EDITORIAL

Almost 150 books are reviewed or noticed in this number, and readers who make their way through all of them will gain a rich impression of the sorts of thing that classicists are up to in the contemporary world—and, incidentally, many palmary examples of the genre 'academic review'. If, in the great babble of voices heard and reflected between these covers, there is one that argues polemically for a divorce between ancient history and 'Classics' (Jerry Toner, whose book is reviewed by Peter Wiseman on pp. 499–500), the indissolubility of the marriage, or rather of the complex web of multiple relationships that best defines 'Classics' in 2003, seems amply demonstrated throughout the issue as a whole. This is not to say, of course, that the individual disciplines that underlie the study of classical antiquity cannot in any circumstances be separated and brought into relation with the materials and methods that go to form studies outside the normal classical boundaries; but the range of those disciplines and their mutual associations offer added strength both to the status of Classics in this managerial age and to the understanding of the ancient world—and our own—which is our proper business.

We begin, nonetheless, with work of a traditional kind on individual ancient texts, which must form one of the great slabs on which the edifices of classical scholarship are built. Both more and less familiar material is represented in these pages. The first complete edition of the grammarian Terentianus Maurus to be published since 1874 is subjected to a searching review by Jan-Wilhelm Beck on pp. 385–8, while the Notices section includes a briefer but highly detailed critique, by James Diggle, of the first edition of the florilegium of Orion to emerge for nearly a century and a half (pp. 487–8). Two new volumes of the Budé edition of Appian's *Roman History* are reviewed on pp. 318–21, by John Richardson and Brian McGing respectively; Apuleian studies too are advanced with the publication of the Groningen Commentaries on Books 2 and 10 of the *Metamorphoses*, both greeted warmly by the reviews of Ellen Finkelpearl and Anton Bitel (pp. 379–83). Pride of place, however, must go to Donald Russell's complete (five-volume) Loeb Quintilian, in the words of the reviewer, Peter Mack, a 'magnificent edition [which] will serve as the valued and indispensable companion of all anglophone studies of rhetoric for at least the next fifty years' (p. 376). The proofs of this review contained, in the bibliographical details of each of the five volumes, the splendid error 'Hazard [for 'Harvard'] University Press'. If a red flag has sometimes had to be waved over Loeb editions in the past, this is emphatically no longer the case; new Loebs, while remaining 'reading editions', have attained a level of reliability and overall quality that belies their former perceived status as 'cribs'—this issue also contains positive comment on John Fitch's first volume of Seneca's tragedies (pp. 369–70) and the concluding volumes of D. R. Shackleton Bailey's edition of Cicero's letters (pp. 344–6). Classicists have always had cause to be grateful to James Loeb, and never more so than now.

Cicero is the subject of another of the books in the current crop which, on the basis of reviewers' expressed judgements, would be a candidate for a prize if *CR* offered such things (we have no intention of doing so). Shane Butler's *The Hand of Cicero*, described by Ellen O'Gorman as 'engaging and original', and indeed 'simply the best book on classics I have read in a long time' (pp. 346–7), reasserts the importance of texts—documents—of all kinds in the culture of late-Republican Rome, and especially

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in the career (and self-representation) of Cicero himself. On the Greek side, studies considered by their reviewers to be of major significance include Stephen Hodkinson's 500-page volume, *Property and Wealth in Classical Sparta*, and Sian Lewis's *The Athenian Woman. An Iconographic Handbook*. Building on his previous work, Hodkinson challenges at length and in detail the tenacious idea that the Spartans were self-denying and practically communistic, in a book that 'not only forces us to think differently about Sparta, but serves as a manual for how to research social change in Greece' (Graham Shipley, p. 400). A patent strength of Hodkinson's work is its use of a wide range of analytical methods, a demonstration of the fact that classical scholars cannot have too many tools in their toolkit (provided, of course, that they know how to use them). Lewis, similarly, demonstrates the importance both of questioning received wisdom and of basing interpretation on sound methodologies if we are to advance our understanding of an area of knowledge. According to David Cohen, *The Athenian Woman* forces us to confront head-on the sharp divergences in the portrayal of its subject in (on the one hand) vase-painting and (on the other) literature: too often evidence that will not fit a particular interpretation is elided, or problems explained away by methods that are circular, whereas in fact we have to accept the existence of 'messy contradictions' (p. 452). The tendency to flatten things out, or put everything into a tidy box, is of course a phenomenon of which we have become increasingly aware in recent years, and Lewis and Cohen are entirely right to take a stand against it; it needs to be said, though, that it is difficult to see how, in trying to make sense of anything, we can altogether dispose of the practices of eliding and explaining away.

