as having a distinctly Athenocentric point of view, a perspective that is not universally accepted. To validate his claims, Christ engages responsibly with the mass of scholarship on Xenophon, including the striking preponderance of monographs and collected volumes on the author that have been released in the past couple of decades, such as V.J. Gray (ed.), *Oxford Readings in Classical Studies: Xenophon* (Oxford 2010); F. Hobden and C. Tuplin (eds), *Xenophon: Ethical Principles and Historical Enquiry* (Leiden 2012); and M.A. Flower (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Xenophon* (Cambridge 2017). There are two volumes that would have been relevant that came out close enough to Christ's publication date that I imagine they did not come onto his radar before he submitted his final draft: V. Azoulay, *Xenophon and the Graces of Power* (Swansea 2018); and R.F. Buxton (ed.), *Aspects of Leadership in Xenophon* (Newcastle upon Tyne 2016). Nothing in either book 'scoops' him, but there is some common ground covered. While *Xenophon and the Athenian Democracy* has an argument that sets it apart from other books of its sort, its overlaps with them in certain respects makes this less novel a monograph than were his three previous.

This is a very readable book that will serve the needs of professional scholars, graduate students and even advanced undergraduates. Its organization by works of Xenophon, rather than by theme, makes chapters particularly practical for assignment in classes, primarily graduate ones, and to be employed by students writing papers, in Classics or history classes, on Xenophon or the themes of his works.

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COLE (E.) **Postdramatic Tragedies** (Classical Presences Series). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020. Pp. x + 312, illus. £79. 9780198817680.
doi:10.1017/S0075426923000198

Emma Cole's monograph discusses adaptations of Greek and Roman tragedy that, according to the author, come under the banner of postdramatic theatre. The book concludes that classical tragedy has played a crucial role in the development of postdramatic forms, and that the postdramatic provides insight into the role of tragedy in modernity (276). Given that the author examines comparatively very different plays and performances (from Sarah Kane's traditionally dramatic *Phaedra's Love* (1996) to Jan Fabre's extravagant *Mount Olympus* (2018)), she creates a new general category, taking into account individual differences or special historical circumstances.

Cole maintains that 'postdramatic techniques can translate feeling, sensation, and emotion from a source text … and can foreignize an adaptation and make a familiar text become strange' (24), yet in the book the 'postdramatic' becomes a taxonomical problem as a one-size-fits-all category. Cole is aware of this issue and she is convincingly arguing that many traditional 'scripts should be analysed for their potential to be realized as postdramatic performances, not dichotomized into either postdramatic or dramatic categories' (27). Still, this potentiality refers to more general categories such as post-traditionalist drama and post-postmodern and post-Brechtian performance (in some cases outside the postdramatic frame).

The book is divided into three parts: I 'Rewriting the Classics', II 'Devising the Classics' and III 'Embodying the Classics'. In the first part, Cole suggests that Sarah Kane's 1996 play *Phaedra's Love* codified a set of postdramatic techniques, and served to indicate the potential for postdramatic receptions to make powerful sociopolitical statements. Similarly, according to the author, Martin Crimp employed diverse postdramatic techniques in order to reinvent

Sophocles' *Trachiniae* and Euripides' *Phoenissae*, producing in some cases texts that seem arguably more dramatic than postdramatic. The final chapter in Part I turns to the work of Australian playwright Tom Holloway, who adapted Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* in order to explore the difficulties that contemporary soldiers experience upon war and repatriation. Again, the postdramatic was more clearly realized through postdramatic performance.

In Part II, Cole focusses on performances collaboratively devised by an ensemble of performers (The Wooster Group's 2002 *To You, the Birdie!* and The Hayloft Project's 2010 *Thyestes*), arguing that in analysing such a political theatre it is important to include the idea of a 'politics of form' (189–90) and an interrogation of modern values and stereotypes.

In Part III, the author discusses devised pieces of work performed outside traditional theatrical spaces, following uncanonical and durational formats, namely, ZU-UK's overnight, immersive reception of Euripides' *Medea* (*Hotel Medea*, 2009–2012) and Jan Fabre's 24-hour *Mount Olympus* (2015). Such productions (which meet the traditions and techniques of the Environmental Theatre of the sixties), put their audiences 'in a dialogic and revelatory relationship with the original plays' (30), creating ideological and 'intellectual emancipation' (31).

Cole's monograph argues programmatically that 'postdramatic reinventions can appear to test the limits of reception … and constitute a significant, political form of classical reception' (31). The political, of course, is not new (or not exclusively postdramatic) in the receptions of Greek tragedy, and it cannot be solely accepted as *the* indicative factor of postdramatic receptions. There are two indicative elements which render most of the works discussed in Cole's book broadly postdramatic, if we must choose from Hans-Thies Lehmann's plethora of characteristics (*Postdramatic Theatre*, trans. by Karen Jurs-Munby (London and New York 2006), 90): (a) the refusal of the normalized forms and (b) the *deforming figuration* of a classical text. But generally, Cole's interest lies in the textual transformations of classical tragedy and its theatrical reinventions, which affect a significant experience of sensations, ideological stimuli and performative energies.

Undoubtedly, this well-written book is a significant contribution to classical reception studies, mostly because it enriches the philological and philosophical study of tragedy with new analytical tools that broaden its interpretation. In some cases, the book tries to fit dramatic texts to postdramatic stage 'realizations' or reinvent environmental performances in found spaces as mainly postdramatic, hoping to canonize a new type of political reception of tragedy (that can historically be rendered as somehow typical). The performances discussed in the book, as Cole maintains in the conclusion, 'have pushed both the tragic genre and the postdramatic style in new directions' (277) which are neither very new or very deforming (before and after Bertolt Brecht, or after Heiner Müller, the most postdramatic of them all).

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CONNELL (S.) (ed.) **The Cambridge Companion to Aristotle's Biology**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021. Pp. xvii + 355. £85. 9781107197732.
doi:10.1017/S0075426923000824

The Cambridge Companion to Aristotle's Biology, edited by Sophia M. Connell, is a valuable and significant addition to the Companion collection. The essays in this volume offer engaging exegeses of various aspects of Aristotle's biology and orient the reader in key