instance, did Plutarch's popularity collapse (among academics) after 1850? G. wittily dispenses with the idea that Karl Marx's disapprobation of Plutarch's historical skills (in an obscure appendix to his Jena dissertation) had anything to do with it. Yet to invoke the 'bloody history of modernity and of nationalism and its heroes' (p. 292) seems at once too broad and too narrow: too broad in that yes, modernity changes things; too narrow because it elides the reasons why postmodernists may also find Plutarch, who 'looks to Egypt to find Greece, to lay the foundations of his Greece, to assert once more the power of Greek *paideia* in the face of the multiplicity of the world', a dubious figure, at least in comparison to the attractive Lucian, who 'uses the interaction of religious differences to play so ironically with the categories of insider and outsider' (p. 281).

Irony and playfulness are much in evidence throughout the pages of this delightful book; G.'s heroes (notably Lucian and Erasmus) manifest them exuberantly; his villains (notably Luther and 'the grim Scaliger', p. 47) lack them. So it is all the more impressive that the author leaves us with a renewed sense of the genuine seriousness of contests over classical Greek language and culture in the long passage to modernity.

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## WORKING TOGETHER?

S. J. HARRISON (ed.): *Texts, Ideas, and the Classics. Scholarship, Theory, and Classical Literature*. Pp. xiii + 330. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001. Cased, £50. ISBN: 0-19-924746-3.

As the editor of the volume, himself known both for his own traditional scholarly virtues and for his openness to the new, says, 'The "literary classics meets theory" book is already a genre in its own right'. Examples from the early nineties, such as the volumes edited by Hexter and Selden, and de Jong and Sullivan, could still present themselves as standard-bearers of the exciting and controversial advance of new theoretical approaches into texts traditionally the preserve of a mandarin scholarship. Nowadays there is no classics department in this country where some acquaintance with 'theory' would not be a recommendation for an applicant for a junior lectureship, if only as grudging recognition of the power of market forces in an age when students are also customers.

This particular, and arguably belated, example of the genre arises out of specific historical and institutional conjunctures, a footnote to the larger stories of scholarly politics narrated in the last two chapters of the volume: the observation by an open-minded participant at a conference of 'traditional' scholars on 'The Language of Latin Poetry' held at the British Academy, viewed by some as a bastion of established scholarly values, that the 'others' were not present. The resulting conference on 'Working Together', on which the present volume is based, was held in Oxford. The participants ranged from heroes of the revolution (John Henderson and Don Fowler, who until his death continued to draw energy in Oxford from a friction between the old and new schools of a kind that in Cambridge is now only memory), through leading scholar-critics who have internalized theoretical approaches as part of their working practice (Irene de Jong, Lillian Doherty, and Alessandro Barchiesi), to more traditional readers of texts but with distinctive and capacious agendas of their own (Michael Silk and John Moles). Notably absent, for the most part, are the textual

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https://doi.org/10.1093/cr/53.1.242 Published online by Cambridge University Press

critics and commentators of the old school, and who in many cases, one suspects, are unlikely to be persuaded by this volume of the benefits of working together.

After a clear-headed and sensible general introduction by the editor, the chapters are grouped under five areas of 'theory', with brief prefaces by different hands. No claim is made to comprehensive coverage of the range of theoretical approaches, and some sections have a greater internal coherence than others. This does not pretend to be a systematic guide for the theoretically perplexed.

Section 1, 'Literary Language', is the least coherent of the groupings. Michael Silk frames a characteristically subtle and interesting reading of Plato's use of Pindar with mildly dyspeptic criticism of 'the last forty years of fashionable theory', as presented by Don and Peta Fowler in their article in the third edition of the *OCD* on 'Literary Theory and Classical Studies', countered with a rallying call for a renewed engagement on the part of critical theory with values. Silk refreshingly places his own critical practice within a wider history of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century theory (Schelling and Schlegel, Nietzsche, Russian formalism); a number of the contributors remind us of the utility of expanding our theoretical horizons beyond what can become a constricting and unreflective use of a postmodernist *koine*. Jerzy Danielewicz offers a lucid, if formalistic, account of metatextual utterance in Greek lyric, those places where the text comments on its own performance or structure (Calame's 'énonciation énoncée').

