

he compares the myth of Hypsipyle to three other myths by constructing binary oppositions inside and between them: the Pelasgians, the Danaids and one Hittite myth of a queen, who bore thirty sons and thirty daughters and drowned the former in a river. The myths tell the story of massacre conducted by women, but also a denial of it, displayed by one woman (Hypsipyle, Hypermnestra).

The myth of the Pelasgians is also the subject of the most substantial contribution to this volume, the paper written by Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood ('Reading a myth, reconstructing its constructions'). First, she discusses the definition of myth and why myths are especially vulnerable to reductionist approaches – in this case, to political explanations. Sourvinou-Inwood has also elsewhere argued for the concept of myth as the constructions of mythic schemata, that is, of categories of assumptions, which occur modified in different myths. As the results of her insightful analysis, she presents some of the mythical schemata of the Pelasgian myth (e.g., "perceptions pertaining to a community's vulnerability through its women", "the importance of legitimate sons").

As such, both volumes contain many stimulating studies of myths in their cultural, literal and social context.

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SIMON GOLDHILL: *Who Needs Greek? Contests in the Cultural History of Hellenism*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2002. ISBN 0-521-01176-0. VIII, 326 pp., 20 figs. GBP 15.95.

In his introduction, G. informs us that this book is "not a history of classical scholarship [...]. Nor is it a history of the 'reception' of Greek texts in the West [...]. Nor is it a history of education, nor a plea for a place for Greek in the modern curriculum" (p. 3). The book consists of five chapters, five intense contests about Greek and "Greekness", which, however, due to G.'s interdisciplinary and anti-chronological approach – and meandering style – contains less than clear-cut "cases". G.'s essayist and associative mind leaps easily back and forth from the first century BC to Victorian scholars. He has an eye for bizarre and delightful details and the history of passion for Greek and Greekness certainly includes many eccentric personalities. We may question G.'s choice of cases or examples as especially telling, of which he is aware since he also lists other contests which should be included in the full history of this area of study (p. 9) – an area whose terminology is still arbitrary: we speak about Hellenism or Greekness, and of Greekomania or Grecomania and sometimes even Philhellenism as a broader term.

G. begins with Erasmus who stimulated knowledge of Greek as a translator of the New Testament but also as an advocate of the new educational system including Greek. Despite the heading ('Learning Greek is heresy! Resisting Erasmus'), this chapter is concerned more with Erasmus' own Grecomania than a detailed analysis of the opposition he met when trying to promote Greek learning. What I felt especially missing in G.'s account was the contest between the advocates and adversaries of "eastern" Greekness (the Greekness of the former Byzantine Empire). This controversy was acute during the Renaissance, but also continued into the sixteenth and even to the seventeenth century in some parts of Europe. It turned up not only in the way in which Greek was taught, but also, e.g., in the conflict over correct

Greek pronunciation, a subject which G. deals with. When speaking about the resistance to Greek education in the sixteenth century, one could have also discussed the contest between the vernacular and Latin: Greek was sometimes paired with the vernacular (especially in France) when the hegemony of Latin was called into question. Part of this chapter was later published in G.'s *Love, Sex, & Tragedy. How the Ancient World Shapes Our Lives* (2004), which addresses a larger public.

Erasmus' admiration for Lucian functions as a link to the next chapter ('Becoming Greek, with Lucian'). First, G. discusses the way in which the constant "I" speaker in Lucian's works constructs for us a picture of this author. Then he picks up passages of Lucian's satires from the standpoint of a Syrian whose "education in Greekness" was necessary in order to have the career of an intellectual in the Greco-Roman world. This education entails all the social discomfort of a *homo novus* who has to pay keen attention not only to how to speak and write Attic Greek, but also how to behave in the sophisticated manner of the time. G. also discusses the later re-evaluation (or rather devaluation) of Lucian towards the end of the nineteenth century, especially in Germany. An author, whose works had been used as basic texts in schools from the Renaissance onwards, was later devalued as an imitator of "pure" Greekness and lacking originality. As reasons for this, G. presents the influence of Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Möllendorf, but also the once influential, now forgotten anti-Semitic work by a certain Chamberlain (1899), which was positively cited even in the Pauly-Wissowa article on Lucian.

