

may be advanced. (1) The Stoics recognised Heraclitus as their ancestor in the field of philosophy. (2) The Stoics, too, made a very broad and elaborate use of allegorical interpretation on the basis of etymology. (3) Such a change in historical context radically modifies all evaluations of the commentator's situation within the religious context, and in particular the Dionysian tradition, to which the gold leaves testify; but this is not the place to elaborate on this subject.

In conclusion, this book is, on a material and argumentative level, the best to be found in English on the Derveni papyrus. Although one can dispute the translation of one or another essential passage, the arguments advanced by B. to justify his position are strong and very well developed. Nevertheless, this work, with regard to its philosophical interpretation of the commentary and its reconstitution of the religious context in which the commentary was written, remains heavily dependent on the hypothesis of a date for its composition in the period of 420–400, which orients the author's conclusions towards pre-Socratic influence. B. does not make use of this hypothesis concerning dating, and would be happy to accept that the text was written any time before the archaeological date of the roll, that is, some time before 300. Nevertheless, most of his commentaries deal with pre-Platonic thinkers, which means that one way or another he accepts a predominantly pre-Platonic influence on the commentator, if not historically at least philosophically. This is the most important issue. Situating the writing of this commentary after Plato (438–348) and after Aristotle (384–322), in a Stoic context (Zeno lived between 335 and 263) radically modifies the interpretation: it focusses attention on the importance of allegory and on the development of a cosmology involving providential warm breath (*πνεῦμα*) associated with Zeus.

It is not the least merit of this exemplary book that, through the quality and presentation of its arguments, it leads us to raise such essential questions.

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PINDAR'S ANCIENT EDITORS

NEGRI (M.) *Pindaro ad Alessandria. Le edizioni e gli editori.* (Antichità Classica e Cristiana 34.) Pp. 253. Brescia: Paideia Editrice, 2004. Paper, € 28.60. ISBN: 88-394-0689-1.

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This is not a book that will increase one's understanding of Pindar. Rather, as the title suggests, it concentrates on the rationale adopted by Alexandrian scholars, especially Aristophanes of Byzantium, for the organisation of the four books of epinicians. Negri rejects Slater's assertion that Aristophanes was responsible only for cataloguing, not for editing, Pindar's odes (see fr. 381 in Slater's edition of Aristophanes) and rightly argues against a strict distinction between cataloguing and editing.

After a thorough discussion of the possible rationale used by Aristophanes for his edition of the epinicians, N. concludes that there were three primary criteria. The first was hierarchical, i.e. the prestige of the festivals, contests and victors, the second a combination of aesthetic and artistic features, and the third an 'imprescindibile principio, la parola del poeta.' On pp. 44–118 we are provided with an exhaustive

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treatment of the ancient sources which deal with the origins and chronology of the four stephanitic festivals, as well as several local games. The lack of agreement among these sources leads to the conclusion that chronology had nothing to do with the order adopted by Aristophanes – Olympian, Pythian, Isthmian, Nemean. It was simply a matter of prestige. Within each book it was the prestige of the contest, with chariot victories taking pride of place, and the fame of the victor. In view of this one might have expected *Olym. 2* (for Theron's chariot victory) to have begun the book of Olympian odes, but *Olym. 1* is placed first for two reasons. The first is Pindar's own statement in v. 7 that no contest is superior to that at Olympia, and the second is the myth of Pelops. In the latter case it is not that Pelops' victory over Oenomaus is to be viewed as the inauguration of the Olympian games (that was specifically assigned to Heracles by Pindar), but that the victory was in a chariot race, the most prestigious of all.

On pp. 161–9 N. attempts to determine the criteria governing the organisation of Bacchylides' epinicians. Here conclusions can be only tentative, given the fragmentary condition of some odes, but a good case is made for the order of at least the first seven odes. Just as Aristophanes, for reasons given above, placed Pindar's *Olym. 1* first, so Odes 1 and 2 (for the same victor, Argeios of Ceos) preceded 3–5 for Hieron. Although Argeios was a boy victor at the Isthmian games, in contrast to Hieron's chariot victory at the Olympian games, Ode 1 is placed first because of its impressive opening invocation of the Muses, because the victor was from Ceos, Bacchylides' native island, and because the myth celebrates the early history of the island. The typical hierarchy determines the order of Odes 3–5 and then we have two odes for another Cean winner. For the remainder each ode celebrates a different victor and probably concludes, like Pindar's *Nem. 11*, with an ode in honour of a political appointment.

I have touched upon only a few of the topics treated in this volume, and I can only emphasise that those interested in the editorial practices of Alexandrian (and post-Alexandrian) scholars will profit from N.'s thorough and well-reasoned account. As is to be expected, much attention is paid to the scholia; these, as well as other citations in Greek, are accompanied by a translation. My only criticism is that at times the book is unnecessarily repetitive and verbose.

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EMPEDOCLES

TRÉPANIÉ (S.) *Empedocles. An Interpretation*. (Studies in Classics 2.) Pp. xiv + 289. New York and London: Routledge, 2004. Cased, £55. ISBN: 0-415-96700-7.

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The modern scholarly consensus is that the surviving fragments of Empedocles derive from two poems: *On Nature* and *Purifications*. Scattered through antiquity are occasional references to works with these titles (sometimes *Physics* rather than *On Nature*); and mention by Diogenes Laertius (8.77) of 'the things concerning nature and the purifications', together with a figure for the number of verses they contain, is usually taken to be a clear indication of two separate titles. But in a powerful article

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