A.P.M.H. Lardinois, J.H. Block, and M.G.M. van der Poel, eds., *Sacred Words: Orality, Literacy and Religion* (*Mnemosyne Suppl.* 332/*Orality and Literacy in the Ancient World* 8). Leiden: Brill, 2011. Pp. xiv, 415. ISBN: 978-90-04-19412-0. $199.00 hardbound.

For the eighth conference on literacy and orality in the ancient world (2008, Nijmegen, Netherlands), the focus turned to religion, a theme which fit the growing interest in writing in different religious spheres, particularly the questions of whether it was the province of marginal cults such as mysteries and whether its use increased over time.[1] Although the book's editors draw their inspiration from this debate which, in their words, they "aim…to modify…or at least to challenge" (2), the chapters resulting from the conference offer a great deal more. This provocative collection interprets its subject broadly, and so covers a range of topics from gods' speeches in Homer's *Iliad* to the oral qualities of a psalm of Augustine.

An introductory chapter by the three editors briefly addresses the primary scholarly problems. It summarizes the arguments of each of the twenty international contributions and provides some structure to bind the papers together. Since it is rare to see links drawn between chapters within the chapters themselves, some might appreciate a stricter framework, but this looseness does invite readers to ask questions and form new connections of their own.

The book is divided into five unequal parts, organized both chronologically and thematically. The opening section on Greek literature sets the expectations for the rest of the volume: the four chapters approach the theme at hand in widely divergent ways, whether it be to focus on only literacy or only orality, or to explore the interaction between the two. The first, Elizabeth Minchin's "The Words of Gods: Divine Discourse in Homer's *Iliad*" (17–35) examines orality through the discourse of the Homeric gods, concluding that it is not significantly different from human speech interactions in the same work. A wider range of sources is explored by Fiona Hobden in "Enter the Divine: Sympotic Performance and Religious Experience" (37–57). Using sympotic literature and vase painting, the author shows that the symposion was a place of communication with the divine which involved both oral and written channels. How Pindar actively constructs time is the subject of "Past and Present in Pindar's Religious Poetry" by Maria Pavlou (59–78). This chapter considers the festival context of performance and bolsters its conclusions with a brief contrast between time in the cult poetry and epinicians. The final chapter, Ruth Scodel's "Euripides, the Derveni Papyrus, and the Smoke of Many Writings" (79–98) confronts the previous scholarship on writing in

[1] See especially A. Henrichs, "'Hieroi Logoi' and 'Hieroi Bibloi': The (Un)Written Margins of the Sacred in Ancient Greece," *HSCP* 101 (2003): 207–266 and "Writing Religion: Inscribed Texts, Ritual Authority, and the Religious Discourse of the Polis," in *Written Texts and the Rise of Literate Culture in Ancient Greece*, ed. H. Yunis, Cambridge, 2003: 38–58. Adding to the argument are F. Graf and S. I. Johnston, *Ritual Texts for the Afterlife: Orpheus and the Bacchic Gold Tablets*, London and New York, 2007, and A. Chaniotis, "The Dynamics of Ritual Norms in Greek Cult," in *La norme en matière religieuse en Grèce ancienne. Actes du XIe colloque du CIERGA (Rennes, septembre 2007)* (*Kernos* Suppl. 21), ed. P. Brulé, Liège, 2009: 92–105.

marginal cults by showing that texts like *Hipp*. 952–954 should be understood in the context of a Euripidean amalgamation of trends in natural science, mystery religions, and allegory. This leads to a comparison with similar combinations in the Derveni Papyrus.

The first two chapters in the section on Greek law, Michael Gagarin, "Writing Sacred Laws in Archaic and Classical Crete" (101–111) and Sarah Hitch, "Embedded Speech in the Attic *Leges Sacrae*" (113–141), concern that slippery modern category, *lex sacra*, or "sacred law." Concentrating on early inscribed laws in Crete, Gagarin's conclusion that there was no significant difference between "sacred" law and other law confirms the status quo, but he also brings to the forefront authority, the use of writing, and the choice of context (e.g., the Dreros laws inscribed on a temple wall). Hitch searches the inscriptions of classical Athens (5th–4th BCE) for evidence of inscribed "speech acts"—statements made by priests, heralds, or other officials—but finds none. Her conclusion that this lacuna signifies an attempt to keep some power inaccessible under the democracy is intriguing, and it would be worthwhile to investigate if it would hold up when set against evidence from other times and places. A different approach is taken by Evelyn Van 't Wout in "From Oath-Swearing to Entrenchment Clause: the Introduction of *Atimia*-Terminology in Legal Inscriptions" (143–160). The author finds the sacred within non-sacred laws through a reinterpretation of what it meant to be declared *atimos*; it was not a legal punishment, but a "quasi-magical speech act" (146) which set up the possibility of social repercussions. Finally, in "'And You, the Demos, Made an Uproar': Performance, Mass Audiences and Text in the Athenian Democracy," (161–187), Rosalind Thomas again tackles the complications of the use of writing in Athens, arguing against those who have seen a reliance on written texts in administration. This chapter, originally the conference's keynote address, is invaluable for the debate about writing and the democratic process, though it is a bit of an outlier here because the connection to religion is mostly implied.

