

production, and a ‘mentality’ that demanded ‘forgoing immediate gratification for the sake of future returns’.

Turning to the ‘Classical Critique of Modern Society’, M. mentions thinkers who viewed antiquity as free from ‘alienation’. Here and elsewhere, M.’s brevity is tempered by citations of his own earlier studies in ancient economics. Whether Marx ‘intended’ ‘class’ to be ‘almost universal’ is a contested topic, though many agree. M. has clearly read and thought about Marx. Economic differentiation could certainly be severe in antiquity, but whether that differentiation led to class-based historical change is another question. M.’s comments on social complexity in Weber are likewise brief but well-informed. Both Durkheim and Weber doubted that modernity brings happiness, and Durkheim’s analysis of social complexity was more pessimistic and sceptical than others’: ‘almost invariably, the basis for such arguments was comparison with the awesome and fully rounded humanity of the Greeks’, who had, it was thought, a *Gemeinschaft* not a *Gesellschaft*. A near consensus held that we have declined from that ‘organic community’. Hegel demurred. Nietzsche, in *Götzen-Dämmerung*, presented a perhaps deliberately ‘incoherent account’ that refused to idealize the Greeks: M. agrees with James Porter that the incoherence was ‘deliberate’. Did Greek art embody ‘eternal beauty’? So many Germans insisted, even if they otherwise favoured modernity. Sometimes, they argued that ancient art was uniquely embedded in the society of its time. On this score (and others), Nietzsche perhaps influenced Weber’s conclusion that modernity is ‘disenchanted’ — a word that haunted Daniel Bell — and its art ‘intimate and not monumental’.

M.’s fifth chapter, ‘History as Nightmare. Conceptions of Progress and Decline’, covers the rejection of history ‘in favor of more present-oriented disciplines’, as well as the (selectively Eurocentric) ‘grand narratives’ of progressive development or long-term decline. Marx’s *Eighteenth Brumaire* and Nietzsche’s *Untimely Meditations* both ‘reveal’ that saturation in historical study can ‘uproot the future’, thus preventing change. W. J. Ashley provides a key quotation in the final chapter, ‘Allusion and Appropriation. The Rhetorical Uses of Antiquity’: ‘An alleged historical fact has often more hold upon men’s minds than any theoretic argument.’ M. notes that Aristotle serves Marx as both an economic authority and a predecessor who has been surpassed. Others, too, used classical allusions, but with mixed results, as Matthew Arnold said. Did Roscher’s claim that a passage in Demosthenes ‘cautions us against the Manchester criterion of national prosperity’ win anyone over? M. uses slavery as a ‘case study’ of the variety of ways in which writers ‘deployed ancient material’. He reviews the many ways in which ancient slavery was invoked, and the perhaps surprisingly widespread readiness to call factory workers ‘modern slaves’. Neither Nietzschean ‘diagnosis’ nor Marxian ‘denunciation’ of slavery wins our adherence ‘except on preconceived political or moral grounds’. In Marx, Nietzsche, and the other subjects of this book, concepts like ‘classical’ and ‘modern’ are disputed without resolution, but in all cases, ‘there needs to be an alternative, a touchstone ... to which we can refer in making sense of our own situation’.

This is an inadequate ‘summary’, passing over many useful observations. The book succeeds not by pressing a single grand claim, but by providing hints and suggestions, backed up by thoughtful reading. Although the conclusion is muted, the book opens up topics often ignored in standard studies of ‘classical influence’, and enables readers to pursue important questions. Further work by M. himself would be welcome, perhaps particularly on the intriguing triad of Marx, Nietzsche and Weber.

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II. LITERATURE AND LANGUAGE

W. A. JOHNSON and H. PARKER, *ANCIENT LITERACIES: THE CULTURE OF READING IN GREECE AND ROME*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. Pp. xv + 446, illus. ISBN 9780195340150 (bound); 9780199793983 (paper). £45.00 (bound); £22.50 (paper).

In the age of the ebook, none of us should need convincing of the multivalence of terms like ‘reading’ and ‘book’; and so the reappraisal to which this volume, the product of a 2006 conference, subjects a once-monolithic idea is timely indeed. Its title and pedigrees will have guaranteed its notice by specialists, to whom its merits will be clear, but classicists of all stripes will want to take notice of its panoptic approach, and may be surprised at the diversity of material it considers.

