distinctions: so nature's celebration of the union with Nicaea is replaced by prevailing silence, since Aura's child will be Iacchus, god of the mysteries (pp. 57–8; cf. Gerlaud, vol. 6.102–7). Aura's inebriation ties this book not only to the Nicaea episode but also to Book 47, where the Athenian Icarius is killed in a drunken brawl, a link enhanced by the intervention in 48 of Dionysus' love of 47, Ariadne, who laments the god's unfaithfulness, but is finally rewarded by the catasterism of her crown, immediately prior to Dionysus' own apotheosis.

Dionysus' conjuring of wine for the thirst-mad Aura by striking a rock (48.574–7) has Mosaic overtones, the description of Ariadne as a 'wind-borne' spirit (*ψυχὴ ἠνεμόφοιτος*, 48.530; cf. 490 of Aura) parallels that of the risen Christ before his disciples (*Par.* 20.105 with Accorinti's note), Artemis' revenge includes the taunting of Aura's 'virgin birth' (48.832–4), and the mystic Iacchus finally encapsulates Dionysus' trinitarian nature. But V. argues powerfully (pp. 94–5; cf. Liebeschuetz, *Decline and Fall of the Ancient City* [Oxford, 2001], pp. 231–9) that this poem carries no covert Christian message, *synkrisis* with or prefiguration of Christ: similarities may be pointed, but Dionysus is no saviour figure; rather he is a Don Juan, a great literary creation analogous to Homer's Odysseus or Apollonius' Jason.

V. is masterly in detail as in overview, conversant with electronic publications (e.g. p. 24 n. 2), as with the latest linguistic scholarship, highlighting the strict and carefully articulated internal symmetry of scenes (pp. 3–4, 18–19 and *passim*) in this book where major episodes are so grossly unequal (respectively 89, 147 and 740 lines). An appendix (pp. 215–19) examines the enhanced proportion of grandiloquent tetracola in Book 48, a technique appropriate to elevation—witness their clustering in the closing lines—but also exploited for caricature, as in the opening epic Gigantomachy (e.g. ll. 34–5). Scenes and episodes may be unconnected, but V. does not find here the signs of incompleteness evident in some earlier books (e.g. the sea-battle of 39); see, for example, pp. 18–19 on 48.152–8, described by Keydell as *frustula*.

The text has many problems, discussed most recently by D. Accorinti, *Medioevo greco* 1 (2001), 13–20, whose views V. often shares. V. makes judicious choices, sometimes upholding Keydell's solutions (e.g. ll. 53, 78, 130, 338 transposed, 346 followed by lacuna, 365 accentuation of *ἀθήλεας*, 589/8), elsewhere reverting to the reading of the Laurentianus (e.g. ll. 13, 33, 165 *ταρσῷ*, 188, 358, 403, 505, 520, 606 with discussion p. 186, 726, 728), rejecting proposed lacunae (e.g. ll. 333, 335, 358, 666, 800, 822), and eliminating cruces (e.g. ll. 603, 659, but not 727).

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THE GREEKS ON LANGUAGE

D. L. Gera: *Ancient Greek Ideas on Speech, Language, and Civilization*. Pp. xiv + 252. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003. Cased, £50. ISBN: 0-19-925616-0.

In this book Deborah Levine Gera sets out to survey ancient Greek ideas of the nature of language, its origins, and its relation to civilization and human culture, taking time to present close readings of important Greek texts in order to tease out the assumptions about language and culture they contain. She also compares modern ideas that are either closely influenced by ancient Greek thinking or that 'enable us to read backwards, so to speak, and tease out the implications of the Greek texts'

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(p. vii). I should say at the outset that I think this is a very valuable technique, and one that produces a much richer study than would be achieved by sticking exclusively to ancient sources, since it presents ancient theories as part of a living tradition rather than as exhibits in a museum of dead ideas.

There are five chapters: 1, 'Polyphemus the Linguist'; 2, 'Language in the Golden Age'; 3, 'Psammetichus' Children'; 4, 'The Invention of Language'; and 5, 'Between Language and Speech'. G. begins in Chapter 1 with a close study of Homer's account of the meeting between Odysseus and the Cyclops in *Odyssey* 9. This, as she says, serves as a general introduction to the book, and here is introduced the fundamental tension, found in so many Greek ethnographic and anthropological speculations, between the idea that humans have declined from an original ideal Golden Age and the idea that humans have gradually developed and progressed from an original bestial state. As G. shows, Polyphemus and his 'society' seem to exist partly in both worlds, as is exhibited in his primitive diet and the Cyclopes' rudimentary social organization, and also in his limited linguistic abilities in contrast to Odysseus' eloquence which symbolizes his superior *metis*, while at the same time Polyphemus inhabits a landscape of spontaneous plenty familiar from so many descriptions of the Golden Age, the Isles of the Blessed, and other blessed lands. G. concludes that although the episode is clearly not only about language, it does point to many Greek questions about language, its origins, development, and relationship to other aspects of human culture such as diet, hospitality, and social structures, and even to the very status of being human.

