

the solitary sphere, provide him with an analytical tool for his readings of Cicero, Virgil, Horace and Propertius. His readings make a convincing case that this is a fruitful angle from which to approach his chosen writers.

Cicero is obviously the odd man out in a book on the age of Virgil, but K. contends that Cicero's disillusionment with the political world leads him to lay the groundwork for the solitary sphere of the Augustan poets in his books and letters from the mid-forties to his death. Idealisation pervades these works: for oratory, Cicero substitutes the *ideas* of oratory and of the orator, and similarly with figures of political authority, and even with the deceased Tullia; friendship, in *De Amicitia*, is a form of longing for a friend idealised in memory. As these examples show, K.'s understanding of the solitary sphere is broad, but does not stretch the concept beyond breaking point.

Virgil's *Eclogues* gets a chapter to itself. Pastoral was to become a privileged site of solitude, but K. pushes this connection back (*pace* Poggioli) to the inventor of the genre: the first *Eclogue* is not a dialogue, but two monologues that look past each other. Pastoral's location of song in a resonant environment is another form in which the genre imagines the solitude of literature, a solitude which pertains to the reader as well as the poet. (Not every reader will agree with K. that Virgil's singers are as 'unobtrusive to the solitary reader' as the diminutive figures in Campanian 'sacro-idyllic' painting). The thread of K.'s argument that focuses on the solitude of the reader culminates with the solitary readers of elegy ('ut tuus in scamno iactetur saepe libellus/quem legat expectans sola puella viro', Propertius 3.3.120). In the *Aeneid* the reader's solitude reflects that of the characters to whose internal world the reader is privy, characters who are 'alone with their thoughts and anxieties'.

Another strain of K.'s argument is to show that poets of the age of Virgil were particularly concerned with the power of poetry to constitute its own social reality. In the case of Propertius, whose poetry abounds in solitude words, we oscillate between seeing the world through the subjective solitude of the poet and seeing the solitude of the poet from the perspective of the objective sociality of the world (220). Similarly, K. comments, *à propos* Horace *Satires* 1.10, 'The point is not that this book has an imagined community: it is that the imaginary quality of this community is so obvious' (168).

Besides the more extended readings of the period's major writers, K. gives us some intriguing *lagniappes*: pantomime, in which a single, solitary dancer performs all the roles, flourished in the age of Virgil, and is symptomatic of its solitary sphere. Anticipations and groundlaying for Augustan solitudes in Catullus (and Cicero) are balanced by aftermaths in Ovid, Phaedrus and Manilius. The last of these features in an extraordinary passage from the *Astronomica* (2.136–44), which casts him as 'solitary astronaut', outdoing even Lucretius' Epicurus.

K. has given us a new lens through which to look at some very familiar texts, and at a period of literary history usually more associated with the public than the solitary. His readings of selections from most of the important poetic works of the period are close, enlightening and refreshing, though they occasionally tend towards the ingenious. Erudition and wide learning are on display throughout, and serve to locate the Augustan age in the broader history of solitude. This is a dense, original and thought-provoking book.

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JOHN OKSANISH, *VITRUVIAN MAN: ROME UNDER CONSTRUCTION*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2019. Pp. xii + 251. ISBN 9780190696986.

This elegantly written book can be seen as part of an ongoing 'Vitruvius moment' generated by the encounter of the European tradition of scholarship on technical treatises and the Anglophone tradition of literary studies in classics. As Oksanish acknowledges (vii), 'continental' scholars have been studying *De architectura* as literature for decades; then from around the turn of last century, as marked e.g. by the publication of Indra McEwen's

*Vitruvius: Writing the Body of Architecture* (2002), more and more publications in English have appeared, shifting Vitruvius from the margins of the Latin canon to the mainstream of cultural and intellectual history.

