

what is later called history, all at a time when the political subject is abjuring the symbolic power controlled by *basileis* and asserting his own competence to make judgements, 'in essence following Achilles' lead by snapping the *skeptron* and firmly fixing *kratos* at the center of the *laos*' (p. 351).

This is a complex work, and I have only sketched its riches. Although there are points that allow for disagreement and B. seems sometimes to read too much into the text (and the language is occasionally turgid), the book will interest not only Homerists and historians but also scholars working on religion, economy and law in Greece.

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THE EROTIC FRAGMENTS OF ANACREON

LEO (G. M.) (ed., trans.) *Anacreonte: i frammenti erotici. Testo, commento e traduzione*. (Quaderni 18.) Pp. viii + 239. Rome: Edizioni Quasar, 2015. Paper, €31. ISBN: 978-88-7140-603-9.
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After a 23-page introduction to Anacreon, his poetry and his reception, this book provides text, commentary and translation of 27 fragments, followed by a rich bibliography and four helpful indexes compiled by L. Severi. Inevitably, the reader's attention is first drawn to L.'s selection of poems, namely the amatory fragments of Anacreon. Anacreon is (thought to be) a quintessentially erotic poet, and L. refers to Anacreon's amatory poems as the most important part of his output, 'la parte forse più considerevole della sua produzione poetica' (p. 9). As a consequence, L.'s selection may strike the reader as odd, all the more so because the 27 selected fragments are unlikely to exhaust the whole range of Anacreon's erotic poetry (e.g. I would count 347 and 379 *PMG* as amatory), while the erotic quality of some of them may be questioned (by L.'s own admission, fr. 17 = 432 *PMG* is iambic in character). However, in his 'Premessa' L. points out that references to *eros* must be explicit for a fragment to count as 'erotic' (cf. p. 1). Later in the book, moreover, L. has an interesting point to make about erotic poetry as a genre: he explores the connotative force of the adverb *δεῦτε* and suggests that it gradually developed into a generic hallmark of erotic poetry, and was used as such by Anacreon (p. 79).

In the introduction, L. tries to redress the balance by emphasising Anacreon's political and iambic vein, an attempt that includes the intriguing suggestion that even such an ostensibly erotic poem as 362 *PMG* has a political ring conveyed by the word *σύμβουλος* (cf. p. 16). The introduction itself is surprisingly selective: besides two sections devoted to the political and iambic components of Anacreon's poetry (1 and 3), Section 2 explores the metamorphic quality of Anacreon's Eros, Section 4 examines the notion of erotic justice, and Section 5 concerns Anacreon at Alexandria. Each section is interesting in its own way, though one is left wondering about the coherence and rationale of the whole. For example, why not devote a section to the rich Athenian reception of Anacreon and to its fascinating and ideologically charged iconography?

Except for the Italian translation, which takes the form of a concluding appendix, the bulk of the book consists of the 27 fragments. Each fragment is presented as follows: list of testimonies, metre, bibliography, ample introduction, text, negative apparatus and running commentary. The list of testimonies is accurate, though more lines of context might have been welcome. L.'s discussion of metre is detailed and careful, affects the

layout of the text and often extends to the general introductions of the fragments (e.g. L. argues that synaphy is integral to Anacreontic strophes between the second and the third *kolon*, which results in his decision to indent the latter: cf. p. 62, where he introduces fr. 359 *PMG*). A specific bibliography for each fragment is a commendable choice, one that is likely to make the book very useful for prospective students and readers of Anacreon. L.'s introductions are no doubt interesting and informative, but at times are unnecessarily lengthy, especially when he launches into long quotations from previous scholarship in an attempt to describe the poet's/speaker's (supposed) feelings and the poem's aesthetic quality (cf. e.g. p. 152).

L. is generally cautious and conservative in establishing the text. Sometimes, two convincing *lectiones* may be at stake. In this case, L. tries his best to determine which of the two is preferable, while at the same time allowing for the possibility of performative variants in the context of the symposium. This is the case of fr. 15 (396 *PMG*): at line three, our sources preserve two different readings: ὥς μῆ, the better attested reading, has the speaker asking a *pais* to bring water, wine and wreaths so as to avoid being engaged in boxing against Eros; with ὥς δῆ, which is given by Eustathius and may find some support in the *Etymologicum Genuinum* (ὥς ἦδη), the speaker would express his desire to fight. According to L., ὥς δῆ is a remarkable *varia lectio*, one that might be the result of ancient sympotic practices ('la cui genesi potrebbe risalire all'antichità, perfino in contesto di riuscito simposiale', p. 141). At the same time, he provides a number of persuasive arguments in favour of ὥς μῆ.

The same strategy can be seen at work when it comes to competing interpretations, as is clear from L.'s discussion of fr. 6 (358 *PMG*). It is of course one of the most famous and excruciating fragments, given that it is hard to make sense of the girl from Lesbos who despises the speaker's hair only to gape at someone else's (πρὸς δ' ἄλλην τινὰ χάσκει: true to his cautious approach, L. resists the recurring temptation to correct πρὸς δ' ἄλλην to πρὸς δ' ἄλλον). L. questions the widely accepted interpretation provided by B. Gentili, who took χάσκω as referring to *fellatio*. As L. argues, the alleged parallels from Aristophanes do not support the required meaning of the verb χάσκω. According to L., the verb highlights and ridicules the girl's inconclusive behaviour, which forms a contrast with the speaker's *savoir faire*. L. stresses the originality of this interpretation, which builds on a suggestion H. Fränkel made long ago, but at the same time he explores the implications of a less ironic interpretation, emphasising the poet's old age. While clearly opting for his own reading, L. allows for what he calls 'una possibile anfibia del linguaggio letterario'. Such an ambiguity, however, cannot be ascribed to the author. Rather, it may develop in the context of sympotic (re-)performance.

One of the volume's main reasons of interest lies precisely in its very detailed discussions (to which I cannot do justice in a short review). L.'s readings are sometimes bold (he follows philologist M. Barbi in stating that 'è meglio errare in qualche giudizio che rinunciare al giudizio', p. 1), but at the same time he gives due space to competing opinions. Overall, this is a very welcome addition to scholarship on Anacreon. The book is well produced, with very few typos and misspellings (e.g. at p. 168 ἀρχαῖα should be ἀρχαία).

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