The third, longest section is problematically titled "Greek and Roman Religious Texts." Although it is easy to divine why texts such as magical papyri and hymns are included under this rubric, the opportunity to examine what qualifies a text as "religious" is missed. This lack is more keenly felt because these chapters follow a section in which contributors problematized the term "sacred law" and blurred the distinction between secular and sacred.

Christopher Faraone connects early literary incantations like Hom. *Od*. 19.455–458 to a series of lead amulets in the first chapter of the section, "Heximetrical Incantations as Oral and Written Phenomena" (191–203). The author also reminds us that although such tablets are written documents, the words inscribed on them had an oral use as well. "Oral Bricolage and Ritual Context in the Golden Tablets" by Franco Ferarri (204–216) contains the only figure in the volume (a drawing of the famous Petalia amulet case). This chapter continues the theme of highlighting the oral life of written formulae by positing a new way of looking at the transmission of the golden tablets, one which does not require an archetype but allows for epichoric variations. Mark Alonge in "Greek

Hymns from Performance to Stone" (217–234) examines several inscribed Greek hymns to illustrate the variety of processes which led to their inscribing and show how the monuments typically functioned as a reminder of a past performance. Because the chapter concludes with a critical reading of the fascinatingly complicated Palaikastro Hymn, whose final (re)inscription belongs to the early third century CE, it forms a smooth transition to the subsequent chapters on Roman texts. The first of those is Ana Rodriguez-Mayorgas's "*Annales Maximi*: Writing, Memory, and Religious Performances in the Roman Republic" (235–254). The author mines the sources referring to these accounts of the pontifex maximus to argue that they were primarily a religious, not historical, record. The last two chapters, Andromache Karanika, "Homer the Prophet: Homeric Verses and Divination in the *Homeromanteion*" (255–277) and Crystal Addey, "Assuming the Mantle of the Gods: 'Unknowable Names' and Invocations in Late Antique Theurgic Ritual" (279–294) take us into the Late Antique period. Karanika examines how written compilations of lines from the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were used in the oral ritual of divination in the fourth or fifth centuries CE; further light is shed on their creation and manipulation through comparison to the roughly contemporary Homeric cento poems. Addey focuses on the writings of Iamblichus, the 3rd century CE Neoplatonist, to provide a novel understanding of the "unknowable names" used in magic and theurgy: their function was not coercion, but a way of accessing divine power through the gods' own "language." These written *symbola* would be meaningless, however, without proper knowledge of pronunciation and performative context.

The chapters on Roman literature cover drama, history, and rhetoric. That the performance and reperformance of the plays of Plautus made them an important part of communal Roman discourse on religion is shown in "Plautus the Theologian" by Niall W. Slater (297–310), who focuses on the term *religio* and representations of the divine. Vanessa Berger in "Orality in Livy's Representation of the Divine: The Construction of a Polyphonic Narrative" (311–327) examines the topic through multiple venues; events recorded as tradition, the use of gods in speeches, and oral proclamations by gods each present an opportunity for Livy to build his authority and shape his presentation of early Romans. A convenient appendix of "words referring to an allegedly oral tradition" (327) is also provided. "Dilemmas of Pietas in Roman Declamation" by Bé Breij (329–348) proves how informative this less-explored genre can be. With their stock characters and moral ambiguity, these pedagogical exercises offer an opportunity to analyze what it meant to be Roman, and their arguments based on *pietas* demonstrate the variable meanings of that term.

The collection closes with three chapters exploring the interplay between orality and writing through the lens of early Christian literature. Akio Ito's "Paul the 'Herald' and the 'Teacher': Paul's Self-Images Within an Oral Milieu" (351–370) explains how the written letters of Paul were steeped in orality through their public reading to a congregation, Paul's allusions to the prophets of Hebrew Scripture, and his borrowing of the diatribal format from the philosophical school. The representation of Peter and Paul in the book of Acts is the subject of "Divine Voice, Literary Models, and Human

Authority: Peter and Paul in the Early Christian Church" by James Morrison (371–388). The author shows how Luke fashioned authoritative characters for multiple audiences by incorporating literary references to both Jewish Scripture and classical texts and depicting an illiterate Peter who quotes scripture, while an educated Paul receives oral revelations. Vincent Hunink emphasizes the importance of recognizing genre in "Singing Together in Church: Augustine's *Psalm Against the Donatists*" (389–403). Accounting for the psalmic qualities of this work adds new dimensions to its oral performance, which in turn suggest a reconsideration of emendations that have been made to the written text.

Each of the twenty chapters of this volume follows a consistent and practical organizational schema of a formalized introduction and conclusion. English translations are provided for substantial sections of Greek and Latin, and even when the evidence is technical (e.g., epigraphy or meter) or the argument theoretically informed (e.g., discourse analysis), the prose is accessible and clear. Editorial flaws are rare and do not affect the sense (with the possible exception of a missing footnote in the final chapter). Although there are some minor inconsistencies in format across the bibliographies following each chapter, this volume is a remarkably well edited and produced. Its utility is further enhanced by a brief subject index and an index of passages.

One of the benefits of reviewing a collection is the excuse to take the time to read every entry. Although almost any scholar could find something of value to pick out of this expansive volume, the nature of the papers also allows them to work together as a whole. They are exploratory and thought provoking, rather than dogmatic or prescriptive. Instead of offering a firm answer to a big question, they present a multiplicity of views towards the topic, and even when a conclusion is not wholly convincing, there is always something new worth considering.

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