behaupten, daß die Verfassungen des Hippodamos von Milet oder Phaleas von Chalkedon keine Neuerungen einführen («non hanno introdotto novità», 257). Diese und andere Details hätten freilich durch eine intensivere Einwirkung der Koordinatoren leicht überwunden werden können.

Trotz der kleinen Einwände, die man immer gegen ein so anspruchsvolles Unternehmen vorbringen kann, ist diese neue kommentierte Edition der aristotelischen Politik als eine bemerkenswerte Leistung zu begrüßen, die sicherlich in der Zukunft zu einem Referenzwerk für jene wird, die sich mit dem Thema befassen wollen. Sie ist die einzige, die zugleich einen neuen griechischen Text, eine neue italienische Übersetzung und einen neuen Kommentar vorlegt.

Madrid

F. L. Lisi

Jan Kwapisz: The Greek Figure Poems. Leuven/Paris/Walpole, MA: Peeters 2013. 219 S. (Hellenistica Groningana. 19.) 56 €.

This book, the revised version of the author’s (henceforth K.) Warsaw PhD dissertation, provides a new edition of the ancient Greek collection of six so-called technopaegnia (‘games of skill’) or poems in complex metres and riddling language formed – by artfully varying their verse-lengths – into a shape of an object. Such ‘figure-’ or ‘pattern-poems’ found fertile ground in Hellenistic times, the period of various literary experiments. Transmitted partially, in different configurations, by several manuscripts of the bucolic corpus, and wholly in the manuscript of the Palatine Anthology, they bear traditional titles corresponding to their shape: Axe, Wings of Eros, Egg, Syrinx, and Altar.

As is well known, the last few decades have tremendously increased the scholars’ interest in Hellenistic poetry. The figure poems are no exception to this general trend. Only since the beginning of the 21st century a dozen or so publications on that subject have appeared, among others by such scholars as D. Bonanno, L. A. Guichard, A. Hurst, A. Lukinovich, Ch. Luz, B. M. Palumbo Stracca, A. Pappas, M. Pérez López, J. Di Fiori Pondian, A.-L. Rey, and S. Strodel.1

None of these authors, however, has attempted the major task of preparing a complete critical edition of the entire collection with an in-depth treatment of the six poems. As far as the earlier editions are concerned, Gow’s ‘Bucolici Graeci’\(^1\) lacks a commentary, and Haeberlin’s edition,\(^2\) in view of its date of publication, has become extremely outdated.

K.’s book consists of a general introduction (pp. 1–56), a critical text with English translation (pp. 57–72), an extensive commentary (pp. 191–204), and two indices (pp. 205–219). In the Introduction, K. competently addresses the key issues of the poems’ origin, their date and authorship, ‘Nachleben’, shape, metre, dialect, ancient collection, and MS tradition. The conclusions on the question of authorship and dating are conveniently summarised on p. 30: Simias of Rhodes, the author of the Axe, Wings and Egg – late fourth or early third century BCE; Ps.-Theocritus (possibly Lycophron), the author of the Syrinx – late third or second century BCE; Dosiadas (or a Roman, or Munatius of Tralles), the author of the Doric Altar – first or early second century CE; Lucius Iulius Vestinus, the author of the Ionic Altar – CE 132 or near this date.

The paragraphs devoted to the poems’ shape (pp. 33–8) are among the most fascinating in the Introduction. They testify to K.’s laudable cautiousness in accepting popular opinions unless deeply scrutinised by himself. He gives proof of independent thinking in the comments on the shape of the Axe and, particularly, the Egg. K. assumes that: (1) figure poems are easy to compose, so it would not have been difficult for Simias to compose a perfectly shaped poem, and (2) neither the various layouts in which the mediaeval scribes arranged the technopaegnia, nor the testimonies of the ancient grammarians provide firm evidence as to the original shape of the poems. Based on such assumptions, he questions the shapes of these two poems as preserved in the MSS (double-axe and egg) and prefers to arrange them in the order in which they have to be read. This leads, in the case of the Axe, to replacing the transmitted double-axe pattern with a simpler one, more resembling the actual carpenter’s tool (as did already H. Fränkel in his doctoral dissertation on Simias\(^3\)). In the case of the Egg, K.’s conclusion is that it was not conceived as a figure poem at all. Nevertheless, for other important reasons, K. thinks it advisable not to exclude this poem from his edition. As concerns the Egg, K. leaves to the reader of his book the decision whether it was originally a figure poem. Let us add that he does not subscribe to the sugges-

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\(^3\) H. Fränkel, ‘De Simia Rhodio’ (Göttingen, 1915), 63–4.
tions of those scholars who admit the possibility that Simias’ figure poems were composed for inscription on real objects.1

