

compelling, and sometimes moving, narrative. Their purpose is two-fold. The first is to challenge the predominant view of refugees as powerless victims and reconstitute them as agents. The second is to offer not just a balanced approach on a controversial issue, but a study that can enhance our understanding of the evacuation of the children and, thus, to enable Greek society to come to terms with a difficult and traumatic past. They succeeded in both.

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#### RECEPTION AND HISTORY OF SCHOLARSHIP

EIDENEIER (H.) **Äsop – Der Frühneu-griechische Roman: Einführung, Übersetzung, Kommentar. Kritische Ausgabe** (Serta Graeca 28). Wiesbaden: L. Reichert Verlag, 2011. Pp. 446, illus. €148. 9783895007910.

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The *Life of Aesop*, also known as the *Aesop Romance*, is an anonymous text of the first or second century AD, which narrates the adventurous life of the legendary storyteller. This was a popular work which circulated widely in many countries and was read continuously across the centuries. The Greek text survives in several forms: there are two versions of the ancient text, both from the post-classical era (the first, version G or Perriana, is closer to the original text; the second, Westermanniana, dates to the fifth century AD), a 14th-century *paraphrase* in learned language by Maximus Planudes and four *metaphrases* (translations) in low register from the early modern Greek period (16th–17th century).

Eideneier's book centres on the four modern Greek *metaphrases* of the *Life* and offers a new edition. These *metaphrases* were edited for the first time a decade or so ago by M. Papathomopoulos (*Πέντε δημώδεις μεταφράσεις τοῦ Βίου τοῦ Αἰσώπου*, Athens, 1999). Eideneier's edition differs from that of Papathomopoulos in two main respects. Firstly, he reduces the number of *metaphrases* from five to four, arguing that the fifth text in the Papathomopoulos' edition (*Atheniensis*, EBE 2958) actually constitutes an *apograph* of the Venetian printed edition from the year 1664 (the fourth text in Papathomopoulos). Secondly, he designates manuscript K (Const. 64) as the *Leithandschrift* for the edition of the so-called *metaphrase* K, while Papathomopoulos opts for manuscript A (*Atheniensis*, EBE 1205).

In his introduction, Eideneier succinctly provides basic information on the texts, drawing on the manuscript tradition of the *Life*. This is followed by a very neat German translation of *metaphrase* K. The Greek original is rendered with a sensitivity towards the language that retains the text's stylistic verve and graceful narrative flow, while the humorous tone is carefully tended throughout. However, placing the translation prior to the edition of the texts, contrary to established custom, may not appeal to everyone.

Next comes a section that discusses in detail the manuscript tradition of each of the four translations and the interaction of these translations with their respective sources. Overall, the account of the manuscript tradition is very precise and thorough, but when the editor is faced with the interpretation of variants which come from another tradition/version, Eideneier does not accept the possibility of *contaminatio* and opts instead for the theory that justifies variations as alternative keywords, markers of orality and indicators of multiple cultural memories – a theory which does not seem to be applicable to or convincingly explain every occurrence.

The edition of the four *metaphrases* follows next. As already noted, Eideneier's editorial methodology is that of the *Leithandschrift*, which proves very useful, especially in the case of the critical edition of *metaphrase* K, comprising five manuscripts. The occasions are rare when the editor does not follow the reading of his *Leithandschrift*, manuscript K. In most cases the divergence from K is necessary, but there are also a few instances where both the variant recorded in manuscript K and same-sounding variants recorded in other manuscripts may be retained. Consider, for instance, in chapter 55, the phrase *διὰ τῆς γλώσσης ... ζῆλος, φθόνος, βασιλεῖες χαλοῦνται, ἄρχοντες, ἐπιorkίες γίνονται ...* Eideneier emends the variant *βασιλεῖς*, recorded in all manuscripts without exception. However, the variant ought to be kept because the following word, *ἄρχοντες*, reinforces its meaning and hence the reason to preserve it. On other occasions, Eideneier abstains from emendation, even though it is obvious that the text contains a mistake: for example everywhere *metaphrase* D records the name *Νεκτεναβός*, yet in chapter 116 Eideneier opts to retain the patently erroneous variant *Κτεναβός*.

The next section is devoted to commentary, mainly philological, of every scene in all four *metaphrases*. Variants of particular interest to the editor, already mentioned two or three times earlier in the book, are introduced again here in greater detail, but on occasion not very convincingly; for instance, the explanation for the added word *γάτα* in chapter 77<sup>a</sup> (348–49) as mishearing, on the part of the scribe, of the preposition *κατά* (φάγηι), the presence of the word *μανδήλας* in *metaphrase* D (323) and of the word *ἐροχαλίζαμεν* in *metaphrase* K (351).

The language of the translations is the focus of the next chapter. Here Eideneier focuses on

the peculiarities of the language and the divergences observed in the manuscripts and the printed editions. These instances of variation constitute important pieces of evidence for the history of Greek language and especially the low-register written language of prosaic narrative *ca.* 1600.

In conclusion, it is fair to say that Eideneier's book will become a useful tool for the better understanding of the language and literary production of the early modern Greek period.

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BAKOIANNI (A.) **Electra Ancient and Modern: Aspects of the Reception of the Tragic Heroine** (Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies Supplement 113). London: Institute of Classical Studies, 2011. Pp. 250, illus. £32. 9781905670376.

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'In the particular case of the reception of Electra ... it should be noted that none of her eighteenth-century incarnations directly gaze at the viewer', observes Bakogianni in her brand-new reception study, *Electra Ancient and Modern* (123). The image of an Electra diverting her gaze and making it harder on the viewer to read her is an apt metaphor for the hard work that this new monograph has confronted and successfully accomplished for its scholarly readership. This work invites and trains not only the reader but also the listener and viewer to study an Electra character that is complex and versatile, that dons different tokens of clothing as well as personality traits and that has been the intriguing subject of narrative, visual, aural and theatrical experimentations through the centuries. More complex than Antigone, Iphigenia, Clytemnestra or Medea, the figure of Electra steers a history of multiplicities that originated with the fifth-century BC tragedians and the Athenian drama contests and that continues through the beginning of the 21st century. Bakogianni's book does justice to that long history of reception and opens pathways to help us understand ongoing and future trends.

Bakogianni shows a keen awareness of the context and history of the ancient tragedies that first shaped different Electras and that left their mark on a powerful female tragic role that