Among the contributions to ancient philosophy reviewed in this issue we draw attention especially to Nicholas Denyer's commentary on Plato's *Alcibiades* in the Cambridge 'green and yellow' series, applauded by John Ferrari on pp. 296–8 (is there any other scholarly series, we wonder, that has become so widely identified by the colour of its jacket? The success of Cambridge University Press here is testimony both to its marketing skill and to the quality of the books themselves); and Roslyn Weiss's 'rich and provocative' study of the *Meno* discussed (and, appropriately, questioned and challenged) by Mary Louise Gill on pp. 299–301. Turning to archaeology, we highlight two epigraphical works. Graham Oliver grapples fiercely with Denis Knoepfler's new volume of decrees from Eretria in a review (pp. 454–8) which demonstrates as well as any how reviews themselves can significantly advance scholarship (academic bureaucrats please note); Oliver's level of engagement with this 'major work' is deep, and he does part of the author's job for him by supplying a concordance of decrees. Reviewing Lothar Wierschowski's collection of inscriptions bearing on the movement of private individuals to, from, and within Gaul in the first three centuries A.D. (pp. 439–40), John Drinkwater argues for the supplementation or replacement of epigraphic works in book form by CD-ROMs. The alacrity with which the Classics profession has embraced new technology will no doubt have surprised many outside its ranks, but Drinkwater reminds us that there is still far to go in providing basic tools of the trade in formats which best assist and promote further research.

An apparently throwaway comment of Drinkwater's brings us (almost) to our final set of observations on this number of *CR*. Wierschowski's book, he says, is 'a model of German-speaking scholarship, being comprehensive, accurate, and detailed' (p. 439). Differences in the manner of classical scholarship conducted in different languages, countries, and even institutions can be sources of both enrichment and frustration. Philip Hardie, reviewing a new volume of *Entretiens Hardt*, points to a section of discussion amounting to a 'slightly heated spat . . . about the supposed blindness to one another of Latinist traditions in the anglophone and non-anglophone scholarly

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communities', which he then reduces to order by the assertion that 'there are now welcome signs, of which this collection is one, that Latinists are engaging in closer dialogue across national and cultural boundaries' (pp. 355–6). As the world of scholarship becomes ever more international, such dialogue is increasingly important; it seems to us essential that we strive more and more to understand each other's traditions and, at the same time, to be unafraid to examine them critically—tradition, after all, is in itself neither good nor bad, and what the furtherance of scholarly (or human) understanding requires is ongoing debate on the merits of different approaches, and a constant readiness to challenge assumptions. On the institutional level, a challenge of this kind is laid down by Glen Bowersock to what he sees as, if not a Cambridge school, then at least a Cambridge way of doing things. His review of *Being Greek under Rome*, a collection of essays with a strong Cambridge flavour edited by Simon Goldhill, identifies two 'conspicuous characteristics' which he maintains the majority of contributors share: 'a predilection for walking readers through an exemplary text with interesting or often lively *aperçus* along the way' and 'a disquieting ignorance of major scholarly work outside the anglophone world' (p. 329). Bowersock's provocations in this case, best crystallized, perhaps, in his reference to 'an atmosphere of self-congratulatory hermeticism' on p. 330, may cause blood to boil, and readers of the volume will form their own opinions of their appropriateness; but the questioning of method, and of the kind of intellectual bubble in which Bowersock implies that the group works, is, we believe, an indispensable part of scholarly practice.

By way of coda, we encourage all our readers to reflect on the questions posed by Alexandra Lianeri in her review of Caroline Winterer's *The Culture of Classicism. Ancient Greece and Rome in American Intellectual Life 1780–1910* (pp. 478–9). 'How', she asks, 'can the study of ancient texts establish a counter-culture, a means of criticizing and opposing the dominant utilitarian and anti-intellectualist values of modern societies?' This formulation of a problem familiar to most of us who have worked in university departments in the field of Classics in the last two decades seems to us striking and constructive; and in building into it an overtly political perspective, and raising the question how the notion of responsible citizenship fits into our negotiation of a less marginal place, if not a recovered centrality, for the study of antiquity in the modern world, Lianeri reminds us that what we do has implications far beyond the walls of the academy. Amid the pleasures of research on fine points of detail and the many frustrations sent to try the average academic in 2003, we should not lose sight of this particular big picture.

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