

The concluding Part 4, ‘The Self within the Text’, treats a complex, yet rewarding subject: Seneca’s views on the creation of literature and the self. In ‘The Challenges of the *Phaedrus*: Therapeutic Writing and the *Letters on Ethics*’ (Chapter 9) G. addresses Seneca’s response in *Epistulae morales* to the Platonic position preferring oral discourse over written communication. Chapter 10, ‘The Mouse, the Moneybox, and the Six-Footed Scuffling Solecism’, revises the portrayal of Seneca as an overly solemn moral philosopher. As G. effectively illustrates, Seneca employs humour and satire not only for entertainment but also as a rhetorical device to undermine and mock opposing viewpoints and individuals. I found Chapter 11, ‘The Manhandling of Maecenas’, particularly insightful. Commencing with the critique of Maecenas’ poetry and lifestyle in *Epistle* 114, G. elucidates that, for Seneca, the manner of living and the manner of writing are closely intertwined (*talis oratio qualis vita*). Thus, work and author are inextricably linked. The chapter also explores the significance of concepts such as *ingenium* and *oratio virilis*. It becomes evident that the latter must be defined more from an absence of traits perceived as indicative of *mollitia*. The final Chapter 12, ‘Honeybee Reading and Self-Scripting’, takes Michel Foucault’s interpretation of *Letter* 84 and his idea of ‘scripting the self’ as the starting point. G. expands and refines Foucault’s concept by showing that Seneca does not refer to pre-literary texts but to ambitious literature. In the texts created by the *ingenium*, the self can be recognised and potentially endure beyond the death of its author.

Due to their origin, the individual chapters can be read separately; it is, however, recommended to study them collectively. They mutually complement each other, yielding a cohesive whole. G.’s engaging and accessible writing style renders the book an intellectual feast not only for specialists but for anyone interested in Seneca’s philosophical works.

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MARGINALITY IN LITERATURE

ARAMPAPASLIS (K.), AUGOUSTAKIS (A.), FROEDGE (S.), SCHROER (C.) (edd.) *Dynamics of Marginality. Liminal Characters and Marginal Groups in Neronian and Flavian Literature. (Trends in Classics Supplementary Volume 143.)* Pp. x+176. Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2023. Cased, £82, €89.95, US\$103.99. ISBN: 978-3-11-106158-0.

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This is a slender but densely packed and eclectic book on ‘marginality’ in Neronian and Flavian literature. Taking their cue from modern scholarship that explores ‘marginality’ as a critical concept, albeit with diverse approaches (cf. L. Edmunds, ‘Toward a Minor Roman Poetry’, *Poetica* 42 [2010]; M. Formisano and C.S. Kraus [edd.], *Marginality, Canonicity, Passion* [2018]), the editors have assembled a collection that revisits distinctions between the ‘center/canonical and periphery/marginal’ (p. 4) by looking in

from the outside. This is a rewarding endeavour, and the book's scope, embracing Neronian and Flavian texts, is particularly refreshing.

The eight-page introduction (four if we set aside the summary of the chapters) penned by the editors rather thinly theorises what 'marginality' can mean; but they are candid that the 'protean' nature of the terminology (and surely, the contributors' varied approaches as a whole) resist a more robust theorisation and categorisation, at least for the time being. More valuable is the contention that marginality is a state, with copious manifestations, and is therefore subject to mutation. Despite its reduced theoretical scaffold, the collection breaks new interpretative ground and is an impassioned call for further inquiry.

V.E. Pagán's opening chapter focuses on Philo of Alexandria, an 'indefinite fringe' between Roman and non-Roman, between Jewish and non-Jewish (p. 11), but also an interlocutor between worlds. Whilst acknowledging that 'none of our ancient sources are ever what we want them to be' (p. 13), Pagán deftly shines a light on Philo's historical writings during the reign of Caligula, the *In Flaccum* and the *De Legatione*. Whilst Philo was not concerned with narrating Caligula's rule, this period of history resides in our source's own margins. Philo draws on the image of madness that is so familiar from Cassius Dio and Suetonius, reading the incident of the mock-crowning of Carabas in the *In Flaccum* as a way of reconsidering marginality's boundaries. We fluctuate between dangerous and blameless madness ('Caligula and Carabas, emperor and pauper, Roman and Alexandrian'), and liminal characters are catapulted into the centre of the stage. The chapter closes with a reading of the Jewish embassy arriving in Rome to meet Caligula in the gardens of Agrippina as described in *De Legatione*. Pagán reflects on the spatial marginality afforded by the garden as a liminal, theatrical space, which 'spectacularises' not only the embassy, but also the emperor himself. The discussion of the spatial element is rewarding (if brief), establishing this aspect as one of the *files rouges* of the book (addressed by P. Roche, Arampapalis and A. Roumpou as well as E. Manolaraki from a different viewpoint). Pagán's use of marginality as codified in Genettean, paratextual terms could perhaps have been one of the book's theoretical frames.

