Greek–English lexicon, the one from which we should begin and to which we must all add new insights as they become available' (338). 'There are not many classicists who have read all forty-eight books of Nonnus' *Dionysiaca*, and even fewer who have been paid for it' (339): what a pleasure it is to relish once more the unmistakeable voice of Martin West! Whether he also read the *Paraphrase* in its entirety is unrecorded; but, if so, there was no remuneration: the *Paraphrase* had been exiled to Lampe's *Patristic Greek Lexicon*. Crönert's 1913 revision of Passow 'is of course not up to date with more recent discoveries, and it has the rather more serious deficiency that it never got beyond ἀνά' (340). The four specimen entries which West submits to illustrate a *Poetic Lexicon of Classical Greek* (one of a hypothetical flotilla of specialist lexica) go from ἆ to ἄτη: slightly further than Crönert, but with notable gaps. West's sober judgement is that LS 'has no serious rival and is unlikely ever to have one' (341). Contrast Anne Thompson, using βάπτω to illustrate 'the state of our ancient Greek dictionaries' (392): rightly concluding that 'dictionaries do not very accurately reflect what there is to be known', she makes the utopian demand that 'there needs to be a completely new start' (393). John Considine, a contributor to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, reviews its debt to Liddell and Scott, and the reasons why it had to take a different direction.

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Latin Literature

First up, a brace of major Teubner editions. Marcus Deufert's *De rerum natura* marks a significant moment in Lucretian studies.[1] I suspect that most people, at least in the Anglosphere, are still using Cyril Bailey's venerable Oxford Classical Text (revised in 1922) for everyday reading, if not the equally antique Loeb (W. D. Rouse, 1924). In broadest outline, text-critical views haven't changed much since: a 'closed' tradition, in which two Carolingian manuscripts rejoicing in the workaday names *Oblongus* and *Quadratus* are prime witnesses, but often problematic ones; a mass of manuscripts from Renaissance Italy, which editors consult primarily for conjectures. But the last century has seen plenty of important work, and Deufert can report more precisely on the various corrections made in O and Q; affirm that all Italian manuscripts descend from O, and give them a stemma; pan many more humanist conjectures; wade in the muddy river (xxi) of modern interventions; and offer his own solutions to, or *non liquet* on, textual problems small and large. The result is a text with plenty of novelties (and many questions left open), and an edition with a very different look.

In part that's a matter of aesthetics. Bailey's OCT parades the brevity which has often been preferred in that series, with barely five pages of prefatory material and a minimal *apparatus criticus*. Deufert, like many Teubner editors, is expansive: nearly fifty pages of preface, in Latin (elegant simplicity, with some purple passages), and extensive reporting of variants and conjectures in the apparatus. I say 'the' apparatus; in fact there are three,

[1] *Titus Lucretius Carus. De rerum natura*. Edited by Marcus Deufert. Berlin, De Gruyter, 2019. Pp. xlix + 314. Hardback £72.50, ISBN: 978-3-11-026251-3.

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with one for the indirect tradition and another for repetitions within *De rerum natura*. If that still leaves you wanting more, worry not: not one but two companion volumes are also on offer. The *Prolegomena* published a couple of years ago expand on the preface; they are devoted mostly to the Carolingian and Renaissance tradition, but with chapters too on the transmitted paratexts and orthography.[2] On this last Deufert embraces a curious form of purism, that we'll never know whether Lucretius wrote, say, *oculi* (1.310, etc.) or *oculei* (3.97), and he might even have alternated; we should therefore follow the archetype in its inconsistencies. Conversely, he prints *nihil*, not *nil*, every time, metre be damned (*sed nihil dulcius est…*, 2.7); and the absinth in Lucretius' honeyed cup is now *apsinthus*, whether or not the archetype said so (the apparatus at 1.941 silently implies that it did, but at 4.16 we read 'absinthi…Ω *1, 941*'). A chunky critical commentary, meanwhile, expands on the apparatus with more discursive treatment of textual problems;[3] though selective, it is a major work of interpretation – necessarily literary and philosophical as well as textual – in itself.

The commentary also airs a topic on which the Teubner preface is strangely coy. According to Deufert, the *De rerum natura* contains around 220 interpolated lines (down from 370, as he claimed in headier days[4]), including the proem to Book 4, which notoriously repeats almost verbatim the 'delayed preface' of 1.926–50. Deufert shows his own good nature by leaving all suspected lines in the text, in {curly} brackets, but the implication is a shorter poem than some would like, and a strong contrast, we can predict, with the Oxford text currently in the works. Its editor, David Butterfield, is one of the many who think that Lucretius never finished his poem, meaning that we cannot presume to attribute problems to an interpolator.[5] Far be it from me to intervene in this learned debate, save to note the curious fact that 'Butterfield' contains all the *elementa* of 'Deufert'. {In fact, it's an anagram of 'Deufert bit L.'} Fatuous of me – or is there deeper meaning here (cf. 1.912)?

