

NOTICES

S. SHIRLEY (trans.), J. ROMM (ed.): *Herodotus: On the War for Greek Freedom. Selections from the Histories. With Introduction and Notes.* Pp. xxviii + 201, maps. Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 2003. Paper, £5.95 (Cased, £24.95). ISBN: 0-87220-667-X (0-87220-668-8 hbk).

It is depressing that there is thought to be a market for this abridged Herodotus when excellent annotated translations of the whole work are available at little extra cost. £7.99 will buy you either the revised *Penguin* (John Marincola [Harmondsworth, 1996]) or the World's Classics version (Robin Waterfield, with introduction and notes by Carolyn Dewald [Oxford, 1998]). But, on the assumption that there is indeed a demand to be met, this compilation is nicely done. The introduction, though it starts badly with a slight mistranslation of 1.5.4, is lively and stimulating. In particular, Romm makes a very instructive comparison of Herodotus' technique as displayed in Book 1 (which, predictably, gets the lion's share of space in this volume) with the approach observable in some of the historical books of the *Old Testament*. R. is also responsible for the excellent narrative summaries linking the extracts, for some of the translation, and for annotation. If the notes seem somewhat basic, or even skimpy, it must be allowed that any translator of Herodotus has to struggle with the temptation to overload the text with explanatory material. Provision of maps is generous; however, the lack of any bibliography or suggestions for further reading is to be regretted.

A few points of translation: 1.141 (pp. 40–1): the musician in Cyrus' parable is a piper, not a flute-player (cf. 6.129.2, p. 117); 2.35.3 (p. 54): '[The Egyptians] go to the bathroom indoors' jars on British readers; 7.33 (p. 128): the manner of Artayctes' execution should be rendered in the same way here as at 9.120.4 (p. 187).

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I. MCAUSLAN, J. AFFLECK: *Sophocles: Oedipus Tyrannus. A New Translation and Commentary.* (Introduction to the Greek Theatre by P. E. Easterling.) Pp. viii + 120, map, ills. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003. Paper, £4.95/US\$9.95. ISBN: 0-521-01072-1.

Behind this series of Cambridge Translations from Greek Drama lies the basically sane and sensible idea of making available to the student reader a straightforward translation of a Greek tragedy with enough notes and background to explain why it is what it is. In this particular instance there have been several hands at work, which may account for an uneasy variety of tone. There are two series editors, one of whom, Judith Affleck, is credited with the commentary; the translation is by Ian McAuslan. There is also a brief Introduction to Greek Theatre from Pat Easterling, which comfortably negotiates the no man's land between controversy and dogmatism, marred only by a slightly populist approach to the audience as '... football crowds rather than typical theatre audiences in the modern world'. Still, that is an improvement on all those commentaries of yesteryear which used to equate the experience of Greek theatre with attending a mass in a medieval cathedral.

M.'s translation offers a literalness which is more elegant than such an approach might herald but can lead to some infelicities—'Are you so shameless as to start that line?' (Oedipus, 354), '... I hear that terrible words /Are spoken against me by king Oedipus./That's why I'm here. I can't bear it' (Creon, 513–15), 'What's that, old man? In the name of the gods, do tell me' (Oedipus, 1019). The prime virtue is to render the narrative clear and accurate, helped by a layout which centres the lyrics leaving the dialogue in free verse.

A.'s notes are another matter. Many of them are enlightening and wide-ranging, but others

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