Opening is Thomas's finely-grained look at how the Athenian state depended on, promoted and reacted to different literacies. Synthesizing material evidence with rhetorical discussions, Thomas supplements traditional ideas like commercial literacy with 'officials' literacy' (41), mapping literacies both within and beyond the traditionally élite and showing their susceptibility to change. Complementing this is Woolf's discussion of Roman literacies in the latter two centuries B.C.E. He explores how Roman imperialism drove the 'growth and elaboration' of literacy, showing with deft synthesis the interlinked nature of private and public literacies in Rome, and how an expanding state adapted the former to the latter, leading to the text-heavy society we find in later evidence. Burrell takes on a different medium in a survey of structures from imperial Ephesos, offering a sensitive reading of how these texts-on-structures would have communicated with each other and their various audiences. The interplay of Greek and Latin is just one part of all the ways monumental text can be read by those who inhabit and pass through the spaces it oversees.

Underscoring the volume's productive arrangement, Goldhill next addresses the importance of anecdote to imperial culture, showing its liminal existence as narratives that came packaged and formalized in tighter and more miniature ways, so as to be more easily recalled from text and exchanged in speech. Goldhill also shows anecdote's implications for both thought and cultural politics. That ancients had a clear understanding of how anecdote worked reminds us how closely they themselves scrutinized the media of text and conversation. Habinek offers a survey of non-monumental epigraphic evidence — from *tesserae* to game boards — to identify other patterns of visual signification in Roman writing relating closely to acrostic games in poetry. Although the literary material here is wholly verse (as an approach to 'orality' based on song leaves little room for prose), the discussion is a helpful reminder of the many social interactions to which literate acts relate.

But it is the book that dominates this area of inquiry, and Dupont returns our attention to it, first reassessing Augustan book culture's Alexandrian book-values and then focusing on the book as an object imagined by the poet — one the poet imagines moving from one hand to another. Examination of the moves the book can make highlights the important rôle a Roman literary effort's material form plays in connecting the poet to a literary future imagined in Alexandrian terms. Farrell, on the other hand, zeroes in on Catullus' allusions to the physical book in the act of consumption. This excellent reminder of the vulnerability of material text in the Roman world shows how a Latin author might make use of and allude to those qualities to make the idea of publication a locus of anxiety. Vulnerable to corruptions of text and page, the book also faces the scrutiny of a patron-recipient who stands for successive audiences. Noteworthy is Parker's aggressive challenge to 'orality' at Rome, exhaustively chronicling the various evidence for book- and reading-focused attitudes. This forceful discussion is a much-needed reminder of the significance of evidence beyond Augustan poetry: ideology of recitation and song can be conflated with the *recitatio* in Roman literary production to elide the close physical relationship Romans had with books. The 'exocitizing' (191) of Roman reading is shown clearly to be a conceptual hazard.

Houston's analysis of booklists and book-collections in papyrological corpora takes a rare focus — tracing individual copies of various works — to show how we can understand these collections to have been assembled, preserved and modified. There is much detailed information here about specific collections, making for fascinating case studies in the actual practices of the literate élite. Adding to discussion of the ancient infrastructure is White's excellent examination of the Roman book trade. He synthesizes evidence in dynamic and productive ways: insights about booksellers in the urban landscape and in the conception of their élite customers come together in a pithy explication of bookstore encounters in literature. Ancient authors are well-situated 'to discern connections between the commerce and the culture of the book' (269), but, one suspects, also have strongly vested interest in not discerning some elements as well.

For helpful new social perspectives on Roman literacy, turn to Milnor on Vergilian graffiti in Pompeii, which deftly contextualizes uses (and abuses) of *Aeneid* lines to show what, beyond mere familiarity with the source, they might have signified. Milnor shows common tags to have 'local' significances responding to other graffiti or landmarks, and the graffiti act itself to denote certain attitudes toward canon; also valuable is an appendix listing such tags. Johnson similarly breathes life into the discussion by bringing his productive sociological lens to bear on depictions of reading groups, examining how they are structured and conduct themselves and drawing out not only the strangeness but the distinctive priorities of such groups in Gellius' *Noctes Atticae*. Readers will find more of use along these lines in his 2010 volume (*Readers and Reading Culture*

in the High Roman Empire). Johnson rightly reminds us of the extent to which authorial imagination filters the literary evidence for reading.