If Lucretian editions are like London buses, Virgil has been enjoying more regular renewal, now with Gian Biagio Conte's prompt revision of his Teubner *Aeneid*.[6] Owners of the first edition (2009) will be curious to see what's changed (and perhaps a little sorry that their investment was so short-lived). Font and typesetting for starters, and format too: since taking over the Teubner series in 2007, De Gruyter have ditched the handsome cloth covers, and increased the size to match house style. As for content, Conte's new preface is tight-lipped, admitting only that he has reported more conjectures, and that '*magis confidentem me saepe praebui, tamen non a moderatione alienum*' ('I have often shown myself more confident, but not averse to moderation', xiv); he devotes space rather to arguing that editors need to steer a course between the Scylla of excessive ingenuity and the Charybdis of blind loyalty to the manuscripts (ix–xiii).

[2] M. Deufert, *Prolegomena zur Editio Teubneriana des Lukrez* (Berlin, 2017).

[3] *Kritischer Kommentar zu Lukrezens 'De rerum natura'*. By Marcus Deufert. Texte und Kommentare 56. Berlin, De Gruyter, 2018. Pp. x + 516. Hardback £136.50, ISBN: 978-3-11-041471-4.

[4] M. Deufert, *Pseudo-Lukrezisches in Lukrez. Die unechten Verse in Lukrezens 'De rerum natura'* (Berlin, 1996).

[5] D. Butterfield, '*Lucretius auctus*? The question of interpolation in *De rerum natura*', in J. Martínez (ed.), *Fakes and Forgers in Classical Literature. Ergo decipiatur!* (Leiden, 2014), 15–42.

[6] *Publius Vergilius Maro. Aeneis. Editio altera.* Edited by Gian Biagio Conte. Berlin, De Gruyter, 2019. Pp. li + 384. Hardback £91, ISBN: 978-3-11-064737-2.

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Not a controversial point in the abstract; and his three examples – none of which involves a change of mind since the first edition – do little to show how we get beyond informed subjectivity when it comes to specifics. Still curious, then, about how much is new here, I tried a little collation of text and apparatus. My *sortes Vergilianae* took me to *Aeneid* 7.1–100, where I found three changes in the text, one minor (*Rex* corrected to *rex*, 7.45), two substantive: *At pius exsequiis Aeneas rite solutis* ('But pious Aeneas, the funeral rites duly performed', 7.5) is replaced by Kyle Gervais' newly published emendation *At pius Aeneas sacris iam rite solutis* ('…the sacred rites…'), with Gervais' arguments rehearsed in the apparatus; and where Conte previously had *externi uenient generi* ('sons-in-law will come from abroad', 7.98), he has now come round to Servius' point of view, giving *ueniunt* ('are coming'). I also poked around to see how reviews of the first edition had been received. Without prefatorial thanks, and sparingly thereafter: Stephen Heyworth, for instance, listed twenty 'excellent suggestions' absent from the apparatus;[7] of these Conte mentions but rejects seven, and disregards the rest. (He does, however, tacitly follow the advice of Heyworth and others in signalling which major witnesses are extant at any point.)

Those reviews were united in hailing the *Aeneid* of 2009 as a landmark volume; this *retractatio* ten years on represents more of a tidy-up, but not a trivial one. It's striking, though, that so many Virgilians are still using Mynors' Oxford text (1963) as their vade mecum.[8] Anglocentric conservatism may be to blame, but there is a more banal consideration perhaps worth airing. I can comfortably hold Mynors' volume for reading away from a desk (and it contains the *Eclogues* and *Georgics* into the bargain). Conte (first edition) is a little less convenient, Conte (second edition) distinctly impractical, fifty per cent bigger and heavier. So too with Lucretius: I shouldn't admit it, but I'll be tempted to keep my slim OCT to hand when teaching, less than half the weight of Deufert. To be sure, I get plenty more apparatus in both poems for my money, and much sound learning. But I also get needlessly wide margins and a high price tag: thank you, De Gruyter, for rescuing Teubner; but is it too late to try keeping the old format after all? On the other hand, there's ever better news for those who prefer to read on screen, which I gather is the only way you'll ever read these words of mine, given current circumstances: a steadily increasing back catalogue of Teubners is available online, and each book can now be downloaded as a single PDF – if you're lucky enough to have institutional access to the De Gruyter website (or a deep pocket).

Two Cambridge 'Green and Yellows' next, beginning with Stephen Heyworth, who shows commendable affection for the number three: having written commentaries with James Morwood on Propertius 3 and *Aeneid* 3,[9] he's made it a hat trick with a solo venture on *Fasti* 3.[10] The product is as impressive as you would expect, and a good reason,

[7] S. Heyworth, *BMCRev* 2010.10.03.

[8] Both Elena Giusti and David Quint, for instance, in the books I wrote about last time (*G&R* 67.1 [2020], pp. 81–2). No sign that Conte has been thumbed by Rebecca Armstrong or Hunter Gardner (below) either.

