constantly destabilized by competition for power and recognition. Yet societies also guarded some 'formal' status symbols which were crucial for maintaining order and authority. Reinhold's assumption that purple was at the same time a formal and an informal status symbol thus seemed to miss a crucial aspect of status symbolism.

There was a close connection between the representation of *basileis* wearing purple in Homeric epic and the oriental, probably Assyrian, practice of reserving purple as a formal symbol of royal power. Yet in subsequent literature and myth the association of gods, kings, and heroes with purple was no more than a topical re-working of Homeric imagery and had no immediate historical background. In a cultic context, it was above all women who displayed wealth and status with purple robes and dedicated them in temples. Moreover, purple in cult seems never to have developed meanings that were independent from its everyday usage. In the political sphere B. observes a certain concentration of purple symbolism in Ionia and Athens, although it was by no means absent in other parts of the Greek world. Before the Persian wars it seemed to have been a widespread informal status symbol signalling wealth, power, and connections with the East. The situation changed after the war, when purple became a sign of Persian effeminacy, luxury, and tyranny. When Aristophanes, for example, predicts that Demos will be dressed in purple, this was a parallel to the Thucydidean notion of empire being a tyranny (165 with Ar. *Knights* 1330ff.). The situation changed again when Alexander appropriated oriental symbols of monarchy, including the *chiton mesoleukos* which was normally dyed purple. At the Hellenistic courts purple became a symbol of royal power and *truphe*, reserved for the king and his entourage. With the increasing formalization of court life in the second century B.C., laws become extant which suggest that wearing a purple dress had become one of the privileges formally bestowed by the king on deserving individuals.

B. does not fail to discuss exceptions and variations to this general picture, as, for example, the largely Etruscan influence on the use of purple in Magna Graecia; or the differentiated regulations about purple in the various Hellenistic kingdoms. More questionable are his elision of textual representation and social reality, and his rigid division of in fact overlapping spheres of social practice. The separation of religious and non-religious contexts of symbolic display, or the distinction between mythological, theatrical, and real-life use of purple, ignores the discursive space that existed between these supposedly different areas of social communication. Moreover, the implicit assumption that the amount of extant evidence for purple coincides with the degree to which it was used in practice disregards the possibility that authors deliberately conceal or manipulate the meaning of symbols. If, for example, B. suggests that the purple tapestry in the *Agamemnon* was no more than a 'theatrical' reference to Sardian/Mycenean practices, he underestimates the degree to which the configuration of status and transgression are closely related at a symbolic level. And finally there is his use of sources. Some of them are epigraphical and may offer a glimpse into *realia*. But most of the evidence comes from Athenaeus, Plutarch, Livy, and Pausanias. They hardly provide an unproblematic account of symbolic practice over time and space, let alone of purple, which (as Belis has shown) was fraught with ambiguity and magic. B. has put together a useful collection of material within a plausible socio-political framework. The subject of purple, however, is not quite exhausted.

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U. Bultrighini: *Elementi di dinamismo nell'economia greca tra VI e IV secolo. L'eccezione e la regola*. Pp. 176. Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 1999. Paper, L. 30,000. ISBN: 88-7694-432-X.

This work makes a modest contribution to the longstanding debate over the structure of Greek economic institutions, namely whether to judge that their strongest affinities lie with subsistence, 'peasant' economies (with undifferentiated social behaviors) or to opt for a substantial rôle for market-oriented components and processes. Bultrighini identifies himself as a critic of what he deems neoprimitivism, recognizing appreciations of 'dynamism' and autonomous economic activity in a number of literary sources. In contrast to this approach, parallel anglophone scholarship has tended to be methodologically opportunistic and diverse in its adducing of evidence, drawing on legal texts, documentary material, and archaeological data. Thus, I suspect that the impact of this book on British and North American scholars will probably be limited.

