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.

University of Otago JON HALL
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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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M. Serres (*La naissance de la physique dans le texte de Lucrèce: fleuves et turbulences* [Paris, 1977]), a book very provocative in its day, besides being relevant to contemporary epistemological debates (see esp. N. Ordine, *Belfagor* 37 [1982], 238–42). The reader can appreciate the scrupulous care with which C. questions one of the several most fascinating (but oracular, and not rigorously demonstrated) insights offered by M. Serres, that the atomism of Epicurus/Lucretius presupposes an advanced knowledge of infinitesimal calculus.

By combining the aims of a school text with a serious interest in contemporary philosophical debate, C.'s book finds an illustrious model in the Henri Bergson's *Extraits de Lucrèce, avec un commentaire, des notes et une étude sur la Poésie, la Philosophie, la Physique, le texte et la langue de Lucrèce* (Paris, 1883) ('Avant-Propos' and 'Introduction' reprinted in H. Bergson, *Mélanges* [Paris, 1972], 265–310; for basic information see Ph. Soulez, Fr. Worms, *Bergson* [Paris, 2002], 50–2). Without abandoning his pedagogical aims, the young Bergson (at that time a *professeur de lycée* in the French provinces) took the opportunity of writing a teaching text to emphasize the philosophical autonomy of Lucretius (although for an end result that was too reductive of Epicurus' thought; cf. *Mél.*, esp. 280–5). In addition, Bergson remarked on the importance of Lucretius as a precursor both to modern atomic theory and to Darwin's evolutionism, which he cautiously introduces as not yet demonstrated: *Mél.*, 290–2, esp. 292). In this juvenile work published for school consumption, the characteristic Bergsonian emphasis on intuition as the privileged path to philosophical truth seems to be prefigured: 'Avec son imagination ardente et forte, le poète devine quelques-unes des grandes lois de la nature; il en a comme le pressentiment' (p. 290; cf. also p. 285 on the 'pictorial', imagination that, as Bergson remarks, identifies Lucretius). Certainly one of the merits of C.'s book is that it brings to mind the early work of Bergson, which he does not fail to mention in his bibliography (p. 188).

Among the imperfections of the book, some bad printing of Greek should be observed (not without some real slips, for example at p. 37).

Università di Siena—Arezzo ANDREA CUCCHIARELLI
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LUCRETIUS AND PHILODEMUS

A. MONET (ed.): *Le jardin romain. Épicurisme et poésie à Rome. Mélanges offerts à Mayotte Bollack*. Pp. 376. Villeneuve d'Ascq: Centre de Gestion de l'Édition Scientifique, Université Charles-de-Gaulle—Lille 3, 2003. Paper, €28. ISBN: 2-84467-057-1

Perhaps the most pressing question for interpreters of Roman Epicureanism is that of the relationship, if any, between the two great Epicurean writers of the time: Lucretius, a Roman writing an Epicurean hexameter epic/didactic, and Philodemus, a Syrian living in Italy, writing Greek treatises in prose. Did they know each other? Had they read one another's works? What did Cicero know of either of them? We would surely like to put together the rich resources of Lucretius' poem and the texts excavated from Herculaneum to generate a composite picture of Republican Epicureanism. This collection of nineteen essays plus introduction, offered as a *Festschrift* for Mayotte Bollack, tackles the nature of Roman Epicureanism through a number of different approaches. Some essays address directly the question of the

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