

quite sure that ancient Romans in the Colosseum would have noticed 'the structure's ability to arrest the white-hot energy of this exploding star in cool concrete and stone' (p. 134), and I presume that nobody, admiring the Pantheon dome, would have thought that 'the wand of light penetrating the oculus probes the textured perimeter like a finger in a honey pot' (p. 248).

However, these observations aside, this book is a successful one, and achieves its main aim of providing an unusual and interesting perspective on Roman architecture. The reader can certainly learn something new, see things in a different way, and be stimulated to attempt to solve problems. When Lanciani, the great Roman topographer, was criticized for his *Ancient Rome in the Light of Recent Discoveries* (London, 1888), he replied: 'I have tried to make subjects, otherwise dry or heavy to digest, agreeable and pleasant to the general public . . . and I have succeeded . . . Had I written it in the old style of puritan science, I could not have sold a hundred copies' (from a letter preserved in the copy of the Sackler Library, Oxford). Given that T.'s primary aim is not to sell as many copies as possible but to share his enthusiasm with the reader, it is worth quoting his introduction, where he states that he wishes 'to evoke, if only hypothetically, the cultural and cognitive process involved in the act of creating buildings'. Like Lanciani one century ago, he has succeeded.

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ILLUSTRATIONS?

J. P. SMALL: *The Parallel Worlds of Classical Art and Text*. Pp. xvi + 253, ills. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003. Cased, £55/US\$75. ISBN: 0-521-81522-3.

The Parallel Worlds of Classical Art and Text is a beautifully produced book with a distinctly iconoclastic message. The images of classical art have often suffered from underinformed use by literary and historical scholars, and Jocelyn Penny Small has been a notable opponent of this tendency; she has published widely on classical art and archaeology, holding received opinion up to searching scrutiny (J. P. Small, 'Scholars, Etruscans and Attic Painted Vases', *JRA* 7 [1994], 34–58, on the fallacy of 'sets'). In this study, S. examines the relationship of ancient artists to texts, focusing on the nature of illustration, the rôle of the artist in creating a visual tradition, ancient conceptions of 'imitation' and 'translation', and the differing nature of storytelling in visual and textual modes.

S. has an engaging and informal style, and states her conclusions with clarity and enthusiasm. After an introduction which tackles the question of what 'illustration' means, the book works chronologically through a series of case studies: the field of enquiry is defined at the outset as those objects for which both text and image exist, and S. examines a series of visual representations of stories (which are themselves generously illustrated).

The first two chapters treat Greek pots, looking at depictions of Homer and representations of drama. The Homeric scenes introduce several key theoretical points: the general lack of reference to texts, the use of salient detail to identify textual models (which S. finds generally unconvincing), the way that Greek artists combined stock and heroizing motifs with the contemporary. The images bear out these points: the piebald horse, for instance, which appears in a Corinthian representation of the funeral games of Pelias, neatly demonstrates how painters had to develop their own

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traditions independent of texts. The study of dramatic representations, in turn, suggests that the influence of performance was more important than that of the written word, and that trying to relate particular scenes to known plays is not worthwhile. S. systematically rejects individual examples where images have been attributed by scholars to a particular text, and also suggests that because the tragic and mythological were not clearly separated as subjects, tragic drama was rarely illustrated on Athenian pots, as opposed to the contemporary themes of comedy.

The study then turns to Hellenistic and Roman art, treated relatively briefly. Although S. finds one or two cases in which illustration clearly is intended, in most forms of art (wall-paintings, mosaics) the link between representation and text is undetectable—artists created their own versions, and only simple paintings will easily agree with known texts. The final chapter deals with illustrated papyri, from the second century A.D. and after. S. concludes that while diagrams, maps, and plans were invented early, they never replaced the verbal description, and she advances some nice evidence that even when illustrations are attached to papyri, they still rarely reflect the text accurately, either because they tell the story in a visual way, sometimes with multiple figures to express narrative, or because the artist chose to illustrate a general version of the story.

