

Athens. The relevance of contemporary Athenian concerns is clear, but A. reminds the reader that these references are part of an integrated and wide-ranging dramatization of divine and heroic myth. In Chapter VI ('Gender'), the question of Euripides' alleged misogyny or feminism does not concern A.: instead he asks 'why has Euripides deliberately invented or accentuated the role of women in so many tragic myths?' (p. 164). The *Andromache* reveals a myth being constructed to foreground the women's rôle and also 'raises a wide range of interlocking issues relating to desire, sex, and marriage . . . as well as to the social and political importance of legitimacy' (p. 164). Furthermore, the pressures on 'Euripidean women' reveal much about their male agents, and A. is keen to stress the 'need to take tragic men and issues of masculinity seriously' (p. 161). The Euripidean Chorus is yet another common target for attack; A., however, shows in Chapter VII that such hackneyed complaints are unfounded. The form and content of choral songs are inextricably linked—a sure sign of Euripidean artistry rather than a random, pleasant interlude. The chorus is flexible, and their response to the changing events is shifting but coherent; they reveal a 'malleable, but also intelligible and consistent identity' (p. 232). Problem plays such as the *Andromache* challenge and complicate the all too familiar images of Euripidean tragedy: 'Euripides the atheistic iconoclast' is another tag deftly dismantled by A. in the final chapter. This is a stimulating study, especially in the questions it raises, and begins to answer, on the *Andromache* and its relationship to Euripidean tragedy.

Melton Mowbray

RUTH BARDEL

## THEOCRITUS

R. HUNTER (ed.): *Theocritus. A Selection. Idylls 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 10, 11, 13* (Cambridge Greek and Latin Classics). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999. Paper, £15. 95. Pp. xi + 308. ISBN: 0-521-57420-X.

This splendid volume offers text and commentary on eight of the Idylls of Theocritus. The introduction offers sections on Theocritus, bucolic poetry, the *locus amoenus*, metre, language, and transmission. The discussion of bucolic poetry and its terminology in Theocritus is particularly useful (pp. 5–12); Hunter places emphasis on the idea of contest, but also suggests the possibility of Epicharmus being one strand of the Sicilian tradition that finds its way into Theocritus. Indeed, the concern of H. to stress links with tragedy and comedy is a very welcome feature of the book as a whole (see e.g. notes on 1.115–21, 1.136); the importance of mime for Theocritus should not obscure the influences of other dramatic genres. The sections on metre and on language are also invaluable; students will welcome the exposition of Theocritean metre (pp. 17–21), and the clarity of H.'s catalogue of Doric forms in Theocritus (pp. 24–6), particularly since H.'s commentary makes frequent reference both to metre and to language. H.'s practice of treating metre and dialect as part of the overall literary effect is admirable.

The introductions to the individual poems are as suggestive as they are informative. Thus, with Idyll 1 H. points out that the sense of tradition created within the poem may be as important as the elaborate and perhaps insoluble issue of the 'historical'

origins of bucolic poetry (p. 61). Another achievement of the introductions is to add support to the suggestion in the preface that more needs to be said about the links between the poems; thus H. on Idyll 4 declares that ‘the poem rewrites the central bucolic myth of Daphnis’ (p. 131), while it is also suggested that ‘(on one level) Idyll 6 is a comic “reading” of Idyll 1’ (pp. 247–8). In Idyll 13 there is an excellent discussion on both the literary background and the Mysian traditions behind the Hylas story (pp. 262–4), while the complex relation existing between Idylls 6 and 11 and *Odyssey* 9 is drawn out in the introductions to both poems.

In the Preface H. affirms (p. vii) that he is not attempting to replace the commentary of A. S. F. Gow (2nd edn, Cambridge, 1952), and duly acknowledges his debt to his predecessor. However, this acknowledgement of Gow should not deter anyone from reading H.’s commentary, since it is as strong in traditional areas of philology as it is in literary interpretation.

There are many occasions where H. interprets parallels that are merely noted without further explanation by Gow. In Idyll 11, for example, it is of course a commonplace of criticism to note that the lament of the Cyclops looks back (in literary history) and forward (in mythical chronology) to the arrival of Odysseus and the blinding of the Cyclops in *Odyssey* 9. H., however, shows that the presence of Odysseus is in fact much more pervasive, and that the Cyclops cannot even escape the confines of Odyssean diction: thus at 11.16, where Polyphemos’ passion for Galateia is metaphorically referred to as a wound in his liver, H. notes that this echoes the fatal wounding of Eurymachos by Odysseus (*Od.* 22.83): ‘even when Kypris tortures Polyphemos, the real enemy is in the background’. Similarly, at 1.7–8, where the goatherd remarks that Thyrsis’ song is sweeter than water descending from a rock, Gow mentions Hes. *Theog.* 786–7 (on the Styx) and *Od.* 17.209–10 (the spring where Odysseus and Eumaeus meet Melantheus), parallels which H. sees as programmatic, reflecting the manner in which bucolic is revaluating epic poetry. It is a little surprising that at 1.6, where not only Gow and H. but also the scholia cite Hes. *WD* 591–2 (on the delights of meat of young animals), nothing more is said. This seems a plausible allusion to the passage *par excellence* in the *Works and Days* which is not about hard work in the countryside, Hesiod’s account of the pleasures of a picnic in summertime: Theocritus acknowledges a debt to Hesiod, but also suggests how he will depart from his model. One place where Gow is perhaps a little unjustly treated is at 1.86, where H. prefers *μάν* to *μέν*, on the grounds that the former is *lectio faciliior*, but he does not do justice to the metrical parallels offered by Gow (see also 6.46, where H. prefers *μέν*). However, this is a rare exception to H.’s usual practice. 1.22 nicely illustrates the point that all commentators are located in their own historical period. On the issue of whether or not to read *Κρανιάδων* (Tr<sup>2</sup> ‘nymphs of the springs’, favoured by H.) or *κρανίδων* (Ω, ‘springs’, favoured by Gow), Gow remarks that ‘it seems a pity to introduce more statues than are necessary into this rustic scene’, while H. remarks that ‘Like Priapos, nymphs are to play a major role in Thyrsis’ song, and it is important that bucolic narrative and bucolic emotion are seen to grow out of the context in which they are set’.

