

complex, G.'s presentation throughout is lucid, such that – *ceteris paribus*, including familiarity with given examples – I foresee it serving as a thought-provoking entry-point to studying ancient cosmography as well as other worlds whose fragments may be approached via this ‘philology’.

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ANCIENT SAYINGS AND PROVERBS

WILSON (W.T.) *Ancient Wisdom. An Introduction to Sayings Collections*. Pp. xiv + 321. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2022. Cased, US\$34.99. ISBN: 978-0-8028-7543-3.
 doi:10.1017/S0009840X23000914

W. has produced a very useful reference work on ancient sayings collections, which will be invaluable to scholars and students from a variety of fields. The volume has a helpful introduction to the different forms and functions of wise sayings. Each chapter is an introduction to a collection of sayings or, in some cases, a collection of collections (e.g. the Pythagorean Collections). Nevertheless, as an introduction to ‘ancient wisdom’ or even to ‘sayings collections’, this book leaves something to be desired. What is lacking is any sense of the development of this genre diachronically or of the family resemblances (linguistic, for example) between these collections. The chapters are arranged alphabetically, but some chapters are identified by the traditional title of a collection (e.g. ‘Abot), others by putative author (e.g. Menander) or pseudonym (e.g. Pseudo-Phocylides) and others by a general category (e.g. Sumerian Proverb Collections). Strangely, the dustjacket claims that ‘[t]his book offers a diachronic survey’, which would have been helpful in an introduction that includes collections of sayings ranging from the third millennium BCE to the fourth century CE, but this is not in fact the way in which the book is organised. It is organised as a reference work; so this review will focus on its strengths and weaknesses as a reference work, not an introduction.

The 26-page introduction is a testament not only to the breadth of W.’s knowledge but also to his pedagogical skill. He draws readers in to the topic by first describing the reverence for wise sayings in antiquity and their central place in ancient education. He then defines the two main types of gnomic sayings, the maxim and the proverb, and distinguishes them from the related forms of the epigram and the chreia. Moving beyond that basic distinction, he considers various approaches to categorising the forms and functions of gnomic sayings. The most interesting is a four-part taxonomy of the different ‘warrants’ that gnomic sayings offer in support of their truth claims. He then considers the various ways in which gnomic sayings can be arranged in ancient collections and how the organisation affects the interpretation of the individual sayings. He assigns the 29 collections covered in the volume to three categories: *gnomologia* (in which the organisation of sayings is least apparent); gnomic poetry (in which the logical connections between sayings are more evident); and wisdom instructions (in which gnomic sayings are incorporated into topically organised speeches). The introduction concludes with a survey of themes and topics that are found in many of the ancient gnomic collections, across cultures

and languages. It is worth noting that there are only 27 chapters, because three collections of different types are grouped in the chapter 'Pythagorean Collections'.

The chapters are the following: 'Abot; Ahiqar; Amenemope; Anii; Ankhsheshonqy; Ben Sira; Cato; Counsels of Wisdom; Democritus; Epictetus; Papyrus Insinger; Isocrates; Menander; Merikare; Pseudo-Phocylides; Porphyry; Proverbs; Ptahhotep; Publilius; Pythagorean Collections (including the *Carmen aureum*, the *Sentences of the Pythagoreans* and the *Sentences of Clitarchus*); The Seven Sages; Sextus; Shuruppak; Silvanus; Sumerian Proverb Collections; Syriac Menander; and The Gospel of Thomas. There is also an appendix listing sixteen 'minor collections'. In addition to the bibliographies at the end of each chapter, there is an extensive general bibliography as well as indexes of authors, subjects, scripture and other ancient sources.

The introduction lacks any discussion of the principle of selection of the collections covered. From the perspective of a scholar of Jewish wisdom traditions, I was pleased to see 'Abot included, because it is often overlooked in discussions of ancient wisdom, but surprised that the biblical book of Qoheleth/Ecclesiastes and the instructional text from Qumran, 4QInstruction, were omitted. Both of those contain many proverbial sayings reminiscent of Proverbs and Ben Sira, which are included. The introduction likewise does not explain the decision to organise the chapters alphabetically, rather than chronologically or geographically. It appears that this decision may have been made after the writing was complete, since the chapters do not read like encyclopaedia entries.

