

REVIEW–DISCUSSION

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT WITH GREEK GEOGRAPHICAL WRITING*

Sergio Brillante, *Il Periplo di Pseudo-Scilace: l’oggettività del potere*. Spudasmata 189. Hildesheim, Zürich, and New York: Olms–Weidmann, 2020. Pp. xvi + 289, figs 8. Paperback, €88.00. ISBN 978-3-487-15943-0.

I

The so-called *Periplous of the Oikoumenē* (*Circumnavigation of the Inhabited World*)¹ is a prose text attributed, in the principal medieval manuscript, to the historical Skylax of Karyanda (*fl. ca.* 519 BC; Hdt. 4.44);² but scholars have now detached it from the historical Skylax, so that both the work and its unknown author are dubbed Pseudo-Skylax (hereinafter PS). The work has aroused increasing scholarly interest in recent years,³ and is generally agreed to have been written in the mid-fourth century BC.

To be blunt, ‘[i]t is not a genuine *periplous*’,⁴ if that means the record of an author’s voyage or voyages. It is a desk-based study which, in about 9,000 words, enumerates in clockwise sequence the coastal regions of the world accessible to the Greeks. It begins at the Straits of Gibraltar (Pillars of Herakles), describes the north shore of the Mediterranean, circles the Black Sea clockwise, and proceeds along the coast of the Levant and North Africa (‘Libyē’), before passing through the Straits and continuing a short way down the coast of what is now Morocco. It generally divides the areas described into regions, each defined as an *ethnos* or ‘nation’ containing *poleis* (‘city-states’ or

* I have received helpful advice from Colin Adams, Jan Haywood, Egidia Occhipinti, and Charlotte Van Regenmortel about drafts of this review, but the opinions expressed below are solely mine. I refer to chapters of Shipley (forthcoming, 2023) using the abbreviation *GAGW* (chapters are by me unless otherwise stated). *Inv.* denotes Hansen and Nielsen (2004).

¹ As we shall see later, this title has now been shown to be almost certainly a late antique embellishment.

² For the fragments of Skylax of Karyanda, see *GAGW* ch. 2.

³ Principally, to mention only major studies of the past half-century, Peretti (1979); Counillon (2004); Shipley (2011) ~ Shipley (²2019). Important articles include Marcotte (1986); Shipley (2012); and several by Counillon, e.g., Counillon (2007).

⁴ Quotation from Flensted-Jensen and Hansen (2007) 204.

'cities') and other features. Crucially, the text gives the length of the journey along each region's coast, either in days and nights of sailing or in *stadia* (thought to average *ca.* 185 m).

Brillante's monograph on the *Periplous* publishes revised content from his 2017 thesis, completed under the co-supervision of D. Marcotte (Reims) and P. M. Pinto (Bari).⁵ It is the first thematic monograph on Ps.-Skylax (as opposed to a critical edition) for over forty years.⁶

In the short Introduction (ix–xv), B. emphasizes that the *Periplous* is more than just a quarry for facts about places, and lays out his principal claims (as well as some traditional ones): for example, that the work's attribution to the historical Skylax was devised by Markianos of Herakleia around AD 400;⁷ that the work essentially dates from 338–335 BC but to some extent portrays an earlier state of the world because it is a synthesis of existing sources, while also including a small number of minor alterations from the late fourth century and the late antique period; that the work poses rhetorically as a first person narrative; that it derives its form from the traditions of a 'periplographic genre'; and that the author was an Athenian. What B. does not say in the Introduction is that he views the work as ideologically driven, aggressively pro-Athenian, and anti-Other; this is discussed later in the volume, and represents only a small part of its argument despite the book's subtitle, 'l'oggettività del potere' ('the objectivity of power'). Some of these points are contestable, and we shall return to them.

II

Part I, 'L'autore e il suo mondo' ('The Author and his World', 1–85), begins by stressing the single authorship of the work and its consistent style, which PS maintains even when the nature of his subject matter changes, as in the passage on Libyē (§§107–12). B. goes further than some recent studies in asserting that the author must be an Athenian (5–7); his reasons include that PS refers to the

⁵ I thank B. for sending me a copy of his unpublished thesis, Brillante (2017). I shall not discuss its content, save to note that it includes, as the published book does not, a full critical edition of those parts of Ps.-Skylax not treated in Counillon's masterly volume on the Black Sea portion of the work, Counillon (2004). (It is to be hoped that a Budé edition will follow before long.) In the book, therefore, B. does not always reveal his final decisions about contested passages of the Greek text. In several cases where he does, I am happy to acknowledge that my own Greek text should be modified.

⁶ That is, since Peretti (1979), who sees the *Periplous* as written by the historical Skylax (late sixth century BC) for use by actual voyagers, and therefore updated continually over the following generations.

⁷ For Markianos, see *GAGW* ch. 34.

Saronic gulf as ‘the sea on our side’ (e.g., §40 τὴν ἐπὶ ἡμῶν θάλασσαν).⁸ PS exaggerates the role of Athenians in the settlement of Crete (§47.2); misrepresents Elea in Italy as a colony of Thourioi (§12), itself founded under Athenian patronage; tells us that Damos in Thrace was founded by an Athenian (§67.2);⁹ and is aware of the Athenian festival of the Choës (§112.10). I am not, however, persuaded that any of this evidence actually proves that PS is an Athenian. As I have argued elsewhere,¹⁰ these features show only that the place from which the author purports to view the *oikoumenē* is probably in or near Athens. A scholar resident in Attica, writing or reading a text for others living there (potentially both Athenians and others), might well refer to the Saronic gulf in the way PS does, and might absorb an Athenian perspective on interstate affairs.¹¹ In fact, arguing that PS is an Athenian is advantageous for B.’s other key claims about the nature of the work, as we shall see; but a more open-ended view about his identity leaves open alternative possibilities.

