

BOOK REVIEWS

A Roman Verse Satire Reader: Selections from Lucilius, Horace, Persius, and Juvenal. By CATHERINE C. KEANE. Mundelein, Illinois: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, 2010. Pp. xxvi + 142. Paper, \$19.00. ISBN 978-0-86516-685-1.

A Martial Reader: Selections from the Epigrams. By CRAIG WILLIAMS. Mundelein, Illinois: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, 2011. Pp. xxx + 185. Paper, \$19.00. ISBN 978-0-86516-704-9.

Keane and Williams offer engaging Latin readers that familiarize students with the distinct features of Latin satire and epigram and aim to advance the language-reading skills of Latin students at the intermediate level. They offer a varied range of selections (as the Latin Readers series prescribes), as well as a well-organized and elegant presentation of the material that exposes the delights of reading the genres of satire and epigram for the novice Latin reader. In addition, the readers do well at illuminating the challenges and rewards of their respective genre with accessible notes on major themes, language (grammar and syntax), some trends in major scholarship, vocabulary, suggested further reading, and other media (maps, illustrations, and occasional URL links to online content, such as to images of partially preserved multi-story buildings at Ostia and Herculaneum at www.vroma.org and an online map of Imperial Rome from William Shepherd's *Historical Atlas*). In the following, I will offer some observations about each book separately, since Keane and Williams are ostensibly working on different authors and genres.

Keane's introduction opens with a generous survey of the four canonical Latin satirists—Lucilius, Horace, Persius, and Juvenal—that includes “characteristics of the genre,” a general overview of their works (and as they relate to her choice of selections), and an explanation of style and meter. Since a separate volume could easily be dedicated to each satirist, Keane expertly condenses the material by offering the student incisive remarks on important issues pertaining to all the satirists, including the satirists' use of *personae*, reflections on social and political mobility (Lucilius and Juvenal), philosophical self-examination (Horace, Persius, and Stoic philosophy), expression (or suppression) of anger, and the

use of rhetoric (*sententiae, locus de saeculo*) and mythology. In addition, what Keane's Latin selections may overlook (e.g. Horace's programmatic *Satire* 1.10 or Juvenal's *Satire* 10) is adequately offset by larger discussions of specific satires that convey to the reader a fuller and more comprehensive sense of each author's *oeuvre*.

Keane's array of Latin selections also speaks well to her definition of the genre when she states that "It [satire] documents daily life and customs, reflects on historical events and figures, and articulates and scrutinizes particularly Roman values" (ix). Some selections include "A definition of virtue" (Lucilius, *Satires*, fragments 1196-1208), "Greed and its manifestations" (Horace, *Satire* 1.1.41-79), "The satirist's philosophical and ethical roots" (Persius, *Satire* 5.21-51), and "Unchaste women on display" (Juvenal, *Satire* 6.60-102). The occasional map of Rome detailing its urban layout and of Italy, as well as a few illustrations of graffiti and sculptors of comic actors are a welcome addition as visual aids to the student's understanding of Rome's cityscape, its environs, and the culture's artistic output. The commentary is also very useful to the student, with brief explanations headlining each selection that include: the content of the upcoming selection; thematic and/or literary echoes to other satires or selections in the reader itself (highlighted in bold font); and resonances with authors outside the genre proper. Moreover, Keane often in the notes supplements explanations of tricky grammar and syntax with references to *Gildersleeve's Latin Grammar* (annotated as "GL") and *Bennet's New Latin Grammar* ("B"). I believe these markers can encourage students to acquaint themselves with more advanced supplementary grammar aids also necessary for those who continue Latin at the advanced levels and beyond. In the main, Keane's reader offers a compact yet thorough introduction to the extensive Latin satiric tradition.

Williams' Martial reader offers rich strategies for reading the author's fifteen books of epigrams, with his choice of selections often acting as thematic "teasers" for the book as a whole. In the preface Williams states his desire to empower his reader to appreciate the reading of Martial cover to cover, unlike its traditional appreciation in the form of "bits and pieces" (ix) as light fare after the tough prose of a Cicero or Sallust. In this spirit, Williams, like Keane, offers in his Introduction a concentrated analysis of major components and issues informing a deep understanding of Martial. These topics consist of the author's life, the work's publication and manuscript tradition, the history of the genre of epigram (and its affinities with other existing Greek and Latin literary genres, such as the invective of the iambic tradition), Martial's significant use of names, use of *personae* and the

autobiographical “I,” and a very accessible guide to the scansion and reading of the elegiac couplet, phalaecean hendecasyllable, and scazon.

Most impressive is Williams’ “tips for reading” that encourage the reader to understand “questions of structure” beyond the reading of individual epigrams themselves. To this end Williams poses salient questions to the student when reading the epigrams, such as how the internal structure of the couplet (the hexameter and pentameter pair), and the couplet itself, either as a monodistich (two-line poem) or within an extended series, conveys sense and “progressions in thought and language.” It is also for this reason that Williams does not offer any introductory treatment before each selection in the commentary section, with a view to encouraging the student to “decipher and unpack” Martial’s language and style on her/his own terms. Where difficulties of sense or syntax arise (as they often do!), however, Williams offers ample assistance for clarification without either giving away any final punch lines or undermining the students’ reading and interpretive efforts. Williams offers a most valuable approach to reading Martial in this regard, one that many other commentaries geared towards intermediate readers would benefit from.

In sum, any intermediate student interested in these more challenging genres will greatly benefit from these well-executed, accessible, and affordable collections. My only minor reservation with these readers lies not with the commentators’ choices, but with the series’ restriction on the length of Latin that the commentator can treat (about 500-600 lines), which ostensibly precludes the examination of a satire or a book of epigrams in its entirety. The upshot to this, however, may lie in Keane’s suggestion to pair a look at the verse satirists with Martial’s *Epigrams*, in which case both Keane and Williams together would serve as an effective Latin commentary duo for any school or university term.

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