

**Rosie WYLES, Edith HALL (eds.), *Women Classical Scholars. Unsealing the Fountain from the Renaissance to Jacqueline de Romilly***, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016, XVIII + 465 pp., ISBN 978-0-19-872520-6, £80.00.

If potential readers of the book *Women Classical Scholars. Unsealing the Fountain from the Renaissance to Jacqueline de Romilly* expect some kind of a dictionary or encyclopedia because of its title, they could be disappointed. In fact, it records the results of the international conference “Women as Classical Scholars”, organised on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> March 2013 by the Department of Classics at F.D. Maurice’s college, King’s College London. The volume consists of nineteen essays that differ methodologically and compositionally. The essays are, as is usual in this type of publication, preceded by a list of contributors and an introduction, and followed by an afterword, a bibliography and an index. The volume contains illustrations. Some of the essays are general. Their authors simply chronicle either a defined period of time or a college or university. Others present the life and works of a chosen woman classical scholar in detail, even with information about their sexual preferences. In a few texts from the anthology we can find personal and rather emotional commentaries. It should also be emphasised that most of the women whose activities as classical scholars are discussed in this book worked in Western Europe (especially in England) and in the United States.

The very important part of this book is the introduction (and the afterword too). Obviously, announcing (and concluding) the content of the collection, the editors, R. WYLES and E. HALL, are obliged to stress the main but general idea of its publication. Nonetheless, they do not forget to point out detailed but essential issues: reasons why women were marginalised in classical studies, their social and intellectual background or factors that influenced women’s education. The editors pay special attention to accurately defining a woman who was, and still is, a classical scholar. She could be a philologist, a person just studying and learning Greek and Latin, an editor and translator of texts, or simply a woman writing in classical languages. They also notice in an appendix to the introduction that many significant names, for example from Central and Eastern Europe, were omitted from the anthology.

The first six essays concern the period of time when women could not receive an institutional education. The first, “Learned Women of the Renaissance and Early Modern Period in Italy and England: The Relevance of their Scholarship” by C. McCALLUM-BARRY, describes classical learning in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in Italy and England, using examples of Isotta NOGAROLA (1418–1466), Cassandra FEDELE (1470–1558), Margaret MORE (1504–1544), Mildred COOKE (1526–1589), or Jane LUMLEY (1537–1578). In the next chapter, “*Hic sita Sigea est: satis hoc*: Luisa Sigea and the Role of D. Maria, Infanta of Portugal, in Female Scholarship”, its author, S. FRADE, presents the life and works of Luisa SIGEA (c. 1520–1566), an educated woman born in Spain, who in 1522 moved to Portugal, where she was in the court of *Infanta* D. Maria (1521–1577). Anne DACIER (1647–1720), the renowned French editor and translator of classical authors, is one of heroines depicted in the two following essays. R. WYLES in “Ménage’s Learned Ladies: Anne Dacier (1647–1720) and Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678)” shows the figures of these two women in the light of Gilles MÉNAGE’s *Historia Mulierum Philosopharum*. Then, in the study entitled “Anne Dacier (1681), Renée Vivien (1903): Or What Does it Mean for a Woman to Translate Sappho?”, J. FABRE-SERRIS analyses DACIER’s and VIVEN’s translations of Sappho. The next two articles (E. HALL, “Intellectual Pleasure and the Woman Translator in 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>-Century England”, and J. WALLACE, “Confined and Exposed: Elizabeth Carter’s Classical Translations”) concentrate on women as translators, portraying several important personages: Lucy HUTCHINSON (1620–1681; the translation from Latin into English of Lucretius’ *De Rerum Natura*), Sarah FIELDING (1710–1768; the translation of Xenophon) and Elizabeth CARTER (1717–1806; she translated Anacreon,

Horace and Epictetus). E. HALL also presents the achievements of Bathusa MAKIN (c.1600–c. 1675) known as the author of *An Essay to Revive the Ancient Education of Gentlewomen*.

The next essay, “This is Not a Chapter About Jane Harrison: Teaching Classics at Newnham College, 1882–1922” by L. GLOYN, is the first one in this publication that covers the history of women classical scholars in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when they already had access to formal education in schools, colleges and at universities. GLOYN describes their situation in Newnham College, while M.V. RONNICK presents the classical education of African American women (“Classical Education and the Advancement of African American Women in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries”) and J.P. HALLETT is concerned with women studying Classics at Yale (“Eli’s Daughters: Female Classics Graduate Students at Yale, 1892–1941”).

Eight essays from the collection comprise detailed portraits of women whose names were included in the titles of these chapters. They are devoted to the following classical scholars: Grace Harriet MACURDY (1866–1946), an American classicist studying the history of women in ancient Macedonia; Edith HAMILTON (1867–1963), also an American, the author of books on ancient Greek and Roman civilisations, first of all *Mythology* (1942); Margaret ALFORD (1868–1951), an Englishwoman specialising in Latin prose (Livy, Tacitus, Cicero); Ada Sara ADLER (1878–1946), a Danish classical scholar, known as the author of the critical edition of the *Suda* (1928–1938); Olga FREIDENBERG (1890–1955), a Russian classical philologist and a cousin of Boris Pasternak; Kathleen FREEMAN (1897–1961), a British scholar and lecturer in Greek; Amy Marjorie DALE (1901–1967), a British classicist researching Greek tragedy (especially Euripides); and Betty RADICE (1912–1985), an editor of Penguin Classics and a translator of classical and medieval Latin texts (for example, Pliny the Younger’s *Letters*).

In the last but one essay in the anthology entitled “Simone Weil: Receiving the *Iliad*”, B.K. GOLD presents the portrait of S. WEIL (1909–1943) and her work *The Iliad, or the Poem of Force*. She discusses this study as an interpretation of Homer’s epic.

The collection ends with a text written by R. WEBB. It presents the life and work of Jacqueline DE ROMILLY (1913–2010), the first female member of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres, the first female professor at the Collège de France and the second woman in the Académie Française.

The book *Women Classical Scholars. Unsealing the Fountain from the Renaissance to Jacqueline de Romilly* helps its readers to discover intriguing biographies of several women who were active as classical scholars and their contribution to classical studies. It also shows how they had to deal with prejudices and educational disadvantages. Despite the imperfections mentioned above, this publication is another important step on the way to revealing the history of female classical scholars.

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