non-Western philosophy, for example the growing interest in Confucian and Buddhist ethical philosophy. Indeed, this Companion appears to contain only a single reference to non-Western philosophy in the ancient world – a passing reference to 'oriental sapiential literature' (p. 11) – in a formulation that will hardly be reassuring on this point. Others will also have misgivings about the book's title, but this should not overshadow a more remarkable fact, that it is difficult to imagine many other improvements to this impressive Companion. It will be a continuing resource for many different types of students and for many of their professors.

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HOMER AND VIRGIL COMPARED

RIDD (S.) *Communication, Love, and Death in Homer and Virgil. An Introduction*. (Oklahoma Series in Classical Culture 54.) Pp. x + 258. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2017. Paper, US$29.95. ISBN: 978-0-8061-5729-0.
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This is a thoughtful, carefully crafted three-way introduction to Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and Virgil's *Aeneid*. Despite its ambitious scope of embracing three epic poems in one volume, the subtitle 'An Introduction' is amply justified with R.'s highly readable and accessible style, without doubt born of his 40 years of teaching career.

As is set out in the introduction, this book is designed to be accessible to readers without Greek or Latin, with all quotations from Classical texts translated. References and further reading are limited to works written in English and appearing in book form only. This does mean that the only journal articles mentioned are those incorporated into collections such as *Cambridge Companions* and *Oxford Readings*, and therefore those who wish to delve deeper into the latest scholarly debate on any issues mentioned are likely to have to conduct their own further research beyond the book's bibliography. Nevertheless, that restriction seems to be a reasonable compromise to keep the book a manageable introduction for a general readership and students new to Homer or Virgil.

A unique feature of this book is that the three texts concerned are treated on an equal basis. In other words, Homer is not treated as the source for Virgil as is often the case. In R.'s own words, 'instead of using such terms as "primary" and "secondary" with their suggestion of an ordering and evaluation of the three texts, I invite the reader to take a close look at individual passages within the three texts. Setting them side by side, the reader may more profitably consider similarities and differences between them' (p. 4).

The book's main focus is on ideas and their potential for development (p. 5). This is achieved by close reading of selected passages from the three texts to highlight the three themes in the title of the book, namely, communication, love and death. Naturally these themes are interconnecting (especially visible in Chapter 7's title 'Communicating with the Dead'), but roughly speaking 'Communication' features most prominently in Chapters 1–3, 'Love' in Chapters 4–6 and 'Death' in Chapters 7–8.

The first three chapters feature 'singing' as the common thread. Chapter 1, 'Singing with the Aid of the Muse(s)', introduces the reader to the epic convention of the Muse–poet relationship as well as more generally to the issues of the influence of divine power over humans. Chapter 2, 'Singing and Celebration', and Chapter 3, 'Supernatural Singing', illuminate a wide range of uses of the theme of singing by discussing many passages that are rarely gathered together (e.g. those featuring the Muses, Calypso, Circe and the Sirens in the *Odyssey* and Cassandra, the Harpy and the Sibyl in the *Aeneid*).

Different sorts of love are observed with much sensitivity in the following three chapters. Chapter 4, 'Sons and Mothers', offers a perceptive commentary on contrasting portraits of Thetis in the *Iliad* and Venus in the *Aeneid*. R. describes the figure of Thetis with great precision, particularly in passages such as this: 'Her ability in the past to rescue three male gods – Zeus, Dionysus, and Hephaistos (*Iliad* 1.396–406; 6.135–37; 18.394–405) – throws into sharp contrast her powerlessness in the face of the imminent death of her mortal son' (p. 73). The chapter closes with a discussion of the complex mother–son relationship of Penelope and Telemachus in the *Odyssey*.

Chapter 5, 'Helen and the Men in Her Life', is one of the most successful three-way comparisons in the book, charting Helen's changing characters in the different contexts of the three poems. This chapter is as much about how characters, especially Helen, communicate with others as about her relationships with the men in her life, featuring such passages as her lament for Hector in the *Iliad*, her tense conversation with Menelaus in front of Telemachus in the *Odyssey* and her betrayal narrated by the ghost of Deiphobus in the *Aeneid*, among others.

Chapter 6, 'Parting', also offers a unique collection of passages profitably read in comparison, consisting of the parting scenes of Hector and Andromache (*Iliad* 6), Aeneas and Creusa (*Aeneid* 2), Odysseus and Calypso (*Odyssey* 5), Odysseus and Nausicaa (*Odyssey* 8) and Aeneas and Dido (*Aeneid* 4). There are many notable observations in this chapter, too, such as the comparison of the parting scenes of Hector and Andromache and of Aeneas and Creusa as well as their contexts, which underline the different ways in which the divinely ordained scheme of things features in them (pp. 142–3).