After surveying the little information we have about Vitruvius' life in ch. 1, O. analyses in ch. 2 the ways in which architecture, particularly within the wider context of the Augustan imperial building programme(s), can be said to make history. He applies this interesting argument to the story of how the Caryatids got their name. Ch. 3 focuses on the sense in which *De architectura* is a *corpus*, while ch. 4 explores the notion of ideal architect, something to which Vitruvius goes back again and again in the course of the treatise. Finally, ch. 5 combines the theme of the body and of the ideal architect, by dissecting distinctions between good and bad practitioners, and more generally the moral import of embodying architectural knowledge. Central to the chapter is the anecdote about Alexander the Great and Dinocrates. The volume is book-ended by a long introduction, which provides historiographical contextualisation, and a shorter conclusion; there is an extremely useful appendix summarising the contents of *De architectura*.

O.'s stated aim is to produce 'a "literary" reading of *De architectura* ... with particular focus on rhetoric and intertextuality' (3). That is a very worthwhile enterprise, if not, in the current Vitruvian landscape, a revolutionary one. The present book, it seems to me, does not aim at breaking completely new ground, but rather at contributing to several of the current discussions about Vitruvius and *De architectura* by engaging closely and carefully both with the scholarship and with the text itself.

O.'s strengths are, in my view, in the close analysis of some key passages, particularly but not exclusively the prefaces, which are identified as prime evidence for Vitruvius' authorial self-representation. O. manages to find new observations and nuances in texts that might seem well known; in the case of the Caryatids, for instance, he suggests that Vitruvius creatively reworks previous, Greek-inflected narratives to fit into the specific Augustan moment he is living in, but also points to future audiences for whom architecture and architectural ornamentation serve the function of monumental narratives ('textual' monuments, in his own chapter subtitle). Again, while O. may not be the first scholar to put Vitruvius in a dialogue with Cicero, his analysis is consistently rigorous at a linguistic level, well supported by the evidence and generally persuasive. His proposal that one of the foils for Vitruvius' carefully constructed persona is Ennius, and specifically the model of the 'Ennian friend' (ch. 1) is novel and intriguing. O. takes the reader through the subtleties of the original text in a way that I found remarkably clear, although the reader with little or no Latin may find some passages daunting.

One issue emerging from the book, which deserves further discussion, is the distinction between Vitruvius the presumed historical figure, and Vitruvius the author constructed by the text. This contrast is mirrored by one between real architects and the ideal *architectus*; between architecture as it was practised and the architecture described in the text (4). The distinction is implicitly picked up later (10) when O. describes *De architectura* as 'a rhetorical performance of expertise rather than an invitation to practice'. O. seems to imply that Vitruvian scholarship has concentrated on finding the 'real' Vitruvius rather than understanding the author. Indeed, his ch. 1 laments that socio-cultural readings of Vitruvius 'tend to override, if not negate, the literary and rhetorical capacity of the text to represent its author' (35). However, rather than representing a genuine 'third way' (36), I think that the current volume reiterates a certain dualism, by focusing on Vitruvius the author, while effectively abdicating on the possibility of expanding our knowledge of Vitruvius the historical figure. It shifts, rather than addressing, the question of whether we can, and how we should, historically contextualise ancient authors. On the one hand, the specific social, political, geographical, temporal perspectives germane to an author ought not to determine, or over-determine, the meaning of their text. One of the lessons learnt from reception studies is that the text only acquires meaning through its audiences, rather than from authorial intention. On the other hand, however, all ancient texts are historical documents and testimonies of the world which they inhabited. In the case of the so-called technical texts, this element is all the more precious because they can throw light on corners of ancient society which would otherwise be left opaque. Thus, this extremely readable volume constitutes an important contribution to scholarship, not least because it indirectly raises an important question: by concentrating on Vitruvius the literary author at the expense of Vitruvius the

historical figure, by moving him from the margins to the centre of the canon, is his potential for disrupting our view of ancient culture lost?

