the grounds that 'rhyme in an English translation of a choral ode frames the utterance, tells us that we must attend to it as something set apart, something performed, and gives, one hopes, some sense of the intention of the original', 20).

Martin's patterns of rhyme are nicely varied and normally pleasantly unobtrusive, building most frequently around a chiastic unit *abba*, often capped by a *cc.* To offer a particular example, the rhymes in the opening dialogue between the Nurse and the Tutor (27) are structured like this: *abba deed ff* b^1aab^1 *dd ghhg* (where b^1 denotes a near-rhyme: *lamentation/station* with *groan/alone)*. These patterns are subtle enough to avoid calling a great deal of attention to themselves.

Rhyming patterns in choral odes tend to be even more understated, and, to my mind, especially effective. The first strophe-antistrophe pair of the Chorus' celebrated ode on the reversal of the supposed natural order, by which women will come into better repute than men (43), for instance, follows this pattern: *aba* cbc^1 *dede* (strophe), ghg ih^1i jkjk (antistrophe).

The one place where I found the rhymes distracting was in Jason's speeches. Martin characterizes these by saying, 'Rhyming stanzas took over Jason's dialogue and would not leave' (19). Whether or not he means to imply that these rhymes were in some sense uninvited guests, I personally reacted to them that way. A switch to alternate rather than chiastic patterns in these speeches helps create more insistent sound patterns that left me struggling to return to plain old reading, instead of getting side-tracked into retrospective and prospective analysis of rhyming schemes. Martin's explanation of the intended effect ('In my mind they stood in for Jason's need to persuade [Medea] of his essential goodness by offering her the gift of rhyme, which she refuses', 19) seems strained.

For the most part, Martin successfully finds a path between the kind of truth to the text that allows important themes and image patterns to ring through in translation and his self-assumed restriction of rhyme. I would note, though, two instances in the messenger speech (80) where his striving after the 'gift of rhyme' may work against this goal. First, he omits the striking metaphor of the wrestling match (*palaismata*) between Creon and his daughter's corpse in favour of an inserted phrase ('the subtle stuff that *drew him to the floor*') that accommodates a rhyme with 'attempted to/Lift his aged body to his feet once more.' Second, although the pathos of the messenger speech focuses heavily on the relationship of father and child (and Medea's diabolical reduction of Creon, like Jason, to childlessness), Martin slightly skews the tragedian's emphasis by twice inserting references to the princess as *bride* rather than as daughter: the convenience of rhyme between *way* and *day* forces a seemingly unfounded equation of the princess' death day with her intended wedding day (lines 1207–08) and just a dozen lines later (1220), again evidently seizing a rhyming opportunity, Martin renders Euripides' 'they lie dead, both child (*pais*) and aged father next to her' as 'They lie there side by side/In death, an agèd father, a young bride.'

But these are tiny cavils. In the main, I applaud Martin for remaining true to the Greek while at the same time turning out an eminently readable and artfully crafted poetic text.

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MARTIN (B.) **Harmful Interaction between the Living and the Dead in Greek Tragedy**. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2020. Pp. 216. £75. 9781789621501.
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Bridget Martin's book offers a thorough investigation of the complex and ambiguous role that the dead play on the ancient Greek tragic stage. Drawing on an impressive range of

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material and literary evidence, Martin presents a compelling look at the way in which the dead power Greek tragedy, a genre notably defined by death. Arguably, the book is a case study of the methodological complexities which examinations of the ancient world sometimes involve: even in a single topic (here: the dead), the sheer variety that is reflected across ancient conceptions and practices is remarkable, presenting a major challenge for scholars wishing to consolidate and decipher the surviving evidence. Martin's study demonstrates how one might successfully navigate through such bumpy ground.

In chapter 1, Martin delineates the two contexts which inform the depiction of the dead in tragedy: the wider literary tradition (especially epic) and the contemporaneous realities of fifth-century ancient Athens. This broader consideration at the outset is useful: not only does it enable an exploration of death and eschatology in Homer's poetry (such as corpse exposure, necromancy and representations of the Underworld) as well as funerary practices across fifth-century BC Greece, but it also draws attention to real-life beliefs regarding the pollution and contagion of dead bodies which, by contrast, are not reflected in Homeric epic. The chapter also explores general conceptions of the afterlife, including the indications that can be found in mystery cults such as the Eleusinian and Orphic Mysteries. Throughout, Martin examines an impressive range of sources from antiquity, from literary and papyrus texts to material remains such as tablets, epitaphs, vases and vessels.