On the date of the work (9–40), B. makes important refinements to previous arguments. I myself proposed a window of 338–335 while noting that the lower limit (*terminus ante quem*) could not be as impermeable as the earliest possible date (*terminus post quem*) for a number of reasons.¹² B. has reinforced this point, noting that new evidence places the reassignment of Oropos from Boiotia to Attica later than Alexander’s accession (12).¹³ Furthermore, he makes a good case (12–15) that PS’s presentation of *ethnē* (regional peoples) in Italy reflects knowledge circulating in Greece in the wake of the campaign of Alexander the Molossian in Italy, which ended with his death in 331. B. successfully neutralizes the apparent problems posed by the borders between Karia, Lykia, and Pamphylia (16–21), which in some respects might have

⁸ Strictly not ‘il nostro mare’, as B. renders it, though the implication is probably the same as that of ‘the sea on our side’.

⁹ That is, Kallistratos of Aphidna. B. seems to imply that PS refers to Kallistratos by his demotic (7); in fact, PS simply says ‘Kallistratos the Athenian’ (which is actually rather odd if PS is himself Athenian and writing for other Athenians). B. tellingly notes (69) that when Kallistratos founded Damos he was an exile from Athens, and that he at one time served under the Macedonian king Perdikkas III.

¹⁰ Shipley (2011) 6 ~ Shipley (2019) 7; Shipley (2012) 122 n. 4.

¹¹ Racine (2013) 57 concurs.

¹² Shipley (2012) 122–3.

¹³ B. could be more confident about this: he seems over-cautious (12) in relying on the coastal distance of 650 stades in PS §57 as evidence for implicitly placing the end of Athenian territory N of Oropos (which PS does not name); but I have suggested in Shipley (2010) that the distances given by PS for the Attic coastline, which are more precise than in most other regions, are likely to be reliable—which, by the way, still does not prove that the author is a citizen of Athens as opposed to a non-Athenian resident of Attica.

compelled a date of composition at the very end of the fourth century.¹⁴ He shows they are really non-issues, and deploys a similar healthy scepticism about the frontiers of Macedonia: Philip II's possession of Krenides–Philippoi does not necessarily mean that the kingdom's frontier was pushed eastwards (26–7). Likewise, the fact that at §99.1 PS refers to Herakleia rather than Latmos does not compel a late date (20–3); taken with other cases, it may indicate a preference for Greek forms when a city has two names (25). B. and I agree, at any rate, that most of the material in the work antedates *ca.* 335; while it may have seen light retouches in the years following (see further below, §VII), it displays (as Markianos observes in his preface to the work)¹⁵ no knowledge of Alexander's conquests or the territories of the Successors.

More broadly, B. upholds the view that the world depicted by PS is largely that of the mid-fourth century.¹⁶ This does not, in his view, extend to North Africa, where he notes that the account gives hardly any distances and the place-names reflect Euboean and Naxian colonization, perhaps as early as the eighth century (33–6). B. rightly observes that in this part of the work the regions are distinguished more on the basis of which powerful city controls them (reiterated at 91–2), rather than by *ethnos*; but as to the date of the information, I cannot help wondering whether the author did not exploit the presence of foreign sailors and merchants in Athens, particularly for information about the areas beyond Carthage;¹⁷ admittedly, the absence of interim distances past Ityke (Lat. Utica) weighs against this (§III.5). While in certain parts of the work, in B.'s view, PS seems to be at the mercy of his sources, in other parts he intervenes actively to modify the representation of places, particularly those closer to home (38). In recent decades, certain supposed inaccuracies in PS's work, or in the manuscript, have been rehabilitated on the basis of new epigraphic evidence or previously neglected comparanda in literary works (38–40).¹⁸

B. argues against the direct connexion (for which I argued) with Aristotle's new college, the Peripatos or Lyceum, founded in 335 BC, but concurs that PS worked in an educated, intellectual setting (41–4). He is no doubt right to take

¹⁴ The viability of a firm *terminus ante quem* of 335 is doubted by Flensted-Jensen and Hansen (2007) 204–5, and by Counillon (2007). B. asserts that I reject the latter's case without discussion, but see my commentary on §100.1.

¹⁵ Designated 'the scholion' by B.

¹⁶ B. dates PS's representation of the world apart from Libyē as reflecting the second quarter of the fourth century BC (36), that of Greece the mid-fourth century (40). I am not sure this is accurate: Timoleon's campaigns in Sicily (28–9, no. 1), for example, whose presence B. detects behind §13, took place in 344–338.

¹⁷ Shipley (2019) 13.

¹⁸ At 39 n. 101, B. attributes the emendation Κλαμπέτεια (for Πλατεείς) to me; but I took it from Müller. B. rightly notes Πλατέας (accusative) in Iambl. *VP* 35.261.

the mention of Kleostratos (§95) as evidence of this (41–2),¹⁹ but surely the ‘coincidence’ (as we say in Middle-earth) that PS and Theophrastos are the earliest writers to name Kleostratos the astronomer (among very few that do) can be invoked in support of an association between PS and the Peripatos.²⁰ Among the other reasons why a Peripatetic background for PS is plausible is Theophrastos’ will in which the philosopher left instructions about how ‘the *pinakes*’ (tablets) containing ‘the *gēs periodoi*’ (‘circuits of the earth’) should be displayed after his death.²¹

III

Rebutting the notion of a link with the Peripatos (43–4), B. claims that I have attributed the *Periplous* ‘probably’ (‘probabilmente’) to Dikaiarchos,²² and that I have offered a ‘demonstration’ (‘dimostrazione’) that this was so. This is a misrepresentation: in previous publications I have been careful to argue that, while among known writers of this late fourth-century context Dikaiarchos was the most likely candidate, the question must be left undecided.²³ I remain of

¹⁹ B. supports his case by asserting that ‘Liste di astronomi associate ai luoghi delle loro osservazioni sono un prodotto tipico della scienza antica’ (42; ‘Lists of astronomers associated with the sites of their observations are a typical product of ancient science’); but as far as I am aware we do not have any earlier lists than in the very passage of Theophrastos which B. cites in this connexion (see my next n.), which mentions three (Matriketas at Methymna, Kleostratos himself, and Phaëinos at Athens).

