

the epic. The tree list recalled by Odysseus becomes a means for convincing his father about his identity, and the standard number of trees reflects the survival of their family line.

This is a rewarding book. It does not offer an exhaustive treatment of the topic as it is based on a selective presentation of the function of space in several episodes. However, X. puts forward new and convincing ideas. He is also to be credited, and that is perhaps the book's greatest merit, for combining the scattered insights of other scholars and disclosing larger interpretative associations that span the entire *Odyssey*.

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WHAT REMAINS OF THE EPIC HERACLES?

TSAGALIS (C.C.) (ed., trans.) *Early Greek Epic Fragments II. Epics on Herakles: Kreophylos and Peisandros. (Trends in Classics Supplementary Volume 129.)* Pp. xiv + 256, b/w & colour pls. Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2022. Cased, £94, €102.95, US\$118.99. ISBN: 978-3-11-076756-8.

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Heracles is a mythical character that has enjoyed many literary lives: a formidable warrior, who could successfully perform twelve highly challenging labours, a hero with a mission to civilise the world, but also a tragic character on stage, who, driven mad by the gods, murders his wife and children, and a comic one, as he plays a glutton and drunkard. Despite his role of protagonist within the epic world and the wide range of mythical plots in which he was actively involved – not only the twelve labours, but also the first sacking of Troy and so forth –, we are doomed not to know much about the epic Heracles of the early times. Even if the Homeric poems reference him and his deeds on more than one occasion, so that some scholars have hypothesised the existence of a now lost ‘Heracleian Cycle’, which matched the ‘Epic Cycle’, none of the epic works about him is fully preserved, with the (partial) exception of the pseudo-Hesiodic *Shield of Heracles*. Traces of the epic Heracles, however, survive in fragmentary hexameter poems, such as the pseudo-Homeric *Cercopes*, in the *Aegimius* and *The Wedding of Ceyx*, usually ascribed to Hesiod, and in the *Capture of Oechalia* by Chreophylus of Samos and the *Heracleia* by Pisander of Camirus. After these, one has to wait until the fifth century to see a new Heracleian poem in hexameter verse, by Panyassis of Halicarnassus, which, however, does not survive in full either.

The scarcity of textual evidence has not prevented scholars from collecting and investigating evidence about the archaic epics on Heracles. The nineteenth-century edition by G. Kinkel (1877) has been replaced by three important critical editions, prepared by three of the most influential scholars in the field: A. Bernabé (1987), M. Davies (1988) and M.L. West (2003), whose contribution to the topic of fragmentary early epic poetry also includes several articles and commentaries on the Cyclic epics. Yet, the burgeoning interest in this topic seems not to have touched the Heracleian poems, perhaps for the scarcity of material in our possession; as a result, the reference book for those interested

in their narratives was still G.L. Huxley's *Greek Epic Poetry: from Panyassis to Eumelus* (pp. 99–112), which appeared in 1969. A running commentary on Chreophylus' and Pisander's poems was a long-time *desideratum* in Classical studies and now T.'s scholarly collection *Early Greek Epic Fragments* (henceforth: *EGEF*), published in the series *Trends in Classics*, finally sheds some light on the gloomy fate that has befallen these poems. The volume under review is the second of the collection: whereas the first volume (2017) collected fragments of antiquarian epics, this one is about Chreophylus' and Pisander's poems. In the preface T. illustrates for the first time the publication plan for *EGEF*, which will comprise two other volumes: one devoted to Panyassis and a final one on Choerilus of Samos.

The internal organisation of the volume is the same as *EGEF* I: after a slim introduction about the epics dealing with Heracles and the relevant modern bibliography, T. lists the sources of the indirect tradition – there are no cases of fragments known via the direct tradition –, citing the critical texts used, and then unfolds the organisation of the material. The texts of the *testimonia* (on the author's life, works and legacy) and of the fragments come with an apparatus and an English translation. Correspondences with the numbering of other editions are given only for the fragments – despite the fact that the differences are more numerous in the *testimonia* section. Under the fragments, T. includes both quotations and paraphrases (in the majority of cases he keeps the numeration by the previous editions mentioned above). The commentary is structured as follows: *testimonia* are discussed in groups in sections about the 'life' and the 'works' of the author, which are followed by discussions of 'sources', 'plot', 'style of the poem' and 'date', before the commentary on the fragments. In particular, in the sub-section 'style of the poem' T. discusses 'the overall conception and presentation of the main theme . . . [and] issues pertaining to the way the central topic of the epic is carried out and, if possible, to the literary qualities the poem displays' (p. 9). In the case of both Chreophylus' and Pisander's poems, we have one and two lines preserved respectively. The traps lying in the way to guessing what the structure of the poem, the length of its episodes and the narrative style were like are many, but T. treats the matter with sensible caution and does not present conclusive reconstructions. Especially in the case of Chreophylus' poem, where T. analyses the literary and artistic treatments of the subject extensively, I wonder whether these considerations would have found a better place in an introduction broadly devoted to the treatment of Heracles' myths.

