

intentions and Ammianus' understanding of them. In connection with Julian's allegation that the terms of recruitment of his German soldiers precluded their transfer south of the Alps, Szidat follows Hoffmann in arguing that these terms applied only to individual soldiers and not to whole units (p. 143). His scepticism regarding Julian's claims occasionally leads him to use weak arguments. Thus Lupicinus' successful career in the hierarchy is hardly evidence that he was not haughty, mean, and cruel (p. 100). Julian's dispatch of Heruli and Batavi to Britain is attributed either to his desire to prevent them being summoned to the east by Constantius or to his fear that they might not support his usurpation (p. 101); but surely he may have thought the situation in Britain required their presence there. That the Germans did not in fact attack Gaul after Julian's departure is hardly an argument that Julian's fears of a German attack were make-believe, or that the alarm of the civil population was not genuine (p. 144 and elsewhere). The position of Decentius, which is crucial to our estimate of Julian's intentions, is skated over rather lightly, though Blockley's suggestion that he was involved in a conspiracy is rejected (p. 147).

A few minor points. It is not true that the right to issue warrants for the *cursus publicus* was restricted to emperor and prefects: cf. Jones, *Later Roman Empire*, p. 130. The explanation of *Excubitor nomine* (20.4.21) as 'a guard in name only' is, as Szidat admits, without parallel (p. 163). Why should *Excubitor* not be a personal name? Senator was. And the Indian Army under British rule gave rise to such family names as Engineer and Canteen-wala.

Szidat's book is a useful and scholarly contribution to the study of Ammianus, and succeeding volumes will be awaited with interest. But it must be read with alertness.

*Birkbeck College, University of London*

ROBERT BROWNING

## GREEK WISDOM – I

GIORGIO COLLI: *La sapienza greca, I: Dioniso, Apollo, Eleusi, Orfeo, Museo, Iperborei, Enigma*. Pp. 469. Milan: Adelphi, 1977. L. 38,000.

This beautifully printed book is the first of eleven volumes in which Giorgio Colli, known mainly as an editor of the works of Friedrich Nietzsche, intends to rewrite the still unsurpassed *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* of H. Diels and W. Kranz. This first volume entirely deals with the religious antecedents of Pre-socratic thinking. Consideration of this background is not novel: the choice of the texts here presented comes nevertheless as a surprise. Yet there's method in it.

To C., the source of philosophy is folly, *μανία*. The way of cognition in Pre-socratic philosophy, in his opinion, was akin to that of ecstasy, and the Pre-socratics were not philosophers (philosophy begins but with Plato), but sages, teachers of wisdom, *sapienza*: their first representatives, before Thales, were the Apolline ecstasies Abaris and Aristeas (ch. 6). Thus, Dionysos as the lord of *μανία τελεστική* and the Delphian Apollo as that of *μανία μαντική* (chs. 1–2) are the divine inspirers of the Presocratics. Ecstatic experience also forms the climax of the Eleusinian Mysteries, the *ἐποπτεία*, over which again Dionysos presides, being in Eleusis, in C.'s opinion, of old the equal of Demeter and Kore (ch. 3). Orphism, or rather Orphic poetry (ch. 4), combines the three: Orpheus, an

Apolline figure like his counterpart Musaios (ch. 5), is the symbol of a literature which treats the myths of Dionysos for ritual use in the mysteries of Eleusis. Its formative and influential period, the eighth and seventh centuries B.C., seems essential for the genesis of Presocratic thinking; when, in the late sixth century, Onomakritos of Athens collected and edited the hitherto mainly oral tradition, a steady decline began. The riddle, finally (ch. 7), is the characteristic form of Apolline answers and early wisdom.

Thus the introduction to the present volume, supplemented by a book C. published in 1975, *La nascita della filosofia*. One need not stress how much C. has been influenced by Nietzsche's *Geburt der Tragödie*; I doubt whether C.'s theory will be more influential with classicists than was Nietzsche's. But since the aim of the present volume is to present the religious antecedents rather than to follow up their influence on Presocratic philosophy, this review too will concentrate on the religious background; it may, however, be remarked that C.'s theory, significantly enough, is based mainly on Heraclitus and Parmenides and neglects the Milesian monists.

