

Likewise, Clarke takes the theme of interaction and gives us much to think about, as he explores how various traditions of 'Heroic poetry' might be conceived of us as interacting with Homeric epic. Clarke argues that while there is much to caution us against trying to find interaction between the various poetic traditions that have, since the eighteenth century, been termed heroic, 'there really are intensely vivid parallels between heroic literatures' (247). Clarke unfortunately rejects without debate the thesis put forth by Watkins and others that the parallels to be found between the *Iliad* and, e.g., Irish narrative traditions are the result of inherited Indo-European poetics, a 'process that Clarke declares even less likely than direct borrowing' (247). Instead, the pattern 'is of a combination of two complementary processes: typological analogy in the application of similar aesthetic techniques to similar subject matter, and indirect influence through the fragmentary transmission of individual snippets of classical lore into the Irish repertoire.' (267) In the course of his analysis, Clarke studies some fascinating similes that were added by the Irish translator of Dares' *De Excidio Troiae*. That Clarke refuses even to engage the possibility that these expansions of Dares' bare-bones account are evidence of inherited Indo-European poetics does indeed seem 'counter-intuitive', as Clarke himself suggests (267). Nevertheless, the article overall has much to offer those wishing to explore interactions among early European poetic traditions that would appear to have been isolated from one another.

Less controversial but no less thought provoking is Pelling's meditation on the interaction of Homer and Herodotus, from which one comes away with the sense that Herodotus' narrative is infused with an Homeric subtext at virtually every point. Pelling's arguments are subtle and illuminating: 'the Homeric themes are there, but indeed *with a difference*: and we should not talk simply of "contrasts", rather of more interesting "interplays" of the worlds of then and now'. The interplays of theme, heroic concepts, and poetic structure that Pelling discusses are yet another take on the term 'interaction' that has been applied so productively in this well conceived and executed *Festschrift*.

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DAVID (A.P.) *The Dance of the Muses. Choral Theory and Ancient Greek Poetics*. Oxford UP, 2006. Pp. xi + 284. £47. 9780199292400.

The author believes himself to have discovered a revolutionary new approach to Greek poetry which will open new vistas for future research. His fundamental idea is that Greek metre derives from dance rhythm. He also has an original theory of accentuation which produces (quite often) coincidence of verbal stress with verse ictus, that is, with the primary beat of the dancer's foot.

He takes dactylic verse to be primary and lyric to be a later development out of epic. He follows Thrasybulos Georgiades (*Greek Music, Verse, and Dance* (1956) 129-31) in linking dactylic metre with the modern Greek round dance, the *syrtós*, supposed to be of immemorial antiquity. The ring of dancers revolves making one longer and two shorter steps, with regular pauses and retrograde movements, from which David derives the hexameter with its caesurae (105, 112, 119). The structure of the dance, he claims, can also account for such stylistic features as recurrent phrases, ring composition and narrative inconsistency (41-2, 47-8); Parry's theory of oral composition (which he understands to mean extemporization) is accordingly redundant, a pernicious 'fantasy' (48, 208). The dance itself perhaps imitates the planets' movements (197-8).

D. points out that there is Homeric evidence for epic song being sometimes accompanied by dancing, and thinks that the dance template may have continued into Hellenistic times (125); but he does not claim that Homer necessarily intended his poems to be danced, and is vague about when and how versification became independent of the dance. The age of lyric poetry was an interlude in which, 'for the only time in the long history of Greek metre', the words achieved sovereignty and forced the dancers to follow their varied rhythms (67, 106, 218). The dactyl, however, was fundamental to all lyric metre (236).

The new accentual theory is inspired by that of W.S. Allen, who argued from purely metrical evidence for a stress accent in classical Greek independent of the pitch accent. D. describes Allen's work as 'unimpeachable' (16, cf. 68 ff., 264), but it was in fact convicted long ago of being based on circular reasoning (*Gnomon* 48 (1976) 5-8) and is generally ignored by specialists. In D.'s version pitch and stress are brought together in one system: the most prominent syllable in a word may be the one on which the high tone falls, but if it is succeeded by a long syllable, the latter, which carries the falling pitch after the acute, wins the greater prominence. Like Allen's theory, this is not supported by any phonological evidence or ancient testimony (indeed, D. gives a badly distorted account of what the ancients meant by 'barytone'), but is devised to humour the Anglophone hankering after a stressed ictus. It yields, for example, a stress on the third or sixth thesis of the hexameter whenever the word before the caesura or at line-end falls into any of a range of accentual patterns. However, the scheme frequently fails to produce this happy result, and when that happens we should admire the poet's skilful art of variation, his mastery of counterpoint and syncope (121, 135-7, 249-51). D. thinks that his system has some applicability to Latin too, and that in *arma uirumque cano* there was not, as we all suppose, any clash on *cano* between accent and ictus – that would 'spoil' the caesura (77-9).

