

*quem regnum ... pervenire esset necesse* (note especially *illum*) cannot be interpreted otherwise than as showing that *everybody* knew about the story.

Olli Salomies

*The Cambridge Companion to Lucretius*. Edited by STUART GILLESPIE – PHILIP HARDIE. Cambridge University Press, New York 2007. ISBN 978-0-521-84801-5 (hb), ISBN 978-0-521-61266-1 (pb). XIV, 365 pp. GBP 55, USD 95 (hb), GBP 19.99, USD 36.99 (pb).

*The Cambridge Companion to Tacitus*. Edited by A. J. WOODMAN. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge – New York 2009. ISBN 978-0-521-87460-1 (hb), 978-0-521-69748-4 (pb). XVI, 366 pp. GBP 60, USD 90 (hb), GBP 18.99, USD 32.99 (pb).

This is a review of two companion volumes from the *Cambridge Companion* series. Discussing these two in the same review can be justified on the grounds that 'companions' or 'handbooks' tend to present similar sets of qualities and problems, especially when they belong to the same series like these two. In such a volume, one expects the contributors to master their subject, and as it is not usual to offer new and original arguments, the most important thing to be expected from a chapter in a companion is easiness of consultation and clarity of exposition.

There is an inherent inconsistency in the established aim of the companion volumes (stated explicitly on p. xv in the *Companion to Tacitus*). First, the authors of chapters should manage to say something that is accessible and interesting to the non-specialist (ranging from the hypothetical general reader to scholars working on other aspects of antiquity). At the same time, however, the authors should cover their field adequately, report the views of previous scholars and preferably also make their personal voice heard. Reviewing recent scholarship and providing a useful account of the topic for the non-specialist are not necessarily goals easily compatible with each other. Recent scholarship in most cases makes sense only as a reaction to the views promoted by previous generations, and reporting the entire tradition together with modern viewpoints in an article of average length while holding on to the ideal of clarity may prove an impossible task.

The results of this can be seen in that too often the chapters fail to present their basic information lucidly enough to provide the non-specialist (say, a university teacher coming from some other area of ancient scholarship) with a quick and easy review of the central topics. They may serve as state-of-the-art reports for readers familiar with the subject, but if they are limited to this they fail to serve one of the two explicit aims of companions.

Given these doubts regarding the nature and goals of companions it is a pleasure to note that in both volumes there are many good chapters that do succeed in combining these two aspects.

In the second part of the Tacitus volume, dedicated to Tacitus' works and entitled "Texts", I would like to single out the chapters by Thomas (on the *Germania*), Goldberg (on the *Dialogus*), Malloch (on the Claudian *Annals*) and Keitel (on the Neronian *Annals*) as good expositions of their subjects. Griffin's chapter on Tacitus as a historian (in the third part entitled "Topics") is one of the most interesting in the whole volume. The chapter by Oakley on language and style is rewarding even to the not insignificant number of people for whom Tacitus'

language remains the most astonishing feature of his literary person. In the fourth and final section ("Transmission") the chapter by Martin (whose last scholarly contribution this is, cf. the "Introduction", p. XVI) on manuscript tradition and early printed editions is the most useful.

There is a considerable difference in the scope of material to be discussed in the two volumes: the whole oeuvre of Tacitus set against the sole surviving work of Lucretius, the *De rerum natura*. Perhaps partly because of this, less than half of the Lucretius volume is about Lucretius and his work. The rest are about various phases in the reception of the *De rerum natura*. It is of course only natural that a work with such a special place in the history of science and an intriguing reception history should have a companion where these aspects are adequately covered. But the volume as it stands now should have included the word 'reception' in its title.

The first chapter after the introduction, Warren's on Lucretius' relationship to Greek philosophy, is excellent. Farrell's chapter on the structure of the *De rerum natura* can be recommended for its clarity. Interesting but not as clear in their content or style are the chapters by Schiesaro (on Lucretius and Roman politics) and Gale (Lucretius and previous poetical traditions). The chapter by Obbink on the exiguous fragments of Lucretius from the Herculaneum library nicely expands the reader's perspective on Lucretius even if it is by necessity rather speculative.

Among the chapters on the afterlife of Lucretius, the chapter by Reeve on transmission in the Middle Ages is the most interesting to the average classicist, even if rather compact in its expression. An interesting and well-written chapter is the one by Johnson and Wilson on Lucretius and the history of science.

Kenney's chapter on language and style is good, but is more about style than language, and one would have hoped to see a chapter on language proper as well, where, for example, Lucretius' taste for archaism or other aspects of his language would have been discussed in more detail. The absence of such a chapter is probably a by-product of the volume's policy to be (to cite the back cover) "completely accessible to the reader who has read Lucretius only in translation". In such a volume, a more philologically oriented reader will find less useful material.

One thing that readers of companions will certainly be looking for are the bibliographical references of various chapters, among them the "Further reading" sections. The length and number of comments in these sections varies remarkably in both volumes. In part, this is a natural result of the varying range of materials covered by the individual chapters, but more editorial guidance might have rendered them more useful down the line.

The ambitious goal of these companions means that not all chapters will satisfy all potential users, but some of them do, and all will probably satisfy at least some of their potential users.

Hilla Halla-aho

*The Cambridge Companion to Horace*. Edited by STEPHEN HARRISON. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2007. ISBN 978-0-521-83002-7. XIII, 381 pp. GBP 55.

Im zehnten Kapitel seines berühmten Romans *Der Graf von Monte Christo* erzählt Alexandre Dumas d. Ä. vom französischen König Ludwig XVIII. in der Zeit, als der aus Elba zurück-