

Not everything in the book is problematic as the examples discussed on the previous pages. Some parts are satisfactory, and the large number of figures is especially commendable since they can be quite informative and helpful for the general public. Yet as a whole, the uneven treatment of various subject and problems, and especially the period of the Antigonids, as well as the number of errors, unfortunately greatly diminish the value of the book as an introductory guide for the history of ancient Macedonia.

Stefan Panovski
Institute of National History
Skopje, Macedonia

MICHAŁ BZINKOWSKI, *Masks of Charos in Modern Greek demotic songs, sources, representation and context*. Kraków. Jagiellonian University Press 2017. Pp. 171. ISBN 978-83-233-4330-1.

Michał Bzinkowski is an Associate Professor at the Department of Classics at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, where he teaches Modern Greek Language, Modern Greek Literature, as well as Ancient Greek Epic and Lyric Poetry. He also translates modern Greek poetry into Polish. His close interest for the lingering heritage in the European and especially the Modern Greek culture, as well as years of sturdy work, resulted in his latest scholarly research.

As the author himself writes, the ancient ferryman of the dead, whose name was inherited by Charos (Χάρως), the modern personification of Death, was rather neglected in the pantheon of Greek gods and appears very rarely in Ancient Greek literature. But, in the European consciousness, Charon is mostly associated with his representation in Dante's *Inferno*, where he appears as an old man with fiery eyes and demonic in appearance, which was, as we know, merely borrowed from Virgil's *Aeneid*. On the other hand, in spite of the fact that the figure of Charos is well known in the Hellenic world, the way he is represented has an added degree of complexity, intertwined with many common stereotypes. The representation of Charos as a successor of the ancient Charon, especially in the Modern Greek demotic songs, is the subject of prof. Bzinkowski's book.

The book itself is divided in seven chapters. The content of each is as follows:

I. Preface. – In the first part the author lays down the main difference between the characters of Charon and Charos, as well as the understandable mix-up of the two. Also, in this part the author himself presents us the content of the book.

II. Chapter I - Sources. – The first chapter of the main body of the book is itself divided into two parts. The first of the two being called *Folk songs in the nineteenth and twentieth century Greece*, deals with the source of the demotic songs in which the character of Charos appears. It also shines the light on the research of the accomplished researchers of this type of songs, some of which do not have a Greek heritage. The second part deals with the *mirologia* songs (*dirges*) as well as the folk songs depicting the Underworld and Charos.

III. Chapter II - Representation. – This chapter focuses on the representation of Charos. The chapter itself is divided in four parts. The first part deals with the Underworld and its representation in the demotic songs. Here the author compares the depictions of the Underworld in several different cultures, such as the Acadian, the Babylonian, the ancient Greek, and depictions in the Old Testament with the one gi-

ven in the demotic songs. He concludes that the Underworld in the demotic songs is quite similar to the one from ancient times.

The second part deals with linguistic issues, i.e. with the name of Charos in modern Greek language. The conclusion of this part is that the figure of Charos is identified with Death itself.

The third part continues with the linguistic approach. It deals with the nouns, verbs, verbal phrases and adjectives that help complete the picture of Charos, as well as the scenes he is present in. The bottom line is that those are words with negative context that are associated with pain, loss or punishment.

The fourth part gives us a very good catalogue of Charos's "mask". The conclusion that is drawn from this is that Charos is represented as a character that is unavoidable and unmerciful, someone that cannot be bribed or tricked.

IV. Chapter III - Context. – This chapter deals with the context that Charos's character is depicted within the scenes of the demotic songs. The chapter itself is also divided in six separate parts, which represent different contexts. In the first part the author explores the Acroatic songs, and since their main theme is the struggle of the main hero, we always come across the scene where the main hero wrestles Death. In the Modern Greek folk songs this particular scene is called *charopalema* meaning "fighting" or "wrestling with Charos".

The second part is dedicated to Charos and the Christian Angels and their mutual relationship. The main thesis in this part is based on the study of the classical scholar John Cuthbert Lawson (1874–1919) titled *Modern Greek Folklore and Ancient Greek Religion: A study in survivals* published in 1910.

In the third part the character of Charos is closely compared with the character of Hermes, and his part as the *nekropompos*. The author also analyses the representation of the procession of the dead as well as the ship of the dead, which are associated with Charos in the demotic songs.