Chapters 2 and 3 illuminate the difficulties that are involved in conceptualizing and categorizing the tragic dead. Chapter 2 examines the varying depictions of the 'awareness' of the dead across Greek tragedy, which are revealed to be contradictory; as Martin summarizes, the dead are perceived to be both 'powerful and weak, dangerous and harmless, jealous and oblivious, vocal and voiceless, revenge-driven and unaware, and unhappy and free from grief' (62). To tackle these ambiguities, Martin develops a spectrum of consciousness for the dead across the tragic corpus, beginning with oblivion and ending with the dead who can physically manifest. Chapter 3 then presents case studies featuring interactions between the living and the dead in tragedy, most of which involve necromancy and dreams. Here, Martin offers suggestive readings of notorious necromantic episodes, most notably of Darius in Aeschylus' *Persians*, as well as the apparitions of Clytemnestra in Aeschylus' *Eumenides* and Polydorus in Euripides' *Hecuba.* This exploration crucially extends beyond the surviving tragic corpus, as Martin includes examples from fragmentary tragedy such as Teiresias' appearance in Aeschylus' *Psychagōgoi*.

Chapters 4 and 5 explore cases of active conflict between the living and the dead: both the living harming the dead (chapter 4) and vice versa (chapter 5). Chapter 4 reveals that the most grievous harm the living could impose on the dead involved neglecting their bodily remains. Exposure and mutilation of dead bodies resulting from a lack of burial are thus read as a form of dishonour and punishment. Various tragedies debate the burial of the exposed dead, most notably Sophocles' *Antigone*. Martin's discussion highlights the manner in which these debates not only reveal the importance of burial rites for expressing familial duty and a general sense of respect for the dead but also their use as dramatic tool through which tragedians reveal character. Chapter 5 similarly draws our attention to the complexities surrounding harmful interactions stemming from the dead. Though Martin considers the notion that the dead can cause damage to the living autonomously, which is suggested in several plays from Aeschylus' *Choephori* to Euripides' *Hippolytus*, the discussion reveals that they generally rely on intermediary agents, such as the Erinyes, to inflict harm on those still alive. Certain plays depict more active collaboration in which living agents act on behalf of the dead, but, as Martin illustrates, these tend to show how the living exploit the dead for their own ends.

Overall, *Harmful Interaction* reveals what Martin calls the 'malleable and protean nature' of the tragic dead (186). This is reinforced in the book's conclusion, which provides a helpful outline of the role of the dead in the plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides. Despite the book's commendable strengths, it neglects to consider the role

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of the dead in the wider terrain of fifth-century drama. Though Aristophanes' *Frogs* is mentioned in Martin's discussion of the Eleusinian mysteries in the first two chapters, there is no mention of the dead in comedy (or satyr play), a consideration which, in my view, would have strengthened Martin's arguments on tragedy. Nonetheless, the book will prove useful to scholars and students of Greek tragedy and indeed to anyone seeking to understand the complex beliefs and customs concerning the dead in antiquity.

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CHEPEL (E.) **Laughter for the Gods: Ritual in Old Comedy** (Kernos Supplement 35). Liège: Presses Universitaires de Liège, 2020. Pp. 230. €30. 9782875622365.
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This volume begins impressively with acute and largely fair criticism of earlier theories on Old Comedy and ritual, followed by a lucid discussion of recent theories about 'ritualization'. A first comprehensive study of rituals will offer a new answer to the 'nothing to do with Dionysus' problem' (17). Major topics are how plays contribute to the cultic worship of festivals and how the rituals enacted are part of the fictional reality of the plays rather than reflexes of non-theatrical rituals: 'The representations of cult ritualise the theatrical performance by imbuing it with elements of real religious practices.' For instance, 'through the ritualisation in the parabatic hymns, the comic performances are revealed as important events in the religious life of the *polis*' (31). Comedy thus plays an active part in city religious life and so is fitting for the festival of Dionysus.

There follow chapters on: the use of hymns, prayers, shouts, oracles and exegesis; the techniques of making the stage into a 'ritual space', especially through the use of altars and the evocation of sanctuaries; the religious calendar, the festivals put on stage and the play with ritual cycles; and, finally, sacrifice, how it is conducted, what is omitted, the relationship to tragic representations and the way that comedy reverses the normal power hierarchy between gods and men.

These chapters offer very full and useful collections and discussions of the relevant material from Aristophanes and other poets. They are liberally annotated (though many references are to a mere page or two of a particular work, while fuller treatments that readers would have found helpful are absent). There is a good bibliography, but one is surprised that in the 'space' chapter there is no mention of the treatments of dramatic space in I.J.F. de Jong's *Space in Ancient Greek Literature* (Leiden 2012): the relationship between tragedy and comedy is an important topic. The book therefore covers a great deal of ground and tackles a commendably wide range of topics, with intriguing suggestions along the way.

There is a problem however in the balance between the proposals that come from the theoretical sections and the analytical discussions that they introduce. Interesting theories are set out at the start of the chapters, but the keenness to provide as much evidence as possible means that (paradoxically) it can be hard to assess the proposals, as they can be obscured by the large amount of detail offered. The proposals duly reappear at the end, but come almost as a surprise, the discussions having taken on a life of their own.

One could complain, say, that the section on hymns etc. (33–87) is too much of an extended demonstration that comic ritual is close to every-day practice, a point that could have been made more briefly and clearly. This concern to find similarities is central also to the discussion of space, but one wonders if looking at the differences might have been

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