

to *De rerum natura* 2 is probably a fond fancy, but Statius did apply the Lucretian vision to a bricks-and-mortar villa in *Silvae* 2.2 (see R. Nisbet, *Collected Papers on Latin Literature* (1995) 27–46), and much later Frederick Hervey, Bishop of Derry, was to build Mussenden Temple, a library perched on the wild cliffs of the Antrim coast, with Dryden's translation of the opening lines of *De rerum natura* 2 inscribed round its dome. The two remaining chapters both get stuck into the detail of Philodeman texts: Francis Cairns gives a display of sometimes hair-raising ingenuity in his excavation of a continuous Epicurean and Philodeman subtext in Propertius' address to Lynceus (identified with Varius Rufus) in 2.34. Dirk Obbink gives an object lesson in the Delattre-Obbink method of reconstructing Herculaneum rolls, which is then put to sterling use in the restoration of some of the connections in Greco-Roman mythology.

Such imbalances as the volume shows should be taken as a sign that these are still pioneering times. Even those chapters that fall short in the attempt to show direct use of Philodemus in the Augustan poets serve a useful function in raising our consciousness of a crucial part of the intellectual environment of the Roman poets.

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S. J. GREEN, *OVID, FASTI I: A COMMENTARY* (Mnemosyne, bibliotheca classica Batava. Supplementum). Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2004. Pp. xii + 365, 1 table. ISBN 90-04-13985-0. €90.00/US\$119.00.

Green's substantial commentary fills a conspicuous void in Ovidian studies: following Fantham's 1998 Cambridge Latin Classic on *Fasti* 4, it is the second English language commentary on this scale to deal with a single book of Ovid's *Fasti*, and the first specifically on Book 1, since Frazer's anthropologically oriented edition of all six books in 1929. This hefty and handsome Brill hardback consists of a bipartite introduction (25 pages), line-by-line commentary (302 pages), bibliography (c. 330 items), and indices (25 pages). The text used is the 1988 Teubner by Alton, Wormell, and Courtney, to which G. proposes twelve variants (listed on p. xii): these are plausibly advocated (mostly according to contextual logic, with stylistic coherence adduced in nn. 474 and 705), but are difficult to assess in the absence of a text, *apparatus criticus* (admittedly a bulky resource), and history of the text.

The first part of the introduction (1–14) highlights how the *Fasti* corresponds, and (deliberately) fails to correspond, to Ovid's ostensible programme (vv. 1–62): G. makes sensible use of recent scholarship on Roman religion, ascribing the flexibility with which Ovid handles his material to the absence of a rigid orthodoxy (7–9); at the same time, self-professedly disposed to the ambiguous/subversive reading of internal discrepancies (see p. 12, 21n.), G. ventures that the *Fasti* is 'essentially about Ovid, ingenious poet and savvy critic of Augustan discourse' (14). The commentary proper is similarly multilateral (cf. e.g. 650n.), and enables the reader to reach an independent position. In the second part of the introduction (15–25), G. demonstrates his mastery of the scholarship on the vexed issue of pre- and post-exilic strata in *Fasti* 1: a survey of the *status quaestionis* outlines the case for post-exilic revision (15–17), which G. accepts as valid, and resolves suspected revisions into three groups according to date and likelihood of revision (18–21). Taking issue with other scholars' indiscriminate use of the term 'revision' in relation to Ovid's post-exilic additions (e.g. p. 19, n. 17), G. defines a more serviceable heuristic terminology ('continue', 'update', and 'revise', p. 15 with n. 1). This lucid analysis of the problem ultimately exposes its insolubility, and paves the way for G.'s reader-centred approach: exilic in part, the text should be read as exilic *in toto*. Such a reading will ultimately subordinate the historicity of exilic strata to the autonomy of the text (e.g. 'whether or not the Evander episode was physically altered by the poet during exile ... it admits of a strong exilic reading' (23)). If this proves too pragmatic a solution for some, there remains G.'s tentative reconciliation with the 'Ovidian intention': Ovid, once exiled, would himself have recognized the 'exilic potential' (23) of the entire work (22–3, 23n.).

