

BOOK REVIEW

King and Court in Ancient Macedonia: Rivalry, Treason, and Conspiracy. By ELIZABETH CARNEY. Swansea: The Classical Press of Wales, 2015. Pp. xxvi + 326. Hardcover, \$110.00. ISBN 978-1-905125-98-2.

Elizabeth Carney has been a leading scholar in Macedonian studies since the 1970s and this volume is a collection of thirteen essays, published in a range of journals and edited books in the period 1980 to 2009. The pervasive theme is elite interactivity, and the chosen contributions are concerned with topics and events which remain central to research and teaching.

The book commences with an engaging introduction that provides a retrospective of the author's own career, mingled with reflection on the history of the field and the current state of scholarship. More meditative than indulgent, Carney here provides a succinct overview of the study of the region, particularly the developments which have come as a result of the improvements in the archaeological evidence for Macedon over the past four decades. Carney also offers a spirited defence of the field against critics who have considered the study of Alexander the Great stuck in a methodological quagmire.

The main part of the book is arranged into three sections: *Part I: Argead Monarchy: Image and Practice* considers the presentation and effect of women within the Argead royal house as well as the enduringly controversial questions of the identity of the occupants of the royal tombs at Vergina. A chapter on Macedonians and Mutiny, reproduced from *Classical Philology* 1996 is an enjoyable exposition of the events at the Hyphasis and at Opis, but may have been better placed in the second section: *Conspiracies Real and Alleged*. The four chapters in this section are interested in death and dying, both of kings and those near to the kings, including Alexander the Lyncestian and Cleitus the Black. *Part III: Life at Court* moves away from such obstinately grizzly matters and into the spaces of the manifold educations of the Macedonian elite, including within the *Basilikoi Paidai*, the Symposium, and the Hunt.

A curated set of intelligent journal articles and book chapters, presented attractively and cohesively in a single volume is never undesirable, but the incisive afterwords that accompany the chapters are invigorating responses, transforming

the collection into something altogether more interesting and distinctive. These short additions illuminate the process of research and composition, the compromises involved in the publication process (wounds which clearly still smart), and the changes that have been brought about by new scholarship and new discoveries since the article was published.

One of the the earliest pieces republished in the book, Chapter 7 “The death of Cleitus” (taken from *GRBS* 22 (1981)), offers a good example. The article is a classic, succinct dissection of a moment that has long been regarded as one through which the nature of Alexander’s interaction with his court and the modalities of his kingship can be better understood. At the time of original publication, the account posed new questions of the paradox of a characteristically violent Macedonian paroxysm triggered by resistance of Alexander’s attempts to introduce elements of non-Macedonian behaviour to his court. The significance of Cleitus and his murder remains contentious, but one does not have to subscribe to Carney’s arguments to appreciate the value of a postscript that relates the decision-making process of the early-career academic, the responses of the anonymous readers for the journal, the challenges to her views in scholarship since, the shift toward reading the major literary sources for Alexander as a product of their Roman-era contexts, and the advantages and disadvantages of the diverse approaches to this incident that have been taken in scholarship. Across the thirteen chapters, this discursive format offers up-to-date, succinct vignettes on the important questions with which Carney’s research engages, though, predictably, this format is less effective for those contributions written most recently.

Carney has made a significant contribution to the study of Macedon and Macedonians. This collection of articles offers readers a chance to appreciate its scope and development, and makes appreciable the gentle move in the study of Macedonian history away from individuals and events and toward structures. Despite the sometimes apparently narrow range of focus, the reader is rarely in doubt that these are discussions which have contributed, and continue to contribute, to stimulating wider readings of what Macedonian history is and can be. The addition of reflection on the current state of scholarship and the development of the author’s own work makes this book especially useful and instructive.

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REVIEW OF Goldwyn, *The Trojan Wars and the Making of the Modern World* 3

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