

ohne weiteres vorzuziehen ist. Alles in allem kann Wellesleys Ausgabe nicht als die maßgebende Standardausgabe charakterisiert werden, durch interessante Einfälle und Konjekturefreudigkeit zeichnet sie sich aber als anregendes Arbeitsinstrument aus, das die Forschung um den Tacitustext durch interessante Anregungen in Schwung hält.

*Heikki Solin*

*Saxo Grammaticus tra storiografia e letteratura*, ed. C. Santini. Bevagna, 27-29 settembre 1990. I Convegni di Classiconorroena. Editrice Il Calamo, Roma 1992. 441 p. ISBN 88-86148-00-3. ITL 100.000.

Questo volume raccoglie gli atti del convegno di Bevagna che segnò anche la fondazione della Società culturale Classiconorroena. Gli scopi dell'associazione, che tende, tra l'altro, a promuovere l'indagine comparativa delle lingue e letterature scandinave dai punti di vista linguistico, filologico-letterario e storico, vengono esemplificati proprio in questa raccolta di saggi sulla figura di Saxo. Tra gli interventi spiccano in particolare quelli di Karsten Friis-Jensen ('Saxo Grammaticus' study of the Roman historiographers and his vision of history', 61-81), di Paul Gerhard Schmidt ('Saxo Grammaticus – ein singulärer Fall in der mittellateinischen Literatur', 355-365) e quelli centrati su Saxo in confronto con Snorri Sturluson (Margaret Clunies Ross, 'Mythic Narrative in Saxo Grammaticus and Snorri Sturluson', 47-59; Anatoly Liberman, 'Snorri and Saxo un Útgarðaloki, with Notes on Loki Laufeyjarson's character, career, and name', 91-158). In genere, tutti i contributi mettono molto bene in evidenza i numerosissimi punti di contatto dell'opera di Saxo con altre sfere dell'Europa settentrionale e persino meridionale (Diego Poli, 'Il primitivismo in Saxo e Vico', 281-291). Per lo stato dell'arte al momento attuale, il bel volume curato dal Santini è un'ottima guida. Rimania in attesa dei risultati futuri dell'associazione Classiconorroena.

*Otti Merisalo*

ROSALIND THOMAS: *Literacy and Orality in Ancient Greece*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1992. xii, 201 p. GBP 32.50 (hardback), 11.95 (paperback).

Sometimes a classical student or scholar may have found it difficult to grasp the fundamental impact of orality in Greek civilization since he or she has been accustomed to penetrate into it by reading written texts by ancient authors. In addition, the

predominance and high esteem of the written word in our modern societies has undoubtedly been a conditioning factor. As to the correct assessment of orality, the 'Parry-Lord oral formulaic theory' on the Homeric epics in the 1930's, was pioneering. However, it is only in the past ten years that books and articles connected with questions concerning orality and literacy and the consequences of the coming of the alphabet into ancient Greece have begun to abound. The discussion has opened also wider perspectives with regard to the character of Greek literature since ever more importance is laid on the performing conditions of, say, archaic poetry or drama.

The book by Rosalind Thomas is an excellent introduction to all the basic issues of literacy and orality in ancient Greece. Individual chapters deal with (among other things) the Homeric orality, the use of writing in archaic *poiesis*, the adoption of the alphabet and earliest uses of writing, the symbolic and magical uses of writing, the orality of the poetic performance, the nature and function of written documents. There is also an appendix on the Roman world, a 'Bibliographical essay' and a comprehensive bibliography of 22 pages. We do not do full justice to the work if we define it only as an introduction. Thomas also asks many new questions and with an admirable methodological rigour modifies old formulations. Also the very terms 'literacy' and 'orality' are discussed in a novel way. Here for instance the different degrees of literate skills are postulated. On the whole, it becomes clear that oral and written communication do not exclude each other but interact in various ways in their specific social and historical contexts.

*Jaakko Aronen*

*Author & Audience in Latin Literature*, eds. Tony Woodman & Jonathan Powell. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1992. xiv, 276 p. ISBN 0-521-38307-2. GBP 35.00.

This volume is the fourth in the "occasional series" created by Tony Woodman and David West, the previous ones being *Quality and Pleasure in Latin Poetry* (1974), *Creative Imitation and Latin Literature* (1979) and *Poetry and Politics in the Age of Augustus* (1984); it is also a homage to David West who retired from the University of Newcastle upon Tyne in 1992. Accordingly, the theme chosen is close to his particular scholarly interests, although the approaches adopted are not always necessarily those preferred by West. The twelve contributors cover aspects of Cicero (R.G.M. Nisbet, 'The orator and the reader: manipulation and response in Cicero's *Fifth Verrine*', 1-17; Niall Rudd, 'Stratagems of vanity: Cicero, *Ad familiares* 5.12 and Pliny's letters', 18-32),