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Paolo Asso, *A Commentary on Lucan, De Bello Civili IV. Introduction, Edition, and Translation*, Berlin / New York, 2010, 333 pages.

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 *Assyrii* 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 *murra*. 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 *Inachiüs ... 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. *caleo* 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.

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