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GIULIO CELOTTO, *AMOR BELLI: LOVE AND STRIFE IN LUCAN'S BELLUM CIVILE*.  
 Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2022. Pp. 242. ISBN 9780472132874. \$75.00.

Has the pendulum swung too far, dear reader? Have we all gone Derrida [on Lucan]? Celotto certainly thinks so, and in his Florida PhD thesis book poses a challenge to the prevalent (at least in my post-code area) deconstructionist interpretation of Lucan's civil war epic which reads the poem as characterised by confusion, fragmentation and irrationality, dissolving the epic genre and disregarding conventional norms. C. is aware that many are quite comfortable with this position and see no need for change. O'Hara nails it: 'the case for Lucan being fractured is looking pretty good, and attempts to put him back together again have not worked' (*Inconsistency in Roman Epic* (2007), 138, quoted by C. at 4). Nevertheless, C. argues 'that Lucan composed a poem characterized by unity, coherence, and linearity, to convey a specific and unambiguous political message' (4). Using structuralist methodology, in particular Saussure's notion of binary opposition and Lévi-Strauss's propositions on deep structures as sets of binary oppositions, C. sets off to explore how 'Lucan uses the dialectic of the opposite forces of Love and Strife to create a coherent narrative structure that conveys a cohesive political vision' (4). After surveying other epics for Aristotelian unity, however, C. reminds us that, according to Hainsworth, different rules apply in historical epic (*The Idea of Epic* (1991)): Lucan's lack of a central hero means that a sense of unity can be found only if one considers that the *Bellum Civile* is built not around such a hero or an event but instead showcases a theme: the demise of the Roman Republic (5). In addition, he surveys Quint's analytic tools of Iliadic and Odyssean plots (*Epic and Empire* (1993)), the former linear and continuous, the latter circular and repetitious; the former a model for the 'epic of winners' (and that then also applies to the *Aeneid*), the latter (and that then also applies to the *Bellum Civile*) a model for the 'epic of losers'. C. questions this dichotomy and suggests seeing unity and linearity in not just the *Aeneid* but also *Bellum Civile*. The former is ascending toward a positive end, whereas the latter is descending, moving towards a negative end, thereby adapting the—in Aristotelian terms—ideal tragic plot to epic poetry. C. then suggests a reading of the *Bellum Civile* along the lines of Lucan's adaptation of the cosmological dialectic of Love and Strife. These Empedoclean terms (which are often perceived as polar opposites, one constructive, the other destructive) can be refined to include destructive epic romances counterbalanced by constructive conflicts. Accordingly, the *Aeneid* features destructive forces followed by constructive forces in a kind of ascending path, while Lucan offers his readers the opposite sequence and a descending path. After an introductory chapter tracing the notion of Love and Strife in Greek and Roman thought and the epic genre in particular, C. develops his argument in four chapters followed by a coda on the reception of the cosmological dialectic of Love and Strife in Flavian epic. Ch. 2 highlights the influence of Empedoclean philosophy on Latin epic and proposes that Lucan equates civil war itself with the second phase of the Empedoclean cosmic cycle in which Strife progressively overcomes Love, and the Principate to its third phase characterised by complete chaos, a systematisation which lends narrative structure to the epic. Ch. 3 traces Love in the form of interpersonal relations in Lucan's epic, which while frequently doomed (Julia), often remain infertile (Cato, Alexander the Great) or resemble Aeneas' destructive affair with Dido (Caesar and Cleopatra). Love fades away and Strife takes over. Ch. 4 in turn emphasises the lack of constructive Strife in Lucan's epic using the *Aeneid* as foil, which in contrast to the *Bellum Civile* offers the victory of cosmos over chaos, *aristeia* displaying *virtus* and granting immortality through fame, athletic games and finally *clementia* as mitigation for destructive strife. Indeed, Love and Strife combine rather than contrast to facilitate the annihilation of Rome, a feature which C. interprets as an *imitatio negativa* of the *militia amoris* developed in Roman Love Elegy which