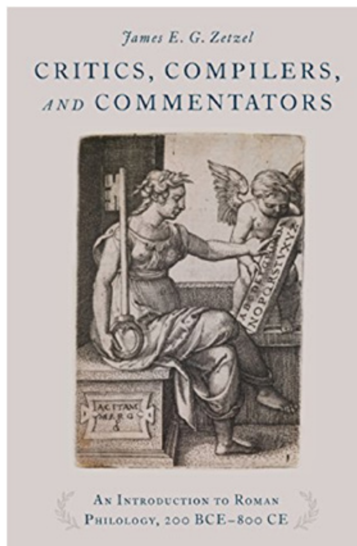
# BOOK REVIEWS

## Zetzel (J.E.G)

***Critics, Compilers, and Commentators: An Introduction to Roman Philology, 200 BCE – 800 CE.* Pp. xviii + 425. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018. Paper, £21.99 (Cased, £71). ISBN: 978-0-18-538052-1.**




Zetzel, in his preface, acknowledges the magnitude of the project he set out to undertake in the writing of this volume, and it is fair to say that the finished product reflects entirely the ten years of efforts required to complete it. The scope of the work, much larger than anything attempted before it on the topic of Roman philology, runs from the early origins of the study of language in Rome, through to the Medieval period, in a remarkably consistent and methodical manner for a volume covering such an extensive time period and volume of texts.

*Critics, Compilers, and Commentators* presents us with a project in two parts. The first half of the volume recounts the history of Roman philology, orientated around its key figures, followed by a discussion of the forms in which it is preserved, with Z. bringing together both angles in the context of the larger cultural project which emerged in an increasingly defined manner. The second half of the volume contains an extensive bibliographic guide to Roman (as well as medieval) scholars and their works, the compilation of which is an extraordinary feat in itself and provides an impressive and comprehensive reference guide to philological activities in antiquity and beyond.

The first half of the volume begins with Z. setting out the context of the study, providing a useful discussion for the general reader regarding the nature of philology in chapter 1. The narratological account begins in chapter 2, where the role of the *grammaticus* (grammarian) in the Republic is defined with reference to historical writings (p. 18-19), and Z. attempts to establish exactly *when* the Romans began to think about philology, and *what* exactly these early philologists did (p. 27-30). Chapter three turns towards specific writers and their works, beginning with a discussion of Varro's *De Lingua Latina* and his perspective on the origins and making of words. Similarly, chapters 4 and 5 continue the historical narrative, through identifying key figures and setting out the evolving trends in philological studies. These opening chapters provide a clearly explained introduction to the historical background for the reader unfamiliar with the study of Roman philology; however those who already have some knowledge and are seeking a more critical discussion may also make use of the ample footnotes provided.

The latter chapters of the first part of the volume move away from a narrative account of Roman philology to a discussion of "the forms in which it is preserved" (p. 95). Chapter 6, "Dictionaries, Glossaries, Encyclopedias", presents an overview of the broader theme of "words", which Z. terms "a central preoccupation in the study of language in the 2nd and early 3rd centuries CE" (ibid.). Following a discussion of the problems relating to the area (including abridgement, authorial insertion), he moves onto a more technical discussion of glossaries in which he begins to refer to particular manuscripts in a more critical and philologically orientated manner. Chapter 7, "Commentary and Exegesis", explores the place of commentary in the philological tradition, and examines commentaries on Virgil, Cicero and Horace to give a more concrete idea of the history of the commentary from antiquity to the Carolingian period. The extensive discussion of Virgil, Cicero and Horace's commentaries is particularly illustrative of this, and especially useful if taken in conjunction with the bibliographic information provided for these authors in part two of the volume. Chapter 8, "Grammars and Grammarians", establishes the remit of the *grammaticus*, and of what the *ars grammatica* consisted, while chapter 9 "Author, Audience, Text" brings together the various strands of the study under a discussion of the continually evolving relationship between a text, its tradition, and its audience.

The second part of the volume, a bibliographic guide, comprises an endeavour so immense it could well be a book in its own right, encompassing hundreds of scholarly texts from antiquity to the Middle Ages. Chapter 10 covers dictionaries and similar lists; chapter 11 commentaries; chapter 12 ancient grammatical writings; and chapter 13 early medieval grammars. Z. begins this second half with an explanation of how the guide can be used, including its layout and its limitations. The result is an incredibly clear, easily consultable, and, most significantly, a very thorough guide to a comprehensive range of materials relating to Roman philology.

Z. has produced an outstandingly informative volume, useful to both the general and expert reader alike. Part one's lucid account of key trends, figures and works are clearly explained and are accessible to the general reader, and as well as introducing the main areas of critical debate he also points the more advanced reader clearly in the direction of further relevant material. The author often begins his chapters with a brief account of their scope, definitions of key terms, and any limitations of either his own endeavours or that of the material he is concerning himself with. This ensures that *Critics, Compilers, and Commentators* remains clear and methodical, yet stimulating. The book's true value, however, lies in the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bibliographic guide, which represents an astounding amount of work and may act as an indispensable reference guide not only for students of Roman literature, but also for medievalists and those interested in the history of education, linguistics, and intellectual history.

***Emma Wall, Durham University.***

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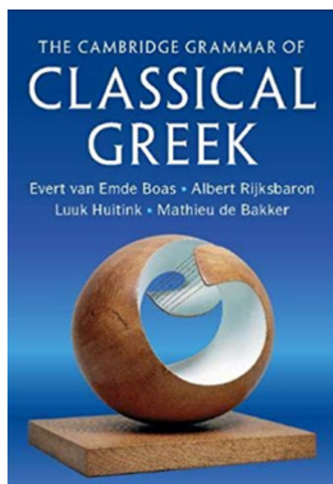
# Boas (E.) *et al.*,

***The Cambridge Grammar Of Classical Greek*, pp. xlii + 811, CUP, 2019**
**ISBN 9780521198608**




## Preface

Be warned: this is a very long review, as befits a long and very important book that is going to have a long-lasting impact on studies of the Greek language. However, the impact may not be felt by students below undergraduate level, and their teachers, until its effect has percolated down from its target level, as it must surely do. One hopes that by such a time there will still be students of Classical Greek who can benefit from it.

This 'hefty tome', as the authors describe it, will surely be a landmark in the history of Greek grammars, and the benchmark for future grammars, however rebarbative it may seem to those who cleave to traditional grammars. Its many insights will enable users to engage with the language of Classical Greek texts in a much more informed and enlightened way than heretofore.

(I shall use the abbreviation for the book *CGCG*, favoured by the authors. The first 'C' stood originally for 'Concise'; it could now stand for 'Compendious'. As for the second 'C', see below.)

Considerations of space prevent me from going much beyond generalities in a book of this length and detail; and I do not have many issues with the particulars in any case. I shall mention just a few towards the end of the review.

## Main Features

'The difference between the pattern *ὁ ανὴρ ὁ ἀγαθός* and *ἀνὴρ ὁ ἀγαθός* resides in the identifiability of the head: in the article-head-article modifier configuration, the head is identifiable on its own and the modifier is added to confirm that this is the intended referent, or to specify a subgroup; in the less frequent head-article-modifier configuration, the head is typically not identifiable without the information provided by the modifier.' (*CGCG*, 28.11, Note 2)

No, I didn't understand it (at first) either, once my old eyes were able to make it out. And we thought that Smyth was difficult to follow! But then again, this small type is for 'features which students … may not be expected to know by heart'. (p. xxxv) A small mercy for which they must be thankful.

This extract, not altogether uncharacteristic, illustrates the most novel and distinctive feature of this book, one that distinguishes it from all other Greek grammars in English (but see below for an earlier Latin near-counterpart). For the authors' decision to use the terminology of modern linguistics (described on p. xl as 'now fairly well established in Greek linguistics, if not in Classics at large'), with the advancement in our understanding of Greek grammar that it has brought over recent decades, to describe and explain the grammar of ancient Greek, and the policy adopted for its application in the book, see p. xl again (where the authors say '…we aim to use terminology which is intuitive (ideally, self-explanatory) and, where possible, familiar'). Obviously, as the authors concede, the implementation of the decision will not please everybody; in fact, it will probably please only the minority of fellow students of linguistics, initially at least, and until the rest of us catch on and catch up. And yet, perhaps as a concession to tradition, or to traditionalists, the book also makes frequent use of grammatical terms that one can find in Smyth, e.g. the terms for different case usages ('ethic dative' etc.) many of which are hardly self-explanatory either. But in the end the book is as readable as the subject matter and the language of linguistics allow. Fortunately, since it is a grammar of an ancient (form of a) language, the grammar itself remains as it has always been and will be. This means that the grammatical data itself is much the same as it is in other books of its kind, especially the grammar of Smyth, its equal of 100 years ago, in size at least, though the content of Smyth is possibly even fuller and more detailed, if very differently described and presented. Actually, much of Smyth is unreadable in its own way. But, as I say, the grammar it contains is much the same. So, this book is revisionary mainly in its language of instruction, as it were, and in the fact that it does set out to instruct us by purging us of our outmoded views on Greek grammar and the language we use to describe it. (For a brief statement of what the authors perceive to be the main problems with existing Greek grammars and their terminology, see p. xl.)

To make things even harder for us, there is no glossary provided of the unfamiliar terminology, as there is to some extent for instance in the book by Horrocks and Clackson, *The Blackwell History of the Latin Language*. And there is no glossary of grammatical terms either, as there is in the much slighter grammars of James Morwood. Presumably, the book itself is supposed to fulfil this purpose, with its indexes and extensive cross-references. The layout and presentation of the content are excellent: a refreshing change from the dense and cramped pages of Smyth that hurt the eyes (and head) at every turn. It really is very easy to find one's way around the book, if a little irritating to be given so often directions to do so. The contents pages too are very detailed and laid out admirably clearly. The abbreviations and symbols may take some getting used to (the use of X and Y as placeholders can be confusing). (The diagrams on pp. 381-2 to illustrate expressions of space and time look like nothing so much as the questions set in the old 11-Plus non-verbal reasoning tests. I passed, I think,



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after some head scratching.) The authors took the decision not to overload the book with the kind of supplementary material to be found at the back of many traditional grammars, e.g. prosody, literary terms etc. There is, however, a short section on accents (short by the standards of Philomen Probert's *A New Short* [sic] *Guide to the Accentuation of Ancient Greek*), which is as opaque as any other. There is also a sizeable bibliography, arranged thematically, much of it to do with linguistics, that one does not normally find in a grammar book. We are invited to consult it if we need to brush up on our knowledge of modern linguistics, especially Greek linguistics. I imagine that most of us could profit by dipping into this if we propose to make serious use of the book.

As for the second 'C' in the abbreviation of the title: what is '*Classical* Greek'? Is it the name of a high register of ancient written (mainly) Greek developed in the Classical period of Greece and used by a tiny educated elite for literature and certain types of sub literary texts, approximations to which and variants of which have been written down to this day? Or is it a name for all and every form of Greek that was used only or mainly in the Classical period of Greece? If it stands for the latter then no grammar has ever, or ever could be, written of it. So, it is a grammar of the former, but of classical *Attic* Greek only, not of other literary dialects that might, strictly speaking, be subsumed under 'Classical Greek', since they too had higher registers that were used for the same purposes as Attic Greek. Actually, there is a short section on Doric (if one may still use that term) as used in Athenian drama, and selected aspects of literary Ionic, which is as it should be, given the formative part that it played in the development of literary Attic; and Herodotus, its greatest exponent in prose, and one of the most cited sources of examples of usage in the book, falls within the Classical period too. It is perhaps ironic (no pun) then that the success of ('Ionicised') Attic led to the demise of literary Ionic by about 300 BCE or even earlier, before the Classical period was over, if periodisation of the past reflects any historical realities. The grammar of an ancient language, or a historical period (as here) of the language, has not changed since it ceased to be a living language, or at least a language in use. Moreover, the periodisation of a language does not set temporal (or geographical) limits to the use of the language, since particular forms and features of the language that become codified (committed to books of grammar) and standardised transcend such boundaries. (Lucian (from Syria), making use of grammar books of Classical Greek and teachers of grammar, was enabled to write a very passable form of Classical Attic Greek 500 years after Plato (he could be cited in this book for examples of usage); Jebb (from Scotland/Ireland) was doing the same in Cambridge nearly 2,000 years after Lucian. A few people in the world (increasingly fewer) are still able to do it today.) The grammar of Classical Attic Greek did not start to appear in 479 BCE and it certainly did not disappear around 300 BCE. It is not confined to the Classical period of Greece, any more than Classical Latin, High Arabic, Sanskrit, (revived) Hebrew etc are confined to their 'Classical' periods. In the case of Latin, apart from some of the vocabulary, you might suppose that you were listening to Cicero *redivivus* when you tune in to *Nuntii Latini*.

