

texts are sound in their own ways. It cannot be said, then, that this new edition ‘replaces’ the Teubneriana, but it is now an excellent starting point and it certainly must be considered in any future discussion of Chariton’s text.

STEFAN TILG
University of Freiburg
Email: stefan.tilg@altphil.uni-freiburg.de

BENAISSA (A.) **Dionysius. The Epic Fragments.** Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018. Pp. xiii + 352. £90. 9781107178977.
doi:[10.1017/S0075426922000520](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0075426922000520)

Amin Benaissa has produced a superb critical edition with translation and commentary of the fragments of Dionysius. An epic poet of uncertain date (post-AD 79 is tentatively suggested), Dionysius authored the *Bassarica* (the Bassarids were a group of Bacchae who sided with Dionysus in the war against Deriades), and the *Gigantias*, concerning a gigantomachy and its prehistory, apparently centring on Heracles’ role in the war between the Dorian king Aigimios and the Lapiths.

The book contains a rich and informative introduction, where Benaissa examines in painstaking detail the ancient reception of Dionysius (1–13), the relationship of the *Bassarica* with Nonnus’ *Dionysiaca* (13–31), the literary background of the legend of Dionysus in India (31–50), Dionysius’ language and characteristics of its epic style (50–58), metrics (58–75) and manuscripts (75–80). The fragments of the *Bassarica* come with a full-scale commentary (147–224), whereas those of the *Gigantias*, which are preserved in a much more mutilated state, appear with shorter explanatory notes in a long appendix (225–89).

A new edition of the fragments of Dionysius was made necessary by the publication in 2011 by Benaissa himself of a novel fragment, *P.Oxy.* 5103, which was reunited with a previously unattributed fragment written in the same hand from the Oxyrhynchus collection, *P.Oxy.* 2818. The discovery gave us 30 more lines of Dionysius, which are absent from the previous editions by Livrea (Rome 1973) and Heitsch (Göttingen 1963²). The new Oxyrhynchus fragments are now added to a corpus already featuring two papyri, one from the British Library (*P.Lond. Lit.* 40) and one from the Oxford collection (*P.Oxy.* 2815). These are republished here in a much-ameliorated form.

Benaissa’s re-edition of the papyrus fragments (nos 33–41) contains both a papyrological and a critical apparatus, including suggestions by authorities in the field such as W.B. Henry and G.B. D’Alessio. Benaissa provides a greatly improved text, based on a fresh examination of the papyri, particularly *P.Lond. Lit.* 40. He deserves praise for deciphering segments of papyrus text which must have seemed unintelligible to previous editors (and indeed appeared as such to me in the online image of the British Library website). Preparatory work on *P.Lond. Lit.* 40, including numerous notable new readings, was previously published by Benaissa in a 2013 article (*P.Lond. Lit.* 40 revisited: new readings in Dionysius’ *Bassarica*, *APF* 59.2, 280–97), but there are further important improvements here, most of which are decisive and some of which remarkable: see, for example, 33^v.45–46, where a syntactically difficult passage is normalized thanks to a minor correction by Henry.

Nearly all of the non-papyrus fragments of the *Bassarica* (1–32) come from Stephanus of Byzantium and feature verses or contextual information from books III, IV and XIV. Most come in fact from Book III, which contained catalogues of the allies of Dionysus from the Sicilian, Cyprian, Lydian, Phrygian, Macedonian and Thracian contingents (frs 1–10), and those of Deriades (12–28*). Several of these are marked as doubtful and are notably absent from previous editions (frs 4, 8, 21, 24, 32). Criteria for their inclusion seem sensible, for

example: ‘toponyms or ethnics associated with Dionysus’ Indian campaign in Stephanus [...] or shared exclusively between Stephanus and Nonnus [...] should be assumed to derive from Dionysius’ (160). Benaissa’s novel correction of the transmitted text in fr. 18.1 ἦδ’ οἷ is worthy of note.

Editorial choices are sound and consistent, and I have very little to offer other than the following points of detail. In fr. 11, a line on the Thracian Odonas, part of the Dionysian contingent, Benaissa is rightly suspicious of the transmitted ἐγγεσίπελοι (‘covered in spears’); could ἐρνεσίπελοι (‘clad in foliage’), mentioned in the discussion on page 155, be considered here, given that it is said of Dionysus himself in Orph. H. 30.5? At 34^{v.5}] αὐτὰρ ἐπειτα [...] . ας εἶρουον, I believe we can read and supply θ[ση]λάς (‘but then they were tearing apart the sacrificial victims’, that is, their meat), cf. Orph. L. 743, in the same *sedes*. Finally, I wonder whether fr. 41^v, where a humble host seems to have entertained Dionysus, bears any relation to the theoxeny scene in the *adespota* P.Oxy. 1794 (both are strongly indebted to Callimachus’ *Hecale* and both contain speeches delivered in the first person).

In general, I would have personally opted for a more conservative approach to supplements of uncertain or missing words, as, for instance, at fr. 41^{v.1}, where West’s κύαμοι ζ[οφοειδέες (in A.S. Hollis, *Ovid: Metamorphoses, Book VIII* (Oxford 1970), 151), however brilliant, does not seem inevitable. At 33^{v.45} αἰ γὰρ δῆ, a grave accent on αἰ is required. For the problematic accentuation of 33^{v.41} κακοδῆνει and κακομηδῆς, the latter variously accented in the commentary, see H.W. Chandler, *Practical Introduction to Greek Accentuation* (Oxford 1881²), 199–200.

These quibbles aside, this edition is an excellent piece of scholarship, which will instantly become a point of reference for scholars investigating the still much-understudied (and undervalued) world of Imperial Greek poetry. I would like to commend, in particular, the incredibly detailed metrical profile of Dionysius offered in the introduction, which will no doubt serve both students and scholars of hexameter poetry for many years to come.

MARCO PERALE

University of Liverpool

Email: perale@liverpool.ac.uk

NISBET (G.) **Epigrams from the Greek Anthology** (Oxford World’s Classics). Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2020. Pp. xlii + 244. £10.99. 9780198854654. doi:[10.1017/S0075426922000532](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0075426922000532)

‘We are all liars, we translators’ (xxvii), writes Gideon Nisbet. For one thing, translators face choices that perforce omit something of the original. Valuing accuracy over elegance, many choose a more literal route, frequently rendering a verse original into prose. Nisbet has chosen differently with great success: charm characterizes Greek literary epigram, and his translations exude charm. He composes in smoothly flowing blank verse, largely without poetic diction and archaisms, but with a flexibility of word order that often tracks the Greek closely. Although rhyming couplets are mostly eschewed, catchy rhymes do appear, as at 7.28, ‘Anacreon’s shrine/ ... I like my wine’. More common are sound effects reflecting original features, though usually with different sounds, as in 6.236 on dedicated ships’ beaks from Actium: ‘See how they, hive-like, hold the honeycomb,/Encircled by the humming swarm of bees’ (ἦνίδε συμβλεύει κηρότροφα δῶρα μελισσῶν, | ἔσωψ βομβητῆ κυκλόσε βριθόμενα).

Nisbet sacrifices literal translation in small ways to enhance conversational flow or colloquial tone: ‘Let’s ... knock back/The unmixed wine .../The *dolce vita*’s short’ at