

The Classical Review

<http://journals.cambridge.org/CAR>

Additional services for *The Classical Review*:

Email alerts: [Click here](#)

Subscriptions: [Click here](#)

Commercial reprints: [Click here](#)

Terms of use : [Click here](#)



LUCAN AND HORACE. D. Groß *Plenus litteris Lucanus. Zur Rezeption der horazischen Oden und Epoden in Lucans Bellum Civile*. (Litora Classica 3.) Pp. 305. Rahden/Westf.: Verlag Marie Leidorf, 2013. Paper, €34.80. ISBN: 978-3-86757-473-0.

Nicola Hömke

The Classical Review / Volume 65 / Issue 01 / April 2015, pp 145 - 147

DOI: 10.1017/S0009840X14002534, Published online: 22 January 2015

Link to this article: http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0009840X14002534

How to cite this article:

Nicola Hömke (2015). The Classical Review, 65, pp 145-147 doi:10.1017/S0009840X14002534

Request Permissions : [Click here](#)

specifically technical² and sometimes pertains to aesthetics or performance.³ The conclusion, consequently, is somewhat anticlimactic for its caution: when Z. pleads that ‘I am not suggesting that the influence of pantomime ... necessarily bears the implication that Seneca intended his tragedies to be performed as pantomime or with pantomimic sequences’ (p. 203), the *litotes* frustrates by deviating from the trajectory of the argument while leaving the door open to the possibility that such an argument might none the less be made. I suspect that, with the foundation laid, there is more to come on the topic of Seneca-as-dance.

Other minor shortcomings take the form of missed opportunities or odd editorial choices. Revisions to the dissertation on which the monograph is based, for one, appear (on the basis of my cursory survey) limited to the most minor of adjustments at the level of paragraph structure. The opportunity to move beyond the strictures and limitations of that genre ought to have been seized. I am surprised as well that Greek and Latin remain untranslated throughout: non-specialists will feel themselves hard done by and adrift, particularly amongst the primary sources for pantomime. But such quibbles ought not to detract from the study’s success: Z. treats pantomime confidently and convincingly, and even if serious questions remain about the pantomimic quality of Senecan tragedy, she has gone some way to elucidating many oddities of his dramaturgy.

University of Manitoba

C. MICHAEL SAMPSON
mike.sampson@umanitoba.ca

LUCAN AND HORACE

GROB (D.) *Plenus litteris Lucanus. Zur Rezeption der horazischen Oden und Epoden in Lucans Bellum Civile.* (Litora Classica 3.) Pp. 305. Rahden/Westf.: Verlag Marie Leidorf, 2013. Paper, €34.80. ISBN: 978-3-86757-473-0.

doi:10.1017/S0009840X14002534

Plenus litteris – this is the quality demanded by the poetaster Eumolpus at Petron. 118.6 in anyone who wants to write a civil war epic. Whether the poem that follows (Petron. 119–24) on the theme of civil war was really designed as criticism specifically of Lucan is a discussion that will presumably never reach an end; but G. is clearly a proponent of this identification, and he interprets *plenus litteris* as ‘familiarity with literary predecessors’. He has set himself the challenge of analysing how Lucan engages with one such predecessor – the poet Horace. For G., this has been neglected until now for two reasons, namely that a focus restricted exclusively to texts of the same genre has obscured the reception of other genres, and that until recently too great a stress has been placed on the role of Virgil as pre-text author (pp. 11–12). It is therefore all the more welcome that there are now a number of recent or current research projects that look beyond generic boundaries and

²E.g. the ‘alien’ technique of description ‘derives from the penetration into Seneca’s tragic texts of the stylistic technique of composition of pantomimic libretti’ (p. 90); ‘it is possible that the language of pantomime ... may have affected Seneca’s writing’ (p. 202).

³The lyric exchange in act 1 of *Troades*, for example, ‘could well bear the sign of the influence of the aesthetics of pantomime’ (p. 85). Similarly, ‘The idea that pantomime played a part in the performance of the problematic scripts that have come down to us as “Seneca’s tragedies” can help to solve’ (p. 201).

are thus gradually filling this gap (cf. p. 277). G.'s aim is to show that the Horatian pre-texts offer decisive help to the reader of Lucan in interpreting the later poet's new view of history, which goes hand in hand with the dismantling of the earlier, Augustan historical myth.

G. first presents an extensive review of existing research on the reception of Horace from Propertius to Lucan using a large number of subcategories (the precise structure of which is revealed only in the more detailed version of the contents list at the end of the volume). He concludes that the reception of Horace in most authors before Lucan and in Lucan himself has not yet been adequately explored. Furthermore, there is a section (1.3) on method, which discusses possible ways of presenting intertextual references, based on J. Helbig (*Intertextualität und Markierung* [1996]) and M.G. Bonanno (*L'allusione necessaria* [1990]). G. concludes, none the less, that the intertextual references that he identifies in his own study will not be assigned to these kinds of functional categories, and he will instead interpret passages on a case-by-case basis (p. 40); however, he does return to these categories in the concluding summary in Chapter 4. The two forms of intertextuality that he regards as productive – affirmative adoption and contrastive imitation of the pre-text – correspond to Bonanno's *allusione* and *parodia* respectively (p. 113).

