

notes that this method of communication may have been vital in securing the support of the legions. For example, Vespasian was hailed as a particularly attractive prospect for the soldiers because he had sons who could succeed him, which empathised the secure nature of the potential new imperial dynasty.

Throughout this volume, Eaton also makes use of images, and there are several fine examples in colour; one in particular is a coin issued by Vespasian upon his accession to the 'purple' in AD 69. This was a key example of the emperor making use of both written and visual forms of communication to gain the support of the troops. This is not the only image used in the volume, which boasts six pages of attractive, and well-chosen images which display monuments, both imperial and personal as a means of conveying a particular message.

Overall, Eaton notes that the Roman army was not the shepherds who guarded the emperor, but wolves who would turn upon him if he did not strike a balance between master and patron. If there was one criticism of this volume, the work does expect a certain amount of background knowledge, as emperors, prefects, and legates are mentioned in great numbers and in quick succession. Despite this, Eaton has produced an interesting and unique study which will offer useful examples for those studying A Levels in Ancient History and Classics, particularly for the Julio-Claudian and Imperial Image modules, although it should be noted, that this would probably be an extension text, rather than a core work.

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## Vincent Obsopoeus: How to Drink. A Classical Guide to the Art of Imbibing.

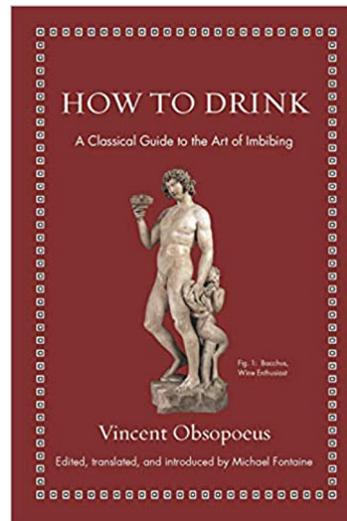
Fontaine (M.) (ed., trans.). Pp. xxxii + 285.  
Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020.  
Cased, £13.99, US\$16.96. ISBN: 978-0-691-19214-7.

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Abolitionists and teetotalers may wish to stop reading here, for this review will contain nothing but praise for the *Ars Bibendi* expounded in spirited Latin elegiac distichs by Vincent Obsopoeus (c. 1498–1539) and translated into intoxicating prose by Michael Fontaine as the punning *How to Drink*. Hard drinkers, too, may be disappointed, as this didactic poem, perhaps contrary to expectation, does not endorse inebriation. Rather, Obsopoeus advocates drinking with moderation in a humorous three-book poem inspired by Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*, while showing up the excesses of his time. He moves from a light lesson on responsible drinking to the headier stuff of the vices of excessive intake (though pardonable from time to time, as long as it does not become a habit) and tips for winning at drinking games, where he does not shy away from cheating to gain eternal fame as Franconia's greatest barfly.

Obsopoeus is well-served with a reader so attuned to puns and humour as Fontaine, author of, inter alia, *Funny Words in Plautine Comedy* (Oxford, 2010) and translator of *John Placentius, The Pig*



*War* (New York, 2019) (as Michael Phontaine) and the forthcoming *Marcus Tullius Cicero: How to Tell a Joke. An Ancient Guide to the Art of Humor* (Princeton, NJ) in the same series as the book under review. At all times, the translation is lucid and faithful to the Latin in terms of *inventio* (although not literal), while the endnotes are kept to a sober minimum. The introduction is a brief, informative and entertaining survey of the life and times of the author and the contents of his poem. While not intended as a standalone edition (see

below), I expect that Fontaine's vintage effort will be the port of call for some time.

