that Greece (a distant runner-up to Rome on the big screen) has claimed so large a share. Who knew, for instance, that 1960s schoolchildren were routinely shown televised tragedies (Wrigley, 84–108) or that in 1965 Leo Aylen and Jonathan Miller updated Plato's *Symposium* for BBC1? Their *Drinking Party* is the point of entry for the editors' cogent and richly contexualized introductory essay (1–23), itself among the volume's highlights. Moving on through, I found especial value in Hobden's smartly observed chapter on how documentary scriptwriting and cinematography presume and help concoct a 'special relationship' between ancient Greeks and modern British viewers (25–43), Wyver's archivally strong study of late 1950s documentaries (64–83) and Foka's meticulous and carefully theorized account of CGI in the 2010 documentary, *Atlantis* (187–202). The quality of the contributions is consistently high, though, and other readers will find their individual scholarly and fannish interests piqued elsewhere – perhaps, for instance, by Potter's comprehensive excavation of mythic referentiality across *Doctor Who*'s various incarnations and spinoffs (168–86). The volume ends (203–23) with the edited transcript of a conversation chaired by Hobden between media-friendly academic Michael Scott and David Wilson, a freelance director with whom he has often collaborated. Their practical insights into the circumstances in which ancient Greece makes it onto television, the kinds of competition and objection it faces in the commissioning process, the difficulty of fixing a visual style and the practicalities of filming are fascinating. Dialogue is just the right format to communicate the pragmatic concerns and open-ended interest of the televisual creative process, and Scott's and Wilson's perspectives as seasoned practitioners add tangibly to the volume's already serious interdisciplinary credentials.

All told, this is an exciting and highly worthwhile collection; it is tightly managed to satisfy a definite need and give pleasure to readers. The quality of writing is consistently high and the book's accessibility will make it useful to students as well as more advanced researchers. There are a couple of dozen illustrations, mostly stills – every chapter has at least something appropriate to its largely visual subject matter. Unfortunately, they are in grainy black-and-white. Obviously, not every illustration needed to be in colour, or could be, since some of the shows predate colour TV; archiving in the medium having historically been patchy, one appreciates too that the quality of the available sources may sometimes be poor, and, in such cases, it is clearly better to have a grainy image than none at all. Still, I wish the press had done a better job with the images, on better paper. Perhaps the e-versions give a better experience: they ought to, since each costs as much as the physical book. The editors and contributors deserved better.

G. NISBET
University of Birmingham
g.nisbet@bham.ac.uk

WINKLER (M.M.) **Classical Literature on Screen: Affinities of Imagination**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017. Pp. xii + 410. £90. 9781107191280.
doi:10.1017/S0075426919000600

Classical Literature on Screen is an eclectic new addition to the ever-burgeoning field of 'classics and cinema' by one of the key figures in the field. Winkler offers us some real gems in this book – a chapter on John Ford read alongside pessimist interpretations of the *Aeneid* stands out for instance, as does a justified and excoriating indictment of the 'fuzzy' fascism (based on Umberto Eco's notion of *Totalitarismo fuzzy*) of Zack Snyder's *300* (2007).

The latter begins with an excellent account of the Nazis' obsession with Sparta, grounded in plenty of fascinating evidence, including a spine-chilling but illuminating comparison of *300* with the vile propaganda film *Der ewige Jude* of 1940; this is followed by an inspired section on *300* as a *Bergfilm*, and the chapter concludes with a splendid rebuttal of Victor Davis Hanson. This will be my go-to recommendation for anyone wanting to start work on Snyder's film.

There are also interesting and wide-ranging chapters on adaptations or versions of *Medea* and *Lysistrata*, in which readers will find a lot to consider and to conduct further research on, and which are fine examples of the kind of deep knowledge and close reading we are used to from Winkler's previous work. The fact that he does not limit himself to anglophone and mainstream material is especially pleasing and makes this book a real treasure trove. The notion of 'affinities' is used as a broad and accommodating umbrella to encompass all kinds of ways in which film relates and responds to classical myth and literature. This means that there is no theoretical or methodological constraint to keep the author from ranging far and wide.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0075426919000600 Published online by Cambridge University Press

