other contemporary public figures. In New Comedy mythical travesty disappears; C. argues—without much cogent evidence, so far as I can see—that such plays as Diphilos' *Herakles, Theseus*, and *Peliades* were not about Herakles, Theseus, or Medeia, but about figures from contemporary life who behaved in ways reminiscent of these characters.

In most respects this book does not carry us beyond the point reached, for Middle and New Comedy by Webster and Nesselrath, for Old Comedy by Angus Bowie's valuable discussion in F. D. Harvey, J. Wilkins (edd). *The Rivals of Aristophanes* (London and Swansea, 2000), pp. 317–39. However, there are some worthwhile ideas in the fairly extensive treatment of Epicharmos' *Odysseus Automolos* (pp. 47–55) and of the three above-mentioned plays of Kratinos (pp. 61–112). C.'s suggestion (pp. 51–2) that in Epicharmos' play Odysseus had been sent on a spying mission to the Trojan 'Feldlager' is ruled out by fr. 97.14 K-A, which shows that the mission which Odysseus is pretending to have discharged successfully had been a mission to infiltrate the city—and if he sought, and was given, a job as a swineherd (p. 51, cf. fr. 99), that suggests that the mission was meant to be an extended one. But she makes at least four good suggestions about the Kratinos plays: that to the extent that *Nemesis* was political allegory, Leda and Nemesis (the goddess of Rhamnous) represented Sparta and Athens respectively (p. 86); that fr. 42 is part of Hera's offer of τυραννὶς ἀκίνητος to the supposed Paris, and fr. 43 is Dionysos' reply to it (pp. 101–2); that, *pace* Luppe, it is quite in order for Aphrodite to promise 'Paris' that he will be κάλλιστόν τε καὶ ἐπέραστον (*POxy.* 663 i.16–19) because, though Paris by tradition had these qualities anyway (as indeed did Dionysos), Perikles did not (pp. 102–4); and that frr. 44, 46, 47 relate to the wedding banquet of Paris and Helen (thus far C. is reviving an old idea of G. Thieme's) and, furthermore, that frr. 46 and 47 are addressed [by the loyal satyrs?] to a Dionysos who, shamelessly standing on his head, is trying (in vain, as we know) to ingratiate himself with (the real) Paris, get invited to the feast, and avoid being handed over to the Achaians (pp. 108–9).

Overall, though, this book, which I began with high hopes, must be rated a disappointment. The 'vollständige Abhandlung' is yet to be written.

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ARISTOPHANIC LANGUAGE

A. WILLI: *The Languages of Aristophanes. Aspects of Linguistic Variation in Classical Attic Greek*. Pp. xiv + 361. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003. Cased, £55. ISBN: 0-19-926264-0.

This revision of a prize-winning Oxford dissertation offers a detailed and nuanced examination of the way Aristophanes varied his language to fit different contexts. Though there is considerable truth in Plutarch's statement that Aristophanes did not adapt his language to suit different characters as did Menander, modern scholars have found Aristophanes' language to be far from homogeneous. Willi provides a close look at a few types of variation: religious registers, technical language, scientific discourse, sophistic innovations, female speech, and foreigner talk. Each topic is treated in the light both of previous work on Aristophanes and other Greek authors, and of relevant linguistic theories. As the title suggests, the conclusions go beyond Aristophanes to shed light on Attic Greek in general.

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W.'s work is ambitious, impressive, and generally convincing; the author clearly has a good command of relevant work in both Classics and linguistics, and an unusual familiarity with Greek grammar and syntax. The book's conclusions will have a significant impact on our understanding of Aristophanes. For example, the finding that Aristophanes did not use or parody strictly technical terminology (legal, medical, or literary-critical) in his plays overturns widely accepted—though evidently unfounded—beliefs. The discovery of two separate registers for religious language, those of the prayer and the hymn, is also illuminating, as is the argument that Aristophanes' religious language is subtly varied to characterize individual speakers. The analysis of the speech of the Scythian in Thesmophoriazusae using linguistic work on 'foreigner talk' (a type of simplified language that native speakers often use to foreigners) is interesting and surprising, and the accompanying conclusion that, contrary to popular belief, Aristophanes differentiated between the types of bad Greek spoken by foreigners of different origins is appealing (but somewhat less convincing, because the speech of foreigners other than the Scythian is not examined in detail).

Beyond such individual points is another, larger finding: that linguistic variation in Aristophanes is richer and subtler than has hitherto been appreciated. The most obvious aspect of such variation, Aristophanes' use of different Greek dialects, had already received a book-length study (Stephen Colvin's *Dialect in Aristophanes* [Oxford, 1999]), and areas such as women's language and the speech of foreigners had been treated in lesser detail. Yet W. has now shown that Aristophanes' linguistic variation extends to all sorts of other areas, thus opening up many possibilities for future exploration both in Aristophanes and in other authors.