From gardens to trees: Manolaraki's learned paper takes us to Vespasian's reign. Metaphors of grafting in Pliny the Elder's *Natural History* are well suited to craft a narrative of the new imperial family, considering 'previous arboreal castings of imperial power' (p. 25) for describing the Julio-Claudians. In this world of 'botanical politics', Manolaraki surveys evidence for *insitio* in discourses of autochthony, ethnicity and class as well as mirroring Vespasian's policies. This historicising approach to Pliny is abundantly fruitful. One of her case studies is the grafting of the *prunum* (*HN*. 15.43): apple-plums and almond-plums reveal reflections of ethnic identity and imperial membership within Iberia (*cives Latini*), whilst damsons and sebestens recall Syria – no longer exotic or novel, but increasingly central to the empire, and naturalised within it. Of course, Rome-the-*parens*-tree retains hegemonic power, and the 'political economy of *insitio* anesthetizes Pliny's positive imperialism as an organic exchange' (p. 38). With the discussion of apple-grafting and naming, Manolaraki suggests that it can be an equaliser of class and privilege, at least in theory. In the discussion of chestnuts (p. 41) the location of the anecdote must be significant: *in Neapolitano agro* conjures the cultural blend of Naples in the first century CE, and Tereus suggests a name of Greek origin.

J. Master's paper is a *tour de force* that engages with the sense experience of the *Moretum*'s marginalised characters, Simulus and Scybale. Showing well that a metapoetic/metaliterary approach is by no means the only interpretative path, Master explores the physicality afforded to these characters. Starting from R. Heinze's characterisation of Simulus as 'realistic' (p. 44), Master weaves a different picture of the narrated morning in the life of Simulus and Scybale, reading against its parodic and farcical

elements. Master invites us to share in the pain, anxieties and the repetitive physical toll attached to the production of bread and *moretum*. The comparison with Hephaestus toiling over the shield of Achilles is illuminating, though more sustained links with the sense experiences of Vulcan in *Aeneid* 8 (8.407–15, an intertextual model in the poem's opening, cf. A. Perutelli), could be pursued productively, despite the clearly ironic pulse in the *Aeneid*. The piece closes with a reflection on Scybale's description – the fullest portrait of an individual of African descent in antiquity – and the derivation of her characterisation from ancient ethnographic traditions. That Simulus' and Scybale's lives are brutal and gruelling there is no question: however, it bears repeating that these two are not equals. Scybale's further marginalisation and lesser status within the household's hierarchy are evident from the jobs she does. She does not partake in the preparation of the food; rather, she carries the mortar, rekindles the hearth, heats the water, sweeps (W. Fitzgerald and N. Horsfall both note her work's subordination).

Building on his earlier work on satire's generic penchant for performativity, Roche revisits the seemingly marginal persona of the speaker in Persius' *Satires*: the narrator's claim to marginality is only a façade. Persius creates a web of *performed* social isolation; at its epicentre, we find a conservative aristocrat whose intellectual and cultural taste has isolated him from the mainstream and who is enveloped by anxieties and prejudices against corrupting, foreignising forces. Persius' opening denigration of poets shows that, in contrast to Horace, there are few attempts at integration within any social circle. The subsections 'Deferral and Imminence' and 'Interiority' are fascinating: Roche reflects on the speaker's temporal alienation, out of sync with the present time and turned inward (building on V. Rimell's pioneering 2015 *The Closure of Space in Roman Poetics*). In particular, the consideration that the dense and obscure language of the *Satires* is a product of this morally elevated, and simultaneously insulating, pull towards interiority could be mapped out in terms of a 'topography of isolation', literal and metaphorical (the presence of inner *loci* is sketched at pp. 76–7, but a sociological, systematic reading of these spaces would be very valuable).