The work under review, like all the others of its kind before it, is based ultimately on the work of the Greek grammarians of Antiquity. The earliest of these (none of whose works survive) presumably based their findings on the practices of Greek writers, and not necessarily of writers of Attic Greek exclusively. But grammarians came to *shape* the practices of Greek writers, as well as to record them. For they did not simply transcribe and systematise a uniform Greek (even within the same dialect) that they found in their sources. The uniformity that we find in Classical Greek was imposed on it by the practices of the grammarians in favouring a particular set of forms and features above others. In time these others were abandoned, as the literary dialects themselves were abandoned apart from Attic (and the koine, if that is classed as a dialect), resulting in a factitious uniformity where there had been a natural diversity. This uniformity became the standard for educated, especially literary, Greek for future writers, and was adopted and extended by later grammarians and by editors of literary texts, beginning with the scholars of Alexandria, if not earlier, who applied their preferred ('correct') readings retrospectively to authors from Homer onwards, including writers of Classical Attic Greek. The results of their work can be seen in the texts — and the grammar books — that we use today. The term 'Classical' used of a form of the language is honorific as well as descriptive. It was the grammarians who made it so. They did this by decreeing a certain dialect, certain writers, and certain forms and usages of the language (the grammar of the language) as superior to others. (The same sort of thing happened to Latin.) The diversity that was the reality of literary Greek during the Classical period of Greek cannot be recovered, though we get glimpses of it in the manuscript tradition. This book is not, therefore, in the first place a grammar of the literary Greek that was actually written in the Classical period, but only of the literary (Attic) Greek that was favoured by earlier writers of grammar books. Contrast this with a descriptive grammar of the contemporary form of a living language, even if a form of it has become 'standardised' too.

When did the grammar of Classical Greek and Classical Latin cease to change? The short answer is when the process of standardisation was complete and its results were encoded in grammar books that were adopted as authoritative. This stage was reached by the end of Antiquity. Select grammar books written up to that date continued to be used until (and after) the new grammars of the 19th. century, which of course embodied much of the content of the earlier grammars.

The basic principle on which grammar books, however compendious, were founded is a simple one: if you wanted to use a certain kind of language (of your own or a second language) to compose texts of certain kinds, this is how the best exponents of it went about it. Greek and Latin grammar books were written to enable *grammatici* to teach a social elite how to read and write the higher registers of the language as embodied in its finest literature. They still are, and this one is no exception.

This book is the first truly compendious (xlii + 811 pages) Greek grammar in English for 100 years. It comes on the heels of the first volume (of two projected) of *The Oxford Latin Syntax* (2015) authored by Harm Pinkster, (a partial grammar: it does not include


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morphology), based on similar linguistic principles to those of *CGCG*. The first volume of this publication, on simple sentences, runs to just short of 1,500 pages. One wonders how there is so much more to say about a selected part of Latin syntax alone than Greek morphology and syntax combined. (But, as the authors admit, there is more to say about Greek grammar than is contained in their book.) The great (in both senses) German grammars of both Latin and Greek are even more compendious, of course. But Dutch scholars seem to be cornering the market nowadays in the production of Greek and Latin grammars, as five of them are responsible for these two, as many as four of them for the Greek one (though you would not be able to tell that it is not the work of a single author).

The book is replete with examples of usages taken from Greek texts, mainly of the Classical period, mainly literary, both prose and verse. (There is a (very long) list of all of them at the back of the book. Most prose ones come from Xenophon, whose prosaic Greek, on the cusp of the *κοινή*, is more readily understood, though all are very ably translated by the authors, with some borrowings from Loebs.) But most of the examples of verse usages mirror those of prose, and differences between them are generally to be found in the supplementary notes or in relevant sections of the body of the book. Perhaps one of the best features of the book (another novel feature) is the incisive and illuminating explanations of the usages appended to many of the examples. In nearly every case the explanations are convincing and borne out by the examples. At the end of the book there are four 'sample passages', each accompanied by a commentary and copious notes. The passages are *texts*, (here) sentences that fit together to form extended discourse, rather than isolated, short, context free extracts. They are intended to exhibit 'textual coherence' by means of such devices as particles and word order (both of which have substantial sections to themselves). The exegesis of the passages is revelatory, and yet another novel feature.

The book is not so new-fangled that it does not contain a list of the irregular principal parts of the most common verbs (not, note, a list of the principal parts of irregular verbs, which would be a very short list indeed by the traditional understanding of 'irregular verbs.' The parts are unconventionally arranged, but provide more information than most other books, except for full-scale dictionaries, which of course give the irregular principal parts of less common verbs too, and in other dialects.

The bulk of the book is divided into three parts: phonology/morphology, syntax, and the aforementioned (much shorter) 'textual coherence'. The fact that it is much shorter but given a part to itself indicates the importance that the authors attach to it. In fact, this part consists of 'particles' (a term that is apparently another casualty of modern linguistic parlance), about which Denniston wrote a whole book (a book that is not much favoured nowadays), and word order, another topic that has been the subject of whole books since that of Dionysius of Halicarnassus. The third section consists of the four sample passages described earlier.

I never know how to understand the function in a given context of any but the most common, usually connective, 'particles.' I say 'function' rather than 'meaning' (as do the authors) since it is not obvious that many of them have a meaning, certainly not one that can be translated informatively. It is safe to say that nobody understands the functions of all of them in all the contexts in which they are used, especially in comedies and dialogues. But here most of them are, all categorised, explained where explanation is possible, and nicely displayed. I hope that readers will be able to make more use of them than me. Notwithstanding, the authors show that they do have an important part to play in generating and maintaining textual coherence. Actually, in speech what is expressed by some particles may often be conveyed or reinforced non-verbally by such devices as pauses, aposiopesis, facial expressions, bodily gestures, emphasis by means of volume and pitch of voice, sighs, laughs, grunts etc. I sometimes wonder whether particles were actually used generally in speech, or whether they are written indications of intonation for readers, including people giving an oral delivery of a text.

The section on word order is highly technical, abstruse even. Although it shows how word order works to generate textual coherence, there is little mention of word order, and the disruption of typical word order, as a literary device rather than a system of syntactical conventions, e.g. the positioning of the words *μῆνιν* and *'Αχιλῆος* in line 1 of the *Iliad,* or the poignant enjambment of the word *Πενθέυς* (with the play on *πένθος*) at Euripides, *Bacchae* 1113. In this connection, modern observations about instances of word order to create literary effect are based on the presentation of the text in medieval manuscripts and, more importantly, in modern printed editions, not in their ancient equivalents. The differences of format, the manner in which texts were accessed, the ease with which texts were absorbed, all of these play a part in the ancient and modern reception of word order, as I hope to show in a forthcoming article.

There is a useful 'overview' of the uses of all the verb moods in *main* clauses on p. 446. There is an even more useful one of their uses in *main and subordinate* clauses on pp. 640-5. In addition, there is a whole section on overviews: on different kinds of subordinate clauses; of the uses of *ἄν*; of the uses of *ὡς*; of the different uses of the negatives *οὐ* and *μή* of the moods as in pp. 640-5.

## Reservations

I come now to some particulars of *CGCG* about which I have some reservations: What is termed 'aspect', and its relationship in Greek to verb tense and time location is a very difficult thing to grasp fully, and nobody does (I comfort myself with that fact). But we are definitely dealing with *three* items (at least): 'tense' and 'time' are not the same thing and should not be conflated. One is a grammatical feature; we don't know what the other thing is, and we leave it to philosophers and physicists to find out. Essentially, it's all to do with what the tense tells us about the time something happened and/or what kind of happening it was (usually the latter). The tense of a Greek verb may express time or aspect, or both in the case of the aorist indicative (past time and 'perfective' aspect), the imperfect (past time and 'imperfective' aspect), the perfect indicative (present time and a state of some kind) and the two other tenses formed from the perfectum (past and


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future time and a state). The present indicative (I contend: ἀκούω can mean 'I hear' (perfective) or 'I am listening to' (imperfective)) does not in and by itself, i.e. grammatically by virtue of its tense alone, express one aspect rather than another, nor does the future indicative; both by their tenses denote time locations only. All indicatives therefore denote particular time locations; not all indicatives indicate a particular aspect. In all the other moods and the infinitive (but not the participle, in effect if not technically, though it *can* express both time and aspect, like most indicatives) the tense of the verb usually expresses a particular aspect only, not a time location, the imperative and subjunctive invariably so; and the writer must select one tense rather than another (usually present or aorist; the perfect is rare outside the indicative) to express the preferred aspect, perfective or imperfective, except where the inherent meaning of the verb or other considerations predetermine the aspect and the appropriate tense to be used. But in most cases, where the meaning of the verb is aspect neutral, the writer must choose for himself/herself how they represent the situation aspectually; the appropriate tense will then select itself. (This exception applies to the choice of the imperfect and aorist indicative too.) The treatment of aspect in *CGCG* is *much* fuller than in other grammars, but in the end is just as opaque when it comes to explaining the actual differences of aspect and apprehending them in the texts. And the explanation given does not obviously fit many actual usages, especially in the imperative. For us, aspect in Greek is an alien concept and is likely to remain so. As with every other treatment, there is some conflation of the concepts of tense and time, so that verbs are said to express tense and a distinction is made between absolute and relative tense. Disproportionate space is given to the indicative compared with the other moods and the participle and infinitive. It might have been helpful too to take each of the moods and the infinitive and participle separately in turn and provide examples of usages that clearly express the differences of aspect as explained by the authors, and to gather together in one place the exceptions to these examples where the tense expresses time and not aspect (see my article in *JCT* 34). And if all this were not difficult enough to take in, the indicatives (and participles too) do not always express their usual time location, the present sometimes referring to past time, the aorist and imperfect referring to present time, or to no particular time at all in the case of the 'gnomic aorist'. There seem to be exceptions one can cite for any generalisations or 'rules' that one may draw up for the relationship of tense and aspect in the various moods. The definitive account of aspect has yet to be written, but probably never will be. The one in this book is the closest to it so far that I know of. I hope that what I have written makes sense; I struggle to understand the topic myself.

The treatment of verb forms and conjugations is likely to irritate users who are expecting to find synoptic paradigms of all the forms in all of the persons, moods and tenses of each of the conjugations. Such a paradigm is provided for uncontracted verbs in -*ω*, (except for the future perfect) but not for the other conjugations and 'irregular' verbs. Instead, the forms are to be found in a series of different sections each one dealing with a different tense. I don't understand why, for convenience, the traditional paradigms of all the conjugations could not have been included as well. (There is mention of 'nothing but the tables' of morphology on the book's page on the CUP website.) The treatment of verb forms is likely to be the most talked-about feature of the book after the unfamiliar terminology and the treatment of constructions (on which see later).

The section on the 'voice' of a Greek verb will have many readers tearing their hair out — if they have any left after tussling with the aspect. The authors take no prisoners. The traditional triad of 'active', 'middle' and 'passive' has been collapsed by linguists into the dyad of 'active' and 'middle-passive' — such are the advances in linguistics. The disjunction of 'transitive' and 'intransitive', and the use of 'deponent', are frowned upon too. It is not always clear whether one should understand the terms of the triad to refer to morphological forms or functions/ meanings, or both. The meanings of the terms 'middle-only', 'passive-only' and 'middle-passive' are likewise not transparent, even when you realise that they apply to the future and aorist tenses only. And yet in a way it all (especially the explanation of the differences in the uses of the voices) makes more sense than any other account you will have read. As for the 'deponent', according to the index it occurs once only (on p. 451) and then only in a note deprecating its use. Provided it is not used as a synonym of 'middle' to suggest that there are such things as 'middle verbs', it seems to me to be a harmless, even useful, way to distinguish verbs without any active *forms* (except for a few in certain tenses), but with active (or middle, occasionally passive) *meanings*, from verbs that do have active forms (whether they have middle or passive forms as well). I think students find such a distinction helpful. 'Middle' and 'passive' (and 'active') are forms and functions of verbs that show how people are affected (or not) by the referent of the verb, and some verbs have all three of these. (And the middle form alone can express a middle, active or passive meaning.) They should not be used of *types* of verbs; otherwise one does not know whether, e.g. 'active verb' refers to form or meaning (there is no straightforward equation of form and meaning in the middle and passive). I divide verbs as a whole into 'deponent' and 'non-deponent', as I do 'regular' (by conjugation) and 'irregular', and I get along fine with that, as have my students. It may be linguistically execrable, but it is at least intelligible.

'While on the topic of the phonology/morphology: we have in those chapters provided rather more historical information than is now usual in university-level grammars. Much of what is 'irregular' in Greek forms and paradigms can be explained with a little historical background, and it is our experience that students benefit greatly from being provided with such information.' (p. xxiv) Why then has this not been done for Greek *syntax*? Is it not appropriate for some reason? Is it thought that students will not benefit greatly from it? One of the things that was new (in 1959) about Woodcock's *A New Latin Syntax* was that it prefaced each construction with a brief account of the history and development of the mature construction. Surely mature Greek constructions had a history and development too. The omission of this kind of account from *CGCG* was surely deliberate, and one would like to know the reasons for it. The authors go on to say


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that 'Students interested in finding out more about the historical background of the language are strongly encouraged to refer to the works on this topic listed in the bibliography'. But it is not clear that this is being offered as a substitute for including accounts of the background of Greek constructions in the book; and it does not explain why these have been omitted from the book while *those on the morphology have been included*.

