contrast, F. and H. argue that the poetry of this age is shaped in the first place by an awareness of its own historicity, that is, each poet's consciousness of finding himself at a particular point in literary history and of writing in a particular tradition. The Hellenistic poet thus views himself as not only inspired by the Muses, like the poets of old, but also, and equally, influenced by his poetic models (thus the book's title).

This insight is not in itself original, but F. and H. deserve special credit for systematically putting it to work in their interpretations. Taking every author seriously (instead of perpetuating the cliché of the Hellenistic poet as an endearing if annoying *Wunderkind*), they examine in detail each one's particular situation within literary history, the poetic challenges that faced him, and the way he chose to deal with these challenges. Thus, for example, H. in his chapter on Apollonius attempts to determine the relationship of the *Argonautica* not only to Homer (the most obvious model), but to the epic tradition in general, while also considering such non-poetic influences as the accounts of the exploits of Alexander; similarly (to take a genre rather than an author), in treating the predominantly literary epigrams of the Hellenistic period, F. discusses how they are both like and unlike the real inscriptions they imitate. This is Hellenistic poetry for grown-ups, and the reader comes away from *Muse e modelli* with a deeper appreciation of the nature of this first 'modern' (p. v) period of western literature. Finally, the good news for those less than entirely happy to read 600 pages of learned Italian: a revised English edition of the book is in preparation.

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THEOCRITUS CONTEXTUALIZED

H. Bernsdorff: *Hirten in der nicht-bukolischen Dichtung des Hellenismus*. Pp. 222. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2001. Cased, DM 86.05. ISBN: 3-515-07822-3.

In his introduction, Bernsdorff informs us that he 'aims to make a contribution to the understanding of Hellenistic bucolic poetry by asking how the literary contemporaries of the bucolic poets represented the central themes of the genre' (p. 13). But B. has another, to his mind more important, goal as well: to test the validity of the conception that Theocritus is unique in presenting a realistic–ironic parody of the pastoral world in his bucolic poetry. This 'Ironiethese', whose most recent proponent is Bernd Effe, holds that Theocritus' primary aim is the entertainment of a learned audience through a comically derisive depiction of pastoral life. According to Effe, Theocritus achieves this ironic effect most prominently through a 'Destruktion' of the sentimental elements of the bucolic world (and the sympathies they arouse) by combining them with more realistic, coarser, and even obscene aspects of pastoral existence. 'Ironiethese' leads to 'Isolationsthese' with Effe's claim that Theocritus ridicules not only the shepherds he represents, but also his literary contemporaries, who have simplistically glorified the pastoral world in their poetry. Thus is Theocritean bucolic isolated from the rest of Hellenistic pastoral poetry. B. notes that Effe isolates Theocritus from his imitators as well, citing Effe's assertion that in a 'radical difference of intention and reception', Theocritus' followers failed to appreciate the parodic character of their model and consequently reduced the pastoral world to its purely idyllic–erotic aspects.

Chapters 1 and 2, which evaluate the treatment of shepherds in New Comedy and Apollonius' *Argonautica*, respectively, reflect B.'s wider goal of comparing the use of

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pastoral motifs by non-bucolic Hellenistic poets to that found in Theocritus. B. argues that the limited evidence from New Comedy emphasizes the poverty and hardship of pastoral life without any admixture of bucolic idealism. An excursus on Old Comedy's representation of rural life suggests that even Aristophanes contains more hints than does New Comedy of the leisure and eroticism of an idealized pastoral world.

A comparison of the use of pastoral motifs in Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* serves as prelude to B.'s examination of their appearance in the *Argonautica*. B. concludes that Apollonius' primary model for his treatment of the pastoral is the *Iliad*: both poems relegate pastoral motifs to the margins of the epic narrative, primarily to similes (where shepherds' rôles as protectors and leaders are emphasized) and to the principal ecphrasis of each work. Apollonius differs from Homer, however, in that he includes more peaceful and pleasant representations of pastoral life, which serve as contrasts to the hardships and battles that typify the world of heroic epic. Although B. finds no concrete points of contact between Apollonius' depiction of the pastoral world and that of Theocritus, he suggests that Apollonius' increased focus on the eirenic aspects of the herdsman's life might be seen as another expression of the tendency that led to the development of bucolic poetry in the Hellenistic period.

Chapter 3, on the relationship between pastoral epigram and bucolic idyll, contains B.'s promised discussion of the 'Isolationsthese'. In largely convincing fashion, B. challenges the very existence of an earlier sentimental bucolic that is the supposed target of Theocritean parody. By painstakingly evaluating the evidence for dating each of the authors under whose names bucolic epigrams have been transmitted, B. attempts to prove that no pastoral epigram, positive or negative, can be securely dated as pre-Theocritean. This includes the two epigrams of Anyte cited by Effe as evidence for the earlier idealistic representation of the pastoral parodied by Theocritus.

B. next selects two 'typical' bucolic motifs, 'Rast und Syrinxspiel' and 'Erotik, Obszönität und Realismus', and compares their treatment in pastoral epigram and Theocritean bucolic. Through close readings and juxtapositions of selected epigrams and idylls, B. demonstrates that while there are indeed pastoral epigrams that present a pure, sentimental–idyllic view of the pastoral world, others present a picture closer to that found in Theocritus. Here B. aptly adduces Callimachus Epigram 22 Pf. (= HE XXXVI = AP 7.518), which alludes in playfully ironic fashion to Theocritus *Idyll* 1. B.'s investigation also shows that, in contrast to Effe's assertion, Theocritus' later imitators often modelled their own realistic–ironic depictions of pastoral life on that of their predecessor.

B. successfully undermines Effe's conception of Theocritus as isolated and unique in his parodic treatment of the pastoral world. Indeed, he is largely successful in showing that certain features treated by Effe as peculiar to a Theocritean representation of pastoral life in fact find correspondences in other Hellenistic poets.

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THEOCRITUS' EPIGRAMS

L. Rossi: *The Epigrams Ascribed to Theocritus: A Method of Approach*. Pp. xii + 417. Leuven, Paris, and Sterling, VA: Peeters, 2001. Paper, €63.60. ISBN: 90-429-0992-7.

This industrious book, a revised doctoral dissertation, offers a commentary on the twenty-six epigrams attributed to Theocritus in the bucolic and anthological

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