²⁰ B. makes the plausible suggestion (43) that PS has misunderstood a reference to an observation conducted by Kleostratos *on Tenedos* that appears in a different form in the possibly Theophrastean treatise *On Weather Signs* (*De signis tempestatum*, 4 Sider–Brunschön; Fotheringham (1919) 165 no. 3) as a reference to Kleostratos’ being a *citizen of Tenedos* (which he was); cf. *ibid.* 168. PS certainly does mean that Kleostratos is from Tenedos, not that he observed from there: the expression ὄθεν ... ἐστί, perhaps awkward, is nevertheless paralleled by §81 *Αἶαν ... ὄθεν ἢ Μήδεια ἦν*. Since, however, he speaks of Kleostratos in the present tense, whereas the astronomer is most plausibly late archaic (though Sider and Brunschön (2007) 109 ‘would not rule out’ that he was contemporary with Theophrastos), it may be that PS took his information from an old book of which he was aware because he moved in the same circles as Theophrastos.

²¹ The probability that *gēs periodoi* (which can denote either images or texts) refers here to maps rather than texts does not invalidate the point: Theophrastos’ interest in the geography of the wider *oikoumenē* demonstrates the proximity of his interests to those of PS.

²² For Dikaiarchos, see *GAGW* ch. 9.

²³ See Shipley (2011) 18 ~ Shipley (2019) 19, ‘theoretically possible that the *periplous* is an early work by Dikaiarchos or Pytheas’; Shipley (2012) 121 (abstract), ‘is most likely’; 132, ‘the strongest candidate for authorship’; 134, ‘The case ... remains unproven’. I used ‘most likely’ not in the sense of ‘very probably’ or ‘beyond reasonable doubt’; I meant simply that the probability that D. was the author was *higher* than the probability that any other writer was. That said, D.’s likely career is hard to extend far enough back to allow him to have

the view that the proximity of Dikaiarchos' interests, as well as those of other thinkers in Aristotle's ambit, to the content of the *Periplous* is highly suggestive. The fact that, as B. observes, Dikaiarchos' interests are much wider than what we see in the *Periplous*, and that scientific interests are marginal in the *Periplous*, is not relevant to this claim: there could be no *a priori* expectation that all of a philosopher's interests would be manifested in any given work of his, as may easily be seen by comparing the multiple extant works of Xenophon, Aristotle, or Theophrastos. Furthermore, I assembled a lengthy catalogue of points of contact between PS and 'both earlier Academics such as Herakleides Pontikos and those who became Peripatetics such as Aristotle, Dikaiarchos and Theophrastos'.²⁴ Particularly suggestive of proximity to Dikaiarchos and Aristotle is PS's interest in calculating very long distances between parts of the *oikoumenē*, particularly given Aristotle's explicit reference to adding up smaller distances to reach very long ones (*Mete.* 2.5.362b 19–25), and especially the expression *εάν τέ τις τοὺς πλοῦς λογιζήται καὶ τοὺς ὁδοὺς* ('if one reckons up the sea voyages and the roads'). The first part of that clause describes exactly what PS does three times in the *Periplous*, calculating the total sailing lengths of the coasts of Europe, Asia, and Libyē that he has described, and even using the same verb as Aristotle, 'reckon up' (*λογίζομαι* at §§69, 106.4)²⁵ and a related verbal noun (*λογισμός*, 'a reckoning up', at §111.8). B. does not discuss these suggestions with reference to the question under consideration, or address my suggestion that these calculations by PS should logically be earlier than those by Dikaiarchos, which cover a wider span of the accessible world, and the latter's in turn earlier than those by Aristotle.²⁶

As we shall see, it serves B.'s purposes to make PS definitely an Athenian, and to remove him from the 'scientific' and specifically Peripatetic milieu that I proposed, since these moves leave PS open to charges of political and ethnic 'partisanship' ('partigianeria', 5 and 149).

written the *periplous*, whereas Theophrastos (*ca.* 371–287/6) was certainly active before the foundation of the Peripatos and Pytheas' voyage probably took place in the 320s, making either of them stronger candidates, perhaps, than I have considered up to now.

²⁴ Shipley (2012) 125–31; quotation, 132, which continues, 'That is not to say that one of these well-known figures wrote the *periplous*'.

²⁵ Also used three times by Theophr. *Char.* 10.5, 14.2, 24.12. Herodotus uses it on more than twenty occasions, several times with reference to numerical quantities: 2.7.2 (distance from Athens to Olympia), 128, 145.2, and 145.3 (the last three with reference to years); 3.95.1 and 7.28.2 (both of money); 7.184.1 (ships' crews) and 187.2 (army numbers). Herodotus also, however, regularly uses a phrase such as *εἰρίσκω συμβαλλόμενος* ('I find by computing') in such contexts. On Greek authors' treatment of distance measurements, see Rubincam (2021) ch. 3, esp. 41–65.

²⁶ Shipley (2012) 126.

IV

In the remainder of Part I, B. traces the origins of Greek geographical writing to such works as the lost ‘report’ (*apographē*) by Demokedes of Kroton, who was sent to reconnoitre Greece by the Persian king Darius I, and the lost books of the historical Skylax of Karyanda, despatched to South Asia by the same ruler (45–6). To these, B. adds other Greeks including Eudoxos of Knidos,²⁷ as well as Carthaginians including Hanno²⁸ and Himilco, who were under commission from rulers or commanders; and others again who apparently travelled privately, such as Aristeas and Pytheas (47–8).²⁹ B. derives the coastwise form of reporting from the writings of such authors; but we know little about what form their writings took, particularly whether they narrated coastwise, though B. may be right to claim (46) that Demokedes appears to have done so.³⁰ B.’s inclination (in line with many though not all scholars) is to hypostatize factual reports into a ‘geographical genre’ (‘genere geografico’) and then to posit a ‘periplographic genre’ (‘genere periplografico’) as a specific variety of it. One thing we do know is that Damastes of Sigeion (fifth century?) described first peoples on the coasts, then those inland (50–1),³¹ but, as B. himself acknowledges, the coastwise organization of material is basically dictated by the facts of travel by sea. Of course, a voyager does not have to expound what he saw in the order in which he saw it; but even if he does (as ‘Hanno’ does), he need not be following the implicit rules of a literary genre, which should be more than just an observed similarity in how geographical writers (in the widest sense) lay out their material. Authors like Hekataios with his clockwise arrangement of the historical geography of the *oikoumenē*,³² or PS

²⁷ *GAGW* ch. 6.

