

familiarity with the sources and the bibliography is exemplary. The arrangement of separate components within arguments can be a little confusing, and questions can be raised about some of her detailed claims and conclusions. Nevertheless, the book points to the crucial importance of ancient representations of the figure of Homer in the tradition and makes a significant contribution to their study.

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## THE NINTH OLYMPIAN ODE

D. E. GERBER: *A Commentary on Pindar Olympian Nine. (Hermes Einzelschriften 87.)* Pp. 94. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2002. Paper, €34. ISBN: 3-515-08092-9.

Douglas Gerber has given heroic service to the cause of Pindaric scholarship. All Pindarists must acknowledge, in particular, his 1969 bibliography, his 1976 inventory of emendations, and his large 1982 commentary on *O. 1*. His new commentary on *O. 9*, the first ‘detailed commentary’ on this ode (Preface), is a learned study in the same vein.

Unlike some commentaries (from Jebb’s Sophocles—and Gildersleeve’s Pindar—to Macleod’s *Iliad* 24), this one has no literary-critical pretensions (which is not entirely predictable: G.’s *O. 1* commentary indeed had some). By Pindar’s own high standards, *O. 9* is not an overwhelmingly impressive work of the human spirit, but we learn little from the commentary what those high standards might amount to. The brief introduction, indicatively, hints at no interpretative perspectives beyond traditional historicist method and neo-Bundyan preoccupation with ‘compositional and encomiastic techniques’ (p. 11). G.’s audience, correlatively, is his fellow formalists: he eschews comment on various substantive topics, notably the foundation myths of Opous.

Within these limitations, philological expertise and command of secondary literature produce helpful discussions of detail. G. makes a good case for taking *ἀνήσαις ἐ καὶ νίόν* (14) as parenthetic, *κοίλαν* (34) as transferred epithet, *ἄεθλον* (108) as referring to Pindar’s ode. He is illuminating on the ‘illusion of intimacy’ in 21; on war and gods in 40–1; on ‘novelty’ (*νεωτέρων*) and ‘appeal to tradition’ (*λέγοντι*) in 49; on the operative implications of *ἐφάψαις* in 60 and *τόλμα* in 82; on the implicit comparison between victor Epharmostus and hero Patroclus that inheres in the metrical/phraseological parallelism of *παῖς ἄμ’ Ἄτρεΐδαις* (70) and *παῖς δ’ ἐν Ἀθάναις* (88); on the syntax in 103–4; on the ‘boldness’ (*θαρσέων*) that links poet and athlete (109); on the tricolon in 111. He has a useful comparative appendix on victory catalogues in Pindar, Bacchylides and ‘agonistic epigrams’ (pp. 71–8) that supersedes Thummer and De Conno.

And then one has criticisms. Bare notes of the form ‘uncommon word, found only here and in late prose’ (of *μεγαλόδοξος* 16) are frustrating: what follows from such a spread? 28: *σοφοί* is hardly evocative of *wrestling*. 70–3: the special status of Achilles (especially, but not only, in Aeginetan odes) deserves comment, even encomiastic comment (glory by association). On *ἄωτοι* (19) and *δεξιόγυιον* (111) see also my discussions in *CQ* (1983), 316–17, and *TAPA* (1998), 73. On *αἰών* (60), G. is content to refer to Pfeijffer (*Three Aeginetan Odes*), whose bibliography stops at Degani in the early 1960s; add e.g. Burkert, *Eranos Jahrbuch* (1982), 346–7, and Johansen-Whittle on Aesch. *Supp.* 46 (Pfeijffer’s is a generous but hit-and-miss compilation: here and

elsewhere G. relies on it too readily). Discussion of the text in 112 is inadequate: Hermann's *Αἶαν τεόν τ'* is accepted on trust (as by most edd. except Farnell), despite introducing the twin oddities of (i) an invocation to Ajax tacked onto an address to the chorus/poet (*ᾄρυσαι* 109) and (ii) an anomalous *τε* after the vocative—whereas the otherwise unexceptionable *Αἶαντεῖον* (codd.) seemingly has papyrus support (as G. himself notes) and (as G. and others fail to note) is open to prosodic interpretation as the iambic metron (with internal correction: cf. *O.* 13.81, *P.* 8.55, Bacch. 16.8, 17.92 and 129) which the infelicitous conjecture is designed to restore.

My chief criticism, however, is of G.'s treatment of the creative marvel of Pindaric language, especially the way he underinterprets Pindar's connotation play. Take 1–2, *μέλος φωνάεν*, Archilochus' 'song that *spoke, communicated*' (cf. the adj. at *O.* 2.85, *I.* 4.40, Xen. *Mem.* 2.7.13, and *ποτιφ.* at *Od.* 9.456, with West's note on *Theog.* 584), where G.'s response to *φ.* is 'a somewhat colourless word' 'meaning nothing more than "having a voice"': there are comparably reductive comments on (most obviously) *σκύταλον* (30) and *αἰπειναί* (108). Reading poetry is not a predictive science, but 'meaning nothing more than' must count as one of the most unpromising hermeneutic handles on Pindar, whose stock-in-trade is the *callida iunctura*, the defamiliarizing distortion, the subtly suggestive configuration. Hellenist commentators can do better: witness Garvie's *Choephoroi*, Sommerstein's *Aristophanes*, and—of old, once again—Gildersleeve's *Pindar*.

It would be churlish not to welcome what is, as G. says, the first detailed commentary on *O.* 9. It is only a shame that its perspectives are narrow and its contribution to critical appreciation limited.

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## LYRIC RECEPTIONS

M. CANNATÀ FERA, G. B. D'ALESSIO (edd.): *I lirici greci. Forme della comunicazione e storia del testo. Atti dell'Incontro di Studi, Messina, 5–6 novembre 1999.* (Pelorias 8.) Pp. 205. Messina: Dipartimento di Scienze dell'Antichità dell'Università degli Studi di Messina, 2001. Paper, €30. ISBN: 88-8268-007-X.

This volume has its origins in a conference held at Messina in November 1999. Its stated subject is not only the history of the texts of the lyric poets, but also the ways in which Archaic lyric was communicated and performed. Pindar is the best represented author, with five papers (out of thirteen), and another on a papyrus commentary to Pindar or Ibycus, while Sappho, Alcaeus, Anacreon, Archilochus, and Mimnermus get one each. One paper (by M. C. Martinelli), on the division of the Homeric hexameter into *cola*, is out of place.

The overall quality of this careful and thorough collection is high, though the 'presentazione' is too brief, which has unfortunate consequences. In their explanation of the connection between the textual history of the lyric poets and the performance of the poems the editors claim that the communication and diffusion of Greek lyric was almost exclusively oral (p. 9). Put as bluntly as this, no mention is made of the complexities involved in an accurate picture of the performance and early diffusion of Archaic poetry. Happily, several of the papers show a clear awareness of the difficulties.

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