[9] S. J. Heyworth and J. H. W. Morwood, *A Commentary on Propertius, Book 3* (Oxford, 2011); S. J. Heyworth and J. H. W. Morwood, *A Commentary on Vergil Aeneid 3* (Oxford, 2017), reviewed in *G&R* 65.1 (2018), 108–10.

[10] *Ovid. Fasti Book III*. Edited by S. J. Heyworth. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2019. Pp. x + 288. Hardback £74.99, ISBN: 978-1-107-01647-7; paperback £24.99, ISBN: 978-1-107-60246-5.

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if you need it, to give one of Ovid's longest and least-read poems a try. (A 'Green and Yellow' on *Fasti* 5 being written by John Miller will mean that every book has a modern English commentary.) Book 3, the book of March and of Mars, is rich in foundation myth, with Silvia, Romulus and Remus, and the 'Rape of the Sabines' leading the procession; there's Bacchic revelry too, in Ariadne's catasterism and the Liberalia. As for those Ides, they occasion an outsized narrative on Anna Perenna – before Vesta persuades Ovid to include just a few lines on a certain more recent event. To all this Heyworth is a consummate guide, writing a touch more austerely than in the collaborations with Morwood, but fitting plenty onto every page as a result, and still giving ample help with linguistic nuts and bolts. The text is his own, with some new conjectures (an Oxford text is promised) and the commentary is richly learned. The introduction is full and usefully provocative, with helpful context on *inter alia* calendars, religion, and aetiology, and a clear precept to read the *Fasti* as a didactic poem (not a view shared by all). There's also interesting discussion of dating and self-imitation: Heyworth maintains that the whole *Fasti* was potentially revised during, and necessarily reframed by the fact of, Ovid's exile, and posits two-way intertextuality with the *Tristia*; he also finds *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti* showing awareness of each other.

On the prose front, meanwhile, Peter White comments on Augustine's *Confessions* 5–9.[11] This is quite a departure for White, whose last monograph was an influential book on the Ciceronian epistolary corpus,[12] and for the 'Green and Yellows', which haven't before now ventured later than Tacitus and Juvenal, at least on the Latin side. There was a time when later literature – 'titles that fall outside the conventional canon' – had its own sister series, the Cambridge 'Imperial Library', known in some parts, or perhaps just to me, as the 'Purple and Purples'. It was a short-lived experiment, reaching its fourth and final volume with Gillian Clark on *Confessions* 1–4;[13] now, in an age of exploded canons, Augustine gets to join the pagans in dashing green and yellow. Books 5–9 complete the 'narrative' part of the *Confessions*, accompanying Augustine through his late twenties and early thirties as he leaves Carthage to teach rhetoric at Milan, gets married, converts to Christianity, loses Monica, and prepares to return to Africa. It's not, of course, a fast-paced plot: rather, autobiography-*cum*-prayer-*cum*-meditation on language, humanity, and God. Like one and all recent Latin 'Green and Yellows', White's is much chunkier than those of years gone by, giving ample room to ease the classically trained reader into Augustine's language and to chart at least some of the constant underlay of biblical echoes. And if the minimalist thirteen-page introduction is terse to a fault, the line-by-line comment on content, structure, and literary-historical context is as full as it is elegant.

[11] *Augustine. Confessions Books V–IX*. Edited by Peter White. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2019. Pp. xii + 358. Hardback £79.99, ISBN: 978-1-107-00959-2; paperback £24.99, ISBN: 978-0-521-25351-2.

[12] P. White, *Cicero in Letters. Epistolary Relations of the Late Republic* (Oxford, 2010).

[13] G. Clark, *Augustine. Confessions Books I–IV* (Cambridge, 1995). The series was inaugurated by the late lamented E. J. (Ted) Kenney († 23 December 2019) with Apuleius' *Cupid & Psyche* (1990), still much used. Between the two Latin volumes came two Greek ones: Donald Russell on three orations of Dio Chrysostom (1992) and Neil Hopkinson's anthology of imperial poetry (1994).

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We might hover a moment more at the turn of the fifth century to register Aaron Pelttari's commentary on the *Psychomachia*, an impressive addition to the Oklahoma catalogue.[14] Prudentius' one-book poem is an attractive choice for students, teachers, and anyone else wanting to sample Christian Latin, serving up its theological meat (the inner struggle of virtue and vice) in convenient brevity (915 hexameters) and reassuringly familiar epic guise, as female personifications of Lust, Anger, & Co. are brought low by Faith, Humility, & Co. in seven stirring duels. Pelttari's guide is aimed primarily at 'intermediate and advanced students', and caters to its audience superbly. Brief nudges help with construing the Latin; parallels with (primarily) Virgil and the Bible are adduced singly, clearly, and intelligently: no mindless 'cf.'-ing here. The seventy-seven-page glossary is perhaps a touch *too* exhaustive (it starts with '*a*, *ab*'), but every pain has been taken to supply enough and no more in the definitions: like the book as a whole, it breathes the spirit of thoughtful pedagogy. The introduction in particular is a model of its type, giving well-judged context, and inviting thoughtful participation, in a disarmingly ingenuous tone. But this is more than a classroom book: besides occasional text-critical arbitration, there is plenty of scholarly dialogue, not without some gentle restating of Pelttari's views on late antique intertextuality.[15]

