positive law. And yet at 3.33, in connection with oral and written voting, Cicero makes it clear that the code he presents is tailored to human (and Roman) circumstances—and hence can not possibly be equated with the natural law which is unchangeable and identical to right reason. D. (pp. 426–7) recognizes that the code of Book 3 is not ideal, but he fails to draw the obvious conclusion—which is, unfortunately, that *Leg*. does not attain the level of philosophical or logical consistency that he demands. *Leg.* is in many respects anomalous in the corpus of Cicero's philosophical writings: it is the most technical of the dialogues modelled on Plato—or the most rhetorical of the technical dialogues. It belongs both to the period of *De oratore* and *De re publica* and to the dialogues of 45–44. D. often seems to want it to be one thing, and one thing only, and perhaps Cicero would have liked that too. As it stands, it is an uncomfortable and unfinished project, the goals of which are, and are likely to remain, unclear.

D.'s commentary has so much, however, that it is perhaps ungrateful to ask for more. Throughout, he treats difficult problems judiciously and with exemplary clarity and learning. What he says is to the point, and where interpretation is difficult, he sets out the problems and possible solutions with patience and tact. If reading his work straight through—something few commentaries can survive—gives one the impression of watching a powerful piece of earth-moving equipment working slowly and relentlessly across the landscape, it is also true that he creates a straighter and clearer path for others to follow.

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CICERO'S THIRD PHILIPPIC

C. MONTELEONE: *La 'Terza Filippica' di Cicerone. Retorica e regolamento del Senato, legalità e rapporti di forza.* (Biblioteca della Ricerca, Philologica 4.) Pp. 553, b/w and colour maps, ills. Fasano: Schena Editore, 2003. Paper, €32. ISBN: 88-8229-390-4.

Running to over 500 pages, this study offers a good deal more than a linguistic commentary on Cicero's *Third Philippic*. In addition to a Latin text of the speech, facing Italian translation, and explanatory notes, M. provides four substantial essays addressing the oration's political and ideological background. The first (pp. 107–322) examines Cicero's literary works from 46 to 44 B.C. and attempts to identify within them elements of anti-Caesarian propaganda. The second (pp. 323–400) presents a survey of the political developments following the Ides of March, and the events that ultimately led to the coalition against Antony in which Cicero was a leading figure. The third and fourth essays offer respectively a rhetorical analysis of the *Third Philippic* (pp. 401–36) and a discussion of the relationship between our extant version of the speech and the debate that actually took place in the senate (pp. 437–59). There are also some seventy pages of indices and a bibliography.

M.'s explanatory notes to the speech perform well the task of helping the reader to appreciate its historical background, linguistic style and persuasive techniques (the Latin text used is that of Fedeli). The erudition displayed is formidable, and M. shows an outstanding grasp of the extensive primary sources for the period, providing discussions that are often impressively detailed and nuanced (see, for example, the

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lengthy analysis at pp. 51–2 of Cicero's complex relationship with the consuls of 43, Hirtius and Pansa). M.'s essay on the speech's rhetorical elements likewise contains some excellent observations on Cicero's persuasive techniques, although it would have been useful perhaps to have considered how these tactics are reproduced in the later *Philippics* too. (The dual tasks that Cicero undertakes in *Philippic* 3—denigrating Antony on the one hand and celebrating men such as Octavian and Decimus Brutus on the other—also constitute his main rhetorical strategies in the speeches delivered in the following months.) M. also makes an astute case (pp. 450–1) for supposing that the published speech that comes down to us presents a telescoped version of how events unfolded during the actual debate in the senate.

The most noteworthy—and tendentious—portion of the book, however, is its lengthy analysis of Cicero's literary works in the years immediately preceding the dictator's assassination. Over some 200 pages, M. scrutinizes each of these works in turn and identifies in them a consistent strain of politically engaged anti-Caesarianism. This highly politicized view, especially of the philosophical treatises, builds upon and develops the arguments put forward over the last decade or so by H. Strasburger, *Ciceros philosophisches Spätwerk als Aufruf gegen die Herrschaft Caesars*: *Bedeutung der philosophischen Spätschriften* (Hildesheim, 1990) and H. Wassmann, *Ciceros Widerstand gegen Caesars Tyrannis* (Bonn, 1996). On this evidence, it is a view that seems fast on its way to becoming the new orthodoxy, at least in Continental scholarship.

