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Reviews

ELIZABETH ARCHIBALD, *Apollonius of Tyre: Medieval and Renaissance Themes and Variations*. With an English translation of the *Historia Apollonii Regis Tyri*. Woodbridge, Suffolk; and Rochester, N.Y.: Boydell and Brewer, 1991. Pp. xv, 250. \$70.

The *Historia Apollonii Regis Tyri* (henceforth “HA”) has been a stepchild even among ancient novels. Its earliest extant version appears to have been composed in the fifth or sixth century (the first allusions to it occur in the latter), postclassical by any reckoning, and the language of the two main recensions, RA and RB, the one more, the other less vulgar, though of great interest to students of the history of Latin, cannot claim the literary qualities of Petronius and Apuleius. Marginal to a genre until recently regarded as marginal by classicists, the HA is in this regard like the *Clementine Recognitions*, which, however, can be set in the context of popular propaganda of the Orthodox Church.

Like so many abandoned children described in the romances, always taken up and reared, and ultimately proving to have a heritage of unexpected quality, so HA was adopted by myriad parents—in this far outstripping any of the more canonical ancient romances—and, still extant in well over a hundred Latin manuscript copies, was transformed *miris in modis* in umpteen European languages across the centuries, in versions by the anonymous as well as by some of the great. Among the latter we encounter Gower, Sachs, and, though with the names changed, Shakespeare in *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, Archibald’s terminus (one Greek oral *conte* recorded c. 1900 apart [p. 71 f.]). But the central power of the original story of loss and recovery beyond hope speaks to us in more familiar and recent languages, not only the transformation of Hermione’s statue at the end of *The Winter’s Tale*, written and performed shortly after *Pericles*, but the sublime “Figlia! A tal nome io palpito” of *Simon Boccanegra* (the text is by Piave) of that great devotee of Shakespeare and specialist in father-daughter emotions, Giuseppe Verdi.

Thanks to the inexhaustible variability and repeatability of HA’s particular congeries of folktale elements—incest, wooing involving riddles, shipwreck, *Scheintod*, evil step-mother—the story thrived more than its more pretentious cousins. Archibald highlights its moral serviceability as well as its malleability: “The secret of the [story’s] success . . . seems to have lain in its indeterminate genre and lack of explicit motivation or moralization, the variable ratio of dungheap to gold in the adventures of a Tyrian Everyman” (p. 106). This pauper truly became a prince.

Archibald’s book consists of two major portions: first, a very thorough and intelligent study of HA itself, its sources and analogues, its circulation and influence in the Middle Ages and Renaissance, along with closer analyses of plot elements and issues of genre and popularity (pp. 3–106; supporting part 1 are two appendices, “Latin and Vernacular Versions of HA to 1609” [pp. 182–216] and “Medieval and Renaissance Allusions to the Story of Apollonius” [pp. 217–33]); next, an eminently readable Latin text of HA with a faithful English translation (pp. 112–79). Archibald modestly describes her Latin text as “basically that of the RA version in Kortekaas” (p. 109), but that belies the work of smoothing and standardizing she has done vis-à-vis Kortekaas’s RA with her eye on several recent critical editions.¹ The translation is highly readable, as her prose is through-

¹ Archibald, italicizing her more significant departures, often follows the P witness of RA (occasionally a modern editor’s conjecture) or even RB (e.g., “favente” at 12.20 and the lacuna in c. 45) while Kortekaas characteristically prefers unadulterated A. If I have inferred her principles of

out. With additional notes, a list of manuscripts cited, full bibliography, and indices, the whole—handsomely and accurately produced—is a rich repertorium on which students of all aspects of European culture and literature may draw.

Archibald's examination of a great number of the manuscripts permits her to add to our picture of responses to the story such information as which passages are marked for emphasis (e.g., with marginal pointing finger) in which manuscripts and what *Erwartungshorizont* individual rubrics or library catalogue entries suggest (pp. 92–94). An important innovation in her detailed survey of the different versions is that instead of “deal[ing] with the vernacular versions in groups determined by language,” Archibald “consider[s] the development (or non-development) of the story in both Latin and vernacular versions chronologically,” the better to elicit “the reasons for certain innovations” (p. 46). Readers must look to appendix 1 for the real benefits of this; in “Problems in the Plot” the solutions of any one version, say Gower's, to successive structural cruces in the narrative are treated under separate headings, and in relationship with *HA* and the responses of other versions, while in the appendix each of the forty-three versions is presented as a coherent work in its literary-cultural context. There the only limitation is that of space: most summaries are brief, with references to editions, translations, and criticism. One wishes many were fuller. A valuable exception is the entry on Falckenburg's hexametric poem printed in 1578 (pp. 203–5).