Back to Berlin now, for two philological commentaries from De Gruyter. Tobias Bell's doctoral dissertation fills a significant gap on Cicero's *Post reditum ad senatum*,[16] a speech which has up to now been, as he puts it, 'stiefmütterlich behandelt' ('given stepmotherly treatment', 3). But Valerius Maximus has had an even harder time of it, so I'll focus my attention on John Briscoe's *Facta et dicta memoranda* 8,[17] a welcome if idiosyncratic addition to the short list of modern commentaries on Valerius. Briscoe isn't much concerned to 'sell' his author ('V. writes in a highly rhetorical and often overblown style …', 9; he imitates 'sometimes to the point of plagiarism', 6); his own style tends to dryness, but for some rather indulgent digressions on modern (-ish) Britain, as when Demosthenes' trouble with pronouncing *rho* prompts seven lines on Roy ('Woy') Jenkins (138); and I was intrigued to find 'Magna Graecia' compared to Greater Manchester (142). Much labour is spent revisiting and correcting his Teubner text of 1998, often on minor points, not enough perhaps on the proofs of the present book (witness such typos as 'Syrasusis', 54, 'amd', 140, στεφάνου, 175; I liked 'Walbank…, in an most unusually inaccurate note', 203); and the note on *FD* 8.7.*ext*.1 *proeliatus est cum rerum natura equidem uictor abiit* leaves me none the wiser as to how that might be construed (all other editors – aka '*dett.*' [45] – emend to *et quidem*, which does the trick nicely). Carping aside, there is much useful material strewn around the notes; for instance, being one of those who think Valerius was read more carefully in his day

[14] *The Psychomachia of Prudentius. Text, Commentary, and Glossary*. By Aaron Pelttari. Oklahoma Series in Classical Culture 58. Norman, OK, University of Oklahoma Press, 2019. Pp. xvi + 327. 10 b/w illustrations, 1 map. Paperback $29.95, ISBN: 978-0-8061-6402-1.

[15] Set out in A. Pelttari, *The Space That Remains. Reading Latin Poetry in Late Antiquity* (Ithaca, NY, 2014).

[16] *Ciceros Rede 'cum senatui gratias egit'. Ein Kommentar*. By Tobias Boll. Göttinger Forum für Altertumswissenschaft – Beihefte, neue Folge 10. Berlin, De Gruyter, 2019. Pp. viii + 260. Hardback £100, ISBN: 978-3-11-062921-7.

[17] *Valerius Maximus, 'Facta et dicta memorabilia', Book 8. Text, Introduction, and Commentary*. By John Briscoe. Untersuchungen zur antiken Literatur und Geschichte 141. Berlin, De Gruyter, 2019. Pp. xii + 268. Hardback £91, ISBN: 978-3-11-066424-9.

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than tends to be assumed, I'm interested to find Tacitus adduced both for *truci uultu* ('with a fierce mien') at *FD* 8.1.*absol*.3 (cf. *Ann.* 4.34.2 *truci uultu*) and the striking use of *destrictus* in *FD* 8.2.2 *destrictam feneratricem* ('inexorable creditor'; cf. *Ann.* 4.36.2 *destrictior accusator* 'more inexorable accuser'), in related contexts and proximate in both texts: a delicate hint that he for one didn't find Valerius *infra dig*.[18]

Gerhard Binder's massive companion to the *Aeneid* professes a humble aim: to gather the fruits of modern research for tasting by a wide audience.[19] Volume 1 is mostly given over to an encyclopaedia of sixty 'central themes' such as genealogies, dreams, and modern reception, and including selected 'key words' such as *furor*, *pater*, and *saeuus*. As advertised, discussion is mostly scholarly reportage, but it is handy for that, as are the abundant lists and tables – the *Systematisierungszwang* is palpable – in which you can find, for instance, all the similes of the *Aeneid* in schematic summary (X is compared to Y at line Z). Two still larger volumes present a commentary (no text is printed), unusually arranged: the poem is blocked into chunks of twenty or so verses, for each of which we get (A) basic language help, (B) 'Sacherläuterungen' (e.g. names, geography, mythology), (C) interpretative notes, (D) bibliography. Bulk, price, and language mean this won't supplant other student commentaries in the Anglosphere, but it amply merits its place on the library shelf.

