

In one of the most impressive contributions in the volume, Luca Iori explores the growing study of Thucydides in English grammar school and universities, and amongst the nation's nobility, during the Renaissance. Iori persuasively demonstrates the rapid growth of interest in Thucydides during the 1620s and 1630s, a period in which he was appreciated for 'rhetorical, moral, civil, and historical concerns' (76). The focus remains on Thucydides in the next chapter, where John Richards touches on a relatively neglected area of Thucydidean scholarship: Thucydides' reception in Germany during the early Protestant Reformation, notably in the works of Philip Melancthon and Martin Luther. According to Richards, for Thucydides' German readers 'there was something very Thucydidean in Protestantism, and even something very Protestant in Thucydides' (96).

The next few chapters revert to Herodotus. In the first, Mordechai Feingold scrutinizes Isaac Newton's positive deployment of Herodotus and biblical sources to build up an historical chronology of the ancient world. Next, Reinhold Bichler examines changing approaches to Herodotus in (primarily German) scholarship on Achaemenid Persia during the 19th and earlier 20th century, paying special attention to the East vs. West paradigm. Finally, Gastón J. Basile considers Herodotus' growing reputation in recent decades, which results not least from a much greater emphasis on the narrative qualities of historical writing. Of special interest here is Basile's engagement with certain colligatory concepts (or, to use Ankersmit's terminology, 'narrative concepts') that bind together Herodotus' work, namely, the Greek-barbarian polarity and the very notion of the Graeco-Persian Wars (τά½° Μηδικά½°, 9.64.2).

In the book's final chapter, which returns once more to Thucydides, Neville Morley builds on his work on Thucydides' reception in modern western historiography (especially *Thucydides and the Idea of History* (London 2014)) by considering the enduring appeal of Thucydides amongst successive generations since the mid-18th century. Morley explores how different readers came to view his work as being somehow 'modern', speaking to contemporary and universal concerns.

In sum, this collection is a welcome contribution to the field of ancient Greek historiography and its reception. While there is not a consistent juxtaposition of Herodotus and Thucydides throughout the book, with some contributions tending towards a more discrete approach that foregrounds only one author in a given context, all chapters are of sufficient quality and interest that such inconsistency does not detract from the book's overall significance. Nevertheless, one of the book's main strengths is precisely those contributions that facilitate readers in developing a more sophisticated appreciation of the ways in which ideas about, and approaches to, the two historians in combination have changed over the *longue durée*.

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OLSON (S.D.) **Aristophanes' *Clouds*: A Commentary** (Michigan Classical Commentaries). Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2021. Pp. x + 263. \$29.95. 9780472054770. doi:[10.1017/S0075426923000174](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0075426923000174)

This *Clouds* by S.D. Olson, author or co-author of now-standard critical editions with commentary of four plays by Aristophanes, is the second volume of the Michigan Classical Commentaries series, following *Knights* by Carl Arne Anderson and T. Keith Dix (Ann Arbor 2020). It will serve its contemporary audience of 'intermediate' readers

as effectively as Kenneth J. Dover's abridged student commentary (*Aristophanes: Clouds* (Oxford 1968)) has served earlier generations.

An introduction covers the essentials about Aristophanes, the play, its production and staging, Socrates and his portrayal, and metre. Suggestions for further reading are restricted to recent items in English, with a special recommendation of Martha Nussbaum's 'Aristophanes and Socrates on Learning Practical Wisdom', *YCLS* 26 (1980) 43–97. Appendix I supplies fragments of the original play, Appendix II additional passages of comedy by Aristophanes and other comic poets referencing Socrates, and Appendix III scansion (but not analysis) of the solo and choral songs. There are indexes of people, places and objects as well as Greek words. The text is printed without an apparatus but the commentary regularly addresses textual issues, and interested readers will spot differences from the most recent critical editions of the play, by K.J. Dover and Nigel Wilson (*Aristophanis fabulae* (Oxford 2007)), and from the annotated bilingual edition of Alan Sommerstein (*Aristophanes: Clouds* (Warminster 1982)). Olson warns readers to be cautious about Wilson's OCT edition and in the commentary flags its 'large number of dubious conjectures' (11).

For a 'born-digital' audience the commentary focuses on 'explaining issues that are not easily dealt with by a click of a mouse', such as word formation, syntax, usage, idiom and tone. Words that appear in precisely the same form in the text are boldfaced, and the constituent parts of compound lexical items are distinguished (for example, ἀ-πίρῶντον, 3). There are no references to standard grammars (readers are trusted to consult such resources 'should the mood strike them'), but Olson's explanations are lucid, often more so than in standard grammars and dictionaries. He introduces readers to finer points of idiom and syntax, citing ancient authors and works by their full, anglicized names, and generally providing all that his target readers will need.

