chapters on receptions of Cleopatra. The first chapter, with its investigation of representations of Cleopatra in Augustan poetry, acts as a useful bridge between the love elegy of the first half of the book and the more modern Cleopatras and Messalinas of the second. However, W. persuasively argues in the first half of the book that '. . . Propertian elegy's poet-lover appears to adopt, provocatively, the position of an Antony . . . Its elegiac mistress, however, is not figured comparably as . . . a sovereign Cleopatra' (p. 171). In which case, one wonders—from the viewpoint of the unity of the collection—why Cleopatra bulks so large in the second half. One answer is that the Augustan poetic narratives of Cleopatra, at least, show as little interest in awarding the queen her rôle as divine protectress of Egypt as Propertius does in granting his mistress the rôle of sovereign woman logically correlative to his Antony.

Chapters 7 and 8 revisit and expand on some of W.'s earlier work on ancient Rome in the cinema. Initial contact with the previous chapters is established by highlighting the debt of film-makers to the *meretrix regina* of the ancient sources (p. 245) and their myth of the West's victory over the East, although interests here are soon (necessarily) widened to allow for a study of Cleopatra as site for exploration of modern imperialism, gender and ethnicity. If Cynthia is of interest to Propertius only in so far as she helps to define his identity, Cleopatra takes on, among others, the rather different rôle of depicting the Orient-other as a woman (feminizing, alluring, penetrable). But, along with all the expected references to Orientalism, the gendered western gaze, Americanization, and commodification, one would have welcomed more recognition of the well documented ability of readers—above all where the mass media are concerned—to sift, traduce, resist, misread, and even ignore the manifest or intended meaning of the cultural products which they are consuming (crucially, of course, where films made in one country are viewed in another). Having said that, the material studied here is fascinating, particularly W.'s pages on Elizabeth Taylor as Cleopatra. Chapters 9 and 10, on Messalina 1870–1970, run in illuminating parallel with Cleopatra 1910–1960 and focus on another *meretrix regina*, this time in the very heart of Rome, and on such complementary issues as the empress as a site for the consumption and exploration of sexuality, femininity, and tyranny. Here W. weaves a narrative, based on extensive primary research, from such diverse media as Italian dictionaries, medical literature, theatre, cinema, novels, and even the BBC's infamous—all wobbly sets and terrible lighting—mid-1970s small-screen version of *I, Claudius*. The very plenitude of the material provokes an unsettling contrast with the first half of the book: the constant suspicion that we have too little and know too little afflicts all who work on Augustan literature; while study of the reception of antiquity in theatre, book, and film surely threatens continually to ramify into a Complete History of the Twentieth Century.

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VITRUVIUS

I. K. McEwen: *Vitruvius. Writing the Body of Architecture*. Pp. xiv + 493, ills. Cambridge, MA and London: The MIT Press, 2003. Cased, £26.50. ISBN: 0-262-13415-2.

This is an immensely stimulating book, not in the least because of its idiosyncrasies. McEwen, who is not a classicist and therefore can expect the same carping from the guild that greeted Diane Favro's successful *The Urban Image of Augustan Rome*

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(Cambridge, 1996), makes the commendable attempt to present *De architectura* as more than a handbook. That it was not such is, of course, a truism; one finds it, for instance, in the article on Vitruvius in the third edition of the *OCD*, which also includes formulations—such as that according to Vitruvius, 'architecture included everything which touches on the physical and intellectual life of man and his surroundings', and for him, 'understanding the nature of nature was central'—that call precisely for the kind of exploration that M. is undertaking. In short, then, this is a book on the philosophy of architecture and an attempt to place *De architectura* in the intellectual and cultural context of the Roman and, especially, the Augustan world.

It almost follows that its main beneficiaries will be readers who do not have much of a classical background. M. ranges widely, and often quite associatively, over a broad spectrum of Roman culture, and her discussion of topics from Roman religion, for instance, will not be new to classicists. Her argumentation, however, goes beyond being merely introductory and instead aims to integrate these topics into a conceptually coherent world of Vitruvius' imagination (an oxymoron to some, to be sure). The undertaking is quite venturesome and sometimes the envelope crumples from being pushed too hard. As is clear, however, from the bibliography of some seventy pages, M. has certainly done her homework.

A central fascination is Vitruvius' extensive use of 'corpus (architecturae') that sets him apart from other Roman writers up to his time. More is involved than a mere denomination of *Gesamtwerk*; rather, M. argues, 'corpus' is the organizing metaphorical principle of the entire work and its relation to the Roman world: 'I hope to show. . . how the specifically architectural *corpus* he wrote provides a framework for understanding the *corpus* the Roman world would become during the reign of the autocrat for whom it was written' (p. 11) and there is 'a mutually entailing fit between book-body and world-body' (p. 303). Accordingly, the four chapters of the book are entitled 'The Angelic Body', 'The Herculean Body', 'The Body Beautiful', and 'The Body of the King'. Clearly, we are not dealing with a recycled dissertation.