²⁸ For Hanno, see *GAGW* ch. 4, by R. J. A. Talbert and myself. It should be noted that the text we have is far from certainly genuine, and possibly early Hellenistic (Desanges (1978) 78–85), though the latter is a minority view.

²⁹ For Aristeas, see D. C. Braund in *GAGW* ch. 1; for Pytheas, my ch. 8.

³⁰ Hdt. 1.136.2 *προσίσχοντες δὲ αὐτῆς τὰ παραθαλάσσια ἐθηεύντο καὶ ἀπεγράφοντο, ἐς ὃ τὰ πολλὰ αὐτῆς καὶ ὀνομαστότατα [v.l. ὀνομαστά] θεησάμενοι ...* (‘keeping to the seaward parts, they made observations and wrote them down, to the point where, having seen the majority of it and the most famous features ...’; my trans.). While this is not, as such, a description of the written record they made, it does suggest a primary focus on coastal places.

³¹ Strictly speaking, the fragment B. cites (50–1), *FGrHist* 5 F 1 = fr. 1 Fowler (Steph. Byz. v 37 s.v. ‘Hyperboreoi’), shows only that Damastes reported that ‘above’ (*ἄνω*, i.e., inland from) the Skythai lived the Issedones, with others beyond them (*ἄνωτέρω*). This does not amount to *periplous*-style exposition.

³² For Hekataios, see *GAGW* ch. 3.

with his jejune tessellation³³ of the coastal lands accessible to the Greeks, may have been influenced to follow this arrangement by what they had read. Beyond that common feature, as I have attempted to show elsewhere, there are few similarities between the various writers commonly regarded as either geographical or periplographic: they may use the first or the third person; be in prose or verse; be coastally arranged or otherwise (the former implemented in varying fashion); have a navigational purpose or not; be eye-witness reports or desk-based compilations; and in short, between them they generally exhibit limited intertextuality which 'does not (as in, say, tragedy or the novel) invite us as readers to reflect on our knowledge of similar texts'.³⁴

Genre, in any case, is more a feature of Hellenistic and Roman-period writings than of archaic or early Classical. It becomes a powerful tool of analysis when an author's deliberate deviations from expectations of form or content are intended to give pleasure to the highly educated reader who can 'get' them. It is surprising that, although they are in his bibliography, B. does not discuss any of the key methodological ideas that have emerged from the Topoi-Haus in Berlin since 2012 or earlier, in which the applicability of 'genre' is questioned and an alternative notion of 'common sense geography' is put forward.³⁵ This theory is not to be dismissed lightly. It posits that most of the writings we have are neither strictly scientific (like Ptolemy) nor functional (like the *Stadiasmos*), but are designed to please educated readers of literature. Consequently, most geographical writing should not be classified as descriptive, mathematical, exploratory, and so on (as in 'Jacoby V'), or be shoe-horned into supposed 'genres' as if there is a clear distinction between, for example, *gēs periodos*, *periēgēsis*, *periplous*, and *chōrographia*. A possible exception may be made for geographical poems: Aristeas, the so-called Ps.-Skymnos (better called by some such name as *The Nikomedean Periodos*),³⁶ Dionysios son

³³ A term I owe, in this connexion, to Andy Merrills.

³⁴ Shipley (2012) 134–5 (quotation, 135); more briefly, Shipley (2011) 20–1 ~ Shipley (2019) 22.

³⁵ Key publications earlier than B.'s thesis and book include Geus and Thiering (2014); Dan et al. (2016); see now also Dan, et. al. (2021). B. mentions 'common sense geography' only once (124 n. 66), in connexion with awareness of the relationship between a circle (or part thereof) and a chord (such as, he says, is implied in PS and in texts such as the Roman-period *Stadiasmos*, for which see J. W. Ermatinger and R. C. Helmer in *GAGW* ch. 31. The theory of 'common sense geography' is implicitly dismissed as a 'categoria in voga' ('fashionable category'); if that is true, however, it would surely merit discussion and, if appropriate, refutation. Elsewhere in B.'s book, I have found only a couple of bare citations of the first two works (at 49 n. 16; 119 n. 53), in both cases with no discussion.

³⁶ *GAGW* ch. 17.

of Kalliphon,³⁷ and Dionysios Periegetes³⁸ may all be read profitably with generic considerations in mind.³⁹

A similar sequencing or mode of exposition hardly amounts to a ‘genre’; still less does similar subject matter. B. would derive the first person narrative mode from the *Odyssey* and the early geographers (51–3), but rightly concedes that PS’s use of the first person singular is an artificial device of presentation (53). Notwithstanding this, he gives a significantly different emphasis in his Introduction (xiii), claiming that ‘Il Periplo vuole dare l’impressione di essere il frutto di un viaggio realmente vissuto in prima persona dall’autore, ma questo è solo un effetto retorico, ricercato per rendere la descrizione più chiara e più gradevole’ (‘The *Periplous* wants to give the impression of being the fruit of a real, lived voyage in the author’s first person, but this is solely a rhetorical effect adopted to make the description clearer and more enjoyable’). But the use of the first person is so rare in the text⁴⁰ that it does not colour the exposition as a whole. It need not be an evocation of earlier travellers’ narrative style, but is rather a ‘signpost’ by which, as PS knows, his readers or listeners will recognize him as an expert presenting a pre-formed set of data.