'Keeping the book approachable [sic] also meant forgoing radical departures from 'normal' ways of organising a grammar. Our syntax chapters … follow a traditional pattern… *discussing all ways of expressing 'cause' or 'purpose'* ***under one heading***. *This is not, in the end, the course we took*.' (p. xxxiii) (my italics). The structure and organisation of the book as a whole is in fact broadly similar to that of Smyth, though there is nothing in Smyth similar to the third part of the book. However, the approach in the syntax chapters to the treatment of the constructions in complex sentences (an approach not followed for simple sentences) will not find favour with many. These have been divided basically into those which employ moods of the verb and those which use the infinitive and participle. Some constructions employ both a mood and a non-finite verb form, but they are not dealt with 'under one heading'. An example of the practical effect of this is that the chapter on indirect statement deals only with clauses introduced by *ὅτι* or *ὡς*. The uses of the accusative and infinitive and the participle in indirect statements are dealt with in separate chapters on the infinitive and the participle. There is some precedent for this approach in Smyth, whose treatment of indirect discourse consists of a plethora of *disiecta membra*. Again, there are half-a-dozen ways of expressing purpose, but only *one* of them features in the chapter titled 'Purpose'. But this policy is not applied consistently throughout the syntax chapters. For example, the infinitive (as it must) gets equal billing with the indicative in the chapter on Result clauses. (Incidentally, the authors get no nearer than anyone else in explaining the use of the infinitive in such clauses, which apparently may denote a result that is asserted by the speaker to be inevitable without actually occurring. What it does in fact is to *suggest* or *imply* — the infinitive, a verbal noun, cannot actually *assert* anything — that Y was/is/will be *likely to occur* given the occurrence of X.) The approach of *CGCG* would not be tolerated in a course book; one has to keep reminding oneself that this is not a course book. I still think though that the decision they took was the wrong one. In fact, ironically, they provide a convincing reason for taking the alternative decision of 'under one heading', quite apart from the convenience of the user.

Readers will have noticed that I have said little about the morphology part of the book apart from its treatment of verb paradigms. This is because there is not space to discuss everything in the book. But be assured that there are nuggets here too that are not to be found in other grammars, and not just the sections explaining the evolution of Classical Greek morphology. But be warned that the use of unfamiliar terminology is perhaps at its thickest in the treatment of morphology.

For objections to the use of 'correlative' and 'direct'/ 'indirect' for pronouns and adverbs, see my review of John Taylor, *Greek Beyond GCSE* in *JCT* 37. And how do pronouns with the forms of adjectives (nearly all pronouns) come to be regarded as adjectives (see the table on p. 99)? They do not appear to have the function of adjectives in that they denote rather than describe, i.e. ascribe properties to things. The only possible exception I can think of is the third person pronoun *αὐτός* when it means 'same', if sameness can be thought of as a property of a thing, But is it in fact a pronoun here any more than the so-called 'possessive pronoun' in both Greek and Latin is a pronoun?

What is (a) 'pronominal'? Is it a word that is not a pronoun but acts as a pronoun, as linguists seem to define it? Or is it, as 26.22-23 suggests, a pronoun or adjective (or numeral) that acts (also) as a noun, e.g. '*These* then are your *great* and the *good*'. Is it both? Or is 'pronominal' an adjective only, not a noun, describing a use of certain types of words? (see 29.13) The book nowhere explicitly defines 'pronominal', though it uses the term quite a lot.

On the subject of pronouns, the treatment of the attraction of the relative pronoun, and the omission of its antecedent are, like most treatments, unnecessarily tortuous. For a much simpler account, again see my review in *JCT* 37.

## Conclusion

According to the authors, the book is not intended for users below undergraduate level. It would be inappropriate therefore to complain that it is not suitable for people below that level. But many undergraduates, especially beginners in Greek, who may be using traditional and elementary course books intended primarily for use in schools, would find it as overwhelming, initially at least, as Smyth, especially with the unfamiliar terminology to contend with as well.

How many students, even undergraduates, actually use full-scale grammar books on a regular basis these days? The basic grammar is given to them in course books if they are beginners (though not in prose composition books such as *Writing Greek* and Eleanor Dickey's recent *An Introduction to the Composition and Analysis of Greek Prose*, which directs users to the relevant pages of Smyth for each construction). The texts they read usually contain assistance with grammatical difficulties. In the past grammar books were often consulted in connection with writing Greek rather than reading it. How many advanced (beyond A level or undergraduate level) formal language courses are there that require regular recourse to a grammar book, especially a full-scale one like this one? To be brutally honest, is there really much of a real need for this book these days? Most people don't learn language for its own sake, but rather as a tool with which to engage with texts. Classics these days is very much text-oriented and text-driven. Grammars tend to focus on prose rather than verse; but most texts studied tend to be verse texts, and the grammar of verse often differs from that of prose. And how often do they need to refer to a grammar when reading a text?

But *CGCG* is clearly not intended to be used simply as a reference grammar. It also sets out to explain what is wrong with existing grammars and the language in which they are written. This is another novel feature of the book. But it does mean that in order to achieve this the explanations have to be couched in terminology that will be unfamiliar to users who do not have a background in modern linguistics. This is bound to put off many potential users, especially older ones, especially people who just want to


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use it as a more reliable and friendlier reference grammar. I feel sure that in time its time will come, and that it will become the standard work in English that will replace all existing grammars for any serious and advanced work in Classical Greek, even the model for how such works should be written. But that time is not now. If not now, when? It will have come when we have familiarised ourselves more with those features of the book that at the moment distance us from it.

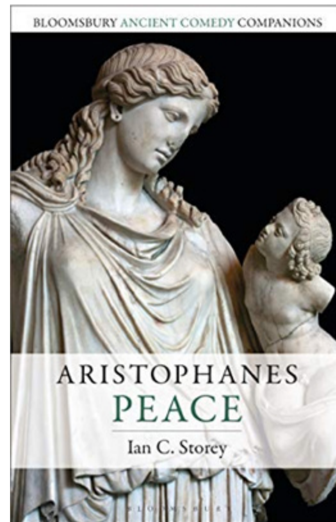
One thing bothers me though about my concluding remarks. The authors state that the book had its origins in handouts given to their students (even first year students, though not beginners in Greek, presumably) to correct information to be found in existing grammars. How did these students cope with the terminology, assuming that they were presented with material similar to that found in the book? If they did not have a background in linguistics, and were not given a crash course in it, but managed to assimilate the language of the handouts without too much difficulty, have I overestimated the problems that other users may have with the book? I sincerely hope so, for in the right hands this is a truly wonderful book. I hesitate to say that it is a much-needed one (even though it has been a long time between conception and parturition), since at present only trained linguists will be able to make full use of it and fully appreciate its merits.

As for the traditionalists, I keep the worst of the bad news for the end: in the order of cases the accusative comes last, except when that position is occupied by the vocative, as with the American Smyth (gasp!). His contemporary, Goodwin, no mean grammarian, showed more consideration, as have all right-thinking Anglophone grammarians since. This is no doubt a ploy on the part of CUP (an English publisher withal) to prevent those of us who expect to find the dative in its proper place from using other grammars. And didn't CUP try (and fail, mercifully) to pull this dastardly trick on us before? It won't catch on this time either, especially after Brexit (written in June 2019). Amazon will be flooded with Blimps ('diehards of ultraconservative nationalistic outlook and complacent stupidity', as a major *American* dictionary defines them) sending back their copies of this book, mark my words. They won't know what they've missed.

***Jerome Moran***

## Storey (I.C.)

***Aristophanes*: Peace. Pp. x + 177, ills, map. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019. Cased, £55 (Paper, £17.99). ISBN: 978-1-350-02022-1.**




This is a timely addition to the new Bloomsbury Ancient Comedy Companions series since the *Peace* is the A level verse set text chosen by OCR for examination in 2020 and 2021 and it is with this in mind that I write this review.

Split into six major chapters S. deals with a variety of themes ranging from the play's context and staging to legacy and reception. There is also an appendix 'Was there another *Peace*?'

In Chapter 1 (Old Comedy) I found S.'s exploration of the voting system for the plays presented at the festival and why the *Peace* was defeated by the *Spongers* of Eupolis particularly interesting.

In Chapter 2 (*Peace* as an Old Comedy) S. considers the structure of old comedy from the extant plays and shows how the flexibility and looseness of this structure is fully exploited in the *Peace*; his chart of the structure of the play which concludes the chapter is very useful as is his discussion of the lack of a real *agon* and his analysis of the *parabasis* and the second *parabasis* and the character of the chorus. In questioning how the audience identified the divisions of the 'Panhellenic' chorus of Spartans, Boeotians etc. and Athenians sub-divided into farmers, merchants etc., metics and men from the islands, S.' stresses how we must consider Greek drama as a theatre of the imagination not a theatre of reality.

In Chapter 3 (*Peace* and its Historical Background) S. gives a brief summation of the major events in Greek history from 479 to the 420s. In the rope-pulling scene the devastation caused by the Megarian decree of the late 430s is well brought out to explain why "they are half dead with starvation" as are the roles and, in particular, the deaths of Cleon and Brasidas ("the pestles of War") at Amphipolis in Autumn 422 which made peace more of a possibility in 421. S. also shows how Aristophanes knew about the lack of enthusiasm of some members of the Peloponnesian League for the peace treaty, which was very much an Athens and Sparta affair, and portrayed this in his play finishing up with the Argives pulling in both directions: later the Megarians, Corinthians, Boeotians and Elias refused to sign the treaty. I found very interesting the idea that Aristophanes was writing and adapting his play as the peace negotiations proceeded and were changing. S. supports this with the fact that Aristophanes named one of *Peace*'s Hand-Maids Theoria (Holiday) which accords well with the first clause of the peace treaty containing the words "freedom to visit the common sanctuaries of Greece" [Thuc.5.18.1] where the verb 'theorein' is used.

The fourth chapter (Themes and Motifs) is most probably the most useful for A level students. S. considers War and Cleon as part of the 'comic monster' genre, fairy-tales - comparing Trygaeus and the dung beetle with Aesop's The Eagle and the Beetle and Euripides' Bellerophon and the rescue of an imprisoned female 'Peace' with the Persephone myth - and the idealisation of country life in contrast to that of the city. Also interesting is S.'s view that the use of a statue for Peace instead of a mute actor helped Aristophanes to produce three sorts of female personality - the sexually promiscuous prostitute (Holiday), the formal wife (Harvest) and the virginal and aloof goddess (Peace). S. also notes the breaking down of dramatic illusion so frequent in Old Comedy which '*Peace* does . . . more often than any extant comedy'.

Chapter 5 (Staging Peace) would also be useful for A level CC students studying theatre since S. investigates the *skene* building - the number and use of doorways and whether there was a raised platform in front - the *ekkyklema* and *mechane* and whether there was a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permanent altar of Dionysus in the theatre. These questions are very important for the *Peace* with the flight of Trygaeus aboard the dung-beetle up to Olympus and the hauling out of (the statue of) Peace from the underworld and its placement in the theatre once restored to 'Earth'. Costumes and props are also discussed and there is a convenient breakdown of how the parts were divided amongst the three actors in the *Peace*.

In the final Chapter (*Peace*: Poets, Plays and Posterity) S. considers intertextuality looking to Homer, the tragic poets and other comic poets including the rivals of Aristophanes before turning to Old Comedy in Later Antiquity and the afterlife of *Peace* including modern productions.

This is a very good book for A level students under the careful direction of their teachers and for university students wanting an introduction to this comedy and its context.

***P.D. Bunting***

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## Hinds (A.) with Cuypers (M.)

***Euripides'* Iphigenia in Aulis. Pp. 187. London: Oberon books, 2017. Paper, £14.99. ISBN: 978-1-78682-135-5.**

Released as a companion volume to Hinds and Cuypers' *Oresteia* (2017), H. (a playwright and director) offers a new translation of *Iphigenia in Aulis* under the guidance of classicist Martine Cuypers. The text is an exercise in double translation, and H. has based his translation on that of Kovacs' Loeb.

