Groß, D.


The contention that a book is making an heroic effort to rescue a neglected subject from oblivion often serves as a mere *captatio benevolentiae*, but in the present case, the author corroborates his claim by a very thorough review of the history of scholarship demonstrating that his topic has indeed not been served well. In this slightly revised version of his PhD dissertation (defended in March 2011 at Mainz University), Groß studies the reception of Horace’s *Odes* and *Epodes* in Lucan’s epic *Bellum Civile*. Even when taking into account the (reasonable) gap between the submission of the dissertation and the eventual publication of the book (the most recent titles in the bibliography date from 2010),1 Groß’ statement that Horace has been largely neglected in Lucan scholarship (and vice versa) still holds true. A quick look at the index to the *Brill’s Companion to Lucan* (ed. P. Asso, Leiden/Boston 2011) rather confirms the view that there is not much attention being paid to Horace as a poetic predecessor. Groß not only states the symptom but also analyses its underlying causes. Admittedly, many of the approaches he illustrates with quotes from studies on Horace’s *Nachleben* as well as on Lucan’s sources and models are outdated by now, but some generic preconceptions and ideological biases still prevail. The focus on the epic tradition and especially on Lucan as an anti-Virgil has tended to obstruct the view. Taking up and expanding an appeal made by his *Doktormutter* Christine Walde in 2005,2 Groß pleads for a broadening of the intertextual horizon, not only with respect to Greek and Roman poetic genres, but also to historiography and Cicero’s speeches beyond old-fashioned *Quellenforschung* (pp. 23f., 277).

After his review of scholarship (pp. 9-32), Groß provides a brief discussion of intertextuality as methodological groundwork of his study (pp. 33-40),

---

1 E.g. Paolo Asso’s commentary on book 4 (Berlin/New York 2010) and Paul Roche’s commentary on book 1 (Oxford 2009), which Groß especially commends for considering Horace among the sources and models for book one (p. 71, n. 283). Lisa Sannicandro’s study on female characters in Lucan (*I personaggi femminili del Bellum Civile di Lucano—Die weiblichen Charaktere in Lucans Bellum Civile*, Rahden/Westf. 2010), which appeared in the same series as Groß’ book, is mentioned on p. 227, n. 746, but has obviously not been incorporated in the argument.

focusing on linguistic markers and the function of intertextual references, with terminology deriving from Maria Grazia Bonanno (‘allusione’ as an affirmative versus ‘parodia’ as a critical or subversive re-working; the neutral ‘ripresa’ is not taken into account as the aim is to demonstrate Lucan’s emphatic engagement with Horace). Although this approach is valid, especially the term ‘parodia’ is too simplistic, as Groß himself admits in subsequent chapters, where he differentiates among several functions and also uses ‘Kontrastimitation’; moreover, the term ‘comparativus Lucani’ in analogy to Seidensticker’s ‘comparativus Senecanus’ is introduced only in the conclusion (p. 274ff.). In view of his cross-generic approach, I missed a reference to Stephen Harrison’s ‘generic enrichment’ that supersedes the older concept of Kreuzung der Gattungen.

After these preliminary remarks, Groß goes on to demonstrate the crucial importance of Horace for Lucan by tackling one of the most notorious issues of the Bellum Civile, the role of the narrator (pp. 41-70). He proposes a convincing solution by linking the role of Lucan’s narrator with Horace’s pose as a praeceptor populi, which results in a ‘lyrization’ of the epic. Referring to Schlonski’s ‘Illusion des Inmitten’ (p. 56), he emphasizes the strategies used by the narrator in order to stir the readers’ emotional response to the narrative. He reads the famous passage in book 7.210-213 as the key to the poetics of the Bellum Civile by adducing ancient theories of reader-response especially in connection with tragedy (p. 56, n. 239; p. 59ff., n. 256); here in addition I would have expected a reference to another well-known text much closer at hand, namely Horace’s own Ars Poetica (99-105). The discussion of reader manipulation and aesthetics of reception leads straight to another much-debated problem of Lucan scholarship, the apparent contradiction between the praise of Nero in the proem and the anti-monarchic statements found especially in the context of the battle at Pharsalus, and the resulting attempts to reconstruct the political allegiances of the author Lucan himself. Again Groß proposes a subtle solution that opens a third way between the pro-Neronian and anti-Neronian/pro-Republican readings. We are not meant to reconcile these contradictory passages by reading them biographically, but they reflect different roles of the narrator. Whereas in the proem he gives a rationalizing analysis of the inevitable process that led to the Principate, in the body of the poem he allows himself to be carried away by the violent emotions of a contemporary of the civil war, a feeling he wants to convey to his audience. The pro-Pompeian

---