

been put in editing. It really is a pity that there has been no or insufficient copy-editing. Now we have some annoying repetition, and an arrangement of the contents that could have been more clearly structured, especially in the chapters 4-7 and in the conclusion (which is mostly a summary). The landscape archaeology might have been treated more prominently. Now it is a *very* implicit theoretical framework: after the introduction it gets a mere two mentions towards the end of the book. The English is not always idiomatic and could have benefited from the attention of a native speaker, and there are some small, but sometimes worrying mistakes, e.g. Piccinini 2019 for Piccinini 2017 (n.11), 370-378 for 370-368 (39), Aphodite for Aphrodite (130). The English practice of capitalizing nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs in titles is sometimes erroneously extended to German and other non-English titles. Otherwise the book is very decently produced as can be expected from De Gruyter.

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MARCO GIUMAN, *La trottola nel mondo classico. Archeologia, fonti letterarie e iconografiche*. Roma: Giorgio Bretschneider Editore, 2020. 146 pp., 24 ill., 19 plates, 24 cm (Quaderni di Otium 4). – ISBN 9788876893247.

Anybody familiar with the work of Marco Giuman – a long list of publications – will not be surprised that his latest book, *La trottola*, the spinning top, does not limit itself to toys and child's play. Toys in a literal sense in fact account for only a small part of the text: most of it is dedicated to spinning tops and a range of related objects, all characterized by a gyrating movement and a humming sound, in the context of ancient religion and symbolic thought. Movement and sound have been the subject of previous studies by Giuman: (with Federica Doria) *The Swinging Woman. Phaedra and Swing in Classical Greece, Medea 2.1* (2016) 115-147; «Ho incatenato lingue ostili e bocche nemiche». *Magia, parola e silenzio nel culto romano di Tacita Muta, Medea 1.1* (2015) 301-324 (in a special issue 'Frontiere sonore' also edited and introduced by Giuman et al.); *Melissa. Archeologia delle api e del miele nella Grecia antica*, Rome 2008; as an editor (with Romina Carboni) *Sonora. La dimensione acustica nel mondo mitico, magico e religioso dell'antichità*, Perugia 2015 (Quaderni di Otium 1).

Despite its relatively modest size of 120 pages, this is an extremely rich, dense text that touches upon a wide range of subjects: the spinning top as a children's toy, but above all its ritual and symbolical dimensions, which are many. This need not surprise us: a spinning top, which spins without falling over, and would do so forever (if it was not for the friction), is something magical and hypnotizing – 'hypnotizing' being the word that Giuman uses of his own childhood experience with his "trottola di latta rossa" (xiii). My spinning tops, richly decorated with push pins and my mother's nail polish, evoke comparable memories.

After a short introduction there follow four chapters and no conclusion. There is an index of ancient names (Zagreus was overlooked) and an index of ancient

authors (just names, so not an *index locorum*). A subject index would have been helpful in dealing with this text stuffed to bursting with detail, and with many twists and turns, as befits the subject. Only a summary account can be presented here, let alone detailed criticism of particular items. Departing from actual tops and scenes of child's play, by way of Hermes spinning his top, we arrive at the *rite de passage* from boyhood to manhood, as associated with Hermes. Scenes with girls or women with tops have been usually interpreted as merely illustrating that these were playthings not just for boys, but for females as well. Departing from burial ensembles, Giuman argues for the connection of the top with Eros and Aphrodite, and again Hermes, as an oracular god. Tops as grave gifts, "the spinning tops of Hades", correspond to the "nexus between marriage and death", when a *parthenos* dies before her wedding day. This leads on to the top and other toys as symbols in Dionysiac mystery cults, and as votives donated at sanctuaries: especially the Theban Kabirion. "Spinning" and other circular motions, sometimes in combination with buzzing or whirring sounds, are connected with ecstasy. This connects to other objects related to tops, several of which share the name *rhombos*, amongst them bull-roarers. Another word for *rhombos* is supposed to be *inyx*. Giuman sees the two as different and dedicates a chapter to the *inyx* in its own right, as a magical instrument, a spinning love charm. The mythical character Iynx who was changed into a bird, *inyx*, the wry-neck, and the charm are intimately connected. More generally, circularity and repetition are essential elements of the world of ancient magic.

Confronted by this roller coaster ride, one might entertain some methodological misgivings: Giuman's appreciation of authors such as Jane Harrison, Mircea Eliade and Karl Kerényi who do not shun some quite speculative notions, raises some doubts. These centre on what I have previously called the 'scrapyard approach' to ancient religion: every disparate bit of evidence that might be relevant is adduced to support a hypothesis, with a certain disregard for dating, genre, context, and so on. Although Giuman is not nearly the worst offender, and builds up his arguments quite carefully ("procediamo per gradi", 37), these doubts linger in my mind. Is not too much made of too little?

