

famously begins *πολλὰ τὰ δεινὰ* (332). While many translators render *δεινὰ* as ‘wonderful’, Taplin (like Scott Horton’s 2007 translation in *Harper’s Magazine*) uses ‘formidable’, expressing the Chorus’ astonishment at human achievement. The semantics of *δεινὰ*, which range ‘from the terrifying to the marvellous’ (199), are difficult to capture in a single English word, and I note that in his translation of the play, Paul Woodruff chose to paraphrase it as ‘Many wonders, many terrors’ (*Sophocles: Antigone* (Indianapolis 2001), 14).

The format of Taplin’s book replicates that of his 2015 translation of Sophocles’ four ‘male’ tragedies, *Sophocles: Four Tragedies* (Oxford 2015). The introductory chapters on ‘Sophocles and His Theatre’ (xi–xxvi), on Taplin’s translation itself (xxvii–xxxix), and on the ‘Text and Conventions’ (xxxiii–xxxvi) are shortened and tailored versions of the 2015 introductions. The overall presentation is a familiar one from OUP’s ‘Oxford World’s Classics’ series. Each play begins with a learned introduction, and circle symbols in the translation point to endnotes. Taplin’s use of square brackets around lines that could be deleted, angle brackets for his own insertions and italicization of Greek words (such as *aulos*, 85), makes this a scholar-friendly translation, albeit possibly daunting for the casual reader. Any theatre group wanting to perform this would need to decide carefully what lines to keep, what lines to cut, what words to find equivalences for. Yet Taplin’s translation quite rightly raises these textual critical challenges for the performer, as part and parcel of how Greek tragedy survives to us. We must begin with what the text is, or is not, or might be, and there is no escaping that. For example, what of *Antigone* lines 905–12, often doubted as not genuine, where Antigone claims she would never have disobeyed the law for a husband or child, but only for a brother? Taplin cleverly has it both ways: he translates the passage (47–48) but puts it in square brackets and signals an endnote (203) where he explains his belief that it is an actor’s interpolation. Another troublesome section, the ending of *Trachiniae/Deianeira* (lines 1275–79), attributed to Hyllus in most of the manuscripts, is assigned by Taplin to the Chorus without square brackets (125); an endnote explains the controversy.

In sum, Taplin’s translation communicates the mood and register of each passage with a confidence that only comes from decades of philological expertise. His work is the fruit of a lifetime of living with these plays in their original language and interpreting them for students and colleagues alike.

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FINGLASS (P.J.) (ed.) *Sophocles: Oedipus the King* (Cambridge Classical Texts and Commentaries 57). Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018. Pp. xiv + 708. £135. 9781108419512.

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Readers of *JHS* are likely to be familiar with the earlier commentaries by P.J. Finglass, and this one is similar in format and approach, especially to the commentary on *Ajax*; it similarly provides a translation with each entry. I will recommend it to students who want to understand the textual criticism of tragedy. Finglass explains his reasoning with admirable clarity, whether he is defending the tradition or arguing for a conjecture. Exemplary but completely typical are the defence of the transmitted text (639–41) and the treatment of the corruption at 665–892. His metrical analyses are similarly very clear (the period-end at 1201 is the rare exception where no parallel is offered). Note 2 on page ix lists the most

significant differences between his text and that of the 1992 Oxford Classical Text edition of Nigel Wilson and Hugh Lloyd-Jones, and I find his choices consistently more convincing. Even when I do not agree with a textual decision, he makes me reconsider. His love for the play and his respect for Sophoclean style are manifest throughout.

The introduction strongly argues for a first production before the plague at Athens (I myself find it hard to imagine that the plague could be so ignored in the last part of the play if it were produced in the 420s). He offers a succinct discussion of staging and an account of the myth. This section briefly mentions the foreshadowing of later disasters in the extant ending, which Finglass strongly defends (apart from 1524–30), but the commentary does not have much to say about it and does not discuss the curse of Oedipus on his sons. The introduction also asks ‘what kind of a play is this?’ and discusses six tags that could be applied to it: suppliant drama, recognition drama, *nostos*-play, founding narrative, a work of theodicy and tragicomedy. These are not all of the same kind or of equal importance. The comparison of the tragedy’s opening with suppliant dramas is meaningful, but the answer to ‘what kind of play is this?’ is certainly not ‘suppliant drama’. ‘A work of theodicy’ is not a ‘kind of play’ at all – but the loose heading is convenient. Finglass emphasizes Apollo’s active role and the innocence of Oedipus, and stresses that it is nowhere said that Laius and Jocasta should have avoided having a child.

There are topics in which Finglass is interested and those in which he is not. His first concern is the text and the meaning of the Greek, secondarily the staging and some basics of interpretation. Neither the introduction nor the commentary proper addresses political interpretations or intellectual background. Pericles and Protagoras are absent from the index, as are Freud and Lévi-Strauss; Herodotus has a single entry. Deconstructionist readings go unmentioned.

A reviewer inevitably has quibbles. There are a few peculiarities in the usually very helpful translations. At 314 he takes ἄνδρα (‘man’) as object instead of subject, without explanation. At 532, ‘how did you get here?’ is misleading, since Oedipus is not asking about Creon’s means of transportation. At 897–902, I am not sure what ‘conspicuous in its application to all mortals’ means. At 915–17, ‘speaks of fear’ would mean ‘speaks about fear’, not ‘speaks reasons to fear’. And at 1447, Finglass translates as if Oedipus meant that Jocasta’s tomb would be inside the house when he is surely using a circumlocution for her name.

Some comments are not quite satisfactory. On 114, θεωρός, ὃς ἔφασκεν (‘to visit an oracle, as he said’) deserves more attention (why the slight note of doubt?). On 383, Oedipus surely does not mean that he was forced to marry Jocasta, but that he lacked essential knowledge when he did. I do not quite understand what Finglass is arguing about ὁθοόνεκ’ at 572. If it is causal (Finglass translates it ‘because’), what is it that Oedipus thinks Creon knows? If it is for ὄτι, why would it be sensible for Creon to admit it? At 618–21, ‘he thereby admits that he is acting unjustly’, I do not think so; that Thucydides is critical of similar assumptions does not mean that Oedipus would agree. At 628, I am unconvinced that ἀρκτέον (‘must rule’ or ‘must be ruled’) is passive. On 1459–61, would Oedipus really be so confident that Creon did not need to worry about his sons if they were still children?

Everyone who studies Sophocles will consult the commentary with gratitude.

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