The final section, titled 'Aesthetic affinities', is an odd one: the idea is to focus on portrayals of women from ancient epics. To start with, this part of the book contains some close analyses of sections from Franco Rossi's *Odyssey* and *Aeneid* adaptations of 1968 and 1971, through which Winkler conveys the quality of these works very convincingly – and enticingly. The discussion of Irene Papas' portrayal of Penelope in Rossi's *Odissea* draws on some of the scholarship on her famous inscrutability in the *Odyssey* in a very productive manner. With Helen, however, there seems to be a change of gear, and we are promised 'a brief survey of the cinema's tributes to Helen's beauty', announced by drawing on the trailer for the 1942 film *Sweater Girl*, in which Venus de Milo, Cleopatra and Helen of Troy are billed as 'famous Sweater Girls of history'. The reader is admonished not to 'grumble at this homage to classical curves' lest she be called a Beckmesser.

I'll take the risk and grumble. It is not, I think, pedantry or philistinism of the kind poor Sixtus Beckmesser is known for, to point out that Winkler's approach to discussing the representation of women and their bodies in film is somewhat old-school (women are always referred to as 'ladies' in this book). It is also dominated by a rather curious obsession with breasts, as my mention of the *Sweater Girl* motif has suggested already. An early example is to be found in the *Lysistrata* chapter, during an otherwise fascinating discussion of *The Second Greatest Sex* (1955), in a lengthy section that begins with the author's descriptions of the actress Mamie van Doren as a 'buxom blonde' (126) and her character, Birdie, a version of Aristophanes' character Lampito, as a 'broad-chested bimbo' (127). I find it odd that the comedic exchange between Calonice and Lampito concerning the size of Lampito's chest is here interpreted as a comment on the legendary beauty of Spartan women (by citing Jeffrey Henderson's observation of this in his commentary, with the help of *Odyssey* 13.412 in which Sparta is the land of beautiful women, καλλιγύναικα). There is no mention of beauty with respect to Lampito, and there is no reference to breasts with respect to Spartan women in the *Odyssey*. It is Winkler who makes the equation between breast size and beauty.

After this there follows a section on breasts more generally, and on the breast fixation of American males, and on Jayne Mansfield and Jane Russell. Perhaps Winkler is in fact commenting on the commodification of the bodies of women such as van Doren, Mansfield or Russell, and perhaps he is suggesting that Aristophanes too is making a joke about breasts as 'assets', suggested by Calonice's use of the word χρῆμα. There is nothing to suggest, however, that Winkler sees anything wrong with the idea of breasts as assets – nor is he interested in any critique of the cinema's objectifying and commodifying of women's bodies. (Needless to say, Laura Mulvey's groundbreaking analysis of how this works ('Visual pleasure and narrative cinema', *Screen* 16.3, 1975, 6–18), which any serious film scholar now takes into account when discussing the role of women's bodies in mainstream cinema, does not feature in Winkler's bibliography.) Winkler is happy to write, for instance, that a particular dress worn by Sophia Loren as Helen 'shows off her assets to good effect' (349) or to draw attention to the cover of a paperback edition of John Erskine's 1927 novel *The Private Life of Helen of Troy*, which Winkler claims is 'known to connoisseurs as "that naughty nipple cover"' (347). Connoisseurs of what? The cover in question, on a 1948 'Popular Library' edition available for £9.48 from various second-hand book dealers, depicts Helen as a kind of early Barbie doll in a transparent dress, underneath the legend, all in capitals: 'HER LUST CAUSED THE TROJAN WAR'. I cannot see why we need to know about this (any more than we need to know that Barbara Bach, now Lady Starkey, was featured in *Playboy* after playing Nausicaa) – unless there is a point to be made here about the exploitation of women's bodies in works of classical reception in film and literature. But such a point is not made. Instead, there is more about 'connoisseurs' – this time with regard to the actress Sienna Guillory who played Helen in a 2003 television film. Winkler has this to say about Guillory: 'Connoisseurs and philosophers of posterior analytics will readily appreciate Helen's *kallipygia*. Her chest is usually covered by a loose and occasionally diaphanous garment, which serves to accentuate rather than to hide her well-rounded and freedom-loving personality' (358–59). It is not easy to decide which is the most egregious fault in this sentence: the pretentiousness of 'posterior analytics', the coyness of *kallipygia* or the cliché of 'well-rounded and freedom-loving'.

