

**Felix BUDELMANN (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Lyric***, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009, pp. XXII + 457, ISBN 978-0-521-84944-9 (hb.), ISBN 978-0-521-61476-4 (pb.), hb. £ 66.00, pb. £ 23.99.

The Cambridge Companions to Literature and Classics aim at introducing selected subjects to non-specialists. Felix BUDELMANN (henceforth B.), the editor of the volume under review, defines it (p. XV), somewhat enigmatically, as “intended for anybody with a serious interest in Greek lyric”, meaning perhaps also advanced undergraduate and graduate students. I would not hesitate to include therein professional classicists, given that this book does not fail to keep the initial promise of presenting new approaches and new philological work both on the lyrical corpus and the socio-cultural contexts in which lyric pieces were created, performed and transmitted. B.’s *Companion* succeeds in meeting the needs of its diverse audience: it can serve as a useful guide, a rich source of knowledge, and a stimulus to further critical discussion.

The volume is divided into three parts typically featured in this series: I. Contexts and Topics (pp. 19–146), II. Poets and Traditions (pp. 147–294) and III. Reception (pp. 295–370). This is, however, only a general scheme to be filled with relevant contributions. In order to give an outline of its scope and specific character let me enumerate the titles of the essays included together with the names of their respective authors.

Part I: Chris CAREY, *Genre, Occasion and Performance* (pp. 21–38); Simon HORNBLLOWER, *Greek Lyric and the Politics and Sociologies of Archaic and Classical Greek Communities* (pp. 39–57); Eva STEHLE, *Greek Lyric and Gender* (pp. 58–71); Mark GRIFFITH, *Greek Lyric and the Place of Humans in the World* (pp. 72–94); Barbara GRAZIOSI and Johannes HAUBOLD, *Greek Lyric and Early Greek Literary History* (pp. 95–113); Giovan Battista D’ALESSIO, *Language and Pragmatics* (pp. 114–129); Luigi BATTEZZATO, *Metre and Music* (pp. 130–146).

Part II: Chris CAREY, *Iambos* (pp. 149–167); Antonio ALONI, *Elegy: Forms, Functions and Communication* (pp. 168–188); Eveline KRUMNEN, *Alcman, Stesichorus and Ibycus* (pp. 189–203); Dimitrios YATROMANOLAKIS, *Alcaeus and Sappho* (pp. 204–226); Felix BUDELMANN, *Anacreon and the Anacreontea* (pp. 227–239); Hayden PELLICCIA, *Simonides, Pindar and Bacchylides* (pp. 240–262); Dimitrios YATROMANOLAKIS, *Ancient Greek Popular Song* (pp. 263–276); Eric CSAPO and Peter WILSON, *Timotheus the New Musician* (pp. 277–293).

Part III: Silvia BARBANTANI, *Lyric in the Hellenistic Period and Beyond* (pp. 297–318); Alessandro BARCHIESI, *Lyric in Rome* (pp. 319–335); Pantelis MICHELAKIS, *Greek Lyric from the Renaissance to the Eighteenth Century* (pp. 336–351); Margaret WILLIAMSON, *Sappho and Pindar in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (pp. 352–370). This part is followed by Epilogue (Michael SILK, *Lyric and Lyrics: Perspectives, Ancient and Modern*, pp. 371–385).

The above-listed impressive array of scholars and topics requires an introduction to clarify the likely problems that a potential reader may immediately encounter. B. begins with a chapter entitled *Introducing Greek Lyric* in which he discusses such important (and sometimes much debated) issues as the meanings and history of “lyric”, a varied and ill-defined corpus, an incomplete record, genres and categories, reconstruction of texts and contexts, Greek vs. Latin and modern lyric, performance, and the lyric “I”. He ends with a passage on “Further reading” (a routine final section in all the contributions). B.’s lucid preliminaries serve in fact a double purpose: on the one hand they provide basic information, on the other they delineate the area to be explored in more detail by other contributors (who are allowed to take one step beyond summarising the current state of play),

and conveniently anticipate some of the book's outcomes. In the section devoted to further reading, as expected, B.'s close predecessor, GERBER's Brill companion of 1997<sup>1</sup>, is mentioned. That book is described as "structured around individual poets", which is partly unjust, since two of its chapters (of four in total) – those devoted to *Iambos* and *Elegy* – are preceded by thorough introductions to the respective genres. The whole Part II of B.'s companion is, evidently, structured along quite similar lines. That said, however, one should emphasise essential differences between the two companions, which undoubtedly work to the advantage of the recent one. Firstly, B.'s book contains stimulating chapters on contexts and topics; secondly, it provides a valuable part on reception.

