

MIRABILE DICTV

HARDIE (P.) (ed.) *Paradox and the Marvellous in Augustan Literature and Culture*. Pp. xiv + 388, ills. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. Cased, £70. ISBN: 978-0-19-923124-9.

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The intriguing title and the reputation of the editor perhaps promise more than is delivered, but this collection offers a rewarding examination of a refreshingly unusual subject. The volume originates in a 2005 Oxford colloquium on paradox and the marvellous in Augustan poetry, and while such collections are bound to be uneven and less cohesive than a work by a single author, the best chapters are admirable. Poetry dominates, Ovid in particular, but H. has adeptly broadened the subject matter to include some prose and visual art. The chapters are self-contained, but there are plentiful connections between them. The book is aimed at academics, and only a few chapters are accessible to undergraduates. The press's web site gives a full list of authors and chapter titles (<http://ukcatalogue.oup.com/product/9780199231249.do>).

The book's concentration on the Augustan era is understandable, but it results in an excessively narrow scope: Virgil and Ovid are the focus of four chapters each, Horace of three, Vitruvius of two and Livy and Seneca the Elder of one each. Chapters on wall painting and monumental architecture complete the collection. The focus on intellectual culture means much valuable societal context is missed. The marvellous permeated Roman culture and society, but there is little sense of that. Pieces of important literary and cultural background needed for a reader to appreciate properly what is in the book are scattered throughout or buried in notes.

Neither paradox nor the marvellous is an easily definable concept and there is some slippage between the contributors' understanding of them: I do not think that, on the basis of this book alone, I could define 'the marvellous' (several references to Todorov notwithstanding), how it relates to the miraculous, the monstrous, the wondrous and the fantastic, and what the relationship is between the marvellous and reality. Sometimes it seems that things under discussion are merely marvellous, and sometimes it is 'the marvellous', which are far from being the same. More consideration of semantics would have been helpful. In addition, paradox rarely refers to the simple figure of speech or its broadest New Critical usage, but rather to that which is contrary to expectation or perceived truth. It is often treated as virtually synonymous with the marvellous, which therefore comes to dominate the discussion.

H.'s introduction is one of the best parts of the book. It offers a readable, reasonably thorough overview of the subject, the necessary background and the major concerns of the chapters that follow, and helps to put them in context. It adds highly valuable comments on almost all the authors discussed and topics such as the basic problem of literary continuity and periodisation, *adynata*, spectacles at Rome, the relationship of the fictional and the wondrous, wonder in philosophy and education, Roman technological wonders, and paradox and paradoxography and their epistemological functions. Much of this is very important for a full understanding of the topic, and it is highly regrettable that H. was not able to discuss what he does in greater depth.

H.'s, Nelis' and Rosati's chapters are particularly rewarding. H. (reprinted, with revisions, from *PLILS* 9 [1996], 103–21) examines Virgil for types of paradox, as well as hyperbole, which H. characterises as prominent post-classical tropes.

He demonstrates the widespread presence of basic paradox and oxymoron in the *Aeneid*, larger conceptual paradoxes, and dramatic paradoxes such as Camilla as female warrior. Paradox can be seen as bringing in the 'two voices' concept, but paradoxical *adynata* can also be read as representing the *concordia* of the Augustan settlement. Nelis focusses on the creation of life at *Met.* 1.416ff. and proves that Empedocles was an important influence on the handling of paradoxical elements in epic. He also makes some excellent observations on paradoxography and Lucretius. Rosati's characteristically rich paper starts with *Met.* 5.318ff. and concentrates on the reaction to Egyptian theriomorphic gods, wonders and paradoxes in Augustan Rome and the ways they are tamed in their reception. *Aeneid* 8 is discussed, and Diodorus Siculus makes a welcome appearance.

As to Virgil, Deremetz suggests convincingly that the *Georgics* offer a vision of the marvellous as found in Italian nature, somewhat like the Lucretian wondrousness of scientific reality. The unreal marvellous, such as the *bugonia*, can none the less be true in its poetic context. Labate shows how Virgil uses encounters with the marvellous to portray a human and believable Aeneas as a new type of hero, particularly in contrast to Hercules.

Narratology dominates the remaining Ovidian chapters. In a sensitive reading of the Philemon and Baucis episode in *Met.* 8, Fabre-Serris considers how Lelex adapts the story to suit his audience and to make the apparently incredible believable. In turn, Ovid, partly guided by Callimachus, offers a model for the recounting of Roman exemplary marvels. Klein reads the particularly fantastical Perseus sequence in the *Met.* as allegorising the ideal reader's response to the unbelievable marvellous. Finally, Beagon argues, sometimes over-subtly, that Pythagoras' speech in *Met.* 15 offers a vision of constant change (metamorphosis being, in essence, wondrous) that challenges Augustus' attempts to create his own new order in Rome.

