

The first article – which is at the same time the longest in the collection – stems from a very fine collected volume edited by David Rundle (*Humanism in Fifteenth-Century Europe*, Oxford 2012) and offers a most useful overview (with extensive appendices) of the crucial role played by Greek scholars who emigrated to Italy in both the history of the classical tradition and that of the Church. It is complemented by its follow-up (which, however, came out the year before) on the pro-Latin apologetics written by those Greek émigrés.

Articles 3 and 4 are dedicated to George Gemisthus Pletho. The first of these – which, according to Monfasani's own confession in his preface to the volume, is among 'the ones that have given [him] the most pleasure to write' (xi) – establishes the precise dates of Pletho's demise and of the moment when his *Laws* were burnt by George Gennadius Scholarius. The second highlights the reception of the neo-pagan Pletho in the West, which turns out to have been mostly one of rejection (Bessarion being the one notable exception). A second diptych focuses on George Amiroutzes (on whose philosophical tractates Monfasani also published a monograph in 2011), more specifically on his *Dialogus de Fide in Christum*.

Five articles on Bessarion and his acquaintances are an apt illustration of Monfasani's long-lasting interest in the cardinal's important contribution to the Quattrocento reception of the Greek legacy and his pivotal role in the Plato-Aristotle controversy to which Monfasani has dedicated so many publications. Two articles focus on Bessarion's study of the Latin language and the role played by his secretary Niccolò Perotti in correcting Bessarion's Latin writings. The other three consider Nicholas of Cusa's role in the controversy and publication history of Bessarion's *In calumniatorem Platonis* – a bilingual critical edition of which remains a major desideratum – and the *Comparatio philosophorum Platonis et Aristotelis* by Bessarion's nemesis, George of Trebizond. The latter is also at the centre of an article addressing two rival translations of Aristotle's *Problemata*: that of George and the one by Theodore Gaza, which had the good fortune to appear in print and hence eclipsed George's superior effort. In addition, there is an article that examines the lavishly decorated manuscript Vat. lat. 2094, Gaza's dedication copy for Pope Sixtus IV of his translation of Aristotle's *Historia animalium*, and, finally, a short addition to P.J. Fedwick's *Bibliotheca Basiliana Universalis*

(Turnhout 1993), discussing various Quattrocento translators of Basil the Great.

As in the many articles reissued in his previous Variorum volumes (published in 1994, 1995, 2004 and 2015), Monfasani again manages to add interesting pieces to an impressive series of puzzles that, taken together, offer an impressive kaleidoscopic image of the Greek cultural scene of Quattrocento Italy, ever more 'adding color and nuance' (as he himself describes his evolving views on Perotti's role in the production of Bessarion's Latin *In calumniatorem Platonis*, on page 183 of article 7). One would perhaps only wish that at some point Monfasani might bring all these *tesserae* together into a single mosaic – a monograph – dedicated to Bessarion and his network, featuring Perotti, Gaza and Trebizond, and illustrating these protagonists' connections and controversies, as well as their major contribution to the return of Greek to the West in Quattrocento Italy. It is a synthesis that he would without any doubt be the most qualified scholar to produce. Such an *e pluribus unum* monograph would be a most welcome addition to Paul Botley's *Learning Greek in Western Europe, 1396-1529* (Philadelphia 2010) and to Nigel Wilson's seminal study *From Byzantium to Italy: Greek Studies in the Italian Renaissance*, which was recently reissued in a second edition (London 2017).

With the present collection, Monfasani continues to occupy a most prominent place in the field, displaying throughout the volume a broad knowledge of a polyglot bibliography, which fully incorporates both the most arcane source texts and the most recent scholarly publications. While catering in the first place to a specialized audience, this volume will hopefully also convince neophytes to explore a fascinating niche of scholarship at the crossroads of classics and early modern cultural studies.

