Greco-Roman martial epic poetry, from Homer and Virgil to Neronian and Flavian epic, is obsessed with the treatment of dead bodies. Sometimes corpses take centre stage in grand funerals; sometimes, disturbingly, they are objects of physical violence or malign neglect. In this book – the first full-length examination of corpse mistreatment in epic – Andrew M. McClellan explores the motif of post mortem abuse in Greco-Roman epic, especially the Latin poems of early imperial Rome: Lucan’s Bellum civile, Valerius Flaccus’ Argonautica, Statius’ Thebaid, and Silius’ Punica. He counters the pervasive tendency to view epic violence from the perspective of the abuser by shifting the focus to the object of abuse. In signalling the corpse as a critical ‘character’ and not simply a byproduct of war, he offers a fundamental re-evaluation of violence and warfare in Latin epic, and through close study of intertextualities indicates the distinctive features of each author’s treatment of the dead.

Andrew M. McClellan is the Stepsay Family Postdoctoral Fellow in Classics at San Diego State University. His research interests range widely across Greek and Latin literature, especially epic poetry, drama, historiography, and classical reception. He is particularly interested in the intersections of war, violence, and death in Roman epic poetry and society.
ABUSED BODIES IN ROMAN EPIC

ANDREW M. MCCLELLAN

San Diego State University
For Zana and Zafir
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Preface

My justifications for writing this book and an outline of its structure and arguments are laid out in the Introduction. Here it’s a great pleasure to express my gratitude to a number of people who have provided their time and support as I brought this project to life. The present work began as a doctoral dissertation submitted to the University of British Columbia in 2015. First thanks go to Susanna Braund, my supervisor. She has for many years now been my first and best reader. I cannot begin to express or do justice to my many debts to her, academic and otherwise. In alphabetical order, Keyne Cheshire, Francesca D’Alessandro Behr, Laurel Fulkerson, Kyle Gervais, Stephen Guy-Bray, Philip Hardie, Toph Marshall, Siobhán McElduff, Tim Stover, and Gernot Wieland all read drafts of the book, or select chapters, at various stages of composition. Each has offered valuable feedback that has immeasurably improved this final product. I’d like to thank CUP’s two anonymous readers for brilliant suggestions, for making me think harder, and for their enthusiasm, which has proved enormously heartening. Audiences in Bryn Mawr, Boston, Boulder, New Brunswick (NJ), Provo, Seattle, Tallahassee, Vancouver, Waco, and Winnipeg have endured bits and pieces of this project. I am grateful for helpful comments on what was often very much work-in-progress. Students in my courses the last few years deserve credit for being my sounding-board for theories and irrationalities; I note in particular seminars on Lucan, Ovid, and the survey ‘Epic and History’ on Virgil, Lucan, and Silius, at Florida State University. Everyone I’ve mentioned has saved me from countless blunders. In cases where my stubbornness has won out, they will wish they had saved me from more. All errors that remain are my own responsibility.

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Part of Chapter 1 is a revised and trimmed-down version of a piece that originally appeared as ‘The death and mutilation of Imbrius in Iliad 13’, in the Yearbook of Ancient Greek Epic, vol. 1, eds. Ready and Tsagalis (Leiden, 2017): 159–74.
Notes on Texts and Abbreviations

For the main epic authors discussed in this monograph, I have used the following editions (exceptions/emendations cited in notes): Monro and Allen (1920) for Homer’s *Iliad*, Vian (1974–1981) for Apollonius’ *Argonautica*, Mynors (1969) for Virgil’s *Aeneid*, Housman (1927 2nd ed.) for Lucan’s *Bellum ciuile*, Ehlers (1980) for Valerius Flaccus’ *Argonautica*, Hill (1983) for Statius’ *Thebaid*, and Delz (1987) for Silius Italicus’ *Punica*. Other Greek and Latin quotations are from the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* and the Packard Humanities Institute. All translations are my own though I have often leaned on earlier versions; my aim has been for utility, not artistry.

In general, abbreviations for Classical authors and their works follow Hornblower, Spawforth, and Eidinow, eds. (2012), *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 4th ed. (Oxford), with occasional expansions for the sake of clarity. The main exceptions are Apollonius’ *Argonautica* (AR), Lucan’s *Bellum ciuile* (BC), and Valerius Flaccus’ *Argonautica* (VF). Journal abbreviations follow the system of *L’Année philologique*. Note also:


**CIL** (1862–), *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*. Berlin.

**C&S** *Cultura e scuola*


**ORA** *Oxford Research Archive*

**TLL** (1900–), *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*. Leipzig.