

The introduction places Sallust in a context of intellectual experimentation as a historiographical innovator. The first chapter defines digressions and applies the concept of *dispositio* to them. Ch. 2 interprets the *archaeology* (*Cat.* 6–13) and the digression on Africa at *Iug.* 17–19. The third chapter looks at the political digressions that come at the low points of the monographs, *Cat.* 36.4–39.5 and *Iug.* 41–2. For S., Sallust's historical analysis is schematic and reflects his use of history to illustrate political philosophy. The fourth chapter examines Sallust's character sketches to demonstrate that those digressions produce individual examples of larger historical patterns. Contrary to most previous Roman historiography, S. shows that the charismatic individuals in Sallust are reflections of historical forces rather than the true causes of events. Ch. 5 provisionally interprets the geographical digressions in the fragmentary *Historiae*. The conclusion offers a summary of the book and a brief consideration of Sallust's impact on the later historiographical tradition.

S. offers comprehensive coverage of Sallust's historiography and provides many new interpretations of long-discussed passages. His bibliography is exhaustive and draws together strands of research that have not yet made a significant impact on Classicist-dominated historiographical scholarship, including, for example, recent work by political theorists like D. Kapust (2011) and D. Hammer (2014). He also takes into account recent monographs (both published in 2019) by A. Rosenblitt and J. Gerrish (*A. Feldherr's* was published too late for consideration), but it is above all the work of A. Wallace-Hadrill and C. Moatti on intellectual exploration of Roman identity in the first century B.C. that serves as his touchstone. S. generally does not find common cause with scholars who emphasise Sallustian uncertainty. He often seeks to resolve tensions and ambiguity, whereas others such as W. Batstone and D. Levene have seen those qualities to be the point. S. insists, for instance, that *fortuna* is paramount in the famous sentence at *Cat.* 10.1 where Sallust asserts that Roman history started its decline after Rome had conquered all its rivals, including Carthage (155–8). He is right to note, as others have, that Carthage is merely on the list in a subordinate clause while *fortuna* is the subject of the sentence. But just as it is overreading to import the concept of *metus hostilis* into the sentence, it is likewise underreading to suggest that the disappearance of any external threat is just a matter of *fortuna*. Likewise, S. (271–4) twists himself up in denying the significance of Sallust's application of *superbia* to Metellus in the *Bellum Iugurthinum*, since its meaning conflicts with his more expansive interpretation of the dynamics of class conflict in that part of the monograph. Though its readings of individual passages will naturally spark disagreement, with its coverage of the entire Sallustian corpus and a compelling thesis of Sallustian historical vision, this is an excellent book.

Emory University
jmaste2@emory.edu

JONATHAN MASTER

doi:10.1017/S0075435823000515

© The Author(s), 2023. Published by Cambridge University Press on behalf of The Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies.

AARON J. KACHUCK, *THE SOLITARY SPHERE IN THE AGE OF VIRGIL*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2021. Pp. xiii + 316. ISBN 9780197579046. £64.00.

Anyone scanning academic titles over the last fifty years might get the impression that everything was always already 'invented': a search of the titles category in my university library catalogue gives me 1640 hits for 'The Invention of ...!'. Mercifully, Kachuck eschews this trend. As he puts it, 'The age of Virgil did not invent the solitary sphere ... but it did heighten that sphere's contradictions to a pitch of unprecedented, and long unparalleled, clarity' (246). Nevertheless, the historical claim is important: 'Writers of this [Virgil's] age struggled to give form to an idea that would go on to prove immensely influential thereafter: that literature might serve as a space of one's own for writers and readers, for dancers and spectators, for rulers and ruled alike.' K. lists as the conventional candidates for the 'inventions' of solitude: Augustine's monasticism; Petrarch's humanism; Montaigne's scepticism and Romanticism; he is generous throughout with comparisons and allusions to the 'solitary' culture of later periods. Within the Roman world, Seneca might be a more obvious candidate for a study of the solitary sphere, but K.'s subject is, at its broadest point, 'the solitude of literature itself', which, together with the contradictions of

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.

King's College London
william.fitzgerald@kcl.ac.uk
doi:10.1017/S0075435823000564

WILLIAM FITZGERALD

© The Author(s), 2023. Published by Cambridge University Press on behalf of The Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies.

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