This interpretation challenges the traditional view that Cicero's philosophical studies signalled a complete disengagement from political life during this period. M.'s argument certainly does enough to suggest that the situation was not quite this simple. He may well be right, for example, to regard the paucity of references to Caesar and his supporters in many of the dialogues as deliberate and significant (p. 193). When we think of the chumminess of Cicero's poem on Caesar's achievements in the 50s (*Q. Fr.* 3.6.3, 3.7.6), and Caesar's reciprocal dedication to the orator of his *De analogia* around the same time (*Brut*. 253), the absence of Caesar from these later works is quite possibly a calculated snub. It is also reasonable enough to suggest (pp. 249–50) that criticisms of Marius and Cinna at *Tusculan Disputations* 5.54–6 may have functioned as 'elementi di polemica anticesariana'. The difficulty is deciding exactly how far to take this kind of speculation (for often these assertions can be little more than speculative). At times M.'s arguments seem to strain the evidence.

M. asserts, for example, that the choice of the staunch Republicans Q. Lutatius Catulus, L. Licinius Lucullus, and Q. Hortensius Hortalus as speakers in the original version of the *Academica* performs 'una funzione politica e implicitamente anticesariana' (p. 198). And yet Cicero soon replaced these individuals with a quite different cast of characters in his second version of the dialogue. Certainly, as M. notes, Cicero's first inclination (*Att*. 13.16.1–2) was to assign two of the parts to M. Brutus and Cato, 'due repubblicani tenaci' (p. 201). Nevertheless, in the end he decided to give the three main speaking parts to Varro, Atticus, and himself, for specific literary reasons that he discusses explicitly and at some length in his letters to Atticus (*Att*. 13.12.3, 13.13.1, 13.14.1, 13.16.1–2, 13.19.3–5). At the very least, this decision suggests that, even if there were political motives behind his original selection of interlocutors, ultimately these ranked very low on his list of priorities. In this case M. seems to be forcing the evidence too hard in order to fit his theory. It is also debatable at what point the various signs of Cicero's deep resentment at the dictatorship can be reasonably regarded as an active and coherent programme of anti-Caesarian propaganda. The final image that emerges from M.'s discussion is of Cicero as a

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cunning and subversive agitator, waging a staunch and highly principled campaign of resistance against Caesar. Thus his opposition to Antony following the dictator's assassination becomes in turn merely the continuation of a determined struggle in which he has been engaged for years. It is an attractive picture, but not one that most people (I suspect) would form from a reading of Cicero's correspondence.

The book is well produced, with only a few misprints (minor examples on e.g. pp. 95, 241, 395, 411, 418). Indeed, scholars producing commentaries for British and US publishers may well look upon the copiousness of citation granted by Schena with a mixture of astonishment and envy; the phrase *civem natum rei publicae* at *Philippic* 3.8, for example, is glossed here with eleven comparative examples, each quoted with full Latin text and supplemented with a further three citations without text (pp. 55–6). And in note 255, comparative passages from three letters to Atticus begin on p. 172, take up virtually all of p. 173 and finish halfway down p. 174 (with some consequent disruption of the main discussion, it has to be said). Such *abundantia* makes recent English commentaries seem positively Atticist by comparison.

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AN INTRODUCTION TO LUCRETIUS

M. CONCHE: *Lucrèce et l'expérience*. Pp. 226, ills. Québec: Éditions Fides, 2003. Paper, Can$19.95, €18. ISBN: 2-7621-2486-7.

Conche's volume offers a lively introduction in French to the Epicurean philosophical system that Lucretius constructed in his *De rerum natura*. This remark aptly summarizes the book's two main highlights: namely, a refreshing passion for illustrating the Epicurean system of Lucretius, and a willingness to consider him an imaginative thinker in the context of ancient Epicurean doctrine. In the manner of an ancient *eisagogé*, C. has undertaken to involve his reader in the act of speculating in the manner of an Epicurean thinker. He does this by crafting his reconstruction of the doctrinal system of Lucretius as itself a kind of philosophical search. The freshness with which C. adopts the viewpoint of an Epicurean thinker makes the book both useful and enjoyable, especially for those who approach Lucretius and Epicurus for the first time.

As one might expect from a work of this kind, the book contains ample quotations from Lucretius and from his Epicurean sources (though with too much attention paid exclusively to Epicurus' best-known works). In keeping with his didactic aims, C. includes an ample selection of Lucretian texts in French translation (pp. 123–82), and to the book's last pages he adds a chronological table and a 'Bibliographie philosophique' (well-informed, if not exhaustive). Two appendices conclude the volume, the second one schematizing the poem's structure (for the first, see below). The unquestionable effectiveness of the book as a teaching tool makes up for a certain vagueness of its argumentation, which often remains at the level of paraphrase, and which constantly avoids taking the risk of a more detailed and problem-centred approach.

One may well wonder what aims such a book might have beyond its manifest function in teaching the basics of Lucretius and Epicurean doctrine to French students preparing for their exams. One answer comes from the first appendix, 'Épicure et l'analyse quantique de la réalité', where C. discusses the well-known volume by

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