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In the last few decades, Greek epigram has been the object of an increasing scholarly discussion. This book, based on the proceedings of a conference held in London in 2013, follows the research trend on this subject and constitutes an important contribution for forthcoming works on specific authors and aspects of Greek epigram.

The introduction gives an overview of the state of the art of the most important themes inspected and methodologies adopted in the most recent debates about the corpus of Greek epigrams. These are, for example, the dynamic relationship between inscribed and literary epigram, the different subgenres of epigrams, their language and style and the way some recurring topics are represented over the centuries. I cannot do justice to the richness and complexity of each contribution, but I will try to consider the most relevant points of each section.

The first part ('Encountering epigram') focuses on material aspects of epigram before it emerged as a literary genre and the continuous reminiscence of epigram's earlier epigraphic status. Some scholars adopt more traditional approaches: Joseph Day, for example, analyses the literary epigram and tries to detect authors' stylistic strategies which aimed at evoking an imaginary situation where the epigram still preserves its ancient epigraphic features. On the other hand, we can also find more innovative inputs. Andrej Petrovic considers Greek epigram handed down in paraliterary sources from the Hellenistic period, such as papyri of private collections, ostraca and tablets. Thus, he ascertains the popularity of epigrams in a school context, where pupils learned them in order to improve not only their mnemonic skills, but also reading and writing competence. Moreover, epigrams were a suitable means of conveying Ptolemaic ideology, with the aim to gain a favoured young elite.

The second part ('Imitation, variation, interaction') is concerned with the contact between Greek epigram and other poetic genres. Annette Harder persuasively demonstrates the references in epigram to archaic lyric, elegy and bucolic poetry, which constitute the core of the narrative plot contained in the short poems. Thus, epigrams take on themes and features of other genres in miniature form, which is a kind of experiment 'undertaken by the generation of Callimachus' (101) and further developed by later poets. This diachronic analysis is also adopted by Simone Beta, who recognizes in Classical or Hellenistic literature the prodromes of some patterns in Byzantine riddle epigrams, drawing attention to a much-neglected section of the *Palatine Anthology*.

The third part ('Writing death') deals with the long tradition of sepulchral epigrams. Richard Hunter scrutinizes the degree of literary competence of the author of an inscriptional epigram from the Imperial age (GVI 1159 = SGO 03/05/04). Hunter's exhaustive analysis shows that the anonymous author is less dependent on Posidippus than previously believed, whereas Homeric reminiscences and a versatile versification technique indicate the high quality of this composition. The contribution of Michael Tueller appears to me quite inconsistent. In the first paragraph, the scholar adopts a descriptive approach to analyse epigrams dealing with death at sea, highlighting the idea of separation between grave and body recurring in these poems. Nevertheless, the second paragraph marks an abrupt change, since it rashly focuses on epigrams about the separation between soul and body, which I believe would deserve a separate, distinct analysis. As regards the last epigram analysed by Tueller, of Philip of Thessalonica (*Anth. Pal.* 7.383 = Gow-Page, *GP* 32), it is just an outspoken description of the dissolving force of death for the frame of a human body. Anyway, the term ἀνάστροφία ('frame') referring to a corpse recurs also

in Leonidas (*Anth. Pal.* 7.472 = Gow–Page, *HE* 77) and in Crinagoras (*Anth. Pal.* 9.439 = Gow–Page, *GP* 47), which would have constituted interesting parallels on the same topic.

The fourth part ('Gods, religion, and cult') contains only two specific case studies, the first on Cybele, the second on Eros, whose valuable results highlight the need for more comprehensive studies of this kind in the future.

The fifth part ('Praise and blame') analyses some strategies adopted in the rhetoric of praise and blame contained in Greek epigrams. Federica Giommoni offers an excellent example of diachronic examination of literary topics underpinning Ptolemaic propaganda, later constituting the praise of the Byzantine emperor Justinian. On the other hand, I found the contribution of Joseph Romero quite flawed since the poems examined give no clue to a supposed quarrel between poetry and philosophy. On the contrary, praise and blame seem to be directed to would-be pupils of specific philosophical currents (Cynicism, or more established schools, such as Stoicism and Epicureanism). For example, Automedon (*Anth. Pal.* 11.150 = Gow–Page, *GP* 4) contrasts simple-minded principles to specific concepts of Epicurean physics (void and atoms). As such, the poet wards off useless philosophical thoughts, but does not reject 'philosophy as a whole' (299).

The sixth part ('Words and images') focuses on the interstitial spaces between epigrams and works of art, reproduced or simply hinted at for skoptic, political or sociocultural reasons. The contribution of Peter Bing is an excellent case study on Palladas' epigrams on Greek monuments, transformed or deeply defaced under pressure from Christianity. Thus, the act of seeing and interpreting artworks, which was the mainstay of ekphrastic poems, is now reinterpreted into a witty reflection on extensive cultural transformation.

The book is well edited and the recurring themes running through the contributions are conveniently highlighted. Despite some methodological discrepancies and qualitative differences in individual contributions, this work certainly represents an important contribution to our understanding of the vast production of Greek epigrams.

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KLAVAN (S.A.) **Music in Ancient Greece: Melody, Rhythm and Life** (Classical World Series). London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2021. Pp. xi + 159, illus. £18.99. 9781350119925.

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LEVEN (P.A.) **Music and Metamorphosis in Graeco-Roman Thought**. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2021. Pp. xii + 277. £75. 9781107148741.

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Mount Parthenius rears tortoises most suitable for the making of lyres; but the men on the mountain are always afraid to capture them, and will not allow strangers to do so either, thinking them to be sacred to Pan.

Paus. 8.54.7

As the shepherds of Mount Parthenius knew all too well, the transformation of an animal is central to making an ancient Greek lyre. As Hermes said to that first ill-fated tortoise, 'if you die, then you shall make sweetest song' (*Hymn. Hom. Merc.* 38). From Spencer Klavan, readers new to ancient Greek music will learn that Greek lyric poetry is so called because it was originally sung to the lyre (*lyra*) (6–7). Pauline LeVen's book offers a rich, challenging and very