The next two papers form a nice couplet: both focus on Petronius' *Satyrica*, whose emphasis on marginality is evident. C. Star brings in the full force of the law to the text to make it an axial theme, arguing that the 'study of law and literature is particularly helpful for investigating marginality in texts for the simple fact that law is a key force in creating social margins' (p. 82). Though the specific nature of his past crimes is never made explicit, Encolpius' criminal status is a marginalising factor. Star offers a broad overview of Encolpius' legal standing, deduced from the *testimonia* (as well as analysis of the variety of crimes that might exist in the lost portions of the story). On Trimalchio's hyperbolic justice system and the shortcomings of Roman imperial justice readers will profitably juxtapose this chapter with L. Donati's recent piece on the scenes of servile 'crime and punishment' in the *Cena Trimalchionis* ('Purple Wool: the Imperial Texture of Trimalchio's Domestic Jurisdiction', *CQ* 72 [2022], 739–54).

Arampapaslis turns to a marginalised god in the Graeco-Roman pantheon, Priapus, amplifying his might in the *Satyrica*. Arampapaslis associates Encolpius with Priapus via their 'outcast' status from several angles. Encolpius' adventures can be interpreted as a mock-version of religious pilgrimage (further after-effects in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*?). He offers an intriguing speculation on the lost ending: the possibility that Encolpius, like Priapus, will eventually resettle after his excommunication during the ritualistic *pharmakos*, which had triggered his departure. Less convincing (but only in its current form as a concluding afterthought) is the suggestion that the anti-hero's adventures 'perhaps [reflect] the anxieties of low-class people during the imperial period who would become marginalized through their wanderings in search of a better future' (p. 111).

T. Antoniadis examines the slippery characterisation of Hercules in Silius Italicus' *Punica*. Rather than focusing solely on his autocratic aspirations deriving from the *Hercules Furens*, Antoniadis shows how Hercules' emotional instability enacts the character's marginalisation, a 'preeminent outsider'. There is always a discordant note, Antoniadis shows well, when Hercules' exemplarity is put on view. The discussion of his portrayal in Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica* is too brief (but readers can turn to G. Manuwald's "'Herculean Tragedy" in Valerius Flaccus' *Argonautica*', in: S. Papaioannou and A. Marinis [edd.], *Elements of Tragedy in Flavian Epic* [2021], pp. 91–106). The historicising links made in the conclusion between Hercules, Nero and Domitian are revealing. In the discussion of the Saguntine massacre and Hercules' role as a spectator of the horror, I wondered whether Jupiter's role is more marked and that of Hercules more tragic. The hero's attitude is that of a god recently admitted among the Olympians, who must prove his mettle as the worthy heir of his father. And such a one he arguably is, as he weeps (*inlacrimat*) in a similar manner to the Homeric Zeus, who had 'felt pity' for Sarpedon's predetermined death and had made the sky weep tears of blood on his behalf (*Il.* 16): Zeus and Hercules are both spectators who cannot directly intervene to change the fates unfolding. The heightened emotions of a *lacrimans* Hercules match those of the Saguntines committing kin-killing (*et facto sceleri inlacrimant*).

Roumpou's piece, fittingly closing the book, expertly and lucidly explores the side-lining that Silius Italicus enacts by banning Hannibal to the margins of the action, which can be read in poetological terms as a closural device. The non-killing of Hannibal and the emphasis on renewal and continuation resist closure. The idea that the displacement of Hannibal to a pastoral world reflects a wider poetic technique by Silius of putting on view generic tension as a way of exploring essential themes is an argument that I hope will be further probed.

In sum, the volume does not quite achieve cohesion, but common threads emerge successfully, and the book is just the beginning, as acknowledged (p. 8). Further potential interpretative avenues might examine topographies of isolation/marginality, the relationship between marginality and liminality, or the *agents* of these marginalising processes (whether these may be historical or literary or even us as readers/critics). This collection is to be commended for shining a light on several underrepresented texts and characters with a variety of methodologies, 'old and new', from spatial and ecological, to sensory and intertextual. All readers will surely find something of interest in this edited book.

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NIGHT-TIME FIGHTING IN STATIUS

AMEIS (K.) *Heimliche Nachtaktionen in der Thebais des Statius*. (Orbis Antiquus 57.) Pp. x + 408. Münster: Aschendorff, 2022. Paper, €56. ISBN: 978-3-402-14469-5.

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As A. observes in the opening of this book, night in epic conventionally signals a break from activity, and night-time ambushes such as the Doloneia of *Iliad* 10 and the