The hostile reception of the first performance of Richard Strauss' opera *Elektra* in London in 1910 is the core of G.'s third case ('Blood from the shadows: Strauss' disgusting, degenerate *Elektra*'). G. describes how the "oriental" and expressive staging and acting of this performance as well as the image of Electra as a hysterical, mad woman revolted Victorian Classicism's image of glorious Greece. The libretto of this opera was adapted from Hugo von Hofmannsthal's *Elektra*, which, for its part, was based on Sophocles. The new notions of Greekness are expressed in Hofmannsthal's distress at the inability to feel any Winkelmanian sublimation when visiting the Acropolis: "This was Athens. Athens? So this was Greece, this antiquity. A sense of disappointment overwhelmed me..." (p. 144). Hofmannsthal's modernity is contrasted with the traditional concept of the idealizing Hellenism of Richard Wagner along with the discussion already started in the previous chapter about the importance of "the divine Hellenes" (especially the Dorian race) to German national identity. In this context, G. ranges over Nazism, but fails to mention that Hitler also advocated "the ideal of Hellenic culture" (*Mein Kampf*, Vol. 2, chapter 2).

The fourth chapter ('Who knows Greek') is the largest in the book. It concentrates on Greekness in the Victorian and Edwardian eras, when Greek was still part of cultural "knowingness", but was already declining and defending its privileged status as part of the curriculum. G. begins with Thomas De Quincey's bold assertions of his excellence in Greek (he translated newspaper articles into Greek while reading them), and why this excellence was so important to De Quincey – or the lack of knowledge of Greek so movingly lamentable for John Keats. However, the main concentration is on three men: the politician Robert Lowe, the writer Matthew Arnold and a Cambridge Don, Walter Hedlam, who all expressed not only educational but political arguments about the role of Greek in English and American culture, especially the reasons why Greek was necessary for an educated man in an age where science and professional specialising was beginning to have more place. That knowing Greek indicated

privileged class and high social status which differentiated those having this knowledge from the unsophisticated masses was no longer an adequate reason to promote Greek learning.

The fifth part is about 'cultural forgetting', as G. put it, namely "how personal and institutional interests work to refashion and to silence the authors" (p. 299), in this case Plutarch ('The value of Greek. Why save Plutarch?'). G. argues how Plutarch himself had to "reinvent" his Greekness at the beginning of the dominance of Greece by the Roman Empire. By listing some texts from *Moralia* as well as from *Lives*, G. emphasises how Plutarch – like Lucian – was part of the educational curriculum since the Renaissance. For some reason, G. ignores the pseudo-Plutarchean *De liberis educandis*, which was one of the most common Greek texts for beginners from Byzantine times to the Age of Enlightenment. According to G., Plutarch was also seen as an apostle of liberty during the French revolution, and an important author for such different authors as Montaigne and Rousseau. However, like Lucian, his works experienced a drastic withdrawal from the curriculum at the end of the nineteenth century. G. puts the blame on academic criticism which saw Plutarch as "an incoherent collector of other people's knowledge" and the re-evaluation of the Victorians who dismissed him as a "small-town antiquarian" (p. 288). If earlier Plutarch was seen as a revolutionary, he was now seen as a petit bourgeois, a second-rate mind. This chapter also functions as a warm apology for Plutarch, giving reasons why he should be more widely read than he is today.

In all, this book is mostly a delightful reading experience. Goldhill is a storyteller and the book is valuable as a source for ideas for a more thorough investigation within a theoretical framework (e.g., imagology). The details which G. provides are, however, overwhelming – an index rerum would have been very useful – and the place of some anecdotes is certainly in the footnotes. G. offers a reasonable picture of how the answers to the questions "Who knows Greek?" and "What has it meant to know Greek?" have varied in different times. Although he often bases his argumentation in earlier research, he also frequently manages to provide unfamiliar evidence (re-reading Lucian, Plutarch, Erasmus' letters) and new connections. His central argument about Greekness as not only a constructed quality, but also as a self-formative act for western intellectuals is – if not altogether new – at least unfamiliar while discussing the debate about cultural and national identities. And why have these passionate, past conflicts about Greek usually escaped our notice? Maybe because "Greekness" means much less for us than all these Grecomaniacs presented in this book.

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PAUL. W. LUDWIG: *Eros & Polis. Desire and Community in Greek Political Theory*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2002. ISBN 0-521-810365-5. XIII, 398 pp. GBP 47.50.

At first sight, the title of Ludwig's book is startling since one would not spontaneously connect such concepts as *eros* and *polis*. On the other hand, the title fits well with concepts of 21st-century society, according to which everything can be associated with sex, and when sizing this book, I was waiting (hoping?) for some kind of version of an ancient "Sex and the City". But, of course, "sex and the city" is not the correct way to read the title, and if *eros* and *polis* are interpreted as "sex" or "love" and "politics", the name of the book becomes less astonishing. In fact, the same year as Ludwig published his book, another work with very similar subject