Another hefty tome ends my line-up of commentaries, A. J. (Tony) Boyle on Seneca's *Agamemnon*.[20] Running to almost 750 pages, it amply expands his already substantial series of Senecan tragedies for Oxford; since I enthused over his *Thyestes* not long ago,[21] I'll be telegraphic: more of the same (and no complaints about that).

Did Tacitus believe in gods? Goodyear was agnostic at best ('One may reasonably. . .regard most of T.'s references to fate and the gods as nothing more than devices of style. . .'), Syme a downright disbeliever ('A striking and ominous phrase, but no confession of a creed'); according to Koestermann, Tacitus himself had no idea.[22] Kelly Shannon-Henderson argues otherwise: when Tacitus attributes the rise of Sejanus to

[18] The case has been made for others, including Seneca, both Plinys, Plutarch, Quintilian, Frontinus, and Gellius; see e.g. C. Whitton, *The Arts of Imitation in Latin Prose. Pliny's Epistles/Quintilian in Brief* (Cambridge, 2019), 41 and 112.

[19] *P. Vergilius Maro. Aeneis. Ein Kommentar Band 1. Einleitung, Zentrale Themen, Literatur, Indices*. By Gerhard Binder. Bochumer Altertumswissenschaftliches Colloquium 104. Trier, Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 2019. Pp. 430. Hardback €49.50, ISBN: 978-3-86-821784-1. *P. Vergilius Maro. Aeneis. Ein Kommentar Band 2. Kommentar zu Aeneis 1–6*. By Gerhard Binder. Bochumer Altertumswissenschaftliches Colloquium 105. Trier, Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 2019. Pp. 648. Hardback €69.50, ISBN: 978-3-86-821785-8. *P. Vergilius Maro. Aeneis. Ein Kommentar Band 3. Kommentar zu Aeneis 7–12*. By Gerhard Binder. Bochumer Altertumswissenschaftliches Colloquium 106. Trier, Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 2019. Pp. 682. Hardback €72.50, ISBN: 978-3-86-821786-5.

[20] *Seneca. Agamemnon*. Edited with introduction, translation, and commentary by A. J. Boyle. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2019. Pp. cxlv + 600. Hardback £120, ISBN: 978-0-19-881082-7.

[21] *G&R* 65.1 (2018), 112–13.

[22] F. R. D. Goodyear, *The Annals of Tacitus. Volume I (Annals 1.1–54)* (Cambridge, 1972), 276; R. Syme, *Tacitus* (Oxford, 1958), 521, on *Ann.* 4.1.2; E. Koestermann, *Cornelius Tacitus. Annalen. Band I. Buch 1–3* (Heidelberg, 1963), 33–5: 'Tacitus steht der Frage im ganzen hilflos gegenüber. . .' ('In the face of this question [*sc.* whether gods intervene in mortal life] Tacitus is altogether helpless. . .').

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divine wrath, it is 'a real assertion of supernatural involvement' (169).[23] That article of faith (soon softened to a double negative: 'we cannot dismiss the possibility that Tacitus is not simply using a stylistic device', 170) epitomizes the mission of this substantial book: to take religion in the *Annals* seriously.

Her enquiry isn't restricted to my naïve question, or even much committed to answering it. Rather, she asks: what, and how, does religion *mean* for Tacitus? There's certainly plenty of it about in his works: gods, fate, portents, astrology, liturgy, sacred architecture, priests, and priesthoods, not to mention the imperial cult, make rich pickings for a religiously inflected reading of the *Annals* (with the odd look-in for the *Histories*). Shannon-Henderson bills 'cultural memory' as her prism, but doesn't tarry long with Assmanns & Co. ('*lieux de mémoire*' crop up with due frequency). Scholarship on Roman religion looms a little larger, handled to my inexpert eye with a sure touch; but this is at heart a philological study: footnotes are populated primarily by commentaries and recent literary work, and the method is close reading, scrupulous and sober.

Shannon-Henderson works in sequence through the Tiberian books (five chapters), then more briefly Claudius and Nero (a chapter each). This arrangement distinguishes her study, as she says (23), from another recent attempt to take Tacitus on religion seriously,[24] and it has sure merits: it invites differentiation of the three emperors (Germanicus too, subject of Chapter 2, which convicts him of 'striking failures in religious memory', 119), and will make for convenient dipping by readers interested in one part of the *Annals* or another. The flipside is a certain shyness in the face of some big questions. Not so much the old favourite of how Tacitus saw the Julio-Claudian Principate – here Shannon-Henderson perceives the familiar pessimism ('Tacitus makes painfully clear the yawning chasm separating Julio-Claudian Rome from its cultic past, and leaves little hope for improvement', 351) – as tricky matters like fate, fortune, and (yes) the gods: how exactly *are* they to be imagined? But here it's perhaps appropriate if crisp answers are absent.

