

Whenever one publishes, one risks the misfortune of being too early for important new material. Theozotides' decree for the sons of dead democrats (but not his proposal attacked in a speech by Lysias) is attributed to the first restoration rather than the second by A. P. Matthaiou:<sup>1</sup> in one footnote Shear notes the forthcoming publication and expresses doubt but does not know Matthaiou's arguments. Shear builds a good deal on the decree of Demophantus and other documents quoted in *Andoc. 1*, but a strong attack on the authenticity of those documents will be made by E. M. Harris and M. Canevaro,<sup>2</sup> and if that attack is judged successful some of her points will be undermined.

There is still room, then, for further discussion, but this is a good book which contains much worthy of discussion, and it deserves a warm welcome.

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*Roman Landscape: Culture and Identity*. By Diana SPENCER. *Greece & Rome* New Surveys in the Classics, no. 39. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press for the Classical Association, 2011. Pp xvi + 236; figs. 1–20 (6–20 in color). £14.99/\$21.99.

Diana Spencer's new contribution to this on-going Classical Association series combines broad topical coverage of her subject with searching theoretical inquiries into its conceptual meaning within the culture of Roman intellectual and practical life. As a term for the verbal comprehension of space and environment Spencer's "landscape" is not a simple equivalent of either entity, but, more broadly, a perceptual interaction of ancient Romankind with nature and the inhabited world. Roman landscapes meet us in a variety of written and pictorial forms, alternatively urban and rural, some wild and untamed, some strictly ordered, some as the obvious products of idealizing fantasy, some advertizing their laborious cultivation. Many seem infused with symbolic values that bear upon current political ideology, cultural memory, Roman self-fashioning. Spencer's six chapters develop these ideas through examination of literary representations drawn from

<sup>1</sup> A. P. Matthaiou, *Τὰ ἐν τῇ στήλῃ γεγραμμένα* (Athens, 2011) 71–81.

<sup>2</sup> E. M. Harris & M. Canevaro, "The Documents in *Andocides' On the Mysteries*," *CQ* n.s. 62 (2012), forthcoming.

Varro, Horace, Vergil, Columella, Pliny and Statius and, in the material sphere, examples from painted representations of the late Republic and early Augustan period as well as archeological reconstructive treatments of the lost gardens of Sallust on the Pincian and Pompey's theater porticus. Given, however, that the very conceptualization of landscape is a post-classical creation of European writers and artists, Spencer occasionally reminds us how the visions of North European and Romantic painters have shaped our aesthetic preconceptions while such Roman testimonies as that of the Younger Pliny's descriptions of his two villas have served as models for the design of European aristocratic and public parks and gardens, such as the ordered prospects of Kensington or the sculpture enriched fountains and alcoves of the Villa Sciarra.

In her introduction Spencer draws upon several recent theoretical discussions of perception and spatial dynamics to establish the semiotic context. She lays out two comprehensive categories of Roman landscape awareness: landscapes of poetic imagination that conduce to aesthetic pleasure and those of the agricultural countryside that come to figure in the ideological self-definition of Roman character, yet the two categories allow for overlap which is to say that the fertile prospects developed by Roman agronomy can possess their own versions of idealized beauty.

In the following chapter the prototype for aesthetic appreciation and the tradition of the so-called *locus amoenus* is Socrates' stroll with Phaedrus by the extra-urban River Ilissus. Echoes of this evocative scenario appear in the garden ambience of Epicurean philosophers and the Roman design of the philosophical garden which, in Cicero's dialogues, often becomes a setting for discussion of hot issues in contemporary politics. Aesthetics, however do not disappear from consideration with this chapter but remain the informing spirit of "Those Happy Fields" which explores a literary union of pastoral imagination with idealization of the real countryside in late Republican poetry and agronomic writing.

