This work, the lightly revised German translation of the author’s Hungarian PhD dissertation (Piliscsaba 2011), aims to provide a literary study of metaphorical applications of the motifs of ‘eye’ and ‘vision’ in Pindaric epinician, showing their importance in shaping the poet’s thought.

The book consists of an introduction, seven chapters, and an appendix (categorizing all the instances of χάρις in Pindaric epinician). In the introduction, the author briefly recapitulates the highlights of Pindaric interpretation from Boeckh to Bundy (and no further), summarizes previous studies that have dealt with his theme, and lists a number of works that have dealt more generally with eye and vision, light and darkness in archaic and classical Greek. Chapter 2 deals with the gaze of χάρις and the Charites, beginning with Olympian 14, but expanding its horizons to deal first with Olympian 7.1–12 and then with the notions of blooming, growth, desire, and vision with which χάρις and the Charites are associated in Pindar more generally; it also includes a ten-page excursus on the Muses in Pindar, designed to show (in the absence of very much evidence) that the gaze of the Muses in Pindar is as protective and beneficent as that of the Charites. Chapter 3 treats the gaze of the poet, the victor, and the god: the shining achievement of the victor corresponds to the poet’s shining song; the poet’s gaze confers light and preserves the truth, that of the φθονερός sheds darkness, falsehood, and oblivion; and the light of the divine gaze promotes both victory and poetic inspiration. In chapter 4 the eye of the ruler is presented as the earthly counterpart of the eye of the gods, a conceit that is used to support the chapter’s lengthy exegesis of the much-disputed P. 5.15–22. Chapter 5, on the ‘Blick der Hoffnungen’ concentrates on a single passage at I. 5.56–8, while the final chapter deals with light and darkness as symbols of the mutability of fortune in Olympian 2.

The author concentrates on epinician, rather than exploring the fragments of other genres, on the grounds that only the epinicia are preserved in their entirety. He sees his task not merely as the analysis of the complex of imagery that is his express focus, but also as requiring detailed philological discussion of many of the problematic passages (in textual or interpretative terms) in which these images occur. In turn, he is convinced that such discussion can take place only in the context of a comprehensive, line-by-line interpretation of the relevant odes themselves. The results of this approach, as far as the Pindaric text is concerned, are summarized in a table on p. 198, which lists four deviations from the eighth edition of Snell-Maehler and a further four passages in which Adorjáni’s (A.) analysis confirms Snell-Maehler.

In the case of I. 5.56–8, A. (pp. 140–61) reads ἐλπίδων ἐκνίσ᾽ (codd., with ἐκνισ’ for ἐκνισ’) in place of Wilamowitz’s emendation ἐλπίδ’ ἐκνιζον, as printed by Snell-Maehler; at Pa. 7b, fr. 52b.20 he suggests the supplement ἔλπιδος ἐκνίσӨ σοί τε ὃς as «der … den tief(sinnigen) Weg der Hoffnungen auf Weisheit sucht» (p. 66). He emends δε to γε at O. 2.56 (p. 182) and (after Bergk and Jurenka) ἐξεῖ to ἐξει at P. 5.17 (pp. 128–37).

In these discussions, A. gives plentiful evidence of considerable philological expertise. Having settled on his preferred text and interpretation, his practice is
to provide it with a Latin prose translation. This he chooses to do in order to profit from Latin’s «äußerste Knappheit und unbestechliche Klarheit» (p. 16), but also, one suspects, because he can. In all chapters, discussion of textual and interpretative cruces looms large, but in chapters 4 (on P. 5.15–22) and 5 (on I. 5.56–8) in particular the defence of the author’s chosen text is clearly the central purpose. In both cases, the results yielded are valuable, and it may fairly be said that the stated purpose of reading disputed passages in the light of Pindar’s wider use of the language of vision and the visual does produce its promised dividends.