Olivia Elder and Alex Mullen present a joint study of 'the language of Roman letters', or, more precisely, the use of Greek by Cicero, Pliny, Fronto, and their correspondents, and in Suetonius' works.[25] (The rich corpus of non-literary letters, oddly enough, is nowhere to be seen.) It's an interesting collaboration, seamlessly pairing a linguistics-based approach (Mullen) with a literary-historical one (Elder). A fair few articles have been written along the lines of 'Le parole greche nell'epistolario di Plinio' (to mention one absentee from the bibliography),[26] and the authors more than once settle for reportage even at third hand ('Adams notes that Wenskus has pointed out that…', 74). But this volume gains profile by its broad sweep from

[23] *Religion and Memory in Tacitus' Annals*. By Kelly E. Shannon-Henderson. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2019. Pp. x + 414. Hardback £90, ISBN 978-0-19-883276-8.

[24] J. P. Davies, *Rome's Religious History. Livy, Tacitus and Ammianus on Their Gods* (Cambridge, 2004), 143–225, one of whose less plausible suggestions is repeated here, I presume inadvertently (303, on *Ann.* 4.12.2).

[25] *The Language of Roman Letters. Bilingual Epistolography from Cicero to Fronto*. Edited by Olivia Elder and Alex Mullen. Cambridge Classical Studies. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2019. Pp. xiii + 333. Hardback £75, ISBN: 978-1-108-48016-1.

[26] P. Venini, 'Le parole greche nell'epistolario di Plinio', *RIL* 85 (1952), 259–69.

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Cicero to Fronto;[27] by the inclusion of Suetonius *qua* witness to Augustus' letters and – despite the title of the book – for his non-epistolary Greek citations (the squibs against Nero, for instance); by its integration of theory on bilingualism and 'code-switching' (dropping in a word or phrase from another language); and by the blend of close readings and holistic analysis.

That analysis is determinedly data-driven, with thirty-two tables and abundant statistics derived from a database of Greek words and passages which the authors have put online. There you can find jotted notes, occasional pointers to modern discussions, and one or more 'functions' ascribed to each instance. Much energy goes into defining and assigning these functions (eighteen in all), which turn out to be a mixed bag, ranging from crisp ('Quotation', 'Word-play') to woolly, verging on vacuous ('Referential: This category is assigned where the code-switch advances the meaning of the text. . .', 29); many examples land up in 'GCS' (Greek cultural sphere). All those capital letters suggest Positive Fact, but of course any such exercise will be rough and ready, as the authors admit (18); that makes statistics about, say, how many different functions each corpus includes (83–4) of questionable significance, even before we consider how small the four corpora are. Still, it certainly sheds new light, or brings patterns into relief: for instance, that Pliny only rarely ('11 per cent') stays in Greek for more than a single word, whereas Fronto quite often does ('41 per cent', 49); and there are interesting observations on the 'syntactic dimension of code-switching' (56–80), such as Latin morphology on Greek words.

Other novelties include an argument that Cicero's abundant Greek in the letters to Atticus does not reflect intimacy, but constructs it (158–65, a characteristic move in our times), and the sustained studies of Fronto (Chapter 4, by Mullen) and Suetonius (Chapter 5, by Elder). After all the typologizing, it's surprising that the authors here sometimes settle for cruder method: *Plautinato* ('Plautify!'), sometimes conjectured at Fronto 153.13 vdH, is 'not jovial, but considered and restrained', we are told *ex cathedra* (79), and another combination of Greek and Latin simply 'seems inelegant' (102); Suetonius *Augustus* 92.2 is picked out as an example of 'bilingual wordplay' (259–60), when in fact it contains Latin wordplay and a Greek word. Likewise on large questions about orality, 'colloquial' language, and above all bilingualism itself. 'A defining characteristic of high-status Romans', the authors claim (without footnotes), 'was full competence in both Latin and Greek linguistic and cultural spheres' (105) – a strangely blunt take on a complex question. Still, here is a volume with plenty to interest readers of 'literary' letters. Alas, among the typos, for '*cotidiano sermo*' (240).

From the professedly humble world of epistolography, we pass all too briefly by Rebecca Armstrong's rich exploration of Virgilian plant life,[28] John Oksanish on Vitruvian self-fashioning,[29] and Bracht Branham in Bakhtinian dialogue with

[27] Not quite as novel as claimed: P. Cugusi, *Evoluzione e forme dell'epistolografia latina nella tarda repubblica e nei primi due secoli dell'impero* (Rome, 1983), not cited, briefly treats Greek usage across the same range (and more).

[28] *Vergil's Green Thoughts. Plants, Humans, and the Divine*. By Rebecca Armstrong. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2019. Pp. ix + 330. Hardback £75, ISBN: 978-0199-23668-8.

[29] *Vitruvian Man. Rome Under Construction*. By John Oksanish. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2019. Pp. ix + 251. Hardback £47.99, ISBN: 978-0-19-069698-6.

