

lichkeit, mit der der Verlag neue Veröffentlichungen der nachklassischen Autoren für die Forschung herausbringt. Der Band enthält u.a. die Fragmente und die auf Syrisch und Arabisch bewahrten Texte.

Jaakko Frösén

Platon: Die Werke des Aufstiegs. Euthyphron, Apologie, Kriton, Gorgias, Menon. 2. Aufl. — **Die Gesetze.** — [Both:] Eingeleitet v. *Olof Gigon*, übertr. v. *Rudolf Rufener*. Die Bibliothek der alten Welt. Zürich, Artemis Verlag 1974. 454 and XLII, 550 p. DM 48.— and 58.—.

The German Plato of G.Krüger, O.Gigon and R.Rufener is now complete. In the reissue of "Die Werke des Aufstiegs" (orig. 1948) a comprehensive discussion by Gigon of the dialogues concerned has been substituted for Krüger's brief general introduction to Plato, but the explicatory notes are left out. Rufener's translation has been slightly modified. — The last volume in the series, the "Laws", is interesting also as a fresh attempt to make this awkward but important work accessible to modern readers. The introductory essay of Gigon is brief, elegant, personal and not too apologetic. Rufener's translation (posthumously published, revised by Gigon and Laila Zimmermann) tends to avoid the most extreme extravaganzas of Plato's later style. In my opinion Rufener should have gone further, as this is not a bilingual edition nor, primarily, a scholarly work of reference. His German is considerably different from Apelt's (1916), but apparently this is not due to stylistic reasons to quite the same extent as to efforts to approximate to the original. In general, Rufener's translation is a solid and reliable piece of work, but it is not easily read. Contrary to Apelt, this new version has not been provided with explicatory notes, which is a pity.

H. Thesleff

Philip Vellacott: Ironic Drama: A Study of Euripides' Method and Meaning. Cambridge UP 1975. 266 p. £ 6.—.

The aim of this stimulating book is to present a coherent view of the method of dramatic composition used by Euripides. Irony is found to be most important for the correct interpretation of this poet — mostly in the sense that the dramatic characters themselves when expressing their ideas are sincere enough, but the intention of the poet is not that these ideas should be approved by the spectators or readers as acceptable, but, on the contrary, to show their shallowness and injustice. In V.'s opinion, only a small enlightened minority of the spectators did understand the poet's underlying message, and the majority took these ironic scenes at their face value. The poet's ironic message, however, was there, and in this way Euripides conveyed to the enlightened few his critical opinion especially of the treatment of women and the demoralising effect of war apparent in fifth century Athens.

Such an ironic method of writing cannot, as V. points out, be actually proved. There is no doubt that Euripides used irony in many instances; his general way of presenting the heroic persons of the past as human beings liable to the faults of