With ἔχεις for ἔχει at P. 5.17, συγγενὴς ὀφθαλμός in 17–18 stands in apposition to the subject: in so far as he is king, Arcesilas, ‘the innate eye of great cities’, possesses honour and privilege; to that honour he has now added by virtue of his Pythian victory (15–22). Similarly, taking ἐλπίδων ... ὑπ’ιν in I. 5.58 as ‘the eye of hopes’, i.e. with reference to the glance of an eye that looks hopefully towards the future, makes better sense of the passage than any of the competing explanations (from the scholia to the present day) reviewed on pp. 141–52. But in each of these cases the discussion could surely have been much briefer. The interpretation of I. 5.56–8 is given succinctly in the author’s translations on pp. 161 (Nec labor ingens occaecatus est, nec tot sumptus, qui aciem spei excitaverunt) and 166 (‘Nicht blind ist so viel Mühe und Aufwand, die den Blick der Hoffnungen erregt haben’). It might have been outlined in a page or so of argument and supporting detail, without the exhaustive, twelve-page history of rejected interpretations or the five-page survey of ἐλπίς in Pindar that are presented in its support.

The same pattern obtains throughout: long stretches of every chapter work through the relevant poems in sequence, rehearsing textual and interpretative problems, not all of which, by any means, are related to the motifs of eyes and vision. As a result, the book does not really offer a comprehensive study of those motifs in Pindar, but rather a series of case studies, in which analysis of the author’s chosen passages is embedded in detailed exegesis of their wider contexts. To a large extent, this procedure leaves the study of ophthalmic, optical, and visual imagery in Pindar where it was: in general terms, the main aspects of the author’s thesis, concerning the splendour of victory and of the victor’s glory, the illumination of the victor by the poet’s praise, the darkness of envy, the victor’s basking in the beneficent gaze of the gods (including the Charites and the Muses), are all very familiar to students of Pindaric epinician. Where the author goes beyond the mainstream interpretation of these features, however, is in his synthesis of this complex of imagery into a single, consistent system based on a single and unified optical theory.

On p. 12 the author outlines his working hypothesis as follows: «Das metaphorische Sehen stellt ein Lichtphänomen dar, da es als ein Licht-Ausstrahlen von dem Auge im empedokleischen Sinne aufzufassen ist». The evidence cited for this ‘Empedoclean sense’ is B 84 DK, though C. Mugler’s article on ‘La Lumière et la vision dans la poésie grecque’, REG 73 (1962) 49–72, is then adduced in support of the proposition that «Was die moderne Rezeption Empedokles zuschreibt, ist in Wirklichkeit das Gemeingut der gesamten früh griechischen Dichtung» (pp. 12–13). This notion, A. contends, underlies and
unites the presentation of the motifs of looking and seeing in Pindar, and it is this apparently simple theory that is referred to repeatedly in the remainder of the volume as ‘die Lichttheorie des Sehens’ (pp. 13, 77, 79, 121–2, and passim).

The position, however, is not so simple. It is indeed true that the emissionist theory of vision is the dominant one in archaic and classical poetry. It is also true that this conception forms part of some early optical theories (including that of Alcmaeon of Croton). Nor can it be denied that intraocular fire figures in what we have of the optical theory of Empedocles. But Empedocles’ theory also had a substantial role for the eyes’ passive reception of physical emanations from objects. This might suggest that his was an interactionist theory, such as is found in Plato’s Timaeus; recent interpreters, however, place more emphasis on its passive, emanationist aspect. If Empedocles’ theory is not straightforwardly emissionist, it seems that the rival theory of Democritus and the other atomists, traditionally seen as passive/emanationist, may also be more complicated – a recent re-examination by K. Rudolph makes a strong case for the combination of both active (emissionist) and passive (emanationist) elements. Fifth-century optical theory, then, is more complicated and less monolithic than A. allows, and the simple emissionist model of early poetry should not be conflated with Empedocles’ position, whatever it in fact was.

This does not necessarily mean that Pindar should be credited with a consistent theory of another, non-emissionist sort, but it is important to establish (a) how closely Pindar’s popular/poetic model corresponds to the models of early science and philosophy and (b) how far Pindar’s model permeates and conditions his use of optical and visual imagery. A. (p. 12 n. 2) cites five Pindaric passages in which a simple emissionist model is supposedly explicit (P. 4.28–9, N. 7.66, 26–7).

