epistolary form for these poems and the relationship with the genres of epic and tragedy. Chapter 6 ('Les Pseudo-*Testimonia* du Poet et l'Attente du Public') consists of a discussion of the relationship between the two 'authors' in these epistles (Ovid and the heroine). The final chapter ('Fiction Epistolaire et Narration') ambitiously (and all too briefly) discusses the ways in which the collection foreshadows the epistolary novel, focusing firstly on the three main cycles of myth in the epistles (the Trojan cycle, Theseus and his family, and the beloveds of Jason), and secondly and more extensively on the epistles connected with Paris, that of Oenone (*Heroides* 5) and his exchange with Helen (*Heroides* 16–17). There follows at the end a short conclusion. In terms of the development of J.'s argument, the decision to divide his material in such a way is sound: the opening three chapters must, on account of the paucity of ancient source material, follow the paths beaten by the great source-hunters of the past, whereas the more distanced approach of the remaining four chapters allows for a much greater flexibility of approach. However, in terms of the potential audience for J.'s scholarship, this appears a tactical error: many readers will be tempted to abandon the book at the point where its author steps out of the shadow of the texts, yet these chapters contain some extremely thought-provoking insights into the *Heroides*' deployment of the epistolary form. Intertextuality is one of the few fields in ancient literary criticism where traditional philological approaches sit comfortably alongside more nuanced theoretical debates: where veneration of the 'text', in other words, can be reconciled with an acknowledgement of the practices of a more radical 'textuality'. Such segregation of ideas as J. pursues is surely not to be welcomed: both sides of this argument would have benefited from a more creative arrangement of the material.

This book is a development of a doctoral thesis submitted to the Sorbonne as far back as 1995, and its publication has, as the author remarks in his preface, suffered from a considerable number of delays and technical difficulties. This reader is happy enough to grant the indulgence which J. begs of him (p. ix) for having been unable to take account of many significant items of bibliography produced in the intervening years; nevertheless, it is regrettable (and no doubt J. also shares these regrets) that a book which would have been so much closer to the cutting edge in the mid-nineties now acquires a slightly belated and distanced air. The feel of the book (like J.'s own experience of reading Ovid) is that of a response to a scholarly tradition that has already undergone canonization, rather than a creative attempt to inscribe itself within that same tradition of *Heroides* scholarship.

*University College Dublin* MARTIN BRADY

## ESSAYS ON OVID'S *FASTI*

G. HERBERT-BROWN (ed.): *Ovid's* Fasti. *Historical Readings at its Bimillennium*. Pp. xvi + 327, ills. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002. Cased, £50. ISBN: 0-19-815475-5.

The ideological differences that have separated Geraldine Herbert-Brown's *Ovid and the Fasti*: *An Historical Study* (Oxford, 1994) from more subversive readings of the poem as an ironic, insinuating challenge to Augustan authority are generally laid aside in this collection of twelve essays, some of them by prominent opponents (e.g. Barchiesi, Newlands) of the 'Augustan' interpretation previously pursued by H.-B. A strength of this collection is its diversity of literary, historical and religious approaches to the *Fasti*, with gender also well represented. But while this wealth of

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interests may fairly reflect the richness of current research on the poem, the lack of any clear ordering principle beyond the alphabetical arrangement of authors makes for a volume without a coherent agenda; H.-B. writes of 'a tribute to the expanding readership' of the poem and to 'the increasingly varied ways of looking at it' (p. v), but a plainer characterization might be 'Essays on the *Fasti*'.

Given this absence of a firm editorial mandate, the volume's strength lies more in the high quality of many of its parts than in the sum of those parts. Those contributors already well known in the field reapply their distinctive approaches and methodologies to (mostly) fresh areas of the poem; but a drawback is that, because the project 'did not arise from a conference and some contributors have not seen all papers' (p. vi), there is little dialogue between the essays. In exploring the intersection between readings of text and of monument (the temple of Mars Ultor in the Forum Augustum, 5.549–98), Alessandro Barchiesi blends fresh insights with a revitalization of the tensions already destabilizing Augustan ideology and discourse in his *Il poeta e il principe* (Rome, 1994). Emma Gee's elaborate discussion of Sirius and the Robigalia (4.901–42) and Orion and Mars Ultor (5.493–598) in connection with the *Georgics* culminates in her fine weighing of the ambiguities in Ovid's response—endorsing or qualifying?—to 'Virgilian pessimism in the light of Augustan peace' (p. 67). In a refreshing, forthright style, Peter Knox revives discussion of the *Fasti* as 'a sustained evocation of the *Aetia*' (p. 161), balancing the Callimachean claims of the work with its Roman/Augustan elements in his alert reading of the Magna Mater sequence (4.179–372). John Miller's close reading of Ovid's Liberalia (3.713–90) is rich in insight but restricted in its scope after a stimulating opening account (pp. 199–205) of the episode's 'political and cultic backgrounds' and its suggestive symbolism so soon after the Ides of March. In her fine contribution on the razing of the villa of Vedius Pollio and the construction in its place of the Porticus of Livia with its shrine to Concordia (6.637–48), Carole Newlands well draws out the symbolic implications of this physical/spatial transformation from excessive equestrian ostentation to imperial modesty and apparent (but cf. pp. 244–8) concord.

