accepted not in the rather derogatory sense it has now acquired ('mere decoration' – French *décor*, implying lack of 'deeper' content or meaning), but rather with the powerful ambivalence of the Latin *decor*, implying both adornment and propriety. It is a pity, I think, that Hölscher does not extend his methodological discussion to the art-historical notion of *decorum*; however, if similarly shy of the term, other contributors here are more or less engaged with just that notion, as far as it applies to retrieving the 'messages' from temple sculpture. Robin Osborne, for example, speculates why centaurs are 'good to think with', while satyrs are not. He bypasses the (admittedly little-known, and lamentably unpublished) Dionysiac pediment from Figareto on Corfu, and ignores Marsyas as a possible theme, but we take the point: certain subjects evidently satisfy 'the narratological or theological demands of temple sculpture' (12) better than others. But how far can particular meanings be assigned to either generic or particular sculptures? The Olympia pediments, for example, are notoriously evasive of determinate interpretation: here, Hilda Westervelt offers a carefully argued case for the west pediment to be a representation not of the battle of lapiths and centaurs at the wedding of Perithoos but rather of the fight that ensued when the centaur Eurytion made advances on the daughter of Dexamenos, king of Elis – at a wedding where Herakles happened to be among the guests (*cf.* Bacchyl. fr. 44). Though inherently plausible, this is of course counter to the tradition that Pausanias relates. Nevertheless, we may wonder if the 'Elean centauromachy', having appeared so prominently (and with such technical virtuosity) at this major Panhellenic site, subsequently became a generic part of Classical temple decoration; and, as it was used elsewhere – on the Hephaisteion, the temple of Apollo at Bassae, and so on – lost its local particularity. Such is the nature of artistic decorum: the meeting point of formal design, visual precedent, and semantic association that constitutes 'propriety'.

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General

The phenomenon of companions, guides, handbooks, and introductions covering every conceivable part of the classical world continues apace. In this crowded marketplace it is becoming harder and harder to create a unique selling point for new volumes. *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Greece and Rome*, edited by Michael Gargarin, has, however, taken the 'genre' to a new level with a seven-volume guide to the world of classical antiquity (from the Bronze Age to the fifth century AD), running to over 3,000 pages.[33] As an author of one of the articles in this *Encyclopedia*, I must at the outset declare my own interest in the project. As such it is best for the work to speak for itself. One of its distinctive features is its attempt to provide comprehensive coverage of the field. In addition to broad overviews of key areas (literature, history, archaeology, art, philosophy, science, and religion), the work comprises more than

[33] *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Greece and Rome*. Edited by Michael Gargarin. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010. 7 volumes. Pp. 3298. 550 illustrations. Hardback £625, ISBN: 978-0-19 517072-6.

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a thousand A–Z entries, with accompanying bibliographies for further research, together with some 550 illustrations, maps, chronologies, genealogical tables, and so forth. With a price tag of £625, this *Encyclopedia* will go well beyond the pocket of most readers, but it is likely to prove a most useful resource for school, college, and departmental libraries. Back to reference works that can be easily moved by hand rather than wheelbarrow. *The Oxford Handbook of Hellenic Studies*, edited by George Boys-Stones, Barbara Graziosi, and Phiroze Vasunia, has gathered together an impressive, seventy-strong cast of academics.[34] The use of 'Hellenic' rather than 'Greek' in the title is not simply a ploy to make this guide appear more distinctive than competitor volumes. Exactly what Hellenic/Hellenism means may puzzle some and that is to some extent precisely the point. As James Porter says at the start of his chapter on 'Hellenism and Modernity', 'Hellenism, as readers of this volume are doubtless discovering for the first time or again, is a baggy, questionable idea that eludes definition' (7). It is the spirit of questioning and interrogation, rather than didacticism, that underlies this valuable work and is its most distinctive feature. Explicitly, the handbook 'exemplifies the various ways in which evidence can be used, explores the breadth and potential of current approaches to ancient Greece, and encourages informed dialogue between different disciplines, perspectives, and approaches' (xiv). It is divided into four parts: 'Hellenes and Hellenisms'(including Polly Low on 'The Athenian Empire' and Tim Whitmarsh on 'Greece and Rome'); 'the Polis'; 'Performance and Texts'(including 'Performance and Text in Ancient Greece' by Gregory Nagy, and 'Biography' by Christopher Pelling); and 'Methods and Approaches'. Alongside the well-established Blackwell Companion series stands the Blackwell Introductions to the Classical World series, designed to provide 'concise introductions to classical culture in the broadest sense'. *Ancient Epic* by Katherine Callen King gives the general reader an accessible survey of key authors.[35] It is clearly written and has a particularly engaging introduction, with some nice examples designed to show something of the relevance and topicality of this most ancient of genres. King focuses on six epic poems, starting with the epic of Gilgamesh, then treading a familiar path through Homer, Apollonius Rhodius, Virgil, and Ovid. The books also includes chapters that aim to contextualize Homeric epic and Roman epic. Perhaps because of the introductory nature of the work King's choice of material is highly selective. This is understandable, but it is a shame that readers should not have the chance to discover Catullus 64, for example, and the genre of the miniature epic. It would also have been nice for the reader to gain a sense of the extraordinary vitality of the epic genre after Ovid. No Lucan or Statius is to be found here, let alone Quintus of Smyrna and Nonnus of Panopolis. As far as it goes, however, this book fulfils its promise and provide a good introduction to the genre. In our increasingly global world, notions of identity and cultural hybridity have never been more topical. *Material Culture and Social Identities in the Ancient World*, edited by Shelley Hales and Tamar Hodos, uses material culture as a lens through which to view global

