However, these are minor cavils. This is a most valuable and important contribution to the study of late antique philosophy, which makes a neglected Neoplatonist accessible to a wider readership, including those with little or no Greek. It is an indispensable addition to any serious research library.

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THE RITUAL LAMENT UPDATED

M. ALEXIOU: *The Ritual Lament in Greek Tradition*. Second edition, revised by D. Yatromanolakis and P. Roilos. Pp. xviii + 293. Lanham, Boulder, New York, and Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002 (first edition 1974). Paper, £22.95. ISBN: 0-7452-0757-2.

Many thanks are owed to Gregory Nagy, editor of the Rowman & Littlefield monograph series *Greek Studies: Interdisciplinary Approaches*, for his commitment to bringing Margaret Alexiou's seminal work back into print. As he states in his Foreword, this book 'has been consistently consulted and cited as the most authoritative work on the tradition of singing laments in the prehistory and history of the Greek-speaking peoples'. The two editors created a Greek revised edition and, at the request of Alexiou and Nagy, this new English edition, both of which faithfully preserve the original 1974 version of *The Ritual Lament* in framework, methodology, and interpretations; a few updated references are included, along with a very useful bibliographical supplement that includes titles published through 1998. This refreshed edition is welcome indeed; it is an essential source for any study of women's song traditions.

In her *Preface*, written in 1973, Alexiou clearly states her purpose: 'to study the evolution of the ritual lament throughout Greek tradition, indicating how poets of different ages were able to draw on a common fund of ideas, themes, and formulae, frequently investing an old and well-established convention with a new significance and contributing something of their own' (p. xv). She studies the laments 'in relation to the funeral ritual and in relation to other kinds of ritual laments and songs to the dead' (p. 131) to show the continuity, evolution, and change in the use of imagery in laments from antiquity to the modern era, and also to highlight their originality. She draws on a variety of sources, both literary and archaeological, and includes often full-text examples of laments in Greek with English translation and interpretation. Her sources for the songs are nineteenth- and early twentieth-century collections of Greek folksongs (e.g. N. Politis), and her own fieldwork, conducted in Greece during the 1960s. Most, if not all, of the Greek folksongs that appear in the book had never before been translated into English—or even studied, for that matter, by English-speaking scholars.

Alexiou approaches her interdisciplinary investigation of women's lament traditions in three parts. In 'Lament & Ritual', Alexiou explores tradition and change from antiquity to modern survivals, with reference to the wake, the funeral procession, burial and after, and legislation governing lamentation and funerals. She includes excerpts from Homer, Byzantine and modern Greek poetry and song to illustrate the diachronic flow of both the popular and learned lament traditions, focusing on issues of performance context, composition and form, reception, and interpretation in literature, epigraphy, archaeology, and history. In 'Gods, Cities and Men', she

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categorizes the different genres of laments: (i) five types for gods and heroes; (ii) the historical lament for the fall/destruction of cities; and (iii) the classification of ancient and modern laments/songs to the dead (*thrênos*, *goos*, *kommos*). She includes here a short section on 'the men's part', and 'the origin of modern *moirologi*'. Finally, in 'The Common Tradition', Alexiou examines more deeply the form and structure of laments, their conventions, themes, and formulae. In a section entitled 'The Allusive Method', she explores the expression of ideas through symbols and imagery (e.g. 'death as a journey').

The year 2002 was an auspicious one for Alexiou, for it saw the re-issue of this ground-breaking work and also the publication of its long-awaited sequel: *After Antiquity: Greek Language, Myth, and Metaphor*. Taken as a whole, these two complementary studies contribute much to our understanding and appreciation of the beauty, the power, and the significance of poetics in Greek tradition through the ages.

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DIVINE INTERVENTIONS

V. Muñoz Llamosas: *La intervención divina en el hombre a través de la literatura griega de época arcaica y clásica*. (Classical and Byzantine Monographs 51.) Pp. xi + 726. Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert, 2002. Paper. ISBN: 90-256-0638-5 (90-256-1155-9 hbk).

The book under review, a revised version of the author's doctoral dissertation (University of Oviedo, 2000), proposes to 'investigate the phenomenon of divine intervention in human beings exhaustively and in detail, covering all of classical and archaic [Greek] literature' (p. 1). The author states that she has not limited herself to Greek religion and mythology, since the study of divine intervention requires an examination of the development of ancient Greek thought generally. Clearly, she has set herself no small task.

The work has the virtues and defects of an old-fashioned dissertation. The author has staked out an immense subject, has accumulated a huge bibliography, and has dutifully covered the terrain. Unfortunately, she has not managed to articulate a clear and up-to-date theoretical framework, and she does not succeed in offering new interpretations of any author or passage.

After a brief attempt at defining 'religion' and, more particularly, 'Greek religion', M. Ll. introduces the views of Nilsson and Nestle (p. 2). Although she claims that she will nuance the evolutionist view of Nestle—the famous transition from mythos to logos—it soon becomes clear that her approach remains grounded in the concepts of these two scholars and those of a few others, whose debt to them is apparent (e.g. she adopts Dodds's idea that the Homeric world represents a shame culture). Thus we read on p. 2 that 'the mythic mode of thought . . . is just as rational as the logical mode'; and yet, on p. 3, M. Ll. states: 'the opposition between mythos and logos that has been characteristic of western thought since the sixth century B.C. arose under specific circumstances, and was completely foreign to earlier authors such as Homer and Hesiod.' One might suppose she means that the opposition—not rational thought itself—arose in the sixth century (although on p. 144 we read that Pindar 'is the first author in whom the opposition μῦθος/λόγος, which is essential to Greek thought, may be documented'). But, on the following page, where she outlines her conclusions

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