

la thèse de doctorat de Valentina Popescu, *Lucian's Paradoxa: Fiction, Aesthetics, and Identity*, Université de Cincinnati, juin de 2009.

La présentation typographique du livre est assez soignée. Néanmoins on a compté plus de cinquante esprits et accents grecs erronés. Sont également gênantes les fautes de coupures des mots et des noms grecs à la fin de la ligne: φαν-ερῶς p. 70; τᾶλ-ηθές p. 133; Demod-ocus p. 159; Hephaes-tus p. 203; Her-akleitos p. 222 (même pour les mots anglais il semble ne suivre aucune règle). Enfin, à deux reprises on peut regretter l'oubli du numéro de page exact: p. 51, n. 16 (Ch. 2: 00–0) et p. 140, n. 1 (Ch. 1: 00–0).

L'étude de Kim représente une contribution remarquable dans le domaine des études sur l'époque impériale et deviendra certainement un ouvrage de référence pour la réception d'Homère à l'époque post-classique.

Orestis Karavas

LILIANE BODSON: *L'interprétation des noms grecs et latins d'animaux illustrée par le cas du zoonyme sēps-seps*. Académie royale de Belgique, Bruxelles 2009. ISBN 978-2-8031-02631. 368 pp. EUR 30.

Professor Bodson is well known as a specialist of Graeco-Roman zoology. She has written on animals in religion and as pets, on horses, dogs, birds and serpents and edited an impressive series of proceedings of thematic conferences on animals, held at the University of Liège.

The present volume has a reptilian theme: the discussed words (σῆψ, Latin *sēps*) are variously applied to serpents (vipers), lizards and occasionally even insect larvae and myriopoda. The textual evidence has been carefully collected. It contains altogether 63 occurrences in Aelian, Aristotle, Dioscorides, Lucan, Nicander, Pausanias, Pliny, etc. Every extract is given in both the original and in translation.

The word σῆψ is derived from σήπειν 'to putrify' (cf. σήψις 'putrifying, putrification'). As an animal, different texts give it different characteristics, but all agree that a σῆψ is poisonous. After a methodological introduction and a general discussion of the sources, the book presents the four offered identifications in four different chapters. The most common (18 texts, some with several occurrences) is a viper, possibly with two different species, the European *Viper ammodytes* and the African (Egyptian) *Echis pyramidum*. The characteristics of both are given in detail and compared to descriptions provided by texts.

The second group of six texts describe σῆψ as a lizard. The term is synonymous with χαλκίς and a σῆψ is probably a member of the family of the *Scincidae*. Several closely related species are discussed with a view to identifying them. Thirdly, two passages of Pliny describe *sēps* as a poisonous centipede (*Chilopoda*), and finally, seven texts (mostly in late glossaries) as a moth larva, *Traumatocampa pityocampa* (the pine processionary, of the *Notodontidae* family).

All cases are very carefully presented and there is no need to doubt them. The definitions and characteristics of a σῆψ given in the texts are analysed in detail and compared to the biological, taxonomical and toxicological aspects of the animals. The results are also arranged in lucid tables. The fact that different authors used the same word for different animals

with one common characteristic – poison – is not to be wondered. Even now, more than two centuries after Linné's work, many non-biologists tend to mix the different species.

In the second chapter some possibly relevant iconographical evidence (a few works of art and some manuscript illustrations) are discussed. It is a pity that we have no illustrations here.

The book concludes with a detailed bibliography (almost 40 pages), several indices and four colour plates presenting the four different identifications of σήψ. A fifth showing the imago of the moth would have been nice.

*Klaus Karttunen*

LUCIO CECCARELLI: *Contributi per la storia dell'esametro latino*. I–II. Studi e testi tardoantichi 8. Herder, Roma 2008. ISBN 978-88-89670-36-1, ISSN 1973-9982. 238 pp., 110 tavv. EUR 50.

The dactylic hexameter is a unique metre in that it allows a variety of expression and personal poetic styles, as its long history in Greek and Latin literature manifests. This owes largely to its considerable length and its employment of two distinctly different metrical feet: the dactyl and the spondee. It is also remarkable that Roman authors imposed a new set of rules on its basic structure: this was mainly necessitated by the high rate of long syllables in the Latin language as well as its system of accentuation. Indeed, judging by the extant fragments of Ennius' verse, Latin hexameter poetry showed, from its very beginning, several features which its Greek models do not have. The Latin hexameter is generally characterized by its very high rate of spondees and its system of caesurae: virtually all Latin hexameter lines have either a penthemimeral or a hephthemimeral caesura (a word break in the middle of either the third or fourth foot). Even these restrictions allow for significant variation in the employment of the metre, and the individual styles of authors are easily recognizable by their placement of dactyls and spondees and their use of word division.

Several attempts to chart the history and evolution of the Latin hexameter using statistical methods have been undertaken previously, but none of them are as extensive or ambitious as Ceccarelli's compendium: the author has manually scanned and analysed over 140,000 lines of hexameter verse from Cicero's *Aratea* to Venantius Fortunatus' *Vita Sancti Martini*. As the sheer scope of such a study is in itself massive, the author has, probably wisely, limited his analyses to a handful of the central structural features of the Latin hexameter. The main objects of his study are the ratio of dactyls and spondees, their placement in the hexameter line and the use of different dactyl-spondee patterns. Ceccarelli's study of other structural phenomena such as word division is more narrowly focused, and his observations are, by and large, limited to penthemimeral and hephthemimeral caesurae, line endings and the use of elision. The author himself readily admits that he discusses the structure of the hexameter on an abstract level, and syntax and style do not enter the picture (although he does touch on such considerations in his immensely learned footnotes). Ceccarelli divides the first volume of his work into two sections: in the first, he discusses the early exponents of the Latin hexameter up to Juvenal, and in the second, the Late Antique poets. The second volume of the work contains the statistics to which Ceccarelli constantly refers in his first volume.