Chapter 7, 'Communicating with the Dead', seizes another great opportunity for comparing the three epic poems, featuring Odysseus' conversations with the dead in *Odyssey* 11, Aeneas' in *Aeneid* 6 and Achilles' conversation with the ghost of Patroclus in *Iliad* 23. There are many gems of observation aptly put in this chapter (at 35 pages the longest in the book, along with Chapter 8), such as: 'In the first half of the *Aeneid*, as in *Odyssey* 10 and 11, communication between the living and the dead takes place within the context of a long and hazardous journey. But in contrast to the *Odyssey*, such communication in the *Aeneid* is a recurring feature within the narrative rather than an isolated experience. Throughout the whole sequence, messages imparted from the dead to the living direct the path of the living toward a better future' (p. 181).

Chapter 8, 'Deaths and Endings', fittingly brings the book to a close (without a separate conclusion or epilogue). R. selects Hector's death in the *Iliad* and the killing of Turnus in the *Aeneid* as two main examples to focus on, followed by the foreshadowing of what is to come after the closing of the three poems in the section entitled 'Still to Come'. In another example of his skilful elucidation R. observes (p. 227) that Turnus' death can be placed 'as the last in a sequence of premature deaths on the battlefield, a sequence that stretches back to the *Iliad* and includes, within the *Aeneid* and in addition to the death of Camilla, the much lamented deaths of Pallas, Lausus, Nisus, and Euryalus (*Aeneid* 11.26–99; 10.819–30; 9.446–49). . . . There is another, broader sense in which Turnus's death acts as the last in a sequence of deaths. In a variety of different contexts, a death occurs at or near the ending of eight of the eleven books that precede the final book of the *Aeneid*. Thus, death features regularly in the construction of an intermediate sense of closure. As *Aeneid* 12 comes to an end, this juxtaposition of deaths

and endings takes on an increased significance since both the narrative and the life of one of the two individuals on whom it has recently focused come to an end at the same time.' (Needless to say the footnote to this passage gives references to the deaths of Creusa, Dido, Palinurus, Marcellus, Cleopatra, Mezentius, Camilla and Arruns.)

Given its comparative nature, this book may prove a challenging 'introduction' to those readers who know nothing about any of the three epic poems discussed, but those with some knowledge of any of the texts who are curious to learn more about Greek and Roman epic are sure to enjoy this highly readable book. I imagine it will make an ideal textbook for introductory courses on Greek and Roman epic. Although it lacks the rigour of references to the very latest of research publications, R.'s sensitive reading of significant passages from the three poems and the often surprisingly illuminating results of comparison will also richly reward those who approach the book with more specialist research interests.

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THE COMPARISON OF HOMER AND VIRGIL

WEIß (P.) *Homer und Vergil im Vergleich. Ein Paradigma antiker Literaturkritik und seine Ästhetik*. (Classica Monacensia 52.) Pp. 392. Tübingen: Narr Francke Attempto, 2017. Paper, €88. ISBN: 978-3-8233-8110-5.

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In this very useful and timely monograph, W. surveys the beginnings of a complex phenomenon, the ancient habit of comparing Virgil and Homer. Many of the connections between the two figures are so obvious, so often repeated and so fundamental to the way we still read Virgil today that it is good to have someone go back to basics, in an attempt to trace the beginnings of the habit of seeing Virgil as almost inseparable from Homer and to discuss the various angles of approach and particular interests of those who made key contributions to a fascinating story. W. shows convincingly how the *Kanonisierung* of Virgil is inextricably related to his perceived status as a very Homeric poet. In doing so, he sheds light in passing on the reception of both Homer and Virgil individually, but the focus throughout is strictly on Virgil and Homer as an almost inseparable couple. When the *Aeneid* first appeared, it was immediately read as a fundamentally imitative poem, and this feature had a strong impact on early critics. And so, like all great works of literature, the very nature of the poem led to changes in the way critics read. Appreciation of Virgil's virtuoso *imitatio* obviously went hand in hand from the very beginning with interpretation of his imitation of Homer before all else. But where some readers immediately saw highly successful *aemulatio* and *variatio* based on absolute mastery of well-known techniques of composition, others saw only shameless plagiarism.

Building on the standard study of E. Stemplinger (1912, but rather confusingly dated by W. in footnotes to 1990, which is merely the date of the reprint) and the more recent work of S. McGill (2012), W. devotes a whole chapter to Virgil's first *obtrectatores* and to the connections between them and earlier writing about plagiarism in the ancient world.