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1 See (e.g.) Od. 4.150, 19.446; Hes., Th. 826–7; h. Cer. 45, 415; A. fr. 99.13, 243 R; S. Aj. 69 (cf. 83), fr. 157 R; E. Andr. 1179–80, Hec. 367–8, 1104 (cf. 1034, 1067–9), Her. 130–2, Pho. 1561–4, Rhes. 737. Cf. the notion of the sun as an eye which sees by means of the rays it emits (e.g. b. Hom. 31.9–11; h. Cer. 70; S. Trach. 666) and a model for the human eye (Pi. Pa. 9, fr. 52k.1–2 S-M; Ar. Thesm. 17).

2 Alcmaeon A 5 DK; cf. Euclid, Optics, introd. axioms 1–7. Alcmaeon’s theory, however, may not be straightforwardly emissionist, but may have had both active (emissionist) and passive (receptive/emanationist) aspects: see J. I. Beare, ‘Greek Theories of Elementary Cognition from Alcmaeon to Aristotle’ (Oxford, 1966), 11–13.

3 B 84 DK.

4 Cf. A 86, 88, 90, 92, B 89, 1098 DK.


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10.40–1, frr. 52u.13, 123.2). But of these, only the last three present the eyes as a source of light. P. 4.28–9 presents the epiphany of the god Triton in human form (φαιδίμων ἀνδρὸς αἰδοίου πρόσοψιν θηκάμενος). For A. (p. 38 n. 1), this is «[a]ne Stelle, die das Antlitz (~ den Blick) αἰδοίς strahlen lässt», an implication that he then reads into O. 7.89–90 (διδοῖ τέ οἱ αἰδοῖν χάριν ἔκχρος δέρκομαι καὶ ποτὶ ξεῖνων). But there is no warrant for either of these assumptions. πρόσοψιν in P. 4.29 refers to the appearance of the disguised god as seen by others, just as αἰδοίου, which is passive in sense, implies the αἰδός of the onlooker; and the light with which the god or god-like human shines in epiphanic or quasi-epiphanic situations is not restricted to the face or the eyes.¹ Nothing whatever is said about the eyes’ emission of either light or αἰδός in P. 4.28–9. Similarly, despite A.’s claim that O. 7.89–90 expresses the wish «dass alle Menschen ehrenbietend auf den Sieger blicken mögen», the text offers no warrant for importing a specific reference to vision. At N. 7.65–6, on the other hand, the language of vision is certainly used, in the narrator’s affirmation that ἐν ... διμόθης ὑματι δέρκωμαι λαμπρόν. This is not incompatible with an emissionist concept of vision, but it is not positive evidence for it either, for the eye can be bright without there being any assumption that it sees by emitting rays of light. And in fact vision is not really what the passage is about; the reference to the bright look of the eye is a metonymy for the confidence that arises from having nothing to be ashamed of or to apologize for (no reason to avert one’s gaze, hang one’s head, cover one’s face, or hide oneself away). The cultural model here is not primarily one of vision, but of emotion, its expression in non-verbal behaviour, and its role in social interaction.

Scrutiny of the five passages that A. adduces as explicit evidence for ‘die Licht-theorie des Sehens’ in Pindar thus raises a number of issues that extend to the entire project: (a) it applies, across the board and without sufficient attention to the nuances of individual passages, a single, monolithic, one-size-fits-all model; (b) it reads this model into passages in which it does not occur; and (c) it exhibits surprisingly little interest in other aspects (emotional, social, etc.) of the language of eyes and vision in Pindar.

