

LINDSAY WATSON AND PATRICIA WATSON, *Juvenal, Satire 6*, Cambridge Greek and Latin Classics 55, Cambridge: CUP, 2014, xiii + 320 pp. ISBN 978-0-521-85491-7

The publication of Lindsay and Patricia Watson's (henceforth WW) commentary on Juvenal's sixth Satire in the Cambridge Greek and Latin Classics series is a most welcome and important event. Our profession has travelled a long way from when my own Juvenal commentary was commissioned by Cambridge, roughly thirty years ago: I had to work hard to persuade the Press to permit me to select Satires 1-5 (= Book 1) rather than the then canonical selection, Satires 1, 3, 4 and 10. The misgivings related to the sexual content of Satire 2. The fact that students now have guidance in this series through Juvenal's tirade against hypersexualised Roman *matronae* is wonderful, not least because Books 1 and 2 are highly complementary. Our guides, WW, are experienced and trustworthy veterans of the commentary genre (Martial) and undisputed experts in early imperial Latin poetry.

WWs' 56 page introduction covers all the ground it needs to, with sections on (1) J's life and work, (2) structure and themes of Satire 6, (3) J's 'anti-*matrona*', (4) misogyny in literature, (5) the *persona*, (6) J's style, (7) the textual tradition and the Oxford fragment and finally (8) a summary of the poem. The authors have immersed themselves thoroughly in the relevant scholarship and make generous reference to earlier work, indicating agreement and disagreement with clearly articulated reasons. The only exception is Yvan Nadeau's substantial running commentary on the poem (Collection Latomus, 2011), with which there is almost no engagement; despite Lindsay W's negative views, made clear in *BMCR* 2012.09.19, Nadeau should appear in n. 61, for example.

I find WWs' introduction and commentary extremely sound. This is doubtless a reflection of the convergence of my own views with those of WW, particularly in respect of the *persona* adopted by J: 'much of what the Speaker says, by virtue of out-and-out counterfactuality, grotesque exaggerations, slanted presentation of the facts and embrace of conspicuously outmoded attitudes, is designed to fail in its ostensible object of persuading the reader, even as it arouses admiration for the brilliance and virtuosity of the individual portraits' (48). The cultural details of WWs' arguments about the *persona* are extremely valuable. Valuable too is WWs' evident admiration for their author which enables them to see the poet's hand at work, for example, in his structuring of the poem by means of a programmatic prologue and ring composition between prologue and epilogue (11-13). A brief selection

of exemplary notes would include 10 *glandem ructante*, 63 *chironomon*, 159 *obseruant...mero pede sabbata reges*, 165 *nigroque simillima cycno* (includes a nice mention of the WWs' Australia), 205 *DACICVS...auro*, 286 *monstra*, 339 *fugit mus*, 07-13 (very clear and honest about the extreme difficulties), 569-70 *quid sidus...astro* and 592-609 on contraceptives, abortifacients and suppositious children.

WW make few concessions to the undergraduate reader in their sometimes compressed and footnote-heavy style and recherché references (e.g. Men. fr. 219 K-A (29); 'Circe's maid' lacks contextualisation (43); no explanation of how Seneca's *De matrimonio* survives (43)). Moreover, they refer to the Oxford fragment simply as O (for the first time, I think, on page 13) and the abbreviation and history behind it is not explained until page 52. The sequencing of the topics in the introduction strikes me as a little odd. It may be customary in the series to relegate discussion of textual matters to towards the end of the introduction, but in this case, the significance, and sheer excitement, of the story of the O fragment deserves much more prominence. Winstedt (its discoverer) was, after all, an undergraduate (as WW mention, 52): this could be a real hook for students. If I were teaching with this edition, I would ask my students to read the sections of the introduction in this sequence: J's life and work, the textual tradition, misogyny in literature, summary of the poem, structure and themes of Satire 6, the *persona*, J's anti-*matrona*, J's style.

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