[34] *The Oxford Handbook of Hellenic Studies*. Edited by George Boys-Stones, Barbara Graziosi, and Phiroze Vasunia. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009. Pp. xxi + 889. Hardback £85, ISBN: 978-0-19-928614-0.

[35] *Ancient Epic*. By Katherine Callen King. Blackwell Introductions to the Classical World. Chichester, Sussex, Wiley-Blackwell, 2009. Pp. xi + 206. 1 map. Hardback £50, ISBN: 978-0-4051-5947-0.

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and local structures of identity.[36] Central to this exploration is the belief that material culture does not simply reflect identity but has an active part to play in the expression and transformation of social and cultural identities. It is divided into three parts. Part 1 establishes the 'Theoretical Frameworks' that locate and inform the following articles. Central theoretical concerns addressed include identity, ethnicity, and cultural diversity. Part 2 is devoted to specific case studies (covering Greeks, Romans, Etruscans, Persians, Phoenicians, and Celts) and this forms the main part of the book. Articles include studies of Phoenician cultural identity in the Iron Age (Michael Sommer), ethnic conceptions of beauty in Achaemenid-period seal and gem stones (Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones), and female portrait statue types (Annetta Alexandridis). Part 3 comprises not a conclusion but an 'Afterword' by David Mattingly on 'Cultural Crossovers: Global and Local Identities in the Classical World'. Identity, this time in the guise of 'Romantic identity', is the theme of Jonathon Sachs's monograph *Romantic Antiquity. Rome in the British Imagination 1789–1832*.[37] The focus of this book is not the British Grand-Tour love affair with Rome that flourished in the early to mid-eighteenth century; rather Sachs casts the spotlight on the relationship between Britain and Rome in the period of Romanticism. According to traditional critical responses this should be an unpromising area of study, since the Romantic period is associated with a widespread rejection of the classical past – or, at the very least, a rejection of Rome in favour of the bright democratic lights of ancient Greece. Sachs, however, emphatically puts Rome back into the Romantic. This was a period in which our understanding of Rome (and more broadly history itself) was transformed, but it was no one-way street: Rome herself functioned as a central transforming agent. The book is divided into three parts: 'Political Writing and the Novel' considers how the idea of Rome influenced and informed responses to the French Revolution; 'Poetry' focuses on the Romantic Byron and his rejection of Romanticism and on Shelley's Hellenism; 'Drama' includes an exploration of the Romantic staging of Shakespeare's Coriolanus. As this fascinating study shows, the idea of Rome was of fundamental importance to the construction of Romantic identity in its many diverse and complex forms. A somewhat different Rome emerges from the pages of Tyler Lansford's *The Latin Inscriptions of Rome. A Walking Guide*.[38] This work furnishes its readers with what amounts to an idiosyncratic history of Rome as seen from the perspective of the inscriptions that cover her surface. As Lansford says,

> Over the course of the city's history, Latin has been the vehicle of messages ranging from graffiti and epitaphs to the dedication of temples, arches, basilicas, and obelisks. As a result the inscriptions furnish the ideal material for an integral if desultory conspectus of her history as a whole – ancient and modern, public and private, sacred and secular. (ix)

[36] *Material Culture and Social Identities in the Ancient World*. Edited by Shelley Hales and Tamar Hodos. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2010. Pp. xv + 339. 48 b/w figures. Hardback £55, ISBN: 978-0-521-76774-3.