In a number of passages, the source of light is not the eye of the beholder, but the object of vision. In O. 1.93–4, 4.10, N. 3.64, and 3.84 (all discussed on p. 78) it is the fame or excellence of the victor, the victory, or the mythical heroes with whom the victor is associated that shine. Equally, light may be said to shine on the victor on account of his victory (famously at P. 8.96–7, which A. cites only in

¹ At b.Cer. 188–9 it is the goddess’ appearance as such that fills the doorway with light; though at b.Cer. 214–15 (as A. notes, p. 38 n. 1) αἰδός is indeed present in her eyes (both as an aspect of the goddess’ demeanour and as a quality that attracts the respect of others), at 190 αἰδός is part of the onlooker’s awed response to disguised epiphany. At b.Cer. 278–82, the goddess (this time in her true form) fills the room with light, but this is explicitly said to emanate from her entire body (τῆλε δὲ φέγγος ἀπὸ χροος θυκανότου | λόμπε θεῶς, 278–9). Cf. A. Pers. 151–2. A. uses this passage as a parallel for (unlikely) emissionist interpretations of P. 4.270 (Παινόν τέ σοι τιμή φῶς) and I. 2.17 (ἐισάρματον ἄνδρα γεραίρων, ἄφρογαντίων φῶς), but has to admit «Hier strahlt jedoch das Licht nicht aus [the Queen’s] Auge, sondern aus ihrer ganzen Erscheinung». 

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passing; cf. N. 9.41–2, cited in p. 78 n. 1). For A., all passages of this kind can be brought under the umbrella of the ‘Lichttheorie des Sehens’ in so far as it is the light from the eyes of others that makes an object shine. Hence the gaze of both the poet and the gods illuminates the deeds of the victor (or the hero) in chapter 3 (pp. 79, 104–5, 109, 113; cf. chapter 2, pp. 19, 35, 50–2, 63, on the gaze of the Charites and the Muses). The beneficent light cast by the eye of the ruler in chapter 4 similarly depends on the light emitted by the eye of god (pp. 122, 138); and the ‘eye of hopes’ (I. 3.36–8) in chapter 5 ultimately depends on the light shed on the world by the eye of Theia, mother of the sun, invoked in the ode’s proem (pp. 167–70). In some cases, no doubt such inferences are justified. The eye of the gods as the source of their favour is a well-established topic.

1 Nor, perhaps, is it too much of a leap to imagine that the αἰγλα διόσδοτος of P. 8.96 comes specifically from the eye of the god. But here too there is a danger of reducing all metaphors to one and of tying them too strictly to a single theory of vision. When, at O. 9.21–2, the laudator describes himself as φίλαν πόλιν μαλεραῖς ἐκφλέγεν, the metaphor is surely that of song as a blazing torch, as at I. 4.43. There is no need to invoke «der leuchtende Blick» of the poet here (pace A., p. 79), and if it is true that the πυρσὸς ὠφνων that the laudator kindles for Melissus stands «in eindeutiger Parallele» (ibid.) to the radiance of Melissus’ achievement (ἐγγράμματοι ἀκτὶς κυλῶν ἀσβέστοι, I. 4.42), it is not true that the brightness of the latter depends wholly on the former. Mortals’ excellence has a light of its own, though it may depend on divine favour and may need the skill of a poet to keep it alive (as Bacchylides might put it: 3.90–2; cf. 13.175–81).

Central to chapter 4 on the eye of the ruler is the generalization (p. 122) that «Wo immer Pindar φόνος in Bezug auf die Person des Königs gebraucht, zielt er auf den schützenden Blick desselben als Quelle dieses Lichts». But in the passages in which the ruler is described as a ‘light’ (P. 4.270, I. 2.17) or an ‘eye’ (O. 2.6, 9–10, P. 5.17–18, 55–7) there is likely to be at least as much emphasis on the ruler as the focus of others’ visual attention (as, e.g., in the metaphorical use of ‘eye’ at S. Trach. 203, OT 987; E. Andr. 406) as on his protective gaze (or his ability to ‘look out’ for the community, as the eye looks out for the person: cf. O. 6.16–17; A. Pers. 168–9, Cho. 934). At P. 5.55–7 Battus’s wealth (or Battus

