THE CHREIA AND ANCIENT RHETORIC
THE CHREIA AND ANCIENT RHETORIC
Commentaries on Aphthonius’s Progymnasmata

Volume Editor
Craig A. Gibson
The Chreia and Ancient Rhetoric

Commentaries on Aphthonius’s *Progymnasmata*

Translated with an Introduction and Notes by

Ronald F. Hock

Society of Biblical Literature
Atlanta
In memory of Edward N. O’Neil

συνεργοῦ καὶ φίλου
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<td>Anon. Schol.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anon. Seg.</td>
<td>Anonymous Seguerianus</td>
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<tr>
<td>AP</td>
<td>Anthologia Palatina</td>
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<td>Ars gramm.</td>
<td>Dionysius Thrax, Ars grammatica</td>
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<td>Barrocc.</td>
<td>Codex Bodleianus Baroccius graecus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bis acc.</td>
<td>Lucian, Bis accusatus</td>
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<td>Brit. Mus. addit.</td>
<td>British Museum additional manuscript</td>
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<td>Cat.</td>
<td>Lucian, Cataplus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coisl. gr.</td>
<td>Codex Coislinianus graecus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comm. in Aphth.</td>
<td>Commentarium in Aphthonii Progymnasmata</td>
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<tr>
<td>De an.</td>
<td>Aristotle, De anima</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dem. enc.</td>
<td>Pseudo-Lucian, Demosthenis encomium</td>
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<td>Demetr.</td>
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<td>Demosth.</td>
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<td>Eleg.</td>
<td>Theognis, Elegiae</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fab.</td>
<td>Fabulae (Aesop, Aphthonius)</td>
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<td>Frag.</td>
<td>Epicharmus, Fragmenta</td>
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<td>Hec.</td>
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<td>Hell.</td>
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<td>Hes.</td>
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<td>Hom.</td>
<td>Basil, Homiliae</td>
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<td>Il.</td>
<td>Homer, The Iliad</td>
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<td>Intr.</td>
<td>Porphyry, Introduction</td>
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<td>Laur.</td>
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<td>Laur. S. Marc.</td>
<td>Codex Laurentianus San Marco</td>
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<td>Men.</td>
<td>Lucian, Menippus</td>
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<td>Merc. cond.</td>
<td>Lucian, De Mercede conductis</td>
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<td>Mon.</td>
<td>Menander, Monostichoi</td>
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<td>Mor.</td>
<td>Plutarch, Moralia</td>
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<td>Nub.</td>
<td>Aristophanes, Nubes</td>
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<tr>
<td>O.Claud.</td>
<td>Mons Claudianus. Ostraca Graeca et Latina</td>
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## The Chreia in Ancient Rhetoric

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<td>Od.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Orat.</td>
<td><em>Orationes</em> (Demosthenes, Dio Chrysostom, Isocrates, Julian)</td>
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<td>Oxon. misc</td>
<td>Codex Oxiensis miscellaneus graecus</td>
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<td>Paris. gr.</td>
<td>Codex Parisinus graecus</td>
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<tr>
<td>P.Berol.</td>
<td>Papyrus Berolensis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pelop.</td>
<td>Plutarch, <em>Pelopidas</em></td>
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<td>Phoc.</td>
<td>Plutarch, <em>Phocion</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Progymn. Frag.</td>
<td>Sopatros, <em>Progymnasmatum Fragmenta</em></td>
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<td>Rhet.</td>
<td>Aristotle, <em>Rhetorica</em></td>
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<td><em>Rhetorica ad Alexandrum</em></td>
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<td><em>Rhetorica ad Herennium</em></td>
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<td>Riccard. gr.</td>
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<td>Taurien. gr.</td>
<td>Codex Tauriensis graecus</td>
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<td>UB Salamanca</td>
<td>Universitas Bibliotheca Salamanca</td>
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<td>V. Apoll.</td>
<td>Philostratus, <em>Vita Apollonii</em></td>
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<td>Vat. gr.</td>
<td>Codex Vaticanus graecus</td>
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<td>V.H.</td>
<td>Aelian, <em>Varia historia</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Vindo. phil. gr.</td>
<td>Codex Vindobonensis philosophicus graecus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vit. dec. orat.</td>
<td>Pseudo-Plutarch, <em>Vitae decem oratorum</em></td>
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<td>WD</td>
<td>Hesiod, <em>Works and Days</em></td>
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### Secondary Resources

- **ABla** | Analecta Blatadon
- **ArchExSard** | Archaeological Explorations of Sardis
- **AttiSocLSL** | *Atti Società linguistica Scienze e Letteratura*
- **BNf** | *Byzantinisch-neugriechische Jahrbücher*
- **BS** | *Byzantinoslavica*
- **ByzA** | Byzantinische Archiv
- **ByzZ** | *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*
- **CAG** | Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca
- **CHellSt** | Center for Hellenic Studies

