

not our concern here.³ Suffice to say that this is the most likely reason why the model of oral transmission through composition-in-performance does not apply in the case of the two Homeric epics. Yet this is not to conclude, together with Jensen, that from the moment they were fixed in writing the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* ceased being orally transmitted at all. I suggest we turn once again to Shaked's reconstruction of the transmission of the Avesta, which both agrees and disagrees with Jensen's reconstruction of the history of the dictated text of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*:

It seems likely that not only its structure and scope were fixed before, but that there existed copies of the text [of the Avesta] in two written shapes: one, as a private aide-mémoire for individual transmitters; and one, perhaps, as a ceremonial book in the royal treasury, where prestigious documents of various kinds, including the official annals of the kingdom, were regularly preserved. It may be assumed that such a book in the royal archives, if it existed, was not very often consulted.⁴

Note that while the second part of the above description fits in perfectly with Jensen's scenario as to what happened to the Panathenaic text of Homer, the first part corresponds closely enough to what ancient Greek sources tell us about the rhapsodes. Note also that the model of transmission thus emerging is practically identical to the long-established scholarly view of the rhapsodes as possessors of their own copies of the Athenian text of Homer, the text that they memorized in order to perform.

We will probably never know whether the poet who dictated the *Iliad* was indeed the Homerid Cynaethus, whether Onomacritus whom Herodotus mentions was indeed the scribe who wrote down and edited it,⁵ or whether the three small statues of scribes in the Acropolis Museum were indeed meant to commemorate the historical moment of the recording of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* (302-12, 363-88). But Jensen states her case clearly and eloquently, and her argument commands respect even when one disagrees with it. For everyone interested in oral-formulaic theory and the history of the text of Homer, her book is an obligatory reading.

Margalit Finkelberg

Tel-Aviv University

Adam Schwartz, *Reinstating the Hoplite. Arms, Armour and Phalanx Fighting in Archaic and Classical Greece*. Historia Einzelschriften 207. Franz Steiner Verlag. Stuttgart 2009. 337 pp. 64 €. ISBN 978-3-515-09330-9.

In this book, based on a Ph.D. dissertation supervised by Mogens Herman Hansen and Gorm Tortzen, Adam Schwartz sets out 'to assess the military function and fighting style of the Greek hoplite phalanx in the period from c. 750 to 338 B.C.' (12-13). Justifying the necessity of the enterprise by the frequency of wars in ancient Greece, the agonal aspect of Greek culture, and the claim that 'war played an absolutely central role in Greek history and culture' (12) (issues, by the way, that are not followed up in the conclusion), he undoubtedly succeeds in attaining this relatively narrowly defined aim. This is a thorough, clearly focused and meticulously executed study, which despite some deficiencies will no doubt rank high among books on ancient warfare.

³ For an overview see e.g. Margalit Finkelberg, 'Homer as a Foundation Text', in Finkelberg and Stroumsa (n. 1 above), 75-96; for Homer and the Epic Cycle see ead. 'Homer and His Peers: Neanalysis, Oral Theory, and the Status of Homer', *Trends in Classics* 3 (2011), 197-208.

⁴ Shaked (n. 2 above), 66.

⁵ The hypothesis was first formulated in Minna Skafte Jensen, *The Homeric Question and the Oral-Formulaic Theory* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum 1980).

At its core lies an inventory of forty-one descriptions of hoplite battles (234-292), selected by criteria such as narrative fullness and contemporaneity. Details of the battles, tabulated under 29 headings (such as name and date, time of year, duration of battle, decisive factors, exchange of bodies), punctuate the book throughout.

The analysis itself is contained in four chapters of uneven length. In Chapter 1 ('Introduction', 14 pages), Schwartz presents the aims and purposes of his study, traces the research history of the hoplite soldier and phalanx fighting, and comments on the sources and methods used. In Chapter 2 ('Hoplite Equipment and Its Limitations', 75 pages) he focuses on the minutiae of arms and armor, both defensive (the shield, the headgear, breastplates, corslets, cuirasses, greaves) and offensive (the spear, the sword), occasionally enlivening the monotony of the descriptions with sections such as 'Hoplite race and pyrrhic dance', 'Comparison with a modern combat shield', and 'Physiology'.

Chapter 3 ('The Phalanx', 96 pages) deals with the development of the phalanx, the role of the shield in fighting, and deployment (the width and the depth of files, and the maneuvers designed to make changes in the formations). Its high point is the suggestion, which the present reviewer finds plausible, that we should reject attempts by scholars such as Cawkwell and van Wees to deny the importance of *othismos*, and instead revert to its canonical interpretation (i.e. 'a common effort, ostensibly a common push or shove ... of the entire phalanx [or parts thereof] towards and into the enemy in order to drive them back, disrupt their lines and break their ranks entirely'; 183).

Chapter 4 ('Duration of Hoplite Battles', 24 pages) addresses the temporal dimension of hoplite battles. Warning that 'the exact duration of ancient battles is next to impossible to assess' (201), Schwartz attempts to get the picture right nonetheless through the assessment of points of reference such as the phraseology of battle duration, battle phases, and contemporary perceptions of battles as abnormally short, long or unusual. His generalization, that 'the fighting itself was usually confined to a rather small amount of time, and that other, necessary phases of battle took up much of the day' (222), seems to fit in well with the details of the evidence.

Schwartz processes mountains of evidence that had formerly been scanned scrupulously by other scholars, and reaches a series of judicious conclusions. Thoroughly empirical and allowing little room for inspiration and grand theory, his research strategy more closely resembles that of the IBM supercomputer Deep Blue than that of a Garry Kasparov. In a book of this sort one would expect, however, to read about issues such as: the psychology of the hoplite warrior, the way he confronted the basic problem posed by phalanx fighting, i.e. how to impale without being impaled; the envisaging of enemy armor, which by the logic of the arms race must have been involved in shaping the hoplite equipment; and the social consequences of the transition to the hoplite mode of fighting. One would expect, moreover, an extension of the book's theoretical horizons through the establishment of a link with the burgeoning literature that exists on why people go to war. (Robert A. Hinde, ed., *The Institution of War*, Macmillan 1991, could provide a starting point.) Let us hope that Schwartz will use his wide accumulated knowledge on hoplite warfare to tackle issues such as these in his next book.

Gabriel Herman

Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Yoon Florence. *The Use of Anonymous Characters in Greek Tragedy: the Shaping of Heroes*. Mnemosyne Supplements 344, Leiden: Brill, 2012. ISSN 0169-8958.

This monograph, a revised Oxford dissertation, is at once valuable and frustrating. The book examines the unnamed characters of tragedy, with the exception of messengers. These are ubiquitous; not just the slaves and unnamed heralds, but the Pythia in *Eumenides* and *Ion* and the Priest in *Oedipus Rex*, the daughter of Heracles in *Heraclidae*. The book presents a straightforward argument: the anonymous minor characters serve to characterize the heroes. In the