concise, if N. had refrained from regularly citing (and quite often translating) entire passages from Greek and Latin texts that are somehow 'parallel' to an idea included in a passage of Seneca's text. Such long lists of intertexts (the useful *Index locorum* at the end of this volume occupies thirty-six columns) feature in many modern commentaries, but are potentially confusing, because they obscure the issue of real and fruitful intertextual dialogue. I would have been happier both if N. had highlighted more clearly the passages that either influenced directly or were themselves directly influenced by Seneca's views in this epistle, and if he had been more prone to excluding rather than including intertexts of a more general nature. Had this been done consistently, I would have been able to appreciate more clearly what happened before and after the transmission of a philosophical idea from one author to the next, or from the text of an author to another text of the same author. What, for instance, is the point of adducing passages from Seneca's tragedies (mostly, *Phaedra*) to corroborate Seneca's own views against Posidonius, if the reader is not told about the speaker and function of the tragic quotation in its context, and if there is no discussion of the relationship (if any) between the tragedy in question and Epistle 90?

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SNAKEBITTEN

C. R. Raschle: *Pestes Harenae. Die Schlangenepisode in Lucans* Pharsalia *(IX 587–949)*. Pp. 445. Frankfurt am Main, etc.: Peter Lang, 2001. Paper, £40. ISBN: 3-631-36666-3.

This lightly revised dissertation submitted to the University of Fribourg offers a lengthy introduction, text, translation, and detailed scholarly commentary to roughly one-third of the ninth book of Lucan's *Bellum civile*. It covers the last part of the march made by Cato and his army across the Libyan desert toward Leptis Magna, the highlight of which is a deadly encounter with a menagerie of poisonous snakes. The rhetorical strategy of the dissertation is to defend the so-called snake-episode against a long tradition of criticism that finds it inappropriate, absurd, or a failure. Raschle does this well by showing how Lucan masterfully orchestrates a variety of sources and discourses (epic, mythological, didactic, zoological, and medical) so that they harmonize with the larger plan of his epic.

R. follows the lead of scholars who assume that Lucan structured *Bellum civile* in three units of four books, and that the twelfth and final book would have ended with Cato's suicide at Utica. R. understands the ninth book as the beginning of the poem's final tetrad, in which Lucan re-introduces Cato as the true hero of the poem who champions republican *libertas* through his Stoic opposition to the tyranny of Caesar. Within this framework, the snake-episode is no extravagant digression, but a defining moment in which Cato's character, when put to the ultimate test by *Fortuna*, exhibits the Stoic ideals of *virtus*, *patientia*, and *duritia*, in contrast to the *voluptas* to which Caesar will succumb on visiting Egypt in Book 10. R.'s reading of Cato's heroism in the snake-episode is obviously an inherited one, but it gains renewed energy by disagreeing with 'Anglo-Saxon' critics (particularly Johnson and Leigh) who argue that Lucan's purpose in the snake-episode is either to parody Cato's Stoicism or to show its futility. R. may be a little too quick to rattle his saber against 'deconstructive' interpretation, given the fact that his own 'constructive' reading of the episode involves

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at least one *petitio principii*. To be sure, safety would appear to lie with the scholars who want *Bellum civile* to have a redemptive ending. But the epic in its extant form does not culminate in Cato's *Freitod* and moral transcendence over Caesar. Nor does R. address Fantham's point that Cato contradicts Stoic principles by marching *au rebours* through the torrid zone, which Nature has made inaccessible to humans. One may therefore legitimately ask whether Cato's march is a test of Stoic virtue or an act of hubris.

Even if the dissertation is too one-sided to deal with Lucan's ambiguity, one can still profit from its thorough study of sources, parallels, and secondary literature. One of the opportunities that the commentary exploits is the recent appearance of a study of ancient herpetology by an Egyptologist: C. Leitz, *Die Schlangennamen in den ägyptischen und griechischen Giftbüchern* (Stuttgart, 1997). With Leitz as a guide, R. compares Lucan's snakes not only to ancient scientific and medical descriptions (Nicander, Aemilius Macer, Andromachus Senior, Celsus, Philumenos) but also to modern zoological ones. Another strength of the dissertation is its attention to Lucan's use of the epic tradition and particularly his reliance on Ovid. R. is not interested, however, in the way that Lucan receives the *Metamorphoses*, because he does not view Lucan's imitation of Ovid as a form of reception, but simply as a product of emulative *variatio*. Nonetheless, when he contests Leigh's reading of the battle between the *prester* and Nasidius as an allegory about Stoic anger, his alternative reading of the scene as a 'metamorphosis' suggests that Lucan is creatively responding to the *Metamorphoses* (cf. S. Wheeler, *Arethusa* 35 [2002], 361–80).

