

tradition. He then can choose between what he calls *m* and *m* purely on the basis of sense and usage. I find some of his choices compelling, but others strike me as more dubious, bordering on what once was taboo, *lectio facilior*. For those—and that will not be many of our students—who read an apparatus criticus, H. offers a special treat.

It is of course the Commentary that determines the value of these Cambridge texts. H. has studied and admired Ovid from many viewpoints, so that the somewhat arid source-material of the Introduction becomes fleshed out into brilliant poetry in his line-by-line notes. The opening debate between Ajax and Ulysses gives him the opportunity to show how each speaker manipulates his rhetoric and how Ovid plays with his audience's familiarity with details from Homer, the epic tradition, and Virgil, and dazzles us by his recombinations. But along with that come useful observations about Ovid's stylistic practices, so that the reader is truly encouraged to evaluate and appreciate the genius of this poet. In the tragic section, H. artfully adapts to Ovid's new modulations, and similarly he takes on the burlesque of Polyphemus' love song and the amatory semi-pathos of Acis, Galatea, and Glaucus. Well attuned to the variety of this book, he helps the reader relish Ovid's versatility.

Apart from some textual decisions, the Commentary is so admirable that I need point out only two slight errors. In the note on 293, *immunem aequoris*, H. states that the Bear-constellation into which Callisto was finally transformed never takes a bath because, according to Ovid's version, her shame was revealed in an earlier bath at 2.458ff.; and he cites 2.527–30 for the version. But those lines, spoken by Hera, make it amply clear that in Ovid, Hera is securing the Bear's punishment as a *paelex*, her hated rival. The two baths are artful pairs, but not specific cause and effect. At 450, H. declares that all Hecuba's male children have been killed in the war. That is not entirely consistent with the fate of Polydorus, who, at 438, just after the fall of Troy, has been killed by Polymestor; and it of course leaves out of consideration entirely Helenus *Priamides*, whom Ovid introduces quite alive at 13.723. But enough. This is a volume of which both H. and Cambridge can be proud.

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OVID TAKEN (A BIT TOO?) SERIOUSLY

P. HARDIE, A. BARCHIESI, S. HINDS (edd.): *Ovidian Transformations: Essays on Ovid's Metamorphoses and Its Reception*. (Cambridge Philological Society Supplementary Volume 23.) Pp. 336. Cambridge: Cambridge Philological Society, 1999. Paper. ISBN: 0-906014-22-0.

Seldom has a collection of papers been edited with such thoroughness. Anyone (like myself) present in July 1997 at the First Craven Seminar in Cambridge will immediately note that the contributions, which were all delivered there, have undergone rigorous revision. Moreover, a closely woven net of cross-references lends the volume monograph quality. The collection very effectively reflects current trends in what is possibly the most significant period of *Metamorphoses* readings to date—the phase, that is, triggered by the books of G. Rosati, *Narciso e Pigmaliione* (Florence, 1983), and S. Hinds, *The Metamorphosis of Persephone* (Cambridge, 1987).

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Like these, the papers edited here focus principally on semiotics, poetics, and intertextuality, whilst the Augustan context figures less prominently (only K. Galinsky takes a closer look). The arguments tend generally to single out specific passages, only three papers offering broader interpretations (A. Keith, G. Lively, and G. Rosati). Were the collection furnished with an *index locorum*, readers would see at a glance that not a few episodes in the *Metamorphoses* are discussed in depth, some even more than once (proem, *Daphne*, *Orpheus*, epilogue), but that very many are only referred to briefly, e.g. *Narcissus*, *Raptus Proserpinae*, *Aeneas*, or *Pythagoras*. The likely explanation is that such episodes have already been analysed elsewhere by various of the contributors and scholars taking the same approach.

The authors of papers considering *Metamorphoses* reception also concentrate on the above-named aspects of interpretation. Some open up new avenues of exploration by allowing works influenced by Ovid's text to steer them towards new readings of the latter. P. Hardie's paper on *Daphne* and Petrarch's *Rime Sparse* is particularly fruitful in this respect, while R. Lyne's thoughts on the geography of the *Metamorphoses*, based on Michael Drayton's seventeenth-century *Poly-Olbion*, at least outline an entirely new approach. Similarly innovative is S. Hinds's paper, with its presentation of the Ovid who wrote the exile poems and *Ibis* as a *Metamorphoses* 'reader'—yet another sample of this scholar's art of detection when it comes to Ovid's art of allusion. The other *Nachleben* papers—N. Wright on medieval responses to *Met.* 1.5–88, C. Burrow on the influence of Ovid's Cave of Sleep on Spenser and other English poets, D. Hershkowitz on Ovid in Proust, and J. Henderson on Ted Hughes within the context of Ovid's current afterlife—try to show, amongst other things, that scholarly interpretation of Ovid over the past 25 years is not so very far removed from that of the Ovid readers they discuss. R. Tarrant even cites Heinsius' textual criticism as justification of the methods he himself applies in his forthcoming OCT edition of the *Metamorphoses*.