V

In a brief survey of ethnography in the *Periplous* (56–9), to which he will return, B. helpfully notes (60) that on the only two occasions when PS cites a source it is for information derived from local informants (§§22.2; 106.5) and that this is designed to add credibility; but I hesitate to ascribe this, as B. does (59), to PS’s

³⁷ *GAGW* ch. 20.

³⁸ Y. Z. N. Khan in *GAGW* ch. 28.

³⁹ I shall say a little more about common sense geography in §III.2.c of the Introduction to *GAGW*.

⁴⁰ In fact, the first person singular is used almost exclusively in fifteen formulaic statements of the form ‘I return to the mainland, from which I turned away’ or a similar wording (§§7; 13.5; 29; 34.2; 48; 53; 58.4; 67.2, 5; 97; 98.3, 4; 99.2, 3; 103). (I do not grasp the force of B.’s statement (60) that ‘Un tale uso è verosimilmente il segno dell’abbandono dell’autopsia da parte dell’autore, che in nessun luogo del testo fa appello a conoscenze personali o esperienze dirette dei luoghi descritti’ (‘Such a usage is probably the sign of the abandonment of autopsy by the author, who nowhere in the text appeals to personal knowledge or direct experience of the places described’). If, as B. and I both believe, PS nowhere claims autopsy, how can he abandon it?) The only other two occurrences of the first person singular describe the narrative: ‘I shall begin’ at the very opening of the work (§1); ‘whose names I am able to state’ (§22.2). The first person plural appears only in ‘the sea on our side’ §40 (see above on the author’s alleged Athenian identity) and near the end of the work in ‘the largest of all the humans of whom we know’ (μέγιστοι ἀνθρώπων πάντων ὧν ἡμεῖς ἴσμεν, §112.9; cf. the phrase τῶν ἡμεῖς ἴδμεν, common in Herodotus, e.g., 1.6, 14, 23; etc.).

adherence to a literary tradition rather than to the nascent principles of scientific investigation (I have already suggested a different view of scientific writing). These cases are so isolated within the work that it is easier to believe that PS has simply taken them over from written sources than that he has made a conscious, strategic decision to claim credibility through this literary device.

A lengthy discussion of ideologically slanted instances within the work (61–85) is the only part of B.'s book that answers to its subtitle, 'the objectivity of power'. Tipping his hat to the left-of-centre (originally far-left) French newspaper *Libération* (61) and later to the Marxist historian Eric Hobsbawm (80), B. adopts a radical, perhaps deconstructionist position that, just as maps lie, so 'geographical work is itself the result of wars and (is) an instrument of struggle' ('l'opera geografica stessa è il risultato di guerre e uno strumento di lotta', 61), an assertion so sweeping that, by posing as an explanation of everything, it risks explaining nothing.⁴¹ He proceeds to accumulate examples of such 'instruments of struggle': by situating Thourion within the Akarnanian *koinon* PS aims, or so B. argues, to separate that city from its neighbours (63–4); the exaggeration of Athens' involvement in Crete strikes a blow against Spartan primacy (64–6); the highlighting of the fortified harbours of Cyprus is designed to foreground the achievements of Euagoras, king of Salamis in Cyprus earlier in the fourth century, a sometime ally of Athens (70–2). In all these cases, the identification of a subtext may be justified; but they do not necessarily amount to a systematic attempt to change people's beliefs—unless we think this is a literary or even a political work, as opposed to a broadly scientific work (of 'common sense geography') as I have suggested; possibly not even intended for publication.

Nor are all of PS's supposed 'struggles' necessarily beyond challenge. The case for a deliberate down-playing of Philip II's achievements (67–70) looks weaker the more closely it is examined. PS names Methone, which Philip had destroyed in 354; but we now know it was revived '[a] few decades later', an archaeological date and thus inherently imprecise, allowing the possibility that it existed when PS wrote.⁴² Likewise, PS may have known that Olynthos, which he calls a Hellenic *polis* (§66.4) and which had been razed by Philip in 348, had partially endured as a settlement, as archaeology proves.⁴³ Alternatively, both Methone and Olynthos may have been in an out-of-date

⁴¹ Cf. the view attributed (80, without a reference) to Yves Lacoste, 'la géographie ça sert d'abord à faire la guerre' ('Geography's first purpose is the making of war').

⁴² *Inv.* 804, no. 541. B. notes that despite the suggestion in *Inv.* that it was now a non-*polis*, it passed a proxeny decree in the second half of the fourth century, and so must have been a *polis* at that moment.

⁴³ *Inv.* 834–6 no. 588, at p. 835, is tentative as to the details; but Cahill (2002) 49–57 and 60–1 demonstrates (chiefly from coin finds) that the NW quarter of the site was reoccupied after 348 and before 316.

list of *poleis* that he consulted; or he may have taken it from an older writing. (Incidentally, it is easier to imagine PS making a mistake about a place whose history was etched in Athenian memory if he was not an Athenian.) The fact that PS calls Methone and Olynthos ‘Hellenic *poleis*’ is not necessarily a swipe against Philip, given the alternative possible explanations. Likewise, the fact that PS places the end of ‘continuous Hellas’ before Macedonia may not be a deliberate gesture, if his predecessor Phileas did the same.⁴⁴ As with the decision to refer to Datos (see above, §II, ad init.) by its original name rather than as Philippoi, or the choice not to call Pella a Hellenic *polis*, it is equally possible that PS (a) was at the mercy of his sources, or (b) has absorbed Athenian ways of thinking, or (c) is (as B. would argue) an ideological Athenian prepared to grind an axe. On a wider scale, in any case, I find it hard to envisage the so-called *Periplous* as a political tract or a covertly ‘campaigning’ work. An author engaged in a ‘struggle’ would not have written this kind of text.

