

ANDREW DYCK, *A Commentary on Cicero, De Divinatione II*, Michigan classical commentaries, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2020, \$80.00, xviii+320 pp., ISBN 978-0-472-07457-0.

Six years after the appearance of Celia Schultz's commentary on the first book of *De Divinatione* (reviewed in *ExClass* 20, 2014, 309-14; cf. p. vii), the Michigan Classical Commentaries series at UM Press produces a commentary on Book 2 by Andrew R. Dyck (henceforth D.). The project is closely comparable in scope and ambition to its antecedent: a full-scale discussion of a work of major significance to the study of Roman intellectual and religious history, which may equip students to closely engage with the original Latin. The scale of the two projects is also comparable: D. provides 187 pages of commentary on 37 pages of Latin, against a 143/34 ratio in Schultz. There are some glaring differences too. Schultz is a leading specialist in Roman religion; Dyck has written an unequalled set of commentaries on a range of Cicero's works, from philosophical tracts (*De Legibus*, *De Officiis*) to key speeches (*Pro Roscio Amerino*, *Catilinarians*, *Pro Caelio*); he brings to this project a comprehensive working knowledge of Cicero's oeuvre, and a rather different range of interests. Schultz's project had a recent precedent in the OUP commentary published by David Wardle in 2006: although their respective interpretations of the work could not be further apart, Schultz had an obvious reference point to bat against, along with a sizeable body of scholarship. For book 2, on the other hand, there had been no full-scale commentary in English since A.S. Pease's 1920 *opus magnum*; Dyck's attempt to fill the gap could directly engage with the commentary of Christoph Schäublin (1991) and the rich set of notes that Sebastiano Timpanaro appended to his masterly Italian translation (1988, 1994), but is to a large extent free to break new ground. There is no doubt that the key aim of this edition has been achieved: we now have a commentary on *Div. 2* that provides a comprehensive, authoritative guidance, and also sets a high standard for any future work on the dialogue. It may be effectively be used as a free-standing resource – an Advanced Latin course on *Div. 2* can at last be offered in the English-speaking classroom – or it may be fruitfully triangulated with Schultz's commentary.

The work has a straightforward structure, which essentially overlaps with Schultz's: an introduction, a Latin text, and a dense commentary. The introduction readily brings to the fore the final, and crucial difference between the two projects: the overall understanding of the dialogue and its agenda. Schultz embraced what she termed an 'integrative reading', and

subscribed to the view that the dialogue is an exploration of a philosophical and theological problem through the exposition of two opposite cases; Dyck makes a sustained case for the view that *Div.* is a critique of divination, notably of the prophetic kind, and that the arguments put forward in the two books do not carry equal weight. Both views have strong scholarly currency: the first has been very influential since the mid-1980s, especially in the English-speaking scholarship; the latter has a much older history, and has been recently restated by D. Wardle in his commentary on *Div. I*. I have also made the case for it on several occasions, and it is unremarkable that I should find Dyck's reading compelling (cf. 22 n. 59 for a difference of opinion on Marcus' attitude towards Quintus). What does bear noting in this context is the thoroughness with which D. charts the arguments of Denyer, Schofield, and Beard in favour of the opposite interpretation; his forensic refutation of Denyer's reading of Marcus' argument (37-9) is especially significant, and will no doubt be of use even to those who might wish to revive Denyer's attempt to show the flaws of Marcus' riposte. The point made on p. 25 about the need to consider divination as an 'art or science' – a *technē* – is especially significant.

The introduction is noteworthy in at least another respect. It brilliantly sets *Div.* in the context of Cicero's personal and intellectual trajectory; the opening section, 'Life of Cicero' (1-19) is one of the best concise accounts I have ever come across, and should be on the reading list of any course on the Roman Republic. It may profitably be read on its own, or as a highly effective introduction to 'The Impulse to Write' (19-20), where the composition of the dialogue is set in the uniquely complex context of late 45-early 44 BCE; it is worth stressing that such a strongly contextual reading of the dialogue is broadly conducive to the interpretation of the work that is put forward here.

