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*Introducing New Gods: The Politics of Athenian Religion*. By Robert Garland. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992. Pp. xvi + 234. \$39.95.

## William O. Stephens

Garland's aim is to identify everything in Athenian religion 'that is implied by "nomizein theon", the technical term...for the recognition or formal acknowledgement of a deity's presence in the community through the traditional apparatus of cultus, including votive offerings, sacrifices, prayers, and the like', and to trace 'a pattern of association between politics and religion' (vii). The main claim to originality the author makes is that there have been no previous attempts to align Athenian religion with Athenian politics for the period this survey covers, from c. 750 to the execution of Socrates in 399 BCE (viii). Garland also seeks to demonstrate that Athens played a significant part in promoting new cults throughout the Greek world, and gave them a prominence that greatly facilitated their subsequent promotion to the rank of Panhellenic deities (9).

In his introduction Garland observes that 'It is the conspicuous refusal on the part of the Greeks to acknowledge the existence of a distinctively spiritual outlook which is manifested only by certain select or selected individuals, that creates a seemingly impermeable wall around their religious experience' (18). This impermeability adds to Garland's portrayal of Athenian religion as alien to our own. In chapter 1 Garland discusses the ancestral practices that set the foundation for his inquiry into specific cult introductions and the synoecism, that is, the name given to the process by which the inhabitants of Attica agreed to recognize Athens as their political and administrative center. Chapters 2 through 7 are detailed examinations of how the cults of Pan, Artemis Aristoboule, Theseus, Bendis, Asklepios, and Sokrates' *daimonion* were introduced into Athens. In chapter 8 Garland discusses the functioning of the Athenian *aition*, the foundation legend of a cult that explained the circumstances that led to its introduction and served as its *raison d'être*. He has a few concluding remarks followed by a helpful chronology of Athenian religion and a rather incomplete glossary of terms. While Garland includes a decent map of Attica, he unfortunately omits a map of the whole Greek mainland, which makes it difficult to follow his frequent

geographical references to places outside of Attica.

One of the book's most important conclusions is the claim that what marks out the Athenian religious system from others 'is that it treated worldly success as wholly commensurate with divine favour and patronage', and that consequently 'we are dealing with a conception of the world which is entirely different from our own experience and understanding of it' (173). This air of mystery is definitely present in chapter 2. Here Garland recounts Herodotus' description of Pheidippides' encounter with Pan at the summit of Mount Parthenion in Arcadia during his return journey to Marathon after having failed to win the promise of military assistance from the Spartans. Garland explains that Pheidippides' mystical epiphany constituted the *aition* for the subsequent introduction of the new cult of Pan into Athens since (a) the epiphany took place at a moment of crisis, i.e., the Athenians' impending defeat by the huge Persian invading army; (b) the god promised to render assistance to the desperate and vastly outnumbered Athenians; and (c) the fulfillment of Pan's promise was borne out by the Athenians' subsequent incredible victory. Garland judges the establishment of a state sponsored cult of Pan to be an important turning-point in the history of Athenian religion since it coincided with the era when the Demos was just beginning to exercise independent authority in matters of religious innovation (62).

The confidence Garland has in the veracity of his historical sources at times vacillates rather arbitrarily. For example in chapter 3, in discussing Herodotus' account of the embassy to Delphi in 481/480 to inquire about Xerxes' invasion, Garland asserts that the Athenian ambassadors' 'double consultation' of Apollo through the Pythia named Aristonike 'is undoubtedly based on historical fact' (66), although he has admitted that Herodotus is our *only* source for this story (64). Garland then adds that even if we accept the historicity of the 'double consultation' incident 'unreservedly', we need not believe 'that the oracles' wording is also genuine' (66). He writes 'it is in the highest degree unlikely that a presumably uneducated peasant like Aristonike could have produced twenty-four lines of hexameter verse at a moment's notice' (66-67). This lack of reservation regarding the historicity of the incident seems credulous, while on the other hand, given the dramatic skills required of a Pythian priestess in an oral culture, Garland's highest degree of skepticism about Aristonike's poetic ability seems unfounded. I am also loath to accept Garland's importation of Derrida when he claims that since the Delphic oracle and its recipient were part of the same floating discourse, devoid of determinate meaning, 'Deconstructionists would have felt entirely at home in Delphi' (69). I would think deconstructionists would have felt just as out of place in ancient Delphi as any other modern would. However, Garland does successfully establish his central conclusion of this chapter, namely, that Themistocles introduced the new goddess Artemis Aristoboule (Of the first-rate counsel) in order to celebrate the luminosity of his own mind (78).