The book does not read like a thesis, being free of the defensive thoroughness characteristic of such works; the introduction, at only seven pages long, is by far the briefest I have seen in a revised dissertation, as well as one of the most interesting. And the space saved here is well used later, for the whole work is very concise and squeezes an amazing amount of detail and argumentation into its pages. On occasion, however, this same efficiency leads to the omission of necessary information. Thus when statistics are presented there is sometimes little information on how the numbers involved were generated or the size of the corpus to which they relate, nor are references always given to even a selection of the passages involved, making some of the author's claims very difficult to verify and a few of the results tricky to interpret (e.g. pp. 133, 151). In addition, features are occasionally stated to be colloquial without adequate justification of the reasons for such a register judgement (e.g. pp. 191, 265).

W. makes several interesting innovations in the presentation of his ideas. The conclusion contains charts showing the structure of the arguments in several of the chapters, a device that works well. The brevity of the introduction is partly offset by the use of the first chapter as a sort of methodological trial run, in which the search for varieties within Aristophanic language is validated by finding some and testing them for the features that linguistic theory suggests they ought to have. This device is an elegant substitute for the straightforward justification of methodology found in most introductions, though its effectiveness is slightly diminished by the need to stretch a few of the Greek findings to fit them into the linguistic theory (e.g. the difference in 'production circumstances' between hymns and prayers, whereby hymns are carefully planned and prayers are spontaneous, composed 'on-line' as they are spoken—a distinction that cannot be literally applied to the text of a comedy and that needs careful argumentation before it can be figuratively applied).

The writing is usually clear and effective and very rarely uses unnecessary jargon, though a few elements of terminology are inadequately explained (e.g. 'diathesis'

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defined as 'verbal gender', p. 257). Translations of Greek words and passages are regularly provided. There are few typographical errors.

Overall, this book is an important contribution to our understanding of Aristophanes' writings both from a linguistic and from a literary perspective; it contains the best and most thorough analyses yet produced of certain passages, as well as much new information on the interpretation of certain types of usage. At the same time it is an even more important contribution to the sociolinguistic study of ancient languages, a new but rapidly growing field in which a work of this depth is particularly welcome. Yet it does not attempt to be a complete study of the subject of Greek linguistic variation, even in Aristophanes; the few case studies examined are narrowly defined (as was necessary to make room for the thoroughness with which they are investigated), and possibilities for further work leap out at the reader from every chapter. It will take a good many more books to address all the issues that W. has raised here, and it is to be hoped that those other books will soon be written.

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A HERODOTEAN CONFERENCE

P. DEROW, R. PARKER (edd.): *Herodotus and His World. Essays from a Conference in Memory of George Forrest.* Pp. xiv + 378, maps, ills. Oxford University Press, 2003. Cased, £55. ISBN: 0-19-925374-9.

This is a very successful volume. It consists of nineteen papers, almost all on Herodotus, originally delivered at a conference held at Oxford in July 2000 in memory of George Forrest. While it would be wrong to claim that a single theme runs throughout, distinct trends do emerge. Several essays bear the mark of continuing worry about how to rescue important parts of Herodotus' narrative from being labeled 'outright fabrications' without at the same time lapsing into an uncritical acceptance of *logoi* that cannot, as they stand, be true. Bakhtin and 'dialogism' come up in two discussions. There are also a trio of papers on Herodotus' relationship to Athens. Oracles and religion form the subject of three other essays. And there are several papers that resist categorization, though four of these, which are rather technical in nature, can be usefully grouped together.

Stephanie Dalley and Miltiades Hatzopoulos present cases where the material record has in fact corroborated Herodotus' account, most notably in sections where he was faulted. Dalley's treatment of the absence of the Hanging Gardens (not in Herodotus because they were not in Babylon, but rather Nineveh) is provocative and learned, and her list of places where Herodotus and Ctesias have been vindicated by the research of Assyriologists is equally arresting (p. 189). There is also much to learn from Hatzopoulos' discussion of topography and the myth surrounding the foundation of the Macedonian kingdom. A related but different concern surfaces in three papers by Simon Hornblower, the late John Gould, and Irad Malkin.

Herodotean details verifiable by documentary evidence are not the issue in these essays, rather how we read Herodotus' stories with an eye also on the truth claim of his proem, to keep from oblivion the notable deeds of men. So, in what sense is the incredibly bizarre and lurid tale of Panionios true (Hornblower)? Or, can the supernatural occurrences of Herodotus' narrative be paralleled by modern experience

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