

beyond mere plausibility with regard to the mediating role played by textual and physical monuments for audiences who did not personally experience the First Punic War. Contrast the epilogue's documentation that the early American audience did not really get the meaning of their newly erected naval column, though for a learned audience the Roman associations were significant.

Embracing the need to be sceptical in the face of the obscurity imposed on fragmentary texts from multiple directions, B. nevertheless chooses, thank goodness, to say something about what we do have (cards shown at 65 n. 33). His book succeeds in showing the potency of cultural poetics as a tool in early Latin studies. It shines valuable new light on the first Roman poets' inexhaustible relevance to authors and texts of the late republican and imperial era.

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JASON S. NETHERCUT, ENNIUS NOSTER: *LUCRETIUS AND THE ANNALES*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2021. Pp. x + 260. ISBN 9780197517697. £64.00.

The title of Jason Nethercut's erudite and engaging monograph could not be more apt. Both are about several fascinating subjects. One is Lucretius' use, conceptually and stylistically, of Ennius' Latin epic poem as a literary model for his own *De rerum natura*. Lucretius' reading of Ennius' *Annales* is another. A third is Lucretius' efforts to (re)shape the readers' perception of Rome's first national epic — clearing the field not only for himself but also in the process for Rome's national epic *par excellence*, Vergil's *Aeneid*. With a commendably clear, light and accessible touch, N.'s monograph offers a thoughtful and thought-provoking analysis of these important and challenging subjects; yet perhaps the greatest achievement of this volume is the relationship it compellingly shows between them. Coming away from *Ennius noster*, one will take very seriously the book's central thesis, neatly encapsulated by the wordplay of that title and quotation (*DRN* 1.117). Lucretius' programmatic account of Ennius' dream — receiving his poetic mantle from Homer, indeed being Homer reincarnate (*DRN* 1.112–26) — perhaps even all of *DRN*, is at once about Lucretius' Ennius and our Ennius, we Romans, Lucretius' readers. How deep does this go? And how does Lucretius navigate and close that implicit gap to further his own Epicurean aims?

As N. would have it, Lucretius goes much further and deeper than has hitherto been recognised. His book traces a programme of Lucretian engagement with Ennius' *Annales* in both form and content. This is bolstered by five learned Appendices covering the full philological evidence for the book's core arguments. Those arguments stem in various ways from the analysis of what it deems particularly Ennian archaisms (7). These Ennianisms, it contends, feature throughout *DRN* in ways that are significant by virtue of their presence (individually or in combination), frequency and even at times absence. Taken together, Lucretius' use of such effects constitutes a coherent and deliberate strategy spanning the whole of *DRN*, across which they occur with an overall frequency of 0.26 times per line (9). This is not just a matter of unprecedented stylistic appropriation. It is a means of interpreting acknowledged places of special engagement with the *Annales*, and of revealing new ones. To this proleptic end, the chapters build. Ch. 1 challenges the traditional view of Ennius' influence on Republican epic, suggesting Lucretius himself is responsible for our misconception of its pervasiveness. Ch. 2 contends that Lucretius views epic as inherently philosophical. The Roman conceit of *imperium sine fine* with itself as the centre and head celebrated by the *Annales* therefore represented a philosophical position fundamentally at odds with many of his core Epicurean beliefs — thus meriting thorough-going refutation. Building on this, ch. 3 argues that Lucretius targets particular historical episodes in the *Annales* crucial to that narrative of Roman greatness, stripping them of their significance and glory. Lucretius similarly undermines the value Ennius, or at least his construct of Ennius, placed on history more generally — at best a Pyrrhic victory. Through a process, then, of what N. terms 'provisional argumentation' and course correction over the course of *DRN*, Lucretius gradually demythologises the *Annales* and all it stands for and symbolises, both generally and specifically; thus the fourth and final chapter.

Sure to stimulate lively discussion are the arguments that Lucretius views both Homer and Ennius as philosophers writing *de rerum natura*, that Lucretius' representation of Ennius' *Annales* is a calculated distortion and, effectively, straw man (rather than, e.g. a reflection of what Lucretius understood to be his audience's view), that Lucretius is a presentist who believes in neither the value nor the existence of the past and, by extension, that for all his use of intertextual echoes and other forms of allusion, Lucretius is not aiming to create a literary genealogy which he might simultaneously both inherit and surpass. In this, among other things, *Ennius noster* recommends itself also by the groundwork it lays for future research. The relationship between Lucretius' Ennius and Lucretius' Empedocles and, likewise, between Lucretius' Ennius and Lucretius' Hesiod are areas that would seem particularly fruitful. *Ennius noster* offers a few tantalising glimpses of what such avenues of investigation might open up, and N. himself has been exploring them at greater length elsewhere. Another opportunity to which this book points is the extension of its litmus test. For instance, does Lucretius use Ennianisms when closely following other sources (not least Epicurean ones)? If so, to what end? Using the conventions of poetry to elucidate a philosophical point? Effecting a syncretism of sorts? If not, why? As a point of comparison, as N. rightly observes, one of the least stylistically Ennian sections of *DRN* is Lucretius' account of Thucydides' plague of Athens.

This book is aimed in the first instance at specialist readers interested in Lucretius on the one hand and Ennius on the other. It will also be of great interest to scholars working on the Greco-Roman epic tradition, the boundaries and complementarities between epic and didactic poetry, the interaction between form and content in Latin poetry, the dynamics of authorial intent and reader response, and the theory and praxis of transmission, reception and appropriation more generally. The Appendices are a veritable treasure trove that will further many such ends. Well edited and attractively presented — this valuable contribution to scholarship will, in every sense, be a welcome and worthwhile addition to the shelves of any library and scholar.

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BARNABY TAYLOR, *LUCRETIUS AND THE LANGUAGE OF NATURE* (Oxford classical monographs). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020. Pp. x + 223. ISBN 9780198754909. £60.00.

Lucretian scholars who combine to a high level the relevant skills in both classical literature and classical philosophy are a rarity. Is there a new generation equipped to take forward the legacy of Don Fowler, Diskin Clay and others of their calibre? Barnaby Taylor's book justifies an optimistic answer.

Lucretius inherited Epicurus' two-stage theory of the origin of language. Stage 1 consisted of instinctive vocalised responses to the various objects of experience, which proved useful as referring terms in primitive communication. In the rational stage 2, language-users made these communications briefer and clearer, while an intellectual elite extended the vocabulary by adding names for theoretical entities. Lucretius speaks eloquently of stage 1 (5.1028–90), but fails even to mention stage 2, giving some the impression that his interest had waned. Taylor persuasively affirms the opposite. Far from being uninterested in the linguistic work of that elite, Lucretius represents himself as one of its pioneering members. The core of his enterprise is the expansion and repurposing of the Latin language, to make the theoretical entities of Greek atomic physics accessible to a Roman readership. For the purposes of that transition, Taylor argues, he expands the familiar resources of Latin in numerous ways, thereby triumphantly answering the charge of *egestas linguae* which he initially seemed to concede (1.139).

A taxonomy of the techniques that facilitate Lucretius' completion of the task constitutes the main subject-matter of Taylor's book. At a purely formal level these are, in Taylor's chosen terminology, such devices as metaphor (necessary and unnecessary), synecdoche, metonymy, diaphora, etymology (explicit and implicit), calques and code-switching. But it is what