In chapter 4 Garland argues that the recovery of Theseus' bones by Kimon, the son of Miltiades, the architect of the victory at Marathon, repatriated Theseus, and 'served as a metaphor for his countrymen's recently acquired naval

supremacy, since Athens was now posing as the leader of a maritime alliance' (84). Kimon's retrieval of Theseus' bones disposed the Demos to elect him frequently over the next few years to the office of generalship, and this again supports Garland's argument for the linkage between the religion and politics of Athens.

In chapter 5 Garland contends that the establishment of a cult in honor of Bendis would have been seen at the time as an effective way to consolidate a military partnership between the Thracians and the Athenians (112). Garland argues that from the 450s onwards the goddess Athena began to symbolize not only Athenian military success, but also the will of the growing Athenian empire to dominate over the Aegean (106).

Chapter 6 is the most detailed, and perhaps the most intriguing, of the book. Here the author carefully reconstructs the successive stages in the adoption and promotion of the healing god Asklepios into the Piraeus and on into Athens. One of Garland's most fascinating suggestions is that 'Of all the gods, it was Asklepios, arguably, who came closest to challenging the polytheistic basis of Greek religion and who in consequence was destined to pose the most serious challenge to Christianity' (134). Another provocative, yet reasonably well supported, claim he makes is that theriomorphism, the belief that gods can and do sometimes take nonhuman animal form, represents an ancient strand of Greek religion that was never entirely supplanted by anthropomorphism (121).

The weakest arguments are found in chapter 7. Here Garland contends that 'Sokrates was accused of neglecting to perform sacrifices and of failing to participate in state festivals. The charge, one of non-conformity in religious practice rather than unorthodoxy in religious belief (cf. Burnet 1924, 104), was fully justified, notwithstanding Xenophon's claims to the contrary' (144). This speculation is unconvincing. The mere fact that in the *Apology* Plato does not mention that Socrates was punctilious in performing religious rituals in public is the sole ground to which Garland appeals for rejecting Xenophon's explicit testimony that Socrates *did* perform such rituals. I would distinguish between Socrates' untraditional, humanistic religious views and his public religious practices. It was the former, and not the later, that seem to have been seen by people like Anytus as threatening to the stability of the Demos, insofar as the young men who associated with Socrates were exposed to his painstaking elenctic analysis of philosophically indefensible, though popular and state-approved, religious beliefs. This, I think, is how the charge of impiety was linked to the charge of corrupting the young. Garland's account fails to explain how the two charges against Socrates are related. But he rightly observes that 'Sokrates' religious outlook presented a challenge to the very concept of Athenian democracy, which operated on the principle that it and it alone had the right to determine who should be worshipped and in what manner' (151).

Garland concludes his inquiry in the final chapter by 'tentatively' proposing four different impulses behind any decision to establish a new Athenian cult or ritual: (a) guilt at having committed an offense that gravely offended the dignity

of a deity; (b) gratitude and relief at having escaped an impending catastrophe; (c) wonder at a deity's epiphany or at a heroic exploit; (d) pride in a community's cultural advance (154). The generally rigorous investigation Garland has carried out adequately justifies his proposal of these four impulses.

*Introducing New Gods* is a welcome contribution full of information for understanding the subtle interplay between political motivations and theological sensibilities that underlies the religious innovations of classical Athens. While a few of Garland's claims are too speculative and weakly supported, his central theses are solidly substantiated. Readers will definitely glean many fascinating insights into the religious politics of Attic culture.

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The twelve papers in this volume were originally presented at a conference held at Pittsburgh in 1986 that had as its goal to bring about closer ties between the historiographies of Greek philosophy and Greek science, with particular focus on the fifth and fourth centuries BCE. Plato and Aristotle are the chief personages, as one would expect from the dominant position of their works among the extant writings on natural philosophy from this period, but the overall emphasis proves to be as much on actual scientific writings (mathematics, harmonics, astronomy, medicine, and biology) as on the philosophers' broader theories of the nature of science.

There is considerable variation in the degree to which the single papers address the contrasts that exist between modern scientific and philosophical historians' approaches. In a combative piece that opens the collection, C.H. Kahn argues energetically on behalf of the view, traditional within the history of philosophy, that the origins of Greek science are indistinguishable from the origins of Ionian philosophical speculation. Kahn singles out, unsurprisingly, the concepts of uniform, systematic nature, of mathematical proof, and of geometrical modelling in astronomy, as Ionian innovations that stamped Greek science as fundamentally distinct from either Near Eastern science or earlier Greek poetic thought. (Yet the role of these concepts in the Greek scientific traditions is easily exaggerated; for example, calendars and, later, the prediction of celestial phenomena are dominant