One of the commentary's drawbacks is its length. Repetition could have been eliminated and errors kept to a minimum. There are numerous questionable uses of terminology. For example, Lucan's encomium of Cato (9.587–604) is called an 'elogium', although it is patently not a sepulchral inscription. Misprints in Latin and Greek quotations abound. For instance, on the first page of the introduction, the quotation of 9.34 'civilia belli' should read 'civilia bella'. The weakest part of the dissertation is R.'s text of *BC* 9.587–949, which is littered with mistakes that would have earned a sharp rebuke from Housman. If that were not all, the readings in the text sometimes do not agree with the Latin quoted in the commentary's lemmata. Some of the problems have to do with confused orthography: at 674, R. prints *voltus* in the text (contrast *vultusque* at 680) but *vultus* in the commentary. The same disagreement between text and commentary occurs at 841 (*alliciunt*, *adliciunt*), 896 (*inmunes*, *immunes*), and 913 (*conprendit*, *comprendit*). At 707, the text has a typographical error: *Libyae* should be *Libycae*, as in the commentary. At 709, *squamiferas . . . orbes* is incorrect, but the commentary has the correct *squamiferos*. In some cases, the commentary cannot help the text's blunders: the enclitic *-que* is missing from *sibila* (724) and *totis* (749). More serious still is the unmetrical *fatis* (753), which should be *fatique*. At 903, read *utque* not *atque*. One would have also expected R. to note on p. 127 that he diverges from Shackleton Bailey when he reads *illis* instead of *illa* at 898. More could be said about botched punctuation (e.g. a missing period at 610), but suffice it to say that textual criticism is not R.'s strong suit. Likewise his reports of the textual criticism of others is suspect. At l. 592, he comments that Shackleton Bailey follows Housman in preferring *conatur* to *cogatur*, but does not realize that Housman adopted *cogatur*. Moroever, Housman did not agree with 'KORRTE (sic) und WEISE im letzten Jahrhundert' on this point, neither of whom were alive in the twentieth century. The reader will not be able to find out from the list of 'Textausgaben' that Kortte or Cortius published his edition in 1726 and Weise his in 1835 because both have been omitted. To sum up, R.'s industriousness in collecting and presenting a wide

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range of information on Lucan's snake-episode is laudable, but readers will have to watch their step when using his text and commentary.

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SATIRIC VOICES

K. FREUDENBURG: *Satires of Rome: Threatening Poses from Lucilius to Juvenal*. Pp. xviii + 289. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. Paper, £17.95 (Cased, £47.50). ISBN: 0-521-00621-X (0-521-80357-8 hbk).

No review can do full justice to the wealth of sophisticated and provocative ideas put forth in this volume with remarkable clarity of expression and unfailing wit that owes much to John Henderson.

If I were to offer a conventional description of F.'s study of Roman verse satire, I would say that it is predictably divided into three very long chapters (one on Horace, one on Persius, and one on Juvenal) with helpful sub-sections that discuss a particular satire or group of satires, and that its aim is to explain the shifts in the development of Roman verse satire by taking it out of the margins of Roman literary history and by placing it not only in relation to the concepts of identity and self-understanding of the Roman reader, but also in the centre of the cultural and political events of the times in which Horace, Persius, and Juvenal were writing. F. realizes his aim through a close reading of the majority of the satiric output of the above authors, and the conversational and jargon-free style he employs while guiding the reader through each poem is reminiscent of the informal and relaxed style Horace was using to convey his message to his audience (and make them agree with him). A list of key dates for the study of Roman verse satire and a glossary of key names and technical terms give the impression that this book aims at a wide audience. Almost all Latin and Greek extracts are translated.

But the conventional description I offer above is inadequate, for F. achieves much more than that. The unseen but strongly felt presence in F.'s discussion of the social-historical issues raised in the poems he analyses is Lucilius, and all the chapters of this book focus on how each of these three verse-satirists deals with the image of the politically outspoken and socially formidable Lucilius as the originator of the genre, and with the implications of the decision to write satire of the Lucilian kind in an era that would not look kindly upon or even tolerate such literary initiatives. So for 'Chapter 1: Horace' read 'Chapter 1: Horace *and Lucilius*', for 'Chapter 2: Persius' read 'Chapter 2: Persius *and Lucilius*', and so on.

Is the speaker in the so-called 'diatribes' of Horace's first book of satires a convincing Epicurean or a mere parasite, whose view of life undermines the validity of any serious messages projected out of these poems? Is Horace, the Callimachean satirist, better than Lucilius? If not, why is it important to point out that losing to Lucilius is more telling than defeating him? If Horace fails in his rôle as satirist in the Lucilian arena, are *we* more successful in our rôle as alert readers avoiding the traps Horace has set in his ostensibly amusing poems about the witch-hags and 'the pest'? How does it feel writing a second book of satires shortly after the events at Actium? What are the powers that exert such pressure on Persius that his satirical voice, filled with Horatian reminiscences, comes out so vitriolic, disillusioned, and introspective?

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