General

For this General review, I have selected five exciting books dealing with religion. I am very happy to report that we now find selected papers of Robert Parker, one of the luminaries in the field of Greek religion, in a handsomely produced and affordable volume published in the *Kernos* Suppléments series, whose many virtues I have often extolled on these pages.[1] The collection contains twenty articles published over the span of thirty-five years, and, in a way, provides the 'best of' of Parker's *opera minora*. But these are *minora* in name only: all articles gathered in this volume have been, and remain, highly influential and represent question-defining studies that shaped the way we think about discrete problems in Greek religion.

The volume is split into four sections: the first and the longest section, 'Religion and Society', opens with Parker's inaugural lecture delivered before the University of Oxford in 1997 on Cleomenes' siege of the Acropolis ('a presumptuous intrusion on a high place', 11), and it gathers eight papers on both broad matters of the Athenian, Spartan, and Panhellenic religion and cults, as well as more technical pieces dealing with various problems surrounding Greek ritual norms and the matters of the '*polis* religion'. The section 'Divination', dedicated to Parker's long-standing interest, comprises four papers, as do sections three and four: two articles are dedicated to the oracle of Dodona, and the remaining two to the relationship between oracles and states and oracles and individuals, respectively. 'Sacrificial problems' gathers papers on sacrificial meat, battle sacrifices, agents of sacrifice, and the issue of substitution in Greek sacrifice. The final section, 'Gods and Their Names', studies discrete problems associated with theophoric names, cult epithets, and the cults of Aphrodite and Priapus. Those working in the field of Greek religion will be familiar with most, if not perhaps all, pieces published here, but the fact that now we have them at our disposal in one handy volume is most welcome. All the more so, since the author has taken care to provide postscripts for individual papers, affording us additional observations and bringing readers up to speed with most important finds, publications, and key debates since the original publication (which in one case goes all the way back to 1989). As ever, Parker's crisp and at times witty prose, his unique gift to circumscribe and examine problems from a variety of vantage points, and his masterful disposition of evidence and scholarly views affords one a thoroughly rewarding (re-)reading.

In his recent monograph, Parker examined the question of what happened to Greek gods abroad, that is, how non-Greek cultures to which Greek gods were imported influenced the nature of the worship. In a kind of a complementary undertaking, Bradley Buszard studies the way in which the Greeks themselves dealt with Roman gods. But there is one fundamental difference: while Parker's principal interest is firmly set in the domain of lived religion, Buszard opts to examine the translations of Roman divinities in Greek literature.[2] There is a valid reason for this decision: Buszard's monograph is the first study to be published within a broadly conceived project on Greek Translations of Latin (GRETL) aiming to examine in a series of monographs

[1] *Cleomenes on the Acropolis and Other Studies in Greek Religion and Society*. By Robert Parker. Kernos Supplément 42. Liège, Presses Universitaires de Liège, 2024. Pp. 380. Paperback, €30.00, ISBN: 978-2-875-62398-0.

[2] *Greek Translations of Roman Gods*. By Bradley Buszard. Berlin/Boston, De Gruyter, 2023. Pp. xii + 324. Hardback, £99.98, ISBN: 978-3-111-07217-3.

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'Greek translations of native Roman concepts' (3), so one hopes that in time also the vast relevant epigraphic material will be systematically studied as well. For now, GRETL's and Buszard's focus in harvesting data is set on Polybius, our earliest literary source for Greek translations of Latin terms, and then on Diodorus, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Strabo, Plutarch, Appian, Cassius Dio, and the *Monumentum Ancyranum* (Buszard does pay some attention to further epigraphic sources as well). Since the Roman pantheon includes both divinities analogous to the Greek ones as well as non-analogous gods and goddesses, Buszard splits the material accordingly. In the first half, 'syncretized Roman gods', he catalogues and comments on twenty-nine analogous divinities and the cult of the emperor; for Felicitas and Fortuna, Iuno, Iuppiter, and Venus, a number of specific divine epithets is discussed. The second part of the book correspondingly examines twenty-eight 'unsyncretized' gods, many of which are divinized personifications such as Aius Locutius, Concordia, Honos, Pax, Pietas, and similar. Each entry starts typically with an overview of a divinity's nature, age, and the place in the pantheon, and then turns to an analysis of the Greek translations of the divinity in a variety of sources, and to general comments on Greek attitudes towards a given divinity. As Buszard rightly observes in his brief conclusion, much can be learned about cultural interactions between Greeks and Romans on the basis of interests and emphases of individual authors: many are keen to ponder on etymology, colourful details, and materiality of Roman cults. The volume closes with three good sets of indices (Greek words; sources; general). This learned and helpful book, a product of a substantial effort in collecting and analysing data, deserves a warm welcome, since it will represent a valuable tool for classicists, students of religion, historians, and archaeologists alike.