A work may reflect its author’s ideological surroundings without itself having an ideological purpose. This reservation applies, likewise, to B.’s generally perceptive discussion of Hellenocentrism in the text (72–82): the accumulated examples of the representation of non-Hellenes undoubtedly reflect an increasingly politicized fourth-century Greek identity and a ‘Greek gaze’ (‘sguardo greco’, 73), but do not require us to view it as an exercise in ‘erasing realities’ (‘cancellare ... realtà’, 78). Omitting more places than Hekataios seems to have done (73), preferring Greek names (81, cf. 25), and integrating non-Greeks into Greek mythology (80–2) do not necessarily amount to cancelling history (remember that PS is not an historian). The last, in particular, could just as well be viewed as a way of making the non-Greek world seem accessible to Greek readers. As noted before, B.’s insistence on PS’s being an Athenian is useful to his strategy of elevating PS into a text of ‘struggle’ that expresses or reveals the ‘objectivity’ of power. Nevertheless, B.’s discussion of examples from the text is continually illuminating, as when he shows (85) that, while Herodotus’ five-day ‘cut’ across Asia Minor from Soloi to Sinope reflects an Athenocentric view of the limits of Hellenicity, the effective limit in the fourth century was Knidos (§99.2), the last *polis* PS calls Hellenic (apart from those on islands) until Holmoi in Cilicia (§102.1). Again, however, I am reluctant to make this ideological representation of the world into the ‘agenda’ of the work rather than simply a reflection of the cultural context in which the author was writing.

⁴⁴ As suggested by Marcotte (1986) 169–70. Note, however, my suggestion (in the introductory note to §§33.2–65 in my commentary) that PS himself, rather than Phileas, may have originated the term ‘continuous Hellas’ (συνεχῆς Ἑλλάς).

VI

Part II, 'L'opera' ('The Work', 87–165), opens by helpfully reiterating the primary importance of *ethnē* in PS's organization of space (87–92). Previous scholarship has noted it, but PS's emphasis upon it is well brought out by examples of how he slips between *ethnos*, *polis*, and *chōra*: 'the Kampanians', for example, can be followed immediately by 'Kampania', while the neuter noun *ἔθνος* (*ethnos*) can be preceded by the verb 'to be' in a plural form, or replaced by a feminine pronoun as if it is a *chōra* (territory; 89–90). B. shows acutely that, at least in the Greek homeland, PS calls a region an *ethnos* only if it contains a plurality of *poleis*.⁴⁵ He also offers a solution (100) for some cases where, on a local level, PS departs from strict *periplous* order: his habit is to name an important feature first.⁴⁶

Turning to the detailed organization of the work, B. offers important discussions of PS's use of myth and history to characterize places (104–11), convincingly identifying a certain scepticism on the author's part and a tendency to reduce the mythical to the real in a rationalizing fashion. B.'s discussion of 'ethnography' (111–22) is equally successful, assembling (*inter alia*) macro-ethnic groups that subsume others (such as Illyrians and Libyans) as well as geographically fragmented *ethnē* (Thracians, Phoenicians) and identifying an interest in peoples' customs on PS's part; PS's information on the latter is sometimes borne out by other evidence. As before, however, if it is true that

⁴⁵ This helpful principle may allow us to achieve greater clarity than hitherto about the Megarid. At its first occurrence (§39), referring to its coast on the Corinthian gulf, PS offers 'the Megareis (*Megarians*), an *ethnos*, and the following cities: Aigosthena; Pegai, a fort; Geraneia; and A<igei>ros'; but he may mean that Pegai is not a *polis*, while Geraneia is a well-known mountain. At its second mention (§56), referring to its coast on the Saronic gulf, it is simply 'Megara, a *polis*' with a fort, Nisaia. As B. notes, PS tailors his language to the circumstances in each case. Since there is (as far as I can see) no section in Greece where PS lists only non-*poleis* after heralding 'these *poleis*', and since he calls the Megarians an *ethnos*, we can infer that one or more of Aigosthena, Aigeiros, and possibly Pegai was recognized as a *polis*, i.e., a dependent *polis* of Megara. This partly resolves the hesitations of Legon (*Inv.* 462–3 no. 224; 465 no. 226) as to whether Aigosthena and Pagai were non-*polis kōmai* or dependent *poleis* of Megara. (Aigeiros is 'Aris' in the MS, 'Aigeiroussa' at Strabo 9.1.10, C394, where it is implicitly an insignificant place; but a *polis* in Steph. Byz. a 96 s.v. It is omitted from *Inv.*)—The same may apply to the *ethnos* region of Elis (§43), where PS has 'Elis, an *ethnos*, and in it the following *poleis*: Kyllene with a harbour; and the river Alpheios; and there is also another union of *poleis*, Elis, in the interior'. If Kyllene was not a *polis*, which Roy leaves uncertain (*Inv.* 499 no. 254), this would be the only example of PS announcing *poleis* but delivering only non-*poleis*; the balance of probability is, rather, that PS, though unsystematic, is never demonstrably mistaken as to the existence of recognized *poleis* within Greek regions.

⁴⁶ It is not immediately clear, however, that this would explain any of the incorrect sequences noted at Shipley (2011) 3 n. 4 ~ Shipley (2019) 3 n. 4.

by sometimes inserting non-Greek peoples into the Greek historical and mythical canon PS is ‘cancelling the specificity that made them “other”’ (122), I am inclined to think this is more a reflection of his historical context than a deliberate campaigning stance that we are supposed to see as colouring, even vitiating, the whole text. B.’s discussion (122–32) of space and movement rightly opens with a warning against taking ‘hodological space’, theorized by Janni as a distinctive feature of Greek thought, as ruling out two-dimensionality in geographical texts that narrate (metaphorical) movement, with, e.g., crossing routes, branch routes, the opposite coasts of isthmuses, and large peninsular units featuring in the text.⁴⁷ Finally in this subsection, B. assembles PS’s references to the natural world (132–5), which once again exhibit a tendency towards rationalization.