Werner's bibliographical essay takes this volume from valuable to invaluable: an introductory survey is followed by a thematically indexed bibliography, covering not just classical literacy but also valuable comparanda from non-classical cultures. Olson's thought-provoking epilogue is a helpful coda, arguing that the writing and reading of ideas depends on — and so promotes — a unique ability to conceptualize abstractly. It is thus a productive meditation on why literacy matters. Readers may not need to be told this, but if the volume proves anything it is the value of reappraisals and new approaches to old questions.

No firm thesis emerges, nor should one be expected. The topics and approaches it covers are as diverse as the kinds of activities and phenomena that must clearly be included under its titular heading. And questions remain: what might studies of poetic imaginings of books have to say of the social ramifications of library and commerce practices? Despite evidence to the contrary in this volume, genre and period distinctions within Latin literature still keep valuable evidence needlessly separated. And though several contributors note with admirable caution the problems of applying the more evidence-rich Roman period to classical Greece, clearly solving that methodological puzzle would be immensely valuable. Lest we neglect the obvious reflexivity of a book about books, editors and press should be commended for excellent production, proofreading, and indices and bibliography. The book as artifact more than lives up to its value as text. And any scholar of ancient texts with a glimmer of interest in context will find something of use within.

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L. MORGAN, *MUSA PEDESTRIS: METRE AND MEANING IN ROMAN VERSE*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010. Pp. x + 412. ISBN 9780199554188. £74.00.

To write a manual of Latin metre is a simple enough task for the competent metrician; to write a detailed history of Latin metre is a more demanding but, though not yet convincingly attempted, realizable task; to write, however, a sensitive and sophisticated treatment of how Roman poets not only employed but also interacted with their metrical forms is a much more exacting and ambitious undertaking. *Musa Pedestris* is the fruit of more than a decade's work: the result is a rich and energetic tour through a broad spectrum of Roman poetry. Although the book necessarily has limited coverage, and thus some surprising omissions, it has several facets that make it a rewarding read and a genuine stimulus for future research.

The book comprises a lengthy introduction followed by four chapters each dedicated to a given metre (or family of metres): hendecasyllables; iambs, especially choliambics and pure iambs; sapphics; dactylic hexameters, including their appearance in elegiac and epodic metres. The book ends with a brief conclusion, a disconcertingly brief bibliography, a full *index locorum* and a less full *index rerum*. Although the division of the book into metre-specific chapters is a natural one, Morgan's anfractuous style of argument means that the same ground is trodden more than once, often giving the impression that the volume expects specific consultation rather than consecutive perusal.

The introduction to *Musa Pedestris* is particularly interesting, tackling head-on the book's aims and their place in the theory of classical literary criticism. M.'s primary goal is set in the context of Paul Fussell's tripartite analysis (in his 1965 *Poetic Metre and Poetic Form*) of the 'meanings' that metre can convey, namely the elucidation of his third type — the force a metre and its literary-historical context can possess in Latin poetry. It is the significance of metre via its associations, then, that is cardinal to this book, holding together its variegated readings of various verse forms. M.'s continual assumption is that Roman poets and their audiences were highly literate in metrical matters (yet more so than their Greek predecessors) and thus acutely sensitive to metrical play or posturing ('metametricality', 26). The illumination that acceptance of this context can bring to Latin literature is neatly demonstrated at the introduction's close through two close readings of Catullus 17 (in priapeans) and Martial 3.29 (in sotadeans).

Ch. 1 ('The Hendecasyllable: an Abbreviated History') tackles the Phalaecian hendecasyllable, in particular its polysemous ambiguity in both origin and employment. M. begins with Statius (a prominent focus of the book) and his fashionable poem on the Via Domitiana (*Silu.* 4.3), advancing — perhaps with more passion than persuasion — its claims to *technopaignia*, before he