Nero – comprising history, literature, religion, art, and architecture – is clearly a stimulating subject for 'companion' treatment. An impressive range of contributors (including Elaine Fantham, John Henderson, and Susanna Braund, as well as many younger scholars) ensures that hackneyed views of Nero and Neronian culture are absent, and less-travelled vistas are explored, although it is to be noted that literary themes do somewhat dominate this overview of the 'Neronian Age'. Miriam Griffin considers recent historiographical 'rehabilitations' of Nero in a final chapter, exploring the reasons for what she sees as contemporary scholarly admiration of the traditional villain. This makes for an interesting and thoughtful read, even for avowed revisionists, as Griffin warns us not to go too far in promoting Nero 'from zero to hero' (480).

LUCY GRIG
lucy.grig@ed.ac.uk
doi:10.1017/S0017383514000126

Art and Archaeology

Whatever Luca Giuliani writes is usually worth reading. *Image and Myth*, a translation and revision of his *Bild und Mythos* (Munich, 2003), is no exception.[1] This monograph engages with a topic germane to the origins and development of classical archaeology – the relation of art to text. Giuliani begins, rather ponderously, with an exposition of G. E. Lessing's 1766 essay *Laokoon*, 'on the limits of painting and poetry'. Lessing, a dramatist, predictably considered poetry the more effective medium for conveying a story. A picture, in his eyes, encapsulates the vision of a moment – likewise a statue. The Laocoon group, then, is a past perfect moment. A poet can provide the beginning, middle, and end of a story; the artist, only the representation of a fleeting appearance. Giuliani shows that this distinction does not necessarily hold – works of art can be synoptic, disobedient of Aristotelian laws about unity of place and time (and scale). Yet he extracts from Lessing's essay a basic dichotomy between the narrative and the descriptive. This dichotomy dictates the course of a study that is most illuminating when its author is being neither narrative nor descriptive but analytical – explaining, with commendable care for detail, what we see in an ancient work of art. But is the distinction between narrative and descriptive as useful as Giuliani wants it to be? One intellectual predecessor, Carl Robert, is scarcely acknowledged, and a former mentor, Karl Schefold, is openly repudiated; both of these leave-takings are consequent from the effort on Giuliani's part to avoid seeking (and finding) 'Homeric' imagery in early Greek art. The iconography of Geometric vases, he maintains, 'is devoid of narrative intention: it refers to what can be expected to take place in the world' (37). In this period, we should not be asking whether an image is 'compatible' with a story, but rather whether it is incomprehensible *without* a story. If the answer is 'no', then the image is descriptive, not narrative. Thus the well-known *oinochoe* in Munich, clearly showing a shipwreck, and arguably intending to represent a single figure astride an overturned

[1] *Image and Myth. A History of Pictorial Narration in Greek Art*. By Luca Giuliani. Translated by Joseph O'Donnell. Chicago, IL, University of Chicago Press, 2013. Pp. xix + 335. 87 figures. £45.50, ISBN: 978-0-226-29765-1.

keel, need not be read as a visual allusion to *Odyssey* 12.403–25, or some version of the tale of Odysseus surviving a shipwreck. It is just one of those things that happens in the world. Well, we may be thinking – let us be glad that it happens less frequently these days, but double our travel insurance nevertheless. As Giuliani commits himself to this approach, he is forced to concede that certain Geometric scenes evoke the 'heroic lifestyle' – but, since we cannot admit Homer's heroes, we must accept the existence of the 'everyman aristocrat' (or aristocratic everyman: either way, risking oxymoron). Readers may wonder if Lessing's insistence on separating the descriptive from the narrative works at all well for Homer as an author: for does not Homer's particular gift lie in adding graphic, descriptive detail to his narrative? And have we not learned (from Barthes and others) that 'descriptions', semiotically analysed, carry narrative implications – implications for what precedes and follows the 'moment' described? So the early part of Giuliani's argument is not persuasive. His conviction, and convincing quality, grows as artists become literate, and play a 'new game' 'in the context of aristocratic conviviality' (87) – that of adding names to figures (as on the François Vase). Some might say this was simply a literate version of the old game: in any case, it also includes the possibility of 'artistic licence'. So when Giuliani notes, 'again we find an element here that is difficult to reconcile with the epic narrative' (149), this does not, thankfully, oblige him to dismiss the link between art and text, or art and myth (canonical or not). Evidently a painter such as Kleitias could heed the Muses, or aspire to be inspired; a painter might also enjoy teasing his patrons with 'tweaks' and *corrigenda* to a poet's work. (The latter must have been the motive of Euphronios, when representing the salvage of the body of Sarpedon as overseen by Hermes, rather than by Apollo, divergent from the Homeric text.) Eventually there will be 'pictures for readers', and a 'pull of text' that is overt in Hellenistic relief-moulded bowls, allowing Giuliani to talk of 'illustrations' – images that 'have surrendered their autonomy' (252).