Horace is somewhat slighted. He, Virgil and Ovid dominate Armstrong's stimulating examination of the ambiguous response of artists to building projects that are impressive in their scope and ingenuity but also discomfiting in their almost hybridic violation of the natural order. Such violations can be paradoxical, as when water is turned into land for magnificent houses (Hor. *Odes* 3.1.33ff.). The concern here seems to be with things that are marvellous rather than the marvellous. Alternatively, Citroni, in his welcome examination of the *Ars poetica*, tends to equate marvellousness with the unnatural and the improbable. It is good to see the Aristotelian background discussed, even if C. gives debatable translations of some key terms (compare Demeretz). Unfortunately, the only major discussion of Horace's *Odes* occurs in Schwindt's paper on *thauma* and *thema*, i.e. how 'the theme wonders at itself' (p. 157). It is a playful concept, though ultimately unrewarding and cloaked in deeply abstruse language.

Fucecchi contrasts characters' reactions to metamorphoses within the *Golden Ass*, the *Aeneid* and the *Metamorphoses* (principally Arethusa and Iole), focussing on the disorienting effects produced by such encounters with the marvellous. Feldherr turns to Livy and analyses paradoxes in Hannibal's character. He argues that Lucretius is an important intertext for Livy's account of the crossing of the Alps and that Livy offers an opposing vision of the viewing of history, but many of the conceptual parallels Feldherr finds look as likely to be coincidental as deliberate. Connolly examines how moral paradoxes and 'epigrammatic marvels' (p. 349) in Seneca's *Controversiae* challenge and question the Augustan order. Her use of a wide range of theoretical terminology can be trying and the relentlessly politicised reading will probably not convince those that do not share her cultural materialist assumptions.

Politics is a major issue in the two chapters on visual art. It is strongest in Platt's discussion of the unreal and monstrous in wall painting, which she sees as partly reflecting the strangeness of the new regime. She makes some intriguing observations, despite a strong post-structuralist tendency to overvalue the evidence. Finally, Barchiesi identifies his concern as 'the uncanny' and moves from Phaethon's flight in the *Met.* to Roman spectacles to Augustan building projects on and near the Palatine. Unfortunately, on his way to the Palatine he seems to leave paradox and the marvellous behind.

I have two further criticisms of the volume as a whole. Metapoetical readings are perhaps too prominent, but that reflects contemporary trends and there is a reasonable variety of approaches. Some of the papers are still distractingly oral in their style and, more seriously, in their sparse engagement with modern scholarship. But overall, footnotes do what they should and the bibliography is representative.

The book is well edited with unusually few errors, the illustrations are clear, the general index is serviceable, and there is — *mirabile dictu* — an *index locorum*.

Queen's University

MICHAEL S. CUMMINGS
cummings@post.queensu.ca

AENEID 3

HORSFALL (N.) (ed., trans.) *Virgil Aeneid 3. A Commentary.* (*Mnemosyne Supplementum 273.*) Pp. liv + 513. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2006. Cased, €172, US\$245. ISBN: 978-90-04-14828-4.
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Anyone interested in the *Aeneid* will be familiar with H.'s massive commentaries on Books 7, 11 and 2 (Brill, 1999, 2003, 2008); and with the range of interests and expertise that he has brought to them. First, the tradition of the Trojan migration, which H. knows better than anybody. Book 3 treats a multiplicity of 'Aeneas legends', from a greater multiplicity; H. does not offer a comprehensive discussion of Virgil's sources (p. xx), but he is alert for them (Cato, *Origines*, n. 147–91), and analyses in detail for each episode the relation of Virgil's version to the tradition. At the Trojans' first stop there are two problems, as H. observes (n. 13–68), of geography and of toponymy (or rather, of what if anything Aeneas actually founded). The area is determined by the introduction of Polydorus (n. 13–68, 18). Aenus, in that area, was founded by the Trojans, according to Lutatius Catulus (or Daphnis), apparently, and Mela and Ammianus; and so H. interprets Virgil. But an Ainos already there during the war was well attested, if variously (Pfeiffer on Call. *fr.* 697), and the Trojans of the *Aeneid* when they depart leave behind only a tomb of Polydorus (60–1). The name Aeneadae (18), which Theon also mentioned (St. Byz. s.v. *Αἰνεαία*, 132 Billerbeck, apparently referring to Chalcidice), whether it is to be the name of the settlers (R.D. Williams) or the settlement (H., translation), is a feint, or an evasion (cf. Heinze, Cartault). Palaefatus on Anius and Anchises (n. 69–120) is lurking as *FGrH* 44F6 in the 'Addenda' in *FGrH* IA², with comments on the story there, and a careful discussion of persons named Palaiphatos in the 'Nachträge zum Kommentar'. In his thorough discussion of the oracle on Delos, H. might have cited with reference to lines 97–8 and Strabo's variant text of *Iliad* 20.307 the scholia on that line, which comment on both variants (*γενεή* – Strabo's *γένος* – as well as *πάντεσσιν*) at some length. For lines 109–10, on