Focusing on the method rather than the doctrine of the dialogues, and treating them as unified wholes, he demonstrates their central and sophisticated pedagogical concerns as texts which encourage in increasingly sophisticated ways a philosophical progress based on methodological reflection and a reliance on plausibility. Kenyon's careful treatment of individual dialogues as carefully constructed wholes will have value for any scholar interested in philosophical method more generally and dialogue form more specifically.

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*Reception*

Bloomsbury's Imagines series, edited by Filippo Carlà-Uhink and Martin Lindner, focuses on classical receptions in the visual and performing arts. It has blazed into 2020 with three edited volumes and one monograph. The monograph by Carlà-Uhink is on the reception of classical Greece in theme parks, and the edited volume that has landed on our desk is *Classical Antiquity in Video Games*.[1] In this attractive volume, clad in the stylish graphics of Alientrap's *Apotheon* (2015), Christian Rollinger has assembled a vital collection of essays on the underexplored subject. As he emphatically proclaims, 'Video games are everywhere' (xiii) and this book is a lifeline for countless university teachers faced with the task of supervising students enthusiastically writing about the ever-expanding mass of classically inspired games.

The emergent field is crying out for a theoretical and practical introduction to gamer classics and a substantial sociological audience history of classically inspired video games. This book does not attempt to offer either. But in practice it is a good stand-in. The first PhDs specializing in this region of classical reception studies have emerged over the past few years, which has heralded a new and welcome theoretical sophistication, as several essays in this volume demonstrate. There are no doubt several perplexed fossils who still feel that video games are not of sufficient cultural importance to warrant serious study, but such a position is increasingly untenable when in Classics departments across the globe students at all levels are exploring game receptions of the classical world.

The present volume offers a diverse range of approaches by an admirably motley array of scholars and developers. It therefore provides an essential collection of case studies illuminating several key aspects of the subject area, and acts as a secure port from which students can launch into classicizing realms often way beyond their supervisors' horizons. The sociological, critical theoretical, and historical frameworks provided by Classical Reception Studies (CRS) can be felt to inform most richly those chapters on the representation of women in *Ryse: Son of Rome* by Sian Beavers (Chapter 4) and of postcolonialism in ancient world games by Ross Clare (Chapter 8). Extremely useful for students will be the perspective of creative practitioners and

[1] *Classical Antiquity in Video Games. Playing with the Ancient World*. Edited by Christian Rollinger. London and New York, Bloomsbury, 2020. Pp. xv + 294. 25 b/w illustrations, 2 tables. Hardback £85, ISBN: 978-1-3500-6663-2.

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scholars who usually work outside classical studies, not to mention the glossary of video-game terms and the bibliography and ludography (and their conventions).

Rollinger's Prologue and first chapter provide a handy introduction to ancient historical video games, from their pixelated birth pangs in *Legionnaire* (1982) and *The Return of Heracles* (1983) to the hyperrealism of *Assassin's Creed Odyssey* (2018). He alludes to the idea that snobbery plays a part in the paucity of classical reception (CR) scholarship interested in 'low-brow' video games. This is a familiar observation from CR scholars who feel that they are working in the margins, and one that the field needs to address. But are dozens of manuscripts on video-game classics being rejected by the publishing houses? I suspect not. The observation still rings true, however, and raises questions about how an academic field can and should expand to include new elements. CRS has successfully embraced many disparate cultural realms over the past decade or two, helped in no small part by publications such as the present volume. We need more.

Liz Gloyn, in *Tracking Classical Monsters*,[2] is also interested in expanding the CR franchise. She is emphatically not interested in the androcentric reception of ancient heroism, but prefers to look at monsters (1). Like Rollinger, Gloyn asks whether it is not cultural snobbery that has excluded her subject from CRS to date. Monsters, she states, are most likely to appear in 'popular culture', which she defines as 'things produced with a mass audience in mind', and it is this area that the scholarly community tends to overlook or undervalue (2). In our experience this attitude is marginal in CRS, which has long been interested in cultural activity beyond the expensively educated elite. Indeed, the danger of 'popular culture' as a concept is that it assumes that the individuals who make up that *populus* (who are we talking about?) do not participate in or care about the cultural products of an antithetically defined 'elite'.

