Whatever we may think of the *Aeneid*, we must acknowledge that it put Virgil in a class by himself among Augustan poets. It was a class that none of the major Augustans – Horace, Propertius, Ovid – chose to emulate, as Matthew Robinson shows in 'Augustan Responses to the *Aeneid*'. Horace erected a lyric 'Pindaric' persona as his iconoclastic counter to Virgil's Homeric persona. Propertius asserts a contrasting elegiac identity, 'subverting the themes of other genres' (p. 207), including Virgilian epic. For his part, Ovid 'took a mischievous delight in undercutting anything that took itself seriously' (p. 210).

Matthew Leigh's 'Statius and the Sublimity of Capaneus' is the only chapter in this collection that takes a polemical stance. Leigh takes issue with the views of David Vessey, Gordon Williams and others who describe Statius as meekly submitting to the supremacy of Virgil. Following Dryden, Leigh points to the hero Capaneus in the *Thebaid*, 'the spiritual heir of Mezentius' (p. 227), as a character with whom Statius identifies as he challenges the established mastery of Virgil.

Far more distant from the lofty eminences of Homer and Virgil are the Anglo-Saxon and Irish heroic narratives discussed in Michael Clarke's 'Achilles, Byrhtnoth, and Cú Chulainn. Continuity and Analogy from Homer to the Medieval North'. Finding common ground in the depiction of the hero as possessed by self-destructive recklessness, Clarke finds these are probably parallel independent developments. The topos of the warrior transformed by rage in the Ulster Cycle, on the other hand, is more likely to be influenced by 'dog-eared handbooks of sub-literary lore' (p. 271) in the Classical tradition such as Dares Phrygius' *De excidio Troiae*.

In 'Quantum Mutatus ab Illo' Emily Wilson argues that instances of failed recognition in *Paradise Lost* and *Gerusalemme liberata* are metapoetic devices revealing their authors' 'concerns about how Renaissance Christian epic can connect itself to the classical tradition, and yet remain distinct from it' (p. 299).

For many, Richard Jenkyns is the dean of Victorian neo-classicical studies by virtue of *The Victorians and Ancient Greece* (1980). His contribution to the present volume, 'The Idea of Epic in the Nineteenth Century', comments on the struggle that (mostly English) writers had with the challenge of defining and writing in the epic mode. It was, as we all know, a losing struggle, whose details will be better understood by anyone who reads this fine essay.

Bruno Currie's Epilogue complements the preceding eleven contributions by exploring common themes and developing further ramifications of their arguments. The volume as a whole is richly laced with footnotes augmented by a 37-page list of references, an index of passages and a general index.

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ELEGY AND EPIGRAM

ALONI (A.), IANNUCCI (A.) *L'elegia greca e l'epigramma dalle origini al V secolo. Con un'appendice sulla 'nuova' elegia de Archiloco*. Pp. xiv + 274. Florence: Le Monnier Università, 2007. Paper, €19.40. ISBN: 978-88-00-20492-7.

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This attractive yet inexpensive book is a welcome study of archaic and classical elegy, covering more ground than earlier surveys, most notably in its 32-page appendix,

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obviously written after the book was ready for the press, on the new Archilochus Telephus-elegy edited by Obbink as *P.Oxy*. 4708. In English, its only rival would be C.M. Bowra, *Early Greek Elegists* (Cambridge, MA, 1938), but of course A. and I. have much to tell us about what has concerned scholars since Bowra,[1] even if it is not their intention to break new ground. And thanks to papyrological finds, there is now more elegy to consider, most notably the new Archilochus, Simonides and Tyrtaeus. It is pleasing to see that the survey ends with the liminal figure of Antimachus, whose meagre remains render him a minor classical elegist (West included him in *IEG*), but who is the elegist mentioned more than any other by Hellenistic poets.

Part 1, on the origin, form and diction of elegy, and which for most readers may prove the most generally useful, is a survey of the major topics of interest inherent in the genre. In 'I nomi dell'elegia' and even more in 'La forma e i contenuti', A. and I. review, as all who deal with the subject must, the history and etymology of the root ἐλεγ-. They are sympathetic to the possibility that it does derives from the idea of lamentation, but ultimately settle for the compromise that threnody was assimilated to but one early offshoot of Greek elegy. In other words, the elegiac metre was broad and flexible enough to incorporate (to mention only this polarity) both the joy of the symposium and the sadness brought on by the death of a friend or relative. Its historical origin remains a mystery. It is an interesting eccentricity of A. and I. that in discussing elegy they cite more examples from French, German and Italian poetry than from more immediately relevant Latin passages.

