apparatus, it seems that L. is not interested in documenting scholarly efforts. According to his own statement (p. ix), his main aim is to correct Polara's mistakes concerning the transmitted readings. Indeed, a comparison of the two editions reveals an amazing number of corrections in L.'s apparatus (e.g. about twenty changes for *epist.* 4 in only six and a half pages), which are an important improvement, even if they do not seem to affect the constitution of Virgil's text. L. also documents rejected *variae lectiones* or obvious emendations of Mai from 1833/1871, which Polara too often ascribes directly to N. In addition, L. includes four new fragmentary manuscripts and eight fragments recently published by Law (he does not mention Polara's single fragment), and even more important, the indirect tradition, exploiting sources like Beda, Bonifatius, Donatus orthigraphus (listed in a second apparatus together with Virgilius' possible sources, and easily accessible by means of two indices, pp. 248–57). This is what L. does best, having edited eight of these himself. Their contributions do not only attest later grammarians' use of Virgilius' text; they provide occasional corrections (e.g. at *epist*. 2.15.31 an addition by Don. orth.; *epist.* 2.151 and 161 conjectures of Mai are confirmed by Ars Bernensis). Disappointingly, three of the newly utilized manuscripts tend only to add misspellings, with rather few useful exceptions (e.g. *epit.* 1.25, 5.6.228 and 235, 7.24, 9.214; they are unfortunately not collected in the *praefatio*), and even the Augiensis, highly praised by L., shows lots of mistakes (about thirty-five within the extant seventy-four lines of *epist. praef.*), while being useful six times and verifying eleven emendations of Mai, Huemer and Polara. Respectively twenty-nine and eighteen other conjectures of Polara are accepted by L. for *epist.* and *epit.*; explicitly rejected are those for *epist. praef.* 92, 1.146 and 328, 2.19, 3.542, *epit.* 2.81, 7.161, 10.77. L. gives at least sixty-five conjectures of his own (about fifty for the *epist.* [most of them for *epist.* 1–3], considerably less for the better transmitted *epit.*), with three ingenious corrections (*epist.* 3.121 *accusatio*, 551 *Latinitatis*, 623 *Stoicorum*) and often simple and thus probable additions of particles, changes of single letters and of word order. They all make the text more legible, but are not always necessary (e.g. *epist.* 3.466, 4.94) and without commentary on Virgil's use of language remain unproved. L.'s *Index verborum et formarum* (eight and a half pages) is shorter than Polara's (twenty-two pages); an additional index of *nomina propria* like Polara's would be helpful.

L. began analysing Virgilius with articles in 1981 and 1982. His new text is welcome and should be esteemed as a valuable contribution to the understanding of a peculiar author, especially as it is announced as a testament to Bernhard Bischoff (pp. ix–x), who entrusted his lifelong collection of material to L. for the preparation of this useful edition.

*University of Regensburg* JAN-WILHELM BECK

## INDIAN CONNECTIONS

T. MCEVILLEY: *The Shape of Ancient Thought. Comparative Studies in Greek and Indian Philosophies*. Pp. xxxvi + 731, maps, ills. New York: Allworth Press, 2002. Cased, US$35. ISBN: 1-58115-203-5.

Classicists, with the notable exception of Martin West, have seldom been very happy to explore possible connexions of Greece and India before Alexander. Even when ideological considerations (the East as 'Other') have not come into play, compared with West Asia, India has seemed simply too remote geographically, the contacts too

The Classical Review vol. 54 no. 2 © The Classical Association 2004; all rights reserved

uncertain, for conclusions to be more than hypothetical. Added to this is the difficulty of any scholar's gaining an equal expertise in two quite different languages and cultures, which in turn have given rise to academic disciplines with rather different traditions. The classicist, in other words, suspects the indologist who ventures to tread on Greek soil, and the reverse is often also true.

Potentially worried classicists may therefore be on the lookout for signs that M.'s credentials are less than perfect. (His appointment is in art history.) And although his citation of sources seems generally accurate, the appearance of strange forms such as Metus (for Metis), *hapate*, Res Gesta, even occasionally Anaximines, alongside some equally odd Sanskrit transliterations, suggests at the least careless proof-reading. More worryingly, in the otherwise very interesting chapter on *kuṇḍalinī*, references to Homer and Hesiod, along with various Old Testament texts, have disappeared altogether into Onians, *The Origins of European Thought*, accompanied by the quite unjustifiable assertion that ἐγκέφαλος normally means 'cerebro-spinal fluid'. On the other hand, these are odd lapses in a book of nearly 700 pages, and citation of strictly philosophical authors, whom we might expect after all to form the mainstay of the book, is managed properly and consistently. In any case, the sheer bulk of the material assembled here and the scale of the argument relating to it are such that it will not easily be demolished by the inaccuracy of a few details.

