apparently indiscriminate use of terms like 'phallocentric' and 'phallogocentric'. I would have expected a feminist poetics to discuss inspiration by the Muse. The main achievements are the stringent feminist analyses of critics of Homer, and interpretations of the texts of the Penelopean tradition.

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doi:10.1093/clrevj/bni217

HOMERIC HYMNS AND HESIOD

D. J. RAYOR: *The Homeric Hymns*. A Translation, with Introduction and Notes. Pp. xiv + 164, map. Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 2004. Paper, US$14.95, £9.95 (Cased, US$35, £22.95). ISBN: 0-520-23993-8 (0-520-23991-1 hbk).

A. N. ATHANASSAKIS: *The Homeric Hymns*. Translation, Introduction, and Notes, 2nd edn. Pp. xxii + 106, map. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004 (1976^1). Paper, £13.50. ISBN: 0-8018-7983-3.

A. N. ATHANASSAKIS: *Hesiod:* Theogony, Works and Days, Shield. Translation, Introduction, and Notes, 2nd edn. Pp. xxiv + 163, map. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004 (1983^1). Paper, £13.50. ISBN: 0-8018-7984-1.

When the first edition of his translation of the Homeric Hymns appeared in 1976, Athanassakis was for the most part justified to state in his preface that 'The Homeric Hymns have been neglected both in antiquity and in modern times'. This comment remains in his recently published second edition (p. ix), but there is no longer justification for its inclusion. First, research since 1976 has suggested that the Hymns were not as neglected in antiquity as had previously been thought. Numerous echoes in later Greek literature seem to reflect substantial knowledge of the Hymns; even if the poems have always existed in the shadow of the two great Homeric epics, it is at least no longer prudent to say that they were neglected. More strikingly, it can certainly not now be claimed that the Hymns have been neglected in modern times. Translations alone speak to this fact. Whereas A.'s work was a rarity in 1976, recent years have produced a steady flow of translations of the Hymns; S. C. Shelmerdine (Newburyport, MA, 1995), M. Crudden (Oxford, 2001), M. L. West (Loeb, 2003), and J. Cashford together with N. J. Richardson (Penguin, 2003) have all published translations, together with an introduction and notes. Rayor's new book is the latest addition to this fast-growing collection.

R.'s book includes a small map of Greece, a short introduction, a verse translation of the Hymns, brief notes for each poem, a select bibliography of relevant scholarship, and a glossary of names and places. The translation itself is on the whole very faifthful to the original Greek, and, although such judgement must necessarily be subjective, it is attractive to read; R. should be pleased with her overall result. She has at times, however, let poetic fancy get the better of her. For example, she translates Artemis' epithet κελαδεινός throughout as 'with baying hounds'. The epithet seems to

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https://doi.org/10.1093/clrevj/bni218 Published online by Cambridge University Press

have a connection to hunting when it is applied to Artemis (although it may refer more generally to the sounds of wild nature; cf. its use of *Ζέφυρος* at *Il.* 23.208), but it is surely misleading to introduce the specific image of the hound here. If one is to follow the connection with hunting, West's 'of the view-halloo' seems preferable; better yet is Crudden's more general 'whose cry resounds'.

The introduction and notes to this volume are aimed specifically at 'readers who, approaching the poems for the first time, desire additional background or historical and geographical details' (p. 12). Accordingly, one might not expect them to be particularly ambitious in their coverage. They could, however, have been more substantial than they are. As it stands, the introduction is at times so slight as to mislead the intended first-time reader. In her discussion of the Hymn to Aphrodite, R. states confidently, with no reference to relevant literature on the topic, that Aphrodite 'loses her special power over the other gods to make them mate with humans, though she does maintain her ability to cause humans, animals and even gods to desire their own kind'. Despite the fact that several modern critics maintain that this Hymn narrates the end of Aphrodite's mixing of gods and mortals in love, this is far from clear in the text of the poem; what is clear is that Aphrodite is shamed by having slept with the mortal Anchises, and will therefore no longer be able to boast about such exploits amongst the gods (see vv. 252–3; earlier in the poem, vv. 45–52 state specifically that Zeus' purpose for turning the tables on Aphrodite is to end her boasting). R. should at least have given some indication that this interpretation of the poem is an opinion of modern scholarship. The notes, while accurate in what they say, are helpful only at a very basic level. Students of the Hymns will perhaps prefer the more extensive notes of Crudden, who caters more to advanced readers.

