

as a discipline, although we have no evidence to validate this (p. 111). There are signs of hasty preparation. For example, R. offers Pindar as a witness to an argument but cites no passage from Pindar to support his assertion (p. 203). None the less, R. has produced a fine edition, and Princeton UP has done an admirable job of producing an attractive, relatively affordable text.

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PLUTARCH'S *ALCIBIADES*

VERDEGEM (S.) *Plutarch's Life of Alcibiades. Story, Text and Moralism*. Pp. 499. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2010. Cased, €69.50. ISBN: 978-90-5867-760-0.

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This book was built on V.'s 2004 Leuven dissertation, a commentary on Plutarch's *Life of Alcibiades*. The detailed introduction is divided into three parts, as promised by the title: Moralism, Story and Text. The commentary is followed by a final chapter, 'Conclusions'. There is a very thorough bibliography, and indexes of passages in Plutarch and in other authors; there is no subject index.

V.'s book rests on two premises: (1) the narrative *text* and the underlying *story* are distinct entities and (2) readers of Plutarch's *Parallel Lives* must never forget his moral purpose, to provide examples for men to emulate. V. is particularly interested in using the *Alcibiades* as a test case in applying narrative theory to ancient texts. This emphasis on the work as a whole acts as a kind of subtext to the biography, in the same way that the emphasis on Plutarch's moral purpose is seen as an omnipresent background to *Alcibiades*. 'Moralism' comes first in the Introduction. V. discusses the moral purpose of the *Lives*, Plutarch's use of negative as well as positive examples, illustrative but non-didactic moralism and the importance of comparison. He then examines the basic facts and different portrayals of Alcibiades by historical, rhetorical and philosophical authors, particularly in the Socratic tradition. Next is 'Story', focussing on Plutarch's sources and method of work. 'Text' discusses Plutarch's narrative techniques, the parallel *Coriolanus*, and the relative chronology of the *Lives*.

The commentary is divided into ten chapters of varying lengths corresponding to different stages of Alcibiades' life, starting with 'The Proem' and ending with 'A Tragic Downfall'. Each is further divided into subcategories. For instance, Section 2, 'A Difficult Character (Alc. 2–9)', is subdivided thus: 1. On Character Changes and Innate Passions (Alc. 2.1); 2. Childhood Stories (Alc. 2.2–3.2); 3. How to Distinguish Flatterers from a Friend (Alc. 4–6); 4. Sayings and Doings of a Young Adult (Alc. 7–9); 5. Conclusions. With the exception of Sections 4 (A Thought-Provoking Transition; Alc. 16) and 6 (The Art of Adaptation; Alc. 23.4–5), each section ends with 'Conclusions'. These sections highlight particular aspects thrown into relief by the passages under scrutiny. For instance, at the end of Section 7, 'From Sparta to Samos (Alc. 23.6–26.9)', the Conclusions discuss Alcibiades' chameleon-like nature, Plutarch's treatment of Thucydides as a source, and the alteration by Plutarch of the order of events, having 'deliberately decided to bring up Peisander's mission to Athens (26.1) after the end of his account of

the Phrynichus affair (25.7–14) to keep together all the events relating to the installation of the Four Hundred' (p. 306).

V. is right to recognise the importance of examining the *Parallel Lives* together. Citing the problem of manuscript length for a work that provided detailed coverage of both Alcibiades and Coriolanus, V. proposes to refer to Coriolanus 'wherever a comparative reading contributes to the moral purpose of the pair' (p. 11). The same disclaimer applies to Comparison. The 'Moralism' section of the Introduction discusses the Comparisons in general, and in particular the inconsistencies within and among them. V.'s point about manuscript length is well taken, and he does refer us to a forthcoming publication on the subject, but it is a shame there was not space for a fuller treatment of this important topic.

This eclectic book is a cross between a traditional historical commentary and a literary study of Plutarch through the *Alcibiades*. Although the commentary is linear and easy to use for particular passages, the organisational structure gives an additional dimension that is ultimately rewarding, but not without challenge. Looking at the biography thematically, as well as by the traditional division of chapters and paragraphs, provides an additional armature for the biography itself and helps further V.'s goal of looking at it in a wider context. This fine book will be of most use to specialists, but it will appeal to scholars of ancient literature in general and to those interested in the life and times of Alcibiades.

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GALEN

GILL (C.), WHITMARSH (T.), WILKINS (J.) (edd.) *Galen and the World of Knowledge*. Pp. xviii + 327. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009. Cased, £60, US\$99. ISBN: 978-0-521-76751-4. doi:10.1017/S0009840X1000199X

Based on a conference of the same name, organised by the Editors at the University of Exeter in 2005, this book (the most recent in the series *Greek Culture in the Roman World*, edd. S.E. Alcock, J. Elsner and S. Goldhill) succeeds admirably in its stated aim to 'contribute to the upsurge of new research on Galen by focusing on a topic that bridges the interests of specialists in ancient medical history and Classicists and philosophers more generally' (p. xvii). The emphasis throughout is on accessibility to a wide audience.

The volume consists of thirteen chapters written by leading international scholars. The Editors' 'Introduction' (pp. 1–18) sets the context and themes, explains the structure of the volume and provides a summary of each essay.

Chapter 1, 'Galen's Library' by V. Nutton, is richly learned and a pleasure to read, introducing 'Galen, the Antonine man of letters' (p. 33) and providing context for the whole volume.

Chapter 2, 'Conventions of Prefatory Self-presentation in Galen's *On the Order of My Own Books*' by J. König, considers compilatory writing generally before focussing upon the 'tropes of prefatory self-presentation' (p. 40) and the motif of writing for friends.

Chapter 3, 'Demiurge and Emperor in Galen's World of Knowledge' by R. Flemming, is an ambitious chapter, where potentially unfamiliar material is made