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1 Hes. Th. 81–2; Pl. O. 7.11, P. 3.84–5, 8.67–9, 71–2, I. 2.18–21; B. 11.14–17; A. Supp. 1, Th. 667, Ag. 952; Call. fr. 1.37–8 Pt., epigr. 21 Pt., H. Ap. 50–4; Theocr. 9.35–6; Epigr. 451,1 Kaibel.
2 Cf. I. 2.17–18: Xenocrates is the ‘eye of Acragas’; Apollo ‘saw’ him at the Pythian games and ‘gave him aglaia’; but ‘saw and gave’ does not necessarily mean ‘saw and thereby gave’.
3 Cf. Pa. 2, 52b.66–7, both discussed by A., p. 79.
4 The splendour of the victory at I. 4.42 is answered by the obscurity of the defeated opponent in line 48, here presented as a result of the victor’s own efforts (χρῆ δὲ πῶν ἐρώιτ’ ἀμυνόμενος τὸν ἐπίθρον).
5 Even where the victor’s radiance does depend on divine favour, that favour is not necessarily expressed via the eyes. At N. 6.37–8, for example, it is the singing of the Charites, not their gaze, that makes the victor ‘blaze’ (παρὰ Κασταλίαν τε Χαρίτων ἐσπέριος ὁμάδο φλέγεν).
himself, in so far as he is wealthy, and ultimately Arcesilas, as Battus’ heir) is a bulwark to his own people and a shining eye to ξένοι (πύργος ἄστεος ὀμμα τε φαεννότετον ξένοισι). Battus’ own attitudes are evidently in play; but something that shines brightly towards ξένοι is equally likely to attract their attention. As an emblematic feature of social interaction, the eye is an interactive entity; it both conveys and attracts visual attention.

For A. (p. 169 on frs. 52k and 108b) «Es ist der Glanz der Sonne, der die irdischen Augen zum Licht-Aussenden, d.h. Sehen, befähigt». But how? If our eyes emit light like a lantern, sunlight should make no difference. Though, in archaic poetry, the sun and the human eye are both imagined, analogously, as seeing by means of the rays they emit, if we move from analogy to causation, so that the human eye sees only by virtue of the light emitted by the sun, then we are no longer dealing with a simple emissionist model of human vision. This complication is, in ways that A. does not notice, intrinsic to the Empedoclean theory, for although Aristotle can criticize that theory as if it had no role for ambient light,1 he also indicates that sunlight did play a part in Empedocles’ account of vision.2 I remain unconvinced that Pindar’s symbolic use of the language of vision does in fact depend on a single, consistent optical theory, but since A. believes that it does, it is surprising that he is so incurious about the relation between the theory that he attributes to Pindar and the specific detail of the various versions of optical theory that were current in Pindar’s lifetime and in the century or so thereafter.

The volume’s reductive approach applies also to its account of the emotional aspects of vision. At pp. 51–2, for example, the author writes:

«Die Wirksamkeit des göttlichen Auges lässt sich unter Rückgriff auf die Ausstrahlungstheorie gut erklären. Der Abstand zwischen dem Auge und dem Objekt des Sehens wird durch den Lichtstrahl als Träger verschiedener Gehalte überbrückt. Diese Gehalte sind vornehmlich geistiger Art, wie z.B. der Eros. Per analogiam können jedoch auch andere Gehalte mit materieller Wirkung in der Substanz des Lichtes mit aufgehen, vor allem die Fähigkeit der Befruchtung … Präziser formuliert: Das Licht des Blickes nimmt jene Substanzen auf, die für die Liebe und das Blühen zuständig sind und teilt sie dem Gegenstand mit, auf den der Blick sich richtet.»

This assumption of a direct relation between an emissionist model of vision and the material effects of an emotionally charged gaze is often made, but is subject to substantial complications. At first sight, fragment 123 (the well-known *encomium* for Theoxenus)3 seems to bear out what might be regarded as the standard view – Theoxenus emits rays from his eyes that have a palpable effect on any normal onlooker (fr. 123.3–6):

τάς δὲ Θεοξένου ἀκτίνας πρὸς ὅσσον
μαρμαροζώστασα δρακετις
ός μὴ πόθῳ κυμαίνεται, εξ ἀδόμνατος