As I just mentioned materiality, K. A. Rask's *Personal Experience and Materiality in Greek Religion*[3] discusses personal experience of ancient Greek worshippers between the eighth and the fourth centuries BC from the standpoint of materiality. With the rise of interest in individual and belief and individual and religiosity, as *G&R* readers have learned in this issue from Parker and will learn more in the next issue from Harrison, the topic is timely and welcome, as is the insistence on materiality, which is well on its way to become an interdisciplinary subfield of its own within the area of Classical studies. Rask's principal aim is to draw attention to the importance of individual religious experience in everyday life, rather than that of a group in an organized large-scale ritual, and in this distinctly interdisciplinary undertaking she does so by drawing conclusions from both samples of large data-sets, such as votive offerings, as well as on the basis of distinct case studies. The author singles out four aspects of personal experience as vital to her approach: haptics and self-made votives; life-long religious practices and ubiquitous material culture; divine/supernatural presences in daily life; and media of presence. Therefore, the key words are corporeality, materiality, and haptics – both in those circumstances that Harvey Whitehouse might associate with a low and with a high level of arousal among worshippers. Rask takes us in this book from production and dedication of wreaths, cakes, and woven and wooden

[3] *Personal Experience and Materiality in Greek Religion*. By K. A. Rask. London and New York, Routledge, 2023. Routledge Monographs in Classical Studies. Pp. 209. 49 figures. Hardback, US $160, ISBN: 978-1-032-35748-5.

artefacts, over religious education and magic, to the experiences of divine presence, as we learn in this wide-ranging study about emotional, sensory, and physical reactions of ancient worshippers from various walks of life, and, cumulatively, from childhood to death. Pinpointing individual experience in Greek religion can be a challenging, even daunting, endeavour for a variety of source-related reasons, yet Rask's materiality-based approach does bear fruit and provide original and important insights into the hearts, minds, and bodies of ancient worshippers. The problem of scaling-up observations drawn from sources of heterogeneous nature and stemming from different periods is a real one, and Rask does well to acknowledge and address it repeatedly in the book. While one may occasionally disagree with some of Rask's views or complain that certain promising areas should perhaps have been covered as well in a book with such an ambitious title and aim, I have learned a great deal from this thought-provoking study. But my main quibble is to do with the press: Routledge, ancient wisdom teaches us that we should do nothing in excess, so what *are* you doing with your prices? Charging $160 for a 209-page hardback? Even with the staggering world-wide inflation of the past few years, I never thought that the day would come when De Gruyter's prices will appear to me comparatively sensible.

On the topic of divine knowledge, there is plenty to learn about it in *Divination and Revelation in Later Antiquity*, an exciting volume edited by Elsa Giovanna Simonetti and Claire Hall.[4] Chronologically, the collection deals with the period from the end of the Republic until the end of antiquity and analyses a broad spectrum of divinatory practices and beliefs among Greeks, Romans, Jews, and Christians. A cast of younger and well-established international scholars covers a vast amount of ground, and as a whole the volume greatly enriches our knowledge of divination during the period of intense interactions between and cross-fertilization among powerful religious traditions.

In their erudite introduction, the editors start from the observation that there is a paradox at the heart of divination: divination is predicated upon inspiration, while at the same time it may presuppose a certain degree of technical knowledge and skill; in other words, divination is a gift in two senses of the word – a present from the gods, and an ability to do something, whether an innate or an acquired ability. Hence, for some types of divination, inspiration suffices, while for the others, conjectures based on technical knowledge must be made to obtain a result. Similarly, the knowledge acquired by divination can be sourced from material (contingent) events, or immaterial (transcendent) experiences. The focus is distinctly on the intellectual, rather than socio-historical, dimension of divination: how did the philosophers of the period contemplate on divinatory practices? How were the prophets themselves conceived, conceptualized, and perceived? What tensions existed between prophetic inspiration and practical concerns? These three questions, boiled down, form the centre of three distinct sections. The first section, 'Philosophical Perspectives on Divination, Revelation, and Prophecy', contains four papers: Elsa Simonetti's 'Theories of Prophecy in Philo of Alexandria' examines Philo's analysis of reliable and unreliable modes of prophecy; Andrei Timotin's 'The Neoplatonic Background of a Text on

[4] *Divination and Revelation in Later Antiquity*. Edited by Elsa Giovanna Simonetti and Claire Hall. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2023. Pp. 224. 5 figures. Hardback, £72.76, ISBN: 978-1-009-32878-4.