The subject matter, both the *realia* and the religious-symbolic analysis that accompanies them, reminded me of studies of a century ago, by authors like A.B. Cook (of the mind-boggling three-volume *Zeus, 1914-1925*). And indeed, Cook has a long section on Iynx in his first volume and discusses the bull-roarer (referring to, i.a., J.G. Frazer's *Golden Bough* and Jane Harrison's *Themis*). Giuman's work presents a comparable combination of classics, archaeology, ethnography and folklore. But even more than by these Cambridge Ritualists, Giuman appears to be influenced by French scholarship: when we look at the entries *s.vv.* *Rhombus* and *Turben et turbo* in Daremberg and Saglio's *Dictionnaire des antiquités grecques et romaines, 1877-1919*, authored by respectively Edmond Saglio himself and Georges Lafaye, we meet with exactly the same blend of *realia* and symbolic-religious interpretation (one could add to the entries in *DAGR* the 1948 contribution

by August Hug in *Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Alterthumswissenschaft s.v. Turbo*, not mentioned by Giuman). Saglio and Lafaye are duly included in Giuman's bibliography, but are not given enough credit. Both figure in his text and annotation quite sparingly (except for a lengthy quote from Saglio on p. 83) and he does not give us a historiographic account of previous work on the spinning top and related objects where he could have lauded them. But in fact, Giuman's chapters read like an amplification and elaboration of the two entries in *DAGR*. This feeling is strengthened by his use of a number of illustrations deriving from these publications, including the image on the cover. This is a study with an admirable time-depth: if only everyone would read what was published a century ago. But the author seems to find this not worthy of comment, or takes no pride in it. I say he should have flaunted it.

It is definitely not my intent to say that Giuman is a hundred years behind his time. Not only does he include new source material, even unpublished, but his analysis is also very much of the present: it partakes in the so-called material turn, and reflects current interest in the senses, performance and play, and lived religion. Taking a – necessarily very selective – look at the extremely voluminous literature dealing with the religions of the ancient world, I find that much subject matter tends to come full circle: it falls out of fashion and comes back into fashion. But it will be equally obvious (when it is *not* obvious, we are not dealing with legitimate scholarship) that something has happened in the meantime. The subjects may re-appear, the ways in which they are dealt with are different, and I daresay, on the whole more sophisticated. Giuman's book about the *trottola* builds on a century of publications since Frazer, Cook, Harrison, Saglio, or Lafaye. I have not been able to come up with any immediately relevant title that is not in his bibliography, or it should be Huizinga's *Homo ludens* (in the preface by Mauro Menichetti we find the *homo ludens* referred to in general, without mention of Huizinga).

In sum total: a very thorough account of an old-fashioned subject updated for today. Despite the misgivings already mentioned, I feel that anyone interested in ancient religion should engage with it – and with Giuman's other publications which do not seem widely known outside Italy. For those with a primarily archaeological interest, there is a large selection of archaeologically attested spinning tops and related objects illustrated: not only the spinning tops themselves, but also relevant vase paintings, reliefs, statuettes, a wall painting and a piece of jewellery. This study, however, contains no catalogue. Giuman's main focus lies elsewhere, as we have seen above. But this will interest the archaeologist as well: in addition to the *realia*, there is the social and religious embedment of these objects and images in a whole world of play, games of chance, fortune telling, divination, love magic, initiation and mystery cults.

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LUIGI LAFASCIANO, *Archeologia del sogno rituale. Dall'arcaismo alla tarda antichità nel mondo greco-*

*romano*. Rome: "L'Erma" di Bretschneider, 2021. 368 pp., ill, 24 cm (Studia archaeologica 248). – ISBN 9788891321213.

Lafasciano studies dreams and visions in a number of different contexts, from archaic hero cults by way of epiphanic and healing gods to Christian saints. He does so in order to establish diachronic change in the ways in which such dreams and visions functioned within religious life and within communities at large, and to show how this impinged upon the construction of sacred space. And as if this was not enough – and maybe he is right and it is not – he wants to go beyond these already large questions by asking even bigger ones about the ways in which visionary rituals were used to create meaning and forge a cultural identity. This multi-pronged research goal is pursued across three chronologically arranged chapters, and a fourth chapter that takes one particular case study to illustrate and /or illuminate the historical development outlined in the previous chapters. The book concludes with an almost 50 page bibliography and three indices: an *index locorum*, an index of personal names (including classical authors and thus in part replicating the *index locorum*), and one of place names. A subject index is, as so often, sorely missed.

In the first chapter, which deals with archaic and classical Greece, we are straight away confronted with the pluriformity of the phenomenon of 'visions' in a ritual context: on the one hand there are epiphanies perceived by the subject while he/she is awake, on the other dreams that come to the subject while he/she is asleep – in a ritual context, that would be during incubation. Lafasciano focuses on incubation: see the title of his book. Incubation in its turn is also pluriform: its purpose can be oracular (oniromancy); but also more specifically a type of necromancy, where the dead appear in a dream), and its purpose can be healing. The healing can have an oracular aspect, when the sick individual is not forthwith cured, but is instructed on what to do in order to effect a cure. Despite the incubation focus, however, Lafasciano's account also takes in Pre-Socratic philosophizing, 'waking' oracles, and mystic initiation – true to his introduction where he speaks of "sogni e visioni" as two complementary phenomena. Another complication. Though I readily subscribe to the idea that everything has to do with everything else, it is not always practical to pursue this idea in one's research. However, Lafasciano argues, and not unconvincingly, that he needs to take this wide view because for part of the period dealt with in this chapter, incubation ritual as generally understood is only *in statu nascendi*. From Pre-Socratic wisdom branches out therapeutic cults and medical *techne*, the two from the start not in competition, but in symbiosis with one another.

In the second chapter, about the Hellenistic world and Republican/Imperial Rome, it appears that a more uniform incubation ritual with healing as its purpose has crystallized out, "l'incubazione terapeutico-oracolare" as it was progressively codified from the 5th century BC onwards, largely at sanctuaries dedicated to Asclepius (epiphanic techniques, however, were never the exclusive province of Asklepieia). Not only is the ritual more