The first Attic tragedy ever translated into English — a feat effected by a teenaged Lady Jane Lumley as early as 1558 — *Iphigenia in Aulis* has not suffered a shortage of English translations for a long time, especially in recent decades. H. and C. bring something novel to this crowded scene: their edition of Euripides' play is prepared specifically for performance, and instead of miring it in the textual difficulties that have beleaguered this play (revised substantially in antiquity, and troubled by internal inconsistencies) they have made the textual problems into an interactive feature. They offer two translations, titled the "full version", from which practitioners can make their own excisions to maximise performability, and a "production version", edited by H. with the same goal in mind. Decisions that philologists would question have been acknowledged, and "some lines usually considered suspect, [are] retained when they proved to aid impact, clarity, or flow" (p. 16). To observe that the authors make little reference to the Greek text would be to miss the point entirely: They acknowledge (p. 17) that for those interested in authenticity debates, numerous scholarly editions exist already; accordingly, they have refrained from cluttering their work with such references.

There are sound reasons for privileging dramatic impact over 'authenticity' in an edition of this particular text for use on the stage: it is believed that the play was substantially altered with the very goal of enhancing its performability (probably by fourth century actors and producers, following the play's completion by Euripides junior); this edition therefore offers ensemble casts a thought-provoking task. C. provides some pertinent introductory notes; her claim (p.8) that the problematic text explains *IA's* infrequent performance today seems a little overegged — corrupt texts and substantial lacunae have hardly scuppered the performance of *Agamemnon* or *Bacchae* — but the determination to find opportunity in a corrupt text and to credit 'the reviser' with a talent for stagecraft certainly make a welcome contrast to scholarly disdain for anything but the real Euripides.

The musicality of H.'s translation deserves mention. He has opted for iambics almost throughout, and brings a lyrical quality not generally found in the Penguin paperbacks found in many school libraries and drama departments. It is refreshing to read a verse translation; the choral odes are mellifluous, and there are some especially euphonic passages in the stichomythia of Agamemnon and Menelaus. H.'s experience as a theatre practitioner has also given him a useful understanding of the practical demands of mounting a Greek play: no detail that might compromise pronunciational consistency has been omitted, and even a list of names, with phonetic guidance, is included. Despite the minimal attention given to the manuscript tradition, there remains plenty that will interest students of the ancient languages, too: in their introduction and notes, the authors offer an unusually detailed account of their work, furnished with candid observations about the ethics of fidelity. In doing so, they open a window onto the process of translation that will interest students of Greek and of literature in translation alike.

I recommend this text highly for school and university productions: not only is it free of the stolid, often arrhythmic prose with which so many 'faithful' translations are encumbered: by encouraging cast participation in the act of editing the play's text, it will encourage students to think of translation less as a product reserved for the bookish, and more as a collaborative process.

***Peter Olive. Royal Holloway, University of London***

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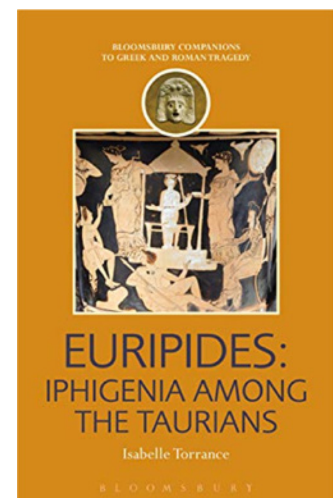
## Torrance (I.)

***Euripides:* Iphigenia Among the Taurians. Pp. x + 165, ills, map. London and New York; Bloomsbury Academic, 2019.**



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Bloomsbury's *Companions to Greek and Roman Tragedy* is an excellent series. They are clearly set out in lecture-sized, illustrated chapters with a clear font in well-cased covers. Most importantly they engage with lesser read plays and are a good way to learn about these pieces of literature quickly and effectively.

Isabelle Torrance's study of Euripides' *Iphigenia among the Taurians* is just such a publication and encouraged me to read this once very widely studied and fine play. There are five chapters: Setting, Action, Plot; Characters and Chorus; Ethnicity and Gender; Ritual and the Gods; Reception. Each one is divided into subsections with a final conclusion and these are clearly indicated in the contents, creating ease of reference alongside the full index, endnotes, bibliography, advice for further reading, timeline and glossary. Endnotes and credits to scholars (especially Edith Hall) abound very helpfully. This layout means that this book could be given to a sixth former who desires to read beyond the syllabus for selective reading.

I will discuss two aspects of this excellent book below: the chapter on Reception and her summaries of Greek customs and *mores*.

The chapter about the play's later reception makes this publication useful not only for those interested in the ancient world, but also in early modern and modern literature and music and history with discussions of Goethe, Gluck, Tony Harrison and the Polish production *Ifigenia w Taurydzie*. From a Classical perspective she shows how Cicero, Ovid, Lucian, St. Augustine and other lesser known ancient authors were influenced by this play before an analysis of its modern impact. For anyone wanting to see the importance of the ancient world to modern literature, this is a very useful chapter.

The book is peppered with short summaries of Greek culture and *mores* which are succinct and good revision tools for students or for introducing ideas or indeed for reminding you yourself. These cover the Dionysia, *xenia* in Homer, *Choes*, the sanctuaries at Brauron and Halai, the status of women, the barbarian (covering Saïd's work effectively) and the mythology surrounding the House of Atreus and the other tragedians' (*sc.* Aeschylus) use of it.

For those more interested in an analysis of the play itself, this is provided in Chapters One and Two where T. considers the date of publication, its location, historical significance, plot and all characters (Chorus, herdsman and messenger included).

She really comes into her own during her discussions of ethnicity, gender and religion. In all three she shows Euripides to be a very sophisticated writer challenging his fellow Athenians; she does not ascribe a point of view to him. This is useful reading in showing how tragedians liked to ask questions, but not give easy answers. T. shows how Euripides designates the Greeks as civilised and the Taurians barbaric using linguistic evidence and Herodotus' accounts of *nomos* and of the Black Sea peoples, but then how Euripides challenges this dichotomy through a comparison of Taurian human sacrificial customs with the murders of the House of Atreus culminating in Iphigenia's and Clytemnestra's deaths. She shows how Iphigenia as a priestess is more than a woman and thus has great influence over the sympathetic character Thoas and is vital to supporting the somewhat feckless Orestes. She concludes by showing how nonetheless Iphigenia's femininity is neutralised as she becomes patron of Artemis at Brauron, a cult dedicated to women who die in childbirth whereas Orestes founds a cult invoking male combat: both men's and women's roles for Athenians are confirmed here: the man's to risk his life in combat and the woman's to risk hers in childbirth.

Finally her analysis of the cults at Halai, Brauron and the cosmic personality of Artemis is compelling. For the former, she gives a good summary of what we know of these cults (making this reviewer want to visit Brauron!) and for the latter considers why Artemis demands human sacrifice. She gives tentative conclusions but is very rational in accepting that we lack evidence in understanding what happened at these cult centres and that we should be careful linking the play with the archaeology too much for fear of creating circular evidence (much of the archaeological evidence post-dates the play and may have been influenced by it originally!) Her use of the famous Plutarchian anecdote about Spartan boys having to steal cheeses from the sanctuary of Artemis is well inserted as a comparison of how exaggeration can occur over time and space.

Similarly she gives no strong answer regarding Artemis. This is good reading, in schools where many subjects offer right and wrong answers, for an adventurous sixth former wanting to see how it can be acceptable to say, "We can't know for certain; the ancient world is challenging us".

I finish with a quotation from the book: "Are the gods brutal or benevolent? The former seems more likely than the latter. Can this really be the way the world works? Euripides' play invites the audience to ponder these serious metaphysical issues precisely by *not* providing any straightforward answers." (p.98)

***Alex Carroll, St. Olave's School.***

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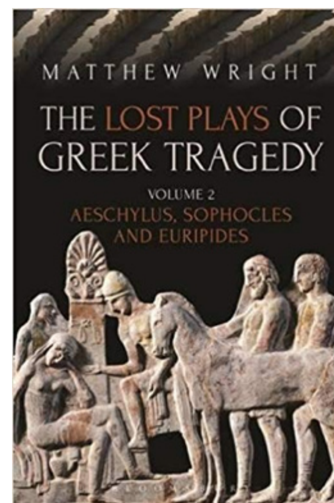
## Wright (M.)

***The Lost Plays of Greek Tragedy Volume 2: Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides.*** **Pp xii + 308. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019. Paper, £19.99 (Cased, £65).**
**ISBN: 978-1-4742-7647-4.**




Whereas Volume 1 of Matthew Wright's *The Lost Plays of Greek Tragedy* addressed the works of playwrights whose works exist only in fragments, Volume 2 examines the fragments of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. The structure of the work is straightforward and helpful: an introduction, followed by chapters on each of the three and discussion of each of the fragments. Finally, W. offers a chapter on the portrayals of three particularly celebrated tragic figures as suggested by the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fragments, and then a chapter on what, if anything, the fragments can tell us about the staging of Greek tragedy.

In his introduction, W. sets out his desire to offer in these two volumes an overview of tragedy as an *entire genre*, and it quickly becomes apparent that he feels that our understanding and appreciation of the genre has been very significantly restricted and misguided by our reliance on the extant plays. Almost 200 plays are discussed in the book, so it quickly becomes clear that our reliance on the extant plays seems bold, and perhaps even rash. W. makes clear that this book is not intended to do the work of a commentary; rather, its purpose is to give an overview by means of 'synthesis and critical interpretation' (p. 3). He also states that he is especially interested in those fragments which might prompt us to reconsider our views about the author and the genre, and that these fragments receive particular emphasis in his reflections.

The chapters on each of the tragedians feature excellent overviews about what we know of each playwright, and then take us through each of the fragmentary plays. He gives information on the title; any available contextual details of the circumstances or dates of the production; a brief description of the evidence available for the contents of the play; and an outline of what we know of the myth and the characters involved. Many of the fragments are very slight indeed, and are mostly drawn from lexicographic works, or have been preserved in gnomic phrases used in later writings, and can be, in W.'s own words, 'frustratingly unrevealing' (p.7). (Take, for instance, Sophocles' *Eurysaces*, of which one word – *adoxaston* ('unexpected') – survives in the lexicographer Hesychius.) As he makes clear in the introduction, he is not seeking to reconstruct or to 'fit together' the fragments. Rather, he presents us with what there is, and leaves the rest to the reader. All of the fragments are listed in the order in which they appear in *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta* by Kannicht, Snell, and Radt (Gottingen, 1971-2004), which orders the plays in Greek alphabetical order. However, W. refers to them by their translated titles, which leads to the oddity of Sophocles' *Aichmalotides* being listed with plays beginning with A, but being referred to by W. at all times as *Female Prisoners*. There are several instances of this – a clearer approach (and one more helpful for a reader with limited knowledge of Greek) might have been to refer to all plays by their transliterated title, with the English translation offered in parentheses.

The penultimate chapter considers the varying presentations of Oedipus, Antigone, and Medea, as suggested by the fragments. It is common knowledge that tragedians possessed freedom and flexibility when treating a myth. However, by demonstrating, by means of specific fragments, the multiple approaches taken by the triad to the three characters who are perhaps the most celebrated in tragedy, W. causes us to question and indeed doubt any confidence that we might claim to have possession of the canonical version of the myth.

The final chapter considers if the fragments offer any clues to the staging of Greek tragedy. In keeping with the thrust of the book, W. here feels that we cannot be certain of many, if any, aspects of staging – even those that we have been taught for many years, such as the nature and use of the *skene*, *orchestra*, and *ekkyklema*. He is particularly critical here of the approach adopted by those scholars – Oliver Taplin especially – who feel that 'There is no call for extra stage-directions because they would add nothing worth adding to what is already contained in the words themselves' (Taplin, O. *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus* (1977), quoted by W. on p. 240). W. uses examples from the fragments to ponder how the likes of the mass murder in Sophocles' *Niobe* could have been staged, and also draws on clues to staging found in Aristophanes.

The conclusions of the work are somewhat nihilistic, and can seem troubling – in essence, anything you think you know about Greek tragedy and the tragedians, and anything we teachers tell our pupils in an introductory session on Greek tragedy, is uncertain, and is based on scant evidence. Nevertheless, this is an accessible and provocative work, which offers much to fascinate the experienced Classicist as well as the sixth former looking to get to grips with the genre.

***Philip Harrison. Merchant Taylors' School, Northwood.***

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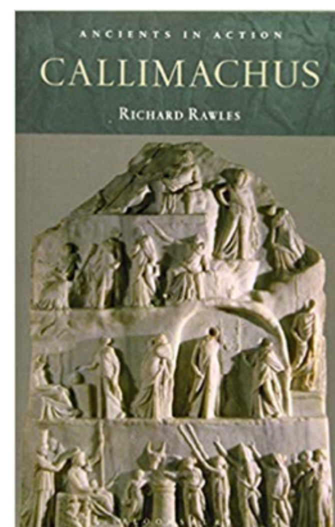
## Rawles (R.)

***Callimachus.* Pp. vi + 139. London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019. Paperback £13.29. ISBN-13: 978-1474254854**




This slender publication would be suitable for any Classics teacher's bookshelf. It can introduce someone to Callimachus' poetry or extend someone's knowledge; furthermore it could be lent to a sixth former preparing for interview or writing an extended essay. An understanding of Callimachus is very helpful to really enjoying Virgil, other Augustan and later writers. It introduces the advanced ideas of textual criticism in an enjoyable, enthusiastic manner.