The fourth part gives us "the constructive" side of Charos, yet in a very macabre way. Namely, in these folksongs, we can see Charos as builder of either a tower or a garden, but those are mostly built out of the bodies of the dead. The author searches deeper into the contexts of the songs and discovers the artistry and mastery of Charos in the buildings he built, such as palaces, houses, factories, prisons and even some monasteries.

The fifth part introduces us to Charos's family, something we almost never expect. Through the examples taken from the demotic songs we can see the relations with his mother, wife and children. It is very interesting to note that their names are derived from his.

Finally, the sixth part shines the light on another "private" relationship of Charos, and that is the representation of his wedding in the demotic songs. As the author himself quotes "the mutual relationship between death and marriage, based both on similarity and opposition, is characteristic to all Indo-European mythologies, and is well rooted in European culture". With this, the author concludes that such representation of Charos's character is a rather symbolic representation of the dualistic thinking.

V. Conclusion. – In the conclusion the author gives us a resume of all his sections, and underlines the diversity that is included in the character of Charos. In brief, he accepts the parallel that lingers from ancient times and the placid Charon, up until the twentieth century and the merciless Charos.

He concludes that we could not escape the impression that in spite all those different masks that are offered throughout the centuries, we could discern miscellaneous concepts and ideas related to the eschatology of the individual according to the folk world view.

The extensive bibliography offered at the end of the book can be quite helpful to scholars in this field, but it can also act as fine guide to the common admirer of the Greek folk tradition.

At the very last pages of this book we find the Appendix that contains pictures as well as an English translation of the songs left on graves at the Thessaloniki cemetery in October 2016.

The “*Masks of Charos in Modern Greek demotic songs, sources, representation and context*”, written by Michał Bzinkowski indeed represents an extensive analysis of the character of Charos and his representation in the Modern Greek folk songs. The author provides enough data to first of all distinguish between the very commonly amalgamated Charon and Charos, and then through his “masks” to show us the real face of Charos. All of this makes this book quite a valuable addition in the exploration of ancient and Byzantine heritage in modern cultural traditions, in Europe, and especially in modern Greek culture.

Marija Manasievska
PhD candidate at the
Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje

ВЕРА БИТРАКОВА ГРОЗДАНОВА, *Лихнид и Дасаретија*, Македонска академија на науки и уметности, Скопје 2017, стр. 475 [VERA BITRAKOVA GROZDANOVA, *Lychnidos et Dassaretie*, Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts, Skopje 2017, pp. 475].

Archaeological excavations in Ohrid and the surrounding Lake Ohrid region during the last 50 years revealed abundant and diverse material and data for the history of the city and region. This vast fund of objects and data gains their real significance only through their identification and interpretation in scholarly publications, such as the collection of papers “*Lychnidos et Dassaretie*” by the highly respected academician Vera Bitrakova Grozdanova.

The collection of papers “*Lychnidos et Dassaretie*”, dedicated to the cultural history of the ancient city of Lychnidos and the region of Dassaretia, is a result of many years of field and scholarly research. They were created over a long period, from the earliest “*Bijoux en or de la nécropole hellénistique chez Crvejnca*”, published in 1967 in the Journal of the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts, “*Arheološki Radovi i Rasprave*”, until today. Some of these studies were written in honor of distinguished scholars, respected professors and dear colleagues of academician Bitrakova Grozdanova: Milutin Garašanin, Aleksandrina Cermanović-Kuzmanović, Stela Drougou, Manolis Andronikos, Julia Vokotopolou, Nives Majnarić-Pandžić, Ivan Mirnik, Duje Rendić-Miočević, Fanula Papazoglu, Dimče Koco, academician Ksente Bogoev and Ivan Mikulčić. Other papers were presented at the International Symposia for Classical and Hellenistic Pottery in Thessaloniki, Mytilene, Chania and Volos, at the symposia of Ancient Macedonia in Thessaloniki, or were published in significant journals or periodicals such as special editions of the Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts, *Živa Antika*, *Macedoniae acta archaeologica*, *Lychnidos*, *Opuscula Archaeologica*, *Histria Antiqua* and many others.

The rich history and cultural heritage of the Ohrid and Prespa regions in antiquity is the main subject of the total number of 32 papers written in Macedonian with French or English resume, or originally published in French, English, Serbian or Croatian. They are organized in five topical units, published on 475 pages. Each paper is