H.’s eye for allusion is one of the great strengths of this commentary. As well as Homer (would it have been worth mentioning *Od.* 11.601 *βίην Ἡρακληεῖην* at 4.8, *φαντί νυ Ἡρακλῆι βίαν* [*IP*<sup>2</sup>: *βίην* codd.] *καὶ κάρτος ἐρίσδεν*?) and the contemporaries of Theocritus, H. is also interested in drawing out links with other poets such as Archilochus (see the note on 7.120–1 and p. 150), Pindar (at 7.47–8, 13.21, 27–8—perhaps compare also *P.* 10.1–2 *Ὀλβία Λακεδαίμων, / μάκαιρα Θεσσαλία* at 4.32–3) and Sappho (at 11.19–21, 22–3, 25–7); note also the attention

given to Plato (especially the *Phaedrus*) in Idyll 7 (pp. 145–6). The discussion of Idyll 13 of course engages with Apollonius; particularly useful in this regard are the notes on 13.16–24 and 16–17. At the same time as being able to chart allusions, H. is also able to show Theocritus as writing in the light of and sometimes responding to Hellenistic literary criticism; see, for instance, the notes on 11.38 and 42–3 for the possibility of Theocritus ‘responding’ to academic controversies reflected in the Homeric scholia. It is also welcome that H.’s Theocritus is not viewed in the light of some oppressive and reductive ‘Callimachean’ poetic; see the notes on 7.47–8 and on 7.51 for H.’s excellent—and concise—circumspection. And though H.’s Preface expresses regret (p. vii) at the lack of attention given to *Nachleben*, there is in fact much here for readers of Virgil—and other Latin poets; the note on 7.72–89 is a particularly fine example.

This is a stimulating and learned volume, which will do much to encourage all areas of Theocritean studies.

*University of Liverpool*

BRUCE GIBSON

## DIVERSE NONNUS

B. SIMON: *Nonnos de Panopolis. Les Dionysiaques. Tome XIV, Chants XXXVIII–XL* (Collection des Universités de France publiée sous le patronage de l’Association Guillaume Budé). Pp. xii. + 317. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1999. Cased, frs. 315. ISBN: 2-251-00474-2.

Following the orderly Homeric interlude of Opheltes’ funeral games (*CR* 50 [2000], 419–21), Book 38 displays Nonnus in cosmic rampage, glittering with erudition for his version of Phaethon’s flight. Aratean (e.g. ll. 222–90) and Platonic (e.g. ll. 416–20) references, and a Philostratean disregard for terrestrial consequences of Phaethon’s fall (p. 27), combine with mythological tableaux (e.g. ll. 108–54) incorporating self-reflexive allusion (e.g. Clymene’s bath; pp. 6–8; Knox, *CQ* 38 [1988], 538ff.). The pretext for this digression (pp. 5f.) is solar eclipse, one of two omens (ll. 15–30) of Dionysus’ imminent success in the Indian war, now in its penultimate year. S. follows current anglophone as well as francophone trends (Knox, loc. cit., 536–51; N. Hopkinson, *Studies in the Dionysiaca of Nonnus* [Cambridge, 1994], p. 3; A. Hollis, *ibid.*, p. 60 n. 16) in denying (pp. 28–45) N.’s dependence on Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 2, even in Helios’ second speech to Phaethon (ll. 222–90), rebutting J. Diggle, *Euripides, Phaethon* (Cambridge, 1970), pp. 180–200, esp. 189f.—though her case is arguably too narrowly based and the omission of Diggle from the bibliography (pp. xi–xii) an unfortunate discourtesy. It is nonetheless right to see N.’s angle as personal, reflecting both the needs of the story—threats to and restoration of the cosmic order on the eve of Dionysus’ victory over Deriades—and his own interest in astronomy (pp. 44–5).

As in earlier volumes, the text is conservative. In Book 38 eight conjectures printed by Keydell are rejected and the Laurentianus’ reading restored (8, 22, 176, 205, 224, 249, 359, 421; note also 40), and five postulated lacunae eliminated (28, 150, 170, 231, 241); three conjectures rejected by Keydell (none S.’s own) are incorporated (242, 255, 324). S.’s choice is not always convincing: at 176 Marcellus’ easy *νέους*, printed by Rouse, attracts more than weak *έοὺς*; at 421 *παλίνδρομον* is preferable.