As Fontaine explains, his edition is a 'third edition' (xv, xxii–xxiii), which is something of a blend of the first edition of 1536 and the expanded second edition of 1537. Although the latter edition is the basis for his text, Fontaine uses the first to silently correct typos in the latter and vice versa, while implementing some (eminently sensible) corrections of his own (273–274). At times, he omits expansions from the second edition (e.g. 1.202–8, 555–824; 3.403–624 with, resp., 277 n. 4, 277–8 n. 15, 281–2 n. 10) and once rearranges lines (2.568–72) to maintain the flow of the argument. Sometimes, he prints digressions from the second edition (so 2.811–862 with 280–1 n. 29). In all cases, the line numbering vis-à-vis the second edition has been retained. In short, this is a serviceable diplomatic edition aimed primarily at readability and not designed as an *editio maior*: not quite a Grand Cru, then, but certainly no Château Migraine.

Especially noteworthy is Fontaine's style of translation (to which this review gestures). He not only effectively conveys Obsopoeus' classicising Latin into idiomatic American-English, but also transports it into the binge-drinking 'bro culture' of American 'college kids' (xxiii–xxvi). This modernising frame works quite well to illustrate how Obsopoeus' strict Reformation-era environment of learned German aristocrats and clergy functioned and only very rarely becomes forced or irksome (the translation of *heus* as 'dude', twice at 3.244–5, to enhance the atmosphere of frat boy shot-taking, may be taking the colloquialisms a tad too far for some). Rather than offering the translation as a way into the Latin, Fontaine's translation is very readable on its own and will give the Latinless reader a good sense of the poem. Conversely, the Latinate reader will want to look at the translation for help in uncovering the poem's rich sediment of puns and wordplay. The reader is furthermore assisted by Fontaine's ([sub]sub)headings and visual aids such as bullet points when Obsopoeus assumes the mantle of the discursive schoolmaster.

A wee nip from a section entitled 'German Drinking Habits Are Appalling' and subtitled 'Frat Culture' (p. 138, 2.425–428): 'That's how great the excess is; that's how great the waste of wine is; that's how many cups are drowning and overflowing with alcohol. Nobody's upset by at this outrageous sight; they're saying "Here, here! Good ol' German *hermanos* are partying here!"' (Fontaine's emphasis; *Tantus adest luxus, tanta est profusio vini, | tot submersa mero || pocula plena fluunt. | Non movet haec*

*quemquam facies turpissima, dicunt | "Hic hic Germani || distribuere boni!"*). The accompanying endnote duly explains Obsopoeus' pun in *Germani* on the 'bromance' of *German* drinking-brothers. I would add that *germanus* in the sense of 'truthful' or 'real' stresses *boni* to comic effect ('the *real* honchos'), while *hic hic* likely plays on the hiccups emitted by the sloshed partygoers, whether through onomatopoeia or a bilingual pun (although Ger. *Hick* and cognates are not attested for Obsopoeus' time in the standard dictionaries).

Beyond historicising the phenomena of 'drinking culture' and *potodidaxis*, this is also quite simply a witty, entertaining and well-produced book, whose editor/translator is clearly well-matched to the subject-matter: in Fontaine's capable hands, Obsopoeus is anything but an acquired taste. *How to Drink* is a more amusing and useful gift than a bottle of plonk: with one of the most apocalyptic and depressing years in modern history behind us and a glimmer of better times ahead, one could do worse than to follow its advice. Perhaps Fontaine will follow up with a chaser of Matthaues Delius *filius*' *On the Art of Joking/De Arte Iocandi*, which alludes to Obsopoeus' poem (cf. B.C. Bowen [2003], 'A Neglected Renaissance Art of Joking?', *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric* 21.3, 137-48)? I'm game.

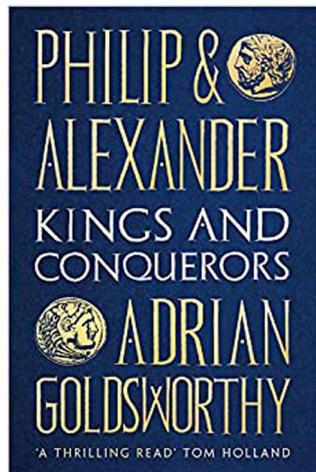
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## Philip & Alexander. Kings and Conquerors.

