curriculum, and by the influence of key texts such as Aristotle's *Poetics* – determined their response to Lucan. In general, classical reception studies could often take better account of how such contexts shape readings of ancient texts, whether this means confronting the particularities of a given historical period or sharpening our awareness of the routes by which classical texts reach most readers, in most places and times: that is, through translation. Although the body of scholarship on translations of classical texts is growing fast,[8] our final title for consideration, Stuart Gillespie's *English Translation and Classical Reception. Towards a New Literary History* carves out its own space as an impassioned and deeply engaging study which is to be thoroughly recommended to a wide readership.[9] Gillespie does not need to argue particularly hard for how influential classical literature has been on Western literary traditions, but, he believes, we have been far less ready to acknowledge and understand the vital role that translations have played in connecting ancient texts with modern authors and readers – and, crucially, in making them *belong* to a vernacular tradition. This book considers a wide variety of modern poets and translators, from Shakespeare to Dryden, Wordsworth to Ted Hughes, in a lucid and accessible style: even 'difficult' poets are explained clearly, as in the fascinating discussion of the far-reaching effects of Ezra Pound's versions of Propertius. In just a few pages, Gillespie shows how Pound's work helped to challenge prevailing ideas 'of what translation is or can be' (24), prompted readers and scholars to revisit the poetry and read it anew, allowed Pound himself to forge his own poetic persona, and 'changed the possibilities for twentieth-century poetry and translation more widely' (28). Like *Redeeming the Text*, then, this study's assertive claims for 'a new literary history' are relevant beyond the sub-field of (Latin) literary receptions; and while it may not be as ground-breaking as Martindale's study, it serves as another potent reminder of how the lessons of classical reception study have consequences for anyone involved in the study of the classical world.

JOANNA PAUL
Joanna.Paul@open.ac.uk
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General

Originally published in Dutch in 1995, *Antiquity. Greeks and Romans in Context* by Frederick Naerebout and Henk Singor aims to provide (in its own modest words) a 'reasonably comprehensive one-volume' overview of the Greco-Roman world for

[8] See, for example, Lorna Hardwick, *Translating Words, Translating Cultures* (London, 2000); Aleka Lianeri and Vanda Zajko (eds.), *Translation and the Classic. Identity as Change in the History of Culture* (Oxford, 2008). See also *The Oxford History of Literary Translation in English* (4 vols, Oxford, 2005–10; Gillespie co-edited volume 3), alongside *The Oxford History of Classical Reception in English Literature*, which commenced in 2012 with the volume on 1660–1790, edited by David Hopkins and Charles Martindale.

[9] *English Translation and Classical Reception. Towards a New Literary History*. By Stuart Gillespie. Malden, MA, and Oxford, Wiley-Blackwell, 2011. Pp. x + 208. Hardback £75, ISBN: 978-1-4051-9901-8.

undergraduates and a wider interested audience (xiii).[1] The main focus of the work is the Greco-Roman world from 1000 BC to 500 BC (divided into the Archaic, Classical, Hellenistic, and Roman Imperial periods). Each period is covered under the same three headings (in the interests of comparability): 'Historical Outline', 'Social Fabric', 'Social Life and Mentality'. The wider context is, however, by no means ignored. The authors provide a valuable overview of the Palaeolithic and Neolithic periods (27–35) and of the early civilizations of Eurasia up to 900 BC (36–58). At the other end of the timeline, the book does not simply conclude with the Roman Imperial period but carries on the story up to the tenth century AD and beyond (369–94). A particular emphasis is placed in the introductory chapter on 'The Ecology of History' (11–23):

> [M]aterial factors can be called the 'basics' of history: they determine what, under given circumstances, is possible and what is not; they create preconditions for, and restraints on human life. Thus, every culture has been in many respects the expression of the ways in which some group of human beings managed to adapt to the ecosystem in which they happened to be living, which might also be described as ecological anthropology. (11)

Historical overviews can often seem rather world-weary, as if the real intellectual excitement lies elsewhere, but this volume bounds along with a real spring in its step. It is attractively illustrated with a good number of maps and images and would be a positive addition to any undergraduate's bookshelf or Kindle.

The fragility of the world's ecosystems and the ways in which the ancient world engaged with the environment are the focus of J. Donald Hughes's *Environmental Problems of the Greeks and Romans. Ecology in the Ancient Mediterranean*. This book was first published in 1994 as *Pan's Travail* – an important work that built on his earlier pioneering study from 1975 – *Ecology in Ancient Civilizations*.[2] In the *Greece & Rome* review of *Pan's Travail* it was stated that 'a book on green issues is something new'.[3] Such publications are now far from innovative, but twenty years on the second edition of this work is more relevant now than ever before. According to the author, the new volume contains 'new sections, chapters, illustrations, and the benefit of eighteen additional years of research, experience, and reflection' (viii). It is divided into fourteen chapters, including ones on 'Deforestation, Overgrazing, and Erosion' (68–87), 'Wildlife Depletion and Loss of Habitat' (88–109), and 'Paradises and Parks, Gardens and Groves'. It is a fascinating, if at times depressing, read – a book that encourages one to see both the classical world and our own with new eyes, reminding us that, even though the Greeks and Romans had no word for 'the environment' or 'ecological disaster', many of the problems which they faced are much the same as the ones we face today. Pluit ça change?

[1] *Antiquity. Greeks and Romans in Context*. By Frederick G. Naerebout and Henk W. Singor. Oxford, Wiley-Blackwell, 2014. Pp. xiv + 450. 48 figures, 28 maps. Hardback £75, ISBN: 978-1-4443-5138-5; paperback £26.99, ISBN: 978-1-4443-5139-2.