B.’s discussion of PS’s ‘oral sources’ (137–40) regards statements attributed to remote communities as a ‘relic’ (‘residuo’) of earlier descriptive geography; but this is only one possible explanation.⁴⁸ The succeeding discussion of ‘maritime sources’ (140–6) is more persuasive, observing that even if ships’ logbooks existed they would not equate to *periploi*; that PS is unsystematic in supplying practical navigational information; and that in all likelihood Athenians habitually talked to visiting traders. I have made a similar suggestion elsewhere, accompanied by the speculation that merchants or financiers kept records of actual journeys which PS could have consulted.⁴⁹

A series of detailed and enlightening discussions of places where PS appears to draw information from earlier authors (146–65) begins with Homer (146–52), on whom again PS does not place unqualified reliance.⁵⁰ B. shows

⁴⁷ B. makes the valuable suggestion (mentioned again at 198) that the intrusive heading *Κρήτης θέσις*, ‘Position of Crete’ (§47.3), was added by Markianos in imitation of the headings of Ptolemy. B.’s closing comment on 132, that PS aims at a better account of the Mediterranean, should presumably be taken to have a wider scope including the Black Sea and the Atlantic coast of Morocco.

⁴⁸ Something is wrong with the discussion of Ancona (140). It is not the paroxytone form of its name (written ἄγκων in the manuscript), that Steph. Byz. *a* 36 suggests may be a local form, but the oxytone Ἀγκών. B. suggests that by using the paroxytone version PS ‘eclipses’ the association of the name with ἄγκών, ‘elbow’, supposedly an evocation of the shape of the city’s harbour, and thus prejudicially suppresses the town’s Greek identity. B.’s assertion is another case of trying too hard to find political bias in PS; and the assertion is untenable, if for no other reason than that we cannot possibly rely on the position of the accent in the medieval manuscript, which is highly erratic in such matters.

⁴⁹ Shipley (2011) 12 ~ Shipley (2019) 13. B.’s citation (146 n. 42) of Amigues (2006) xv–xix, for Theophrastos’s reliance on traders for botanical information, is very welcome. It is also a further point in favour of associating PS with the Peripatos.

⁵⁰ B. (147–8) dismisses the Arkadian *poleis* which PS mentions as no longer important in his day; such a judgement might have surprised them (cf. Shipley (2018) ch. 2 *passim*), and is apparently a reaction against PS’s use of *μεγάλαι* (‘great’) to describe them in §44, which B. thinks simply reflects the fact that Homer names them. We do not yet have B.’s edited text

that, while direct borrowing by PS from Hekataios and from Herodoros of Herakleia is hard to prove given how little sixth- and fifth-century literature survives, a dependence on Herodotus and Phileas is more firmly grounded, though I would be inclined to develop the point that intermediary sources are a possibility (153–9). The ensuing discussion (159–65) of PS's method in combining earlier sources is, however, persuasive, showing that he was unable to harmonize them in every case (failing, for example, to see that the Melieis are the same as the Malieis, §62.1–2).⁵¹

VII

Part III, 'La storia del testo' ('The history of the text', 167–219), is the shortest of the three parts of the volume but the most consistently successful. B. begins by returning to PS's intellectual setting, reiterating that he displays close knowledge of Attica to satisfy the interests of his 'public' (167),⁵² a term whose applicability B. himself then questions (169), noting Counillon's suggestion that the *Periplous* is a preparatory exercise to a historical work but rightly observing that parallels are unpersuasive (169–71). B.'s own suggestion is that it may be a dossier compiled by, or for, some public figure, fulfilling Aristotle's recommendation of *gēs periodoi* as useful sources of information, for example on the laws of other peoples, for a man who is to advise the city on policy (*Rhet.* 1.1360a 33–5). Here, and at *Pol.* 2.1262a 19–21 (*gēs periodoi* as sources for foreign peoples' customs), Aristotle must have in mind prose texts.⁵³ As B. himself notes (172), while PS does not exactly fit this definition it does have some features that overlap with what Aristotle wants. I would counter, however, that those features (e.g., the customs of foreign peoples) are so rare in the *Periplous* that it is hard to imagine it being intended as a reference work for consultation by an orator like Demosthenes or even a pamphleteer after the manner of Isocrates.

of PS, but his 148 n. 50 implies that he will retain the adjective and take it to be referring to cities' fame rather than to their wealth or power. Previously, however, I have followed earlier editors in regarding *μεγάλαι* as a textual corruption of the name of Megale Polis (Megalopolis), just as in the same passage *πρώτη* ('first') should be taken as the name of the island of Prote. Both emendations are surely hard to resist.—At 152 n. 60, B. misquotes my text of §99.3 as if it reads *αἶδε* rather than *αἶδε* and thus differs from that of Müller.

⁵¹ The notion that at §22.2 PS may be using a *periplous* that runs in the opposite direction (165) should be credited to Counillon (2006) 23.

⁵² On Iapis, the W limit of Attica, identified from Kallimachos as a ravine, B. avers (168) that PS does not qualify it with any explanatory term. This is true of §56, but at §57.2 he refers to a district of that name, *Ἰάπιδος χώρας*.

⁵³ At *Mete.* 350a 15–18, however, Aristotle clearly means maps (cf. 362b 12–13) and refers to using multiple sources where one's own eye-witness evidence is lacking.

It still seems to me that the points of contact with the scholars of the Peripatos on the dimensions of the *oikoumenē* offer a better comparison.

B. moves on to tracing the afterlife of the work in other texts. There are direct points of contact with, yet again, Theophrastos (177–9), probable borrowing by Apollonios of Rhodes (181–2), and careless use by Dionysios son of Kalliphon (184–6).⁵⁴ Others, such as Timagetos (179–81), Lykophron (182), the *Nikomedean Periodos* (182–4), and Pliny the Elder (186–7), may be drawing from a common source rather than directly from PS.