B.'s first part, on elements of exchange from the sixth to the fourth century, is dominated by a

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discussion of Thucydides (especially in his *arkhaiologia*), supplemented by explorations of Solon, Theognis, Aristotle, and Strabo. Here restriction to literary evidence is a major impediment, as ancient reflections on the economies of archaic Corinth or Aigina (for instance) can hardly be understood without recourse to extra-textual evidence (and here even some important literary references are missed). B. may be credited for emphasizing the connection between archaic trade/exchange and *harpagē* 'seizure' or 'plundering'. Yet, a more sure-handed treatment of this nexus would have been sensitive to varying historical contexts. For example, the differences between Theognidean Megara and Solonian Athens transcend the gross similarities of a common elegiac diction and discourse. The considerable history of investigation about the interaction of piracy and early commerce also needed better referencing in this work.

The second part of the book treats in much greater depth the *Oeconomicus* of Xenophon and the *Heroicus* of Flavius Philostratus, that constitute for the author *l'aurea eccezione*. B. curiously finds the treatments of economic life in these two works strongly affiliated. His reading of Xenophon is commendably less dismissive about the relevance of the treatise to Greek economic ideology and is sensitive to the ironic play between Socrates and Ischomachus. Thus it is helpful as a corrective to the reading of the treatise by M. I. Finley. The treatment of the *Heroicus* is less happy, first of all for lack of reflection of the controversies about attribution and generic affiliations. Although his readings of individual passages in the work were often intriguing, it is unconvincing that a specimen of pastoral escapism could be very consequential for understanding ancient appreciations of economic behavior.

The more important ancient passages for his argument are translated with the Greek cited in footnotes or, in the case of lengthier selections, collected in an index. The relevant bibliography is tremendous, and this work is very sparing in its citation—much too parsimonious to my taste. I might single out as a case of particularly inadequate marshaling of earlier scholarship a strained interpretation of the Calaurian Amphictyony. The chief utility of this work should be for social historians, who may find some of B.'s textual readings useful.

Rutgers University THOMAS J. FIGUEIRA

S. GRIMAUDO: *Misurare e pesare nella Grecia antica. Teorie, storia, ideologie*. Pp. 206. Palermo: L'Epos, 1998. Paper, L. 26,000. ISBN: 88-8302-189-4.

Weights and measures have not been fashionable subjects. C. H. Grayson's Oxford thesis of 1974, *Greek Weighing*, was never published, and to answer many metrological questions one still has to go back to F. Hultsch, *Griechische und römische Metrologie* (2nd edn) of 1882. But in the area of quantification, as in so many other areas, there has been something of a revolution, for which Foucault is not entirely without responsibility. His *Les mots et les choses* (Paris, 1966) (*The Order of Things*) showed the cultural, and indeed political, importance of counting and classifying, and opened the way to writing a history of weighing and measuring that was not simply antiquarian. For the western world since antiquity, parts, at least, of that history have now been written: Alfred W. Crosby's *The Measure of Reality. Quantification and Western Society 1250–1600* (Cambridge, 1997) lays claim to a Renaissance revolution in quantification as profound as any of the later sexual, penal, or medical revolutions identified by Foucault.

Grimaudo's agreeable and excellently produced book does not quite provide us with the Greek volume of a Foucauldian History of Mensuration, but it certainly moves the study in that direction. G. is not interested in establishing what the modern equivalents of ancient units of length, weight, or capacity were, nor in how Greeks carried out weighing and measuring operations (unlike Grayson); she is interested in how the Greeks thought about those operations.

The first chapter considers the stories that the Greeks told about the origin of weights and measures, looking at both the mythical stories (of Palamedes, etc.), where S. notes that there are both positive and negative traditions, and at claims to historical inventors, Pythagoras, but above all Pheidon of Argos (noting the way in which Isidore compares Pheidon to Moses, and the Josephan tradition in which measures were bad and invented by Cain). G. brings out the way in which authors point to the absence of measures in the state of nature and present the imposition of measures (as in Aristophanes' *Birds*) as a mark of imperialism.

The second chapter is interested in the rôle of measures in politics and in medicine. The political discussion centres on the measure of equality, and in particular on the difference between geometric and arithmetic equality (with a wide-ranging, but by no means exhaustive,

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