Section 2 is enttled 'Narrative'. Developing Don Fowler's important study of ecphrasis, Stephen Harrison applies Genette's narratological terminology to an analysis of the proleptic function of ecphrases in foreshadowing (it could be objected that that older term did the job as effectively) the action of the main narrative, with further reflections on irony and the uses of ecphrasis as sites for interpretive contestation. Irene de Jong extends to Herodotus the narratological analysis of Homer for which she is well known, and finds convincing ways of making unitarian sense of the temporal disruptions ('anachronies') of the Herodotean narrative. Particularly powerful is the demonstration that the resulting authorial control over the supply of knowledge to the narratee comments on the historical theme of 'knowledge is power'. Lillian Doherty gives a 'personal voice' gloss on the genesis of her book on gender and narrative in the *Odyssey*, an object lesson in the ways in which a formalist narratology has immediate consequences for the politics of reading.

In Section 3, 'Genre', Alessandro Barchiesi takes an old friend, Wilhelm Kroll's 'Kreuzung der Gattungen', and in a dazzling exercise of intellectual history teases out the implications of the biological model in the 'cross-breeding' of genres, before thinking about the shift in recent discussions of genre from accounts of origins to a programmatic criticism that focuses on the discursive dramas staged within texts. Barchiesi's own preference for a tougher, more antagonistic, relationship between the old and the new, rather than an irenic 'working together', is exemplified in Marcus Wilson's discussion of ways of classifying Seneca's *Epistles*; but some well-aimed criticism of Habinek and Too is followed by a bland redefinition of the *Epistles* as 'serial epistolography', highlighting the way in which the collection includes a narrative of moral progress. More invigorating might have been an infusion of the recent theorizing of epistolarity.

Starting Section 4, 'Historicism', John Moles, who is never bland, gives himself a crash course in the various and confused meanings of 'historicism', subjects Thucydides' statements about the goals and methods of his *History*, and the unending modern discussion of those statements, to the intellectual equivalent of an aerobics session, and concludes with reflections on the ways that these two exercises illuminate

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each other. John Henderson, in the volume's most imaginative response to the call to 'work together', explores the personal and political histories that lie behind one of the monuments of twentieth-century historical scholarship, Frank Walbank's *Polybius*. Walbank himself agreed to work with Henderson, in conversation and through a written response to the draft, a collaboration that appears to have been good humoured, while preserving a certain edge, the difference of productive dialogue.

In the final section, 'Reception/History of Scholarship', Ingrid de Smet reminds us with well-chosen examples that ignorance of the great efforts of Renaissance scholars may condemn moderns to the reinvention of the wheel, and that the history of scholarship is essential for an adequate literary and cultural history. Christopher Stray uses his unrivalled knowledge as an 'ethnographer' of the history of nineteenth- and twentieth-century English classics to sketch the politics behind a number of nineteenth-century academic spats; agendas change, but the rhetoric of 'purity' and 'standards' is shared with some of the more recent 'theory wars'. Peter Lebrecht Schmidt directs an unflinching gaze at the varying involvement or disinvolvement of German Latinists with the Nazi regime from 1933 to 1945.

*New Hall, Cambridge* PHILIP HARDIE

## LATIN SANS FRONTIÈRES

D. FOWLER: *Roman Constructions. Readings in Postmodern Latin*. Pp. xii + 350. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. Cased, £45. ISBN: 0-19-815309-0.

On 12 May 1939, an article, prompted by a new book, appeared in the *Guardian* newspaper. The article began as follows: 'Mr Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*, parts of which have been published as "Work in Progress", does not admit of review. In 20 years' time, with sufficient study and with the aid of the commentary that will doubtless arise, one might be ready for an attempt to appraise it.' As that newspaper article continues, it becomes very clear that its writer's admiration for the work addressed, as much as the unusual nature of Joyce's accomplishment, was what made producing that appraisal so difficult.

The same obstacles face anyone conversant with the contemporary study of Roman literature who would seek to review *Roman Constructions*. Parts of this book too have been published already, but the usefulness and persuasiveness of the twelve papers it contains are considerably amplified by Don Fowler's endeavour 'to recontextualise them into fragments of an argument'. This is rather too modest: the argument—advancing from the realization that the function of the criticizing of texts can never be to establish forms of truth—turns into something little short of a manifesto for how classical studies should be conceived by its practitioners. The rôle of the scholar or reader is in fact to create rather than recover meaning: this position, often labelled 'postmodern' or 'pomo', is more specifically Rortian (p. 92). Although philosophers have now been engaging with such pragmatism in various guises for nearly a century, this outlook goes against the grain for most philologists who are still prone to regard their 'discipline' or 'field' as a form of science which depends on foundationalist assumptions. Even if they accept that F.'s stance is theoretically incontrovertible, conservatives will object that if this stance were to be adopted wholesale it could undermine or even destroy the practice of classical scholarship as we know it. But F.'s conception of critical constructions (p. 33) is nothing if not constructive. 'The stories

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