The centrepiece of this Part is B.'s insightful discussion of Markianos of Herakleia (197–200), a post-Ptolemaic geographer who may be the intellectual, working in Constantinople around AD 400, whom Synesios names. Markianos, it is generally agreed, compiled one of the two central *corpora* of Greek geographical writings of which we have substantial surviving elements—though he may have based his work on that by Menippos of Pergamon, who lived under Augustus.⁵⁵ B. astutely observes that Markianos, in his introduction to a précis of Menippos' own *periplous*, says he has actively updated the texts by both Menippos and Artemidoros (*ca.* 100 BC)⁵⁶ but does not say the same with respect to our *Periplous*. This B. explains (199–200), attractively, on the basis that Markianos found it disappointingly laconic but included it anyway because it was the earliest geographical work that he knew⁵⁷ and an example of one more variety of geographical style. B. does, however, convincingly identify minor interventions by Markianos, and possibly a major one: the removal from the *Periplous* of the entire description of the Thracian Bosphoros, which he may have regarded as redundant if he knew the *Anaplous Bosporou* (*Voyage Up the Bosphoros*) by Dionysios of Byzantion (mid-second century AD), a prose work paying fulsome and detailed tribute to the monuments and historical topography of the writer's homeland.⁵⁸

Anyone working on the geographical *corpora* is likely to develop a warm admiration for Markianos, not least for the acute analysis of geographical

⁵⁴ In *GAGW* ch. 20, I show that this otherwise unknown first century BC author is likely to have belonged to an intellectual family at Athens. We can surmise that the *Periplous* survived in at least one copy in that city.

⁵⁵ For Menippos, see J. B. Campbell in *GAGW* ch. 21.

⁵⁶ For Artemidoros, see *GAGW* ch. 18.

⁵⁷ Note, however, that B. over-translates Markianos' phrase ἀρχαιότατος ἀνὴρ as implying that M. thinks Skylax was the earliest geographical writer (M., of course, believes he dates to the reign of Darius I in the late sixth century). But by Σκύλαξ ὁ Καρυανδεὺς ἀρχαιότατος μὲν ἐστὶν ἀνὴρ M. means 'a most (i.e. a very) ancient man', not 'the most ancient man'.

⁵⁸ See O. Nicholson and T. Russell in *GAGW* ch. 30.

methodology in his preface to Menippos and for his preface to Ps.-Skylax,⁵⁹ in which he astutely characterizes PS's austere style and correctly deduces that the work precedes Alexander the Great's conquest of the Persian empire. B. is surely right to imply (198–9) that the title of the work that we have, *Periplous of the Oikoumenē*, was devised by Markianos because this phrase occurs elsewhere only in Markianos' own preface to his epitome of Menippos. We can be confident, then, that this was not the original title of the work (supposing it even had one; ancient works did not necessarily have fixed titles).⁶⁰ B. goes further, however, inferring (and stating at several points throughout the volume: xii, 173, 177) that Markianos was the first scholar to attribute the work to Skylax of Karyanda. Whether this is correct is probably a question too far for the present article. Suffice to note that the point is still under debate, for one scholar has recently argued that the attribution to Skylax took place first in the Hellenistic period.⁶¹

Next, B. traces the afterlife of Markianos' edition. Oddly, he begins with Avienus, only then to argue convincingly (204–6) that Avienus lived too soon to have known Markianos' edition.⁶² He shows that it cannot be proved that Stephanos of Byzantion (206–8) or Constantine Porphyrogenetos (211) knew our *Periplous*, and reminds us (as has long been known) that the author of the anonymous *Euxine* used Markianos' editions of Ps.-Skylax, the *Nikomedean Periodos*, and Menippos (208–10).⁶³

Finally, B. rehearses what I may call the object biographies of the principal and secondary manuscripts (213–19), revising the provenance of the thirteenth-century Paris manuscript (previously thought to be South Italian) to the Cyprus–Palestine region.⁶⁴ The main text closes with the observation that

⁵⁹ B. correctly observes (198 n. 57) that in my first edition I omitted the text of Markianos' preface. This was rectified in the second edition (Shipley (2019) 4–5, with translation), doubtless too late for B. to take into account.

⁶⁰ On the emergence and multivalency of book titles in the Classical period, see Castelli (2020) with review by Reggiani (2021). For wider studies of book titles in antiquity, see the papers in Fredouille et al. (1997).

⁶¹ Matijašić (2016). This would raise the possibility that Strabo knew the work.

⁶² B. remarks that strictly speaking Avienus does not refer to Skylax of Karyanda, as the early printed edition that is our only source for the *Ora maritima* prints both *Cariae ditus* ('attributed to Caria'? l. 44) and *Cariae dictus* ('said to be of Caria', l. 372); editors have emended this to *Caryand(a)eus*, but the new Budé prints *Caria editus* in both places (Guillaumin and Bernard (2021); discussion at 40 n. 3). For Avienus, see also R. Morley in *GAGW* ch. 32.

⁶³ For *Eux.*, see *GAGW* ch. 36.

⁶⁴ Marcotte (2000) lxxxiii.

Greek geographical works were disseminated mostly by other geographers, and a well-merited tribute to Markianos.⁶⁵

VIII

Brillante does much to clarify, and sometimes re-focus, our understanding of this perplexing text; but not all his chapters form a seamless whole, he is not always meticulous about considering alternative explanations, and in some respects he goes beyond what the evidence is capable of bearing. Despite the volume's subtitle, the argument that the *Periplous* has an ideological purpose dominates only one part of the study, and remains unconvincing. The most successful parts of the volume are the subtle discussions of the work's date, of PS's rationalizing tendencies when faced with myths, of his critical attitude to his predecessors including Homer, and of the work's afterlife in the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Despite my hesitations about some of B.'s arguments, the book is admirable for the solutions it offers to many problems that have troubled editors, and for its attempt to develop an integrated picture of the *Periplous* that takes a more rounded view of its relationship to other writings than earlier studies (my own included) have attained. There are questions that B. dodges, and others that merit fuller consideration, but even when the Budé appears his book will remain essential reading for anyone working on ancient geographers.

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⁶⁵ There follow the extensive bibliography (221–62); indexes of place-names and ethnonyms (263–70) and another of 'nomi antichi' ('ancient names'; 271–4), which might have been combined; and an invaluable index of literary and epigraphic sources (275–89).

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