K. is fully aware of the testimony of Hephaestion (pp. 61.19–62.6 and 68.7–13 Consbruch) as well as of the scholia to the Axe, both suggesting to read these poems ἀντιθετικὰς (i.e. in the order: first, last, second, second-last, etc.), and he also admits that Hephaestion’s account proves that by 1st/2nd cent. CE they may already have been arranged as ἀντιθετικὰς; nonetheless he gives priority to his above-mentioned basic assumption (1). One of his arguments against the ‘iconic’ lay-out of the Egg is that this poem differs from the other poems of the collection, which contain clearly marked pointers to their shape or emphasise the significance of their visual form, in being deprived of any such allusions. To my mind, not completely. Of course, I agree that taking the initial metaphor (‘a new weft of a twittering mother’) by some later compiler, rather deliberately, for ‘egg’ cannot be accepted any more. However, in the description of Hermes’ model performance, notwithstanding the emphasis put on rhythm, sound and dance, I would discern a subtle hint on how to perceive this poem visually as well, starting from ‘one-footed measure’ (ἐκ μέτρου μονοβάμονος) as the shortest unit of text, by quickly repeated, alternate movements of the eye ‘from above’ to the bottom of the poem. After all, the ‘new’ ἀτριον, ‘weft’, ‘fabric’, exists in its material dimension – as the text presented to the readers. Hephaestion’s statement about the antithetical arrangement of the poem is not incompatible with such an interpretation. Naturally, reaction of that kind on the part of the recipient requires his or her active involvement meeting the expectations formulated by Castorion of Soli (SH 310.3–4): κλήσω γραφῇ τῆδ’ ἐν σωφὴ πάγκελετ’ ἔπτ / συνθείς, ἀναξ, δύσγνωςτα μή σοφο κλέεν – I shall invoke you by knitting together in this clever composition, / lord, widely-renowned phrases that are difficult for dull listeners’ (trans. S. Douglas Olson).

K. has written a very useful chapter on the metre of individual poems (pp. 38–45), in which, importantly, he takes into account the poets’ metrical consciousness. The instances of expansion/compression via repetition, addition and subtraction are easy to explain, but in the difficult case of Simias’ Egg such ‘author-guided analysis’ proves to be the right key to a satisfying solution.

Out of necessity, I have concentrated on selected issues dealt with in K.’s learned and multi-faceted Introduction. There is no doubt that it is an extremely rewarding read for every student of Hellenistic culture. As for its function within the whole book, it does not stand apart and should be consulted while reading the Commentary; the two parts complement each other.

The proposed Text (pp. 57–72), introduced by the last section of the Introduction (‘MS tradition’), fulfills every scientific criterion and is likely to become a standard edition of the ancient Greek technopaegnia. K.’s scrupulous examination of textual discrepancies, as well as of corrections and conjectures made over centuries by scribes and scholars, matches his refined critical judgement. The readings accepted by the editor are then thoroughly discussed in the Commentary. K. is to be congratulated on the final result of his editorial undertaking, especially on successfully managing the task of producing a readable text of the most difficult Egg. Highly responsible and careful about respecting the contributions of the predecessors, K. is sparing in his own proposals. These are: Ἔρος Wings 9; (e.g.) μιγέν Egg 9; <εἰς> Egg 16; λιγνύος Ionic Altar 5. Each text is ac-

accompanied by the English paraphrase by Paton (who himself reprints Edmond’s translation of the Egg); K. has altered them to fit his interpretation of the poems.

The extensive Commentary (pp. 73–190) on individual poems follows a consistent scheme: preliminary remarks, structure, literature, commentary. The commentary proper, though basically conceived as strictly philological, both keeps rigorously to the discussed passages or phrases, line by line, and creatively makes them the starting point to broader considerations. As a result, the reader is offered a wide picture of the cultural context to which the six poems belong, including the tradition they build on.

K. makes full use of the existing literature (see the imposing complete Bibliography, pp. 191–204), but has much to say himself in an attractive way. His remarks are often ingenious and bring a new perspective. Here is how he defines the effect of freshness and novelty in Simias’ Axe (p. 75): «Simias’ concept for this piece is […] twofold: to represent a hero through his weapon in a manner that is well familiar to us from the epics, and at the same time to represent him as an unheroic figure according to the taste of his contemporaries. The result is the representation of the axe which no longer wants to live the humble life of the carpenter’s tool, and in the most famous combat becomes the powerful destroyer of the walls of Troy». As regards Wings of Eros, K. proves that «Simias evokes and rearranges some well-known Platonic motifs in the artful manner well familiar to us from Alexandrian poetry» (pp. 92, 99–100). Simias’ Egg interests K. also as a poem composed for ear (p. 107). The Syrinx is interpreted (pp. 29, 139) on the one hand as playing on Theocritus’ preferred dactylic metre, on the other – in terms of its strongly Lycochironian flavour as a refined, purposely exaggerated accumulation of riddles «unsurpassed in their ridiculous difficulty», a feature which can be taken for Lycochiryon’s signature (K. favours Lycochiryon, and not Theocriratean authorship of the poem). Dosiadas’ Doric Altar is seen (p. 163) as a poem creatively transforming the iambic metre of Lycochiryon’s Alexandra and reusing some of the riddles of that work. Vestinus, the author of the Ionic Altar, is shown (pp. 178, 180–190) to allude to the whole collection of the earlier five technopaegnia, and yet to aim at surpassing them all.

There is no reason to be indignant quandoque bonus dormitat Homerus. For all his accuracy, K. has made two accentual mistakes in Greek words: on p. 17 for Ἐπίγραμματα read Ἐπιγράμματα, on p. 136 for Ἄρες Ἄρες read Ἄρες Ἄρες. On pp. 24 and 94 there remained two slight misprints resulting from rewording the sentence (to be corrected in the second edition). On p. 203 a misprint in the title of Strodel’s book. Vestinus’ acrostic is translated (p. 72) and commented on (pp. 180–182) without actually quoting it in extenso.

Overall, this volume will be a key resource for the study of the Greek figure poems. The author of this fine study deserves the rich thanks of all those who investigate and teach Hellenistic poetry.

Poznań

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