After the detailed exploration of the argument of the dialogue, the introduction is rounded off by a very dense section on language and style. The commentary could have cross-referenced it more systematically: students who encounter a mention of a 'sonorous double cretic' on p. 87 (*ad* 2.3) are likely to be puzzled unless they are directed to the helpful prosodic précis on p. 33. Lastly, there is an equally valuable section on the reception of the work: Voltaire and Diderot get cursory mentions in a footnote, while John Toland and Anthony Collins receive closer attention. K. East's work, esp. *The Radicalization of Cicero. John Toland and Strategic Editing in the Early Enlightenment*, 2017, would have warranted a reference: one of the very few bibliographical gaps in a work that provides admirably strong orientation on that count too. It is in fact worth commending D.'s citational practice more widely: he engages with work in all the main academic languages, and he cites researchers of every career status – and he engages seriously with the work he quotes, rather than using it as a mere token of his bibliographical information. He endeavours to use even the most recent

scholarship: J.P.F. Wynne's 2019 *Cicero on the Philosophy of Religion: On the Nature of the gods and On Divination* appeared too late to be fully taken into account in the commentary, but receives some discussion in the preface (viii), and readers are warmly encouraged to make use of it, in spite of the many differences with D.'s approach.

The commentary takes the text of W. Ax and O. Plasberg as its starting point; it departs from it in just over fifty instances, partly accepting readings put forward by Schäublin or Timpanaro, partly by going back to the *textus traditus* or to strands of the manuscript tradition, and with a few new conjectures as well. The commentary is a very dense one: effectively a line-by-line discussion. It is not infrequent to encounter references to the work of previous editors, going as far back as to Muretus and Lambinus. There are few summative sections, which chart the contents of extended portions of the work: the focus is descriptive, rather than elucidatory. Grammatical and syntactical issues receive some discussion, but are not at the core of D.'s concerns; an Advanced Latin teacher would have to do a fair amount of heavy lifting in the classroom. Teachers and students will be well advised to keep a copy of Pinkster's 2015 *Oxford Latin Syntax. Volume I* at hand: D. systematically and helpfully refers to it (Schultz did not have that option). The key preoccupation is to elucidate the argument, on the one hand, and the historical examples and references with which the dialogue is interspersed, to an extent that is unusually high even for Cicero, on the other. Parallels are systematically invoked, and this is an aspect of the commentary in which D.'s knowledge of Cicero's oeuvre truly shines through. A partial drawback is that we miss a sense of the position of *Div.* in the development of Latin philosophical prose, or more widely in first century BCE literature; references to Hellenistic philosophy are relatively more frequent. The overall effect is a rather inward-looking one. But then, there is a great deal to contemplate in Cicero.

There is also much to profit from every single page of this commentary. Inevitably, some passages convince less than others. It seems somewhat loose to state that in early April 44 BCE Cicero 'retired to his country estates' (83): part of that period was spent at the *suburbanum* of his friend C. Matius; more importantly, that was a phase of febrile political work, albeit conducted away from Rome. The point on the 'patriotic' dimension of Cicero's philosophical writing (90) would have warranted a reference to Walter Burkert's classic paper in *Gymnasium* 72 (1965). The discussion of *diuinatio* on p. 93 is very informative, but the novelty of the term and the range of its potential meanings could have received a fuller and more systematic discussion (cf. 20, where there seems to be some confusion between *diuinatio* and 'divination', and 108, where there is mention of a 'slightly different sense' of divination as practice and 'expectation of benefits', rather than 'predictive power per se'). On 100, D. states that Cicero 'draws no sharp distinction between rhetorical