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Prophecy Attributed to John Chrysostom' uncovers the principles that governed the classification of various types of prophecy and predictive knowledge in general (spiritual, daemonic, natural and artificial, popular), in a Christian pseudepigraph; Ilaria Ramelli's 'Revelation' for Christians and Pagans and Its Philosophical Allegoresis: Intersections within Imperial Platonism' studies overlaps between Christian and non-Christian Platonists in their approach to exegesis and revelation; and Crystal Addey's 'Divination and Dialogue in Porphyry and Iamblichus' fittingly demonstrates that philosophical dialectics *is* reconcilable with divinatory inspiration.

The four papers in the following section, 'Status, Role, and Functions of Human Intermediaries', contain some of my personal highlights: Claire Hall's The '"Holiest Man Ever Born": Sages, *Theioi Andres*, and the Shaping of Late Greek Prophecy', examines interesting differences between 'godly men' (I did not like the volume's rendering 'holy men') of the Greeks versus those of the Judeo-Christian sources (all of which are at some remote from Hesiod's most remarkable *theios aner*); Hanna Tervanotko's 'Women and Divine Dreams in Jewish Texts of the Greco-Roman Era' studies women's dreams in ancient Jewish texts, and thus casts light on practices and methods of female diviners in late antique Judaism; Georgia Petridou's 'Epiphany and Divination Reconsidered: The Case Study of the Iamata from Imperial Pergamum' raises questions regarding the nexus between healing, prophecy, and epiphany; and Marco Zambon's 'The True Prophet in the Pseudo-Clementine Homilies' examines the relationship between prophecy and knowledge.

The final section, 'Divine Transcendence and Pragmatic Purposes', opens with a paper of *G&R*'s own Federico Santangelo, 'Revelation and Roman Augury', which reads the ways in which Roman augury relates to time, timelessness, and (divine) knowledge; and the penultimate paper of the collection, Chiara O. Tommasi's 'For Thy Kingdom Is Past Not Away, / Nor Thy Power from the Place Thereof Hurled': Martianus Capella and a Prophylactic Oracle of Apollo' traces the history, agency, and interpretations of an oracle against pestilence and its value for the pagan Martianus as a token of an 'ideological battle' against the Christians. Finally, Aude Busine's concluding chapter, '"No Longer Does Phoebus Have a Cabin": Emperor Julian and the Fall of the Temple of Apollo in Delphi', scrutinizes an oracle in three verses found in *Artemii Passio*, believed to target emperor Julian, to demonstrate (to my mind convincingly) that the text is of a later date (fifth or sixth century AD) and has nothing to do with Julian's policies regarding Christians, nor with the circumstances surrounding the collapse of the Delphic temple.

The volume is, generally speaking, well produced, although I did notice a number of typos, some innocuous, some mildly irritating (such as e.g. σόφος and *theoi andres*). I do wish that an *index locorum* had been provided, even if the general index is fairly good. Overall, however, this is a rich, wide-ranging, and insightful collection, and I am sure that many will appreciate it; I certainly do.

At the end of this issue's General review, we move to Egypt: Ann-Katrin Gill and Mark Smith have re-edited, translated, and commented upon two papyri dealing with the transformations of the dead in the afterlife, the so-called 'Books of Transformations'.[5]

[5] *Transforming the Dead in Graeco-Roman Egypt. The Spells of P. Louvre N. 3122 and P. Berlin P. 3162*. By Ann-Katrin Gill and Mark Smith. Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und

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One of the papyri is now housed at the Louvre, while the other one is in Berlin, but they were both written by the same scribe, presumably in Egyptian Thebes, in the first century AD. I draw attention to these papyri since they might be of particular interest to scholars of Greek magic and 'Orphism', as the texts outline spells ensuring the transformation of the deceased person in a variety of non-human forms in the afterlife: in P. Louvre N. 3122 these are a scarab, beetle, falcon, serpent, and phoenix, while in P. Berlin P. 3162, the dead will be transformed into a falcon, phoenix, serpent, crocodile, and lion. In both cases, the deceased will enjoy a privileged existence under divine protection. Similarities with various parastatic rituals and rituals of animation, so well attested in the corpus of Greek magical papyri, are significant. Equally striking was the section in which the deceased is instructed to speak in a righteous manner in front of the gods (the word 'righteous' may well have been also painted on the deceased person's tongue, 56) to ensure receipt of all kinds of perquisites in the afterlife, including a distinctly somatic existence spent in eternal youth. Take the following section from the Louvre papyrus, addressing the dead (Column 6, 1–4): 'Your head is yours, your body is yours. Your eyes see. Your ear[s] hear. Your nose inhales. Your nostrils inhale the sweet breeze from the fair north wind.' So much food for thought.

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