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Petronius,[30] to 'lesser' literature of another sort, in Tom Geue's sparky *Author Unknown*.[31] Geue sets out 'to consider anonymity as a site of literary interest rather than a gap that needs filling' (cover); anonymity here describes in part the absence of names within a text, such as Ovid's *Ibis* imposes on its victim, but primarily applies to the status of texts themselves, whether produced 'actively', by self-suppressing authors, or 'passively', by accidents of transmission (3). The *dramatis personae* are mostly texts from lower down the canon: *Ibis* is followed by the pseudo-Senecan *Octavia*, Phaedrus, the *Laus Pisonis*, Calpurnius Siculus, Seneca's *Apocolocyntosis*, Petronius (briefly), Tacitus' *Dialogus de oratoribus*, and – a Greek for good measure – the treatise *On the sublime* attributed to Longinus. Geue gives each text a sequential reading and its scholarship a good shake, pressing powerfully for meaning in anonymity, or at any rate in uncertainty. Stop trying to determine whether Calpurnius Siculus wrote his *Eclogues* under Nero or a Severan: the difficulty of saying *which* emperor he is writing about is precisely the point. If we can't name the author of the *Octavia*, that is telling in itself: 'it becomes … a particularly convincing (if suspicious) claim to be a repository of "cultural memory", precisely because it could have been written by anyone' (83).

Geue's readings are relentlessly smart, even when he lets himself stretch the boundaries of plausibility – he holds out for the possibility that the *Dialogus* is only pseudo-Tacitean, and can only wish away the likelihood that many or all of his 'anonymous' texts were nothing of the sort when first circulated – and always stimulating: try the parade chapter on Phaedrus, or the impressive big thinking on classical scholarship in his introduction. They add up to a concerted assault on context and historicism in literary criticism (the 'historical critic' becomes something of a bogeyman) which should set sparks flying; there are some entertaining sideswipes too against the 'neurotic intertextualist fetish' that wants to make every allusion 'pout in sexy ways' (208–9). And yet the book is a deeply historicizing project in itself. Geue's corpus is firmly anchored in the early Principate, a period where strategies of 'self-abasement before a higher order' (10) have often been diagnosed in the Roman elite; what's more, he leads off with the *Res Gestae*, taken as a counter-example *par excellence* of namefulness – but also casting the shadow of autocracy over all that follows. Harvard have done him proud with their thick paper and nice production; a shame that every apostrophe in Greek has been mangled.

Geue also contributes to *Complex Inferiorities*, a conference volume edited by Sebastian Matzner and Stephen Harrison which explores 'the weaker voice' in Latin literature.[32] It's an interesting mix, embracing such topics as the *plebs* (Ellen O'Gorman on historiography), homoerotics (Stephen Harrison on the *Odes*), race (Amy Richlin on 'blackface' in comedy), and 'not being beautiful' (Gregory Hutchinson); Geue's chapter marries Phaedrus, in a prequel to *Author Unknown*, and Juvenal, subject of his

[30] *Inventing the Novel. Bakhtin and Petronius Face to Face*. By R. Bracht Branham. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2019. Pp. xvi + 225. Hardback £65, ISBN: 978-0-19-884126-5.

[31] *Author Unknown. The Power of Anonymity in Ancient Rome*. By Tom Geue. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2019. Pp. ix + 361. Hardback £36.95, ISBN: 978-0-674-98820-0.

[32] *Complex Inferiorities. The Poetics of the Weaker Voice in Latin Literature*. Edited by Sebastian Matzner and Stephen Harrison. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2018. Pp. xiv + 320. Hardback £70, ISBN: 978-0-19-881406-1.

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previous book.[33] Other highlights include a supple essay on 'weakness and strength' by William Fitzgerald, opening the volume, and Philip Hardie's reading of Paulinus *Carmen* 18, ending it; but almost every chapter pulls its weight.

I felt a little guilty hoarding Andrew Riggsby's *Mosaics of Knowledge*, which could just as well have been sent to James for review under 'Roman History', or Michael under 'Art and Archaeology', or Ivana and Andrej under 'General'.[34] But only a *little* guilty: it has a bearing on literature too, and it's fascinating. The book studies five 'information technologies' in the Roman world: lists, tables, weights and measures, perspective in art, and maps. Riggsby has worked through breathtaking amounts of primary material, mostly literary (especially 'technical' writers) and epigraphic, but he sets out his results with model clarity of prose, and of thought. The 'mosaics' of his title alludes to a thesis that 'Romans lived in a balkanized informational world' (9) in which standardization and shared access to information were much rarer than we tend to assume. But he isn't just concerned to argue that point, or to document the surprising infrequency of, say, alphabetical lists; he asks why it might be, and firmly resists a teleological narrative (primitive Romans, clever us). Cognitive considerations figure large: does the scarcity of tables, in administration (calendars, doles, etc.), pedagogy (maths, grammar, etc.), or wherever else, show an antipathy to tabular *thought*? So does a culturalist outlook: Riggsby detects for instance 'a Roman tendency not to apply any more technology than is required by a particular situation' (13). Lessons and provocations abound, for literary students not least: on indexes and tables of contents (22–9), on the risks of taking numbers literally (84–107), on illustrations in texts (157–64), and much more.