The commentary also offers many insights, some new, about Greek literature, culture, philological methods, classical scholarship and textual criticism that will enhance the experience of readers and stimulate them to discover more on their own. Scholars important in the play's text-critical history are more than just names, for example, at 215 a conjecture was made 'by Richard Bentley, the great – and famously difficult – 18th-century British classical scholar', and the choice among possibilities need not be purely technical, for example, at 664 a conjecture by Elmsley 'seems unnecessarily frantic'. The notes are attentive to production (staging, costume, props) and to characterization, for instance, at 869 Socrates in his admission interview with Pheidippides is 'testing' for 'a potentially nasty, insolent temperament'. The style throughout is succinct, blunt and often drily humorous. Thus Aristophanes' image of Socrates 'was true enough to appeal to the average member of the audience in the Theater, for whom the real Socrates was a familiar local crank rather than a legendary figure from the past' (6–7); '*Clouds* raises serious questions, intended or not, about the place of free intellectual inquiry in a nominally democratic society dominated by nonintellectuals' (7); the oven at 95–96 is compared to 'a modern Weber grill' (664 n.); and a *barbaros* ('foreigner') is 'someone who does not know Greek, and thus by definition an idiot' (492 n.).

Occasionally an interpretative rationale does not consider all relevant factors. At 421, the suggestion of taking φειδωλῆς ('stingy') with μερίμνης ('anxiety') instead of with γαστρός ('appetite') to eliminate a *hapax* 2-termination adjective does not seem to suit the passage's phrasing. The case for identifying the person who answers the door at 133 as a slave and not a student (as the *scholia* and most scholars conclude) needs to consider the poverty of the school; that this speaker has some authority over the (other) students (195 ff.); and that Weaker Argument later answers the door instead of a slave (1145). At 550 n. Aristophanes' claim to have attacked Cleon when he was μέγιστον ('most powerful') but not when he was κειμένῳ ('down') is not false if 'down' means not 'destroyed by means of *Knights*' but 'in relative political eclipse' before Aristophanes attacked him again in *Wasps*, that is, in 423 after the losses at Delium and Amphipolis, and Laches' successful

armistice, ratified at around the time of the play's performance. By the time of *Wasps* in 422, after the revolt of Scione, Cleon was no longer 'down'.

The edition is very well produced, though in the scansion in Appendix III we have 'p' instead of the sign χ to indicate syncope.

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PARKER (L.) **Symeon Stylites the Younger and Late Antique Antioch: From Hagiography to History**. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022. Pp. 288. €75. 9780192865175.
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This book examines the sermons and hagiography associated with Symeon Stylites the Younger (521–592), a holy man who presided over a monastery during a period marked by earthquakes (526, 528, 550s, 577 and 588), plague (starting in the 540s) and the Persian sack of Antioch in 549. This is an unfortunately timely book, calling to mind the devastation caused by the earthquakes of February 2023, which left at least 56,000 dead and 3 million displaced, in a region already devastated by the Syrian Civil War. This contemporary context should cause readers to think even more deeply about Lucy Parker's central points related to the lasting impact of disasters and, particularly, how people living through difficult times can be drawn to local holy figures while also doubting their powers when their intercessions failed to prevent disasters.

As the title indicates, this book focuses on the study of hagiography. Clearly, Symeon's *Life* aimed to glorify the saint and his shrine, but Parker is especially interested in what the *Life* was arguing *against*: the text's apologetic nature is 'a reflection of genuine concerns about maintaining a saint's reputation' (8). As a result, Parker's book engages with more topics than its title lets on, including but not confined to: conflicts within a monastery; an overview of the archaeology of Antioch and its environs; an introduction to Symeon's sermons; and a discussion of the *Life* of Martha, the stylite's mother. While focusing on local issues related to Symeon's monastery, Parker keeps the study plugged into the bigger picture of the Eastern Empire.

Chapter One surveys the textual evidence for the disasters that struck Antioch and its environs, as well as a survey of the archaeological evidence for the region (including the Limestone Massif). Chapter Two examines Symeon's 30 homilies. Parker highlights three prevalent themes in these sermons: conflicts with demons, the association of wealth with sinfulness and paganism, and eschatology. This section includes a helpful table with a list of topics found in each sermon (73–74).

Chapter Three turns to the *Life* of Symeon the Younger. Parker demonstrates that despite Christological disputes, the hagiographer aimed to encourage visitors to Symeon's shrine, regardless of sectarian affiliation, and was more concerned with local challenges to Symeon's authority: the stylite 'faced wide-ranging scepticism' and 'accusations of failure in the aftermath of the disasters' (113). Various tensions arose with local priests, farmers and within the monastery. More than anything else, Symeon's failure to prevent disasters led to doubts about his ability to intercede with God. The *Life* attempts to explain disasters as Job-like tests of Symeon, while also blaming the sins of wealthy 'pagans'.

Chapter Four examines the *Life* of Martha, the stylite's mother. Parker analyses this unusual text's representation of piety in terms of the impact of disasters. Martha presents