
Paolo Asso has written a new commentary on Lucan’s *Bellum Civile* (Book IV). In the introduction, he provides the reader with information about Lucan’s life, and the literary background to the poem. He also discusses syntax and rhetorical devices. He points out that he has followed Housman’s text, and adds that he has been greatly helped by the work of Renato Badali: cf. page 34 (note 117). The Latin text is then printed, together with a critical apparatus, and an English translation. The commentary is very learned, and the bibliography is useful. I would now like to make the following observations on the text of the poem.

On page 25 A. discusses Lucan’s use of anaphora. For repetition in Lucan cf. P. Barratt’s outstanding commentary on Lucan Book V (Amsterdam 1979). Barratt’s Ph.D. thesis was produced under the supervision of Prof. G. Giangrande, in his research school at London University.

On page 60 A. notes that Heinsius read *rutris* at line 294. It should be noted that Heinsius used manuscripts in order to correct the text of Propertius: cf. my *Studies in the Text of Propertius* (Athens 2002), page 166 (note 1).

On page 126 A. mentions the Nabataeans. For the golden shore of Nabathaea (*Nabatharumque aurea ripa*) cf. my *Studies*, page 148. The reading *Nabatharumque* was preserved for us by Burman.

On page 135 A. states that “the mundi pars ima must be Antarctica.” I would like to suggest that *pars ima* means “the meanest part”: cf. Lewis-Short, s.v. infimus (2): “Trop, lowest, meanest, basest, in quality or rank.”

On the same page A. discusses the words medios ignes. I would like to add that ice is said to ease the heat which is in the middle of the constellations: cf. Lewis-Short, s.v. medius I,A: “With gen.”

On page 173 A. discusses “the gold of the Astures.” I would like to point out that the variant reading Assyri makes good sense. Lucan refers to a miner of Assyrian (i.e. Parthian) gold. For Parthian gold cf. my *Studies*, page 149.

On page 185 A. discusses the word *murrā*. It should be noted that the variant reading gemmaque makes good sense. Lucan has made use of hendiadys. Thus he states that they did not drink from golden cups: *non auro gemmaque bibunt*. Cf. Lewis-Short, s.v. gemma 2,a: “A drinking-vessel, goblet or cup.”

On page 199 A. discusses Vulteius’ speech, in which he tries to persuade his men to give up their lives. I would like to suggest that we should translate as follows: “Life is short (vita brevis). It abounds for nobody who has the opportunity (tempus) to seek death for himself, and the glory of death is not less, soldiers. The glory (laus)
of courage (animi) is equal for all men (omnibus) to meet death which is close at
hand, and to lose those years which you expected, and to cut short a moment of
remaining life, provided that you summon death by your own act.”

On page 206 A. discusses the reading nobilium. I would like to suggest that
we should translate as follows: “Thus the enthusiasm of noble men (nobilium) excited
all the hearts of the youths.”

On page 241 A. comments on the words Inachiis ... undis. Lucan is referring
to the hydra. Luck suggested the alteration argis: cf. the critical’ apparatus on page
82. Textual alteration is, however, not necessary. Hercules attacked the hydra in the
countryside, not in the town. Similarly at Propertius 2,26 A, 47 the correct reading
is in arvis: cf. my Studies, page 64.

On page 252 A. discusses Juba’s kingdom. I would like to suggest that we
should translate as follows: “Atlas, near to Cadiz, limits the very long kingdom (quae
sunt longissima regna) due to the western cardinal point, and (et) Hammon limits in
the middle (medio) of the kingdom the neighbours (confinis) of the Syrtes.” Lucan
adds that the hot region of the huge kingdom separates the Ocean and the inflamed
men (calentis) of the zone.” Cf. Lewis-Short, s.v. caléo II,A: “To glow in mind, to
be roused, warmed, inflamed.”

On page 259 A. discusses the alteration Arzux. It should be noted, however,
that the manuscript reading Afer makes good sense: cf. G.I.F. 2006, page 321.

On page 266 A. discusses line 719. I would like to point out that the variant
reading videri makes good sense. We should translate as follows: "Juba feared only
one thing, to be seen (videri) by a dangerous (incauto) enemy.” Cf. Lewis-Short, s.v.
incautus II.

On page 289 A. discusses the adjective nobile. I would like to suggest that
nobile means here “notorious”: cf. Lewis-Short, s.v. nobilis II,A: “In a bad sense,
notorious.” Curio was corrupted by ambition, and the desire for money. Thus Lucan
states that he sold Rome: cf. 4. 824 hic vendidit urbem.

Conclusion. This is an excellent book. The author should be congratulated
on the production of a very interesting and useful commentary, which contains many
fascinating insights into Lucan’s poetry. We look forward eagerly to the production
of further monographs of such high quality from Paolo Asso. Finally it should be
noted that the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor continues to support the
production of valuable research work on Latin Sprachgebrauch and textual criticism
in exactly the same manner as indomitably championed in England by Prof.
Giangrande’s school of research.

Heather White
Universidad de Londres