[37] *Romantic Antiquity. Rome in the British Imagination 1789–1832*. By Jonathan Sachs. Classical Presences. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010. Pp. 320. 6 b/w figures. Hardback £55, ISBN: 978-0-19-537612-8.

[38] *The Latin Inscriptions of Rome. A Walking Guide*. By Tyler Lansford. Baltimore, MD, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009. Pp. 600. Paperback £14.50, ISBN: 978-0-8018-9150-2.

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More than 350 inscriptions (ranging in date from the first century BC to AD 2006) have been selected according to three criteria: 'presence in situ, accessibility, and historical or linguistic interest' (xiii). This is no dry list of inscriptions but a fully integrated (and suitably illustrated) guide to the city, arranged into fifteen walking tours that may be completed in the mind or in situ, book in hand. Each tour contextualizes the inscriptions on view; the inscriptions are then presented in the original Latin, with a facing English translation. This work is admirably accessible to those without Latin and contains a most useful section on Greek and Latin abbreviations. Notes are also provided where appropriate, such as the following comment on the Latin *SERVAT AVGET* ('it preserves and increases') that forms part of the dedication on the Monument to Victor Emanuel II: 'The asyndeton strikes a pompous rhetorical note consonant with the spirit of the monument' (12). From the language of inscriptions we turn to *The Language of the Papyri*, edited by T. V. Evans and D. D. Obbink.[39] What exactly do papyrologists do? Seventeen articles presented in this volume on diverse linguistic features of Greek and Latin papyri fill in at least part of the picture. Papyrological discoveries in the nineteenth century helped to transform our view of the worlds of Greece and Rome. In addition to the discovery of, for example, new fragments of familiar and less unfamiliar poets, there came to light a diverse mass of material (both literary and non-literary) that provided 'fresh insights into the nature of the Greek language in the post-classical period…and the Latin of the imperial and late periods' (1). The editors state in the introduction that 'We are still dealing today with linguistic resources of extraordinary richness which have hardly begun to be explored' (2). This specialist volume constitutes an important and auspicious step forward in that exploration. It is divided into three parts: 'Linguistic Change and Diversity' (including John Lee's 'Auxiliary *θέλω*' and Peter Kruschwitz '*Romanes eunt domus!* Linguistic Aspects of the Sub-literary Latin in the Pompeian Wall Inscriptions' [156–70]); ii) 'Language Contact' (including 'Bilingualism in Roman Egypt? Exploring the Archive of Phatres of Narmuthis' by I. C. Rutherford, and Eleanor Dickey's 'Latin Influence and Greek Request Formulae'); 'General', comprising an essay on 'Building and Examining Linguistic Phenomena in a Corpus of Representative Papyri' by S. E. Porter and M. B. O'Donnell. Mention Classics in the same breath as poets of the First World War and Wilfred Owen's famous denunciation of Horace springs instantly to mind: 'The old lie: *dulce et decorum est pro patria mori* ['it is a sweet and fitting thing to die for one's country']'. For Elizabeth Vandiver in her monograph *Stand in the Trench, Achilles. Classical Receptions in the British Poetry of the Great War*,[40] Owen's bitter rejection of Horace's line 'is so powerful, so memorable, and in its immediate context so apparently unanswerable, that it has been taken uncritically as the last word on the relationship between classics and Great War poetry' (4). Vandiver's work strikes at the heart of such uncritical evaluations of the relationship between Classics and the poets of the First World War. It seeks to deconstruct the notion that the 'war poets' were 'an easily defined, unified group with a single viewpoint, almost all of them officers

[39] *The Language of the Papyri.* Edited by T. V. Evans and D. D. Obbink. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010. Pp. xxii + 362. 20 b/w figures. Hardback £65, ISBN: 978-0-19-923708-1.

