

ies. No doubt these future studies will examine the controversial parts of Volume II in some detail. Whatever their arguments and conclusions, they would do well to emulate the full exposition of the evidence and the general aura of good common sense which make *Kütahya Tiles and Pottery* such an exemplary work of scholarship.

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Olga Santoyo Matamoros, *Las Atenas de los Dioses* (Athens of the Gods), Madrid, Ediciones Partenon, 1972, 16^o, pp. 345.

Olga Santoyo's first novel, *Las Atenas de los Dioses*, is something of an anachronism. Publishers especially are aware that the urgency of contemporary life has left few people—readers as well as authors—willing to expend the effort demanded by the historical novel. Hence it is a pleasant surprise to come upon a work of fiction inspired by ancient Greece, particularly when its author is not even a classicist and lives far from its geographical setting. After a brief stint in Mexico, Cuban-born Dr. Santoyo now works in the School of Spanish Literature at Puerto Rico's Interamerican University. But the thrall of the Eastern Mediterranean also pervades her *Fantasia Oriental*, an earlier volume of short stories.

The action is set in the Athens of 470 BC, after the Persian Wars and before the Athenian contest with Sparta for the hegemony of Greece. The author's history is impeccable, her imagination virile, and the dividing line between history and fiction is often obliterated by a convincing blend of both real and imagined characters and events. Leonidas and the very finely drawn Daphne conduct their love-affair amid the difficulties that arise from a background of political upheaval, intrigue, betrayal and patriotic self-sacrifice. Helen is a former slave secretly in love with Leonidas, her liberator, whom she ultimately repays by intercepting the knife thrust at him by his enemy, thus leaving him free to enjoy the love of her rival.

The treatment is romantic, at times reminiscent of turn-of-the-century historical romances such as Henryk Sienkiewicz's *Quo Vadis*, at others more akin to the exotic atmosphere of Gómez Carillo's works. The informed reader will perhaps find a little too much straight history (as at pp. 47-48, 81-84, 109-111, 165-170 etc.); he may also tend to skip flights of rhetoric lauding the Athenian democracy and its cultural achievements, although these passages arise very naturally from the dialogue. And the somewhat skimpy story-line, one suspects, is a mere pretext that allows the author to portray fifth-century Athens in vivid colours and to highlight its role in the evolution of European civilization.

All who are attached to the classical tradition will read this attempt with interest, and experience suggests that a modern Greek translation would be received with enthusiasm.

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