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N. Gonis

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W. CLARYSSE: *CD-LDAB 1998. Leuven Database of Ancient Books*.
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The proliferation of electronic resources for the study of the ancient world has now given us this wonderful tool. Details on all the published Greek and Latin literary production preserved on 'ancient' papyrus and parchment from Egypt and elsewhere (7,096 items) make up a database stored on a CD-ROM. This sets out to update the catalogues of R. A. Pack, *The Greek and Latin Literary Texts from Greco-Roman Egypt*² (Ann Arbor, 1965), and J. van Haelst, *Catalogue des papyrus littéraires, juifs et chrétiens* (Paris, 1976); some Herculaniensia and magica have also been included. Each record provides most of the information the user of such a work of reference would wish to find: date, provenance, material, details of the first publication, select bibliography, and other interesting details. A search takes only a couple of seconds. *CD-LDAB* makes no demands of advanced computer literacy on the user. It runs on both Macintosh and PC. The operating program is Filemaker (not included in the CD-ROM).

The compiler's concern is with the ancient books and their readership: who read what, when, and where? A specially designed program called 'graph' converts the data of the database into charts and graphs which may answer questions such as: Where did Euripides enjoy the widest readership in the fifth century? When was Aristophanes mostly read? Who was more popular: Herodotus or Thucydides? Callimachus or Apollonius Rhodius? This is useful for the historian of ancient culture, but may occasionally mislead the non-specialist. Some caveats, one feels, should have been introduced. More often than not, publication reflects editorial choice rather than the material available. It is telling enough that virtually every new volume of *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri* upsets statistics and generalizations of the past. Thus the publication of vol. 60 trebled the number of Aeschines papyri at one stroke.

Any catalogue is bound to accumulate addenda and corrigenda, and the *CD-LDAB* is no exception. Shortage of space limits me to a few nitpickings only. Aelius Aristides and the Christian author Aristides appear to have been mixed. P.Oxy. 30.2522 A+B, ascribed to Rhianus, do not belong to a single manuscript, but are two different papyri which transmit overlapping parts of the same work. Rhianus' claims of authorship are even stronger in the case of P.Oxy. 39.2891, but this has not been recorded. In citing editions of Menander's plays the lines covered

by the papyri are not always given. P.Oxy. 33.2656, the codex of Menander's *Misoumenos*, has not been re-edited in P.Oxy. 64.4408: only eight lines of 2656 have been combined with a new fragment into a new text.

But in a work of this size such shortcomings are easily pardoned. In fact, with the preparation of the third edition of Pack's catalogue having entered its third decade, one can only be grateful that *CD-LDAB* is available. One hopes that there will be regular releases of updated versions of the CD-ROM; these, ideally, should allow the user to interact with the database, to intervene in the way one would do in the margins of a printed book (this is not technically possible at the moment). Meanwhile, all classics libraries should acquire this invaluable resource.

Wolfson College, Oxford

N. GONIS