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This book promises a study of genre in the texts of three prominent Latin authors of Vandal Africa (Dracontius, Maximianus, and Luxorius) with additional sections on the *Aegritudo Perdicæ*, the *Unius poetae sylloge* (*AL* 78-188 = 90-197R), and Ennodius. In her preface, Wasyl states that her aim is to show how the genres of epyllion, epigram, and love elegy were rediscovered by the poets of Vandal Africa. Wasyl hopes to highlight the importance of late antique poetry for scholars of these genres, even those who concentrate their attention on late Republican and Augustan Latin literature. The analysis of the structure of Maximianus’ elegiac corpus is particularly good, and will be of use to those working on the structure and organisation of poetry books in earlier Latin love elegy. Wasyl is also an astute reader of late Latin epigram, and many of her observations on individual poems will be of interest to Martial scholars in particular.

The first part of the book deals with Dracontius' *Romulea*, especially those poems that can be classified as epyllia. An introductory section (I.1) attempts to define this genre (or non-genre). This section largely summarises existing scholarship, but, despite c. ten pages of dense discussion of the genre, Wasyl does not offer an explicit definition of epyllion. This absence of a clear and succinct definition of the genre under discussion is a weakness that recurs in the second and third parts of the monograph.

Wasyl structures her study of Dracontius' epyllia around three main topics: the presence of the narrator (I.2); the poetics of 'non-Homeric' epic (I.3); and the mixing of genres (I.4). Each of these topics is treated in its own section and further subdivided into brief studies of four poems (the *Hylas*, the *De Raptu Helenae*, the *Orestis Tragoedia*, and the *Medea*). This arrangement has two difficulties. First, some of the subsections are very short and seem rather forced (note in particular I.2.1 on the narrator in the *Hylas*). It is two paragraphs in length, only one of which actually addresses the *Hylas* itself). Second, the arrangement results in constant cross-referencing. On almost every page of her treatment of Dracontius, Wasyl directs the reader to something she has already mentioned or will mention later. A particularly striking example is page 94, on which all three footnotes direct the reader elsewhere in the book. The book, and the reader’s experience of its arguments, would have benefitted from a less rigid organizational structure.

Section I.2 focuses on the ethical impulse and moralising stance adopted by the narrator in Dracontius' epyllia, particularly in the prefaces. Following Santini[[1]], Wasyl analyses Dracontius’ use of legal terminology. The discussion of the legal framework of Dracontius' poems is handled well, and particularly exciting is the argument that Paris
takes on the role of a crooked judge in the *De Raptu Helenae*. It is argued that this use of legal terminology by Dracontius displays a moralising tendency that is taken to be characteristic of epyllion. Comparison with *Romulea* 5 and 9, a verse *controversia* and *suasoria*, respectively, might have nuanced Wasył's argument here, as these poems provide additional examples of poetic treatment of legal themes and terms, and could have helped to clarify to what extent the ethics of the epyllia are inherent features of the genre rather than simply characteristic of Dracontius' own poetic approach.

Wasył begins Section I.3 (Dracontius and the poetics of 'non-Homeric' epic) by emphasising that the epyllion differs from epic (49). Throughout the discussion, I struggled to find any indication of how the poetics of Dracontius' epyllia differ from the sort of epic practised by Hellenistic and Latin epic poets (e.g. Vergil, Apollonius, and Statius). We are told repeatedly that features of Dracontius' style are "exemplarily epyllic" or "typically epyllic" (62-63). However, the parallels are frequently taken from the *Metamorphoses* and the *Aeneid*, rather than from, say, Catullus 64 or the *Ciris*. Granted, there are those who would argue that the fourth book of the *Aeneid* functions as an epyllion, and that the *Metamorphoses* consists of an interconnected series of epyllia. Yet these are still epic poems, and I wonder whether instead of speaking of Dracontius as a writer of epyllion we should instead see him as the heir to a specifically *amatory* strand of the epic tradition.[[2]] In fact, Wasył herself later states that "there is *no* one single model of the Latin epyllion"(98n.320) and that she considers the term "classical Latin epyllia" to be paradoxical. This comment highlights the difficulties of then speaking of typical features of the genre.

Section I.4 focuses on the so-called mixing of genres in Dracontius' epyllia. Much of this consists of a presentation of what Wasył considers theatrical elements in the poems. This section is intriguing, though it largely consists of engagement with and reaction to Bright's analysis of the same topic in his book on Dracontius.[[3]] This section would have been strengthened by a discussion of other generic influences on the epyllion, notable mime and other forms of public performance in fifth-century Carthage. Moreover, a number of the examples of theatricality Wasył mentions seem simply to be cases of *enargeia* (i.e. vivid descriptions that enable the reader to visualise the scene described). See, for instance, her account of Dorylas' "show" (94) at *Medea* 350-381, in which she argues that because Dorylas gets soaked, the passage has "a certain aqua-mimic coloring".

The study of Dracontius concludes with a summary, after which Wasył moves on to treat briefly the *Aegritudo Perdicae*, mostly from the point of view of its intertextual relationship with the works of Dracontius. After establishing that the *Aegritudo Perdicae* post-dates the *Romulea*, Wasył argues that the author of the later poem approaches epyllion in a different way to Dracontius - particularly evident from his sentimental treatment of characters within the poem.

