

Review

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Source: *The American Journal of Philology*, Vol. 96, No. 3 (Autumn, 1975), pp. 314-316

Published by: [The Johns Hopkins University Press](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/293847>

Accessed: 23-06-2015 15:06 UTC

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documented in this treatment of poems 15 and 16, where a transposition from obscenity of language to obscenity of gesture will make clear what Quinn is up to: imagine 1) equating the gesture of turning up one's nose with the gesture of thumbing one's nose, on the grounds that the obscene act signified by the latter is not literally intended, and 2) using only Latin to explain what thumbing one's nose means.

Quinn's diffidence about the sexual and the obscene may be reverence for the innocence of the young students into whose hands this book might fall. But Catullus has nothing to say about the mechanics and varieties of sex that would be news to today's average fifteen-year-olds; what would be news is a precise and informed understanding of the wit and poetic craft of Catullus on the subject of sex.

Such teaching raises serious questions of moral and intellectual honesty. When classicists do not take sex seriously it is difficult for students of intelligence and decency to take classics seriously. The present book plays into the hands of teachers who would corrupt Catullus by purifying him because Quinn's frankness in some notes may lead the unwary student to drop his guard in others where Quinn finds it necessary to palliate Catullus' sexual openness. These Latin poems are easily accessible to the modern reader and their immediate appeal is strong. The health of classics depends on a fully candid approach to such an author.

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MICHAEL WIGODSKY. *Vergil and Early Latin Poetry*. Wiesbaden, F. Steiner, 1972. Pp. x + 168. DM 30.00 (*Hermes, Zeitschrift für Klassische Philologie. Einzelschriften, Heft 24*)

This is an eminently learned philological monograph of the kind one sees rarely published by a young American scholar. The material is, exclusively, pre-Vergilian Latin works that are no longer extant in their entirety. W. admits that Vergil's imitations of early Latin poetry are a minor aspect of his art (139), but scholars of Latin literature can be grateful to him for presenting a comprehensive, if not complete, overview of the subject and for being sensible and judicious in the process.

W.'s good sense is evident from the start. He devotes a long, useful introduction to ancient and modern views of imitation and differentiates between allusive and structural imitation.¹ The distinction is vital for Vergil's use of Latin writers as well as Homer, and W.

¹ It may be noted that S. Strabyla, whose monograph *Latin Tragedy in Vergil's Poetry* (Polish Academy 1970) is somewhat cold-shouldered by W., allows for additional differentiation. His typology of Vergilian *imitatio* is threefold: verbal, verbal and material, and verbal and structural. According to him, the middle type is most frequent in Vergil's use of the Roman tragedians.

convincingly rejects Knauer's schematic overemphasis on the structural type of imitation. Another difficulty is, of course, the fragmentary nature of the comparative material. Thus the danger is ever-present that unwarranted meaning may be imputed to "parallels" that are parallels only because so much of the literature has been lost and our knowledge of the currency of certain phrases in spoken Latin is completely inadequate. The term "borrowing," therefore, is often misapplied. W. should have taken this somewhat more into account when, somewhat *en passant*, he hypothesizes the ultimate reason for the extent of Vergil's *imitatio*: "Vergil's borrowings, which after all include things so ordinary that the merest poetaster would not have been forced to borrow them for lack of invention, can be explained thus as acts of piety, the same piety that, outside the sphere of literature, led him to show the Trojans' search for a new home as a return to the home of their ancestors, and Augustus' new Golden Age as the restoration of a primeval state." (p. 5). It is a beautiful analogy, but on close scrutiny quite indemonstrable.

W. then proceeds to discuss, author by author, putative and real Vergilian borrowings from Livius Andronicus to Cicero (with a useful epilogue on Catullus and Lucretius). He has to go over much trodden ground and could easily be blamed often for merely weighing the evidence and coming to no clear conclusions. But the point is precisely that the evidence often is inconclusive and that W. rejects the overzealous and simplistic approaches of many of his predecessors, including E. Norden. Examples of *causes célèbres* treated by Wigodsky in this fashion include Naeivius' *Atlantes* fragment, the question of Dido's role in the *Bellum Punicum*,² the function of *Discordia* in Ennius' *Annales*, and Vergil's debt to Pacuvius and Accius.

One of the strongest points of this book is that W. demolishes the unchecked growth of conjectural Ennianisms that owe their existence to circular method and to the fixation of Norden and, alas, his imitators on deriving coincidences between Livy and Vergil from Ennius (chapter 9). This is not to detract from the achievement of a great classicist, but as in the case of Richard Heinze's misdirected monograph on the presumed epic style of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, the cause of Latin scholarship is not well served by the worshipful perpetuation of superficial assumptions.

710 footnotes on 139 text pages give some idea of the format of this book. The ten pages of additional notes are not easily digested. Nor is the author's prose style in general. It is understandable that *diseiecta fragmenta* are not easily brought together, but the predominantly additive and enumerative mode of presentation, punctuated by an

² To Wigodsky's refutation of Buchheit's reconstruction I would add the argument that, considering Anchises' own dalliance with Venus (and he was punished not for the affair itself, but for bragging about it), it is unreasonable to suppose that he would have objected to a love affair of his much-travelled son.

unforgivable plethora of semicola, could have been improved with some care even if this book emphatically is not meant for the coffee table. But it would be ungrateful to end on a carping note because this is a valuable contribution to Vergilian scholarship.

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STEELE COMMAGER. *A Prolegomenon to Propertius*. Norman, Oklahoma, University of Oklahoma Press, 1974. Pp. 77. (*University of Cincinnati Lectures in Memory of Louise Taft Semple, Third Series, 1971*)

This is an effective, if brief, introduction to Propertius which will be useful for the newcomer to this poet as well as stimulating, on a number of matters, for the specialist. Unfortunately, the long period of time which has elapsed between the delivery of these papers and their appearance in print has allowed several of the good observations to lose the impact they would have had earlier.

C. paints an arresting picture of the complications Propertius' translator must face. He has a good section on how intimately the poet fuses the roles of lover and poet: if Propertius makes love in a "narrow" bed (2.1.45), it is because he favors a poetic tradition of restraint and careful craftsmanship (2.1.40); when Cynthia leaves him, her absence from his bed is absence from his poetry (*e nostris carminibus*, 1.11.8). C. does not go on from here to caution his audience against taking everything Propertius says too literally, which he might have done, having made the demonstration that love is poetry and the manipulation of the reader's mood; perhaps this reminder has been sufficiently stated during the last decade.

The first paper makes a real contribution with its analysis of 1.13, which is surrounded by sinister associations: *Taenarius* (1.13.22) recalls for the learned reader Neptune's sanctuary which concealed an entrance into the underworld (Thucydides 1.128 tells how suppliants were enticed out of it and killed). Hercules is evoked in Hebe's arms at the moment of his fiery consummation *in* (not *ab*) *Oetaeis iugis*. *Una dies* (1.13.25) is from Lucretius 3.898-99 (One can also compare *Carm. Epigraph.* 405.1, 1159.2, 2079.2, 2081.1, and 2106.2). *Una* structures the elegy and leads from *una vices* in 1.13.10, to *una dies*, with which it rhymes, to *una sit ista tibi* in 36: Gallus' flame is to be his final, fateful destiny. C. also looks at 2.25.11-12 and the roasting of the lover in the Bull of Phalaris, and 3.13.15ff., where the pyre used for suttee is called a "bed," *lectus*. Elegy 1.1, too, receives a careful reading which will benefit students of Propertius by its elucidation of the highly specialized color displayed by virtually every word of the opening lines. *Velocem* (1.1.15) returns us from the less familiar account of