

She often indicates different interpretations of critics on specific points or refers to useful studies providing interesting background or discussions. The book ends up with an impressive list of works cited, an Index Locorum and a general Index.

Concerned with providing the broadest possible range of information and interpretation, F. has written a very well documented and smart book that fills a gap in recent modern criticism. Everyone interested in elegy and Latin literature will benefit from reading and possessing it.

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LEE M. FRATANTUONO and R. ALDEN SMITH (EDS), *VIRGIL, AENEID 8: TEXT, TRANSLATION, AND COMMENTARY* (Mnemosyne suppl. 416). Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2018. Pp. ix + 801; illus. ISBN 9789004367357. €199.00/US\$239.00.

Scholarship on *Aeneid* 8 comes in waves. Lee M. Fratantuono and R. Alden Smith's commentary follows the intermediate student editions of K. Maclennan (2017) and J. J. O'Hara (2018), and anticipates the 2019 conference of the Augustan Poetry *Réseau* ('Rome's Future, Rome's Past: the 8th Book of the *Aeneid*') and the expected Cambridge Classical Texts and Commentaries edition of A. Rogerson. Clearly, after their much-needed *Aeneid* 5 (2015), F. and S. identified another gap in Virgilian scholarship, since a similar enthusiasm for Book 8 was last seen in the mid 1970s, with another range of closely contemporaneous commentaries (P. T. Eden (1975); K. W. Gransden (1976); C. J. Fordyce (1977)).

Undoubtedly the present edition, with its impressive bibliographical and intertextual coverage, will be an indispensable tool, but it can sometimes leave readers with the impression that its cipher is comprehensiveness rather than discernment, and there are traces of haste in its lack of consistency and careful editing. S. (editor and translator) and F. (commentator) provide plenty of material, and indeed a fresh Latin text, but they do not always tell us what conclusions to draw from it. S.'s *apparatus* notes a plethora of different spellings, misspellings, ancient typos (e.g. *mzentius*; *extimplo*; *reprscussum*) that are extremely valuable for the history of textual transmission, but sometimes distracting in this kind of edition, given their lack of discussion. Confusion also arises in the occasional lack of consistency between *apparatus* and commentary (e.g. Ribbeck's conjecture *quae* for *quem* at 15 or Servius's supplement at 41 are mentioned in the commentary but not in the *apparatus*), or text and commentary (mostly in punctuation, e.g. 147, 150, 211, 274, 338 — the last problematic, with an equally problematic translation). I generally agreed with the discussion of variants (e.g. 194 *tegebat*, 205 *furis*, 211 *raptos*) but found other cases confusing (e.g. 223 *oculis*). S.'s translation is sometimes awkward in English, either because too literal (e.g. 407–8 'the mid-circuit of driven-off night', or 185–8, missing the emphasis that 'it was no idle superstition that...'), careless of the Latin word order (299–300 'the Lernaean snake ... did not encompass you in want of a plan'; 298–9 'towering Typhoeus himself, as he holds his weapons'), adding words (195 'too', 203 'even') or eliding others (631 *ubera*). There are unexplained inconsistencies within the translation (*monimenta* as 'monuments' at 312 (against the commentary), 'reminders' at 356) or with the commentary (194 *tegebat* as 'protected', erasing the point that it is Cacus who is keeping the light from entering the cave; 364 *quoque* is not translated; 377 *opis* is 'succor' in the translation, 'resources' in the commentary).

Similar issues pertain to the commentary, which sometimes compiles more than it comments. While the notes are generally very useful to understand Virgilian usage or metrical patterns, F. tends to list all Virgilian passages where a word occurs, sometimes with no further explanation (e.g. 187 *ignarus*, 200 *optare*), and the rationale for adding such lists or else noting the number of times the word occurs in Virgil (e.g. 82 *candida* 'occurs 7x in the epic') is unclear. Scholars are often quoted *verbatim* without explanations for endorsement. This practice applies to F. himself (375) and includes scholars' typos (420), petty arguments among commentators (e.g. Henry *vs.* Heyne on the description of the Capitoline geese), or even a marginal note by a previous owner of F.'s copy of Page (689). The commentary can be vague when attempting to summarise scholarship (686 on Catiline: 'some' have 'seen/argued'), or close to silent when literature review on important scenes would be needed (649–50 on the shield only provide a chronologically ordered