Today's prize for prescience goes to H. Hunter Gardner, whose study of plague in Roman literature makes for eerily topical reading, or did when I was writing this in April 2020.[35] It centres on poetic accounts of plagues at Athens (Lucretius 6), at Noricum (*Georgics* 3), and on Aegina (Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 7); there's also a chapter on Livy and another on Lucan, Seneca (*Oedipus*), and Silius. This ancient material is framed with theory drawn from the likes of Girard, Foucault, and Sontag on 'the symbolic cleansing, renewal, and reordering of society that frequently operate within plague narratives' (5), and Gardner accordingly probes throughout for implied political narratives: his authors 'imagine the causes and effects of disease as a means of reflecting on their own morbid *res publica*' (273). Some of the texts offer him more to work with on that front than others, but all of them get careful treatment. The final chapter shows particular audacity, pushing through late antique and medieval Latin (Endelechius' Christianizing of Virgil in his *Carmen de mortibus boum*; Paul the Deacon on the bubonic plague of the sixth century) into Renaissance art (Raphael; Coppola) and modern literature from Daniel Defoe to Margaret Atwood. If the final pages risk lapsing into banality with zombie viruses and quoted dialogue from *Fear the Walking Dead*, even that is

[33] T. Geue, *Juvenal and the Poetics of Anonymity* (Cambridge, 2017).

[34] *Mosaics of Knowledge. Representing Information in the Roman World*. By Andrew Riggsby. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2019. Pp. xvi + 248. 8 colour plates, 29 b/w illustrations. Hardback £47.99, ISBN: 978-0-19-063250-2.

[35] *Pestilence and the Body Politic in Latin Literature*. By Hunter H. Gardner. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2019. Pp. x + 303. Hardback £65, ISBN: 978-0-19-879642-8.

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done with laudable conviction; and it's curiously apt that Gardner thereby brings us right into the late 2010s, to the cusp – if only he'd known it – of corona.

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Art and Archaeology

Mosaics have not fared well in the hands of classical archaeologists. Modern viewers have traditionally treated them as panel-paintings laid out on the floor: consider how mosaics are frequently displayed on museum walls, for example, or how book reproductions perpetuate the ideal of a 'vertical' bird's-eye view.[1] Scholars, too, have been quick to identify mythological subjects, homing in on 'figurative' motifs. But we still lack an adequate framework for approaching more 'ornamental' components – or for challenging that segregation in the first place.[2]

Such is the backdrop to Hallie M. Franks's exhilarating new book on 'mosaics and metaphor in the Greek symposium'.[3] The volume examines some of the earliest mosaics known to us, from the later classical and Hellenistic periods (between the end of the fifth and third centuries BC).[4] Franks aims to understand these materials in their original spatial setting, laid out in the *andron* – literally the 'men's quarters' – of the classical Greek house. In particular, she connects their imagery to the social activities associated with that space, revolving around the Greek symposium, or drinking party. As an 'integral part of the setting for the symposium' (3), Franks argues, mosaics took advantage of the rituals that unfolded around them: if the iconography swims with intoxicating designs, that imagery takes us not only to Dionysus, but also to the sorts of activities over which he presided. Classical and Hellenistic mosaics are consequently shown to take up, in their own particular way, the sorts of themes that had long occupied archaic and classical vase-painters. Over the last forty years, the study of sympotic pottery has been overhauled by new anthropological and sociological approaches: French scholars in particular have shown how drinking vessels actively reflected, influenced, and quite literally contained contemporary cultural thinking

[1] For the critique, see especially R. Molholt, 'Roman Labyrinth Mosaics and the Experience of Motion', *Art Bulletin* 93.3 (2011), 287–303.

[2] For some perceptive introductory comments (and further bibliography), see e.g. S. Muth, 'Aus der Perspektive der römischen Bodenmosaiken. Ornamentalisierte Figuren oder figuralisierte Ornamente?', in N. Dietrich and M. J. Squire (eds.), *Ornament and Figure in Graeco-Roman Art. Rethinking Visual Ontologies in Classical Antiquity* (Berlin, 2018), 393–422.

[3] *The World Underfoot. Mosaics and Metaphor in the Greek Symposium*. By Hallie M. Franks. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2018. Pp. xii + 222. 68 b/w illustrations. Hardback £55, ISBN: 978-0-19-086316-6.

[4] For earlier treatments of the material, see especially C. Fiori, N. Tolis, and P. Canestrini, *Mosaici a ciottoli. Capolavori e decline dell'arte musiva più antica da Pella a Delos* (Ravenna, 2003); cf. R. Westgate, 'Greek Mosaics in Their Architectural and Social Context', *BICS* 42 (1997–8), 93–115.

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