A NEW COMMENTARY ON *AENEID* 2

CASALI (S.) (ed., trans.) *Virgilio,* Eneide *2.* (Syllabus 1.) Pp. 390. Pisa: Edizioni della Normale, 2017. Paper, €25. ISBN: 978-88-7642-572-1.
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For almost 50 years R.G. Austin's popular and engaging *Aeneidos Liber Secundus* (1964) served as the standard commentary on *Aeneid* 2. Despite the excellence of Austin's book, substantial advances in Virgilian scholarship during the last half century called for an update. In 2008 this lacuna was filled considerably, with the publication of N. Horsfall's extensive commentary on Book 2 and R.T. Ganiban's smaller but useful student text. Now C. offers an additional commentary on Book 2 that will be useful for advanced students and researchers alike. C.'s book is the inaugural volume of *Syllabus*, a series designed to provide a text, translation and commentary for works typically encountered in the Classical curriculum in Italian universities. In aim and scope, C.'s book most resembles Austin's. While supplying students with needed help on grammar and translation, it also offers ample material for the scholar. C. provides a substantial introduction, a Latin text with facing prose translation into Italian, an extensive commentary (about 250 pages) and a thorough and up-to-date bibliography, although there is no citation of the edition of Books 1–3 by L. Rivero García et al. (*Publio Virgilio Marón* Eneida: *Volumen 1*, 2009).

In an introduction of over 30 pages, C. situates Book 2 within the context of the *Aeneid* and within the mythological tradition. C. focuses extensively on the material in the cyclic poems, the Servian commentary and the post-Virgilian narratives of the Fall of Troy. He also makes numerous observations on the legend of Troy's fall as depicted in the *Odyssey*, Sophocles' fragmentary *Laocoön*, Ennius' works and other sources. Since the poetic tradition was not always kind to Aeneas, C. notes that Virgil's work was one of 'selezione e riformulazione' (p. 19) of the traditional material, which in some cases cast Aeneas in an unheroic light or even as a traitor. Thus it was incumbent upon Virgil to emphasise the actions of Fate and the gods in order to legitimise Aeneas' flight. This legitimatisation occurs both positively, with the visions of Hector, Venus and Creusa, and negatively, with the unjust demise of Laocoön and other signs of a divine conspiracy against Troy. Aeneas must also be cast as a bold warrior who nevertheless yields his personal desire for heroism in favour of care for his family (p. 19). However, this care has its limits, according to C., who stresses Aeneas' culpability in the loss of his wife. C. notes both a human element and a divine element in the narrative that act to a degree in contradiction to one another (p. 37). Creusa has been saved by the gods, and she does not blame her husband, but this cannot erase our awareness of Aeneas' lack of carefulness, which brings about a series of 'tragici errori' (p. 38) causing the loss of his wife. C. suggests that Virgil depicts Aeneas as a sort of foil to Orpheus – Aeneas losing his wife through an insufficiency of love, and Orpheus losing his wife through a failure to restrain his intense passion. This use of intertextuality from the *Georgics* will be developed extensively in C.'s notes on the Creusa episode. Whether or not C. is correct in this interpretation, he is surely right in his conclusion that Virgil could have found a narrative path removing any hint of blame towards Aeneas but intentionally failed to take the easy way (pp. 39–40).

C. follows G.B. Conte's Teubner text (2009), although he has variations in a few readings and minor changes in orthography and punctuation. There is a relatively extensive apparatus, and difficult readings are discussed clearly and carefully in the commentary. For those interested in criticism of the text, C. displays a table of 22 disputed readings, where he offers the variations given in his own edition and those of R. Mynors,

M. Geymonat, Horsfall and Conte. C. almost always sides with Conte and/or Horsfall in these readings, showing a slight preference for Horsfall's version when Horsfall differs from Conte. C. argues well for *ardere* instead of *audere* at 347 and for *alta* over *illa* at 448. At 584 he rightly prints *nec habet* and makes logical arguments for *ultricis flammae* at 587. At 691 he is probably correct to print *auxilium* (with Conte and Horsfall). At 727 he prints *examine* vs *ex agmine*, arguing that the latter is illogical with *glomerati*. C. also offers good arguments for *lassa* (vs *lapsa*, at 739) and for *furenti* at 771, although the case for *ruenti* made by Austin and Horsfall is perhaps more convincing. At 433 he takes *Danaum* with *manu* and punctuates accordingly. For the difficult lines describing Andromache's secret passage (453–5), C. mostly agrees with Horsfall but differs from him by taking *a tergo* (455) at least primarily with 453–4 rather than with 455–7. At 701–2 he punctuates with a colon after *di patrii* and argues in the commentary for taking those words with line 701, as most editors do. (See Horsfall for arguments in favour of taking *di patrii* with the words that follow.) Unlike Conte, who suspects the Helen Episode (567–88) to have been an early Virgilian draft, C. considers the passage to be the work of a Virgilian imitator who tried to fill a lacuna in the text. Although by no means settling the debate, C. summarises the evidence well and draws reasonable conclusions. C. includes the Helen Episode in his text but encloses it in brackets. Overall, C.'s Latin text is printed accurately. Unfortunately, there is a typographical error at line 207, where *ars* is printed instead of *pars*. Along with the Latin text, C. offers a lucid prose translation that flows well.

C.'s thorough and excellent commentary well serves various audiences. For students, there are comments on rhetorical figures and classifications of difficult uses of cases, moods and tenses. For more advanced scholars there is ample discussion of style, textual criticism, literary influences upon Virgil and Virgilian echoes in subsequent Latin authors. C. frequently focuses on perceived ironies and anomalies in the text. Within two lines, for example, he notes the irony of *amor* (line 10), because Dido's love is not simply directed to hearing Aeneas' story, and *breuiter* (line 11), since Aeneas' story will take up a sixth of the book. C. similarly focuses a great deal on the contradictions in Sinon's story which, he suggests, the Trojans should notice but do not, because of Sinon's bravado and skill. C.'s desire to interpret beneath the surface is especially apparent in his notes on the loss of Creusa, where he stresses intertextual echoes from Orpheus' loss of Eurydice in *Georgics* 4. C. views Aeneas as trying to convince Dido of his bravery and his love for Creusa, but C. finds a persistent Virgilian subtext suggesting pallid love on the part of Aeneas compared with the intense passion of Orpheus. C. depicts Aeneas as a negative image of Orpheus, and it is perhaps regrettable that he places so much emphasis on this interpretation, especially given the ambiguities of the Orpheus passage itself. C.'s discussion of subtext is useful and offers a counterbalance to Horsfall's more traditional views, but it might be helpful to students if C. noted more strongly that his interpretations are only one side of the picture.

Despite the focus on possibly subversive subtexts, C.'s commentary is balanced and thoughtful. C.'s book will not replace the rich and personal commentary of Austin or the detailed and erudite work of Horsfall, but it deserves to be read alongside them. One hopes that C.'s book will be the first of many fine texts in the *Syllabus* series.

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