Barbara Weiden Boyd, *Ovid's Homer: authority, repetition, and reception*, Oxford–New York: Oxford University Press, 2017, xvii + 301 pp., $85.00, ISBN 978-0-19-068004-6.

In this study Barbara Weiden Boyd sets out to investigate Ovid's reception of the Homeric poems throughout his career and what this reception-history can tell us about Ovid's own poetry. Strangely enough, this is only the first book-length examination of the relationship between these two poets.[1]

The volume comprises an Introduction and nine chapters.[2] In the short Introduction (pp. 1-10) Boyd states that she intends to drive Ovid out of Vergil's shadow, to bypass both Vergil and Ovid's reception of him, and to focus instead on Ovidian intertextuality with the Homeric poems. She then introduces the three central themes of her book, mentioned in its title: authority, repetition, and reception. Boyd's intention is to show how Ovid responds to and reinterprets Homer's poems, and how he repeats the Homeric themes and ideas by adapting and appropriating them, in order to claim a place for himself in the literary tradition. Boyd ranges widely across the corpus of Ovidian poetry, from his earliest amatory poems, the *Amores* and the *Heroides*, through his erotodidactic works, the *Ars amatoria* and the *Remedia amoris*, into his major *opera*, the *Metamorphoses* and the *Fasti*, all the way to the exilic poetry.

The book is filled with excellent insights on central issues, addressing traditional scholarly questions about the works discussed as well as engaging with current critical trends and interests. Boyd offers many suggestive readings of individual passages and is especially good at demonstrating Homer's pervasive presence in Ovid's works. She provides rich materials for an understanding of Ovid's reinterpretation of a range of Homeric episodes and characters from both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Chapter 1 ("Starting from Homer", pp. 11-40) examines in particular how Ovid playfully rereads the central events and characters of Homeric epic through an erotic lens (*Am.* 1.9.33-40) and how he reshapes the Homeric poems in elegiac terms (*Tr.* 2.371-80). Boyd is sure that Ovid had access not only to the Homeric epics themselves, but also to the rich tradition of ancient Homeric exegesis, such as scholia and commentaries, which constituted the first stage of Homeric reception. As a result, Ovid was attracted to the *Doloneia* or to the character

[1] Earlier versions of several sections of this book have appeared previously elsewhere, as Boyd notes in her "Acknowledgments".

[2] Boyd begins each chapter of the book with one or two carefully chosen quotations from ancient poetry or modern scholarship.

of Phoenix and his participation in the embassy to Achilles precisely because of their controversial status, as if he wanted to assert their Homeric authenticity in this way.

In Chapter 2 ("Seeing Double: Ovid's Diomedes", pp. 41-73) Boyd concentrates on Ovid's incorporation of Diomedes in his poetry and discusses *Am.* 1.7, in which she claims, quite convincingly, that the Homeric Diomedes functions as Ovid's *alter ego* due to his susceptibility to shame and his resilience.

Building on the observation that "the relationship between fathers and sons is fertile ground for metapoiesis" (p. 75), Boyd discusses in Chapter 3 ("Fathers and Sons, Part One: A Success(ion) Story", pp. 75-105), Chapter 4 ("Fathers and Sons, Part Two: Paternity as Paradigm", pp. 107-146), Chapter 5 ("Paternity Tests", pp. 147-165) and Chapter 6 ("Poetic Daughters", pp. 167-180) Ovid's effective deployment of the paternity trope, the succession theme and the ideas of similarity and difference, of filial resemblance and filial resistance, as well as his use of the metaphors of paternity and of disobedient or wayward youthfulness (as shown in the stories of Nestor and Antilochus, Phoenix and the embassy to Achilles, Meleager, Daedalus and Icarus, Sol and Phaethon, Apollo and Aesculapius, my personal favourite section in the book, pp. 129-146; Boyd also treats Ovid's attitude towards his own poems from exile which he considers his children,[3] and his relationship with his 'daughter' Perilla). The paternity trope is key to Ovid's effort to forge his complex metatextual relationship with his poetic father, Homer, and most importantly to depict himself as a worthy and legitimate Roman heir to his authoritative Greek father figure and mentor.

In Chapters 7 ("Homer in Love", pp. 181-212) and 8 ("Homeric Desires", pp. 213-236) Boyd focuses on another central theme of her book, i.e. the poetics of desire expressed through repetition. She deals in detail with "an instance of repetition on the grand scale" (p. 213), Ovid's double treatment (*Ars* 2.561-600 and *Met.* 4.167-189) of the (in)famous love affair of Aphrodite and Ares, first narrated by Demodocus at the court of Alcinous (Hom. *Od.* 8.266-366). This is yet another highlight of the book; Boyd has excellent detailed comments on Ovid's engagement with Homeric repetitiousness in its own terms and on his emulation of his great poetic father. In Chapter 9 ("Homer's Gods in Rome", pp. 237-260), Boyd convincingly argues that Mars and Venus are stripped of their Homeric features in *Fasti* 3 and 4 and rather display their 'Romanness' as divine ancestors of the eternal city.

Boyd's book is sensitive, thought-provoking, and written in a style lively and lucid. It provides a multitude of interesting and perceptive observations

[3] However, the association of Ovid's relationship with Perilla (*Tr.* 3.7) with Homer's depiction as father of two daughters (the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*) is rather tangential and not very convincing (Chapter 6).

on Ovid's dialogue with the Homeric tradition. Although it is aiming at an expert audience, this book will be of equal value to a wider readership of advanced undergraduates and beginning graduates. All excerpts from Latin and Greek texts which receive significant discussion have been translated. A twenty-seven-page bibliography is up-to-date and lists all modern works cited. It is followed by an *Index Locorum* and a generous General Index that increase access to this book and greatly add to its value and usefulness.

The book has been carefully printed, it is elegantly presented and relatively modestly priced. Typographical errors are very few;[4] there is an obvious oversight on p. 158 (lines 17 and 28), where Laertes (instead of Laius) is wrongly mentioned as Oedipus' father.

In conclusion, this book is reader-friendly and easy to consult. It is a pleasure to read, written in a clear, well-chosen and unpretentious language. It displays Boyd's secure command of Greek and Latin literature and of a vast amount of scholarship. It is a volume of impressive depth, stimulating insight, fine interpretive skills and persuasive argument, presented in an admirably lucid manner. Boyd is to be warmly congratulated for this solid contribution to the study of Ovid (and Homer). All serious students of Ovid's poetry are strongly encouraged to read and engage with this book. It provides perceptive literary analysis that enhances our appreciation of Ovid's brilliant re-working of the great Homeric poems. Boyd's observations put Ovid's intertextual relationship with Homer on a fresh footing and will certainly stimulate further scholarly interest in allusion and intertextuality in Ovidian studies.

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[4] E.g. 'used' instead of 'use' on p. 214 (line 1), 'acknowledgemnt' instead of 'acknowledgement' on p. 231 (last line).