example will characterize the main difference between them. Fr. 14 S. (17 Sb., 22 Powell, 18 Kuchenmüller) reads *βουγενέας φάμενος προσεβήσαο μακρὰ μελίσσας*. Sbardella prints the line in this form, and in a note of two-and-a-half pages records the views of various scholars, concluding that the reference to bugonia was probably made in passing. S., in a note of seven pages, sees here part of an aition for apiculture on the island of Cos (famous for its honey), an aition which could have been narrated at a feast given by Chalcon (Theoc. 7.6) and attended by Demeter, who may well have been offered the *κυκεών*, and whose arrival in disguise might perhaps have been heralded by the appearance of bees or bee-nymphs, *Μέλισσαι*. Moreover, the generation of bees from the rotting flesh of an ox is said to be reminiscent of Demeter's association with putrid pork at the Thesmophoria. S. adopts the conjecture *φθάμενος*, which Sbardella calls 'imprudente'. (Kuchenmüller, by contrast, sees no reason even to attribute this line to *Demeter*. 'Tamen non defuere', he adds, 'qui nesciendi impatientes multum terrae viderent.')

S. would have benefited from the services of a native speaker of English as copy-editor: there are numerous mis-spellings and unidiomatic expressions. He provides good indexes, but no translation of the testimonia or fragments. He is able to print one important testimonium unknown to Sbardella: an epigram in the recently published Posidippus collection (no. 63 Austin-Bastianini, ed. min.) sheds more light on the erection on Cos of a bronze statue of the poet. Until such time as a similarly lengthy sample of Philitas' verse is discovered, his meagre fragments will continue to raise unanswerable questions. S. must view the prospect of such a discovery with a mixture of excitement and apprehension.

Trinity College, Cambridge N. HOPKINSON

HELLENISTIC POETRY AND PROPAGANDA

A. COPPOLA: *Il re, il barbaro, il tiranno. Poesia e ideologia in età ellenistica.* (Saggi di antichità e tradizione classica 23.) Pp. 159. Padua: Esedra editrice, 2002. Paper, €18.10. ISBN: 88-86413-60-2.

Coppola's book focuses on one of the hottest issues for historians of the ancient world, the relationship between poetry and power. In spite of its subtitle, the book is not a comprehensive treatment of the rôle of poetry in the 'propaganda' fostered by Hellenistic kings and by their opponents, but is rather a collection of short and independent chapters, which could just as well have been published as separate articles.

The first one is a brief survey on some of the key themes in the Ptolemies' self-representation: the king as a conqueror of the east (Sesostris); the opposition between Greeks and barbarians; the concept of *Homonoia*. Unfortunately the author was unable to take account of some recent works on the same topics, such as Hazzard, *Imagination of a Monarchy. Studies in Ptolemaic Propaganda* (Toronto, 2000), especially for the analysis of Philadelphos' *pompe*; for *Homonoia* in a fragment of Alexis (p. 39) use can be made of Di Marzio, *MD* 42 (1999), 167–86; for the chronology of Nicander (p. 50) see also Massimilla in *La Letteratura ellenistica. Problemi e prospettive di ricerca* (Rome, 2000), pp. 127–37; on Daphitas (p. 51) add Braund, *CQ* 32 (1982), 350–7. In the second chapter, after a short presentation of the *status quaestionis* on the chronology of Lycophron and his work, C. offers an interpretation of some passages of the *Alexandra*, mostly related to western Greece

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https://doi.org/10.1093/cr/53.2.312 Published online by Cambridge University Press

and Magna Graecia; there follows an appendix on Alexander's projects for the west. The title of the book is particularly apposite to the third chapter, which contains a useful survey on the political exploitation of the literary character of the Cyclops, who became a symbol for the tyrant in both Greece and Italy; interesting is Section 8, where C. traces the iconography of the *dux luscus* from Ennius' *Annales* to Petrarca.

Concluding the chapter, a short note deals with the implicit comparison between the Thirty Tyrants and the Galatians in literary sources. Indeed, the Galatian theme is often alluded to throughout the book, but the author seems to have overlooked some recent works on the subject (e.g. N. T. de Grummond and B. S. Ridgway [edd.], *From Pergamon to Sperlonga: Sculpture and Context* [Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2001]; on the other hand, no chapter is devoted exclusively to the Attalids, although references to them are scattered through all the book). Chapter 4 briefly discusses some mythological themes exploited by and against the Seleucids (one can, though, have doubts about whether 'naturalmente il Marsia che difese Celene dai Galati va identificato con un personaggio reale', p. 122).

C.'s work proves once again that historians of the Hellenistic world cannot do without analysis of the literary sources, although care must be taken not to assume that not all the themes treated by Hellenistic authors living in court circles are in fact pieces of royal ideology, especially if they are just passing references. The book contains useful and interesting material, but its treatment is often unsystematic, which makes it difficult to disentangle the new hypotheses proposed by the author from the dense presentations of the *status quaestionis*; a concluding section at the end of each chapter would have greatly helped the reader.

Typographical errors in the text are few (e.g. p. 97 n. 24 'Horden' for 'Hordern'), but more are concentrated in the bibliography at the end of the book (e.g. p. 132: 'Euf0rione'; p. 137: 'aand' repeated twice; p. 138: the name of the city is missing in Hammond 1988; p. 141: 'Nex York' and 'sue riti'; p. 143: 'Agamemmonidi'); it could have been useful if all the bibliography had been collected at the end, while many works are only quoted in footnotes.

Venice International University/
Università Cattolica del S. Cuore, Milan SILVIA BARBANTANI

EPISTOLARY FUNCTIONS

C. D. N. Costa: *Greek Fictional Letters*. Pp. xxiii + 189. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002. Cased. ISBN: 0-19-924001-9 (0-19-924546-0 pbk).

This is a welcome volume that provides easy access to some obscure, but interesting, material. Costa offers a text, translation, and commentary for fifty-one Greek letters dating from *c*. 100 B.C.E. to *c*. 250 C.E. All are fictional, with the possible exception of Philostratus' letter 73 to Julia Domna (a very short history of Greek prose style with special reference to Plato), which, as C. observes, may well be the product of actual correspondence.

In a brief introduction C. enumerates three categories of letters: (1) those reproduced or composed in historical or fictional narratives; (2) independent, imaginary compositions without moralizing or didactic intent, and usually comic; and (3) letters like those in category 2, but with such intent (pp. xiv–xv). Costa's collection includes letters of types 2 and 3 (i.e. 'comic' and 'philosophical'.) For an extended

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