Rawles writes clearly and with a dry sense of humour (p.85 about Hera's relaxation of her anger). There are four chapters covering Philology and Poetics; Callimachean Voices; Religion and the Gods; People and Places; Callimachus in Rome.

The introduction provides just that, a short biography and overview of Callimachus' importance and works.

Chapter One is generally about the theme of 'fatness'; it is discussed using the epigrams, *Hymn to Apollo*, *Acontius and Cypdippe* (*Aetia III*) and the *Aetia*'s prologue. Pp.26-27 do not pull their punches. He looks at why Callimachus chose a particular Greek word for knife; this is then followed by a discussion of ancient textual criticism on whether Homer meant Odysseus to be *polytropos* or *polykrotos*. His full analysis of the *Aetia*'s prologue is particularly good as he looks



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at Callimachus by his own standards comparing him to his literary predecessors (Homer, Pindar, Aristophanes, Plato) and not through the lens of later writers; extended poetry is permitted, so long as it is made of shorter poems; variety of theme and style is what is at stake, not just a rejection of epic (pp.30-40).

Chapter Two looks at various voices (narrators, characters, the book itself, epitaphs and the dead). Pp.45-51 look at comparing inscriptions to his epigrams (5, 34 and 15 Pfeiffer/14, 22 and 40 Gow and Page); there is a welcome extended analysis of *Iambi* 1 and 4. This final commentary is again good reading for a precocious sixth former curious about how deep, obscure and amusing Classical literature can become with its comedy of manners between an olive, laurel and bramble.

Chapter Three is about religion and the *Hymns*, specifically to *Apollo*, *Zeus* and *Delos* and provides an excellent summary of the scholarship on these, particular Hunter's and Haslam's work. There is an introduction to Hellenistic politics and the nature of the *Hymns*. Pp.72-73 engage with the famous conclusion to the *Hymn to Apollo*; he discusses clearly whether these were 'real' hymns or literary constructions.

Chapter Four is about place and the *Hymns*. Pp.91-95 are good on Cyrene, Battus and the Inacchus mythology with connections to the *Hymn to Apollo*. Pp.96-101 return to the *Hymn to Delos* and link it to *Epigram* 5 Pfeiffer/14 Gow and Page. This 'Nautalis' epigram shows how Callimachus could even write scientific Aristotelian Greek as poetry. Pp.101-113 return to the *Aetia* (*Acontius* and *Cydippe*) and its political elements. On p.109 he compares Callimachus with Sotades regarding Ptolemaic incest deftly. He concludes by introducing Fr.54b (Harder)/177 Pfeiffer where Molorcus' explanation to Heracles about his battle with the mice is described in epic terms. Comparing this with *Hecale*, R. shows how Callimachus did praise the establishment, but did so in a new way: "Callimachus works within this tradition in a…fresh style. He adapts his models for a new kind of dynasty…we see an interest in seeking out the humble and lowly in a heroic tale that we saw in *Hecale*…it might feel that Callimachus were rejecting 'kings and heroes' (fr.1.3-5). But this would be a naively simplistic reading…[he] blends together issues of subject matter, treatment and scale rather than…vetoing any subject matter." (p.112)

The conclusion refers to Callimachus' brief reference to Rome and a Gaius (110 Pfeiffer) and discusses the *Lock of Berenice*, making use of Catullus' translation and adaptations. He also brings in Virgil's *Georgics* with a superb comment about Virgil's references to the Euphrates, alluding to Callimachus.

This is an excellent, well-crafted book with each chapter containing subsections and conclusions and a full index, which allow for ease of use if you are just dipping in. Advice for further reading and a bibliography and endnotes are also provided.

***Alex Carroll, St. Olave's School.***

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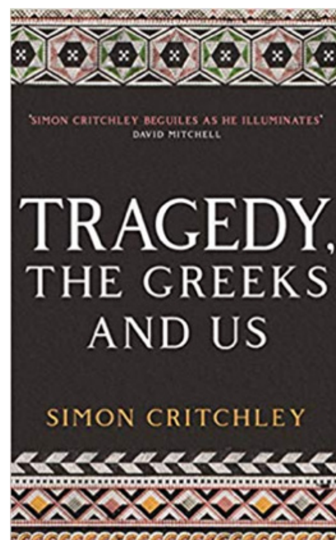
## Critchley (S.)

**Tragedy, the Greeks and Us. Pp. 336. London: Profile Books, 2019. Paperback £13.79.**
**ISBN-13: 978-1788161473.**




This is a twisting, turning, wide-ranging book. For this reader, it was somewhat frustrating and slippery yet, for the most part, highly readable. It has a case to make, a case which is not as clearly stated as it might have been at the outset and which is elaborated only gradually. This is that the tragic theatre of fifth century Athens offers a powerful basis for 'questioning and destabilising the present'.

But throughout the book Critchley wants to do other things too: perhaps the book's most major recurring theme is its attempt to probe and question the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle - particularly Plato's political philosophy (which C. does not believe he can identify with any great confidence) and Aristotle's poetics. 'Why', he asks at one point, 'do we privilege the idea of the philosopher speaking directly and apparently sincerely over the staging of an indirect and ironic drama? Why do we value monologue over dialogue or polylogue in philosophy?' These questions are not necessarily being asked of the general reader. In fact, the 'we' here seem to be professional philosophers (C. is one such himself – and a distinguished one at that) and, throughout the book, he is concerned to throw down a challenge to some among his colleagues. He sees Greek tragedy, he says, as a 'prebuttal of philosophy that refuses to sprinkle idealistic rosewater on reality' (philosophical idealism here appears – as it does commonly in contemporary writing – as a sort of modern heresy). In essence, C. sees himself as pursuing a project inaugurated by Nietzsche: 'we might say that Nietzsche reads tragedy in order to defend a form of philosophy that is destroyed by philosophy. I want to join Nietzsche in this defence of a tragic philosophy', he writes. So the book aims above all, I think it is fair to say, to model a particular kind of (Nietzschean) philosophical approach – and this, C. thinks, is an approach 'we' should consider following ourselves.

Like Nietzsche, C. has a punchy and, at times, breathless style. 280 or so pages of writing are divided into 61 – yes, 61 – short chapters. The book is thus a series of mini-essays, which C. has arranged into six main Parts (each Part is ten or so chapters long). This division of material has its attractions: the reader is unlikely to feel lost or bogged down in a particular line of argument, as individual chapters tend to deal with separate matters, and the next chapter of the book is never far away. At the same time, the overall argument in each main part of the book can at times be hard to follow, particularly as C. changes the course of his discussion so frequently. The frequent changes of direction are perhaps intended to assist C. in his work of 'destabilising': rather than setting out a clear hypothesis and establishing it point by point in the fashion of a typical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monograph, he wants to lead the reader on an unpredictable journey, from text to text and from argument to argument, from the history of philosophy to literary criticism and textual exposition, from the present to the past and back again – and back, again.

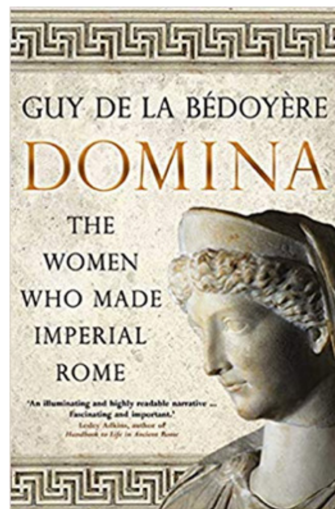
C. is to the point when he turns his attention to specific features of the tragedies themselves. On Sophocles' *Oedipus*, he writes that "Oedipus claims not to know, but still seems at another level to know and is unrelenting in his drive to find out, despite his rage … Tiresias tells him the truth straight to his face early in the play. He doesn't hear it. And behind his back, we watch. Not with an ironic superiority, but with a sullen-faced horror. This couldn't happen to us, could it?" On Aeschylus' *Seven Against Thebes*, he writes that "the core experience of the play is *doubling*. There is the double death of Eteocles and Polynices, which simultaneously saves the city and dooms it. There is the doubling of Antigone and Ismene, which mirrors that of their brothers and their own future strife. And there is the doubling of dirge for the two brothers, which divides the chorus into two halves. Everything and everyone is doubled and doubled over in the play". And yet, despite such examples, the bulk of C.'s book does not really devote much space at all to discussion of the plays themselves. His primary concern, as already stated, is with Plato and Aristotle – and, in the earlier chapters, with the arguments of Hegel, Nietzsche, Schelling and a variety of other philosophers.

For teachers, C.'s book will provide some interesting material for classroom discussion, but in my opinion, there are preferable alternatives. Some readers will prefer to bypass C. and go straight to Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy* for the sorts of argument C. makes. Some will prefer Terry Eagleton's *Sweet Violence: The Idea of the Tragic* for a general overview of tragedy and the tragic in Western literature and philosophy. And some will prefer the more thorough approach of Edith Hall's *Greek Tragedy: Suffering under the Sun* and Simon Goldhill's *Reading Greek Tragedy*, both of which engage more thoroughly and absorbingly with the detail of the ancient texts.

***Gavin McCormick, Bedford School.***

## de la Bedoyere (G.)

***Domina*: The Women Who Made Imperial Rome. Pp. 408. Hardback £22.50. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2018. ISBN-13: 978-0300230307.**




*Domina* is a refreshing and illuminating account of Roman History, as told through the stories and roles of influential women across the Imperial period. Inspired by a silver coin of AD 51 depicting the emperor Claudius and his wife/niece Agrippina the Younger, this book aims to understand how Agrippina and other women from the Imperial period enjoyed a considerable degree of power; and the price they paid for doing so. Through a comprehensive and compelling analysis of the actions of Roman aristocratic women, the author goes beyond the assumption of female passivity to demonstrate how much power and influence these women held in Rome and beyond. Women are not defined in this book solely in terms of their relationship with men, but as individuals with political agendas of their own. The author explores the ways in which these women acted as puppeteers behind the men ostensibly in charge and discusses how they were far more influential than traditional Roman history books would have us believe.

The book begins with an assessment of the typical roles of women in Roman society, as well as the values and laws which shaped their behaviour. Emphasis is placed upon the ways in which marriages of noble women to aristocratic men facilitated control of the political sphere, with the author noting that any marriages could be dissolved just as easily as they were formed. De la Bedoyere emphasises how the female line was instrumental to the succession of the imperial dynasties and the legitimisation of rule. The vast majority of *Domina* concentrates only on the lives of prominent women from the Julio-Claudian line; the Severan women appear as an afterthought in the Epilogue. The main body of the book explores the establishment and continuation of the Julio-Claudians, starting with an exposition of the actions of key women at the end of the Republic. There is a particular focus on how women could be either helpful or detrimental to a man's political standing. Fulvia and Cleopatra for instance proved convenient scapegoats for Antony's failures as a man, general and political leader; Livia, observing this, was able to advance Octavian's interests through acting in the right way at the right time. It would have been helpful to include the dates of the women mentioned in the introductory chapters to avoid the ambiguity afforded by Roman naming conventions. The author does seem to assume a basic working knowledge of who is who in the introductory section.

The actions of Octavian and Livia necessarily dominate much of the opening chapters. Interestingly, however, D. does not limit his discussion to historical female figures; he also considers the role that Venus and Dido (amongst other literary figures and deities) played in the creation of the Augustan myth. Consideration is given to the roles of Livia, Octavia and Julia in establishing a dynastic bloodline, with arguably more than a few passing similarities to *Game of Thrones* and *Love Island*.

A detailed assessment of Livia's roles after Augustus' death provides a welcome contrast to the typical caricature of 'Livia the poisoner'. In highlighting the rivalry between Livia and Agrippina the Elder, this section would be particularly useful as background reading for any student studying Tacitus' *Germanicus et Piso*. Family trees, whilst available in the appendix, would have been welcome additions to the body of the text. A collection of colour plates also serves as a useful repository of ancient source material for use in lessons.



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The juxtaposition of chapters dedicated to Agrippina the Elder and Messalina respectively allows for direct comparison of their conduct. As the embodiment of an ideal Roman woman, Agrippina the Elder was to be revered and admired. Conversely, Messalina was notorious for corruption and deception, her fall from grace paving the way for Agrippina the Younger, whose depravity, desperation and penchant for poison dominates two chapters in this book. The author is keen to present alternative theories behind the most notorious actions of the protagonists and his well-researched account invites the thoughtful consideration of the reader, with helpful references given to the primary source material throughout.

