reputation within a society whose chief mode of communication is face-to-face. Hector is not portrayed as self-absorbed 'to the detriment of those around him' (ibid.), but rather as aware that his *kleos* will forever impinge on that of Andromache, Astyanax and Troy itself.

B.'s greater project becomes clear in the conclusion: '[T]he existence of a basically modern-looking speech presentation spectrum in Homeric poetry draws the *Il*. and *Od*. more closely into the theoretical fold of modern fiction … it suggests that the speakers in the poems can be profitably understood using current linguistic theories that have been developed for understanding the talk of living, non-fictional people' (pp. 194–5). I doubt it. Homer's poems are artefacts of traditional verbal art, comprising embedded layers of ritualised speech uprooted long since from its own habitat, but always remote by convention from living talk.

University of San Francisco J.F. GARCÍA
jfgarcia2@usfca.edu

THE HERO'S *KATABASIS*

DOVA (S.) *Greek Heroes in and out of Hades*. Pp. xiv + 227, ills. Lanham, MD and Plymouth: Lexington Books, 2012. Cased, £44.95, US$70. ISBN: 978-0-7391-4497-8.
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D.'s book has two layers. One layer, the more easily accessible, is a series of thirty essays on discrete topics, most of them no more than four pages in length and none longer than eight or nine. The second layer is the three parts into which the essays have been grouped (with notes at the end of each part). The individual essays are the most successful component of the book, full of texts juxtaposed one against another and surprising observations, often couched in witty phrases; even when D.'s conclusions are unconvincing, I was stimulated by her arguments to rethink my own interpretation of scenes and passages. The larger parts are not as convincing, chiefly because D. does not provide much in the way of either introduction or conclusion to them to help guide readers through her arguments. Instead she seems content to let the material stand on its own and to expect her readers to move from the smaller focus to the larger by themselves.

D. uses a mix of texts from different genres – epic poetry, epinician odes, tragedy, Platonic dialogue and religious tablets – in her discussion and groups them effectively, playing one off against another. The work is accessible to those who do not read Greek; quoted passages are translated and important terms are transliterated. A concept which D. makes particularly vivid is that of *makartatos* and other words using the same root (*makar, makarismos*). She might, however, have helped her readers even more by offering clear definitions for important terms, particularly *katabasis*. A bit of digging is required to see how D. defines this essential concept and two somewhat overlapping definitions emerge:

> the hero descends with divine assistance to the underworld where he performs an important task, has significant encounters with ghosts, and comes back alive to proceed successfully with the rest of his endeavors. (p. 1)

> I would suggest that Heracles' is the archetypal *katábasis*, encapsulating all elements of a successful descent, including the necessity of the labor imposed on the hero, the help he receives from his divine patron(s) and the concrete objective of his trip (as opposed to Odysseus' vaguely defined and remotely assisted journey of mostly self-promotional character). (p. 120 n. 25)

Indeed, Heracles overshadows D.'s entire study, given her understanding of *katabasis*. She emphasises the effect of his appearance to Odysseus, just before Odysseus leaves the underworld; Heracles' rescue of Alcestis, according to D., negates the sacrifice of Alcestis in giving her life for her husband.

Part 1, ten essays devoted to 'Odysseus and the Poetics of *katábasis*', has as its centre *Od*. 11.467–540, the exchange between Odysseus and Achilles in the underworld. D. radiates out from this passage to examine Elpenor's unheroic death and Odysseus' encounters with Agamemnon, Ajax, Anticlea and Heracles in the underworld. Each of these conversations adds a different perspective on *kleos*. D.'s interpretation of the Homeric passages is developed by citations from Pausanias, the Bacchic gold tablets from Thurii and a *pelike* by the Lykaon painter, the only image in her book.

In one of the longer essays of Part 1, 'Living Once and Dying Twice: Circe as an Agent of *nóstos*', D. perceptively analyses the relationship between Circe and Odysseus as one based on an 'oscillat[ion] between masculine and feminine, knowledge and ignorance, action and passivity, risk and safety in a balance of power initially phrased by Odysseus as a blackmail' (p. 39). These pairs of opposites give the time which Odysseus spent on Aeaea a more vivid colour. It is surprising, however, to read D.'s characterisation of how the time with Circe ends (p. 39): it 'is reminiscent of the end of a purely physical and rather superficial relationship, in which one of the partners simply gets bored and moves on'. There may be ways in which Circe's advice to Odysseus is reminiscent of traditional female support, but it is hard to see his stay there as 'a pleasant interlude' (p. 40).

In Part 2, 'Hades (and Heroism) Revisited', D. focuses on Heracles and Achilles in eleven essays. Again starting with the underworld scene in the *Odyssey*, she expands her look at Heracles' *katabasis* by juxtaposing Bacchylides' fifth epinician ode, then she pivots to include the famous encounter between Glaucus and Diomedes in *Iliad* 6. Meleager is the link: like Heracles, he is threatened by a powerful mother; like Achilles, he is persuaded by a beloved companion to return to the fighting; and like both Heracles and Achilles, he has foreknowledge of his own death. The final essays in this part are devoted to the choices which Achilles makes, affected in D.'s reading by anger and affection on the one hand, deception and gratitude on the other (p. 110).

In the nine essays of Part 3, 'Achilles, Alcestis, and the Poetics of non-*katábasis*', D. combines readings of Plato's *Republic* and *Symposium* with Homer and Euripides' *Alcestis*. Heracles is again essential to D.'s discussion: in this section, she plays him off against Alcestis, perceptively suggesting that Heracles' appearance in Euripides' play negates Alcestis' death and therefore her heroism (pp. 181–7). As D. observes, Heracles does not appear in Plato's treatment of the myth, although the actual date of the *Symposium* follows the *Alcestis* by some 50 years (p. 153). In the Platonic dialogue, Phaedrus introduces the story of Alcestis' sacrifice because he wants to use *eros* to link Achilles and Alcestis, who share almost nothing other than their sacrifice (p. 154).

Though she does not explain why, D. has excluded some trips to the underworld from her study. She refers to the *katabasis* of Theseus and Pirithous only twice in her text (pp. 75, 76; four times in her notes), calling their journey to the underworld unsuccessful, since they are not able to bring back Persephone. Dionysus does not appear in D.'s text at all, which is unfortunate, since I am sure she would have perceptive observations to make about a god's trip to the underworld which is successful, since he carries out his task, bringing Aeschylus back.

University at Buffalo CAROLYN HIGBIE
chigbie@buffalo.edu

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