

Pliny the Younger and Fronto; personally I found the chapter on Fronto (241–264) the most interesting.

Cugusi gives good reasons (9) for not extending his investigations further than the second century A.D., and he deserves special praise for a systematic consideration of the letters written on papyri (271–284 and *passim*) and of the relevant inscriptions. In spite of the author's critical remark on his reviewers (129 n. 450), I am one of those who think that poetic letters might have thrown additional light on the subject; a good example is the way in which he himself takes into account the fictitious letters in Plautus (49 n. 20, 57).

The introduction includes a very useful bibliography (10–24). The general index (287–289) might have been more detailed. A final question: should there not be an index of passages?

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*Poetry and Politics in the Age of Augustus.* Edited by Tony Woodman & David West. Cambridge University Press, 1984. VIII & 262 p. £ 25.00.

This is an intriguing contribution to the study of the interrelations between poetry and politics. Partly as a reaction to the political events of the 1960s (Vietnam at one extreme, and Czechoslovakia at the other), classical scholars tended to call into doubt the genuineness of the political commitment in Augustan poetry. To restore the balance, nine British scholars have had a fresh look at the question in the most important Augustan poets. The essays concern the presence of contemporary history in Horace's Epodes (R.G.M. Nisbet), the subtle support given to Augustus' policies in the Satires I (I.M. le Duquesnay), the Epyllion of Aristaeus in Virgil's Georgics as an allegory of Augustus as the Statesman and Antony as the Lover and the parallels to the allegory in the Aeneid (Yvan Nadeau), Horace's First Roman Ode, 3,1, interpreted as a priestly utterance supporting Augustus' policy of moral restoration (Tony Woodman), Virgil's description of Carthage in the Aeneid as reflecting contemporary attitudes (E.L. Harrison), the surprising tribute paid to the alien deity Cybele in the Aeneid, given in order to assimilate this goddess and her temple on the Palatine to the complex of other Palatine temples (T.P. Wiseman), a new interpretation of Propertius' unjustly discredited encomium on the victory of Actium, 4,6 (Francis Cairns), and Ovid's failure to work the praise of the emperor into his urbane poem on the Roman calendar (J.C. Mckeown).

All these papers combine literary and historical and even the topographical (Wiseman) approach. The contributors stress that Virgil, Horace and Propertius never descended to mere flattery. If they backed up Augustus' aims, they did so from conviction. On the other hand, they veiled their propaganda in the language of high poetry, in allegories etc., more often than not lifted from Hellenistic poetry, especially from Callimachus. Ovid's failure was largely due to the fact that he belonged to a younger, carefree generation, who lacked that sense of gratitude and inner commitment that animated his older colleagues.

If some contributions are to be singled out, Cairn's ingenious analysis of Propertius 4,6 is a model of scholarship. By a minute literary interpretation he shows that this much-maligned poem conforms to the Hellenistic type of hymns, with its carefully balanced structure, ostensibly honouring Apollo but indirectly the Julian House and Augustus.

In the volume there is little scope for serious disagreements. If the significance of a particular passage is sometimes stretched, this is natural in a paper trying to prove a particular point. Thus, in my opinion, the features of the Golden Age mentioned on p. 6 are too general to tell us anything certain about the dependence of Horace's Epode 16 on Virgil's Fourth Eclogue. The same comment concerns the alleged echoes of Sallust on p. 8. In the paper on Satire I, applying the conclusions drawn from I 6, 15–17 to the Pompeians seems somewhat rash. Finally, the argumentation in the essay on Aristaeus is in places somewhat difficult to follow.

But apart from these and some other minor critical remarks, this is a valuable work. It also suggests that classical scholars are not living in an ivory tower. They can quickly react to the events and currents of thought in the surrounding society, as is indeed the duty of humanists to do so.

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*Richard F. Thomas: Lands and Peoples in Roman Poetry. The Ethnographical Tradition.* Cambridge Philological Society, Supplementary Volume no. 7. Cambridge 1982. 144 p. £ 30.00.

The frequent use of the names of near and remote countries, peoples and places in Roman poetry is far from being a neglected area of classical scholarship. Professor Thomas's four-page bibliography is not exhaustive and could easily have been longer. There has not, however, been any thorough and systematic study on the ethnographical tradition in Roman poetry so far, i.e. how the main Roman poets have adapted ethnographical literature for poetical purposes. It seems to me that in his book Professor Thomas gives solid information which forms a good basis for further investigation. He throws new light on the way the Roman poets used material afforded by Posidonius and the Hippocratic treatise 'Airs, Waters, Places'.

After giving some background information in the introductory chapter, the author in the first chapter deals especially with Horace's sixteenth Epistle as compared to the tenth Epistle. Although the author is well aware of Horace's way of contrasting city and country in his epistles, it would have been profitable if this contrast had been studied more penetratingly in relation to Horace's ethnographical motives. The second and third chapters have been devoted to Virgil's Georgics. The author shows convincingly how Virgil "consciously presented the world of the bees in the language of the ethnographical study" (p. 36). He gives new insights into the discussion provoked by Dahlmann (pp. 70–73). While most scholars have repudiated Dahlmann's views, the author is willing to support them but sees, however, some flaws in them. When dealing with Virgil's *Laudes Italiae* the author makes comparisons with Horace's Ode 3,24, which he considers as a