Whereas earlier scholars could fall out over the *Aufbau* of the *Metamorphoses*, the division into three pentads covering the ages of the gods and heroes and historical time appears to be a matter of course in this collection. All that interests D. Feeny and the I. Gildenhard/A. Zissos team in this structural context is Ovid's chronology, which follows a pattern of its own without regard to historiographical realities. Debates as to the strictly formal generic classification of the *Metamorphoses* are replaced here with discussions of Ovid's possible reasons for confronting his readers with certain other generic patterns—specifically the Homeric Hymn (A. Barchiesi) and tragedy (Gildenhard/Zissos). Several contributors take the approach pioneered by E. Pianezzola: a metaphorical reading of the *Metamorphoses*. In the papers of J. Farrell, E. Theodorakopoulos, and G. Rosati the main focus is on metapoetics. Another approach to classical texts, one hitherto not often taken for the *Metamorphoses*, is used by two papers which consider the work in the light of gender studies: G. Lively's 'resisting reading' of *Propoetides* and *Pygmalion*, and A. Keith's thoughts on transsexual characters such as Hermaphroditus and Caeneus against the background of epic masculine norms. However, what we know of Rome's gender system is, it seems to me, neglected here in favour of distinctly modern feminist considerations. Lively, for instance, reads the second metamorphosis of the Propoetides—Venus turned them first into prostitutes, then into stone—not as a punishment, but as their 'hardening themselves as a result of the lives they are forced to lead' (p. 202). For modern readers, even male ones, this seems quite plausible, but one might question whether such an interpretation would have occurred to anyone in the days of uninhibited phallocracy.

Given the variety of approaches presented in this volume, it is hard to understand why all contributors almost entirely ignore one thing: that Ovid is very funny. Take, for example, 11.52–3. Orpheus's head, bobbing about in the waters of Hebrus with the lyre as accompaniment and the river bank as chorus, mumbles a *febile nescio quid*, whereas in the pre-text, Virgil's *Georgics*, it has Eurydice's name on its lips. E. Theodorakopoulos sees this as 'Ovid's insistence on Orpheus' loss of voice and creativity' (p. 159), and draws a parallel between the 'silence' of the singer and the 'silence' of the banished poet. However, a comparison of Virgil's and Ovid's versions of the myth reveals that the latter caricatures the oversentimentality of the former throughout, so that when Orpheus calls out not his beloved's name, but just 'something mournful' (or 'elegiac?'), then laughter ought surely to be the reader's immediate reaction. After all, Ovid's Orpheus does not, like Virgil's, mourn the second loss of Eurydice for seven months, but just for seven days (10.72), and then turns his attentions to boys. And what does he do after his reunion and embraces with Eurydice in the Underworld? Do-si-do (11.64–6)! No one would deny that the *Metamorphoses* require serious interpretation in terms of the poet's intentions, and this collection of papers offers many new insights. But Ovid saw himself as a *tenerorum lusor amorum* (*Trist.* 3.3.73), and future studies on the *Metamorphoses* ought to take this into account again.

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SENECA (SEMI)STAGED

G. W. M. HARRISON (ed.): *Seneca in Performance*. Pp. xi + 260, figs. London: Duckworth with The Classical Press of Wales, 2000. Cased, £40. ISBN: 0-7156-2931-X.

The papers in this volume, delivered at Xavier University, Cincinnati, were intended to focus on the theme of production, especially on a performance of Seneca's *Troades* in a reduced version of Frederick Ahl's translation. John Fitch kicks off with the suggestion that Seneca's plays were never to be performed in their entirety. Noting the contemporary fashion for the performance of excerpts, he wonders if Seneca composed in 'excerpts', some of which he is in no doubt could not have been performed, e.g. the scene of sacrifice in *Oedipus* (pp. 9–11). Elaine Fantham then administers a further cold shower to the production camp by refusing to budge from her view that recitation was the envisaged medium of presentation. She makes two capital points: first, that those in favour of production seem to feel that the plays lose value if not intended for the stage (p. 13), and secondly, that many in antiquity prized the capacity to visualize through words alone and to impose an image upon an audience (p. 22). This is a crucial issue, which we, wedded to the image as we nowadays seem to be, underestimate: words alone, as Knemon in the *Aethiopica* was aware, suffice to conjure up a lively scene. C. W. Marshall's essay fails to engage with Fantham's own suggestions about the Chorus in *Troades*, a surprising lapse. His laborious attempt to block out the action leaves me (perversely) with an enhanced sense of Seneca's indifference to place. Does Shakespeare throw up comparable difficulties? Brian S. Hook's essay on the rhetorical quality of the characters is good, but not, that I can see, relevant to a book on performance. The same applies to