introduction on such reconsiderations would have been instructive, as would a few words on the decades-long collaboration between the German and Georgian scholars, as well as a statement by the author on the extent to which he feels this work differs from his previous collaborative ventures in Kartvelian etymology.

This book is unarguably a valuable contribution to Kartvelian studies, and even those already possessed of F-S_2 will probably wish to add it to their collection in view of the additional material and/or reconsidered judgements incorporated here.

Although the work is dedicated to the memory of Zurab Sardzhveladze, who died in 2002, readers might be left wondering if, given the amount of shared labour that lay behind F-S_2 (to say nothing of F-S_1), it might not have been more equitable to have retained co-authorship for this volume too, expanding the title along the following lines: "Thoroughly revised, expanded and translated into German by Heinz Fähnrich".

George Hewitt

SOUTH ASIA

SIMON BRODBECK and BRIAN BLACK (eds):
Gender and Narrative in the Mahābhārata.
(Routledge Hindu Studies Series.) xix, 326 pp. London and New York: Routledge, 2007. £95. ISBN 0 415 41540 3.

The conference at SOAS arising from the *Epic Constructions* project, at which the articles in this volume or their precursors were presented, was itself a memorable event (its starting on 7 July 2005 was only incidental to that) and a fitting tribute to Julia Leslie, to whose memory both conference and book are dedicated. The volume fully lives up to the standards of the conference and is a significant landmark in the current burgeoning of *Mahābhārata* studies. The editors' introduction makes a valuable contribution in this regard with an excellent overview of recent *Mahābhārata* scholarship (as well as an introduction to gender studies), while the 27-page bibliography to the volume is notable for its comprehensive coverage of the last two decades and really enhances the volume. The great majority of the articles are individually important (the weakest are perhaps the first and last) and warrant at least a brief mention.

In the first of the eleven articles Emily Hudson analyses Dhṛtarāṣṭra's weaknesses through two of his laments – at the beginning of the *Ādiparvan* and in the frame of the *Bhīṣmaparvan* – and thus begins in a small way to remedy the relative lack of attention to Dhṛtarāṣṭra in Western scholarship. Next Brian Black examines the role of various women, especially Gāndhārī and Draupadī, as listeners or eavesdroppers in the narrative, making the significant point that their responses to the main events serve to draw in the audience outside the text into the epic's narration and to give emotional depth; his insights give us further understanding of the effects and effectiveness of the text's complex dialogical structure. Angelika Malinar then presents a penetrating analysis of the debate between Yudhiṣṭhira and Draupadī that occurs soon after their

exile, studying how his loss of kingship renders necessary a renegotiation of their gender roles, which includes a stimulating discussion of their attitudes to *manyu* or *tejas* and *kṣamā*; her focus on the implications of one specific passage is welcome.

The focus on Draupadī continues in Laurie Patton's exploration of her conversations with two other female characters: with Satyabhāmā on how she behaves towards her husbands (making good use of recent theoretical ideas on gender and psychology) and more briefly with Sudeṣṇā as she seeks employment at Virāṭa's court. Patton uses these to illuminate most strikingly the role of dialogues in giving depth to characterization. Draupadī also figures prominently in Alf Hiltebeitel's treatment of friendship and of sexual relationships, which he explores principally through two of the text's *upākhyānas* – the story of the *śārṅgaka* birds and the story of the bird Pūjanī and the king Brahmadatta – but also through Kṛṣṇā Draupadī's *sakhā*/*sakhī* relationship with Kṛṣṇa, in his usual discursive and intriguing style.

Next Simon Brodbeck turns to broader issues of problematic male–female dynamics and then to the specific issue of how Yudhiṣṭhira is portrayed, arguing that one way in which they may be understood is as allegories of the relationship between *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* and so on, essentially that is as sociological allegories; this is a rich and densely constructed article which repays the attention and thought that it needs. Nick Allen's article on Bhīṣma as matchmaker in a way forms a link between the genealogical issues to some text underlying the previous chapter and the focus on Bhīṣma of the next. In it he uses his comparativist approach, with its structuralist Indo-European dimensions, to assign the various marriages organized by Bhīṣma in successive generations of the family to their respective functions in his four-functional model. James L. Fitzgerald argues – in the first instalment of a larger study of Bhīṣma that he plans – for a more nuanced psychoanalysis to be employed in relation to Bhīṣma than previous scholars have done, taking it past the Freudian Oedipal triangle with its basis in the Eurocentric nuclear family to a more universal "psychodynamics of family relations" which will take adequate account of the Indian material.