*Chreia* 2


*CJ*

*Classical Journal*

*CQ*

*Classical Quarterly*

*CR*

*Classical Review*

*CSCT*

Columbia Studies in the Classical Tradition

*ÉchO*

*Échos d’Orient*

*GRBS*

*Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies*

*HAW*

Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft

*H/ON*


*ICS*

*Illinois Classical Studies*

*JHS*

*Journal of Hellenic Studies*

*JÖB*

*Jahrbuch der Österreichische Byzantinistik*

*LSJ*


*MH*

*Museum helveticum*

*MMed*

The Medieval Mediterranean

*ODB*


*PG*


*PGL*


*PhilAnt*

Philosophia Antiqua

*PhW*

*Philologische Wochenschrift*

*PRSt*

*Perspectives in Religious Studies*

*PS*

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<thead>
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>PSI</td>
<td><em>Papiri greci e latini</em> (Pubblicazione della Società Italiana)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REA</td>
<td><em>Revue des études anciennes</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REG</td>
<td><em>Revue des études grecques</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RhM</td>
<td><em>Rheinisches Museum für Philologie</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RHT</td>
<td><em>Revue d’histoire des textes</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>SBL</td>
<td>Society of Biblical Literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBLWGRW</td>
<td>Society of Biblical Literature Writings from the Greco-Roman World</td>
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<td>SBLTT</td>
<td>Society of Biblical Literature Texts and Translations</td>
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<tr>
<td>SicGymn</td>
<td><em>Siculorum Gymnasmium</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPByzS</td>
<td>Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teubner</td>
<td>Bibliotheca scriptorum graecorum et romanorum teubneriana</td>
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<tr>
<td>TLing</td>
<td>Trends in Linguistics</td>
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<tr>
<td>TSHCyp</td>
<td>Texts and Studies of the History of Cyprus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VC</td>
<td><em>Vigiliae christianae</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WByzSt</td>
<td>Wiener Byzantinische Studien</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZPE</td>
<td><em>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</em></td>
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Introduction

This is the third and final volume of the Chreia in Ancient Education and Literature Project sponsored by the Institute for Antiquity and Christianity at the Claremont Graduate University in Claremont, California. The first volume, *The Chreia in Ancient Rhetoric: The Progymnasmata*, appeared in 1986 and introduced and translated the chreia chapters from all the extant *Progymnasmata* as well as some related texts. The second volume, *The Chreia and Ancient Rhetoric: Classroom Exercises*, was published in 2002; it introduced and translated the various classroom exercises that used the chreia during the primary and secondary stages of the curriculum but especially during the third, or rhetorical, stage, where elaborating a chreia became the principal exercise for students to undertake.

The years since the publication of these volumes have witnessed a renewed scholarly interest in these texts, and this interest has advanced their study in significant ways. For example, regarding the *Progymnasmata* Michel Patillon and Giancarlo Bolognesi have edited and translated the complete text of Theon’s *Progymnasmata*, and George Kennedy has provided an easily accessible English translation of all the *Progymnasmata*. Advances in the analysis of the *Progymnasmata* proceed in various directions. For example, Ruth Webb, Malcolm Heath, and Manfred Kraus have

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4 George A. Kennedy, trans., *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks of Prose Composition and Rhetoric* (WGRW 10; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003).
written updated surveys of the *Progymnasmata*, whereas others have focused on issues regarding individual *Progymnasmata*. Thus, Craig Gibson has refined and clarified the translation of two terms in the *Progymnasmata* of pseudo-Hermogenes and Aphthonius; Heath has proposed a later dating for Theon’s *Progymnasmata* and conjectured Minucianus as the author of pseudo-Hermogenes’s *Progymnasmata*; and Gibson has found textual evidence in Nicolaus’s *Progymnasmata* for the long-held assumption that its author was a Christian.

Scholarship on the classroom exercises that accompanied the theoretical sections of Aphthonius’s *Progymnasmata* has also begun to appear. Eugenio Amato has published a new edition of the sample narratives (διηγήματα) and speeches-in-character (ἠθοποιίαι) of one of Libanius’s students, Severus of Alexandria, but especially notable in this regard is the work of Gibson, who has translated the voluminous sample exercises either by or attributed to Libanius of Antioch.

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8 Ibid., 158–60.
12 Craig A. Gibson, trans., *Libanius’ Progymnasmata: Model Exercises in Greek Prose Composition and Rhetoric* (WGRW 27; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008).
anonymous sample exercises included in the commentary on Aphthonius’s *Progymnasmata* by John Doxapatres and has used a sample description (ἐκφρασις) of the Alexandrian temple of Tyche by pseudo-Nicolaus to date more securely this author to the late fourth or early fifth century. 