As a narrative history, the final chapter on the Julio-Claudian line explores Nero's continual desire to remove any obstacle or challenge to his own authority – male or female - which ultimately resulted in Nero effectively extinguishing the Julio-Claudian dynasty altogether. This chapter highlights that our knowledge of Roman women depends not only on their marriages, but also on their issue. Those who did not bear children for the emperors become little more than historical footnotes. Intriguingly, D. notes how the limitations of power and public roles for women during the Imperial period were, ironically, helpful for the realisation of their schemes; a political system with no allowance for female power also meant that there was no precedent for controlling it.

The epilogue invites comparison between the Julio-Claudian women and the Severan women. This chapter challenges the reader to evaluate the relative successes and failures of imperial women, noting Livia as the most successful for her ability to manipulate, control and instruct without pressing the 'self-destruct' button. Comparison between the dynasties is somewhat limited due to the fact that the Severan women only benefit from one dedicated chapter. What is clear is that, across the imperial period, Roman women's power was inescapably contingent upon the men but crucially unconfined by them, simply because it was so unexpected and feared.

This book is scholarly yet accessible and should be a staple of every school Classics library. It highlights the importance not only of marital relationships for political alliances, but also of the relationships between mothers and sons, and fathers and daughters. The inclusion of numismatic, artistic, epigraphic and archaeological evidence complements the literary sources and provides a well-rounded approach to the subject matter. An enjoyable read, *Domina* would appeal to inquisitive GCSE students and interested A Level students alike – and of course, should be essential reading for Classics teachers to provide a more balanced and less male-centric view of Roman history.

***Andrea Allman.***

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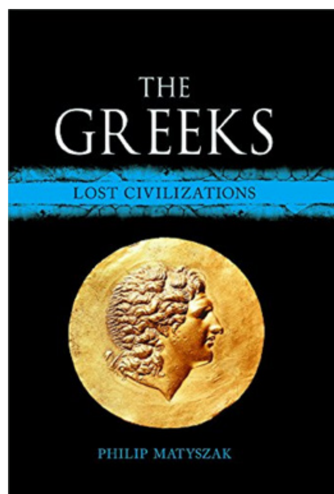
## Matyszak (P.)

***The Greeks: Lost Civilisations*. Pp.207, b/w & colour ills. London: Reaktion Books Ltd., 2018. Cased, £15. ISBN: 978-1-78023-900-2.**




This very readable book seems eminently suitable both for teachers to mug up on the wider Greek world and for students who are interested in broadening their knowledge for either Classical Civilisation or Ancient History. Whilst there is a lot of detail given, the way in which it is presented is clear and narrative-based, and prior, in-depth knowledge is not assumed. The handy chronology at the beginning sets everything in context and the chapters are clear with well-selected and well-captioned illustrations. Matyszak begins with a brief survey of Bronze Age Greece and explains why and how Greek settlements sprang up around the Mediterranean. As the book progresses it is all carefully linked to the idea of 'Greekness' which is not defined as being from mainland Greece but being part of the cultural and philosophical body that made up the Greek world. The more well-known Athenian/Spartan history of the 5th century BC is not dwelt upon because the focus of this history is periphery, and in this case the Macedonians, both Philip and Alexander, though it is the latter who takes up more space. Armchair generals might be disappointed that there is not more time spent on Alexander's battle strategy and that of the Successors, though there is a considerable section on the struggles of the Successors to win dominance. It is the Macedonian influence on the spread of Greek culture, philosophy, religion and literature that interests M., and he does a very good job of selecting relevant figures to illustrate his point. Ptolemy is the major player here and his swift and effective take-over of Egypt with all its wealth led to the foundation of the Library at Alexandria and the Ptolemaic dynasty which ended in 30BC with the death of Cleopatra. There is a fascinating story of Ptolemy asking Athens for original copies of the works of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides, allegedly to correct copies they already held, and putting up a large deposit for their safe return; needless to say, they were not returned. The size of the deposit was the equivalent of a year's tribute from Judaea, and the willingness to sacrifice this sum for literary artefacts demonstrated not only the immense wealth of Egypt but was also a sign of the determination of the Ptolemies to make Alexandria a hub of Hellenistic culture. There are sections on Stoics, Epicureans and Cynics which give the main points without too much detail for the inexperienced reader and nuggets such as the derivation of agoraphobia and trivia (also a cult name for Hecate, the goddess of the crossroads) are scattered through the text. The derivation of trivia will be particularly satisfying for those studying *Oedipus Tyrannus* and wondering how a junction of three roads can be termed a crossroads as it is so often. There is a chapter dedicated to Greek religion and an explanation for that frequent classroom question of why Apollo alone retains his Greek name. M. frequently refers to what might be termed 'freedom of movement' within the Hellenistic states which allowed ideas and people of every sort to flow freely, thus allowing Greek thought and culture to influence and, in turn, be influenced. It is an engaging picture. The huge scale of Hellenistic influence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stretching from the Atlantic coast of Iberia to the Himalayan mountains is mind-boggling, and examples of Greek influence over art such as the Buddhas of Bamiyan are cited, as are the numerous ways in which the Romans stole, borrowed, and assimilated Greek culture wherever they felt their own was lacking. The energy and inquiring nature of the Greeks is apparent throughout this book (teachers who need to justify courses in the ancient world to their SLT could do worse than read this). The legacy of the Greeks lives on across the world in ways that many of us do not see and examples of Greek technology are everywhere; as M. says, the use of terminology for things such as telephones and photography "is a reminder that the Greeks can lay claim to being the world's first scientists in that they were the first people whom we know of who systematically sought out knowledge for its own sake, and developed a rigorous process of working out ideas from first principles." Knowledge for its own sake might be less popular now, but this book is a reminder of how far a civilisation can go when it pursues such a policy. In this sense the title "Lost Civilisations" is a misnomer, as the legacy is not lost, just not always acknowledged.

***Joanna Lashly, Shrewsbury High School.***

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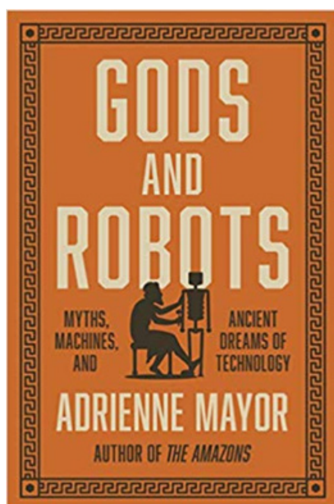
## Mayor (A.)

**Gods and Robots. Myths, Machines, and Ancient Dreams of Technology. Pp.xvi + 275, ills, colour pls. Princeton, NJ and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2018. Cased, £24, US$29.95. ISBN: 978-0-691-18351-0**




At time when the discipline of Classics is constantly having to justify its very existence, Adrienne Mayor has produced a book that very timely reassures the reader not only of the subject's influence on our past but also how many of the works and ideas from classical civilisation can fuse to inform the future. M. does this by selecting key narratives from mythology that engage with the concepts of machines, technology and artificial intelligence. As she does so, she traces how these myths have left an indelible mark on our contemporary ideas of modern technology and science fiction, yet have also been misapplied and misunderstood, often wilfully and with other ideas in mind.

M. first deals with the myth of Talos, arguably the first representation of a robot in literature. Talos is built by Hephaistos to guard the island of Crete. The depiction of Talos in the *Argonautica* ticks all the right boxes for a contemporary definition of a robot: made of metal, autonomous, devoid of apparent emotion. Yet his creation makes him something closer to human. Ichor, not oil, runs through his arterial mechanisms. At his death, he feels sadness; a teardrop can be discerned from his eye in the volute krater of his name. This is very different from our modern assumption that robots must be unfeeling, unemotional automata.

M. also compares Medea's skill at rejuvenation with our modern preoccupation with eternal youth. The witch's cauldron is interestingly compared to the 'soup' that engineered Dolly, the first cloned mammal in modern science. It is compelling that the ancient Greeks themselves had very strong beliefs regarding the ethics of genetic engineering. Medea's actions are wholly reprehensible as she dabbles in the work of gods. Her murder of Pelias is just the culmination of her hubristic approach to generating and negating human life. Similarly, the fates of both Chiron and Tithonus remind us of the overreaching nature of humanity and its powerlessness in the face of remorseless time. Both are granted immortality, yet both crave death: the former, because he is in unbearable pain, the latter because of debilitating old age. Such stories are compared and contrasted strongly by the modern mythos of the vampire. M. uses *The Vampire Chronicles* of Anne Rice to illustrate her point; vampires are lost souls, bored with the very nature of existence, searching for meaning in life amid a meaningless existence. It is notable how the ancient world has already anticipated the pointlessness of such a shallow existence.

Another obvious automaton worthy of discussion in this work is the hollow cow of Pasiphae. This myth is widely known, so there is little need of elaboration at this point but it is interesting to see how a modern reactionary sensitivity to technology – how everything was better in the old days – reaches back to Ancient Greece. The culpable party in this story isn't Pasiphae or even Minos (for his insulting of Poseidon), but Daedalus, because he created the technology in the first place. We are reminded that Daedalus isn't some innocent inventor pressurised by a stronger party into completing work against his will, but an active conspirator in Pasiphae's plan. Let us not forget that he murdered his own nephew out of jealousy. The point is that technology is never neutral. An invention is rarely ever just created out of curiosity but with a certain purpose in mind. The story of Daedalus shows us how important it is to mentor ingenuity.

The myth of Pygmalion is also analysed, comparing the creation of Galatea to the sci-fi depiction of the sex-bot, questioning whether the modern reader ought to have any sympathy for Pygmalion. Is he a brilliant artist that falls in love with his own creation or is he too socially inept to take a lover from the human race, instead begging for divine assistance in order to realise any sense of romantic or sexual identity – an ancient incel, to use the contemporary term? The story of Prometheus and the creation of man is compared with the movie, *Blade Runner*, depicting how the humans created by the Titan are very much just replicants of the divine beings. The creations of Hephaestus raise questions about the nature of mechanised labour, reminding us that even enlightened thinkers such as Aristotle were quite happy to consider slaves as just the same kind of commodity. The parallels between the classical and modern worlds are thrown into stark relief by such viewpoints as we consider just how repellent slavery is to the modern mind. In an era of artificial intelligence, will enlightened automata consider their own condition as tantamount to slavery too? The point that science fiction is not a



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contemporary creation but a classical one is resonant for all students of the classics. M. concludes her spirited investigation of technology in the ancient world by comparing myth with history, examining how successfully inventors and rulers of the ancient world managed to bridge the gap between theory and realisation. She notes in particular how Philo of Byzantium compiled a catalogue of machines and plans for other devices. It is clear that these weren't just fantasies to the Greeks but actual concepts that could be put into practice.

*Gods and Robots* is an excellent discussion of ancient ideas of technology and the potential such technology had to transform the ancient world and to inform the contemporary one. Teachers may hesitate to recommend this book to their students as they may fail to see the direct relevance of it to immediate study, although many of M.'s points are valid to several aspects of A level Classical Civilisation. The book does, however, provide a key introduction to the field of classical reception, showing how the interpretation of the classical world affects not only our discipline, but the manner in which key ideas of today's society can be taken for granted without basing them in the context of their genesis in the ancient world.

***Alan Chadwick, City of London Freemen's School.***

## Watson (L.C.)

***Magic in Ancient Greece and Rome*. Pp. x +248, ills. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019.Paper, £19.99 (Cased, £58.50). ISBN: 978-78831-298-1.**

Firstly, this is a fascinating book and it really does tell you a lot about belief in magic and the nuts and bolts of magic in the ancient world, but in its style it is far too dense for the average school student. The book covers several areas of magic – love spells, *defixiones*, animal magic, herbs, fictional witches and evidence of human sacrifice – all are treated evidentially and with copious notes. There seems to be a general consensus that women were more likely to use love spells which frequently offered violence against the beloved if they did not work and the chapter on fictional witches was, to my mind, a highlight of the book as it covered Circe, Medea, Erictho and the witches of Ovid, Tibullus and Propertius, the prominence of which, the author says, in imaginative literature is "surely a product of the enticing possibility of conflating a figure of great intrinsic interest with a palette of male-authored prejudices about the second sex". Discussions of human sacrifice are gruesomely detailed and all references are given and all are carefully backed up with contemporary (or nearly contemporary) literary evidence; for example, Pliny's immensely readable *Natural History* is heavily used particularly in the section on herbal magic which prompts me to retrieve it from my bookcase and reread it. Livy is quoted on the burial of a pair of live Gauls and Greeks, (one male, one female) in the Forum Boarium in response to a consultation of the Sibylline Books after the disastrous defeat at Cannae, and his comment that this was most un-Roman is emphasised. The extensive chapter dealing with the latest work on *defixiones* is fascinating but would be far too deep for school use. I am pleased that I chose to read this book as it has opened up sources for further study, but it is definitely one for the enthusiast rather than the school student or teacher looking for something to support say Chapter 22 of the *Cambridge Latin Course* or further information for the new Eduqas Component 2 'Superstition and Magic' theme.

