



In sum, the volume is an excellent achievement and a welcome addition to Lucan studies. Leading authorities of the field introduce Lucan's epic and many of its important themes and passages to readers new to the *Bellum civile*. The volume is of great value as a resource for scholars of Lucan, but I believe its major importance will be in the classroom. Whether undergraduate or postgraduate, and whether reading Lucan in Latin or in translation, Roche's volume pairs well with reading the *Bellum civile* in its content, structure and accessibility; it will doubtless inspire many a new Lucanist.

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LUCAN AND THE EPIC TRADITION

JOSEPH (T. A.) *Thunder and Lament. Lucan on the Beginnings and Ends of Epic*. Pp. xii + 299, ill. New York: Oxford University Press, 2022. Cased, £64, US\$99. ISBN: 978-0-19-758214-5.

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J.'s superb study of metapoetics in Lucan takes its lead from the speech of Calliope at Stat. *Silv.* 2.7.36–107. There the Muse of epic foretells the future greatness of the infant Lucan. She predicts that he will surpass Ennius, Lucretius, Varro Atacinus, Ovid and Virgil (lines 75–80); she positions him as the supreme exponent of Roman historical epic (41–53); and she celebrates his proficiency with Homeric material (54–7). J. combines this poetic genealogy with the notions of 'thundering' (cf. *Silv.* 2.7.66: *detonabis*) against his epic predecessors and 'lamenting' (cf. *Silv.* 2.7.71: *deflebis*) the passing of that tradition to investigate Lucan's relationship with the 'beginnings and ends of epic'. Five chapters explore Lucan's polemical response to the epics of Homer, Livius Andronicus, Naevius and Ennius. Ennius is especially prominent as the poet who was taken both to Romanise Homer and make Rome's story of spatial and temporal expansion 'Homeric' (in the reading of J. Elliott, *Ennius and the Architecture of the Annales* [2013]). Although lamentation does feature in the first five chapters, the sixth focuses upon it, and it makes lament and commiseration central to Lucan's poetics. In the same way in which violence leads to lamentation in the progression of the normative epic plot, J. argues that Lucan's emphasis upon grief and mourning suggests his epic 'as a grand lament and thus a completion of Homeric epic' (p. 21).

In Chapter 1 Caesar's visit to Troy shows that Trojan material is exhausted, in contrast to Ennius' claim upon its continuing relevance. The intertextual and polemical frame of reference is quickly expanded to encompass Homer, Ovid and (to a lesser extent) Virgil. J. then argues both for '*Pharsalia*' as the name of the poem and this precise geographical and narrative point as the ideal time and place to reveal it. These pages (pp. 22–35) offer a programmatic glimpse of the style, scope and sensitivity of J.'s reading of Lucan. J. then considers the opening of the epic and Caesar's confrontation with *Patria* through the same metapoetic lens. In Chapter 2 the mutilation of Marius Gratidianus, the violation of the Massilian grove and Scaeva's *aristeia* are vehicles for reading how Lucan collapses epic's *topoi* of violence in upon themselves. Each scene is read as withholding the clausal features of its predecessor scenes in Homer and Ennius. In Chapter 3 J. reads Lucan as

closing the Roman story begun by Ennius in a variety of scenes: the sunrise at Pharsalus, the narrator's prediction that the *potentes* will pay in blood (4.803–6), the doomsday of Lucan's climactic battle, the narrator's interjections during Pharsalus, the end of meaningful consular dating and consular power, and the end of the poem as we have it. Chapter 4 considers Lucan's response to Carthage, Rome's 'maritime moment' and the beginning of Roman epic. This response is located in Lucan's thematic emphasis upon Hannibal, in his disaster narratives at the sites of previous Roman victories in Africa and in the many shipwrecks and self-destructive moments that occur at sea in this poem. Chapter 5 illustrates the varied homecomings that are denied to Lucan's characters and sets these against the *nostoi* of Homer (with brief remarks on Livius Andronicus): instead of homecomings, Lucan constructs 'sequences of departure, absence, devastation, and failure to return' (p. 222). In Chapter 6 J. argues that Lucan signals the central battle of his poem as occurring at the birthplace of Achilles to close out the epic genre where it began. This last chapter then focuses on the pervasive nature of grief and lamentation in Lucan as a final closural gesture to the whole epic tradition. Special emphasis is placed upon implied or explicit passages of antiphonal lament – such as occur between individual characters, collectives and the narrator – where grief is answered, is amplified and defies containment. This is developed into the notion of the epic as a song of lament and of its narrator 'leading a communal, antiphonal song of lament' (p. 257) over the destruction of Rome. The conclusion explores the concept of Lucan's epic living on after its grand act of closure, an idea embodied in the poem's 'living dead': figures such as Scaeva and the corpse of Book 6 as well as in the personification of *Pharsalia* throughout the poem.