Truly autonomous images from antiquity are, of course, particularly difficult for us to understand, at least in terms of their original intention. A well-known picture by Alma-Tadema shows Pheidias, 'master-designer' of the Parthenon sculptures, standing on scaffolding to host a 'private view' of the Parthenon Frieze (Pericles and Socrates appear to be among the guests). In the sculptor's hands there is a rolled-up scroll – presumably the 'master-design'. What would we give to find such a document, even if recycled as a mummy-wrapping? For of course there must once have been a plan, for the project to be steered through the many committees of the Athenian constitution. Not only has it failed to survive, however, but no other source exists by way of compensation. Athenians, for all their garrulity, left no comment. A tradition of 'no comment' about the Parthenon seems to have persisted till the time of Pausanias – either that, or his traveller's curiosity deserts him on the Acropolis. So Joan Connelly is surely justified in titling a book *The Parthenon Enigma*.[2] 'Enigma' will irk those scholars who disapprove of the implications of a code-cracking approach. Broadly speaking, however, there *is* a mystery to be solved. What was the plan for this wondrous monument? The opening sentence makes an arresting claim: 'Never before in human history has there been a structure that is at once so visible to the world, so celebrated, so examined,

[2] *The Parthenon Enigma. A Journey into Legend*. By Joan Breton Connelly. London, Head of Zeus, 2014. Pp. xxiii + 485. Hardback £25, ISBN: 978-1-7818-5943-8.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0017383514000138 Published online by Cambridge University Press

so invested with authority, and yet, at the same time, so strangely impenetrable at its core' (ix). In 1996, Connelly proposed a fresh interpretation of just one part of the structure – its frieze.[3] She evangelized fervently around the academic world, making some converts, but also meeting resistance from doubters and dissenters. Now she has extended the iconographical logic of that 1996 article into a 'fully comprehensive' account of the Parthenon. The pitch of the book is nicely judged: this is an author who wants to persuade both colleagues and the wider public that she must be right. About halfway through reading it, this reviewer surrendered. I remember well enough being present at an exposition of the original case in 1996, and thinking (with an English arch of the eyebrows): 'ingenious'. The book is more than ingenious: speculative, of course, but not requiring such a leap of faith to become a believer. Essentially it creates the most convincing explanation of the entire Parthenon programme so far put before us. The argument is leavened with pleasant twists of anecdote, among them the story of how young Colin Austin – who behind his mask of mildness was steely and shrewd – recognized Euripides upon some papyrus pieces assigned to him in the Sorbonne and kept quiet about recognition until he could publish the fragments. These were speeches from the *Erechtheus*, presented at Athens *c.* 422 BC, and they are key to Connelly's case. Here we have a 'pull of text', but in the other direction. As she observes, 'A false assumption that text precedes image has long bedevilled our understanding of visual culture' (205). For her, it is entirely conceivable that Euripides dramatizes a story already 'set in stone' upon the Acropolis – the story of how Erechtheus, aboriginal king of Athens, comes under attack by combined forces from faraway Thrace and nearby Eleusis. The city is doomed unless King Erechtheus will sacrifice one of his daughters. Just 250 or so lines of this play survive, but they include some powerful passages, among them a speech from the girls' mother, Praxithea:

We have children on account of this, so that we may save the altars of the gods and the fatherland: the city has one name but many dwell in it. Is it right for me to destroy all these when it is possible for me to give one child to die on behalf of all?(cited in Lycurg. *Leoc.* 100)

One daughter volunteers; for solidarity, her two sisters join in suicide. This act, for Connelly, makes the daughters of Erechtheus 'vitally central to the teaching of a unique set of values and the establishment of a common knowledge that made Athens different from every other city-state in Greece' (235). The central section of the east frieze shows preparations for the patriotic sacrifice, in muted visual tones: a younger daughter reaching up for the gown that will be her funerary shroud, her sisters approaching with sacrificial accoutrements, and the parents assisting, while Olympian deities significantly avert their gaze. The rest of the frieze is synoptic, making hero-worship of the Erechtheids germane to the first Panathenaic Festival, and defenders and besiegers alike part of an archaic celebratory parade. And the frieze thus understood joins pediments and metopes in an iconographic programme showing the mythical genesis of Athens; explains the temple's name (*Parthenôn*, 'of the maidens', namely the daughters

[3] 'Parthenon and *Parthenoi*: A Mythological Interpretation of the Parthenon Frieze', *AJA* 100 (1996), 53–80.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0017383514000138 Published online by Cambridge University Press

of Erechtheus, perhaps deemed to be buried below the *cella*); and belongs to a near-maniacal ethos of submission of self to the collective good drummed up by Pericles to match and oppose that of Sparta. Since it is part of Connelly's argument that the imagery of the Parthenon best makes sense when considered as a whole (as it does), she is obliged to add a chapter on the desirability of 'reunifying' the Parthenon sculptures, and in the vicinity of the building for which they were intended. So staff at the British Museum will not easily love her message: but as a concession to its cogency they might at least consider altering their labels for the frieze.

Caption changes are not entailed by a British Museum-produced book, *The Greek Vase. Art of the Storyteller*.[4] The title suggests that it will be concerned with visual narrative; actually, however, problems of 'reading' images on vases are here treated only in outline – just a paragraph, for example, on the well-known Late Geometric *louterion* apparently showing a couple about to embark on a sea voyage. Rather, this is an album based upon the collections of the British Museum and the Getty Museum, with outstandingly clear photographs of whole pieces and magnified details. John Oakley adds a commentary flavoured with good sense: pointing out, for example, that since the number of Athenian black-figure vases depicting sexual acts total less than a hundred, out of a surviving quantity exceeding twenty thousand, these few erotic scenes can hardly be taken as revelations of 'true Athenian sexual mores, but rather…were meant to amuse' (144). So, even when Greek artists were manifestly in Lessing's 'descriptive' mode, their capacity to 'deceive' the modern viewer is potent.

NIGEL SPIVEY
njs11@cam.ac.uk
doi:10.1017/S0017383514000138

Philosophy

The stream of publications on Socrates and his legacy – including, of course, the nature and extent of Plato's 'Socraticism' – continues to flow copiously. This review will consider a sample of titles which have appeared in the last four or five years (several of which have also been released in paperback form more recently). They embody a variety of research aims and approaches, and reflect some of the methodological issues involved in the enterprise of Socratic studies.

George Rudebusch's *Socrates*[1] has a rather idiosyncratic approach to the study of Socrates. The author offers a spirited, almost 'militant', reconstruction and defence of what he takes to be the essential philosophical conclusions of Socrates' life-long practice of conversation: in a nutshell, 'no human being knows how to live'; all virtues are 'one and the same thing: expertise at human well-being'; 'such expertise by itself would…ensure happiness and freedom'; for those who lack that expertise, it is 'better

[4] *The Greek Vase. Art of the Storyteller*. By John H. Oakley. London, British Museum Press, 2013. Pp. 156. 130 colour plates. Hardback £25, ISBN: 978-0-7141-2277-9.

[1] *Socrates*. By George Rudebusch. Malden, MA, and Oxford, Wiley-Blackwell, 2009. Pp. xv + 221. Hardback £72.50, ISBN: 978-1-4051-5085-9; paperback £19.99, ISBN: 978-1-4051-5086-6.