So what is the book's main thesis? Despite the title, this is really a book about influence more than comparison. A certain amount of the work is devoted to demonstrating the evidence for significant and in-depth Greco-Indian contact, as shown in numerous related thought patterns and systems. But M.'s main proposition is twofold: that Indian thought had an incalculable influence on early Greek thought, to the extent that most of the ideas of the Presocratics can be traced back to Indian origins, and that (at a later period) Greek influence on Indian philosophy, particularly Buddhist logic and dialectic, was similarly large-scale and crucial to the development of the tradition. (This, he suggests, reflects the 'shape' of ancient thought, which is circular, like cyclical time.) M. thinks that these conclusions will be 'irksome' and 'traumatic', and given the proprietorial attitudes to culture shown (on both sides) by some of the scholars he quotes, a point to which I shall return, he may be right. But not, perhaps, in quite the way that he thinks. He imagines that Western scholars will be upset because 'within the academic departments where the Greek and Latin classics are custodialized, the fragments of the Presocratics occupy the pinnacle of a hierarchy of texts . . . nothing is quite its equal, not the tragedians, not Plato, not the historians' (p. 642). M. must know some very eccentric classics departments if he really thinks this is the case. Rather than feeling that their favourite representatives of the glory that was Greece are under attack, Western cultural chauvinists are more likely to react by tacitly jettisoning the Presocratics, who after all survive only in fragments, and are characterized as being 'pre' the really important developments in philosophy.

To turn now to the arguments for the position above, M. makes the not implausible supposition that philosophy begins with 'the desire to find unifying principles behind apparent diversity' (p. 24). This desire itself need not, I think, spring from an external source, though M. attributes its appearance in Greece to Mesopotamian influence. There is a much better case for supposing that many of the solutions found have been influenced by non-Greek, particularly Indian sources. M. is not the first to point out parallels, of course. One of the most remarkable coincidences, between Heraclitus and the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad (the solar and lunar paths, expounded later and more familiarly in the Bhagavad Gītā), has been dealt with extensively by West in *Early Greek Philosophy and the Orient*. But, given the reluctance of many classical scholars to engage with West's argument, it is worth recapitulating and extending here. M. is also interesting on the parallel move in India and Greece away from mythological-style and personal explanations to the more abstract and impersonal, and especially on the relationship between the two as we see it in Parmenides—though he perhaps goes too far in implying that the Goddess of Parmenides' poem has real religious, as opposed to allegorical, force. (Neither is it certain that the philosopher Śaṅkara is the author of a hymn to Kali, or of any of the hymns attributed to him.) The obvious next question is, then, what explains the similarities? M. reviews various possibilities as they apply to different strands of thought, concluding in the case of monism and of the doctrine of the rebirth of souls that India is the most likely starting-point: the Indian texts show the ideas developing over a period of centuries, while the earliest Greek ones show them already in their mature form. This seems persuasive, and forms another argument against West's 'Magian' hypothesis, which introduces a somewhat hypothetical *tertium quid*. Not that M. neglects other cultures altogether: Mesopotamia, especially, and Egypt loom quite large in the work, and in the case of cyclical time (a common enough idea in general, but one in which the Greek and Indian versions, as often, share certain details) he inclines to a diffusion hypothesis based on Sumeria.

If the Presocratics, then also Plato, at least indirectly. No one will deny the influence of Pythagorean and other earlier schools of thought on extensive areas of Plato's work, but many classical and Western philosophers have preferred to ignore the more 'mystical' aspects of Plato, regarding them as irrelevancies or as misunderstandings from later 'Platonic' systems which have little basis in Plato himself. Such scholars will obviously be unhappy with M.'s view that Plato has more in common with Patañjali's Yoga-Sūtras than with Descartes. Those who study Plato from a literary or religious history perspective see him more in his cultural context, and take a different view. Thus Burkert, speaking of the *Phaedrus*: 'Philosophical cognition, religious experience, and fantasy coincide' (*Greek Religion* [Oxford, 1985], p. 324). If we are prepared to admit this, we may consider seriously M.'s reinterpretation of Platonic 'knowledge' (φρόνησις) as 'higher consciousness', in the manner of Sanskrit *jñāna* or *vidyā*. Here again, M. makes some very suggestive Upanishadic comparisons, and even a cursory comparison will show some very striking parallels between Plato and both Vedantic and Buddhist ideas. Sometimes M. pushes the parallels too far: though Patañjali can be connected with some passages in Plato, it is only by taking a very particular and strained meaning of *vairāgya* (properly 'detachment') that he can relate the Indian text to the doctrine of 'Platonic love' in the *Symposium*. Some examples work better than this, notably the well-known idea of *kuṇḍalinī*, the force or substance which in yogic practice must be driven from the base of the spine to the crown of the head, which connects very closely with a couple of passages in the *Timaeus* (73b–74a, 91a–b). M. examines the traces of this idea in other Greek authors and propounds the fascinating theory that it reached Greece via Democedes of Croton's stay in the Persian court, before concluding that important elements of this complex may after all be Indo-European or even older.