To be fair to Winkler, he gives a health warning early on before embarking on the *Lysistrata* chapter, suggesting that the 'prim and prissy' will be offended and that 'Believers in political correctness may therefore wish to skip this chapter to spare themselves such punishment' (100). But it is sad to have to write such a prim review of a book that is brimming with knowledge and indeed

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0075426919000600 Published online by Cambridge University Press

with love and enthusiasm for its field. Its only flaw is its complete blind spot when it comes to women's bodies and how to write about them. I want very much to recommend this book to all the young students who are interested in classics and film, because it will broaden their horizons immensely. I think it will also make quite a few of them very angry, because in fact most young people now do not use the term 'political correctness' as a pejorative. I was surprised that no one at Cambridge University Press thought about letting Winkler know about this in 2017.

ELENA THEODORAKOPOULOS
University of Birmingham
e.m.theodorakopoulos@bham.ac.uk

ZAJKO (V.) and HOYLE (H.) (eds) **A Handbook to the Reception of Classical Mythology** (Wiley-Blackwell Handbooks to Classical Reception). Malden MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2017. Pp. xiv + 482. £148. 9781444339604.
doi:10.1017/S0075426919000612

There is one guaranteed way to write successfully about myths: call a Muse and sing, and let someone record your words. Alternatively, you can take out your (wax) tablet and jot down your *perpetuum carmen* yourself. But what if you are not a Homer, Virgil or Ovid, and yet, nonetheless, still feel deep in your heart that you are duty-bound to transmit classical myths? Well, there is a way, though it is strewn with obstacles that can never be overcome, for how can you extract the living fibres of myths and then weave them into a coherent story without *licentia poetica*? But this is exactly what awaits you if you take up the Herculean task of becoming a scholar of reception.

In her introduction to this handbook, Zajko notes that 'There is something faintly ridiculous about attempting to write an introduction to a volume such as this, the content of which spans so many centuries and covers such a variety of genres' (1). I might add that the very attempt to create such a volume may also seem ridiculous. Yet here it is, and nor is it just any book; it is an excellent collection of wide-ranging essays, a much-needed contribution to interdisciplinary scholarship. The source of the editors and authors' success seems to lie precisely in Zajko's introductory remark: 'The value of reception within classical studies is still being hotly debated, not because there is any question about its having a significant role within the discipline, but because of a lack of consensus about what that role is and what it could be in the future' (1). This orientation on the future, quite atypical in classical studies, results from the definition of a classic by Charles-Augustin Sainte-Beuve, T.S. Eliot and J.M. Coetzee: a text that, paradoxically, while being immersed in the past, makes us go – here and now – a step further. Thus we should not be afraid of testing our classics with ever new questions and doubts. The real classics will only grow stronger from such testing and will thereby offer us more solid support. Indeed, Zajko and Hoyle, together with their authors, look at the ancient myths as a base that down through the ages has been helping us define this indefinable, both marvellous and sinister, wonder: the human being (Soph. *Ant.* 332). Owing to this approach – a humble (in the best meaning of this term) abstention from easy answers in favour of an attempt at gathering, preserving and presenting the crumbs of Homer's table to the public of the 21st century – this handbook accomplishes an apparent mission impossible. Its authors offer an overview of the reception of classical mythology from antiquity until our own times. This is a selective overview, yes, but one imbued throughout with a relentless curiosity about the role of ancient myths in our culture and the role of scholars with regard to this phenomenon.

Still, the task of organizing 32 contributions on various aspects of the reception of ancient myths was surely a daunting one. The editors have handled it aptly and with all possible acumen. They have grouped the essays into four parts according to either their main research problems or the kinds of myths discussed. And they have organized the contributions chronologically, where applicable, giving readers a vast panorama of the reception of myths from classical antiquity up to contemporary popular culture. Of priceless help in working with the volume – a handbook *par excellence*, as it is targeted also at non-professional readers – is the fact that the dominant ideas of each essay and its place in the collection are carefully explained in the introduction.

Part 1 ('Mythography') offers the fundamentals for reflection on the transmission of myths from a perspective that is valid both for scholars and for general recipients of culture since childhood. In part 2 ('Approaches and themes') the contributors focus on certain selected issues that in various periods have exerted significant impact on the perception of ancient myths and their role in culture. Part 3 ('Myth, creativity, and

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0075426919000600 Published online by Cambridge University Press