JEROEN DE KEYSER

KU Leuven

jeroen.dekeyser@kuleuven.be

PADILLA (M.W.) **Classical Myth in Four Films of Alfred Hitchcock**. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2016. Pp. 295. £70. 9781498529150. doi:10.1017/S0075426918000514

As the title suggests, this book offers analyses of the relationship between classical myth and four films directed by Alfred Hitchcock: *The Farmer's Wife* (1927), *The Man Who Knew Too Much*

(1934), *Rebecca* (1940) and *Strangers on a Train* (1951). The book offers sustained close readings of each film, and will be of great interest to film scholars interested in Hitchcock, especially those with limited knowledge of the ancient world and of classical myth.

Padilla's methodology is rather unusual. The Introduction emphasizes the classical education received by Hitchcock and others of his time (26). The rest of the book then veers between comparisons between the Hitchcock films and classical myths or texts, and interpretations of the films as works of art directly influenced by classical myth or texts. There are several sections which discuss whether or not Hitchcock might have seen a particular sculpture or painting inspired by classical myth in a museum or gallery (for example at 67). Classical reception studies, as a discipline, embraces both readings that examine parallels between texts with no direct relationship and explorations of texts that echo and repackage the classical world in deliberate, carefully calculated ways; but to look at the same text both ways at once is a little more unusual. Padilla refers early on to 'motifs, archetypes, patterns, symbols, themes, references and allusions of classical myth and literature (largely interchangeable terms in this broad context)' (25), setting out his multiplicitous approach, but a reading based either on a comparison between texts or on a text read as a reception of an earlier text might have been more satisfying.

The idea of 'archetypes' comes up frequently throughout the book, but is never really interrogated. Karl Kerényi is referred to as 'the interpreter of mythic archetypes' (105) but Carl Jung is absent from the bibliography. There's a whiff of Joseph Campbell's *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* (London 1949) around the use of the term, and around the idea that the 'presence of classical material' in these films is 'why [they] were so widely appreciated when released and ... continue to be relevant long after (3), but Campbell does not appear in the bibliography either. Classical reception scholarship is rather better represented, but it is a shame that Padilla is not familiar with Paula James' *Ovid's Myth of Pygmalion on Screen* (London 2011), which not only looks at films that 'do not announce their connections' (6) with the classical world, but includes a sustained examination of Hitchcock's *Vertigo* (1958).

Padilla offers impressively detailed readings of the four films, taking the reader through the whole plot of each film in order. This is especially useful

in the case of *The Farmer's Wife*, which is more difficult to access than the other three, and it is good to see Hitchcock's silent period explored here. The book tries, perhaps, to do a bit too much, as the determined march through every detail of each film, finding classical links, results in some not always convincing tangents (a pregnant character called 'Miriam', for example, surely brings to mind the Hebrew root of the name 'Mary' more than it resembles Hermes' mother's name, Maia, 248). Padilla's reading of *Rebecca* in conjunction with the myth of Cupid and Psyche as told by Apuleius is interesting and offers a convincing and enlightening view of the story as one that pits Venus, together with a twisted Vesta (a nice contrast to the purer Hestia seen in *The Farmer's Wife*), against the lost and confused Psyche. His discussion of Hitchcock's conscious move away from naturalism and plausibility, and how mythic paradigms provide coherence to his films instead is also especially revealing (99).

There are occasional errors and odd stylistic choices. For example, the image of Britannia on the logo for British International Pictures is labelled 'an Athena figure holding a trident in one hand' (89) with no reference to the well-known figure of Britannia; the author asks 'where is Mr. Danvers?', wondering what has happened to Mrs Danvers' husband (200), but British conventions of the early 20th century would require a housekeeper to be referred to as 'Mrs', regardless of her marital status; information about Hitchcock is usually accessed only through secondary sources and in some cases we are told Hitchcock 'shares that' (4) he felt or did something with no indication of where this information comes from; references frequently refer to 'one scholar' without naming the scholar in question until the endnote; and the formatting for the illustrations is different in the introduction and chapter 1 from that of chapters 2, 3 and 4.

A more sustained focus on one or two particular mythic resonances looking at only those elements of the film to which they are relevant, rather than an approach that embraces numerous different mythic paradigms in an attempt to connect every aspect of each film with classical myth, might have produced more convincing readings. However, there are interesting ideas here, and the level of attention to detail lavished on each film is to be admired.

JULIETTE HARRISSON
Newman University

Juliette.Harrison@staff.newman.ac.uk