2 *Sens.* 446a25–8. For the essential role of (sun)light in Arist.’s own theory, see *Sens.* 448b2–8; cf. e.g. Pl. *Resp.* 507e–508d.
3 Discussed only in passing by A. (pp. 12 n. 2, 44 n. 1, 56–7).
What Theoxenus emits, however, is not desire, but desirability. This is a somewhat different scenario from that entailed by the notion of the divine gaze as an effective source of favour and protection; in that case, the gods have a specific emotional attitude that includes a desire for a particular outcome, and that outcome is effected by their gaze. Theoxenus is credited with no particular attitude; the emotions that result from the flashing rays that he emits exist in the onlooker, not in Theoxenus. Lines 10–12 of the fragment show that the emotional effect on the onlooker does not necessarily depend on the beloved’s gaze:

\[ \text{ἀλλα} \, \text{ἐγώ τὰς ἑκατὸν κηρὸς \ὡς δισχθεὶς \ἔλαχ} \text{ιράν μελισσᾶν τάκομαι, \εὔτ' \ἀν \ιδώ} \text{πειδόν νεότυον \ες ἰσκαν.} \]

The avid, emotionally aroused gaze in this interaction is that of the lover, and the lover melts and swells with desire whether he looks at a youth’s eyes or at his body. Yet these emotionally charged looks are ineffective. This is a sign that the emissionist model of vision cannot be simply mapped on to a generalized emissionist model of emotion. What might work in the case of divine favour – or in those of φθόνος or βασκανία – does not straightforwardly apply to ἔρως, and it is a cultural model of ἔρως, not of vision, that determines the discrepancy between the powerful gaze of the beloved and the impotent gaze of the lover. When (later, as far as we can tell) the lover’s gaze is theorized in quasi-scientific terms, it is normally the passive, emanationist model that is preferred, all the way from Plato’s Phaedrus (251a–c, 255c–e) to the Greek novel (e.g. Achilles Tatius 1.9.4, 5.13.4; Heliodorus 3.7.5).1

A. is unaware of these complications because his true focus is more on textual criticism and exegesis than on the theme of vision in Pindaric epinician. In following this agenda he has clearly done everything that is required of a PhD thesis in the Hungarian higher education system. He has certainly given ample testimony of his scholarship and his fitness to practice as a professional philologist. But he has also published his thesis as a book which must now hold its own in the international scholarly arena; and though our various academic cultures are converging in many respects, this volume is an indication of how far apart they can still remain. A British or North American ‘book of the thesis’ on this theme would be a very different creature.2 As a contribution to the study of metaphor, it would almost certainly have something to say on theories of metaphor, ancient and modern. It might also discuss possible links and differences between the cognitive or conceptual metaphors that inform ancient optical theory and Pin-

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It would discuss at length the profusion of sights to which the epinician narrator, often through the focalization of an internal viewer, draws the audience’s attention, and explore the differences between those that may be visible aspects of the original performance setting, and those that are brought to the mind’s eye by enlisting the poet’s powers of ἐνίψαμεν and the audience’s capacity for φαντασία. It would investigate the ode’s stage-management of the spectacle of its own performance and discuss the significance of its various forms of δείκτης. It would treat the poet’s use of images and analogies from the visual arts, as in the architectural metaphors with which both O. 6 and P. 6 open. It would have more to say than A. does on the visual associations of the ἀλάθεια that the poet promises (as, for example, in the image of the quasi-personified Alathiea veiling her face at N. 5.16–17), and it would almost certainly discuss the representation of the victor’s (and especially the young victor’s) physical beauty as the object of wonder and desire in others. In this and other respects, one would expect some sense of the relation between poetry and contemporary culture, a perspective that is almost entirely lacking in the present volume. Similarly, in excluding Bacchylides, A. not only fails to explore the extent to which imagery of the kind found in Pindar is a more general feature of epinician as a genre and a reflection of the culture in which it was performed, but also misses the chance to comment on the sustained visual imagery of such relevant and important passages as B. 9.27–36, where, in a vivid evocation of the moment of victory, the victor stands out among his competitors as the moon outshines the stars, displays his wondrous physique, and wins the wrestling with a flashing movement, the Sapphic simile (27–9) and vocabulary (ἀμάρυγμα, 36)