Evidencing a certain Ovidian polymathy in its introduction, G.'s commentary perhaps reveals its origins as a doctoral thesis. As such, the introduction might prove more informed than informative for a reader new to the text: there are no immediately identifiable sections on, e.g., the status of the elegiac genre prior to the *Fasti*, Ovidian style, prosody etc., and entries on such important antecedents as Callimachus (1–2 (i) n. + 89–288 (iii) n. = 1.5 pages), Propertius (1–2 (v) n. = 1 page), and the didactic tradition (27–62 n. = 1 page) seem disproportionately concise, and are left until the commentary proper. The entry on Propertius, too, shows an uncharacteristic

tendentiousness: G.'s denial in Ovid of Propertius' 'tension between the elegiac poet and the more serious, nationalistic subject-matter' (30) seems overstated when compared to his astute remarks on the *Fasti*'s own generic sensitivities: for example, the bellicose Romulus and peaceable Numa 'articulate both the thematic and generic tensions of the poem' 27–44n.; cf. 13–14n.). Similarly, G.'s suggestion (311–14 (v) n.) that the setting of Cancer marks the departure from the *Fasti* of the constellation which he sees as ominously 'rising' at Propertius 4.1.150, though attractive, applies to the latter an upward trajectory that is not obvious. On the whole, though, balance and judiciousness prevail. A select bibliography is a constant feature of all notes (e.g. 1–2 (i) n. on Callimachus cites rather than repeats the nine pages in Fantham, op. cit.), and meticulous cross-referencing enables the reader to garner relevant material under disparate lemmata. In other respects, too, the commentary compensates for the selectivity of its introduction: G. brings out the text's metaliterary dimension (e.g. nn. 2, 89–288 (iv), 709), highlights nuance (e.g. nn. 3–4, 188, 233, 277, 288) and ambiguity (e.g. pp. 97–9, 165–6, 322), and displays a keen eye for Ovidian wit (e.g. nn. 53, 181–2, 353–60, 405–10), word-play (e.g. nn. 180, 301, 340, 419, 671–2) and metrical effects (e.g. nn. 323–4, 425–6); lexical observations and cross references abound; generous assistance is provided with translation.

Typographical errors in English and Latin (e.g. 82n. 'transitiones' not 'transitions' (an infelicitous autocorrection); 715n. 'gentium' not 'genitum') are few, and likely to irritate the author more than the reader. In sum, G.'s commentary is a rich resource for the literary, linguistic, and historical aspects of *Fasti* 1. It lucidly combines secondary literature with the author's personal interpretations, which will surely, as he hopes (ix), stimulate debate.

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M. GALE (ED.), *LATIN EPIC AND DIDACTIC POETRY: GENRE, TRADITION AND INDIVIDUALITY*. Swansea: Classical Press of Wales, 2004. Pp. xxiii + 264. ISBN 0-9543845-6-3. £45.00.

U. GÄRTNER, *QUINTUS SMYRNAEUS UND DIE AENEIS: ZUR NACHWIRKUNG VERGILS IN DER GRIECHISCHEN LITERATUR DER KAISERZEIT* (Zetemata 123). Munich: C.H. Beck, 2005. Pp. 320. ISBN 3-406-53133-4. £68.00.

This review brings together two very different books with a shared focus on Virgil and the epic tradition. The collection of essays on epic and didactic poetry edited by Monica Gale originated at the Celtic Conference in Classics at Maynooth in 2000. It goes far beyond the generic interface between epic and didactic to embrace varied interactions between both genres and their traditions, some essays focusing exclusively on didactic, most looking at epic. This book could be used as a model for the way that reading classical literature inevitably shades into reception studies: that on some level we are always studying reception, whether the reception of Nicander by Virgil, or the reception of Virgil by twentieth-century Welsh poetry. In contrast, Ursula Gärtner's *Habilitationsschrift* on the influence of Virgil's *Aeneid* on Quintus Smyrnaeus' *Posthomerica* is concerned with the after-life of Virgil's *Aeneid* and occasionally gestures towards intertextuality, yet ultimately fails to move far beyond the important but narrow philological question of whether or not Quintus Smyrnaeus was intentionally alluding to the *Aeneid*.

Latin Epic and Didactic Poetry comes in three loosely related sections. The first section is most clearly focused on the relationship between epic and didactic as genres. Llewellyn Morgan's article is justifiably placed at the beginning of the book because it deals with a fundamental defining feature of the genre(s) under discussion: the hexameter. It ranges broadly across Latin literature from Lucilius to Martial, and focuses on satire as the 'evil twin' of epic. M. here takes up once more the cause of metre making meaning and produces a rewarding read for any Latinist. Gale's own essay ('The story of us: A narratological analysis of Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura*') suggests that Lucretius' poem has a degree of 'narrativity' which deconstructs the division between narrative and didactic poetry. She suggests various narrative trajectories for the poem: the course of a life, from birth to death; cosmic birth and decline; the story of the reader's journey towards enlightenment. These linear movements are set against narrative dislocations and cyclical movements and the image of the poem as an icon for the cosmos. The piece finishes with a discussion of closure. This is a stimulating, lucid, and direct engagement with the generic issue and the nature of narrative. Andrew Laird's contribution ('Politian's *Ambra* and reading epic didactically') equally sets out to blur the boundaries between epic and didactic, but in a radically