As far as the critical text is concerned, T.'s edition differs only slightly from others, and the most relevant innovation lies in the inclusion of new material and in a sometimes different evaluation of the authenticity (*dubia/spuria*). The commentary, which discusses each fragment separately, is without doubt the major scholarly achievement of the volume. This long-awaited work now makes available what remains of the archaic epics on Heracles to a broader academic readership than before. T. shares his outstanding erudition on the mythical plots involved, with numerous references to other literary texts and also to artistic representations, lucidly discussing all the issues raised by the fragments. As the tradition of these fragments is indirect, T. also has to take into careful consideration the agenda of each 'cover text', spanning from Pausanias to Tzetzes, and to weigh their trustworthiness and accuracy. The attention to the field of arts as a vehicle of myths is especially noticeable in this commentary and constitutes one of the most welcome aspects of the volume. For example, the extensive discussion of the Lernaian Hydra episode (pp. 145–50) and of Heracles and the Sun Bowl (pp. 160–6) are only selected examples of how T.'s commentary is rich and thoroughly planned. (By contrast, linguistic problems, such as the problematic and allegedly Doric form $\acute{\alpha}\epsilon$ in Pisander [fr. 10 *EGEF*], are treated more concisely.) Thus, *EGEF* II will be of use not only to scholars dealing with early epics,

but also to those interested in mythical narratives more generally. The bibliography is rich, but not unjustifiably overwhelming, as sometimes happens with commentaries.

T. is undoubtedly one of the most prolific scholars in the field of early Greek epics, and the *EGEF* enterprise will prove indispensable for scholars of Greek literature for a long time to come. The publication of this volume makes us long for the next instalment.

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A COMMENTARY ON THE WORKS OF SAPPHO

NERI (C.) *Saffo, testimonianze e frammenti. Introduzione, testo critico, traduzione e commento.* (Texte und Kommentare 68.) Pp. xiv + 1124. Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2021. Cased, £136.50, €149.95, US \$172.99. ISBN: 978-3-11-073936-7.

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This is the first comprehensive and commented critical edition of the extant *testimonia* and fragments of Sappho produced so far; it follows a previous, noteworthy collection edited in 2017 (*Saffo. Poesie, frammenti e testimonianze*, in joint authorship with F. Cinti), which made Sappho's oeuvre accessible at a more affordable price. The new volume provides an introductory section covering several key topics, such as Sappho's life, transmission, ancient editions, *Nachleben*, language and style. Then there are the Greek text and an Italian translation, followed by the commentary, a thorough bibliography, a *conspectus* and indexes. The major merits of this impressive achievement are immediately obvious: (i) N. includes not only some astonishing, albeit controversial, recent papyrus finds such as the 'Newest Sappho' (with due attention to its fraudulent provenance: cf. B. Nongbri, <https://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2022/2022.05.2>), but also several small fragments omitted by E. Lobel / D. Page and E.-M. Voigt; (ii) he offers an updated and sound Italian commentary by reviewing a significant amount of bibliographical items spanning many centuries of scholarly works; (iii) he also provides the fullest collection of Byzantine passages (F 286A–M) assembled so far, which document Sappho's reception after late antiquity. The apparatus is tripartite: sections on metres and sources (including useful indications on the editorial history of each item) are followed by the apparatus criticus (equipped with plenty of details on papyri readings, modern conjectures etc.).

That there will be some points of disagreement in such a massive book is not surprising: (a) N. preserves Voigt's numbering with the addition of alphabetic letters for new items; but this choice is a little awkward, especially since the latest evidence provided by the 'Newest Sappho' allows us to reconstruct the poems' order in Book 1 quite differently from previous editors (we can now follow a ten-poem-long sequence as arranged in the Alexandrian edition). Likewise, the choice to gather sources on the ancient edition (organised into nine books?) in a dedicated section within the *testimonia* (F 226–35) at the end does not seem appealing. Unlike Lobel–Page, we have no obvious indication of the book division throughout the entire sequence of fragments (just as in Voigt's edition). It would have been more appropriate to have the sources mentioning Sappho's specific