The chapter entitled "Time and Motion" shows landscape as a structure to be realized progressively through narrative, whose paradigmatic embodiment is the spatio-temporal itinerary of Evander's guided tour of future Roman topography in *Aeneid* 8. Alongside this excursus into space as a repository of historical memory, Spencer places another poetic itinerary which she views with ambivalence as an erasure of memory. Journeying south from Rome to Baiae on "Domitian's superhighway" (*Silvae* 4.3: Via Domitiana) the traveler will move with such speed as to obliterate the cultural memory inherent in the landmarks by which the road passes. A final section of the chapter extends Varro's concept of seasonal

order into all civic culture in so far as his way-markers of the agricultural year can be seen to shape the Roman festival calendar linking city and country within an idealized ethic of the Roman past and celebrating the discipline of hard outdoor labor as the basis for Rome's national character.

The long 5th and 6th chapters contain the illustrative substance of the study. Both leisured and working landscapes figure in Chapter 5, "Italy and the Villa Estate," which progresses from Cicero's philosophical discussions to the ideologically mediated agendas of Cato, Varro and Columella, all three of whom are concerned to champion the practices of farming for "the right kind of people." The well-rationalized luxury of Statius' villa-owning friends and Pliny's virtual tours of his own extra-urban retreats complete the chapter. In Chapter 6, "Spaces and Places," Spencer samples painting and garden design by descriptive analysis of two contemporaneous but very differently composed manifestations of a new Augustan age awareness of landscape depiction now exhibited in Rome's National Archaeological Museum of the Palazzo Massimo. In the painted frieze zone of the Villa Farnesina's hemicycle corridor, a series of vignettes which foreground elegant buildings, shrine monuments and groves against an indefinite white background come as close as any graphic image to procuring a visual integration of human activities into constructed and natural spaces. Although their points of reference cannot be precisely pinpointed, nor do they specifically illustrate any of the poetic imaginings they may call to mind, still, for the viewer moving along the sequence, they effectively adumbrate a relationship between interior and exterior environments. In contrast is the all-encompassing arboreal and floral ambience of the garden room from Livia's extra-urban villa *Ad Gallinas Albas*, best known as Prima Porta, which has no recognizable counterpart in known literature. These two highlights of Rome's National Archaeological Museum are complemented by recent scholarly reconstructions of two lost garden places within, or more accurately on the margins of, Rome. Although neither the full extent nor the visual aspect of the Pincian Sallust gardens can be recovered, still an art historian can piece together a suggestive itinerary by surveying the remains of their extensive sculptural program now distributed throughout various European museums. Roughly contemporaneous with this once spacious topography was the enclosed quadrilateral porticus of Pompey's theater of whose plantings, fountains and statuary both Catullus and Propertius have given us tantalizing partial glimpses.

Under the title "Envoi," Spencer's concluding chapter visits the partial remains of another three-dimensional landscape in the buildings and grounds of

Hadrian's villa, playing off past grandeur against an atmospheric present. While she allows that the original purposes of the now so picturesque domes, arches and columns evade reliable identification, she correctly offers the whole to our understanding as a transformation of the customary extra-urban luxury retreat stamped with its aristocratic owner's self image into a new symbolic seat of empire, a substitute administrative and diplomatic center for Rome.

Readers unfamiliar with the interpretive terminology that pervades the discussion will find brief informative definitions in the glossary that prefaces the book. Although more theoretical than has been the norm for such surveys, and incorporating detailed interpretations of so many individual authors in its coverage, the book makes no pretension to be either exhaustive or definitive, but simply to open an area for further investigation. An unusually generous (34-page) bibliography enforces this exhortation with its testimony to the range and vitality of the subject. Returning in conclusion to the attempt to understand "how nature mattered urgently ... at a time when Rome was becoming a major Mediterranean power," Spencer readily admits that cultural meaning is more feasibly retrievable than practical reality. Although a quotidian significance of landscape for the majority of citizens may be irrecoverable, recurrent themes and images can help us identify issues that they may have considered. The richly pictorial engagement of this study with its subject makes for pleasant reading at the same time that the author's thought provoking emphasis on the subjectivity of perception urges readers to understand the variety of Roman landscapes and landscape representations for themselves.

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