

RICHARDSON (N.) **Three Homeric Hymns: to Apollo, Hermes, and Aphrodite, Hymns 3, 4, and 5.** Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. Pp. xiii + 272; maps. £55.99 (hbk); £19.99 (pbk). 9780521451581 (hbk); 9780521457733 (pbk).

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In this edition and commentary, Richardson provides an exemplary teaching tool. All students of the *Hymns* will benefit from this reliable, well-written and sensible work. It begins with a general introduction to the corpus before turning to each of the hymns in turn, summarizing the structure of the poem and introducing its major themes, moving then into more specific questions of authorship, date, performance, language and style, etc.

As appropriate for such a series, Richardson advances his own views on each poem but gives plenty of space to the opposition. For example, Richardson argues that *Apollo* is a unity, against those who would split it into Delian and Pythian sections, and he portrays *Hermes* as a comic masterpiece, against those who see its structure and language as incompetent or inappropriate for the epic style (as, for example, West's 2003 Loeb edition). Richardson is particularly strong on the place of these texts in early Greek literature, cautiously advancing cases of direct intertextuality (for example pages 20–21 on *Hermes* and *Apollo*) whilst ever keeping in mind the traditional nature of the poetry (for example page 29 on *Aphrodite* and Homer), and making excellent use of the evidence of early lyric (for example page 25 on *Hermes* and Alkaios 308 V, pages 29–30 on *Aphrodite* 26–29 and Alkaios 44(A) V), even reprinting and translating the new Sappho fragment on Tithonos in his note on *Aphrodite* 218–38 (247–48). Richardson is less generous with regard to later literature (though cf. pages 25–26 on *Hermes* and Sophocles' *Ikhneutai*), with only a brief preview and selective bibliography on the Hellenistic and Roman reception of the hymns (31–32).

The text is new, but not based on fresh examination of the mss (ix), whilst the sigla and *apparatus criticus* (as a base) are sensibly borrowed from Càssola's 1975 edition (32–33).

Each hymn receives a thorough treatment, though that devoted to *Aphrodite* is by some way the least extensive, mainly (ix) because of Faulkner's recent commentary (Oxford 2008). Richardson's economical notes cover every aspect of the hymns, ranging from the purely textual (for example on *Apollo* 11–12, 162–64; *Hermes*

109–11) and linguistic (*Apollo* 1; *Hermes* 106; *Aphrodite* 125) to the literary critical (*Aphrodite* 117–21 for Aphrodite's 'artful' combination of rape and marriage motifs) and mythological (*Apollo* 16–18, 296–97; *Hermes* 99–100; *Aphrodite* 187–90, 202–17, 218–38). The range of information provided in this commentary is impressive: Near Eastern parallels (*Apollo* 2–4; *Aphrodite* 87–90), the art (*Hermes* 21), archaeology (*Apollo* 296), geography (*Apollo* 244, 269) and history (*Apollo* 540–3) of the Archaic period, music (*Hermes* 51, 53–54), religious ritual (*Apollo* 231–38, *Hermes* 94–141, 109–11) and festival (*Apollo* 146–72), all aside from constant references to the ways in which the hymns are related to, or differ from, other early hexameter poems in matters of theme, language and style (*Apollo* 15, 161; *Hermes* 102–03, 146–47; *Aphrodite* 139–40, etc.). A great strength in this latter area is Richardson's treatment of structure (*Hermes* 322–96) and traditional motifs (especially the seduction elements in *Aphrodite*), always balancing a useful amount of parallel information with particular guidance on the current passage. Such riches as these have the slightly unfortunate side-effect of underlining the brevity of the indices – on subjects, Greek words and other passages discussed (268–72) – and this brings us to the only real criticism to be brought against this book: it lacks an introductory section on language and metre, and gives no easy access through the indices to the many notes on these topics in the commentary.

However, this is a masterly and judicious work, the fruit of an entire career of teaching and publication on this corpus; would that it had been available when I began instructing undergraduates. I shall use it for many years to come.

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CACIAGLI (S.) **Poeti e società: comunicazione poetica e formazioni sociali nella Lesbo del VII/VI secolo a.C.** (Supplementi di Lexis 64). Amsterdam: Hakkert, 2011. Pp. 357. €84. 9789025612726.

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The book is an edited version of Caciagli's doctoral thesis at the University of Bologna and is presented as a complementary work to W. Rösler's study on Alcaeus (*Dichter und Gruppe*, Munich, 1980). Throughout the book, Caciagli's