to Rome, but occasionally vice versa) is followed by a long chapter on narrative and temporality; linguistics are not de Pretis' strongest point (on p. 151 the pluperfect *miseram*, where *-er-* < **-is-*, is said to be constructed with the imperfect *eram*, where *er-* < **es-*; on p. 158 I cannot parse the construction of *Epist.* 1.4.9–11 she prefers to that of Bentley and Orelli), but interesting interpretations are offered nevertheless, as also in the brief coda on Horace's portrayal of his relation with Maecenas. Furthermore, de Pretis understands that the book must be read as a book, and not merely a bundle. This is a study that cannot be ignored.

Oxford LEOFRANC HOLFORD-STREVENS

F. D'ALESSANDRO BEHR, *FEELING HISTORY: LUCAN, STOICISM, AND THE POETICS OF PASSION*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2007. Pp. xii + 259. ISBN 978-0-81421-043-7. US$59.95.

Lucan's sustained use of apostrophe in the *Bellum Civile* at first sight appears to be a rhetorical mistake: by drawing attention to himself so frequently, the narrator breaks down the verisimilitude which he has been so carefully building up. In this book Behr builds on recent scholarship — most notably Matthew Leigh's *Spectacle and Engagement* (1998) — to view this tension as part of Lucan's didactic project. Through apostrophe 'the narrator accompanies the reader along the path of a correct reception of the work of art' (8).

In her introduction B. promises the reader that a full-scale study of apostrophe in Lucan will 'let us reach far and touch on unexpectedly broad critical horizons' (2), and this promise is amply fulfilled. B. finds in Lucan's use of apostrophe the ammunition to launch a defence of Lucan's narrator and the figure of Cato against recent negative portrayals, re-asserting the importance of its Stoic ethical and didactic agenda. The most important section of this book is ch. 3, where B. argues that Lucan's use of apostrophe follows the precepts of Stoic literary theory, which promoted a 'critical stance and a detached spectatorship' (10). In this model of poetic reception the audience is far from passive; on the contrary, it is up to the reader to judge whether or not to assent to the *phantasiai* presented by the poet. The constant interventions by the narrator represent the type of critical questioning that should be happening in the mind of the audience, building what B. calls a 'second consciousness' (105).

The most contentious issue in B.'s book is whether the narratorial interventions can indeed be seen to promote 'critical' spectatorship. In ch. 4 a firm line is drawn between 'emotions', which can be rational and thus acceptable in a didactic narrator, and 'passions', which are not acceptable within Stoicism. The sceptic may feel that Lucan's narrator appears to be not so much 'detached' and 'concerned' as passionately engaged in his narrative; this same narrator wants his audience to be 'thunderstruck' (*attoniti, BC* 7.212), suggesting the very *ekplêxis* which B. believes Lucan is eager to avoid (104). Some may feel that Cato, who in B.'s view has an affinity with the narrator, is also given over-indulgent treatment in the claim that *ira* and *furor* 'tend to assume a positive slant' when applied to him and his imitators (134), whereas when exactly the same words are applied to the opposing faction they are negative. One of the passages cited by B. in support of her argument — *BC* 2.323–5 (138) — appears to point towards unrestrained passion rather than mere emotion: Brutus is roused by Cato to 'excessive love for civil war' ('in nimios belli civilis amores', *BC* 2.325).

B. is well aware that her positive reading of Cato is almost the antithesis of some recent nihilistic readings, but her book is all the more stimulating as a result. It is not simply a learned study of apostrophe in Lucan's epic, but also a sophisticated attempt to show that there is an 'ethical message' amid the despair that pervades the *Bellum Civile*.

Tonbridge School THOMAS MURGATROYD

R. T. GANIBAN, *STATIUS AND VIRGIL: THE* THEBAID *AND THE REINTERPRETATION OF THE* AENEID. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. Pp. x + 258. ISBN 9-780-52184-039-2. £50.00/US$90.00.

C. McNELIS, *STATIUS'* THEBAID *AND THE POETICS OF CIVIL WAR*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. Pp. x + 203. ISBN 978-0-52186-741-2. £50.00.

These books are nicely complementary: after an opening nod to Dante's Statius, each proceeds to examine the *Thebaid* in the light of its intertextual relationship with a particular poetic forebear. Ganiban deals with the *Aeneid*, while McNelis treats Callimachus (which his unhelpfully vague title fails to indicate). Both books make important contributions to our understanding of the *Thebaid* and both conclude with excellent discussions of the figure of Theseus and the Altar of *Clementia*. Each attempts an overall interpretation of the epic, though in both cases the framework is too absolute and schematic to be entirely convincing.