The hypothesis about the hexameter's connection with the *syrtós* is interesting, but neither new nor verifiable. Even if there is something in it, it cannot support a

reductionist theory of the dactylic dance-step as the source of all Greek metre. The accentual theory is without merit and involves much special pleading. Is there then anything of value in the book? As everything in it is based on those two theories, I am afraid the answer is no. OUP was badly advised in this case.

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ALONI (A.) *Da Pilo a Sigeo. Poemi, cantori e scrivani al tempo dei tiranni*. Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2006. Pp. 148. €16. 9788876949289.

Da Pilo a Sigeo represents by and large a *summa* of Aloni's previous work on the self-legitimizing manipulations of Homeric hexameter, its rhapsodic performances and its secondary transcription, by cities and leaders eager to appropriate the cultural prestige of epic. A good deal of material in the fourteen chapters of *Da Pilo* will thus not be new to those already familiar with A.'s scholarship but the core matter of the book is essentially fresh: A.'s inventive conjectures about the socio-historical circumstances surrounding the presence and reception of Pylos in Homeric epic.

A.'s basic contention is that the inclusion of Pylos and the Neleids in Ionic hexameter poetry was in part ideologically motivated and pragmatically directed. Ionian rhapsodes, looking to win favour with civic audiences and patrons who could claim Neleid ancestry, adapted Pylian material from 'continental' song traditions and fitted it prominently into their own performances. A. argues that the notoriously inconsistent references to the location of Nestor's Pylos and to Neleid genealogy resulted from the calculated assumption of this regional *epos* by pan-hellenically oriented epic performers, who were intent on exploiting the ideological valency of localized traditions, if not concerned with (or even capable of) remaining faithful to their particulars.

For A. the definitive site of politicized mytho-poetic interest in Nestor and sons was sixth-century Athens, where (a) thanks to the Hipparchus' regulation of sequential rhapsodic performance at the Panathenaea, the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* cohered into monumental forms, and (b) the Pisistratids, who were broadly invested in cultivating the prestigious, authoritative aura surrounding writing, commissioned a transcription of this *Iliad*. The elaboration of Pylian material was an effective way for rhapsodes to appeal to the influential Athenian audience; because the Neleids were so pervasive in foundation myths throughout the Ionic East, this material played well in the political climate of the time, when Athens was emerging as the 'guida del mondo ionico orientale'. An important related development was the conquest of Sigeion, whose cultural implications are explored in depth in ch.13, 'Formulazione e scrittura: fra Sigeo ad Atene': the tyrants wanted to legitimate

their possession of this holding in the Troad by celebrating in Trojan War epic genealogical ties between Neleids and Athens. Not only the Pisistratids but other politically influential families, above all the Alcmaeonids, would be eager to have the *kleos* of their Neleid ancestors activated by Panathenaic rhapsodes. A. imagines a sort of poetic-political synergy at work between these rival families in their self-interested manipulations of Pylian tradition.

The most markedly tendentious instance of the Pylos-Athens connection in Homer is *Od.* 3.415, where Nestor is given a sixth son named Pisistratus. A., very perceptively, I think, argues that in the socio-cultural context of sixth-century Athens, in which the Pisistratids were careful to maintain an equilibrium between themselves and the leading aristocracy, the verse would simply come across as overkill. What would the Alcmaeonids have said about this embarrassingly ad hoc addition to the Neleid line? Such considerations lead to the more expansive hypothesis that at Sigeion, where a deposed Hippias fled in 510, a kind of alternative epic performance culture thrived. At this alter-Athens a rhapsode could without reservations flatter Hippias with a Pisistratus son of Nestor. The redoubtable scribe Onomacritus found refuge at Sigeion as well, a fact brought forward in the final chapter to support the idea that a 'Pisistratidean' *Odyssey* could have been written down at this court in exile rather than in Athens. Indeed, its defining themes of *nostos* and violent retribution would have made this *Odyssey* a satisfying projection of the fantasies and desires of those exiles at Sigeion yearning to return home and exact revenge upon their opponents.

Of course, as A. himself admits, there are objections. We hear nothing at all about poetic culture at Sigeion itself, nor anything that would point to the existence there of the sustained infrastructure of festival contests in which *rhapsōidia* typically flourished in the later archaic period. A. floats the idea that Cynaethus performed in Sigeion after introducing Homer to Sicily, but that is pure guesswork. Also, while Hippias had been involved in the collection of written oracles, it was Hipparchus *philomousos* (*Ath. Pol.* 18.1) who had been, as John Herington put it, the real 'minister for cultural affairs' in Athens; certainly it was he who supervised rhapsodic performance at the Panathenaea. But A.'s Sigeian scenario, like the book itself, is so ingenious and so charmingly proffered that it seems petty to dwell on its difficulties.

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