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2 See the contributions by various authors in Arethusa 37, 3 (2004); cf. I. Athanassaki, ‘Narratology, Deixis and the Performance of Choral Lyric: On Pindar’s First Pythian Ode’, in J. Greethlein and A. Rengakos (eds.), ‘Narratology and Interpretation: The Content of Narrative Form in Ancient Literature’ (Berlin, 2009), 241–73.
4 NB the building’s πρόσωπον …πιλοταφές at O. 6, 3–4, and the φάει … πρόσωπον ἐν καθαρίῳ of the treasury of song at P. 6.14.
5 A. makes little use of D. Bremer, ‘Licht und Dunkel in der frühgriechischen Dichtung’ (Bonn, 1976: see e.g. pp. 296–314 on ἀλάθεια); in his view (p. 15), ‘der philologische Gewinn’ of Bremer’s work is «nicht immer klar, da er die Begriffe der philosophischen Hermeneutik verwende». This perspective may explain his lack of reference to M. Theunissen, Pindar: Menschenlos und Wende der Zeit’ (‘Munich, 2002), despite its treatment of issues that are important in A.’s own study (e.g. 246–5 on ὀδήγος, blooming, and the visual, 307–91 on ἐλπίς, 698–283 on O. 2); cf. 528–13, 608–9, 627, 631–2, 661–6 on ἀλάθεια, esp. 631 on the veiling image at N. 5.16–17).
enhancing the erotic implications of φαῖνε θαυμ[α]στὸν δέμας. Or take 11.14–23, where the victor, the 'stunning' son of Phaiscus (παῖδα θαητ[ον]ν Φαΐσκου, 14), recipient of the beneficent gaze of Apollo, to whose victory Helios himself is an eye-witness, is presented as the object of the audience’s visual attention and admiration. There is much in these two passages alone that suggests how easy it would be to go beyond the narrow confines of A.’s project.

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Douglas Cairns


A. himself gives a succinct account in his Preface (p.xiii) of the project undertaken in this book. It is to be a running commentary on the Cratylus, Plato’s treatment of what makes a language (or at any rate its «names» – any words «whose function is not primarily syntactic»: p.1) a language, and it will be organized according to a template reminiscent of the well-known Cornford model: ‘chunks of text’ are quoted in English translation, and then supplied with philosophical comment, in A.’s case in the Anglo-American tradition of analysis. As with Cornford and Hackforth, there is also ‘along the way’ quite a lot of philosophical discussion of «many matters of textual criticism and interpretation» – where A. is in fact often at his most penetrating. And as with Cornford’s treatment of the early divisions of the sophist in the Sophist, so A. offers only selective translation of the long section of the Cratylus (394e–421c) devoted to etymologies of ‘secondary’ names: these constitute nearly half the entire dialogue, although they are the subject of only one – albeit the longest and to my mind the best – of A.’s nine chapters.

An excellent Introduction discusses the subject and structure of the Cratylus, and what we know or can reasonably infer about Cratylus and Hermogenes (Socrates’ two interlocutors), and particularly about their philosophical commitments. It concludes with crisp verdicts on the dialogue’s dramatic date (after 422/1 BC, since Hipponicus, father to Callias and Hermogenes, is dead), and relative date (designed to be read after the Phaedo but before the Theaetetus: «and that’s that», p.21); and with the briefest of notes on the MSS. Chapter 1 deals with Cratylus’ initial naturalist position on the ‘correctness of names’, Chapter 2 with Hermogenes’ conventionalism. The next six chapters consider Socrates’ articulation of naturalism (Ch.3), his introduction of etymology as what the natural correctness of names consists in (Ch.4), the exposition of etymologies of ‘secondary’ names (Ch.5), the ensuing treatment of the primary names of which secondary names are ultimately constituted (Ch.6), Socrates’ critique of Cratylus’ defence of the naturalist theory when he resumes as interlocutor (Ch.7), and what A. sees as the final refutation of naturalism and defence of conventionalism (Ch.8). The book ends with a consideration of the dialogue’s

1 The victory is in the pentathlon – the event felt to develop the most beautiful physique (Arist. Rhet. 1361b10–11).