Chapter 2 looks at the Golden Age side of the equation and especially at ideas, both ancient and modern, of an original universal language, or Adamic language, focusing on Babrius' version of Aesop's fables, Plato's *Politicus*, Lucretius, Vico, and Rousseau, before going on to examine Hesiod's account of the Golden Race in *Works and Days*. This chapter is perhaps the least rewarding in the book as the evidence, as presented, is really rather slight for ancient Greek ideas of an original universal or Adamic language, notwithstanding that Babrius' animals can talk, and overall, descriptions of the Golden Age or Age of Kronos tend not to major on the language abilities of the first humans.

There follows, in Chapter 3, a very thorough and detailed examination of the notorious experiment of Psammetichus described by Herodotus (2.2). Herodotus tells us that in order to establish which was the oldest people in the world, Psammetichus had two children brought up by shepherds who were not to speak to them at all. The language in which their first words were spoken then would indicate that that language was the most ancient in the world. G. examines the assumptions of a naturally imprinted language that underlie the experiment, and the problems of Psammetichus' analysis of the experiment's results (e.g. that the children's first word 'bekos', the Phrygian word for bread, is also very close to 'pa-ako', the Egyptian word for bread, and that, anyway, children brought up with goats could be expected to say something in goatese very like 'bekos'.) There follows a very interesting survey of later variations on the experiment carried out in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, intriguingly, by autocrats such as Frederick II of Hohenstaufen, James IV of Scotland, and Akbar the Great of India. Condillac, Maupertuis, and Rousseau's Enlightenment ideas on the origins of language are also well surveyed.

The penultimate chapter looks at the other side of the coin: theories that humans originally had no language and either had to receive it as a gift from the gods or from a great culture-hero of first-discoverer, or had to develop it gradually. This for me is the more interesting side of the question, and again the survey is very thorough,

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detailed, and scholarly. The arguments in this area are crucial; since language so often is seen as emblematic of all human culture and even as a marker of human status itself, it matters very greatly whether we owe language to the gods as a gift or whether, more democratically perhaps, we were able to invent language for ourselves without divine aid. Again, whether it was necessary for a first-discoverer of language to grant this new-found ability to other, lesser humans, or whether language evolved in just the same way as the other arts and technologies, by the application of human ingenuity by trial and error over time, is a question that fundamentally affects the very nature and basis of human culture and society.

The final chapter examines anomalous cases that seem to challenge received ideas of language as a marker of humanity and as our highest cultural possession, with speaking animals, non-speaking savages, and 'people' such as the Dog-heads of India, who not only have no spoken human language, communicating by gesture and barking, but whose status as either humans or animals is in doubt.

Overall, this is a very useful book, scholarly and very thoroughly researched. My only real criticism is that often the analysis of particular passages (e.g. the place of language in the great myth of Plato's *Protagoras*) is so thorough that it can have a rather laboured feel. However, this carping aside, I have learned a good deal from G.'s book and I can thoroughly recommend it both to those who have not studied the field and to those who have already engaged with ancient questions of the origins of language and its place in human culture. Both will find this book valuable.

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KRÜGER'S SYNTAX REVIVED

G. L. Cooper III (after K. W. Krüger): *Greek Syntax*. Vols 1 and 2, *Attic Prose Syntax*. Vols 3 and 4, *Early Greek Poetic and Herodotean Syntax*. Pp. 3512. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1998–2002. Cased, US$295 (set of four volumes). ISBN: 0-472-10843-3, 0-472-10844-1, 0-472-11294-5, 0-472-11295-3.

> It is . . . a great shame that the single best all round presentation [of Greek syntax], distinguished by its practical and inductive organization, that namely by Karl Wilhelm Krüger, has long been unavailable. In fact Raphael Kühner's work, despite its awkward inductive [*sic*] organization, has, due primarily to the elaboration which Bernhard Gerth gave it, largely displaced Krüger's exemplary treatment. I am attempting to remedy this situation, at least for English speaking students.

Thus writes Guy L. Cooper III on pp. 2–3 of the preface to the first part of his stupendous four volume *Greek Syntax*, entitled *Attic Greek Prose Syntax* after K. W. Krüger. More than thirty years ago, C. had already announced a plan to write a 'neue umfassende und kritisch fundierte Darstellung der griechischen Syntax'.[1] Krüger's *Griechische Sprachlehre für Schulen* was, during the greater part of the nineteenth

[1]Preface to his dissertation *Zur syntaktischen Theorie und Textkritik der attischen Autoren* (Zürich, 1971), p. 2.

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