

*R.L. Hunter: The New Comedy of Greece and Rome.* Cambridge University Press, 1985. 183 p. GBP 7.95.

Looking at a repeatedly discussed subject from fresh angles, Dr Hunter comes to a soundly judicious synthesis. The comprehensive introduction is followed by five chapters: The Form of New Comedy, Plots and motifs: the stereotyping of comedy, Themes and conflicts, Comedy and tragedy, and The didactic element. The book abounds in interesting details, such as the Roman *prologus* (26), the repetition of motifs at critical points in the play (56), a male audience's attitudes to women (83ff.), and the homosexual jokes in the *Casina* (112f.)

What impressed me most was the chapter on the form of New Comedy, particularly the section "The five-act structure" (35—42), which is as exciting as a detective story. Apropos of "Rhythmical structures" (42—53), I hope the author might be interested in further investigating "the question of whether particular lyric metres carry particular emotional colour" (161 n. 56), because the results of previous investigations, as he remarks (*ibid.*), are inconclusive. There is another problem which has been troubling me since 1965 when I wrote that "it is hardly possible that Plautus ever read the plays of Aristophanes, for they were out of date in his time and, in any case, they would have been too difficult for him to understand" (*Terms of Abuse in Roman Comedy* 92). Is this view (see also Hunter 14) correct? I am not so sure now when I consider the unexpectedly great number of points of contact between Aristophanes and New Comedy to which Hunter refers (e.g. 24—27, 30—35, 41f., 95—97, 109f.). Or are these all, as he believes, due to "the influence of Euripidean drama" (28)? The book really succeeds, as the author hopes (VII), in stimulating discussion.

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*Albrecht Dihle: Die Vorstellung vom Willen in der Antike.* Titel des Originals *The Theory of Will in Classical Antiquity.* Ins Deutsche übersetzt vom Verfasser. Sammlung Vandenhoeck. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen und Zürich 1985. 178 S. DM 29.—.

A. Dihle's book on "The Theory of Will in Classical Antiquity" (*Sather Classical Lectures*, 48, 1982) has now been, somewhat freely, translated into German by the author himself. The German version is adapted for more general categories of readers than the English one was; some technicalities, the two Appendices, and many of the notes and references have been dropped; and on some points the text has been slightly changed.

The scope of Dihle's learning is impressive, and the book may be said to answer to its theme in many respects. It is to be noted, however, that the emphasis lies on the period from the 2nd c. A.D. onwards, because St. Augustine is (perhaps rightly) considered as the 'inventor' of the modern notion of 'will'. As to the conception of will in earlier periods, say, in tragedy or Plato, very much indeed remains to be said.

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