It is in the nature of the subject matter that, as each poetic moment is explored for its potential metapoetic meanings and their implications, some evidence, readings and details will convince (some readers) more than others. For example, I baulk at the notion of the rain of blood on Scaeva's face as a signal that the *topos* of 'the one against many' is drained of life (p. 91). On a larger point, I resist the reading of the poem as complete (pp. 139–41), not least because there does not seem to me to be any comparable model from antiquity of a work of literature deliberately arranged so as to appear unfinished: this seems a much likelier possibility in early modernity and the Romantic period (see e.g. L. Barkan, *Archaeology and Aesthetics in the Making of Renaissance Culture* [2001], p. 207; A. Allport, *Studies in Romanticism* [2012]). There are also a few places where I thought additional evidence might have sharpened or further enriched J.'s point. The Pindaric/Virgilian image of the 'temple of song' might be relevant for the metapoetics of Caesar plundering the Temple of Saturn. The presence of Cato dishevelled in mourning at 2.373–8 might have been included in Chapter 6 and explored, since it may suggest a prominent role for Cato in J.'s reading of the poem (the narrator tells us that only Cato took the time to mourn for humanity: *uni quippe uacat ... | humanum lugere genus*). Pompey's name, *Magnus*, and its connotations of 'greatness' are made to be significant to the notion of the whole poem as a lament, but the other pun latent in his name, *pompē*, encompassing both triumph and funeral procession (cf. e.g. 1.286: *pompa triumphi*; 6.531–2: *peruersa funera pompa | retullit a tumulis*), may have equal significance for J.'s framework (cf. D. Feeney, in: C. Tesoriero [ed.], *Lucan* [2010], p. 354 n. 17).

These are quibbles. As a comprehensive reading of the poem, *Thunder and Lament* is a brilliant success and effectively puts Lucan in dialogue with the whole epic tradition. It is also a pleasure to read: its style is clear, and the discussion is consistently illuminating. J. states his methodology plainly and puts all textual evidence before his readers. As well as its overall thesis and its many case studies, there are frequent, instructive discussions of individual words with metapoetic resonances (e.g. *conuersum*, *canimus*,

membrum, silua, notus, uestigia, primus, fragmentum). I shall be setting this book for my students in future so that they can consider its overall argument and methodology, so they can apply the many paths it offers for exploring the poem, and so I can re-read it and discuss it with them. Anyone interested in Lucan should read *Thunder and Lament*; it also has a great deal to teach those interested in Latin literature more generally: it is highly recommended.

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TRANSLATING PLINY

TURNER (B.), TALBERT (R. J. A.) (trans.) *Pliny the Elder's World. Natural History, Books 2–6*. Pp. xii + 317, maps. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022. Cased, £79.99, US\$105. ISBN: 978-1-108-48175-5. doi:10.1017/S0009840X23001142

This book is a long-needed, welcome arrival. H. Rackham's aged translation no longer suits; other modern scholarly languages provide better Pliny translations (pp. 5–6). Turner and Talbert (T&T) offer a new translation into English. Moreover, Pliny generously cites his sources, and his Books 2–6 provide a (somewhat kaleidoscopic) window into earlier Latin and Greek geography, of which we now have a modern English translation.

Any translation opens the original to new audiences; thus, evaluation requires technical details. Translators will vary in their choices, and there is no perfect or final translation – so examining multiple versions helps. T&T explain that they only translate (p. ix; cf. p. 6), whereas D. Roller composes the commentary, *A Guide to the Geography of Pliny the Elder* (2022). But every translation amounts to commentary, seen in its choices. Which sort is this one? T&T aim to provide 'freshness and accuracy' and to 'prompt closer attention' (p. ix) – in functional translation theory, a 'documentary' (content-oriented) translation.

T&T include five maps, by the Ancient World Mapping Center (p. xi), and two associated websites indexing ancient sites to modern names (pp. 8, 308). Geography and ethnography continue to play a role in Pliny's later books (p. 3), from which T&T translate and properly index, 'Notable Geographical Passages'. These come from Books 7–10 (humans and animals); 12, 14, 16, 18–19 (plants); 27 (medicines from plants); 31–2 (medicines from watery creatures); and 37 (gemstones).

Latin editions of Pliny's books vary (pp. 4–5). In Appendix 3 T&T indicate their choices for Books 2–6: the Budé edition used for Books 2–4, and some parts of 5–6; however, the Tusculum edition for other parts of 5–6. Their discussion implies that for Book 1 and for the selections they used the Budé.

T&T rarely write out numbers larger than ten (p. 9) – over-regularising Pliny's inconsistency or intention. Some Latin terms (pp. 8–9), mainly political (e.g. *gens*; *oppidum*; *urbs*) and geographical (e.g. *litus*; *ora*; *sinus*), are consistently and distinctly translated, but terms without corresponding distinctive English terms are translated alike ('river' covers both *amnis* and the *flu-* terms). However, T&T sometimes inconsistently translate terms where consistency would be helpful.