But when it comes to the extensive commentary tradition on Aphthonius’s *Progymnasmata* scholarship is still sparse, due in part to a reputation that these commentaries are “a dreary waste of pedantry and triviality.” This opinion has, of course, some truth in it, given the repetition of earlier materials by later commentators and the beginner level of the material contained in these prerhetorical exercises. But that is hardly the entire story. Apart from the pedantry and triviality, there is much in these commentaries that deserves our attention, if we are to appreciate their role in late-antique and Byzantine education. Herbert Hunger has provided a useful summary and a starting point for work on them, and Kennedy’s translation of the *Progymnasmata* also includes a partial translation of at least John of Sardis’s commentary. But much work on the commentaries remains to be done, and it is the intention of this third volume to begin that work, the preliminary work, by providing full introductions to the six texts collected here as well as facing translations of the chapters on the chreia along with explanatory notes. It is hoped that others will go on to provide much-needed critical editions of these texts as well as more insightful and contextual analyses of them.

At any rate, each text in this volume will be based on the standard edition, usually Christian Walz’s. Several changes, however, have been made to these texts, largely to aid the reader. Page

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15 Such is the opinion of J. D. Denniston in his review of the introductory chapters of these commentaries (see his review of Hugo Rabe, ed., *Prolegomenon Sylloge, CR* 46 [1932]: 86).

numbers from the standard editions have been inserted in parentheses at the appropriate places. Quotations from Aphthonius’s chapter on the chreia are printed in bold and further identified by the line number(s) from Hock/O’Neil, *Chreia* 1 (= H/ON; “Aphthonius” is abbreviated as “Aphth”) in parentheses, along with the page and line numbers from Rabe’s standard edition in square brackets. The structure of the commentaries has been made explicit by providing a number and title in bold and in pointed brackets for each section of the commentary. In addition, “verse” numbers have been added within each section for easier referencing.

The earliest known commentary on the progymnasmata is that by Menander of Lycian Laodicea in the early third century. According to the Suda, he wrote a commentary on Minucianus’s *Progymnasmata* as well as on the Hermogenean corpus. This commentary has not survived, and in fact the whole of the extant commentary tradition is entirely Byzantine and devoted to explaining not Minucianus’s but Aphthonius’s *Progymnasmata*. By the sixth century Aphthonius’s had become the standard set of progymnasmata and so was included in the Corpus Hermogenianum, the five-part rhetorical canon that was made up of Aphthonius’s *Progymnasmata* along with four writings attributed to Hermogenes of Tarsus—*Περὶ Στάσεων* (*On Issues*), *Περὶ εὑρέσεων* (*On Invention*), *Περὶ ἰδεῶν* (*On Types of Style*), and *Περὶ μεθόδου δεινότητος* (*On Method*).

The earliest commentary on Aphthonius’s *Progymnasmata* is by John of Sardis, who belongs to the mid-ninth century. His chapter on the chreia is thus the first text in this volume, and the subsequent five texts range from the turn of the millenium to the


19 For the texts of these Hermogenean treatises, see Hugo Rabe, ed., *Hermogenis Opera* (Rhetores Graeci 6; Leipzig: Teubner, 1913). Only two of the treatises are now considered authentic, *On Issues* and *On Types of Style*, but since the commentators assumed all to be by Hermogenes, they will be so treated here. For a summary of the content of these treatises, see Hunger, *Literatur*, 1:76–77.
late fifteenth century. They include the P-scholia from around the year 1000, Doxapatres’s commentary from the late eleventh century, the Rhetorica Marciana from the late twelfth, Maximus Planudes’s commentary from the late thirteenth, and Matthew Camariotes’s epitome from some decades after the fall of Constantinople in 1453. The range in size of these commentaries is equally broad, as John Doxapatres’s is the longest at 483 pages, whereas Matthew Camariotes’s comes in at a meager six.

What scholarship there is on these commentaries tends to focus, as will become clear in the introductions to the individual commentaries, on dating and sources and on making only the most general of statements about their contents. Close analysis of the contents of the commentaries themselves is largely missing, so it is to that task that the introductions to the individual commentaries are devoted. At this point, however, only some preliminary observations need be made.