and philosophical discourse': a major contention, which runs against well-established scholarly assumptions, and would warrant further discussion elsewhere (cf. 141 on 2.45b). Old women are defined a 'marginalized group': that is at best a heavily compressed definition, which does not quite capture the complexity of the operation that associates *superstitio*, gender, and age (cf. C. Mowat, *Engendering the Future: Divination and the Construction of Gender in the Late Roman Republic*, Stuttgart 2021). 'Sullan annalist' risks being a misleading label for an author like Coelius Antipater (108). Caesar's decision to set sail for Africa in 47 BCE is not best understood in light of a contempt for divination: there is an instructive tension between the respect of the letter of the haruspical response he received and its spirit (see E. Rawson, *JRS* 68, 1978, 142-3 = *Roman Culture and Society*, 1991, 307, quoted elsewhere by D., but not put to fruition here); more widely, the familiar image of Caesar's cavalier attitude to divination does not quite hold water. At 112 and elsewhere D. makes reference to the *pax deorum* as a state to be 'restored': that view is often repeated in modern scholarship, but is not backed up by the ancient evidence (see F. Santangelo in Richardson-Santangelo, eds., *Priests and State in the Roman World*, 2011, 161-86). More context could have been given on the astrological lore of C. Sulpicius Galus (or Gallus, as D. writes: 120): see A. Nice in R.J. Evans, ed., *Prophets and Profits. Ancient Divination and Its Reception*, 2017, 87-105). The discussion of haruspicy is outstanding. I am not sure, though, that 2.51 is evidence for tensions between 'official' haruspices and private ones (if I understand D.'s point rightly: see 151); *a summo haruspice* does not entail the existence of a formalised *ordo haruspicum* in the late Republic, and the opposition with *vicanus haruspex* (1.132) is not especially significant (152). The reference to the annotation of an 'anonymous reader' in the margins of Lambinus' 1581 edition (155) is elusive: is D. talking about a specific copy he had access to? The view (expressed later on at 221) that 'the Romans... never mastered the *disciplina Etrusca*' is frankly dubious, especially in light of the evidence from the imperial period.

The section on on augury seems to oscillate somewhat between the idea that augury fell 'on hard times' in the late Republic, partly because it was 'tamed' (173), and the sound case for its enduring vigour that L. Driediger-Murphy has recently made (177). On the sources of Cicero's knowledge on the *tripudium* there should have been some discussion of D. McRae's suggestion that it derived from Ap. Claudius Caecus (MacRae, *BICS* 60, 2017, 41; endorsed by D. Padilla Peralta, *Arethusa* 51, 2018, 253, who also proposes to read Cicero's conversations with Deiotarus at 2.76 in a postcolonial vein). The discussions of lot divination and astrology are equally sure-footed. The first would have afforded the opportunity to comment on the wider issue of Cicero and religious pluralism (cfr. 198 on 2.85), on which J. Rüpke and G. Woolf have recently offered important contributions; the latter does

involve some close engagement with the vast body of Hellenistic and early Imperial debates; Panaetius is confidently identified as the key source of Marcus' case. One is left wondering whether the exciting argument of K. Stevens' *Between Greece and Babylonia: Hellenistic Intellectual History in Cross-Cultural Perspective* (2019), might have in any way impacted the discussion, had D. had the chance to engage with it. The suggestion that Tarutius from Firmum had a personal connection with Pompey (214) is speculative, and not backed up by other parallel evidence; a Picene origin is not a conclusive argument (cf. *Lexis* 39, 2021, 131–36). Marius did not lead an army of veterans to Rome in 87 (258). The commentary on the section on dreams is again very strong, and especially rewarding in tracing the complexities of Cicero's argument (see e.g. 263 on the reliance on evidence from the opponent's side); the political background is less sharply into focus, and the absence of P. Kragelund's important paper on dreams in Republican Rome (*Historia* 50, 2001) is surely revealing. – The book is almost flawlessly produced (I have noticed a 'Hortenius' at 85, and a '.,' at 108, 'altogether' at 199, 'Trogodytes' at 207).

Readers of *Div.* – whatever their interests, experience, expertise, or methodological orientation – are now likely to be sorted for at least a generation. D.'s work completes a sequence of three major commentaries that cover the whole work and the range of interpretative issues that it presents: they all offer strong readings of its agenda, but enable and deepen reflection and research on the text from a range of different standpoints. We can now look forward to new waves of work on *Div.*: to new readings, questions, connections that these commentaries will crucially enable. It is safe to expect that D.'s work will long remain as an example of the skill and rigour that future readers of this text will have to hone, and of the rewards that a close and imaginative engagement with it can yield.

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