Andrea Custodi next looks at issues of trans-sexuality and gender-bending, in particular in relation to Arjuna and his disguise as Bṛhannaḍā and to Ambā reborn as Śikhaṇḍin(ī); she too seeks to go beyond Freud but only to replace him with Lacan. Georg von Simson's chapter is presumably placed next because it too involves issues of gender-bending: Sāmba's being dressed up as a pregnant woman. However, it belongs in some ways more with Simon Brodbeck's chapter in that it suggests that there are deeper layers to be understood for a full appreciation of the text, since he continues here his efforts to elucidate a calendrical symbolism underlying the narrative. Finally, Arti Dhand looks at the ethics of renunciation in the light of the stories of Śuka and Sulabhā in her encounter with Janaka; both of these episodes have already been subjected to considerable scrutiny, as she notes, and her only significant contribution is to point out the way that their juxtaposition highlights the deficiencies in Janaka's discourse.

As aids to the reader the editors have included at the end not only the excellent bibliography, already mentioned, but sensibly also a concordance between the Critical Edition and the Ganguli translation, a glossary of all the Sanskrit terms used in any of the chapters (I do wish, however, that they had avoided throughout the book the division of aspirate consonants between lines – *Mahāb-hārata* and the like make me squirm) and a competent index, while an outline family tree from Manu to Janamejaya is located at the beginning. The

role of the editors has clearly been as important in the careful production of this welcome and significant contribution to *Mahābhārata* studies as it was earlier in the assembling of such a notable group of contributors to the conference.

John Brockington

K. R. NORMAN:
Elders' Verses II: Therīgāthā. (Second Edition.)
(Pali Text Society Translation Series No. 40.) xci, 242 pp. Lancaster: The Pali Text Society, 2007. £22.50. ISBN 978 086013 436 7.

This revised edition of K. R. Norman's translation and study of *Elders' Verses II: Therīgāthā* (first edition 1971) embodies a reconsideration of the textual problems in the light of fresh evidence, as well as a measure of revision and correction. The introductory study of the text's structure and prosody is reprinted, together with the revised translation and notes, and the indexes.

The anthology of over 500 verses begins with separate stanzas addressed to, or spoken by, individual nuns, and works up to a 75-verse narrative of the conversion, preaching, temptation, enlightenment, and nirvana of a princess, a piquant adaptation of the male equivalent. The stanzas and poems are ostensibly attributed to the hundred or so Buddhist nuns involved: several are said to "give an unmistakable reference to their author, either by naming her or by making a pun upon her name" (p. xxi). It is, however, obvious, and rather more obvious than Norman is willing to concede, that the verses, whether spoken by or addressed to individual nuns, named or unnamed, reveal nothing of their authorship or their transmission. He notes that the text itself discounts any such notion, in appended rubrics that ascribe the second verse "Get free, Muttā" to the Buddha, and the first "Sleep, little Therīkā" inevitably to an unidentifiable older woman, a Therī. Clearly these are inferences from the context, rather than historical data. These rubrics, cited but not translated in the notes, are misrepresented in the translation by being reduced to "Muttā" and "A certain unknown bhikkhunī". The initial rubrics, introducing the sets of single verses and distichs, were presumably intended to concede that, while v. 3 *Puṇṇe pūrassu*, etc., can be ascribed to the Buddha, v. 1 *supāhi therīke,* v. 11 *Sumuttā sādhumuttamhi,* and the like cannot.

Asian editions have further traduced the evidence by prefixing *iti* to the already spurious rubrics *Puṇṇā, Tissā,* etc., although Pischel's edition makes it clear that the occurrence of *iti* is sporadic. Norman still (p. 60) sees no reason for its distribution, but it is plain that *iti* marks the end of sections, and so has nothing to do with the rubrics. Eight sections were identified thereby, corresponding to the eventual Nipātas 1–2, 3–4, 5–11, 12, 16–20, 30, 40, and Mahā (the five hemistichs of v. 37 f. being apparently treated as the first triad rather than as the last distich). The eventual untidy sixteenfold segmentation is no more rational than this presumably more authentic arrangement.

Of more significance than the rubrics are the stray indications of Prakrit literary antecedents, notably in the collocation of verses concerning Nandā, Aḍḍhakāsī, and Abhayamātā in the Dukanipāta, reminiscent of the "Śreṇikapurāṇa" cycle in Jain Maharashtri. In *Maṇipaticarita* (ed. R. Williams, RAS, 1959), the tale of King Śreṇika's protégée, the rich courtesan Magadhasenā, is encapsulated within one that involves his Queen Nandā and