If these contributions offer a mini-representation of main scholarship on the *Fasti* in the last decade, H.-B.'s essay belongs in the same category. Setting herself the task of unmasking the *felices animae* (1.297) credited with founding the stellar calendar, she identifies them as *mathematici* (astrologers). But 'sidereal fatalism is absent from the *Fasti*' (p. 113). Why? His horoscope published in A.D. 11, Augustus, out of self-protection, 'issued the first empire-wide legal curb of astrological and other divinatory practices' (p. 120). When, in exile, Ovid rededicated the *Fasti* to Germanicus, he 'could not allude to [the latter's] destiny as Princeps in astrological terms without appearing to anticipate the death of Tiberius' (p. 123). Hence his alleged deletion of 'the prophesying role of the founders of the stellar calendar from the original version dedicated to Augustus' (p. 124); and hence H.-B.'s further proposal that Ovid excised all later mention of astrology in Books 2–6. A bold theory, for which H.-B. finds hints of textual support (pp. 124–6); but her concession that it is 'perilous to argue from silence' (p. 124) merely highlights an immediate objection to her speculative case.

While Elaine Fantham carefully surveys the evidence supplied by the *Fasti* for the religious life and cult-practice of women at Rome, excision recurs, in the form of 'the excision of *feminea lingua* (on so many levels)' (p. 130), in Peter M. Keegan's attempt to implicate the *Fasti* in 'the prevailing masculinist culture of Augustan Rome' (p. 152) and to find certain of Ovid's modern critics in 'some collusion with his conservative phallogocentric standpoint on ritual(ized) female activity' (*ibid.*). The overall direction

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of Keegan's argument is clear enough and points are forcefully made, but the phrasing is often delphic (e.g. p. 150 'Tarquin rehearses the constellated matrix of his masculinist cupidity'), mistranslation glaring (e.g. p. 146 on 2.770, 147 on 2.751). By contrast, C. M. C. Green's attempt to reconstruct from Varro's *Antiquitates rerum divinarum* the outlines of a Roman theology that is then traced to the *Fasti* combines lucid argumentation with good textual analysis (pp. 84–98, with the focus on Book 4); in its tactful way (cf. Green's concluding remarks on p. 99), this essay gives the complex Roman 'discourse of religion' (p. 99) a significant representation in this volume. Another important dimension is supplied by T. P. Wiseman's informative discussion of the possible 'direct influence from the Roman theatre' (p. 283) on Ovidian scenes in the *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti* (pp. 283–99).

Two strong pieces complete the collection, the first M. Pasco-Pranger's investigation of how the holidays that were added to the calendar by the Julio-Claudians interacted with the older layers of the calendrical structure, that 'ancient form . . . open to exegetical expansion and reinterpretation' (p. 255); her contention that the poetic connections between these added days and their surrounding contexts in the *Fasti* are 'mimetic of the associative connections a "reader" of the Julio-Claudian calendar might make' (p. 260) is well supported by her analysis of the later stages of Book 1 (461–724). Finally, R. J. Littlewood adduces iconographic as well as literary evidence in exploring Ovid's contribution to the construction of Numa as a precursor of Augustus. Aeneas is added to the equation by the associations that Littlewood neatly draws between the *ancile* of Numa, the Virgilian shield in *Aeneid* 8 and Augustus' *Clupeus Virtutis*; but perhaps more tenuous is the further link drawn between Augustus, Numa, and Servius Tullius, to the effect that 'the priestly guardian of Vesta's hearth and the champion of Concordia might also appear to be associated with a daughter's treachery' (p. 197, with obvious relevance to the two Julias).

In sum, the volume is of value because of the fresh light that the contributors shed on particular aspects of the *Fasti*, and because of the interim report that they offer on the current state and nature of scholarship on this important poem. There are few misprints, but the errors in the typesetting of the Greek on e.g. pp. 159, 164, 166 n. 25, 170 n. 42 are regrettable.

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## A COMPANION TO *PHAEDRA*

R. MAYER: *Seneca:* Phaedra (Duckworth Companions to Greek and Roman Tragedy). Pp. 142. London: Duckworth, 2002. Paper, £9.99. ISBN: 0-7156-3165-9.

Some 'accessible introductions' to classical literature really are. This one will prove not only accessible, but engaging and stimulating to all readers of Seneca's best-known tragedy, whether in translation or in Latin, whatever their readerly preparation. It belongs in the hands of every student of Senecan drama.

Of nine short chapters, the first five treat the text and its ancient contexts. 'Seneca and Roman Tragedy' offers a thumbnail of Seneca's life and times, a soundbyte on Stoicism, a cogent argument for a longstanding Roman 'tradition of writing [tragedy] for recitation before a select audience' (p. 16), and a refreshingly unapologetic statement of the potential interest and value of recitation drama. Chapter 2, the book's

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