The second of M.'s main arguments concerns the entry of Greek logic and dialectic into the Indian tradition in the Hellenistic age. In the later period, with extensive and well-documented Greco-Indian contact, it is easy to see the material conditions for the exchange of ideas, and we have plentiful evidence also for Greeks and Greek speakers involved in Buddhist contexts. M. quotes some very suggestive parallels, in particular between Scepticism and the Buddhist Mādhyamika school. These parallels have been noticed before, but have usually been attributed to the influence of Indian thought on Pyrrho, who, according to Strabo, went with Alexander to India. M. argues that the

Democritean tradition is sufficient background for the development of Pyrrho's philosophy, and that there is no real evidence that the Mādhyamika philosophy as expounded by Nāgārjuna has a long lineage in India. I am not quite convinced that he proves his case; but if we are thinking of Greek primacy, it is certainly intriguing to find that the rope-mistaken-for-a-snake analogy, famously used by Śaṅkara and a standard Hindu example today, is first attested in Demetrius *On Style*—admittedly in a somewhat different context, though soon taken up in the philosophical tradition. In the following chapters, M. goes somewhat beyond his model of 'cyclicity' to explore parallels and possible influences (both ways) between other Indian and Greek philosophical schools. Each chapter can be read as a separate and stimulating essay, sometimes leaning heavily on the work of other scholars (Daniel Ingalls on Cynics and Pāśupatas, for instance), but taken together, they are eloquent testimony to the cultural interchange of the hellenistic period and onwards. M. seldom overstates his case, allowing that some coincidences may be accidental, and pointing out major limits and differences—the apparent absence of any sort of yogic system in Greece, for instance.

The case for such interchange should not really be too surprising, given what is now commonly believed about mobility in the ancient world. But M. feels constrained to discuss the implications, going beyond the academic discipline of philosophy, in an introduction, conclusion, and appendix (discussing the *Black Athena* controversy)—all of which he allows readers to omit if they so choose. My first reaction, 'how unnecessary', was soon tempered by reflexion: many who see the undoubted differences in society and general thought-patterns between cultures have been led to adopt an exclusivist attitude to specific ideas and assume that they *must* originate in Greece or in India, even that they somehow indicate the genius of a particular race. From here we move to the facile characterization of the East as mystical and the West as analytical, an enduringly powerful stereotype. Thus, for some Indian and pro-Hindu writers, enthused by the discourse of postcolonialism, the idea of any foreign influence on Indian culture, even of an Aryan invasion, is anathema. And for some Western authors, the romantic idea of the Greeks as different from (and by implication superior to) all other peoples retains its appeal. Even so great a scholar as Bernard Knox (in the cringe-makingly entitled *The Oldest Dead White European Males* [New York and London, 1993], p. 67) could speak resoundingly of 'the astonishing originality that sets [the Greeks] apart, that makes them unique . . . in startling contrast to the magnificent but static civilizations of the great Eastern river valleys'. (India, it seems, is too far east even to merit a mention.) M. does not overlook the distinctive differences in cultures, but his book should be required reading for all who have been tempted to think along such lines.

*St Hilda's College, Oxford* EMILY KEARNS

## *NON SCHOLAE SED VITAE*

### K. PIEPENBRINK (ed.): *Philosophie und Lebenswelt in der Antike*. Pp. 271. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2003. Cased, SFr 89.70/€54. ISBN: 3-534-17041-5.

This volume, containing the proceedings of a colloquium held in 2001 in Mannheim on the theme of philosophy and the practical world, is distinguished from many conference volumes both by the speed of its publication and the genuine coherence of its chapters. The papers are chronologically arranged and, though not all

© The Classical Association 2004; all rights reserved