In Part II, Wasył turns her attention to love elegy, particularly as practised by Maximianus. She argues that Maximianus' poetry, written from the perspective of an old
man reflecting on his life, ought to be seen as a sophisticated development of the elegiac genre, rather than a slavish imitation of Augustan elegy. Wasyl is particularly convincing in her demonstration of how Maximianus highlights his progression from Augustan love elegy by privileging Ovid's exile poetry, rather than the \textit{Amores}, as a model in his first elegy.

As in Part I, however, the discussion of genre suffers from an unwillingness to define terms precisely. At times, the term elegy is used to mean "anything written in elegiac couplets", and elsewhere to indicate "love elegy of the sort written by Propertius, Tibullus and Ovid". This could have been clarified by reference to the generic practices of other late antique elegiac poets. Some discussion of Rutilius Namatianus, who also makes considerable use of Ovid's exile poetry in his elegiac farewell to Rome, might have provided an illuminating point of comparison to Maximianus' practices.\[4\] Similarly, when Maximianus' attitude towards \textit{amor} is contrasted with that expressed by Fortunatus in some of his elegies (135), the implications could have been further teased out, by a comparison of Fortunatus' use of elegiac language with that of Maximianus.

Wasyl's account of the editorial history of the text of Maximianus is stimulating, and she does an excellent job throughout this section of showing how intratextual the corpus is (i.e. the extent to which poems within the collection are intertextually interrelated). Here, however, the argument could have been strengthened by even a brief discussion of the intratextual dynamics of Augustan books of elegy (particularly those of Propertius). I also miss references to Maria Wyke's work on the \textit{scriba puella} in the analysis of reality and textuality in Maximianus' poetry (see especially page 149).\[5\]

Part III, on epigram, is the most successful part of the book. The focus here is mainly on Luxorius, with shorter sections devoted to the \textit{Unius poetae sylloge} and Ennodius. Once again, this section opens with an overview of the genre of epigram, in which Wasyl argues that, because his construction of a book of epigrams closely follows the precepts set out by Martial, Luxorius should be seen as his first true successor. Unfortunately, much of the argument for Martial's influence is speculative and circumstantial. As Wasyl herself notes on page 190, there are no explicit verbal echoes of Martial in Luxorius' works. This forces the rather naïve declaration that the fact that Luxorius wrote epigrams about the circus "can be interpreted as another allusion to...Martial's \textit{liber de spectaculis}" (190), while the fact that Luxorius' book lacks any concrete closural devices is explained by reference to the fact that Martial, too, "appears to pay relatively less attention to closures" (192).

Elsewhere, Wasyl is more successful in her juxtaposition of poems of Martial to those of Luxorius. This is certainly a useful way of approaching Luxorius, though it does not require the sort of arguments about influence and imitation that Wasyl is making. Most of this section consists of brief studies of a number of epigrams, with varying success. For instance, Wasyl's suggestion that we should see Luxorius as mentioning specific individuals rather than type-figures (218) is an excellent point, and her mention of paradox and public life in the epigrams is also convincing (219).
Section III.3.1 consists of an insightful and entertaining survey of \(<i>AL</i></\(>78-188\) \((90-197R)\), the so-called \(<i>Unius poetae sylloge</i></\(>\). Wasyl is particularly good on the intertextual relationship between this collection of poems and Luxorius' collection, and I found especially persuasive her treatment \((224-5)\) of \(181R\) \(<i>AL</i></\(>171\), \(<i>De catto qui comedens picam mortuus est</i></\(>\) in relation to Luxorius \(375R\) \(<i>De catto, qui cum soricem maiorem deuorasset, apoplexiam passus occubuit</i></\(>\). Again, however, the book would have benefitted from comparison with a wider selection of late antique authors. The analysis of bilingual puns and joking erotic epigrams \((226)\) could have been complemented by a brief mention of Ausonius' poetry, for example.

Finally, in Section III.3.2, Wasyl touches very briefly on Ennodius' epigrams. This section is something of a mixed bag, and after briefly addressing whether Ennodius was a "self-conscious epigrammatist", Wasyl limits herself to study of a smattering of poems (indeed, the last section is simply called "Notes on selected poems".) These are chosen for the most part as comparanda for the poems of Luxorius, but the entire section feels rather incomplete and superfluous.

In sum, though the book purports to be concerned with questions of genre, it consists primarily of a series of close readings, some of which are more successful than others. The scholar of late Latin poetry will find insightful tidbits scattered throughout, but the volume cannot be recommended as an introduction to those new to Dracontius, Maximianus, or Luxorius.

While the bibliography is extensive and admirably up-to-date, citations of scholarship are not always up to the highest standards. Curtius is quoted in German, though the English edition is cited and cross-referenced to the Polish translation \((9)\). On page 136 Fo is quoted but not cited. Courcelle's review of Rosenblum's edition of Luxorius is mentioned \((216n.248)\), but the reference given is to a quotation of Courcelle in an article by Dal Corobbo. 155-6n.157 paraphrases E.R. Dodds, but cites R. A. Markus, who quotes Dodds.\([6]\)
II. 2. The polyphony of lament: themes and forms in ‘Elegy’
II. 3. Love memories in episodes: ‘Elegies’
II. 4. Maximianus's elegy: final remarks

PART THREE: The Roman Epigram in the Romano-Barbaric World
III. 1. Martial and the definition of the Roman epigram
III. 2. “The Martial of the Vandals:” Luxorius, the follower and the innovator
III. 3. Luxorius and his contemporary epigrammatic writing

Conclusion

Notes:

[[1]] G. Santini, <i>Inter iura poeta. Ricerche sul lessico giuridico in Draconzio</i>. Roma, 2006.
[[6]] Typographical errors will be listed on the BMCR blog.