bibliography). A number of structural issues make the commentary difficult to navigate: entries are given by line, often breaking the syntax; section divisions are not noted in the text, and their commentary varies from digressions (e.g. on the Hercules and Cacus episode, lines 184–212) to less than two lines (e.g. on the *ara maxima*, lines 268–79). The lack of digests in section headings can make it hard to retrieve fruitful information (readers interested in the characters of Tiberinus or Pallas will find material scattered in notes rather than collected at their first appearance), and notes are sometimes postponed or misplaced (e.g. the Capitol is discussed at line 349, the Cloelia–Camilla parallel at 649). This lack of careful editing also surfaces in the frequent typos, and in repetitions within the same note.

The commentary makes little intervention in literary criticism beyond inter- and intra-textuality. There are interesting observations on the book's links with *Aeneid* 5 (the borders of the poem's second triad), or 2 (the two halves' second books), especially in view of Hercules' destruction of Troy. There is also useful material on the connections with the Aristaeus epyllion, or the Homeric *Hymn to Hermes* (more could have been done with Callimachus' *Hymns*). The editors intend to shun a simplistic 'good' vs. 'bad' dynamic in reading Hercules and Cacus, and their different attitudes towards Virgil's allegiances (with F. as more pessimistic) can surface in their choices (e.g. Hercules' *animis* at 256 is 'pride' for S.; 'rage'/'fury' for F.), but the book's introduction makes little attempt at ditching the usual dichotomy beyond a vague blurring of the lines of what remains a twofold conception of morality. There are missed opportunities to discuss relevant themes, such as power and imperialism (in the Cyclopes scene, the commentary focuses on the bees' and Venus' *amor habendi*, with no hint at the uncanny easiness with which bees turn into Cyclopes when discussing the labour of empire) or the dynamics of desire (in the Venus scene, it is unclear why 405 *optatos* should only refer to her desire to trick Vulcan).

Finally, while some recent bibliographical items are overlooked (e.g. M. Stöckinger's *Vergils Gaben* (2016) on gift-giving; S. Rebbegiani, *CPh* 108 (2013), 53–69, on Augustus' *geminae flammae*; N. B. Pandey, *TAPA* 143 (2013), 405–49, on Caesar's comet) and the use of previous scholarship fluctuates between *verbatim* quotations and mere mentions, the material included in these 800 pages is massive. While a commentary on Book 8 aimed at an undergraduate audience remains a *desideratum*, there is no doubt that scholars must be grateful to F. and S. for offering us another vital resource for the study of Virgil's *Aeneid*.

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BOBBY XINYUE and NICHOLAS FREER (EDS), *REFLECTIONS AND NEW PERSPECTIVES ON VIRGIL'S GEORGICS*. London/New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019. Pp. xii + 286. ISBN 9781350070516. £85.00.

These are fruitful years for the *Georgics*. Scholarship on Virgil's middle poem has flourished in the last few decades, as critics have re-examined it through poetic, political, philosophical and pedagogical lenses. This volume springs from a conference held at UCL in 2014; it is a welcome addition to the field, reaping a rich harvest from existing scholarship while sowing the seeds of fresh approaches.

The editors group the volume's thirteen contributions into five sections: poetics and narrative, religion and philosophy, history and socio-politics, ancient responses, and (early) modern receptions. They themselves deftly survey the lie of the critical land and advertise their wares in a succinct yet detailed introduction. While the chapters certainly deliver the interpretative variety promised by the title's plurals, they are united by scrupulous attention to the nature of Virgil's *didaxis*, an interest in planting the *Georgics* firmly in the literary, philosophical and socio-political context of the early principate and a commitment to untangling the poem's complex self-reflexivity across its authorial voice and narration. They share, too, a post-Batstonian understanding of the *Georgics* not so much as a lesson in the impossibility of stable meaning, but as a poem openly wrestling with the looming threat of poetic inefficacy or didactic failure. Most chapters are short: admirable brevity, perhaps, but many of the chapters, particularly in the rewarding middle sections of the book, seem to cut off prematurely before finding room to blossom fully. Weaker chapters tend towards undifferentiated