It may well be that the cause of exclusion for monsters and video games alike stems at least in part from the very force that excludes video games from Gloyn's study, namely her research interests 'and, yes, the things I like' (2). While snobbery is unfortunately written into some of CRS's waspier foundational documents, we need not carry it forward through the next waves of scholarship. The intersection between seemingly natural aesthetic preference (e.g. for TV over *Dungeons and Dragons*, or Horace over *Street Fighter 2*) and cultural snobbery is as blurry as it is complex. CRS is still a comparatively young and, of course, ever-expanding field, but an awareness of how social and cultural horizons affect 'our' focus will be essential as scholars journey away from their inherited literary centre. But enough about snobbery and more about monsters!

Brightly and accessibly written, Gloyn's book is an inspiring and densely researched introduction to a vast and electric field of study. The first two chapters provide an excellent and thorough-going introduction to the diverse theoretical underpinnings of monstrosity and the space in which it is experienced. The third and fourth chapters track classical monsters on the big screen, from the influential stop-motion hybrids of Ray

[2] *Tracking Classical Monsters in Popular Culture*. By Liz Gloyn. London and New York, Bloomsbury, 2020. Pp. x + 228. 30 b/w illustrations. Hardback £65, ISBN: 978-1-7845-3934-4; paperback £19.99, ISBN: 978-1-3501-0961-2. Disclosure: Emma Bridges provided feedback to Liz Gloyn on a full draft of the manuscript for her book. To avoid any possible conflict of interest, Henry Stead wrote the review which we share here.

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Harryhausen to the classically inspired characters in *Pan's Labyrinth* (2006) and *Percy Jackson and the Olympians: The Lightning Thief* (2010). TV monsters are found in Chapters 5 and 6, which are given to *Hercules. The Legendary Journeys*, and *Xena: Warrior Princess* and *Doctor Who*, respectively. The final two chapters are case studies focusing on the characters of Medusa and the Minotaur. Gloyn's modest aim is to 'map out some of the territory in which classical monsters now dwell, and to understand some of the factors behind their surprisingly long afterlife' (5); her book does far more than this. The rich theoretical toolbox supplied in the first chapters alone recommends it very highly. It will be essential reading for students and scholars working on monstrosity in classical studies, and it is a bargain at the price.

Recent additions to our shelves also include a clutch of new publications in the Classical Presences series from Oxford University Press. True to form, the series editors – Lorna Hardwick and James I. Porter – continue to deliver high-quality volumes covering a diverse range of themes. Among these are two edited volumes: *Homer's Daughters*, edited by Fiona Cox and Elena Theodorakopoulos, examining creative responses to the poetry of Homer written by women between 1914 and the present;[3] and *Classicisms in the Black Atlantic*, edited by Ian Moyer, Adam Lecznar, and Heidi Morse.[4]

Both members of the editing team behind *Homer's Daughters* have published widely on classical reception, and in particular on women writers' responses to ancient Greek and Latin texts. Their latest carefully curated volume – within which every contribution has been written by a female scholar – draws on a rich pool of receptions of Homer produced by women, the majority of whom have enjoyed far less scholarly attention than their male counterparts. Fresh insights upon the work of writers with whom some readers might already be familiar (Genevieve Liveley's exploration of the poet H.D.'s many poetic engagements with Homeric epic is a welcome addition to the body of scholarship on this poet; and Jasmine Richards contributes a stimulating essay unpicking what she refers to as the 'anxieties of female authorship' in Margaret Atwood's novel *The Penelopiad*) sit alongside discussions of others who have thus far been the focus of little systematic analysis. In this latter category Francesca Richards' chapter on Adèle Geras' *Ithaka* augments the growing body of scholarship on classical reception in creative works aimed at children;[5] and Emily Spiers writes on Kate Tempest's hip-hop epic *Brand New Ancients*, analysing both the printed text and live performance. Spiers' piece also illustrates the ways in which classical reception scholarship, sitting as it does at the intersection of several academic disciplines, can benefit from engaging with a range of theoretical and methodological approaches; in this case she draws on

[3] *Homer's Daughters. Women's Responses to Homer in the Twentieth Century and Beyond*. Edited by Fiona Cox and Elena Theodorakopoulos. Classical Presences. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2019. Pp. xviii + 341. 3 b/w illustrations. Hardback £75, ISBN: 978-0-19-880258-7.

[4] *Classicisms in the Black Atlantic*. Edited by Ian Moyer, Adam Lecznar, and Heidi Morse. Classical Presences. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2020. Pp. xiv + 338. 14 b/w illustrations. Hardback £85, ISBN: 978-0-19-881412-2.

