectively. These are clearly, at one level, works for a limited readership of specialists in the field, but anyone who has cause or interest to go exploring there will find them indispensable research tools. Two further very different books, both collections of articles, continue to demonstrate the breadth of the influence and inspiration that Don Fowler offered and continues to offer classical scholars. The first, *Cultivating the Muse. Struggles for Power and Inspiration in Classical Literature*,[13] was jointly edited by Fowler and Efrossini Spentzou, one of his doctoral students. The book developed from a day conference held at Wolfson College, Oxford on 4th May 1996, and there is an impressive array of contributors from Britain and abroad. The Muses and the inspiration they offer provide the theme for the volume, but, as Spentzou

[10] *Ptolemy's* Geography. An Annotated Translation of the Theoretical Chapters. By J. Lennart Berggren and Alexander Jones. Princeton U.P., 2002. Pp. xii + 216, with 6 colour illustrations, 13 maps, 20 line illustrations, and 1 halftone. Paperback £24.95.

[11] *Chariotry of the Ancient Greeks*. (16th–1st centuries BC). By Alexander K. Nefedkin. The Centre for Oriental Researches, St Petersburg, 2001. pp. 521, with illustrations. Hardback 270 roubles.

[12] *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources*. Fascicules VI M and VII N. Both edited by D. R. Howlett, assisted by J. Blundell, T. Christchev, and C. White, and by T. Christchev and C. White, respectively. Oxford U.P. for the British Academy, 2002. Paperback £25 each volume.

[13] *Cultivating the Muse*. Struggles for Power and Inspiration in Classical Literature. Edited by Efrossini Spentzou and Don Fowler. Oxford U.P., 2002. Pp. xii + 312. Hardback £45.

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admits, the volume offers much in the way of dissenting voices: 'thoughts hinted at one point are voiced explicitly at another; suspicions intimated in one chapter are openly acknowledged or scotched in another; and concerns apparently settled in one essay are yet again revisited and undermined in another' (22–3). The various chapters focus on Homer, Plato, Greek Drama, Apollonius, Horace, Propertius, Ovid, and Statius, among others, and the absence of a single point of view is entirely in keeping with the thoughts of Don Fowler, whom we quoted in the last volume, writing about another conference: 'one of the nice things . . . is that we did not agree all the time' (*G&R* 49.2 (2002), 272). Yun Lee Too dedicates *Education in Greek and Roman Antiquity*[14] to Don Fowler. This volume, through its various contributors, offers a historical narrative from early Greek education through to the early Christian period. In this way it offers a more coherent picture than *Cultivating the Muse*, but nonetheless the various writers approach education from very different directions, whether literary, historical, philosophical, allegorical, or legal, and the chapters stand as independent studies rather than offering a continuous narrative. Again this is a virtue, as Too claims: 'Together these studies offer the realization that there are ancient educations, rather than one single ancient education, pluralizing the narrative which stands as the history of education in antiquity' (16). The multiplication of such assertions might be thought to be representative of the post-modernism of our age, but we rather think that they are also the product of changing publication practice, as conference papers tend to be collected together rather than standing independently in journals such as this. However, Too does identify the volume's consistent engagement with the social and political dimension of education. To offer only three examples, Ober explores the tension between conformity and dissidence within citizen education in classical Athens, Corbeill explores how Rome managed to appropriate Hellenic education by doing so selectively, a practice which Rappe identifies in a later period as Christian education added to and subtracted from the existing pagan *paideia*. We turn finally to present-day classical education with the appearance of two more volumes in the fourth edition of the ⋆*Cambridge Latin Course*,[15] books III and IV (replacing the old IIIA and IIIB respectively). They follow the same pattern as the two earlier volumes of this edition: a bigger format, updated background sections, the use of new colour photographs, and comprehensions designed to be approachable for students as homework rather than purely for class discussion. The two last are to be welcomed without reservation, the second largely, but not always so: why, for instance, have the Agricola inscriptions disappeared from the background section on p. 100? These at least offered a *language* connection between the Latin of the main body of the chapter and the background at its end. The bigger format has produced a more attractive layout, but adds weight to school bags and seems to favour the publisher's balance sheet by being more susceptible to accidental damage. These two volumes were always among the best of the project, for the clear way in which they set out subjunctive constructions, ablative absolutes, and the passive. However, this edition is perhaps symbolic of the vices of our age: the presentation is much improved, but what there is of substance existed before, and on that front the new edition seems to be a missed

[14] *Education in Greek and Roman Antiquity*. By Yun Lee Too. Brill, Leiden, 2001. Pp. xi + 477. Hardback.

[15] *Cambridge Latin Course*. Books III & IV. Fourth Edition. By Cambridge School Classics Project. Cambridge U.P., 2001. Pp. 184 &159, Illustrated. Paper £10.95 & £11.95.

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opportunity. Like it or loathe it, the course has had a huge effect on Latin-teaching in this country, but while it offers an excellent programme in many aspects of Latin language and culture, its handling of Latin nouns and their cases remains a disordered mess. Doubtless we will not have to wait long for the fifth edition, but will it offer anything more?

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