

Citation style

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encyclopaedists. The discourse includes a brief account of the Latin reception of the Hyperboreans.

The book is divided into two sections. The first section features cultic iconography and textual representations of the Hyperboreans in the context of sacred spaces. The second begins with the presence of the Hyperboreans in the early travel narratives of epinician and hymnic material. The mapping of this spatial figure then advances through several genres and periods of Greek literature. They are explored from various perspectives, ranging from text-internal considerations of authorial knowledge to archival interaction with canonical cosmographies and the framing of literary utopias.

The author insists on a meticulous philological approach to better read and understand polysemantic spaces, though he also develops concepts from the ontological turn of anthropology. Gagné employs a theoretical model that emphasizes the rhetoric of the landscape rather than its relation to factual topography, thus distancing himself from certain methods commonly applied in approaches of lyric archaeology. The Greek texts are translated and made accessible to readers without knowledge of ancient Greek, and essential terms are transliterated and explained in both footnotes and glossary. The bibliography is extensive and convenient to any reader who is curious to explore further philological worlds.

Sofia Heim, Oslo

Sarah Iles Johnston: *The story of myth*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass./London 2018. X, 374 S.

Die Studie fragt nach den Gründen der andauernden Wirkmächtigkeit altgriechischer Mythen. Auf knapp 300 Seiten – gefolgt von Endnoten, Bibliografie, Danksagungen sowie einem Namens- und Begriffsindex und einem *Index locorum* – stellt Johnston in sieben Kapiteln Charakteristika vor, die die besondere Kraft der griechischen Mythen erklären sollen, im Vergleich mit anderen Mythen und nicht-mythologischen Narrativen.

Das erste Kapitel («The story of myth») ist eine Einleitung, die den Gesamtgedanken – der Mythos erzähle Zuhörern eine Geschichte, die nicht nur informiere, sondern unterhalte und fessele – sowie den Aufbau des Buches präsentiert. Das zweite Kapitel («Ritual's handmaid») dient der Abgrenzung v.a. von essentialistischen (Herder) und ritualistischen Analysen, die den Mythos vorwiegend als Ritualunterstützung verstehen wollen (Burkert). Kapitel 3 «Narrating Myths» vertritt, dass es den griechischen Mythen gerade gelinge, Nähe zwischen der erzählten Welt und der Lebenswelt der Zuhörer herzustellen – ihre Kraft bestehe in der Herstellung parasozialer Beziehungen. Kapitel 4 «The Greek mythic story world» thematisiert den holistischen Charakter griechischer Mythologie, in der jede Erzählung, die an einen Gott oder Helden «glauben macht», zum Glauben in die gesamte göttliche Welt beitrage. In Kapitel 5 «Characters» geht es um die Frage, was die Protagonisten «real» mache. In Abwesenheit eines kanonischen Narrativs sei es die Vielzahl konkurrierender Erzählungen, die einen Helden oder Gott so realistisch mache wie reale Berühmtheiten. Das sechste Kapitel «Metamorphoses» stellt diese – in Abgrenzung zu temporärem *shape-shifting* – als Eigenart griechischer Mythologie dar, das die Aufmerksamkeit banne. Das siebte Kapitel thematisiert die Spezifität der Helden, vor allem im Vergleich zu vorausgehenden nahöstlichen Mythologien, in denen eher Götter als Helden die Hauptrolle spielten.

Die vielfach inspirierten Analysen der Autorin sind hoch interessant und anregend, auch wenn sie nicht immer überzeugen. Befremdlich wirkt, dass die Kraft der Mythen

daran gemessen wird, wie sie den Glauben an Götter und Helden herstellen und festigen können und wie sie dies in der Antike getan hätten – obwohl Paul Veynes einschlägige Analyse in die Bibliographie Eingang fand. Die *Poetik* des Aristoteles findet in Johnstons Buch trotz aller Berührungspunkte keine Berücksichtigung.

Michael Groneberg, Lausanne

Amy Lather: Materiality and Aesthetics in Archaic and Classical Greek Poetry. Ancient Cultures, New Materialisms. Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh 2021. X, 266 p.

Amy Lather's study is part of a growing trend in Classics that has become increasingly evident in recent years – the interaction between cognitive studies and the material of Greco-Roman antiquity. In particular, it builds on the so-called “new materialisms” and rethinks the ontology of objects, a force, vitality, relationality that renders matter active, self-creative and productive. Lather explores the material and cognitive dimensions of the quality *poikilia* and how “the entities marked in terms of *poikilia* participate in a fluid economy of exchange between minds, bodies and things” (p. 3).

The monograph contains an introduction, six chapters, and a conclusion. Chapters 1 and 2 consider the perception and production of *poikilia* in fabrics and metalworking respectively. L. argues that *poikilia* is an enactive process in which mind, body and material things play equally important roles in the construction of the *poikilia* experience. The decoration of the Acropolis Korai and garments rendered in black-figure vase painting, the visual details that complicate and prolong the viewing experience, shape the way they are perceived. The dynamic mode of perception that comes into play here is consistent with archaic descriptions of superior female beauty and reflects the interactivity between the sculptor/painter and the materials of his craft. Finally, literary representations of women's weaving (Helen in *Il.* 3.125–128 and Andromache in *Il.* 22.440–441) are analysed, which construe *poikilia* and visualise “material engagement” as interaction between human and material in the sense of Lambros Malafouris. Weaving is seen as an embodied cognitive process and textiles are imagined as extensions of the minds and bodies of those who weave them. In the same vein, sensory effects result from the combination of armour and the body of its wearer. Homeric passages involving interaction between the warrior's body, emotions and armour (e.g. *Il.* 13.130–135 and *Il.* 18.599–601), as well as the dynamic aspect of imagery in Alcaeus' characterisation of the helmets (140.3–10), show that the coupling of armour with the body creates a form of artefact, something distinct from either the body or the armour.

Chapter 3 deals with phenomena and “intelligent objects”, the means and mechanisms by which material objects function as extensions of the human mind. The *poikilia* of the Egyptian labyrinth (Hdt. 2.148), of Odysseus' brooch (*Od.* 19.227–231), of Hephaestus' tripods and golden handmaids (*Il.* 18.372–380; 416–421; 469–473) and of the ships of Phaeacians (*Od.* 8.555–559) is treated as tangible proof of its wondrousness as well as the cause of it. The figure of Pandora (Hes. *Theog.* 570–590), deliberately designed to be both a miracle and a trap, offers an insight into the process of making lifelike objects. Humans grappling with confusing and paradoxical phenomena and trying to make sense of them are juxtaposed with the circumstances and mechanisms that allow non-human substances to come alive and resemble humans.

It is an excellent book to which I have very few objections in general, one of which should be mentioned here. At the end of chapter 3, L. derives another “meaning” for *poi-*