texts; I would have liked longer comments and more synthesis. Especially Chapters 7 and 8 tend to give *multa non multum*.

The Select Bibliography selects only works in English. The parochialism is customary but deplorable.

**De Novis Libris Judicia**


To give a general idea of the framework of this book, I shall begin by quoting the Contents. The chapter on Archilochus is divided in five sections: 1. Life. 2. Ares and the Muses. 3. Blame. 4. Obscenity. 5. Archilochus and Hipponax. Follows Alcaeus with four: 1. Life. 2. Ideal Companionship. 3. The Disintegrating Faction. 4. Art Songs. And finally Sappho: 1. Circle. 2. Desire. 3. Memory. As appears from this survey, Mrs Burnett (henceforth B.) first pays attention to the biographical data. Subsequently she discusses the fragments of each poet, more or less according to their subject.

A book of this kind is certainly to be welcomed. The huge amount of literature on the archaic poets is scattered over many periodicals, while books that comprise the interpretation of their work as a whole are comparatively few. B.’s knowledge of this work is impressive and so is her knowledge of Greek literature in general. Moreover, she is thoroughly acquainted with modern scholarship.

on the subject. It is a pity she did not include a bibliography, but when studying the notes one gets the impression that few scholarly contributions have escaped her attention. Since I did not find any reference to Rösler’s *Dichter und Gruppe*, I take it that the manuscript was closed in 1980.

Despite my admiration for B.’s wide knowledge, I must confess that I was disappointed and sometimes even irritated when reading her book. The interpretations are too often impressionistic, inexact or based upon unwarranted suppositions; sometimes they are ostensibly wrong. In the following pages I shall try to substantiate this judgement.

In her *Introduction* B. divides scholars who published on the same subject in two groups: members of the ‘cri du coeur school’ and ‘occasionalists’. Witty enough, but somewhat exaggerated, and consequently this division leads to a slight distortion of the facts. For instance, we read about Sappho that ‘an astonishing number of scholars will give it as a known fact that the song about the symptoms of desire (16V) was sung, cabaret-style, among eating and drinking wedding guests who all are pleased when the hired singer pretends to have fallen violently in love with the bride.’ (Introduction, 4). Now I do not know of any commentator who has claimed fr. 16 as a wedding-song, but in view of the ‘symptoms of desire’ I assume that fr. 31 is meant. Apart from this error, a statement like this does not seem fair. Even Wilamowitz, who does, indeed, evoke the party with guests and congratulations and all, does not suggest that the hired singer *pretends* to have fallen in love. Moreover, the theory that fr. 31 was actually sung at a wedding is rather obsolete, as appears from B.’s own note 5 on p. 232-3. Why then ‘an astonishing number of scholars will give ...’ instead of ‘some scholars, especially in the past, have given ...’?

B.’s own presuppositions may appear from the following two quotations. 1. ‘It is the contention of the present study that the archaic poets, like poets everywhere, invented both ego and occasion when they composed their songs. ‘I’ might mean, ‘I, a Singer’, ‘I, a Lover’, ‘I, a Citizen’, and it might also mean ‘I, a Young Girl’ (even in a male singer’s mouth) or ‘I, an Old Creature’ (whatever the singer’s actual age). And in the same way the temple-hiding place, the drunken watch, and the celebrations for Atthis might or might not be wholly invented—we cannot know the degree to which they reflected incidents from actual life and it does not matter, for these events are not offered as autobiography or as