[5] See, for example, Helen Lovatt and Owen Hodkinson (eds.), *Classical Reception and Children's Literature* (London and New York, 2018), and the work of the international Our Mythical Childhood project, <http://www.omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/>, accessed 2 June 2020.

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recent applications of aesthetic and narrative theory to the field of futures studies in her discussion of Tempest's poetry.

While many of the pieces collected here examine Anglophone receptions, it is pleasing to see contributions discussing works written in other languages: Catherine Burke focuses on the *Iliad*-inspired poetry of two French Jewish women, Simone Weil and Rachel Bespaloff, composed during the Second World War; Nancy Sorkin Rabinowitz considers Christa Wolf's *Cassandra: A Novel and Four Essays*, originally published in German; Elena Theodorakopoulos examines Barbara Köhler's German *Niemands Frau* and its relationship with the *Odyssey*; and the Spanish poet Francisca Aguirre, and her *Ítaca*, itself a response to the poetry of Cavafy, is the focus of Victoria Reuter's essay. This last is an excellent example of the ways in which new receptions are often themselves responses to an intermediary rather than to an ancient source text; in this case, Aguirre uses the figure of Penelope to explore how the society of Francoist Spain in the 1970s confined her, as a woman, to the private sphere. Reuter carefully unpicks the political and social context of Aguirre's reading to produce an exemplary analysis of the multiple influences at play upon creative responses to ancient themes.

It is fitting that the volume closes with a reflection by Emily Wilson, the first woman to have published in English a complete translation of the *Odyssey*. Translating a text from one language to another is an act which encompasses both scholarship and creativity, and one which Wilson sees as carrying ethical responsibility too; here, as she outlines her translation strategies, there emerges both an insight into her own process and a series of prompts for others seeking to take a feminist approach to translation. Detailed discussion of her choices in relation to three selected passages provide worked examples of her approach.

If Cox and Theodorakopoulos' contribution reminds us of the wide range of perspectives which women's writing brings to bear on Homeric poetry, that of Moyer, Lecznar, and Morse achieves a similar feat with a different subset of classical receptions. The editors set out 'to explore a heterogeneous, plural array of classicisms in the Black Atlantic' (3), building on a series of conversations which were first opened at a 2014 conference at the University of Michigan. Their introduction does an excellent job of situating the current work in relation to previous scholarly discussions around race and antiquity; this provides particularly valuable contextual detail for those approaching these intersecting concerns for the first time. It also, however, serves as a thought-provoking reflection on urgent issues relating both to 'misappropriations of classical imagery in the service of racism and white supremacy' (26) and to diversity within the discipline of Classics itself. The collected essays are divided into three sections, titled 'Wakes' (with papers examining the ways in which classicisms have been used in service of the violence of slavery, and the continuing legacy of these discourses), 'Journeys' (providing an insight into the paths taken by individual scholars and artists in their relationship with Classics), and 'Tales' (relating to some of the stories which have circulated in the Black Atlantic and the ways in which these reshape or allude to classical themes).

*Classicisms and the Black Atlantic* explores a variety of sites of reception, both in the geographical sense and in terms of the types of responses to antiquity which its contributors examine. These include literary receptions: for example, Emily Greenwood's discussion of Derek Walcott's *Omeros* and Marlene NourbeSe Philip's *Zong!* explores

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how each subverts interpretations of ancient epic as 'canonical', through both the form and content of their writing; and Tracey L. Walters considers the relationship of Bernardine Evaristo's representation of Africans in Roman Britain in *The Emperor's Babe* with contemporary British politics. Visual art also takes a prominent place: noteworthy here is the artist Kimathi Donkor's chapter on representations of Andromeda, most of which have erased this mythical figure's Ethiopian blackness. Donkor's piece charts his own process of creating a new artistic version of Andromeda which reinstates her as 'defiantly black' (190). This chapter stands out not least for the insight which it provides into its author's own creative research process, which involved detailed observation of Henry Fehr's sculpture *The Rescue of Andromeda* by way of producing multiple sketches and three-dimensional digitized renderings.