G. excellently demonstrates the Virgilian background of many savage episodes in the *Thebaid*, and his larger argument is that Statius depicts the force of *pietas* as being so weak that he effectively turns the moral universe of the *Aeneid* on its head. Of course, Statius' epic predecessor in turning Virgil's teleological world on its head was Lucan, and G.'s argument works best when it takes full consideration of this key intermediary and others, such as Ovid and Seneca. G.'s clever and supple readings are fitted into a broader structure, however, which exhibits a disagreeable inflexibility in two respects: an insistence that nearly all instances of *pietas* in the poem are futile, and that nearly all moral setbacks in Statius' epic should be read in political terms.

It is certainly true that the world of the *Thebaid* is desperately bleak, but many have found it equally true that there are 'glimmer[s] of light in the sea of darkness' (D. Hill's phrase). G. sets out methodically to extinguish these glimmers wherever in the poem others have seen them. He begins with the Coroebus episode, where he denies that the hero's moral courage shames Apollo into halting the cycle of violence; he then reads Apollo as a figure for a mortal autocrat. But his own argument suggests that it is not Apollo who represents political authority here but Coroebus, whose *pietas* links him to Aeneas and thus to the Princeps. His radiant moral force might even be compared to the statesman in the simile of civil unrest in *Aeneid* 1. For G., however, Coroebus' *pietas* is an 'irrelevant concept' (13) and inadequate (17), even though he has saved his city and himself from destruction. Likewise, Hypsipyle dramatizes the repeated 'defeat of *pietas*' (78, 94), even though she manages to save her reputation, her father and herself, and is eventually reunited with her sons. The expedition of Hopleus and Dymas demonstrates the 'utter futility' of *pietas*, even though they thereby achieve poetic immortality. The suicide of Menoecus as scapegoat to ensure his city's victory is merely a 'self-interested' (142) act, since he thereby obtains immortality.

Of course, it is quite right for G. to emphasize that Statius frequently dramatizes the perversion of Virgilian *pietas* in much the same systematic way that Lucan illustrates the perversity of Virgilian *virtus*. In most cases, therefore, G.'s insistently negative framework does not get in the way of the interpretation. Fortunately his treatment of Theseus is not as negative as his discussion of the self-sacrifices of Coroebus, Hypsipyle, Dymas, and Menoecus; so the conclusion is subtle and nicely balanced. Many of G.'s intertextual readings will be of great value to anyone interested in the *Thebaid*, though not all will be of equal value. Quite a few of his alleged intertexts are mere commonplaces of no significance (see e.g. 98, 134–5); G. might have acknowledged that there is a scale from the secure to the speculative.

The other main problem with G.'s interpretive framework is the way it reifies the optimistic 'Augustan voice' of the *Aeneid* in order to claim that Statius is critiquing it. It seems that G. himself does not buy into this straw man, and it is not demonstrated why Statius should want to read Virgil in this starkly reductive way. G. often interprets the godless and immoral landscape of the *Thebaid* not only as an inversion of Virgil but also as a political critique of the Principate; but cosmic inversion is not the same as political subversion. G. asks: 'If there are no gods respecting such values [as *pietas*] . . . can a moral world ever exist in the *Thebaid*? Is moral kingship even a possibility?' (95) My answer to both questions would be a guarded 'yes'. The remarkable thing is that decency makes even a fleeting appearance in such a hostile environment. But it is no less important for that; indeed, the human condition acquires an epic grandeur via Statius' dramatization of the fragility of goodness.

McNelis makes the case that Callimachus was a vitally important source of inspiration for Statius. He has a difficult remit, for the relevance of this author is less immediately obvious than for Virgil, and the evidence is much more problematic. He nevertheless succeeds admirably, and in some places even underplays his hand. For example, he demonstrates that the explicit programmatic reference to the footsteps of the *Aeneid* at the end of the *Thebaid* is surrounded by Callimachean allusions (23), but he overlooks the way the violent collapse of *livor* in that passage recalls the fate of *phthonos* at the end of the hymn to Apollo. Despite the fragmentary nature of the evidence, M. manages to make many convincing and original points about the importance of Callimachus in the *Thebaid*.