***Joanna Lashly, Shrewsbury High School.***

## Haynes (N.)

***A Thousand Ships*. Pp. xiv + 348. London: Pan Macmillan, 2019. Cased, £16.99. ISBN: 9781509836192.**

Full disclosure: I was a little worried about reviewing this book as I've not really engaged with 'feminist literature'. What if I didn't like it? What if I found it hard to engage with the women's plight? Well I needn't have worried. From the opening petulant muse fed up with being at the beck and call of a poet, to the hopelessness and helplessness of the Trojan women on the shore, the practicality of Theano, the bravery of Penthesilea, Polyxena and Andromache and the endurance of Penelope, I was gripped. The breadth of scholarship and research in this book is amazing. I thought I knew the story of the Trojan War and the tragic plays of Euripides that deal with the aftermath but there was always something to surprise and delight me as well as to create that gut-wrenching sorrow that comes with watching helpless people dragged even deeper into desolation. Natalie Haynes' scholarship is broad-ranging and she is not afraid to delve into the more obscure, or perhaps I should say, undeservedly forgotten parts of Greek myth. In addition, she has not gone for the linear option and this is part of the book's charm, although you need to have your wits about you as elements of the story jump around much as they might in a bard's version of the story. "Give us the story of the discovery of Achilles on



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Scyros", the suitors may shout, and then Phemius takes up his lyre. Gods would not see events unfolding chronologically perhaps and, as in Homer but unlike in Wolfgang Petersen's 2004 movie *Troy*, the gods are integral to the action; they are peevish and powerful, attractive and intriguing, matter of fact and involved in equal measure. Greek gods have always seemed to me very much like the child who stirs up the ants' nest to see what happens and then goes in to have tea, careless of the consequences to the ants whose world has been turned upside down; these gods most definitely fit that description. Athene, Aphrodite and Hera are beautifully brought to life both at Peleus and Thetis' wedding and in the judgement of Paris, where they behave like spiteful schoolgirls. However, it is not all laughs, very much the opposite; this is war and in war people die. Men die, women die, children die, the dogs in the Greek camp die. There is a lot of death, and H. does not shy away from it, though she is more concerned with the effect it has. There were three points that stand out for me here; the sacrifices of Iphigeneia and Polyxena and the slaughter of Astyanax. The deaths of the two women are made more moving by the context in which each is set; the build up to Iphigeneia's approach to the altar, her time sitting with her young brother, Orestes, as he plays in the rock pools, places her in context as a person, and her realisation that all is not as it seems is heart-breaking. Polyxena knows what she is going to, but the drawn-out description of the preparations as she dresses for the sacrifice tears at the heart strings for her youth and courage; but the most moving section for me was the death of Astyanax. As in Greek Tragedy, we do not see the deed, but we watch, as Talthybius comes to take the child, and we hear Andromache's ever more desperate pleas for clemency; later we watch again as Andromache is given to Pyrrhus, the killer of Polyxena and her baby son, and himself the son of Achilles who killed her husband, Hector. This is masterful (mistressful?) story-weaving, learnt from careful study of Homer, Aeschylus, Euripides, Virgil, Ovid and many more and it demonstrates just how the ancient world can talk to us today. My only regret with this book is that Penelope was not drawn more vividly. She is the template for endurance and intelligence in a wife, which came across very clearly, but her *Heroides*-like excerpts were less illuminating of her than the narration of the *Odyssey*, which felt like a missed opportunity (despite the mention of Argus, Odysseus' equally loyal hound). However, I would heartily recommend this book to be required reading for any students embarking on study of Greek (or Roman) literature. It is accessible, accurate and covers a vast amount of ground so smoothly that the students will not even know they are being educated. Instead, they will be caught up in the lives of these desperate women. Classical subjects can rest assured that they will not wither while a writer of this calibre is fighting for them.

***Joanna Lashly, Shrewsbury Hight School.***

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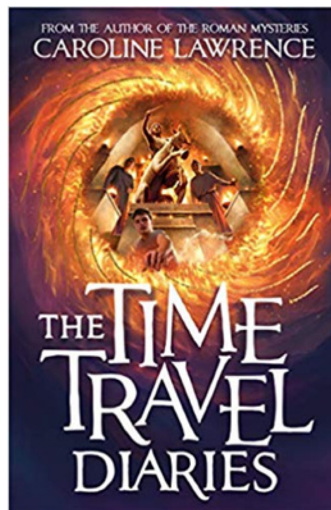
## Lawrence (C.).

**The Time Travel Diaries. Pp.257. Piccadilly Press, 2019. Paperback £6.99. ISBN 13: 978-1848128002.**




Caroline Lawrence has already entranced a generation of children with her hugely successful middle-grade (age 8-13) fiction series *The Roman Mysteries*. Her latest novel, *The Time Travel Diaries* is a lively adventure, also aimed at the middle-grade market.

*The Time Travel Diaries* is very possibly the first in a whole new series. Alex Papas is small for his age (12) and gets bullied at school. His parents are dead and he lives with his hippy Gran. Money is short, so when his headmistress offers him the opportunity to earn £5 million by taking part in a Time Travel experiment, he jumps at it.

His assignment is to go back to Roman times and answer certain questions about a girl whose origins were in Northern Africa, but who had blue eyes and a knife with an ivory handle in the shape of a leopard. One of the enticing features of the book is that the girl with the blue eyes really existed – her grave has been excavated by Museum of London Archaeologists. Another is that the Time Travel Portal is located in the London Mithraeum in the Bloomberg Building, a real place that a young reader can visit for free.

As in the best fantasy, the Time Travel Portal has its own set of unbreakable rules:

1 Naked you go and naked you must return.

2 Drink, don't eat.

3 As little interaction as possible.

You also have to go through the correct side of the Time Portal. The other three rules each have their moment in the plot, but not the final stipulation, making me hope there will be more to this series – what happens when you go in the WRONG side? Even in this first book, L. is creatively messing with the parameters – there are NO rules for what happens when the school bully follows Alex through the Time Portal.

L.'s first career was in teaching and her great success has been to deliver a useful sprinkling of didactic facts with a compelling plot, likeable characters, edge-of-seat adventure and some jokes that made me laugh aloud. One such joke occurs when Alex is briefed about the consequences of time travel and told to contact the authorities urgently if he noticed any changes to his body:

"'I'm nearly thirteen,' I protested. 'I'm hoping for quite a few changes to my body!'"

In *The Time Travel Diaries* there are also opportunities to consider the difference between modern and Roman values, not least at the point where a 14 year old girl is about to be married to an older man. But there are also welcome continuities – all of the characters, in both



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ancient and modern London, come from immigrant families.

Altogether, the L. mix has a great deal to offer and I shall certainly be recommending it to my younger pupils (Year 7 and below).

***Clare F Harvey, Teacher of Classics.***

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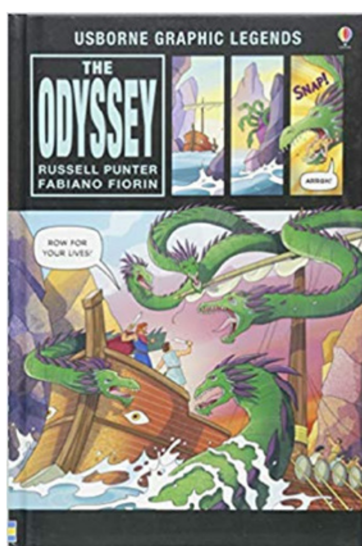
## Punter (R.) and Fiorin (F.)

***The Odyssey.* Pp.104. London: Usborne Publishing Ltd., 2018. Cased, £9.99, CAD $17.95. ISBN: 978-1-4749-3809-9.**




The first classical text to receive the Usborne Graphic Legends treatment (and ninth overall in a series including *Macbeth*, *Robin Hood* and *King Arthur*) P. and F.'s vivid retelling of Homer's *Odyssey* will no doubt engross young readers with a fledgling interest in the classics. The creators have vast experience in the world of graphic novels – P. has been involved in publishing since 1987, with over 50 children's books under his belt, while F.'s work has been selected at multiple children's illustrations contests throughout a glittering career; and certainly, such dalliances are to the fore here, as the 104 pages brim with an abundance of action and intrigue.

Aimed primarily at readers aged ten and above, this highly accessible version of the *Odyssey* has plenty to commend it from the outset. Even before the tale proper begins, an attractively illustrated map outlines the wanderings of our protagonist, alongside the assertion that "nobody knows for certain where these adventures took place", which will no doubt do an excellent job in prompting classroom discussion regarding the purposes of oral poetry and mythology.

Overseen by Dr. Anne Millard, who has been writing and consulting on historical books for children of all ages since leaving university, this retelling remains largely faithful to the source material, beginning *in medias res* with Athena anxious for our hero as he sits on Calypso's beach wistfully staring out to sea; from there, the action is relentless, and bound to captivate the intended audience. Throughout the story, Odysseus is well-rendered - at times brave, pious, loyal, braggadocious and crafty– the very qualities expected from this hero. The lavish illustrations accompany such a status; during the storm sent by Poseidon, he literally falls through consecutive frames before washing up on the shores of Phaeacia, bedraggled, and with only his own thoughts for company. Likewise, the episode featuring Polyphemus is enlivened by extensive use of onomatopoeia and full-page illustrations, emphasising the palpable tension of Odysseus' escape, and subsequent burst of hubris.

As with any adaptation aimed at junior readers, some nuance is bound to be sacrificed; here, the characterisation of Penelope is one such concession. Though there are plenty of nods to her sense of loyalty, the episodes which develop her own sense of craftiness seem rushed, with only passing reference made to her weaving ruse as well as a mere two frames in which she tests Odysseus with the marriage bed ploy. Likewise, Nausicaa and Eurycleia are conspicuous by their absence, while Calypso's entanglement is fleeting, though these editorial decisions are unlikely to bother younger readers who will no doubt be deeply invested in the intrigues of the main character as he faces a range of fierce foes, be they mortal, beast or divine. Fans of the Olympians are catered for, with Athena, Poseidon and Hermes faithfully drawn, while Circe vamps her way across multiple pages, and the delightfully devilish suitors are a moustache-twirl away from achieving carton villain immortality - their comeuppance was met with whoops of delight during a recent bedtime reading session.

Suffice to say, this graphic novel has been robustly road-tested, though perhaps not in a strictly Odyssean sense: my 6-year old delighted in the illustrations over the course of some night-time reading, with the scenes where Athena lends divine aid in Eumaeus' hut proving particularly edge-of-bed fare, though the Cyclops episode caused consternation, which led to questions over the exact nature of Odysseus' heroism. However, when unleashed on a Year 10 (14-15 year old) Ancient and Modern History class, they praised the straightforward layout ("bold, easy to read font"), "the vivid art style" and the overall pacing, which, "with the way it was told, especially the use of language, made a fairly convoluted tale understandable[1]." The brevity of the adaptation lends itself to integration into a classroom environment – the class cited above became immersed in a discussion involving *xenia*, hubris, *nostos* and *kleos*, which will no doubt serve them well moving through Classical Studies in the senior school. The information section on "The Story of Odysseus" at the back – which touches on the Homeric Question and the nature of oral poetry - proved helpful in terms of clearing up any lingering questions for these nascent scholars.

With traditional tales seemingly falling by the wayside for young readers in recent years, P. and F. look to have restored the appeal with this engaging and lively addition to the Usborne canon, which is certain to fuel further passion for young (and young-at-heart) students of classical literature.

***John Hayden, Head of Classical Studies, Columba College, Dunedin, New Zealand.***

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[1]All quotes come from students' responses to a unit evaluation given to a Year 10 Ancient and Modern History class at Columba College, March 2019.


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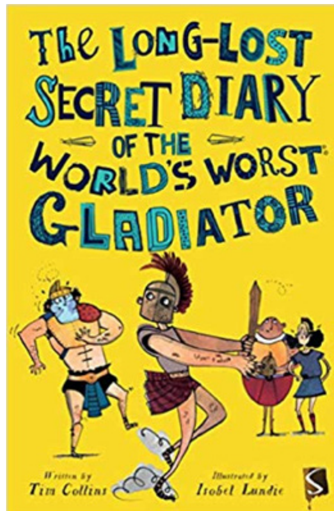
## Collins (T.)

