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## F.M. Ahl, Lucan: An Introduction

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scheme, however. Since Prof. Lörcher believes that her analysis of the structure of book 3 provides a partial rationale for the authenticity of 5 and the unity of 11, I would simply propose the following alternative with 5 excluded and 11 divided into 11a and 11b (conceding the rest of her analysis is correct).

4	To <i>vir</i> , a <i>suasoria</i> : Let my beloved be free to love me.
6	To stream, a <i>suasoria</i> :
7	Impotence, a narrative: } Ovid wants to be a lover but cannot.
8	To beloved, a <i>suasoria</i> : You should not consider my poetry of less worth than my rival's money.
9	Dirge for Tibullus
10	To Ceres; a <i>suasoria</i> : Let my beloved be free to love me
11a	To himself, a <i>suasoria</i> : } Ovid wants to <i>stop</i> be-
11b	To himself, a rejection: } ing a lover, but cannot.
	of the preceding
12	no addressee: My poetry is too good; it has won my beloved a host of lovers.

This structural analysis not only allows the dirge for Tibullus, the most atypical piece in the book, to stand alone but also allows a number of typically Ovidian ironies to come into play, as I have indicated in the above summary.

In conclusion, the monograph marks a good beginning, especially as regards book 1, for the inquiry into the importance of book arrangement in the interpretation of the *Amores*, but much work needs to be done not only on the structure of books 2 and 3, but also on the importance of such arrangements to the poet's artistic intentions.

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FREDERICK M. AHL. *Lucan: An Introduction*. Ithaca, N.Y., Cornell University Press, 1976. Pp. 379. \$19.50. (*Cornell Studies in Classical Philology*, 39)

Frederick M. Ahl, well known to the scholar of Lucan through his recent articles on the *Pharsalia*, here undertakes to introduce the poet to a wider audience. He directs his work "to the Latinless reader as well as to the classicist." Both should welcome the effort, since even for the Latinist, Lucan's reputation has steadily declined from the time when Dante ranked him among the four great poets of antiquity. A book of an introductory nature has been long overdue, especially in the English speaking world where the last major study was Mark Morford's very fine *The Poet Lucan*.

For this volume the author re-uses portions of his earlier studies and adds much that is new, valuable, and provocative. Ahl prefaces his interpretation with a promise of objectivity, stays close to the poet's text and relies heavily on explication of key passages.

The *Pharsalia* tells of the civil war which ended the republic in a narrative that is often propagandistic, highly emotional, and rhetorical. The poem's inspiration, however, lies not in the events of the war, but rather in Lucan's own milieu. The vision which generated the epic springs from the age of Nero in much the same way as that of the *Aeneid* does from the Augustan dispensation. Ahl wisely, then, begins his study by relating Lucan to his own time. In a well thought-out chapter he considers the practical implications of the principate for the man of letters and shows that the *Pharsalia* must be understood as a work hostile to Nero. His argument that for Lucan *libertas* was irreconcilable with the principate should definitively dispel the notion held by Brisset and others that the epic is favorable either to the principate in general or to Nero in particular. Ahl returns to the matter of Lucan and Nero in a valuable appendix which cogently reconstructs the chronology and circumstances of the poem's composition.

While the author succeeds in placing the *Pharsalia* in its social and literary context, he might have devoted more space to its literary background. The tastes of the age which produced Lucan inclined to the bizarre and exotic. This epic is no exception and everywhere exhibits the qualities of Neronian literature. Furthermore, ever since Quintilian's remark that Lucan is *magis oratoribus quam poetis imitandus* critics have attacked the poem for its rhetoric. To be sure, many a reader on first picking up Lucan will not know what to make of the *sententiae*, strained paradoxes, and fiery invective. Accordingly, in a fresh evaluation of Lucan's literary merits it would have been useful to discuss the poem's rhetorical style as well as its debts to the declamation schools.

The scope of the book ranges from the technical questions of the correct title and projected ending to purely literary discussions of theme and character. Ahl's argument that the *Pharsalia* would have ended in twelve books makes good sense on both structural and thematic grounds, and his chapter "Aspects of the Divine" sheds light on the complex problem of *fatum*, *fortuna*, and the *deorum ministeria*. Especially perceptive is the treatment of the poem's minor characters, whose significance has often been lost on critics too eager to dismiss them as irrelevant digressions.

The section on Caesar, generally lucid and sensitive, prompts one reservation, and that is on the matter of *clementia*. Early in his analysis Ahl describes Caesar's mercy as (190) "calculated and sinister," but then says that Lucan makes (192) "unsuccessful efforts to minimize Caesar's clemency." He sees a certain nobility of Caesar intruding into the poem in spite of Lucan. This explanation, which does no credit to the poet's ability to control his material, is unnecessary. For, in reality, Lucan's representation of this clemency is completely intentional because he wants to show it as an *insidiosa clemen-*

tia. The poet cannot deny that the conqueror spared his enemies, but he can and does attribute evil motives to the action. And so, in Lucan's hands this generosity becomes Caesar's means of robbing his enemies of their last moral freedom, namely, to die as honorable men for the sake of republican liberty. This is precisely Lucan's point in those scenes in which characters find themselves in the dilemma of having to choose between pardon and death. Some like Domitius and Afranius choose forgiveness and make themselves the objects of Caesar's magnanimity, while others like Cato reject it and choose to die as free Romans. Far from being embarrassed by his characterization of Caesar, Lucan's portrait of him ingeniously contributes to his own pessimistic vision of the Roman past.

In dealing with post-Vergilian epic, comparison with the *Aeneid* is inevitable and often leads to fruitful results. Ahl says (67), "Lucan would replace the *Aeneid* with his own view of the Roman past. He wanted to match words and ideas with Vergil. . . ." Comparison and contrast of scenes and characters in the two epics is a favorite *modus operandi* for Ahl but yields mixed results because the precise nature of Vergilian influence is never spelled out. Is Lucan writing an anti-*Aeneid*? Ahl seems to imply that such is the case, when, for example, he sees Curio as a *reductio ad absurdum* of Aeneas and his arrival in Africa as almost a parody of Aeneas's arrival in Italy (94). Elsewhere, Ahl compares almost every major and minor character in the *Pharsalia* to Aeneas, but leaves unclear whether Lucan consciously intended the reader to recall Vergil. Furthermore, the parallels and contrasts adduced by the author are at times imaginative but somewhat tenuous. An example (99): "Aeneas may be too huge to enter the small dwelling of Evander, but Curio is no less obviously too small to follow in the footsteps of Hercules and Scipio." Finally, it is debatable that Lucan would have considered Aeneas's *pietas* a perversion (276).

Lucan is, as Ahl claims, highly controversial. This study will certainly settle much useless controversy on the poem's background, outlook, and scope, while at the same time stimulating much thought and discussion about a poet aptly called *ardens et concitatus*.

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F. R. ADRADOS. Orígenes de la lírica griega. Madrid, Biblioteca de la Revista de Occidente, 1976. Pp. 286. Price not stated.

The subject of this book is an important one and deserving of a detailed study. Unfortunately, this is not the treatment that is needed. Adrados is far too prone to vague generalizations, to bald statements which ignore controversy or are not justified by the evidence availa-