Each of the 27 chapters includes basic facts about the collection or collections it covers, but they are not always presented in the same order, avoiding a formulaic uniformity. These facts generally include the original language and approximate date of composition; languages of the ancient versions; the principal manuscripts or tablets on which the text is preserved; the forms of sayings it contains; and something about their organisation. These facts generally (but not always) precede a discussion of the main themes or topics of the collection (or a selection of some representative sayings). Beyond that, the content of the chapters varies: sometimes there is a comparison with another collection, or speculation about the intended audience or function of a collection, or a consideration of a contested issue in the scholarship on the collection. Each chapter includes a well-selected bibliography, including critical editions and important secondary literature on the collection.

The level at which the chapters are written is not exactly introductory, however. For a volume that covers a wide range of corpora in different ancient languages, the audience might be presumed to include people with little or no background knowledge of at least some of the collections under consideration. Yet the first chapter, on 'Abot, does not explain what the Mishnah is or its organisation into orders and tractates; it also does not mention that it is written in Hebrew, a rare omission. It mentions the Tosefta and Talmudim without explaining how they are related to the Mishnah. Of course, this is basic information that any student who had taken an introduction to ancient Judaism would know, but is it fair to assume a student of Classics or the Ancient Near East would have this background?

Conversely, it is unreasonable to expect the author to be up to date on the scholarship in such a wide range of fields, but I noticed a few significant slips. For example, for the Aramaic instruction text Ahiqar, W. follows the edition and translation of J. Lindenberger from the 1980s and does not seem to be aware of the major rearrangement of the columns and alternative reconstructions in the 1993 edition by B. Porten and A. Yardeni (text C1.1 in *Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt*, vol. 3), which is considered definitive by most scholars of Ahiqar. In the chapter on Ben Sira he describes the Prologue's mention of 'the Law and the Prophets and the other books of our ancestors' (Sir. Prol.) as 'a reference to the threefold division of the Hebrew Bible', which presumes the existence of a biblical canon in the second century BCE, an outdated assumption among biblical scholars.

Nevertheless, W. has done an immense service to scholars and students of antiquity by collecting in one volume so much valuable information, including bibliographies, about ancient gnomic wisdom. There is much to be gained from studying this material across cultures, and this book will facilitate such study. Although proverbs and maxims are perhaps underappreciated today, it is impossible to exaggerate their importance in transmitting cultural values in ancient societies. W.'s sympathetic yet critical engagement with ancient collections of wisdom sayings makes them accessible to a non-specialist audience.

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HERA – SPOUSE AND SISTER

PIRENNE-DELFORGE (V.), PIRONTI (G.) *The Hera of Zeus. Intimate Enemy, Ultimate Spouse*. Translated by Raymond Guess. Pp. xxii + 381, b/w & colour ills, map. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022 (originally published as *L'Héra de Zeus*, 2016). Cased, £90, US\$120. ISBN: 978-1-108-84103-0.

doi:10.1017/S0009840X23000628

This book makes a central claim that was simultaneously unexpected and absolutely convincing to me: that the essence of Hera's personality, in both myth and cult, lies in the dynamic, productive tension that endures between her and her husband, Zeus. This manifests itself most markedly in what P.-D. and P. describe as Hera's role as gatekeeper to Olympus – that is, in deciding which of Zeus's progeny by other females will be allowed to join the circle of gods, perhaps only after Hera has tested them severely, as in the cases of Heracles and Dionysus. In the course of the book P.-D. and P. explore the way in which this paradigm appears in individual myths and rituals.

More specifically, they suggest that three frequently recognised aspects of Hera – her anger and contentiousness, her concern with childbirth and her identity as queen of the gods – cumulatively comprise this core identity. To do so, they look closely at, first, the ways in which she behaves and is described in myths (Part 1) and then the ways in which she is worshipped (Part 2). Part 3 pulls some of the strands of Parts 1 and 2 together into a unified portrait.

Part 1, 'On Olympus: Conjugal Bed and Royal Throne', emphasises Hera's identity not only as Zeus's wife but also as his sister and equal, who is given the title 'daughter of Cronus' just as he is given the title 'son of Cronus'; this makes her a bride who need not leave her paternal home. Indeed, as Hyginus (*Fab.* 139) tells us, there was a myth in which Hera helped her mother deliver and protect her future husband, which gives pride of place to her role as sibling rather than spouse and confirms that her sovereignty is anchored not only by her marriage to the king but also by her own birthright. Somewhat perversely and yet logically, her sexual attractiveness for Zeus springs from her power to periodically return to the status of *parthenia* that she possessed before their union (a point to which P.-D. and P. understand the *Dios Apatē* to be gesturing, when Zeus tells Hera he desires her even more now than he ever had before). Her frequent