***The Long-Lost Secret Diary of the World's Worst Gladiator*** **(illustrated by Isobel Lundie). Pp. 218, ills. Brighton: The Salariya Book Company, 2019. Paper, £6.99.**
**ISBN: 978-1-912537-26-6.**




Most of this book, as its title suggests, presents a fictional story of a young Roman, Marcus, in the form of a "long-lost secret diary". Marcus lives in Pompeii in AD 79, but travels to Rome with his father, with the hope that life will be more exciting there. Although forbidden by his father from exploring Rome, Marcus sneaks out and has not visited much of the city before he is mistaken for a gladiator. Marcus decides to visit the gladiator who so resembles him, and on doing so rather naively swaps clothes with the gladiator, who promptly escapes. Marcus is retained by the *lanista*, Lucius, and made to fight in the arena – which he does badly. So disastrous are Marcus' attempts to fight that Lucius takes him and the other members of his troupe away from Rome on a tour that takes in Antium, Tarracina, Capua, Caudium and Aeclanum. Gradually, Marcus comes to realise how much skill is required to be a successful gladiator, and he learns from his companions how to fight and win in the arena. The gladiators' tour finally brings them to Pompeii, where Marcus is recognised for who he really is, and as the book ends he bids farewell to his life as a gladiator and resumes what he believes will continue to be a mundane existence in his home town. The final lines show us Marcus wondering whether he really is cursed, as one of his erstwhile gladiatorial companions believed, and dismissing the idea as he wonders "What danger could I possibly face here in Pompeii?", with the page illustrated with an erupting volcano (p. 198).

The story is well-told and engaging, even if Marcus' age seems somewhat fluid. Although the narrative is presented as the events of April and May of a single year, he seems clearly to be a child at the outset, when we see him playing with two friends in Pompeii's forum and then left in the care of a slave while his father does business in Rome, but his subsequent experiences as a gladiator feel much more like those of an adult. We do read that Marcus "could pass for much older than his age" (p. 8), and the publisher's website reveals that he is in fact supposed to be 15. He is, therefore, older than the age range for which the book is intended – stated (again on the publisher's website) to be "7+", "Key Stage 2". It seems likely that children will enjoy this book, although parents and teachers should of course be mindful that the book is a depiction of a violent aspect of Roman culture. Perhaps the goriest incident in the story is when Marcus causes his opponent to fall into a beast pit in the amphitheatre, where the luckless gladiator is consumed by a lion: "I pushed myself back up and went over to have a look. Decimus was rolling around, holding his knee and screaming. There was another shape down there too. A furry, snarling shape. It pounced and fixed its jaws around his neck. I closed my eyes and tried to block out the noises of Decimus shrieking and the lion feeding" (p. 71). The story is interspersed with "Get real" boxes which usefully present factual information about Roman society, but one of these, in discussing an incident reported by Seneca in which a gladiator "choked himself [to death] by stuffing one of these toilet sponges down his throat" (p. 124), also seemed of questionable appropriateness for the book's intended age range.

The book does well to present many aspects of Roman culture, inevitably with a focus on gladiators. About halfway through the story, Marcus realises the curious position they held in Roman society: "Being a gladiator is weird. You're as low as the commonest slave, yet more famed and loved than any free man" (p. 99). Examples of aspects of Roman life that the reader discovers are their fondness for *garum* (as manufactured in the story by Marcus' father), that a free man might volunteer to be a gladiator, and their use of graffiti; the "Get real" box which discusses the latter includes some examples in Latin (with translations). The journey times mentioned or implied are plausible and give a sense of the scale of Roman Italy, with Marcus noting that Herculaneum is "only three hours away" from Pompeii (p. 15) and his diary entries revealing that it took eight days for him to travel with his father from Pompeii to Rome. The story and "Get real" boxes are supplemented by 18 pages at the end of the book which contain factual information under the headings "Gladiators in Ancient Rome", "How do we know about gladiators?", "Timeline", "Gladiator Hall of Fame" and "Glossary". The timeline, which begins in 753 BC and ends in 2016, starts with thought-provoking entries making the reader question Livy's dating of the foundation of Rome and of the first gladiatorial games. The "Gladiator Hall of Fame" introduces us to some characters known from Martial (for example the *bestiarius* Carpophorus), from graffiti (for example Celadus, known as the "heart-throb for all the girls", p. 211), as well as figures well-known from the historical record (such as Commodus and Spartacus). The book's only illustrations are black-and-white cartoon-style images of incidents in the story; these are well-drawn and help to bring the past to life, even if the pictures of the *gladiatrix* Claudia seem to contradict the text's comment that she has blond hair (p. 60).

Overall this book is likely to appeal to children keen to find out more about gladiators, and it is of course to be hoped that its readers will be encouraged to investigate the Roman world further after reading it, whatever their prior knowledge of the ancient world may be. Its combination of narrative story and factual sections makes it a fine introduction to its subject, even if, as noted above, adults should consider its sometimes gory content when giving or recommending it to a child.

***James Watson***



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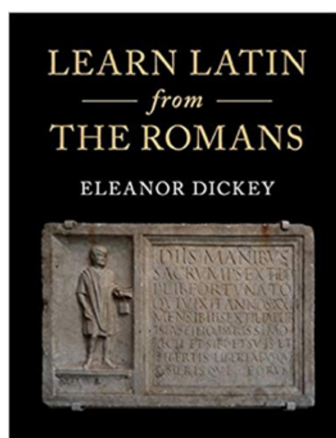
## Dickey (E.)

***Learn Latin from the Romans.* A Complete Introductory Course Using Textbooks from the Roman Empire. Pp. 530. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018. Paperback £22.39. ISBN 13: 978-1316506196.**




There are two stated aims to this comprehensive textbook. Firstly, Dickey aims to enable students to learn Latin using ancient materials. Secondly, D. has written the book to fill what she perceives is a gap in the available teaching materials and essentially to compensate for the reams of artificial or 'fake' Latin in use in many schools today. D. states that she is not alone amongst the Latin teaching community for feeling the need for this sort of text as she has noted that many Latin students "fell into a group not ideally served by any of the available books" (p.xii). It is not without irony that it seems a very original idea to afford students the opportunity of learning Latin using ancient methods and materials, namely *colloquia* (i.e. short dialogues and narratives for reading and speaking practice). However, immediately issues present themselves: not least the fragmentary nature of the surviving sources, the lack of extant texts, the fact that ancient grammatical texts presumed knowledge of ancient Greek, and also the use of post-Classical Latin grammar and syntax which can result in considerable confusion. To eliminate such issues, D. has in a sense done exactly what she set out not to do; i.e. adapt 'real' Latin by standardising grammar and including modern sentences so that it is usable in a teaching context for beginners.

D. is very specific about the sort of learner this book caters for: those with intellectual maturity but not necessarily with a background in Classics; those who are keen to find a fast track to accessing 'real' Latin; and curiously, "those who want interesting reading material but disagree completely with one another about what counts as interesting". It would seem from this list of qualities for the ideal reader that this is aimed almost exclusively at university students. D. also states that "many students learn Latin as their first foreign language" which I, as a secondary school teacher in England, found a very surprising and unsubstantiated assertion.

The introduction is engaging and useful, exploring the origins of the Latin language and its links with other languages. This would be useful for students of secondary school age and Figure 1 could reasonably find its way on to the wall of any secondary language classroom. What follows is a section on pronunciation, which starts off with useful phonetic examples of how to say particular Latin words and names. For the Practice section which follows, however, it would perhaps have been more helpful to provide links to downloadable audio files read by the author herself; links are provided in footnotes to three different readings but this could be confusing to a reader and YouTube links can be removed over time. What I find unsatisfactory about this section is that the practice passages, taken from texts written by Caesar, Virgil and Cicero (or should I say Kikero?!) – bearing in mind the students do not know any Latin at this stage – are presented without comment, context or translation. This may be daunting to the new Latin student; an audio file to listen to and then repeat would perhaps be a more accessible approach.

The main body of the textbook is divided into five sections. It is extremely comprehensive; there are clear tables, concise explanations and numerous practice exercises. Once the idea of declension is introduced, both the British Case Order and the (adapted) Ancient Case Order are presented. Explanations throughout are well written and clear but are perhaps most beneficial to those with some knowledge of Latin. As D. states that there are over 5000 sentences in the book and 700 practice sentences, it is perhaps unsurprising that there are too many practice sentences to appeal to anyone but the most motivated grammarians out there. The ratio of modern sentences to the *colloquia* is very high - which is a shame; the USP of this book is the inclusion of the original Latin texts, but they are relatively scarce. However, by far the biggest issue with this book is the lack of answer key for every chapter so that students can verify whether or not their answers are correct. Without this, the student – especially those who are independent learners/ self-study students - will not be able to assess their progress in the subject, and will not be able to identify errors but in fact will continue making and affirming mistakes through excessive practice. It would have been far better to include a small number of model examples for each exercise, then perhaps five additional practice sentences for each topic, with the answers at the end of the chapter for ease of reference. It would take a very confident and self-assured learner to use the book as it stands without the help of a Latin specialist on speed-dial.

The appendix contains further exercises, this time with an answer key. Again, I feel this is unlikely to appeal to anyone but the most dedicated Latin student due to the sheer volume of exercises. For example, the first exercise asks the learner to identify the type of words underlined – over 200 in total. Flicking back and forth to check every word would be an arduous task; a couple of examples of each type of word (conjunction, noun, preposition etc.) would suffice.

The explanations of the grammar in this book are amongst the clearest and most helpful explanations I have ever come across in my career as a Latin teacher. It has helped to refresh and further my own knowledge about the Latin language. However, without an answer key, I feel that the potential of this book as the go-to textbook for university students studying *ab initio* (as I did) is severely limited. In terms of its use in schools, perhaps it could work for an *ab initio* course for IB Latin if time allowed and the students were particularly motivated, but it is unlikely to work for students below this level; it would certainly be seen as an unwelcome step back in time for those using *CLC*, for example. It is a very interesting and exciting concept – to think you are learning Latin by looking at the same texts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as the ancients – and I hope future revisions include answer keys and fewer practice exercises to make this a more accessible textbook.

***Andrea Allman.***

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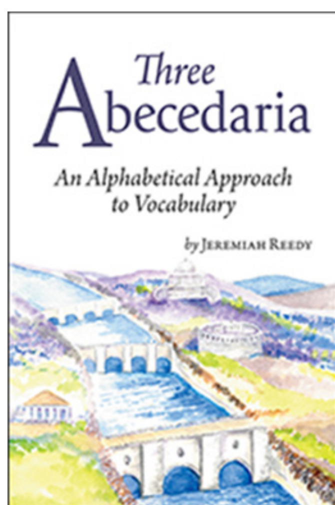
## Reedy (J.)

***Three Abecedaria. An Alphabetical Approach to Vocabulary*. Pp. xvi + 122, ills. Mundelein, IL: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, 2018. Paper, US$12. ISBN: 978-0-86516-856-5.**




Building vocabulary is key to growing confidence in reading a language, and using and thinking about words (as opposed to simply memorising lists of them) is a crucial aspect of vocabulary building. In this regard, Reedy's short volume (illustrated by Mary Ann Reedy) has the potential to be a real help to students and teachers working on broadening vocabulary, in English as well as in the classical languages.

After a brief introduction, the book is divided into three sections – English words derived from Greek, English words derived from Latin, and Latin phrases sometimes found in English – but these categories are not treated as prescriptive, with discussions on Greek derivations in the Latin sections and *vice versa*. The primary focus is on English, Latin and Greek, but there is some discussion of other languages, including Arabic, French, Hebrew and German.

In the first two *abecedaria*, each entry starts with a specific word, but each entry soon branches off into discussing related words. Sometimes the links are obvious and made clear, though there are times when the leaps can seem a little obscure. False friends and unusual changes in meaning from Greek and Latin origins are often explained, and where a word has evolved into an offensive term this is made clear. A reasonably significant proportion of the material for both languages is biblical.

As well as introducing new words to its readers, the book aims to equip them with the tools required to break down words not in it into their constituent parts. In many entries, there are discussions of how to go about doing this, with explanations of ideas such as prepositions in compound verbs and which parts of Greek and Latin words tend to transfer into the English derivations. The book's two appendices are designed to help here: one gives the principal parts of about 40 Latin verbs, while the other lists common prefixes and suffixes of English words derived from Greek and Latin.

That focus is one element of the book's unabashedly philological approach. The introduction sets out a very quick explanation of the Indo-European language family and the reconstruction of proto-Indo-European, and a number of entries refer to PIE. Though this is generally accessible, there are moments when more explanation is required, most notably under V is for Vulpine in the second of the three *abecedaria*, where a number of PIE forms are given with no assistance for the reader on, for example, how to go about saying them aloud. But the enthusiasm that pervades this overall focus on the evolution and connectedness of languages goes a long way to making such material part of the joy of exploring words.

Reading the book in one sitting would probably be ill-advised – it could feel a little overwhelming given the sheer number of words covered in most entries. It would work very well as a resource used on a regular basis, with interested students working through each list a couple of entries at a time; R. suggests a similar approach in the introduction.

The book is clearly for the American market, with frequent cross-references to the *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (available online) and US spellings throughout – UK users of the book thereby getting an extra layer of thinking about language development for free.

R.'s stated aim is to turn readers into "logophiles or philologists, i.e., 'lovers of words'", with the hope that some of his readers will want to take up Greek and Latin themselves as a result of seeing the languages' influence on English. Any student interested in etymology and the development of language will find a lot to engage them here.

***Emma Woolerton, Durham University.***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