

London, 1990), D. C. Pozzi and J. M. Wickersham (edd.), *Myth and the Polis* (Ithaca and London, 1991); and I. Malkin, *Myth and Territory on the Spartan Mediterranean* (Cambridge, 1994). These three books contain much fuller bibliographies than that given by C. (pp. 171–2).

The second chapter is more successful. After discussing all mythological evidence on the foundation of Cyrene, C. provides a brief but masterly study of Pindar's Pythian Odes (Nos 4, 5, and 9). Apollonios of Rhodes is discussed cursorily. Much more space is devoted to other sources, including the problem of myth and fact in the writings of Herodotus. C. has interesting observations to make on the chronology provided by Herodotus (pp. 128–55).

The concluding chapter, a short discussion of mythology from Homer to Strabo, with reference to Cyrene, clearly demonstrates that foundation myths flow from the poetic imagination of the Greeks and have nothing in common with historical facts.

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S. C. TODD: *Athens and Sparta* (Classical World Series). Pp. xi + 83, 21 figs. London: Bristol Classical Press, 1996. Paper, £7.95. ISBN: 1-85399-398-0.

The 'Classical World Series' of Bristol Classical Press is aimed at newcomers to the subject. By standardizing on a format of rather few pages, the series gives uneven coverage. Thus, compared, say, with N. R. E. Fisher's volume in the series (*Slavery in Classical Greece*), T. here faced a severe task of reduction in covering in a similar space the history of the two best documented Greek cities, from the fifth century down to Roman times. T.'s work is sound and accessibly written, with material divided clearly between the chronological and the thematic. His viewpoint is that of political culture; thus the trial of Sokrates is briefly noticed in the context of 'show trials' (p. 56) rather than as a phenomenon of religion or of personal ethics. The tone is non-controversial and agreeably honest in warning the student against modern, as well as ancient, biases; for example, that Athens was 'democratic and good' while Sparta was 'evil and totalitarian' (p. 9), and that the 'nice' Delian League metamorphosed into a 'nasty' Athenian empire (p. 19). T.'s own morality may be hinted at, in his defence of the Athenians as 'democratic' and in his description of Spartan arrangements as a 'spurious equality' (p. 27). He is right to point out the 'persuasive rhetoric of the Spartan term "similars"', *homoioi*, and to wonder whom it was aimed at. (The vases of sixth-century Lakonia, with their Alkman-esque images of luxury, and therefore of inequality, are well emphasized.)

The ghost of Thucydides presides uneasily over the volume. T. wishes not to seem to privilege Thucydides in respect of reliability. He writes 'What makes Thucydides important is his influence'. He describes Thucydides, 'with pardonable exaggeration' as 'the inventor' of the Peloponnesian War (p. 45). T. claims that the 'history of . . . images' of Athens and Sparta 'forms the focus of this book' (p. 9). But this fashionable position is not maintained. Images are not here a main focus of interest in their own right; T. has too healthy a respect for truth-function. As an author of images influential down the centuries Plutarch might have had a better claim on study than Thucydides. Yet T. describes Plutarch as 'unfortunately' one of the most detailed sources for the Spartan *agôgê* (p. 68). Why 'unfortunately'? Presumably, because Thucydides would have been a more reliable witness to the truth. T. should have avowed this openly, to himself and his readers. (Plutarchan scholars might here enter a protest of their own, based on the biographer's increasing respectability as a faithful reproducer of source material, and on the likelihood that for the *agôgê* he drew heavily on Aristotle's *Constitution of the Lakedaimonians*.)

Students can readily be taught to patronize the Greeks (or almost any other culture), as T. is aware. By treating ostracism as 'odd' (p. 26), T. may unintentionally do this. He might better have stressed the rationality of ostracism as a counter to inconsistency (rather than deadlock) in policy, in an assembly whose composition and political complexion might change greatly within days. Thucydides is patronized as having a 'fetish for precise dates' (p. 47). On the principle that students should be taught to understand rather than to condemn, might T. not better have explained Thucydides' anxiety by reference to that salient fact of Greek history: the vulnerability of chronology?

In short a workmanlike book, slightly lacking in focus. The publishers should have provided an index.

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