Of course, receptions of the ancient world also reside in loci other than created artefacts. This is apparent in several of the contributions to this volume which explore alternative sites of reception: Margaret Williamson's chapter, for example, unearths archival material from the island of Jamaica in the eighteenth century to provide a fascinating insight into the ways in which the use of classically derived names for enslaved people could serve as a gesture of domination or mockery. Michele Valerie Ronnick takes a biographical approach by focusing on the life of the black Classicist, clergyman, and physician Henry Alexander Saturnin Hartley, who in 1889 produced the first published book of classical translations by a person of African descent in the western hemisphere. Her essay reminds us that the stories which are seldom told (she notes that Hartley has been 'almost entirely overlooked by scholars', 119) are often those which merit our closest attention. Meanwhile Patrice D. Rankine's eloquent contribution (which forms a powerful concluding chapter to the volume) provides a reflection – in parts autobiographical – on Classicism and its often problematic relationship with discourses surrounding race (with examples including Black Lives Matter) in contemporary America.

Also recently published in the Classical Presences series is Emma Cole's monograph *Postdramatic Tragedies*, which sheds fresh light on an area of theatre which has until now received little attention from scholars of the history and reception of classical tragedy.[6] A substantial introduction provides a welcome overview of the concept of the postdramatic – a term which itself has been interpreted in multiple ways – and highlights key moments in, and theoretical approaches to, the history of avant-garde theatre, as well as outlining the author's own methodology; her approach is one which foregrounds semiotic and phenomenological analyses of the texts and productions she discusses. Cole does not shy away from tackling the contested interpretations of several of the performances at the heart of her book, and her lucid prose style makes light work of these experimental productions which intersect in complex and often problematic ways with ancient theatre.

Structured in three sections, each featuring a series of case studies, the book tackles ongoing debates within theatre studies while analysing the symbiotic relationship between Classics and the postdramatic. Some of the performances on which she focuses are receptions of particular ancient plays; others have a more complex relationship with the idea of tragedy itself, and with classical theatre. Part I, 'Rewriting the

[6] *Postdramatic Tragedies*. By Emma Cole. Classical Presences. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2019. Pp. x + 312. 8 b/w illustrations. Hardback £75, ISBN: 978-0-19-881768-0.

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Classics', addresses the contentious status of the written text within postdramatic theatre. Cole selects three examples of so-called 'in-yer-face' theatre, characterized by often shocking themes and graphic depictions of sex and violence: Sarah Kane's *Phaedra's Love*, Martin Crimp's *Alles Weitere kennen Sie aus dem Kino*, and Tom Holloway's *Love Me Tender*. In Part II, 'Devising the Classics', we find two examples of devised theatre – that is, productions developed through collaboration between an ensemble – with the Wooster Group's *To You, The Birdie!* and the Hayloft Project's *Thyestes*. The final part, 'Embodying the Classics', in which Cole's sensitivity to the relationship between audience and performance comes to the fore, considers devised productions which use immersive and durational formats: ZU-UK's *Hotel Medea* and Jan Fabre's twenty-four-hour performance, *Mount Olympus*.

Each of the discussions combines detailed analysis of the staging – including key aspects such as the use of the chorus – and thematic concerns of the performances with close attention to the sociopolitical and artistic contexts within which they premiered. What emerges is not only a cohesive overview of key aspects of the relationship of the postdramatic with the Classics, but also a series of essays which, read individually, will be invaluable to those interested in the work of particular practitioners. The volume has much to recommend it both for theatre historians and for those whose focus is on the contemporary reception of ancient drama. This reviewer is left wishing only that the riches of Classical Presences were more affordable than the costly hardbacks which most readers will be able to enjoy only if they have access to a library copy.

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*General*

*Structures of Epic Poetry*[1] is a monumental, four-volume compendium which aims to classify, analyse, and compare epic structures across Greek and Latin epic poems (and beyond) in a systematic and overarching way. While the individual Bauformen ('structural elements') have been the focus of the study of epic for decades, a comprehensive analysis providing a systematic overview of all structural elements in the totality of ancient epic is obviously not a one-person job. The editors, Christiane Reitz and Simone Finkmann, gathered an international group of experts for this herculean task. The compendium provides a set of broad cross-sectional papers on the individual epic structural elements, using a consistent terminology. It has to be said that the

[1] *Structures of Epic Poetry. Volume I: Foundations, Volumes II.1 and II.2: Configuration, Volume III: Continuity*. Edited by Christiane Reitz and Simone Finkmann. Pp. x + 871, vi + 568, viii + 863, vi + 425. Berlin and Boston, MA, Walter de Gruyter, 2019. Hardback £218, ISBN: 978-3-11-049200-2.

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