

different types of scholia, which impedes the book's usefulness as a medium for understanding the history of literary criticism.

Short conclusions are included at the end of each chapter, but the book lacks a substantial general conclusion. Instead, a very brief epilogue is presented. Due to the mosaic-like structure of the book, this decision may seem questionable, although it is not really a major detriment. Despite this minor annoyance, the book is conveniently reader-friendly. N.'s style of writing is clear and sharp, all quoted scholia are translated, a glossary of Greek terms (of almost twenty pages) is included, as well as a thematic index and an *index locorum* and a list of published scholia editions. The strengths of the book readily overweight its weaknesses, making it recommendable for all those interested in ancient views on literature.

Kalle Knaapi

ANNA MARIA WASYL: *Genres Rediscovered: Studies in Latin Miniature Epic, Love Elegy, and Epigram of the Romano-Barbaric Age*. Jagiellonian University Press, Kraków 2011. ISBN 978-83-233-3089-9. 290 pp. EUR 10.

Anna Maria Wasyl (hereafter W.) has contributed a timely discussion of several writers of Late Latin poetry, exploring the "change and continuity" in their rediscoveries of genres employed in what she terms the "classical phase" of Roman literature (read "late Republican, Augustan and early Imperial Latin literature") (pp. 7–8). The genres she treats are miniature epic and love elegy in Parts One and Two respectively (W. is aware of the problematic nature of the *epyllion's* status as a non-genre in antiquity, see pp. 13–29), and in Part Three that of epigram. The authors she treats are the most representative of their respective genres in this period: Dracontius (and the anonymous author of the *Aegritudo Perdicae*), Maximianus, Luxorius, the anonymous author of the *Sylloge*, and Ennodius. Each poet's geographical locale (Dracontius, the author of the *Sylloge*, and Luxorius from Vandal Africa, Maximianus and Ennodius from Ostrogothic Italy) has provided W. with the titular designation: "Romano-Barbaric". W.'s contention that one of the most important features of late antique poetics are works produced "that are hardly interpretable in 'old' generic terms" (p. 7) seems a bit strained in light of recent discussions of generic engagements with one another in the earlier "classical phase"; see, e.g., Stephen Harrison, *Generic Enrichment in Vergil and Horace* (Oxford, 2007).

The title of Part One, "The Miniature Epic in Vandal Africa and the Heritage of a 'Non-Genre'", alludes to David F. Bright's 1987 monograph, *The Miniature Epic in Vandal Africa*, one of the most important inaugural studies of Dracontius in English, one which W. is in constant dialogue with in her own engagement with Dracontius' *epyllia* (p. 11). W. limits her discussion to four of Dracontius' poems: *Hylas* (from the poet's juvenilia), *De raptu Helenae*, *Medea* (all from the *Romulea*), as well as, the *Orestis Tragoedia*. The selection is understandable, but as these are the poems that have received the most attention from scholars, some comment on the rest of Dracontius' neglected corpus would have been welcome. After defining the so-called genre of the miniature epic/*epyllion* (pp. 13–29), W. treats key aspects of this "genre" in the aforementioned poems. She deals with the presence of the "poet-narrator" in his work, the antagonistic relationship between miniature epic and Homeric epic (hence W.'s

designation of the *epyllion* as "non-Homeric" epic; 49f.), and Dracontius' "mixing of genres" such as miniature epic with lyric or tragedy. Part One concludes with W. turning her attention to the *Aegritudo Perdicae*, a poem that, she finds, while inferior to those by Dracontius not only in "range of poetic talent" and "depth of moral reflection", can nonetheless be read with "certain pleasure" (p. 109).

Part Two, "The Elegy without Love: Maximianus and his *Opus*", treats Maximianus as a "bold translator" of the traditional Augustan elegy into a different culture (p. 135). W. emphasises that Maximianus' poetics is polyphonic – diversity of themes, moods, and forms is *the* characteristic of his work in general (p. 120). In the Christian era, it is tempting to interpret elements of the poems through a certain moralistic lens, however, W. rightly steers the reader onto a middle road. Love is not read as either wholly similar to what is presented in earlier Latin love elegy, or as a spiritual Christian love (p. 135). What W. rightly concludes is that Maximianus' poems provide no simple messages on love and old age (p. 161).

In Part Three, "The Roman Epigram in the Romano-Barbaric World", W. turns to the final genre she considers: epigram. After providing a summary of the genre from Catullus, via Martial, W. then shifts her focus onto Luxorius, the "Carthaginian Martial" (p. 169). For W. Luxorius is comparable to Martial particularly in his "clear vision" of the genre, for, "like Martial, he seems more precise than his fellow litterateurs in describing the genre" they practiced (p. 217). This section also examines the works of the anonymous author of the *Sylloge* (published by Riese as cc. 90–197), and the Christian poet, Ennodius. W.'s meagre conclusion (p. 236) that the author of the *Sylloge* tells us even less than Luxorius does of life in North Africa – that the "action" of the poems occurs outside any specific context – should not detract the reader for her discussion of the aesthetic qualities of the poems themselves.

Despite her worthwhile and in-depth discussions of the poets and poems she has chosen to examine, often W.'s conclusions are not very profound. However, this estimation should not be read as a caution to actually engaging with the arguments presented in this monograph, but rather as a statement to signal to the potential reader that the real substance and worth of the book (apart from the impressive and very useful bibliography) are to be found in the details, and exemplary discussions of the poems themselves, and often not in the concluding remarks. While the poets that W. has discussed occasionally form a sort of "postscript" to their predecessors – usually only by the negative designator "imitators" – W. has confirmed their importance in any genealogical study of Latin literature.

Jeffrey Murray

ISOBEL HURST: *Victorian Women Writers and the Classics: The Feminine of Homer. Classical Presences*. Oxford University Press, Oxford – New York 2006. ISBN 978-0-19-928351-4. VIII, 253 pp. GBP 60, USD 85.

Victorian Women Writers and the Classics: The Feminine of Homer charts the exposure to and influence of Classical literature on literary women, both authors and fictional characters, during the 19th and early 20th centuries. The book is arranged thematically rather than chronologically, but the theme that Isobel Hurst weaves throughout the book is women's "special" relationship towards the Classics compared to men, derived from differences in education and gendered attitudes towards life experiences and social circumstances.