

succeeds in conveying a real sense of how and why some postmodernist literary productions mean what they mean. For that, Fletcher deserves much credit.

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MURNAGHAN (S.) and ROSEN (R.M.) (eds) **Hip Sublime: Beat Writers and the Classical Tradition** (Classical Memories/Modern Identities). Columbus, OH: The Ohio State University Press, 2018. Pp. x + 292. £62.95. 9780814213551.
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The unexpected collocation of the title signals a new direction in reception studies as scholars of Classics and American literature come together to argue for the significance of Greek and Latin writers to the ‘Beat’ generation. From Allen Ginsberg’s *Howl* (1956) to Charles Olson’s *Maximus Poems* (1983), the Beats and their associates discovered in the Classics an expressive and liberating code. Their radical politics and anti-formalist poetics, experimentation with altered states of consciousness and distrust of artistic or institutional restraint claimed precedent and inspiration in Homer, Sappho, Catullus or Pausanias.

Many of the Beats enjoyed a good education: William Burroughs at Harvard, Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg at Columbia, Ed Sanders at New York University. The introduction to *Hip Sublime* notes the importance of the American ‘Great Books’ syllabus, in which classical texts in translation were required reading, but also records some alternative routes: Gregory Corso, with no formal education, discovered classical literature and mythology in prison. Unlike their Modernist predecessors, the Beats did not struggle with a sense of belatedness; their encounters with antiquity are topical, spontaneous and local. The focus of reception is not so much the individual text as the figure of the author, the relationship with the audience and the pattern of myth and allusion.

The ‘Afterword’ provides a good overview of the intersections between the post-war avant-garde and the classical tradition. Nancy M. Grace and Jennie Skerl address specific subjects and tropes which are also relevant to the theory and practice of reception more widely: generic transformation (from classical epic and lyric to the Beats’ fragmented free verse), mediating texts (available translations, versions by earlier writers) and the tension between recognition and opposition (the Beats’ rebarbative ‘outsider’ stance pitted against their longing for a classical precursor, guide or even ‘soul-mate’).

Hip Sublime comprises groups of essays reflecting the book’s main topics: epic journeys, Catullus, Greek lyric and epigram and ‘personal canons’ (case studies in the ways individual writers recultivated their classical roots). The essays discuss most of the major Beats and some lesser-known ones (Philip Whalen and a lone woman, Diane di Prima). A brief but suggestive reading in the introduction of Lawrence Ferlinghetti’s ‘Sailing thru the straits of Demos’ shows how richly he might have repaid a chapter to himself.

The first of the epic journeys, Stephen Dickey’s ‘Beats visiting Hell’, delineates the Beats’ underworld landscapes and their conversations with the dead. The best-known encounter, that of Ginsberg with Whitman in ‘A supermarket in California’, is absurd, melancholy and intimate; elsewhere in *Howl* (and its obliquely rhyming Hell) the visions are nightmarish: part metaphysical and part entrenched in the subways of Manhattan and the underground settings of Ginsburg’s sexual life. Dickey then considers Burroughs’ use of the Orpheus myth and Kerouac’s versions of both Homeric and Orphic *katabaseis* in his novels *Big Sur* and *Orpheus Emerged*. (Loni Reynolds, in chapter 3, also discusses Burroughs’ underground Quests.) In fruitful dialogue with Dickey, Christopher Gair (“‘Thalatta! thalatta!’”:

Xenophon, Joyce and Kerouac') traces Kerouac's *anabasis* in *On the Road*. Gair's attentive reading of the novel's pattern of ordeal and desire on the journey to the Pacific (reaching back to Xenophon by way of *Ulysses*) is a welcome addition to current scholarship on the reception of the *Anabasis*.

The second group of essays examines the importance of Catullus to Allen Ginsberg, Charles Bukowski and Robert Creeley. Matthew Pfaff, reading Ginsberg's 'Malest' alongside Catullus 38, posits a 'philology of the margins', through which the poet disrupts inherited forms while producing in his own voice a 'recognizably classical text'. Nick Selby describes the 'poetics of adultery' in Creeley's 'Stomping with Catullus', a translation of Catullus 70: the poem strains against the bonds of 'fidelity', as much in Creeley's personal life as in his relationship with his source text. Meanwhile, for Bukowski, as Marguerite Johnson argues, Catullus is a fellow spirit, a 'brother-in-arms' (*contubernalis* or *comes*), a bond encompassing both belligerence and solidarity.

In 'Sappho comes to the Lower East Side', Jennie Skerl traces Sappho's influence from Poundian Modernism to the Beats and their later 'beatnik' associate, Ed Sanders. Sanders, who had a degree in Greek and a prison record, constructs a countercultural Sappho: a 'bohemian Muse' of radical sexuality, political activism and multimedia experimental art. Victoria Moul's fine essay on Robert Duncan then demonstrates how a close reading of 'A poem beginning with a line by Pindar' illuminates both Duncan and Pindar. The poem enacts the experience of reading, at night, a particular translation of *Pythian* 1. Moul traces the strophic movement of the dance and the Pindaric elaboration of mythological allusions, such as the meditation on Cupid and Psyche which Duncan's lamplit setting evokes. This chapter also highlights the importance of genre in reception studies: Moul brings out the correspondences between Duncan's references to himself and to American politicians and epinician concepts of the virtuous ruler and the status of the poet. Gideon Nesbit's chapter examines Kenneth Rexroth's versions of the Greek Anthology.

The last group of essays includes Jane Falk on Philip Whalen and Nancy M. Grace and Tony Trigilio on Diane di Prima. Richard Fletcher's 'Towards a post-Beat poetics: Charles Olson's localism and the Second Sophistic', takes the story forward to the Black Mountain school. Olson has been discussed in relation to Herodotus ('I would be an historian as Herodotus was, looking/for oneself for the evidence of/what is said'); here Fletcher discusses the presences in the *Maximus Poems* of Pausanias and of Maximus of Tyre, arguing that Olson recognized a kind of Beat sensibility in their commitment to a localized historical enquiry.

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STRAY (C.), PELLING (C.) and HARRISON (S.) (eds) **Rediscovering E.R. Dodds: Scholarship, Education, Poetry, and the Paranormal**. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019. Pp. viii + 341. £75. 9780198777366.
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The Irishman E.R. Dodds (1893–1979), Regius Professor of Greek at Oxford from 1936 to 1960 and author of *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley 1951) and other landmark works, was one of the greatest classical scholars of his time. This volume examines Dodds' contributions to different areas of classical scholarship, but it is not confined to Dodds the classicist: it also considers his interest in psychic research, his relations with W.B. Yeats and Louis MacNeice (Dodds, who wrote poetry himself, was personally acquainted with both as well as with W.H.