with a series of rhetorical questions: 'What rituals of language are capable of holding our communities together? Will they allow for the possibility of collective construction of a better world? Will they contain within themselves mechanisms of self-criticism, of testing through competition? Or will we – have we – returned to the unchallengeable pronouncements of soothsayers and oracles?' (pp. 99–100).

This book is an intelligent and imaginative reflection on ancient rhetoric, and its closing pages certainly raise issues which it can be enjoyable – if not necessarily fruitful – to ponder. But in the opinion of this reviewer, the book is undermined by its lack of historical precision, and the ideas it contains are too often far-fetched and fanciful. Specialists will decide for themselves what use they wish to make of it. To its intended readership of students, however, it cannot be recommended without considerable reservations.

University of Leeds D.H. BERRY
d.h.berry@leeds.ac.uk

RHETORIC AND ATHLETICS

HAWHEE (D.) *Bodily Arts. Rhetoric and Athletics in Ancient Greece.* Pp. xiv + 226, ills. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2004. Cased, US$40. ISBN: 0-292-70584-0.

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Debra Hawhee's book makes a challenging contribution to our understanding of education, rhetoric and athletics in the classical Greek world. At the centre of her argument is a claim for the corporeality of ancient rhetorical practice and rhetorical education. That in itself, of course, is not news. Where H. extends earlier work on that subject is in her sustained examination of the institutional and conceptual links between rhetoric and athletics: by showing us the mutual intertwining of these two practices, she conjures up a set of new insights into the precise contours which the bodiliness of rhetoric took within fifth- and fourth-century Athens. The work opens with discussion of ancient concepts of *aretê*: H. argues for an inextricable link between *aretê* and the *agôn*, translating the former as 'virtuosity' in order to convey the sense that *aretê* is always a process, formed from repeated struggle and performance. In Chapters 2 and 3, she extends that insight by examining the concepts of *mêtis* and *kairos*, arguing that they are central to both rhetorical and athletic training and performance: both, she suggests, are 'responsive' *technai* which cannot be codified or summarised, but which rely instead on spontaneous response. In Chapter 4 she elaborates on the concept of *phusiopoiêsis* as the process which inculcates those corporeally grounded, responsive skills: the processes of 'rhythm, repetition, and response' through which *aretê* is learned and performed. And then in Chapters 5–7, she elaborates on some of the institutional links between rhetoric and athletics, showing in more depth how both shared the same architectural space, closely related techniques of training, and central roles within festival contexts.

One of the things which come out of H.'s study most vividly is simply the extraordinary degree of interrelation between two spheres of education which in the modern world we are inclined to separate from each other (although H. also suggests in the closing pages of her book that we have much to learn from the classical world in acknowledging and welcoming the corporeality of our own rhetorical and educational practices); and the extraordinary prevalence of athletic language for

rhetorical endeavour, which H. argues is very much more than 'just a metaphor' – rather, she suggests, it is a symptom of and window on to a complex of ideas about the corporeality of education which fifth-century culture lived through and performed in the very smallest details of its day-to-day interaction. At times, however, I found it hard to avoid the feeling that H. was pushing for a coherence which the evidence does not fully justify, drawing her conclusions from a quite selective use of sources. Most significantly, she is often reluctant to acknowledge the differences between rhetorical and athletic practice, as well as their similarities: her statements of equivalence often skate over the great variety of ways in which the links – and in some cases disjunctions – between rhetoric and athletics were envisaged. For example, her linking of *aretê* and *agôn*, summarised above, is stated without any attempt to examine possible counter-examples, and at times seems to come close to the old stereotype of Greek athletes more interested in taking part than in winning. Moreover, her account of the institutional links between rhetoric and athletics at times seems to be relying too heavily on an idealised reading of Plato's depictions of philosophy in the gymnasium. And she does little in the opening six chapters to address the widespread stereotype of athletes as unintelligent, anti-intellectual figures: it is surely not enough to argue, as she does (citing Cicero on pp. 130–1), that this prejudice did not become widespread until a later period when there are so many examples of athletes as figures of fun even within fifth- and fourth-century writing. Admittedly there are times when she deals with the problem of difference effectively in her close readings, especially in the final chapter, where she discusses for the first time rhetoric's 'rather uneasy connection to athletic performance' (p. 164) – although here with reference only to the context of festival competition – and shows how Isocrates and Demosthenes construct a hierarchy which raises rhetoric above athletics, and yet at the same time depends heavily on athletic concepts and ideals. But elsewhere the issue often drops out of the picture. Less significant, but superficially more distracting, is the repeated appearance of odd transliterations and translations of Greek – for example (amongst very many others) the translation of *athlios* as 'explicit struggle for a prize' (p. 15; cf. p. 24 and index, p. 218 for similar usage) (presumably this should read *athlon*); or slips like 'gymniarchy' for 'gymnasiarchy' (p. 115) or *boulemenos* for *boulomenos* (p. 174).

The reason for that unevenness of focus may be that H.'s primary interest lies with the rhetorical side of the equation (she writes from within the discipline of rhetorical studies, and some of the fellow scholars she quotes from that field will be unfamiliar to readers within the discipline of Classics – a fact which for me gave the work an added sense of freshness). The similarities do indeed shed important light on the way in which rhetorical education was envisaged and practised. But the pay-off for athletic scholarship is not always immediately clear, and often she goes for many pages with no mention of athletic sources or athletic practices (especially in chapters 2 and 3 on *kairos* and *mêtis*, where her arguments for the centrality of these concepts to athletic practice rely on only a very small number of sources). That tendency to force these two fields of action together in a slightly unnuanced fashion will be frustrating for many readers. Nevertheless, the stimulating and suggestive character of H.'s arguments, especially in her more extended passages of close reading, where she often succeeds in shedding new light on familiar texts, goes a long way towards making up for that.

University of St Andrews JASON KÖNIG
jpk3@st-andrews.ac.uk

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