Goldsworthy (A.) Pp.xliv +620, maps, b/w & colour pls. London: Head of Zeus, 2020. Cased, £12.99. ISBN: 9781784978693

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The history of the scholarship of Philip, King of Macedon and his vastly more famous son, Alexander III or 'The Great' as he has been dubbed is almost as weighty as the history of the two figures themselves. Vast quantities of ink have been spilt examining the character, military brilliance, overall aims, diplomatic prowess, and world vision (among other things) of these two men. Yet this volume by Goldsworthy attempts to create a work different from any that has gone before. The majority of works on the two

most recognisable Argead monarchs focus on either Philip or Alexander. Consider the fine volume by Hammond on the life and career of Philip, or Fox's biography of Alexander. In these works, both men play a 'bit part' in the story of the other, either son to father or father to son.

In this latest, highly readable account, Goldsworthy has created a dual biography. This is an ambitious project, but one that, on the whole, succeeds markedly well. The work takes a chronological path through the reigns of both father and son and is split into three sections. The first section of the book deals with Philip and chronicles his birth, rise and reign as King of Macedon. The second covers Alexander's ascension to the throne of Macedon and his lightning quick conquest of the Persian Empire. The third, final, and shortest section of the work deals with Alexander's campaigns in India, his subsequent return to the heart of the Persian Empire and his mysterious and untimely death just short of his 33rd birthday.

In his introduction the author claims that, 'without Philip there can be no Alexander' (p.3). This is more than a statement of biology; Goldsworthy asserts that, without Philip, Alexander would not have been in a position to launch his invasion of the Persian Empire, an invasion which Philip had conceived and planned before his own assassination. Chapters 1-13 detail the startling successes, both diplomatic and military, which Philip achieved: assuming the throne of a fractured and weak kingdom of Macedon at the age of only 23, Philip transformed the fortunes of his 'barbarian' kingdom on the fringes of a civilised Greece.

A colourful character both in public and private, there is an entire chapter (chapter 4) devoted to Philip's marriages, all diplomatic and all delivering some sort of personal gain and alliance for the king. Philip's military abilities are also considered in detail, with the conclusion that he played a major role in transforming a large number of the 'Companions' of the King into near full-time soldiers. This, Goldsworthy notes, is integral to not just Philip's success but Alexander's too. Section one includes all the key moments of Philip's life: his campaigns of expansion in Thrace, his marriage to Alexander's mother Olympias and his victories over an alliance of Greek city states at the Battle of Chaeronea in 338 BC, a victory which left him in command of Greece as its *hegemon*. Goldsworthy then details Philip's plans for a campaign against the Persians at the head of an allied Greek force before his assassination (perhaps at the hands of a humiliated lover). Overall, Goldsworthy's approach is well considered; he accurately and carefully examines the challenges which faced Philip on his ascension to the throne and how, through a mixture of military conquest and well-judged diplomacy, he had forged Macedon into the dominant power of the Eastern Mediterranean.

Section two details Alexander's ascension to the throne in the aftermath of his father's murder. A small amount of time is given to Alexander's efforts to establish his power base at home before the narrative switches to his conquest of the Persian Empire. Goldsworthy's background in the scholarship of the Roman Army is clear: his account of the logistical challenges facing Alexander as he attempted to mount an invasion of Asia is crisp and convincing. Not only is Goldsworthy's analysis of the military situation during Alexander's conquest excellent, but his handling of the dubious numbers also presented by the sources detailing the vast armies of the Persian Great King are worthy of praise. While never dismissing the view that the number of troops available to Alexander's enemies were significantly larger than those of the Greek and Macedonian forces, Goldsworthy points out the logistical issues, and in some cases, the impossibility of feeding and moving so many men (some estimates suggest anything from 200,000-1,000,000 men). Section two details the famous battles fought between Alexander and the forces of the Great King. Granicus (334 BC), Issus (333 BC) and Darius III's eventual defeat at the battle of Gaugamela (331 BC) are all mentioned in some detail. Due to the nature of our sources, the