In C.'s interpretation of the religious antecedents, too many things are speculative. A Bronze Age Dionysos is most probably attested in Lin. B — but we know nothing about his cult, character, and myths. As to Eleusis, three things have to be kept apart. The sources (admittedly mostly late) rather disprove any ecstatic experience at the epopteia, although there are already in the fifth century hints of such phenomena during the procession to Eleusis. Further, there is no evidence whatsoever for an early or even original function of Dionysos in the Eleusinian pantheon: he was brought in only superficially in my opinion, because poets and vase-painters from the later fifth century onward identified with him Iakchos, the leader of the procession. Finally, that Orphic poetry played any role in Eleusinian ritual, is wholly unfounded: when in classical Athens Orphic poetry elaborated Eleusinian myths, it was not with a view to its ritual use (the hymns of the Lykomidai in Phlya do not concern us here).<sup>1</sup>

In his reconstruction of early Orphism, C., though well aware of the limitations of the evidence, in the end completely disregards this consideration and the need not to unify, but to differentiate: except for the name of Orpheus, there seems to be no common denominator in the early evidence of Orphic poetry, though there is a marked tendency to concentrate on the mythologies of Dionysos on the one hand, Demeter–Kore on the other. Chronologically, it seems to the present writer impossible to go beyond the limits of time indicated by Pi. frg. 133. The alleged role of Onomakritos of Athens, on closer inspection, is nothing more than a hypothesis of, at the earliest, Peripatetic origin.

Differentiation is also necessary in C.'s views on the cognitive function of ecstasy. Its use in order to gain knowledge, common in shamanism and with Christian mystics, is in early Greece confined to Apolline divination. In the cult of Dionysos, ecstasy transported one into another, happier state of being and was sought because of its liberating effect, not because of any cognitive value: as a prefiguration of philosophy, it is most unlikely.

But even on a foundation as shaky as that could be built a useful edition, at least of the Orphica: the first three chapters are too hampered by C.'s theoretical starting-point, which has caused the omission of nearly all evidence other than the literary texts concerned with the way and content of the ecstatic revelation.

<sup>1</sup> See my *Eleusis und die orphische Dichtung Athens*, Berlin/New York, 1974.

A closer scrutiny and the comparison to DK and K(ern) will show the value of this edition.

Manifestly, C. offers much more information than his predecessors. Most fragments are accompanied by a commentary, and each is fully translated into Italian<sup>2</sup> and provided with a short bibliography, a list of *loci similes*, and a critical apparatus. *Loci similes* and critical apparatus are, if anything, loaded with too much unnecessary information – but at least, nothing vital seems to be lacking. Not so the bibliographies: many a title, interesting ‘in qualche modo per la critica testuale, la traduzione, l’interpretazione’ (thus C.’s criteria for his choice) is missing: a few examples may suffice. There is no reference to either of M. P. Nilsson’s masterly papers of 1936, *Early Orphism and Kindred Movements* and *Die eleusinischen Gottbeiten*, or to W. Burkert’s *Lore and Science in Ancient Pythagoreanism* (1972/1962) or to any of K. Kerényi’s several books on Eleusis; much worse, there is not one mention of J. D. P. Bolton’s *Aristeas of Proconnesus* (1962), whose collection of texts could have supplemented C.’s ch. 6. Instead, there are regular but more than once superfluous references to Nilsson’s *Geschichte der griechischen Religion* or Kerényi’s *The Gods of the Greeks* as well as to standard commentaries on the texts cited and to DK and K., which every sensible reader would have consulted anyway.

Despite many useful remarks, the commentary seems rather uncritical and unhistorical, characteristics marked already in the introductory chapter.<sup>3</sup> Rarely, C. sets a text before its specific background – no word e.g. on syncretism in early Hellenistic Egypt in the comments on the Gurob Papyrus (4 A 69), or on the circumstances under which the gold leaves had been found, so vital for the understanding of the Thurioi group (4 A 65/7),<sup>4</sup> all the more surprising since C. regards them as key documents for his Orphism. All too often, opinions of modern authorities are accepted without demur, as in the case of the Eleusinian Dionysos, a long-discarded theory of Paul Foucart: the *sôma-sêma* doctrine still is Orphic, and the initiates in Eleusis still handle images of female genitalia. And besides such old misconceptions, there are many mistakes, ranging from simple inadvertence (p. 391: Eur.frg. 472 pronounced by Minos) to sheer fantasy (p. 416: according to C., in the mirror presented by the Titans the infant Dionysos sees ‘il mondo’, whereas the text clearly says εἶδ’ ὤλων ἑαυτοῦ θεασάμενος).

