

ENGAGING WITH MODERN SCHOLARSHIP



CLASSICS PROJECT

What is modern scholarship for?



- Provide you with further avenues into sources and evidence.
- Provide you with opinions and arguments on your topic that are rooted in debates, information and experiences that you might not be able to access.

What is modern scholarship **NOT** for?



- Provide you with information so that you do not have to access the ancient material.
- Tell you the answer to your question.
- Follow blindly.

What should you do with modern scholarship?



- Engage with the opinions and arguments in it **CRITICALLY**.
- Agree or disagree with opinions and arguments.
- Expand your breadcrumb trail.
- Engage with the debates on your subject.

The wonder of the REVIEW



- Reviews are very helpful when dealing with any scholarly book.
- Reviews provide you not only with a summary judgement on the book and its argument but often can help you place the book and its argument in scholarship.
- Often provide you with inroads into scholarly debates.

Example



- Reviews of Hornblower, S. *Thucydides and Pindar*.
- Douglas E. Gerber in *The Classical Review*, New Series, Vol. 55, No. 2 (Oct., 2005), pp. 404-406
- Lawrence Kowerski in *The Classical World*, Vol. 100, No. 2 (Winter, 2007), pp. 161-162
- Rosaria V. Munson in *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Vol. 126, (2006), pp. 171-172

Munson on Hornblower



- The summary I have given oversimplifies the seem-ingly spontaneous twists and turns of H.'s exposition. This is not an easy book to read; it is in fact, in the words of a colleague, 'as difficult as a Pindaric ode'. Parentheses and digressions abound, and the subdivision into parts and chapters is asymmetrical and permeable. Some of the parallels are stretched and either over-whelmed by the differences or, as they straddle different levels, not entirely convincing. But the accumulation of learned details is astounding and really casts a new light on both authors. Gutta cavat lapidem: by the time the readerr eaches the end, s/he is likely to surrendert o the author's overarching thesis (37) that 'two hearts beat in Thucydides' breast and that the prose chronicler of war-fare had some of Pindar the poet in him'.

Kowerski on Hornblower



- At times, the study's focus is lost in the lengths to which the author must go to show this overlap. That this overlap supports intertextuality is not altogether convincing. Nonetheless, one's time will be well spent with this book.

Gerber on Hornblower



- The book is a pleasure to read, whatever one may think about the relevance of certain sections, the style is lively, the Greek includes translations and the indexes are excellent. Misprints are few and unimportant except for the last line on p. 293, where the translation of Pythian 9.77 should read 'amid lengthy ones', not 'and lengthy ones'. H. states that the aim of his book is an attempt' to place Thucydides' prose historian of war and politics, next to Pindar, and to show that the overlap between their two worlds was considerable(p . 37). He has certainly succeeded in fulfilling that aim.

Where do you find reviews?



- In journals such as the Classical Review.
- Check on JSTOR (searching for Reviews).

The JSTOR search... an excursus



The Question of Debates



- You are bound to come across one or more debates in your research.
- It might be that your research is on a debated subject.
- Or it might be that your research merely touches on issues that are debated.

What to do with a debate?



- No matter whether the debated issue is central to your topic or not, if you are touching upon it in your Project you need to show that you know of the debate.
- Make sure that you are aware of the arguments of both sides of a debate – not just the one you agree with.
- You will need to reference both sides of the debate.

What not to do with a debate



- Do NOT approach any subject that is debated without engaging with the debate itself – you need to show that you have read on the subject, thought about and then arrived to a conclusion.
- Do NOT ignore a debate – there is nothing worse than being unaware of a debate on your topic.
- Always consider how the debate impacts on the argument YOU are making.

For Monday



- Prepare a short presentation for your group on the main debates you are encountering in your research, how you are dealing with them and how they are affecting your research and your argument.