The issue of “non-development” is important. As other scholars have observed in other contexts, even illogical elements can be preserved out of a latent conservatism in certain story traditions (see pp. 63, 71, and 92). It would be interesting to consider whether certain “matters” were differentially resistant to innovation, and if so, in what contexts. This might perhaps be a reason why the twelfth century replicated many traditional *HA* texts and only the next century saw the first chivalric reworkings. I am surprised neither that moralizing started only then nor that the whole spectrum from faithful copy to chivalric, moral, and hyperclassifying versions were produced cheek by jowl through the sixteenth century, as Archibald points out: such was the richness of late-medieval and early Renaissance culture, which is only beginning to be appreciated widely. Studies such as Archibald's provide specific data with which further to bolster this more nuanced view.

As for *HA* itself, Archibald finds unity and structure in the whole: each of the narrative's “three acts . . . focuses on the encounter between Apollonius and an eligible young woman who is her father's only child. A display of learning and the solution of a riddle is a feature of each of these episodes” (p. 12). While this is definitional to *HA*, the doubling, even tripling of other elements (e.g., storms at sea, nurses) is common particularly to popular narrative; see, for example, the *Odyssey* (multiple storms, semidivine temptresses, councils both human and divine, even stools hurled at a beggar). The initial story of Antiochus's incest “poses the problem of the relationship between fathers and daughters in an extreme form, and sets the scene for variations on the theme” (p. 17). Related and in some ways parallel to the theme of proper fatherhood is that of proper kingship.

Amidst the wealth of detailed information and exhaustive references to a polyglot spectrum of secondary literature, special attention should be paid to Archibald's argument that if we are to see any Seleucid ruler behind the Antiochus of *HA*, it should be Antiochus IV Epiphanes, “the villain of the Books of Maccabees” (p. 39), which them-

normalization aright, at 9.1 she should have printed P's “litus” rather than A's “litore.” The apparatus consists of the more interesting departures of RB (all seventy-three of which she also translates). For a report of Kortekaas's edition of both recensions, readers of this journal may consult my review of Kortekaas in *Speculum* 63 (1988), 186–90.

selves contain numerous characters named Apollonius (pp. 40–41). The idea that *HA* may have arisen in part as a narrative riff on elements derived from the world of the Books of Maccabees combined with motifs also known from the life of Apollonius of Tyana is ingenious and appealing. (I agree with the significance of the *Clementine Recognitions* as a suggestive parallel—a Greco-Roman romance beginning with the threat of incest and culminating in a multigenerational family reunion [pp. 34–35].)

Of quibbles I have few. Archibald's summary of a famous bit of the *Aeneid*—Dido “rejects her existing suitors in his [Aeneas's] favour” (p. 28)—tendentiously plays up the similarities between Aeneas's and Apollonius's situations. Although the above is probably what Iarbas thinks is true, Vergil makes it quite clear that Dido had rejected all suitors to remain loyal to the memory of her dead husband; it is that vow she abandons in favor of Aeneas. Nor do I think B. E. Perry's “argument is seriously undermined if one accepts a Greek origin for *HA*” (p. 33): the Apuleian analogue is of interest precisely because there is extant the Lucianic “Loukios or the Ass” in Greek with which to compare Apuleius's Latin version.

One of Archibald's great virtues is her fastidious articulation of material into clearly defined sections. This makes for a perspicuous whole but—and this is my only criticism—tends to limit opportunities for the author to reflect at length on the thicker problems posed by *HA* or its reception, indeed, even to gather together the myriad interesting aperçus on this family of texts whose own interrelations border on the incestuous. The sheer wealth of detail, and Archibald's faithful attention to it, may be one of the reasons why she engages relatively infrequently in speculations of a broader nature. Notes announce a “forthcoming study of the incest theme in medieval literature,” which will no doubt include deeper speculations. Fully satisfied by the present book, which meets the highest expectations for thorough research, clear thinking, and good sense, I look forward all the more eagerly to Archibald's next study.

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SVERRE BAGGE, *Society and Politics in Snorri Sturluson's "Heimskringla."* Berkeley, Los Angeles, and Oxford: University of California Press, 1991. Pp. ix, 339. \$45.

Heimskringla has long been recognized as peerless in Old Norse historiography. For this reason Bagge's analysis has raised high expectations. These expectations have been partially met.

The strength of the volume lies in Bagge's knowledge of the era. This is reflected not only in interesting insights into the nature of conflicts but more importantly in a concise overview of Snorri's life, scholarship on *Heimskringla* as a historical source, the evolution and content of the kings' sagas and Norwegian medieval history; an informative discussion on the diverse chronological techniques that Snorri applied to discrete parts of *Heimskringla* and historical eras; and confirmation that Snorri's historical analysis and use of literary techniques differ from those of his predecessors in degree, not in kind.

If the book is, in part, disappointing, the fault does not lie in the nature of the inquiry, a topic of major interest, but in the methodology, which requires honing. In particular, marshaling of evidence, avoidance of equivocations, and limiting usage of the ubiquitous notion of the operation of “the political game” would have contributed to the persuasiveness of the analysis. The mass of necessary detail, some of which might have been presented in appendixes, calls for tighter control. Equivocations flaw the formulation of conclusions. The single notion of self-interest, which purportedly dominates human affairs in much of *Heimskringla*, weakens the thrust of the argumentation.

Bagge's purview is rightly directed toward complexity. An initial statement on the