S. makes the point very well that ancient artists would be unlikely to work from texts, because texts were not common (at least in Greek times), hard to read, and less immediate than a story or performance: furthermore, the idea that there could be one accepted text for any given story is a modern and groundless supposition ('there is no original'). Yet the parameters chosen for the study sometimes give an overly negative impression of the conclusions, with the insistence that we can should credit illustration of a story only when there are no discrepancies from a given text, no matter how minor. The Iliac Tablets are a case in point: the Capitoline Tablet depicts the story of the *Iliad* in 24 bands (an impressive feat in its own right), and the artist declares in the main scene that this is the Fall of Troy as told by Stesichorus. S. shows that it clearly is not Stesichorus' version, but the discussion is otherwise frustratingly short; it is a shame not to have a more extended examination of exactly what is going on in the pictures, and how it relates to the versions, written and pictorial, of which we do know. Similarly, the discussion of South Italian pottery and Roman paintings raises further questions: how far is the distinction between direct and indirect influence of a text an artificially modern one, and if an artist felt no need to consult a text before illustrating a story, and a viewer would be unlikely to do so either, then is it not irrelevant to ask questions about illustration at all?

In relation to a Pompeian wall-painting which shows Iphigeneia, Orestes, and Pylades among the Taurians. S. concludes: 'the painting is neither depicting a performance nor trying to illustrate the text of Euripides. What it is doing is showing key elements in the story told by Euripides within a single visual frame' (p. 109). This highlights the illogicality of the assumption that pictures must derive from texts, since the possibility of doing anything other than this probably never occurred to ancient artists: why should one expect to illustrate a play on a pot or a book on a wall? Rather than 'showing a scene from' a play or story, painters used a 'continuous narrative' style, an idea which has been well discussed in other studies, such as P. J. Holliday (ed.), *Narrative and Event in Ancient Art* (Cambridge, 1993); H. A. Shapiro, *Myth into Art: Poet and Painter in Classical Greece* (London and New York, 1994); K. Schefold, *Myth and Legend in Early Greek Art* (London, 1966); R. Brilliant, *Visual Narratives: Storytelling in Etruscan and Roman Art* (Ithaca and London, 1984). S. is undoubtedly right to emphasize that artistic representations cannot reliably be used to reconstruct

lost texts, describing instead a positive creative tradition among artists, who were not simply drawing what they had seen or read, but adding to and adapting traditions in parallel with poets and playwrights. Simplistic ideas about illustration are unfortunately still very prevalent in modern studies of art and literature, and this book, readable and illuminating, is a very welcome antidote.

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MYTHS IN ART

S. WOODFORD: *Images of Myths in Classical Antiquity*. Pp. xxvi + 305, ills. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003. Paper, £18.95/US\$25 (Cased, £50/US\$70). ISBN: 0-521-78809-9 (0-521-78267-8 hbk).

Woodford's book appears at first glance to fit into the model of previous handbooks which cover the ever-popular subject of mythical images in art. However, to describe it as such would be doing this work a great disservice.

It is structured into five parts, and further broken down into chapters. Along with glossaries of both mythical and historical characters, there are also three appendices and suggestions for further reading. Thus, the concerns of limited references to mythical source material in the text are resolved in these later areas.

The first chapter, the introduction, begins by defining the methodology which provides the basic structure for the study as a whole. Here the aims of W.'s study are explicitly stated: to explore 'various aspects of how artists in classical antiquity managed to evoke so many myths so successfully in visual form'. She provides a brief outline of a myth and discusses examples of images which appear to depict the myth in question. Then follows a discussion of how to identify a match between myth and image through the use of 'clues'—which are themselves the topics for the subsequent chapters. She looks at Greek, Roman, and Etruscan images, and includes those which can be matched to myths and those which cannot. She also looks at various literary traditions and literary sources for ancient descriptions of images, and thereby establishes a non-hierarchical dialogue between story and image. The important point that myths were not static creations is highlighted, and, further, that while artists were able to draw on the literary tradition, they were equally free to work independently from literature.

Following the introduction, the first section, 'Transforming Words into Images', has three chapters. These discuss how myths are made recognizable to their audience and how the artist chose a particular moment of the myth to depict, and there is a chapter ('Epic Expansiveness versus Tragic Focus') where she creates an analogy between artistic and literary styles.

The second part—'Building Images'—also has three chapters, and begins with a discussion on formulas and motifs. The next chapter deals with the transference of types of image, with the third covering the creation of compositions and discussing the 'tension between decoration and narration', as well as spatial restrictions and innovations in the use of space.

Part three, 'Innovations, Developments and Connections', has five chapters. The first three cover innovations inspired by poets, those inspired by artists, and the changing interests in images, and a strong chapter on history and myth in art follows.

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