Common to all four chapters, then, is an investigation of the metaphor of architecture as a reflection of the human body. Depending on one's view, the treatment is wide-ranging or wildly associative, or both. In the first chapter, M. explores topics such as *auctoritas* and, at great length, numerology, followed by a disquisition on unifying principles (mainly 'ratio') and 'signification', rejecting the simple earlier equation of 'ratiocinatio' as 'signifier' and 'fabrica' as 'signified'. Instead, she points out that Vitruvius' claim that the signifiers and signifieds contained in all matters inhere 'tum maxime' in architecture (1.1.3) can be related to the dependence, in authors such as Cicero, Livy, and Virgil, 'of the signifying power of words . . . .upon the far greater signifying power of built works and their topographical *loci;* on architecture, in other words' (p. 89). It is an observation that, due to the work of Zanker and others, could be buttressed even more with reference to the impact of images, and especially the images projected by architecture, in Augustan Rome.

While 'Angelic Body' comes across as an anachronistic misnomer (though M. makes clear the derivation from 'messenger'), the chapter on 'The Herculean Body' takes off from the preface to Book 2, where Vitruvius describes Dinocrates' impersonation of Hercules to gain Alexander's attention. M. develops the theme of Hercules in Rome at length, but its contextual relevance is not always obvious. Still, the broad sweep she delineates, for instance, of the phrase 'omnes gentes' and of its context in wide variety of authors besides Vitruvius can be instructive, grounding architectural rhetoric in rhetorical topoi and converging on architecture's rôle in Rome's mission of civilizing

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conquest. It is commendable that M., an architectural historian, time and again goes beyond the standard compilations of literary sources and parallels, and thus achieves a fuller panorama.

The topics grouped under 'The Body Beautiful' again range widely, beginning, as one might expect, with Vitruvius' description of the human body in terms of circle and square, to be emblematized by Leonardo centuries later. As I indicated earlier, the sections on *religio* and Venus will be valuable mostly for non-classicists, but there are fresh perspectives and connections throughout, such as the importance of squaring in augury, and the reference to 'Roma quadrata' is suggestive and apropos. Insightful also is her demonstration of the unique orientation (to the west) of the Temple of Divus Iulius and the reasons for it (pp. 175–9); this is a convincing addition to the literature on the power of Augustan architectural images, including the transfer of their rhetoric to other parts of the Roman world. Two central notions that emerge, then, are (i) 'at once a metaphysical proposition and a ritual formula, Vitruvian man is also and above all the architect's template' (p. 181); and (ii), so far from being an unsophisticated purveyor of outdated principles of Greek temple building, '*De architectura* made architecture concurrently [with 'humanitas', often in a quite bodily sense] the benchmark of civilization, the means of conquest, and the measurable index of Roman world dominion' (pp. 194–5).

The latter theme is extended in the last chapter. M. usefully elucidates why *gnomonice* was selected by Vitruvius as one of the three parts of architecture, with the Augustan horologium figuring prominently. The next section is the most venturesome (others will choose a less neutral characterization) in this book, pressing for close analogies between the matrices of the Prima Porta Augustus and *De architectura*. The chapter concludes with a more solidly grounded examination of the concept of 'corpus imperii'. It helpfully draws on Béranger's work, who anchored it in the Augustan context, and aims to show it as an operative metaphor and principle in Vitruvius' treatise.

Throughout complex arguments, often involving abstract subject matter, M.'s writing is consistently accessible and clear.

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VELLEIUS

U. SCHMITZER: *Velleius Paterculus und das Interesse an der Geschichte im Zeitalter des Tiberius*. Pp. 346. Heidelberg: C. Winter, 2000. Paper. ISBN: 3-8253-1033-7.

Velleius' historical narrative has suffered from a neglect that has pushed it off many classicists' agendas. Velleius' work burst onto the 'modern' world in 1520/1, and was remarkable for its intense topicality (his vivid account of the conflict between Roman and Germanic peoples struck a chord with contemporary Germans, again embroiled in a monumental—doctrinal—struggle with Rome). S.'s first chapter (pp. 9–36) offers a lively and encyclopaedic way into various receptions of Velleius, taking the reader right up to the twentieth century. S.'s survey makes it abundantly clear that Velleius has been lurking on the sidelines of much recent study of the late Republic, but the reader gains little initial sense of the methodological implications of S.'s contextualizing aim to integrate literary and cultural readings. S.'s introductory emphasis on Velleius' cultural milieu is important and thorough (pp. 23–36), though

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