The book contains only one chapter on epigram (Chapter 2), which may perhaps not seem enough to justify the words *e l'epigramma* in the title, although it is welcome here as an important component of classical poetry in elegiac couplets: all too often classical elegy and archaic and classical epigrams are discussed without any reference to each other. For this reason alone the chapter deserves careful reading, although it cannot replace several fairly recent lengthy articles and one book, even if these are primarily on Hellenistic epigrams.[2]

A. and I. well characterise the distinction between early inscriptional epigram and archaic and classical elegy, noting especially the epigrams' self-awareness as physical objects that are part of a larger physical complex in a unique location: the common expressions τόδε τὸ σῆμα/μνῆμα and ἐνθάδε clearly have their origin in ordinary speech, as can be seen from Hector's imagined description of his tomb which begins ἀνδρὸς μὲν τόδε σῆμα, where the anonymous first word would in a real epitaph be replaced by a proper name (*Il*. 7.88–9). Note too that Hector's πάλαι and ποτε are echoed by the frequent occurrence of ποτε in inscriptions, as the poet writes words appropriate to the time of reading; cf. W. Kierdorf, *Erlebnis und Darstellung der Perserkriege* (Göttingen, 1966), p. 18. Usually μνῆμα and σῆμα are synonyms, but cf. 83 *CEG*, μνῆμα τόδ' ἐστ' ἐπὶ σάματι κείμενον ἀνδρὸς ἀρίστου, where μνῆμα must refer to the upper portion of the entire structure and σᾶμα primarily to the grave, just

[1]See M.L. West, *Studies in Greek Elegy and Iambus* (Berlin, 1974); R.L. Fowler, 'Elegy and the Genres of Archaic Greece', ch. 3 of his *The Nature of Early Greek Lyric: Three Preliminary Studies* (Toronto, 1987), pp. 86–103; K. Bartol, *Greek Elegy and Iambus: Studies in Ancient Literary Theory* (Poznan, 1993); C. A. Faraone, *The Stanzaic Architecture of Early Greek Elegy* (Oxford, 2008).

[2]B. Gentili, 'Epigramma ed elegia', in A. Dihle (ed.), *L'Épigramme grecque* (Vandœvres-Genève, 1967 = *Entretiens Hardt* 14), pp. 37–90; E. Degani, 'L'epigramma', in F. Adorno et al. (edd.), *Storia e civiltà dei Greci: La cultura ellenistica* (Milan, 1977), pp. 266–99: H. Häusle, *Einfache und frühe Formen des griechischen Epigramms* (Innsbruck, 1979).

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as in Thuc. 1.93.2, *στῆλαι ἀπὸ τῶν σημάτων καὶ λίθοι εἰργασμένοι ἐγκατελέγησαν*. See F. Eichler, '*Σῆμα* und *μνῆμα* in älteren griechischen Grabinschriften', *AM* 39 (1914), 138–43.

It is with elegy, however, that A. and I. chiefly concern themselves. Performance in particular has long been a concern of A. (and of the Italians in general, who have adopted the word into their language). Although Bowie's argument that elegy was performed almost exclusively at symposia is discussed, they are sympathetic to Vetta's division of symposia into three types, each of which produces its own kind of elegy. This may be true, but Vetta relies on deductive methods akin to those of West in his *Studies in Greek Elegy and Iambus*, which Bowie's article did much to weaken. They are on surer ground in the next section ('La comunicazione'), where function rather than performance is the main topic. The new Simonides is reviewed here to bring out how different genres are employed in complex ways (suggesting public performance), so that a threnody for all the Greek dead and praise (perhaps for Sparta and Pausanias in particular) are convincingly combined (pp. 78–81).

The last chapter of Part 1 is 'Il codice' (sc. elegiaco), which examines the varying relationship between elegy and epic in terms of diction, accompaniment, and poetic voice or persona. It covers familiar ground but provides an up-to-date review. Here again the new Simonides serves as a touchstone for earlier views.

Although Part 2 takes note of the view that much of elegy is traditional and owes little to its individual practitioners (p. 112), its first two chapters are meant to serve as a brief introduction to the life and work of the major elegists, as well as to the particular problems of the Theognidea (Chapters 5–6 can be profitably supplemented by the testimonia in Gerber's Loeb). Of particular value are the pages on the more obscure elegists of the fifth century, Ion of Chios, Evenus, Critias and Antimachus. The last chapter, 'I contenuti', contains a generous selection of texts without apparatus critici, along with translation and brief discussions which are not meant to substitute for detailed commentary. A selection of inscriptional epigrams would have been welcome.

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SAPPHO

JOHNSON (M.) *Sappho*. Pp. 176. London: Bristol Classical Press, 2007. Paper, £10.99. ISBN: 978-1-85399-690-0.
doi:10.1017/S0009840X0800005X

Written for Duckworth's 'Ancients in Action', this book delivers exactly what the series promises: an engaging and accessible introduction suitable for the 'modern, general reader'. In my experience, the modern, general undergraduate reader typically comes to Sappho's poetry armed with two certainties: that the poet was a lesbian and that, because 'people back then' were unenlightened misogynists, Sappho's poetry must have gone unappreciated and overlooked. The tattered and fragmentary remains of her nine books of poetry – resembling handfuls of pottery shards – only seem to support an assumption of cultural attempts to silence another female voice. This audience, and indeed anyone who has encountered Sappho's riveting and deeply personal lyrics – so beautiful even in translation – has much to learn from J.'s book. The poet whom Plato praised as the 'Tenth Muse' enjoyed from the start a peerless

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