

*Antigone* and its Czech audience, Frank Bretschneider on Oedipus in a poem by Kazantzakis and in Sophokles, and Eckhardt Lefèvre on Sophokles' and Heiner Müller's *Philoktetes*.

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C. MAUDUIT: *Paysages et milieux naturels dans la littérature antique*. Actes de la table ronde organisée au Centre d'Études et de Recherches sur l'Occident Romain de l'Université Jean Moulin—Lyon 3 (25 Septembre 1997). Pp. XXX. Paris: Diffusion De Boccard, 1998. Paper, frs. 150. ISBN: 2-904-974-16-4.

As indicated in the title, this short volume of eight articles derives from papers originally delivered at a conference in 1997. The purpose of the published collection is to reflect upon the theme of landscape and natural environment as explored, either implicitly or explicitly, in a range of Greek authors, thereby 'reviving' interest in the study of such matters.

The articles themselves are of variable quality. The first three provide little in the way of startling insights, perhaps because each author attempts to cover too wide a subject-area. In the first (a survey of descriptive techniques in Homer based on selected and selective passages), a difference is asserted between the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in that the former gives primacy to the narrative of the action itself rather than the visual orientation of that action, while the latter has a more relaxed, subjective attitude to the representation of settings. The author has apparently never read T. M. Andersson, *Early Epic Scenery* (Ithaca, 1976).

In the second article may be found a discussion of landscape in Greek lyric under headings such as 'familiar', 'savage', and 'divine'. The main conclusion of this piece seems to be that landscape appears in a multitude of forms in lyric poetry.

Greek tragedy is featured in the third article (a survey of various kinds of landscape description by the tragic poets), wherein is offered the shocking conclusion that landscape can be one of the features defining the character of the hero, as proves, for example, to be the case with Philoctetes and Hippolytus.

Much more interesting is the investigation in the fourth article of Herodotus' descriptions of water and water courses. The author systematically studies and compares Herodotean descriptions of rivers such as the Nile and its northern equivalent the Ister; peoples who are represented as deriving their living from water; and the association of water with power in various contexts.

The Hippocratic corpus is next to come under the microscope, in an entertaining article examining the nature of analogies between the earth and man in these medical texts; the ways in which natural environment is represented as having an influence on the physical and mental condition of its inhabitants; and descriptions of landscape.

The sixth article in the sequence examines Apollonius' representations of landscapes in Book 2 of the *Argonautica*, focusing in particular on sameness and variation between Phineus' proleptic account of landmarks of the Argonauts' eastward voyage and the later narrative descriptions of the same places. Though this is ground which has been frequently covered in the past, the author makes a useful contribution to critical studies of Book 2, particularly in his exegesis of the descriptions of Acheron and the River Thermodon.

The penultimate article examines the use of the adjective *τραχὺς* by the medical writer Dioscorides. Enough said; even those to whom this type of thing appeals will find it heavy going.

Last, but not quite least, the final article focuses on Dio Chrysostom's diverse use of landscape/environmental descriptions in his discourses, descriptions in which, according to the article writer, the sophistic mingles with the poetic.

Overall, this collection is typical of the current penchant for rushing the proceedings of any and every conference into print, without consideration for academic quality or internal coherence. The result is that specialists will not find enough to detain them in this collection, while others who want to read their way into the subject of 'landscape' in ancient texts can find other and better books to occupy their time.

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