LATIN HYMNS

G. La Bua: *L'Inno nella Letteratura Poetica Latina = Drion: Studi Sul Mondo Classico Vol. I*. Pp. xvi + 537. San Severo: Gerni Editori, 1999. Paper, L. 90,000. ISBN: 88-85077-49-8.

B. takes as his starting point Eduard Norden's important analysis of hymnic elements in Greek and Latin literature in *Agnostos Theos* (Berlin, 1913). He offers us a detailed and exhaustive chronological survey of the Latin adaptation of Greek hymn form from the third century B.C. to the sixth century A.D. The Introduction and early chapters seek to place the hymn as a literary form, with studies of the terms *ὕμνος*/*hymnus*, the codification of hymn form in rhetorical theory and the hymn in Greek literature.

This is a revised and expanded version of the author's doctoral thesis, and it displays the merits and faults of its genre. To this reviewer, who has been concerned chiefly with the Greek hymn, B. supplies a welcome initial source of information and bibliography on Latin hymn composition, and in particular the later period. The problem with the book is too much material and a resulting lack of focus. This is particularly true of the introductory chapters. Given that the Latin poets are essentially sustaining a tradition of creative reformulation begun by the Greeks, it makes sense to start as B. does by filling in the Greek background. However, as they stand, these chapters do not adequately anticipate or mesh with the later. For example, the exhaustive survey of the etymology and semantics of *ὕμνος* in the first chapter is possibly useful in itself but surely of little bearing on the main substance of the book. Curiously, the pagan Latin poets adopted the Greek form but not the Greek term; their word for a sacred song or hymn was *carmen*, and it was left to the Christians to coin *hymnus*. B. might have tried to shed some light on why this was. In the chapters on the rhetorical tradition and the Greek hymn, B. could have saved space by making better use of existing published work, for example the excellent, concise but thorough account of the background to 'Menander Rhetor' in the Introduction to D. A. Russell and N. G. Wilson's edition (Oxford, 1982), which is barely mentioned in B.'s footnotes (Russell and Wilson, incidentally, give good reasons for thinking that Treatises I and II are by different authors).

Interesting as the rhetorical handbooks are, they should not be given too much weight in this context, as they merely codify the rhetorical strategies developed in other literary genres over many centuries (as B. himself is aware); one would have thought the Latin poets far more likely to have used Greek poets as their models for hymn form. A more influential strand of the tradition, neglected by B., is represented by the corpus of epigraphical hymns from Delphi, Epidaurus, and elsewhere (see, for example, J. U. Powell, *Collectanea Alexandrina* [Oxford, 1925], pp. 133ff., P. Maas, *Epidaurische Hymnen* [Halle, 1933]). Many of these have features which show that they were intended for choral performance at a cult ceremony, such as exhortations to the choir (e.g. *ἀείσατε κοῦροι*), prayers for the city or community, and cletic refrains. Such features are consciously used by Callimachus in his mimetic *Hymns* 5 and 6, and by Catullus in Poems 34, 61, and 62 (note especially 61.36–40). Again, B. seems unaware (pp. 3, 153) that it was Hellenistic ruler cult which produced the first hymns to mortal rulers (Pindar had started the trend by using hymnic elements in the celebration of his victors), and not Lucretius or Virgil.

In the later, literary critical chapters, a more selective historical account, in place of the discursive catalogue presented here, would have given B. the opportunity to focus in

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more detail on stylistic highlights, and perhaps to introduce questions of wider interest. As it is, he does not always appear to be alive to the true complexity of his texts. Catullus 61.6–35, for example, displays a highly sophisticated reworking of the cletic hymn form: note the reference to the place from which the god is summoned (61.27–30; Catullus knows his Sappho, see fr. 2.1 and cf. fr. 1.7–8, also Euripides *Orestes* 177) and to the god's footwear (61.9–10, see E. Fraenkel *Horace* [Oxford, 1957], p. 204 n. 4), both missed by B. in his account of this poem (pp. 120ff.).

B. has not internalized the Greek hymn tradition as thoroughly as he might, and there is plenty of room for disagreement with him over the interpretation of individual texts. Nonetheless, the sheer historical range and variety of texts he has chosen to study make this a valuable work of first reference to anyone interested in the topic. Too much helpful work on hymn form languishes in the thesis cupboards of university libraries.

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LITERATURE AND POWER

F. E. CONSOLINO (ed.): *Letteratura e propaganda nell'Occidente latino da Augusto ai regni romanobarbarici.* Pp. 227. Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 2000. Cased. ISBN: 88-8265-094-4.

The papers collected in this volume come from a conference held at the University of Calabria in 1998. They take as their common theme literature and propaganda, but this subject is understood broadly to embrace various manifestations of the relationship between literature and public and civic power, whether that power resides with the emperor or with other influential circles in the state or church. Attitudes to the emperor or powerful figures in society may be implicit or explicit, and may take the form of overt laudatory statements, self-censorship, or the selective treatment of events that otherwise might cause discomfort.

The collection includes studies of both poetry and prose from the principate of Augustus to the end of antiquity and beyond. But despite the title, the chronological coverage is not exhaustive. Six of the nine papers deal with the last four decades of the fourth century and the first few years of the fifth. The collection begins with two papers on Augustus; the final paper concludes with the poetry of Venantius Fortunatus in the last decades of the sixth century. The papers are arranged chronologically, with some cross-references, but no sustained debate between contributors.

Both writers on the Augustan age express some reservations about the current tendency to privilege subversive elements in Augustan poetry. Labate ('Poesia per i grandi, poesia per la comunità: il compromesso augusteo') calls for a more nuanced attitude to Augustus and Augustanism, and points to the variety of voices Augustan ideology could accommodate. Fraschetti ('Come elogiare "trasversalmente" il principe') organizes his contribution round the theme of imperial *clementia*, discussing, among other works, Tiberius' funeral eulogy for Augustus in Cassius Dio, the *Consolatio ad Liviam*, and Ovid's *Fasti*.

Two contributors address prose works relating to the fourth century. Schneider ('Littérature et propaganda au iv^{e} siècle de notre ère dans le recueil des *grandes déclamations* pseudo-quintiliennes') argues that the third of the *Declamationes maiores*, set at the time of Marius' command against the Cimbri and Teutones, reflects negatively on Theodosian policy in the aftermath of Hadrianople: the collection of the

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