The overall argument of the book is that there is a tension between the ultra-bombastic, hyper-epic, anti-Callimachean subject matter of the ultimate battle around Thebes and the delaying material that comes before it, in which Statius frequently alludes to Callimachean aetiologies. So instead of a wandering first half of the epic and a fighting second half in the manner of the *Aeneid*, M. divides the *Thebaid* into a Callimachean, aetiological half and an anti-Callimachean, martial half. There is some truth to this interesting and novel perspective, though I think it is not always so easy to disentangle the Callimachean from its opposite in epic. Ever since Apollonius, epic had learned to accommodate the aesthetics and preoccupations of Callimachus, and Virgil and Ovid were masters of the art.

M. illustrates the anti-Callimachean pedigree of the story of the Seven against Thebes mainly by means of references to Propertius, but there is a danger in relying on a writer with such an anti-epic poetic agenda for an account of the relationship between Callimacheanism and epic; it was not in Propertius' interest to underscore the detente between epic and Alexandrian poetics. It is true that the Thebes story had a reputation as belonging to quintessentially bad epic; but Virgil had already taken major steps down this road in rehabilitating some of the equally reviled subject matter of cyclic epic. In this connection, I think M. underestimates the importance of Antimachus of Colophon. It is true that we only have direct evidence for Callimachus' distaste for his *Lyde*, but it seems certain that Catullus, Propertius, and Horace all considered that his disdain extended to the *Thebaid*, whether or not this was true. In that light, Statius' *Thebaid* is in its essence paradoxical, as a Callimachean revision of an epic he was thought to have hated. M.'s division of the poem into two halves tends to obscure this essential contradiction.

To give a concrete example of the difficulty in disentangling the two sides of that paradox, let us take the necklace of Harmonia. It is one of the major achievements of M.'s book that he establishes the fundamental programmatic importance of this ecphrasis. He shows that this artifact made by Vulcan, the Cyclopes and the Telchines is every bit as important to the epic as the shield of Aeneas is to the *Aeneid*. M. mainly interprets the necklace as anti-Callimachean on account of the Telchines' involvement in its creation and the way it is instrumental in bringing about the war. But this does not do full justice to both sides of its nature: it is a tiny work of exquisite craftsmanship produced by the massive enemies of Callimachus. This paradox of scale is Virgilian: his description of the Cyclopes making the shield of Aeneas repeats the language of a simile in the *Georgics* describing the microscopic work of the bees. To see the necklace of Harmonia as a true 'synecdoche for the larger narrative' (75) would entail seeing that larger narrative not as bifurcated but as a product of continuous tension between the poles represented by Antimachus and Callimachus: a work of sprawling and potentially uncontainable evil, but with the details exquisitely rendered.

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W. FITZGERALD, *MARTIAL: THE WORLD OF THE EPIGRAM*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2007. Pp. ix + 258. ISBN 978-0-226-25253-7. £20.00.

'How does one *read* an epigrammatist?' (1). If this were not such a vexing question we might not have had to wait so long for a new book on Martial, but it has been worth the wait. Sixteen years have passed since the late J. P. Sullivan, in an ambitious literary survey, urged us to reconsider Martial as an 'Unexpected Classic'. William Fitzgerald's *Martial: The World of the Epigram* is the first major study in English on the Latin epigrammatist since Sullivan, and will re-energize the scholarship on this important author. It also richly deserves a wider readership among and beyond the classics community. As we might expect from the author of *Catullan Provocations* (1995), the book is sharply written and rich in ideas. Asked for a back-cover quote, Erik Gunderson (*Staging Masculinity*) volunteered that 'hardly a page goes by without a notable observation or insight', and he is not fibbing. Classicists, academics, writers and readers who share Fitzgerald's fascination with how literary texts meet and create their 'world' will come away from this handsome and very affordable book challenged, charmed, and fired up to read more Martial, by readings that zoom between small details and large contexts to exhilarating effect.

F.'s acknowledgements (ix) locate the genesis of *Martial: the World of the Epigram* in a postgraduate seminar he taught at Berkeley in 2000. Aspects of the book reflect this declared origin in collaborative learning — and make us wish we had been there. Productively relevant areas of contemporary critical theory are introduced with a light touch, challenging us to follow up on the leads that intrigue us. Thus, *persona* and *flânerie* are covered in less than two pages (8–9), Debord and pretty much everyone else on spectacle in three (35–7), and the relation of literary form to the