[2] *Environmental Problems of the Greeks and Romans. Ecology in the Ancient Mediterranean*. By J. Donald Hughes. Pp. x + 306. Baltimore, MD, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014. Hardback £42, ISBN: 978-1-4214-1210-8; paperback £18, ISBN: 978-1-4214-1211-5.

[3] *G&R* 42.1 (1995), 112.

Lukas Thommen's *An Environmental History of Ancient Greece and Rome*, reviewed here two years ago, clearly owed a debt to *Pan's Travail*.[4] This work has now been complemented by another title in the Cambridge University Press series of 'Key Themes in Ancient History' – Daniela Dueck's *Geography in Classical Antiquity*.[5] The focus of this interesting and useful book is not on ecosystems but on the different ways in which the physical world was conceptualized, mapped, and explored by the Greeks and Romans. An introductory chapter highlights the important relationship between geography and politics and pin-points three major moments in the development of geographical awareness: the period of Greek 'colonization' (eighth to sixth centuries BC), the campaigns of Alexander and the eastward expansion of the Greek world (fourth century BC), and the consolidation of the Roman Empire under Augustus, Claudius, and Trajan; it also considers the different sorts of questions asked by Greeks and Romans about the physical world. While sensibly cautioning against generalizations, Dueck concludes that 'for the Greeks maritime navigation aimed primarily at commerce and scientific investigation, whereas for the Romans land-routes fulfilled chiefly administrative and military purposes' (19). There follow four short but incisive chapters on 'Descriptive Geography' (20–67), with a focus on literary and historigraphical discussions of geography; 'Mathematical Geography' (68–98), including discussion of the influence of astronomers in the attempt to fix coordinates on the globe; 'Cartography' (99–110), a chapter contributed by Kai Broderson which considers the striking lack of evidence for ancient Greek and Roman maps (in contrast to the evidence from Ancient China) and concludes that 'the pre-modern Greco-Roman world generally managed without maps' (109); and 'Geography in Practice' (111–21), which considers how people in the ancient world actually made use of the geographical resources (literary, scientific, and visual) that were available to them.

The 'Very Short Introduction' series has enjoyed remarkable success since its inception in 1995. Penguin famously inaugurated its series of 'Classics' with E. V. Rieu's translation of the *Odyssey*, while the first title in the Oxford series was the Very Short Introduction to *Classics* by Mary Beard and John Henderson. Very Short Introductions now run to nearly 400 titles on topics as diverse as Happiness, the Magna Carta, Teeth and Terrorism (the last two, we should add, are *separate* titles). Hot off the press comes the latest volume (number 382), available not just in paperback but – in a clear sign of the times – as an eBook: *Classical Literature* by William Allen.[6] An opening chapter on 'History, Genre, Text' lays the foundations for the eight genre-based chapters which follow, taking us from 'Epic' and 'Lyric and Personal Poetry' through to 'Pastoral', 'Satire', and the 'Novel'. The book is written in a clear and accessible style – engaging but not patronizing. It is ideally suited for the interested sixth-former and undergraduate seeking to get a handle on the diverse forms of classical literature. It offers a window onto a rich literary world, even though, as Allan reminds

[4] *G&R* 59.2 (2012), 282–3.

[5] *Geography in Classical Antiquity*. By Daniela Dueck. Key Themes in Ancient History. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2014. Pp. xiv + 142. 4 figures. Hardback £45, ISBN: 978-0-521-19788-5; paperback £18.99, ISBN: 978-0-521-12025-8.

[6] *Classical Literature*. By William Allan. A Very Short Introduction. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2014. Pp. xvii + 135. 8 figures, 2 maps. Paperback £7.99, eBook £6.66, ISBN: 978-0-19-966545-7.

us, such riches represent barely ten per cent of classical literary production. It is salutory to recall that, of the 900 tragedies produced in Athens during the fifth century BC, only 31 have survived intact (15).

From the very short introduction to the even shorter: *30-Second Mythology. The 50 Most Important Greek and Roman Myths, Monsters, Heroes, and Gods, Each Explained in Half a Minute*, edited by Robert Segal (already the author of *Myth. A Very Short Introduction*, 2004).[7] According to the press release, it has 'already sold over 1 million copies worldwide' and is 'ideal for anyone keen to expand their mind, impress their friends and become champion of the pub quiz'. The editors and contributors have clearly had a lot of fun in their repackaging of classical mythology, 'using nothing more than two pages, 300 words and one picture' for each of the fifty myths covered. Although it has apparently enjoyed great commercial success, we found it surprisingly impenetrable. Part of the problem lies in the fact that the different myths are reproduced throughout using the same one-size-fits-all template. The initially innovative formula comes at times to seem more like a strait-jacket (and at times even 300 words begins to seem too much rather than too little). To take one example, in the section on Troy, the 'one picture' which supports the writing is an artistic collage of rather indistinct images which adds nothing to our understanding of the topic and could have been replaced more usefully with a map or archaeological plan of the phases of the city. As for possible pub-quiz questions: Which city did Semele and Pentheus come from? Who was Dionysus' wife? Who wrote the *Bacchae*? The 'Dionysus/Bacchus' section on page 56 will not help you to answer any of the above, but if the million-dollar question happens to concern the transformation of the daughters of Minyas then you are onto a winner.

VEDIA IZZET
ROBERT SHORROCK
r.shorrock@etoncollege.org.uk
doi:10.1017/S0017383514000163

[7] *30-Second Mythology. The 50 Most Important Greek and Roman Myths, Monsters, Heroes, and Gods, Each Explained in Half a Minute*. Edited by Robert A. Segal. Lewes, The Ivy Press, 2014. Pp. 160. Hardback £12.99, ISBN: 978-1-78240-096-7.