

There are places the guide does not go. It is a shame that a few extra pages could not have been spared to sketch the broad tendencies in the work's afterlife beyond the Renaissance, since G. clearly knows this tradition (her eyes are frequently on Lipsius). Less surprisingly, she devotes no space here to symbolic economics as a literary dynamic: we are not invited to ponder the question of how Seneca's work is itself a *beneficium*. More surprising is the lack of reference to Gareth Williams' essays on *Natural Questions*, that other surviving Senecan dialogue of similar size (see now *The Cosmic Viewpoint: A Study of Seneca's Natural Questions* (2012)). But a work such as this must have its limits; and in what it seeks to do, guiding the reader into *De beneficiis* and making its depths more transparent, G.'s volume is a work of unmatched learning, clear, cogent and generous.

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P. ESPOSITO (ED.), MARCO ANNEO LUCANO, BELLUM CIVILE (PHARSALIA), LIBRO IV (Studi Latini 70). Naples: Loffredo Editore, 2009. Pp. 412. ISBN 9788875643331. €24.00.

Blessed with an annual offering of secondary literature and commentaries, Lucan's *Bellum Civile* has been pushed into the limelight. The last few years alone have yielded Monica Matthews' 2008 commentary on the über-storm scene in Lucan *BC* 5.476–721, and Paul Roche's 2009 full commentary on *BC* 1. In addition, Paolo Asso's 2010 full commentary on *BC* 4 has been published almost simultaneously with Paolo Esposito's 2009 Italian counterpart, under review here. What is more, Roche is already polishing off his next volume on *BC* 7 for the Cambridge green and yellow series: Lucan's future is looking bright.

The fourth book of Lucan's epic on the Roman civil war between Caesar and Pompey contains many of the epic's most famous scenes: the Battle of Ilerda (*BC* 4.1–401) which sees the besieged Pompeians under Afranius endure thirst and gain Caesar's pardon; the mutual suicide of Vulteius and his men on their raft (*BC* 4.402–581); and the so-called Curio episode set in Africa (*BC* 4.581–824), with the embedded myth of the fight between Hercules and Antaeus (*BC* 4.661–714).

E. treats us to twenty-six pages of introduction, followed by the Latin text (41–63) and a substantial commentary (67–352). The introduction points out the structure as well as distinctive (and often unexpected) traits of Lucan's narrative before outlining the central rôles the concepts of *furor* and *virtus* play in Lucan's world of civil war. A further section (unfortunately mislabelled as section 3 rather than 4) highlights the importance of seeing and being seen throughout *BC* 4, before a final section reminds the reader of the problematic of gaining any glory in the unnatural constellation of civil war.

E. partitions his commentary into three parts, one each for the three main episodes of the narrative. A section that outlines the historical sources for, geographical location of, and the major scholarly contributions on the respective episode prefaces each part. E. then subdivides each section into smaller parcels, which he starts off with a brief plot summary before getting down to the nitty-gritty of the commentary. He makes frequent use of Arnulfus of Orlean's twelfth-century commentary on Lucan *glosule super Lucanum* (Marti, 1958), the medieval *Commenta Bernensia* (Usener, 1869) as well as the body of *adnotationes super Lucanum* (Endt, 1909, not 1919 as given in the bibliography) and the *supplementum adnotationum super Lucanum* (Cavajoni, 1979; 1984 and 1990). In addition a number of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century editions with commentaries in Latin such as Burmann (1740, not 1711 as given in the bibliography), Oudendorp (1728), or Cortius (1828–29) are often quoted as well as Grotius (1614) and Sulpitius (1498) and the English commentary of Haskins (1887). Of particular interest are also the previously unpublished notes on Lucan IV of W. B. Anderson (1877–1959) which E. retrieved from the library of St John's College, Cambridge, and which he applies frequently throughout. This wealth of scholarship pre-dating the twentieth century does not mean that E. neglects the most recent scholarly voices. His approach rather balances these traditional views with modern approaches. E.'s commentary often provides a potted history of scholarship on particular passages: sailing through the medieval, Renaissance and (early) modern commentary tradition before finishing an entry off with references to recent publications and his own evaluations. E. also distinguishes himself through the frequent citation of (mostly) English translations through which he seeks to clarify the meaning of many a passage or pointed expression. Even a graduate class

with very little Italian will have much fun mining E.'s exhaustive entries for treasures such as the one and a half pages on *BC* 4's final *sententia* (4.824), which forms part of the epiphonema on Curio ('emere omnes, hic vendidit urbem').