It is particularly surprising that R. fails to take into account *POxy.* 670, which contains a possible fragment of the first Hymn to Dionysus, as argued by M. L. West (*ZPE* 134 [2001], 1–11). Crudden cannot have been expected to include this by the time his book went to press in 2001, but Cashford and Richardson consider the fragment in their edition of 2003, as of course does West in his Loeb edition of the same year. Readers who want the fullest picture of what the Hymn to Dionysus might once have consisted of will surely want to turn to these translations rather than to R.'s. The same omission is found in the second edition of A.'s translation of the Hymns, whose introduction and notes would have benefited greatly from more substantial revision. He does provide an updated bibliography at the back of the book, and has made some helpful additions to the notes, but students will find the supporting material of other recent translations more up-to-date.

In the second edition of A.'s translation of Hesiod, too (*Theogony*, *Works and Days*, and *Shield*), 'additions to the notes are lean' (p. x), but in this case there is no modern translation which rivals what he has to offer. West's translation of *Theogony* and *Works and Days* (Oxford, 1988) offers only the briefest of explanatory notes, while Richmond Lattimore's translation of *Theogony*, *Works and Days*, and *Shield* (Ann Arbor, 1959) provides only a slight introduction with no explanatory notes at all. I should imagine that A.'s revised edition of Hesiod will be very welcome in university classrooms.

It is a pleasure to see such vibrant interest in the Homeric Hymns, so as to produce four new translations and a revised version of an earlier translation in a mere three years. Individuals could not have known that this would be the case when they undertook their work in different corners of the globe. Now that the dust is settling, however, it would be wise for translators to steer clear of the Hymns for the time being. Many later Greek texts still lack a reliable translation, or any translation at all,

https://doi.org/10.1093/clrevj/bni218 Published online by Cambridge University Press

and one can hope that future translators will find these more neglected texts both interesting and worthy of their attention.

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doi:10.1093/clrevj/bni218

LITTERA SCRIPTA MANET

B. B. POWELL: *Writing and the Origins of Greek Literature*. Pp. xvi + 210, maps, ills. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. Cased, £40, US$55. ISBN: 0-521-78206-6.

This is a forceful and wide-ranging book with a somewhat quirky patchwork structure, its different elements all intended to throw light on the relationship of writing to the earliest Greek literature. A series of short, punchy chapters lead up to a lightly revised version of Powell's long and informative *BMCR* (2000) review of M. L. West's *East Face of Helicon* (Oxford, 1997), whose presentation of evidence for an 'East Mediterranean koinē' P. considers highly persuasive. This is followed by accounts of theories of writing and of its contrasting manifestations in China, Egypt, Mesopotamia and the Near East. P. then returns to the question of the invention of the Greek alphabet, an area in which he has already made an important contribution with his *Homer and the Origins of the Greek Alphabet* (Cambridge 1991). Here he builds on and revises his earlier argument for a single 'adapter' of the Greek alphabet, concluding that the inventor 'is likely to have been a Semite, an inheritor of the tradition of West Semitic writing and its traditions of multiliteralism, who was also bilingual in Greek' (p. 114). A wide selection of pertinent images illustrate the book, and in the penultimate chapter P. concentrates on the way elements of Near Eastern art seem to have acted as a catalyst for the aoidic innovation and creation of myths. The advent of writing, however, and consequent preservation and dissemination of the text of Homer is connected to the discernible turn in seventh-century Greece towards the depiction of images drawn from Homeric myths.

In the first section, P. sets out to offer various perspectives on the relationship of the written word to the earliest literature in Greek. He revisits the oral/literate distinction with the aim of destabilizing any cosy assumptions about what such a distinction means. He is unconvinced by such usages as 'oral text' and 'oral literature', and reminds us that the conversion of a song into a text of any kind, whether written in alphabetic script or recorded (like Milman Parry's tapes of Yugoslav oral songs) on aluminium wire, is an unusual, laborious, and denaturing process. We only know Homer's epics as texts, whatever our theories or speculations about their oral composition. P. is a firm proponent of the Parry/Lord hypothesis, that the text of Homer was originally composed in performance and dictated by the poet to a literate amanuensis—something for which he provides fascinating parallels from Ugaritic practice. Writing as we understand it is 'a technology of explosive force', one unknown to the Homeric epic, as P. succinctly demonstrates, pointing out that 'there are no tape recorders mentioned in the songs of the guslar Avdo Mejedovich either'. Homer's ignorance of writing may be tellingly contrasted with its prominence in the Egyptian *Tale of Sinuhe* (*c.* 1800 B.C.E.) which revels in describing written exchanges.

If we are unclear about the meaning of orality, we are equally confused about the

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