With an inquiry into Lucan's narrator (Chapter 2), G. first turns to an overarching element of the epic (in an 'Interpretationsskizze des Gesamtwerks', p. 41). This prepares the ground for the analysis of individual passages by examining the narrator's function as *praeceptor populi*, as presented in the proem, in the manner of a 'first-person lyric voice', in which G. sees a strong correspondence in thought, if not in word, with the narrative style of Hor. *Epod.* 7 and 16. The detailed examination of selected passages for their references to Horace (Chapter 3), at nearly 200 pages, forms the greater part of the book. Here G. sometimes begins from a specific pre-text (thus Chapter 3.2 on Hor. *Epod.* 2 in Lucan), sometimes from shared sites (Chapter 3.4: Troy; 3.6: on the theme of the relocation of Rome among Augustan authors and in Lucan) or personages (Chapter 3.5: Romulus and Remus; Chapter 3.8: Caesar, Pompey and Cato), or from specific poetological aspects or motifs (Chapter 3.1: depiction of civil war; Chapter 3.3: literary characters between *militia* and *amor*; Chapter 3.7: the immortality of poetry). The gains from these intertextual analyses are of varying value. G.'s arguments are most convincing where they are supported by direct verbal borrowing from the pre-text. Thus in Lucan's description at *B.C.* 5.403ff. of how Caesar, when leaving Rome, hurried past a *piger Apulus* on unplanted fields, the true significance of the passage first emerges by comparing Hor. *Carm.* 3.16, with its exemplum of the *impiger Apulus*: the civil war is not about luxury or riches but about sheer survival (Chapter 3.1.4). G. also presents a valuable new approach to the behaviour of the three protagonists Caesar, Pompey and Cato by regarding them under the aspect, constitutive for Augustan love elegy, of the collision of the values of duty and love (Chapter 3.3). Not everyone will follow G. in seeing the three leaders as embodying the three stages of the elegiac life presented also in Horace's Sybaris ode (*Carm.* 1.8) but, when the three protagonists are examined again in Chapter 3.8, Lucan's Pompey, especially, gains depth if we understand his orientation towards the *popularis aura* as deriving from a contrastive imitation of Horace's definition of *virtus* in *Carm.* 3.2.20 (*nec ... arbitrio popularis aerae*).

Every analysis that takes as its starting point the postulate of intensive use of a specific pre-text inevitably runs the risk of searching for references in a far too selective way, and so in this case of seeing Lucan's epic through 'Horatian blinkers'. G. tries to counter this danger by citing other possible pre-texts in the footnotes (this is important, for example, in Chapter 3.1.1 on the causes of the civil war, and in Chapter 3.1.4 on its effects), or by

expanding the scope of the study for certain aspects (thus Chapter 3.3, on the *militia/amor* discourse, covers the Augustan elegists in general, and Chapter 3.8.1, on the Caesar/Amyclas scene in *B.C.* 5, also considers Virgil/Euander in *Aen.* 8, etc.). Horace at times appears to be more one representative of a widespread contemporary mood than Lucan's specific point of reference (e.g. in the rhetorical strategy of claimed effeminisation pursued against Caesar in connection with his residence at the Egyptian court, cf. Chapter 3.3.3).

There is no doubt that G. has undertaken a mammoth task, and a useful one, in examining the whole of the *Bellum Civile* for potential intertextual links to Horace, so one is ready to accept some limitations in the depth of interpretation of the individual passages. In some cases, however, these limits are considerable: no discussion of Lucan's Cato can be considered complete if the diametrically opposed views of this figure in current research are not seriously addressed; merely mentioning the view of Cato as an idealised figure (p. 267 in the conclusion, citing a Festschrift article by H. Strasburger from 1983) is not enough. Similarly, in Chapter 3.8.2, in which G. – very convincingly – interprets Caesar as a 'Prototyp des Normbrechers', one waits in vain for constructive engagement with the various concepts of boundary crossing presented for example in J. Masters (*Poetry and Civil War in Lucan's Bellum Civile* [1992]) or S. Bartsch (*Ideology in Cold Blood* [1997]). A further drawback is that this doctoral dissertation, submitted in 2010/11, has been only 'lightly revised at a few places' according to the foreword. In a 2013 publication it is strange to be told that P. Roche's 2009 commentary only became available immediately before completion (p. 71 n. 283); as G. himself notes, Roche's welcome detailed treatment of Horace would have earned it a discussion in G.'s chapter on previous research. For the same reason, there is also no consideration of the essay collections edited by O. Devillers / S. Franchet d'Espèrey (*Lucaïn en débat* [2010]), N. Hömke / C. Reitz (*Lucan's Bellum Civile* [2010]) and P. Asso (*Brill's Companion to Lucan* [2011]), or the commentary on *B.C.* 9 by M. Seewald (2008).

Freie Universität Berlin

NICOLA HÖMKE
nicola.hoemke@fu-berlin.de

PLINY THE YOUNGER

WINSBURY (R.) *Pliny the Younger. A Life in Roman Letters*. Pp. x + 246. London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014. Cased, £65. ISBN: 978-1-4725-1458-5.

doi:10.1017/S0009840X1400242X

The past decade has witnessed a resurgence of scholarly interest in Pliny the Younger and his world. Pliny's *Letters*, a perennial staple of undergraduate courses in Roman history, have been the subject of incisive critical analysis by I. Marchesi in *The Art of Pliny's Letters* (2008), while R.K. Gibson and R. Morello's modestly-titled *Reading the Letters of Pliny the Younger: an Introduction* (2012), has put the study of the corpus on a new footing. The *Panegyricus*, a speech more often quoted than read, has also been the subject of a fine collection edited by P.A. Roche, *Pliny's Praise: the Panegyricus in the Roman World* (2011). To these works we can now add this volume, W.'s accessible biography intended for the general reader.

It may initially seem surprising that W. is the first author to produce a biographical account of Pliny the Younger in English. There is certainly sufficient source material,