The eight essays of Part I situate poets and genres within the relevant social, historical, literary, and intellectual contexts obtained in antiquity. Inevitably, some issues (notably *symposion*) keep recurring. The contributions bristle with important points and make up a multidimensional analysis of Greek lyric poetry. For obvious reasons, it is not possible here to go into details about each essay. Therefore, I confine myself to the statement that each of them is valuable and illuminating. Two chapters are especially welcome as a novelty in the field: STEHLE's *Greek Lyric and Gender*, and D'ALESSIO's *Language and Pragmatics* (by the way, gender studies are a popular trend in Applied Linguistics nowadays). The latter scholar looks at the vexed problem of the lyric "I" from a different perspective than that of SNELL, repeatedly referred to by other contributors. D'ALESSIO's insightful observations on the communicative strategies to be found in Greek lyric poems could be perhaps extended to include such instances of the transpositional use of the grammatical person as "he" equalling the authorial "I" (e.g. Alcman, fr. 38 f.).

I have reservations, however, about the idea of introducing the piece on metre (by Luigi BATTEZZATO) in its present form. Its author seemed to find himself between Scylla and Charybdis: he had at his disposal but a few pages to present a vast and complicated material, which was bound to result in occasional cursoriness or even oversimplification. In one case (after presentation of spondee, dactyl, cretic, molossus, iamb, trochee, ionic, dochmiac, anapaest) the reader will be misled by the author's assertion (p. 131) that "The metra listed above combined into larger structures, called cola", which is true only to a certain extent. What about, say, glyconic or reizianum? Are they supposed to be analysed in terms of metra? The author himself does not do so on p. 134. The section in question ("The basics") is clearly intended for beginners, so while discussing the repartition of consonants in a line of Greek verse (p. 130) it would have been better not to confine oneself to simple one-word examples, but also add a sequence of several words providing a longer stream of sounds in "synapheia".

In Part II, generally of a very high standard, two chapters (*Iambos* by CAREY and *Elegy* by ALONI) skilfully combine the description of the genre and poems composed by the representatives of that genre. CAREY, persuasively, sustains his old (1986) view on the historicity of Lycambes and his family in Archilochus. ALONI deserves our gratitude for taking up, among other things, the problem of the interrelation between elegy and epigram, usually neglected by scholars. All the contributors of this part of the volume, understandably, are interested in the performance contexts. This is certainly the right perspective – provided, however, that such perspective does not dominate over the other possible ones. A drawback of preferring this very approach is particularly visible in the chapter on Sappho by YATROMANOLAKIS where, additionally, important and famous songs receive either marginal (e.g. fr. 31) or none (fr. 1) interpretation. This is not to say that YATROMANOLAKIS does not offer valuable insights into various aspects of Sappho's poetry.

The part of the volume dealt with here provides a discussion of key poets of the archaic and classical periods. These poets are sensibly grouped together, but this necessity, caused by the limits of space accorded to individual contributors, puts them in an extremely difficult position; PELLICIA, to quote but one example, is confronted with an almost impossible task of discussing Simonides, Pindar and Bacchylides within twenty pages. He is to be congratulated on finding, successfully,

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<sup>1</sup> D.E. GERBER (ed.), *A Companion to the Greek Lyric Poets*, Leiden 1997.

a common level and choosing illustrative material which clearly differentiates the three poets. The final chapter of Part II (*Timotheus the New Musician* by CSAPO and WILSON) is masterly written in every respect; I was particularly impressed by their sensitive analysis of the *Persians*.

Part III shows the long and varied reception of Greek lyric (up to the twentieth century), shaped in different epochs by contemporary perceptions of its role and nature. All chapters are excellent, as well as informative and problem-oriented. The last chapter (WILLIAMSON on Sappho and Pindar in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries) is consciously focused on English and American authors, which symbolically reminds the reader of the main addressee of the volume, although as a whole it is certainly aimed at international audience. Nevertheless, the editor feels obliged to write in the Preface (p. XV): “The policy adopted here is to provide for all topics sufficient references to English-language work but not to *shy away* [my italics] from pointing to material in other languages where relevant”.

The volume is brought to a close by SILK’s brilliant essay that offers a look at the poetic engagements with Greek lyric poems over the centuries. The scholar comes to the conclusion that “[t]here is no later equivalent to Greek lyric poetry as such, and in particular there is no equivalent to it in the Romantic and post-Romantic world”.

In sum, this is an impressive and inspiring collection, worth recommending both to experts who wish to receive a state-of-the-art account of the studies of Greek lyric poetry and to any other readers interested in the subject.

P.S. In the second edition of the book the following misprints should be corrected (I give only the correct forms): p. XIX *Aesopicarum*, p. 168 τὰ ἐλεγεία, p. 174 μέλη, p. 177 Χαλκοῦς, p. 223 *epithalamia*.

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