

BOOK REVIEWS

David M. Schaps, *Handbook for Classical Research*, London and New York: Routledge, 2011. xxii+466 pp. ISBN: 978-0-415-42522-3.

This is a very useful, learned, and lively book. David Schaps (henceforth Sch.) sets out to present a brief, but comprehensive introduction to the study of the ancient world, in order to 'offer an orientation that will allow the interested student to progress further' (xiv). This orientation is twofold: each chapter surveys a particular subfield of classics, before turning to a detailed and most helpful list of major resources for that subfield. These resources include collections of texts or images, books, periodicals, bibliographies, online sites, etc., and Sch. does not simply list the various resources written in the major Western languages, but provides a judicious summary of the content and usefulness of each individual item. Thus, in chapter after chapter we find formidable scholarship presented succinctly and in readable form. Sch. takes a broad view of what the study of classics entails, above and beyond Greek and Roman history and literature. Consequently, the book includes sections on art, archaeology, music and dance, science and technology, religion and mythology, law, and the social sciences, in addition to surveys of the fields of papyri, epigraphy, and numismatics. History and literature, oratory and philosophy, grammar, linguistics, and lexicography are allotted sections as well, and the book concludes with a survey of the classical tradition, classical reception, and the history of classical scholarship. Greece and Rome are treated in an even-handed way; both ancient civilizations are accorded their due, and Sch. is careful to discuss each in turn, in every one of his chapters.

The introductory sections in each chapter vary considerably in content. Sch. moves at times from a survey of modern scholarship in a specific field, such as the discovery of the Mycenaean world (192-199), to a survey of the subject itself as viewed in the ancient world, as in his discussion of the importance of speeches in ancient society and the types and parts of speeches in the section devoted to Oratory and Rhetoric (130-140). At their best, these introductory sections are succinct summaries of the contribution a particular subfield makes to the study of classics as a whole. The following passage on the value of inscriptions is not atypical: 'Because they tell us the same story that they told the ancients, they are invaluable historical sources; because they tell it in the very form that the ancients used, they are invaluable linguistic sources ...' (217). Sch. has the knack of summarizing complex theoretical issues clearly and briefly. We learn, for instance, that Roman 'law, like a tree, became more and more solid and fixed around its center, but developed more and more intricate branches as each question that was decided raised new questions ...' (332). He also discusses technical issues with great clarity, explaining how coins can be dated by die sequence (203-205) or why red-figure pots contain finer details than black-figure pots (270-272). Sch. often investigates the relationship between classical approaches to a subject and more modern methodologies, pointing out, for example, the need for students of ancient philosophy to be acquainted with modern approaches to philosophy (141-143), while noting the great difficulty in applying the methods used by contemporary social scientists to investigate the classical world, because of the nature and limitations of ancient sources (344-345). The chapters on Archaeology, Law, and Science and Technology are particularly rewarding. Other surveys are less successful: the discussion of Music (esp. 291-292) is too brief and the section on Literature (esp. 121-126) is disappointing, because it concentrates chiefly on modern trends in literary criticism.

Sch. assumes that his potential readers, interested graduate students, already have an undergraduate background in classical literature and history and do not need either Greek or Latin to be translated for them. He imagines that these young researchers will be writing book reviews (57-65), in addition to formulating a thesis (15-25) and compiling a bibliography (26-38), and he encourages them to be involved actively in "hands-on" research. Thus Sch. suggests that they will want to decipher an unpublished papyrus, after learning how to open it carefully (239-240), and

perhaps will even throw a pot or two (284), or build ancient looms or musical instruments (377-378) in order better to appreciate and understand ancient arts and crafts. These students could well become the future editors of texts: 'If you are a person with imagination and good judgment — linguistic knowledge can be acquired — and you are not averse to using it in a field that will bring you little money and less fame, you will never lack for challenges in the field of textual criticism' (263). Sch., on his part, offers his readers a great deal of practical help. He brings, for instance, a sample page of the Greek text of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* with its *apparatus criticus* and then patiently explains how to read and decipher the *apparatus criticus*, as well as pointing out the implications and subtle distinctions of the different readings listed in the *apparatus* (102-106). In similar fashion, he takes the reader by the hand and explicates a sample papyrus publication (241-243), furnishes a guide to reading a publication of a sample inscription (218-221), and provides an explanation of the standard numismatic format used to describe a coin (209-211). Well-chosen illustrations in the art section vividly demonstrate how art reflects different societies and their values (267-274), while the photographs of varied samples of Greek and Latin manuscripts are accompanied by transcriptions of the texts (246-253), and will encourage budding palaeographers to try their hand at deciphering these handwritings. These practical guides are invaluable. It is perhaps unfair to ask for even more such help, but I would have liked a specific example of the use to which archaeological reports can be put in a historical or literary context, or more information on the relationship between artistic and literary sources. The book is a clarion call for the integration of classics and related disciplines, but Sch. assumes that all his readers will come to the book with a good grounding in ancient literature and history. It is a shame that those in fields close to classics — archaeologists, art historians, philosophers, etc. — are not offered more guidance in finding their way around fragmentary literary and historical texts. Sometimes Sch. assumes too much knowledge: a search of *TLG* is mentioned casually, before *TLG* is officially introduced, and this is true of *RE* as well. But the handy eighty pages of end matter, consisting of abbreviations, bibliography, and an index, can be used to rectify such slips.

In sum, this handbook has a great deal to teach professional classicists, in addition to research students and academics in related fields. The presentation is elegant and the author's voice is intelligent and amusing. Above all, this is an extraordinarily learned and helpful book, with an enormous amount of useful — and thoughtful — information presented in clear fashion. While I may not turn to testing how much Penelope could weave (and unweave) in a day, I now know how to decipher the entries in coin catalogues, and have learned for the first time of many, many useful reference works, in familiar areas, as well as unfamiliar ones. Sch. is to be congratulated on his highly successful execution of a most ambitious and worthwhile project. All will benefit from his vast learning and balanced approach.

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