E. himself is a seasoned Lucan connoisseur who has published on this author for the last three decades and the wealth of material sampled here bears witness that this commentary is a labour of love and the fruit of many years of research. The author must be congratulated for this fine and welcome addition to scholarship on Lucan.

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R. PARKES, *STATIUS, THEBAID 4 / EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTION, TRANSLATION, AND COMMENTARY*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. Pp. xxxviii + 357. ISBN 9780199695256. £80.00.

Ruth Parkes' commentary on Statius *Thebaid* 4 has been long awaited, and deservedly rewards anticipation. There are still very few recent commentaries on the *Thebaid* in English: most notably Smolenaars on Book 7 (1994) and Pollmann on Book 12 (2004). Books 1 (Hill and Gibson), 2 (Gervais), 5 (Soerink) and 8 (Augoustakis) are currently in preparation. Book 4 has proved an irresistible temptation to commentators with its richly Homeric and Callimachean catalogue and its ghoulish necromancy, both full of literary self-consciousness. P. must engage with the recent treatments of the catalogue (both on lines 4.1–344) by Micozzi (2007) and Steiniger (2005), which she does conscientiously and judiciously. Further, she has plenty to add.

The commentary consists of general introduction, text, with facing translation, notes and bibliography. The text is P.'s own, originally based on Hill, but now drawing significantly on the groundwork of Hall. She tackles very effectively the extensive emendations of Shackleton Bailey's 2003 Loeb and the three-volume intervention of Hall, Ritchie and Edwards (2007), which offers an enormous amount of material not yet fully assimilated into the scholarly mainstream. P.'s textual discussions are concise and for the most part convincing, and her text seems to me to represent an improvement. The frequency and clarity of textual discussion in the commentary is welcome, especially in making clear to students of Statius where problems have been thought to lie. P. is particularly sensitive to Statius' impressionistic and compressed language and its effects on textual critics. She rejects unnecessary emendations with good reasoned arguments.

The translation is also clear, a useful guide to how P. takes the Latin. But it is not one that would stand on its own, and reads rather awkwardly, with more than its fair share of archaisms. The introduction is densely packed; P. offers introductory material on life and works and the plot of the *Thebaid*, but much of the rest is thematic and literary: delay, excess, self-consciousness, the structure of Book 4 and its place in the epic, especially in relation to Books 7 and 12, intertextuality, reception and text. The section on reception is particularly strong, especially in Claudian, but also Ariosto, Spenser and Milton. There is also much material in the commentary on later parallels and receptions of particular elements of Statius. Themes which emerge from the commentary as important to P.'s reading of the *Thebaid* include the imitation of Hercules, epic conventions under strain, the ways in which the two sides of the war (foreign enemies, yet fraternal leaders) are assimilated, the importance of viewing, interactions with Valerius Flaccus and Silius, different types of similes and threads of Statian imagery (for instance, bulls and snakes), intratextuality, the way that Statius plays with time, and ideas of substitution. The book is a snapshot of current directions in Statian criticism.

The commentary is rich, concise and detailed. I rarely felt that P. had avoided the real difficulty or missed out a key mode of reading. Her literary comments are careful and often suggestive. She makes clear her firm grasp of the ever-expanding secondary literature, though not always endorsing readings which she presents (the word 'perceives' acts as a useful distancing device). Occasionally I felt that judiciousness led to a lack of commitment, but in general it is clear which readings and ideas P. prefers. The catalogue offers opportunities to produce readings relevant to the whole poem and P. grasps these opportunities effectively, summing up approaches to each of the seven main Argive heroes.

It would not be an easy read for the average undergraduate, peppered as it is with untranslated Latin, Greek and German among other languages. This commentary is rather aimed at scholars