[40] *Stand in the Trench, Achilles. Classical Receptions in the British Poetry of the Great War*. By Elizabeth Vandiver. Classical Presences. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010. Pp. xx + 455. Hardback £75, ISBN: 978-0-19 954274-1.

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(and therefore upper class), all of them idealistic at the war's beginning, all of them bitterly disillusioned by the war's midpoint' (2). In fact, in order to define war poets as poets of protest, 'one has to disqualify most of those who wrote and published poetry during the war' (4). In some cases, poets even perform an opposite movement from the rejection of classical models of honour and glory to the affirmative embrace of those models. As Vandiver's interesting and very readable exploration reveals, war poems 'demonstrate a wide variety of receptions of classics, just as they show a wide variety of styles, rhetorical registers, and political viewpoints (4–5). The monograph is divided into three parts. Part 1 focuses on 'Education, Class, and Classics' and considers the traditions of public-school Classics on the one hand and 'middle- and working-class Classics' on the other (clearly showing how Classics was not just the preserve of the public-school educated officers but also of the soldiers in the ranks). Part 2 is concerned with 'Representing War': one chapter focuses on 'duty, honour, glory, and sacrifice'; a second chapter explores the way in which the Great War was reimagined as a second Trojan War (for soldiers around Gallipoli this had an even sharper resonance, since they were fighting in the same geographical area as the mythical heroes of Troy). Part 3 considers how classical ideas affected the way that poets envisioned the themes of 'Death and Remembrance' (including a sections on the problem of corpselessness and on the refiguring of Simonides' famous epitaph on the Spartan dead at Thermopylae). In *Conversing with Antiquity. English Poets and the Classics from Shakespeare to Pope*, David Hopkins draws together a collection of his own previously published studies focused on the reception of the Classics by English poets of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[41] This is no loosely structured *omnium gatherum*: the original articles have been revised, updated, and corrected, while a substantial new introduction locates the research within current debates about reception (in which, of course, Charles Martindale looms large). The volume is dominated by Hopkins' major research interest – John Dryden (in particular his engagement with Ovid and Juvenal) – but it also explores other poets and their relationships with the Classics, such as Abraham Cowley (Horace), Lucy Hutchinson (Lucretius), and Alexander Pope (Homer). The central 'argument' of this useful and simulating volume is that reception of classical culture should not be seen as a simple act of appropriation or assimilation; rather, reception is a dialogic process – a conversation between the past and the present. *The Idea of the Library in the Ancient World* by Yun Lee Too invites us to rethink what the notion of a library means, in both ancient and modern terms.[42] For Too, the ancient library is much more than the iconic (and romantic) construction that is the great library of Alexandria. Rather, the ancient concept of the library is

> an idea, or a series of ideas, about how individuals have conceived textual culture. As such the ancient library has its various and diverse forms, some of which challenge and compete with each other, and others that challenge and rival our contemporary notions of library; it is an institution liable to transformation, to (self-)interrogation, and to criticism. (1)

[41] *Conversing with Antiquity. English Poets and the Classics from Shakespeare to Pope*. By David Hopkins. Classical Presences. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010. Pp. vii + 343. 2 figures. Hardback £60, ISBN: 978-0-19-956034-9.

[42] *The Idea of the Library in the Antique World*. By Yun Lee Too. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010. Pp. 250. Hardback £55, ISBN: 978-0-19-957780-4.

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The monograph is divided into four sections: 'Origins: The Diachronic Perspective'; 'Forms of the Library'; 'Memories'; and 'Physicalities'. Ultimately, as Too concludes,

> the library in the ancient world is a multiple signifier, referring to power, to knowledge, to memory and recollection, to plenitude, but at the same time occasionally acknowledging its own deficiencies of knowledge, of memory. Library is a space on which we and antiquity can write our notions of the world, different and differing as they might be, and our intellects, differing and differing as they might be too. Library is also an evolving idea, changing with time to include developing notions of textuality and learnedness. It has an enormous capacity to be transformed as it refers, so that this study will in turn become something of a historical artefact. (244)

Back in her preface, Too noted that 'it is impossible to contain exclusively the concerns of each chapter, because topics necessarily overlap with each another' (vii) – librarians the world over struggling to accommodate the sum of human knowledge to the Dewey decimal system (*vel sim.*) would no doubt be the first to sympathize.

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