The texts, heart and core of the book, are arranged in chronological order, lumping together testimonia and verbal fragments: given the notorious problems caused by DK’s arrangement of the fragments (as with Empedocles and Parmenides) and the sometimes precarious division between A and B texts, this is useful. Furthermore, seeing an important watershed in Aristotle’s doxographical pursuits, C. divides post-Aristotelian (B) and earlier (A) texts – and counteracts this sound principle by a wholly subjective one, the assignment also on the criterion of a smaller or larger degree of original content,<sup>5</sup> which leads to some strange decisions.

C.’s collection of Orphica outnumbers DK as well as the *Fragmenta Veter-*

<sup>2</sup> One bad mistake may be pointed out in 4 A 18, and a questionable translation in 4 A 24.

<sup>3</sup> ‘Mangel an historischem Sinn ist der Erbfehler aller Philosophen’, says Nietzsche, *Menschliches Allzumenschliches* I.1.12.

<sup>4</sup> See the account of G. Zuntz, *Persephone* (Oxford, 1971), pp. 288–9, and the surprising conclusions of W. Burkert, *Magna Graecia* 10:1/2 (1975), 5/7.

<sup>5</sup> ‘una maggiore o minore presunzione di antichità sapienziale’ (p. 10).

iora of K. both by the addition of texts whose Orphic colouring has been suspected but not universally accepted and by tracing old Orphic ideas in later sources. Nobody will object to this, especially since the Derveni Papyrus taught us how old much later attested concepts can be. To include Ibycus frg.285 PMG (4 A 1), however, just because the silver egg of the Molione resembles the silver world egg of a late cosmogony (4 B 72 b 2), is far-fetched: but it is, to be fair, the only text so grossly out of place. There are, on the other hand, strange omissions. No mention of Herodotos' hints at a secret myth of Dionysos, comparable to that of Osiris, which have been explained by Gilbert Murray,<sup>6</sup> no text of Xenocrates' Orphic interpretation of Pl. *Pbd.* 62 c or of either Ion of Chios or Herodoros of Heracleia, the first to propose alternative authors to Orphic writings, and – most detrimental – no text of the Derveni Papyrus with the fragments of the oldest Orphic book we possess,<sup>7</sup> considerably more important for our understanding of early Orphic poetry than the much disputed gold leaves.

A further, less fundamental but still unfortunate oversight concerns the constitution of the texts. Usually, C. relies on the newest editions and keeps clear of emendations of his own (the few examples of his own skill make one feel nothing but gratitude for this epochē). But in the case of Philodemus' *de pietate*, C.'s acquaintance with the work of A. Henrichs would have considerably improved two of his three quotations of Musaios and added a fourth.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, Henrichs (in an article of 1975, so perhaps after C. finished his edition) restored (in 4 B 18) the Ὀρ[φικοί] as authorities for the myth of Dionysos' sparagmos, thus procuring the earliest instance but one for the existence of 'Ὀρφικοί'.<sup>9</sup>

These criticisms may seem harsh, but they are necessary. Through a combination of misguided theorizing, missing critical alertness, and a tendency to pretended rather than real thoroughness, C. destroys his few good starting-points which could lead to an edition superior to DK. If continued in the same manner, his ambitious undertaking may already be regarded as a failure. This would be regrettable: though still unsurpassed, DK is not unsurpassable.

Zürich

FRITZ GRAF

## II

GIORGIO COLLI: *La sapienza greca*, ii. *Epimenide, Ferecide, Talete, Anassimandro, Anassimene, Onomacrito*. Pp. 356. Milan: Adelphi, 1978. L. 32,000.

*La sapienza greca* offers us 'an exhaustive documentation of what is customarily called Presocratic philosophy'. Volume ii deals with Epimenides, Pherecydes, the three Milesians, and Onomacritus; and it contains a section on Theophrastus. The texts are faced by a translation, preceded by a brief Introduction, and fol-

<sup>6</sup> In J. E. Harrison, *Themis* (Cambridge<sup>2</sup>, 1927), pp. 342 f.

<sup>7</sup> Partly published in *Deltion* 19 (1964), 17–25. *ZPE* 1 (1967), 21–32. To be exact, C. mentions the papyrus once, in the apparatus of 4 A 71 (!).

<sup>8</sup> A. Henrichs, *GRBS* 13 (1972), 67–98; the new text is *Phil. piet.* 963.

<sup>9</sup> *Id.*, *Cron. Erc.* 5 (1975), 35: hitherto, the earliest reference was K.fr.70 (? third cent. A.D.). Even earlier is a fifth-century (?) graffito from Olbia, *Vest. Drev. Ist.* 1978: 1. 87 f., brought to my knowledge by W. Burkert: it is scratched into a plaque of bone, of enigmatic use: could it be the token of a religious community?