The commentaries on Aphthonius’s *Progymnasmata* have a number of functions, but most of them can be subsumed under the need to expand on Aphthonius’s rather spare treatment of the progymnasmata. For example, the Suda correctly sensed that Aphthonius wrote his *Progymnasmata* as preparation for the technical treatises of Hermogenes. But nowhere in his *Progymnasmata* does Aphthonius indicate how his lessons actually prepare students for the compositional and argumentative skills they will need for the more advanced task of composing speeches. The commentaries do, stressing how useful (χρήσιµον) each progymnasma is for teaching the basics of the three kinds of public speech and the four parts of a speech. Aphthonius gave no rationale for the order (τάξις) of the fourteen progymnasmata, but the commentaries provide elaborate justifications of his order, particularly with respect to the chreia. Aphthonius provided only the simplest division (διαίρεσις) of the subforms of any progymnasma, but the commentaries, especially in the chreia chapter, provide a subdivision (ὑποδιαίρεσις) and an alternate division (ἐπιδιαίρεσις). Aphthonius simply listed the virtues (ἀρεταί) of a good narrative, but the commentaries go on to provide detailed instructions

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on how to achieve them. Aphthonius simply listed the head-
ings (κεφάλαια) that are to be used in elaborating a chreia, but
the commentaries explain their specific functions, suggest ways of
composing them, and even justify their order. Aphthonius sim-
ply listed the stylistic features required of a speech-in-character,
but the commentaries provide instruction on how to attain them.
In short, the expansive nature of the commentaries would have
made Aphthonius’s *Progymnasmata* that much easier to use as a
textbook for teaching basic compositional skills and especially the
methods of argumentation.

In addition, the commentaries identify what subjects are es-
sential to each progymnasma, debate competing interpretations
of what Aphthonius really said, incorporate Christian quotations
and orators, clarify various words and phrases with synonyms,
comment on grammatical features, point out Aphthonius’s effect-
tive rhetorical figures and strategies in the model exercises, add
further examples of model progymnasmata, and even point out
variant readings in the manuscripts.

All these features, and still others, will be dealt with in de-
tail in the following chapters, but for now it should be clear that
the commentaries provide extensive, useful, and at times sophis-
ticated expansions of Aphthonius’s spare treatment. And perhaps
it should also now be clear that, far from offering “a dreary waste
of pedantry and triviality,” these commentaries helped teach-
ers take students through the sequence of progymnasmata or, as
Doxapatres put it, “the flight of stairs” (ἀναβαθμοί) that would pro-
vide them with the skills necessary eventually to study rhetoric,21
which was the ultimate goal of the educational curriculum.

It remains my pleasant duty to record the debts incurred in
doing this volume. First, those of us who work on the rhetor-
cal texts of Late Antiquity and Byzantium cannot be anything
but profoundly indebted to the indefatigable work that Christian
Walz and Hugo Rabe put into collecting and editing the rhetor-
cal manuscripts on which we are still dependent.22 My debt to
them will become apparent on almost every page of this volume.
Thanks are also due to the Institute for Antiquity and Christianity

21 See Doxapatres 2:138,16 (Walz) (= PS 147,18 [Rabe]).
22 Hunger (*Literatur*, 1:78) lists others, such as Stephan Glöckner and
Otmar Schissel, whose work also forms the basis of much contemporary schol-
arship on Byzantine rhetoric.
and its director Dennis R. MacDonald for their continuing support and encouragement of the Chreia Project. Specific thanks go to members of the Chreia Project who helped in the initial draft translations of the texts in this volume, with special thanks to Professor David Lull of Warburg Theological Seminary for his further work on the introductions and texts of Maximus Planudes and Matthew Camariotes. In addition, I am very grateful indeed to Professor Craig Gibson of the University of Iowa for his help on a number of difficult passages, but also for his meticulous reading of the entire manuscript and his numerous suggestions for its improvement. Thanks also to the Interlibrary Loan staff of Doheny Library at the University of Southern California for their assistance in securing a number of articles that were difficult to find and to Dani Byrd, Dean of Faculty of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at USC, for granting me a sabbatical during the 2009–10 school year, during which substantial work on the volume was done. Thanks are also due to John T. Fitzgerald, the general editor of the Writings from the Greco-Roman World series, for accepting this volume, and to Craig Gibson, the editor of this volume, for his careful and meticulous reading of it, which saved me from numerous infelicities and mistakes. Thanks also to Editorial Director Bob Buller and his staff at the Society of Biblical Literature for seeing this volume through the press.

Finally, even though the late codirector of the Chreia Project, Professor Edward N. O’Neil of the Classics Department at USC, died in 2001 while the second volume was in press, his assistance has continued up to the present, thanks to his “infamous yellow pages,” as they have become known, which provide not only his draft translations of most of the texts in this volume but also his thinking on the grammar and vocabulary of various difficult sentences. Because of his continuing help in this indirect way I have dedicated this volume to his memory.

Ronald F. Hock
Professor of Religion
University of Southern California
January 2011