

LAUREL FULKERSON. *A literary commentary on the elegies of the Appendix Tibulliana*. Pseudepigrapha latina, Oxford-New York: Oxford University Press, 2017, x+384 pp., \$115.00, ISBN 978-0-19-875936-2.

Laurel Fulkerson's commentary on the elegiac poems of the *Appendix Tibulliana* is an early volume (the first?) in Oxford's new series, *Pseudepigrapha Latina*. The series is described on the cover blurb as offering "modern commentaries on frequently neglected, falsely attributed, and anonymous Latin texts." Its commentaries are designed to "engage with questions of authorship and dating, traditional philological issues and style, as well as . . . literary context." Her commentary on the nineteen elegies of the *Appendix* (the hexameter *Panegyricus Messallae* is omitted) is preceded by the Latin text of Lenz and Galinsky 1971, without apparatus; it includes a long introduction, an extensive bibliography, and two indices (an *index locorum* and a subject index).

The *Appendix Tibulliana* is an appropriate subject for a series treating pseudepigrapha, for it is notoriously problematic. Almost every essential historical detail about it is unknown, uncertain, or contested and likely to remain so. The questions include: when and how the several components of the *Appendix* became attached to the text of Tibullus and whether they can be connected with a circle of poets around Tibullus' friend Messalla; the dates of the components (Lygdamus' six elegies, the long *Panegyricus Messallae*, the five elegies of the so-called *amicus Sulpiciae*, the six of Sulpicia, and the two elegies of unknown poets at the end); the identities of the several poets; and the sex of Sulpicia herself.

Fulkerson does not resolve these questions and does not attempt to do so. Instead, in both the introduction and the commentary itself she presents an extremely full discussion on every problematic point and canvasses what seems to be every possible theory about each, with copious bibliography. In keeping with the interests of the series, she pays particular attention to the authorship and dating of her texts; she treats these not merely as historical matters, but as literary ones, pointing out that the poems "regularly play with questions of authorship and identity" (p.36). She is careful not to impose her own views or even to express them, but it is sometimes possible to see her advancing her own opinion—albeit with great circumspection. Thus, on the patronage of Messalla, "the man behind it all (maybe)," p. 32, she suggests that there might have been something like the "circle of Messalla" often evoked by scholars.

. . . it is eminently likely that Messalla, interested in the literary arts, spent time with poets, and it is certainly possible that there was some slightly more formal arrangement, whereby he arranged for recitals and the like (p. 33).

And again, on the identity and sex of Sulpicia, she thinks it is plausible that Sulpicia is who she claims to be, an aristocratic woman of the Augustan age.

My own opinion is as likely to be wrong as anyone else's, but it seems to me that much is gained, and little lost, in treating the poetry of S. as an authentically recovered female voice from antiquity (p. 53).

In these cases and others, however, she does not present her own view as final; she is talking in terms of possibility, not certainty, and she leaves room for other interpretations of our exiguous evidence.

Fulkerson's openness and caution are appropriate both to her subject and to her series, and her inclusion and full accounts of every point of view will be useful for anyone delving into the various issues. That said, her treatment is often diffuse and repetitious, especially in the introduction, where particular questions are treated several times under different headings. The introduction is divided into eight sections: "I. Contexts: Elegy and Amatory Poetry"; "II. Contexts: The 'Augustan Age', Patrons, and Poetic Communities"; "III. Theoretical Approaches to Elegy"; "IV. What's in a Name? Name, Pseudonym and Persona within [Tib.] 3"; "V. Chronology and Authorship: The Composition and Arrangement of [Tib.] 3"; "VI. Women Writing (Latin)"; "VII. Style, Metre, and Syntax"; "VIII. Manuscript Tradition and Text."

Messalla is discussed in Sections II, IV, and V. Sulpicia's gender and identity are treated in Sections I, III, IV, V, VI, and VII. Lygdamus' date, identity, and the nature of his *coniugium* with Neaera are discussed in Sections, I, IV, V, and VII. The questions associated with each of these figures are taken up again at various points in the notes. The focus is somewhat different each time, but there is inevitable overlap and repetition, and it is easy to lose one's way in the discussion.

In her preface (p. vii) Fulkerson says that she "will engage with two primary issues" in her commentary: seeing where the poems do and do not follow the elegiac norms we see in Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid, and exploring "the book as a book," looking for recurrent themes and taking up "the question of what might be gained by imagining that the poems and their authors really do engage with each other." True to her intention, she keeps these two essential questions in mind throughout.

In Section I she lists the various characteristics and *topoi* found in the major elegists and correctly notes that the *Appendix* lacks many of them. Both in the introduction and in the notes, she points out stylistic similarities and differences between the poets of the *Appendix* and their predecessors; and her notes are filled with lists of verbal parallels. But the most striking and important differences between the two groups of poets seem either insufficiently emphasized or lacking entirely from the discussion. These are the absence of historical reality in the *Appendix* and its lack of ancillary characters. Like Vergil in the *Eclogues*, Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid create an alternative world set apart from historical reality but affected and defined by that reality. A major characteristic of their elegy, as has often been observed, is a kind of counter-morality whose elements challenge and often invert traditional Roman values. Underlying most of their poetry is the insistence on privileging private life over public concerns—but always with contemporary Augustan reality in the background as a foil. The world of their elegy is populated not only by the lovers but by the stock figures of the *lena* and the *vir* (the rival who has putative title to the *puella*), as well as by friends and patrons of the poet. These essential features of Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid are missing in the elegists of the *Appendix*, who seem to operate in an entirely private world, one almost hermetically sealed from historical reality and focused entirely on the lovers. In 3.4 Lygdamus dreams that he has a rival (Apollo tells him *formosa Neaera / alterius mavult esse puella viri*, 3.4.57-58); he mentions unnamed friends in 3.5 and 3.6. Sulpicia mentions Messalla in 3.14 and a rival in 3.16. Apart from these isolated references, however, Lygdamus and Neaera, Sulpicia and Cerinthus, and the poets of 3.19 and 3.20 and their anonymous *puellae* are always the sole human population of the poems (various gods are frequently invoked).

Fulkerson is much more successful in her second endeavor, reading the collection as a book, with attention to recurrent ideas and internal links. In her notes she is particularly interesting on the internal structure of the three cycles (the elegies of Lygdamus, of the *amicus Sulpiciae*, and of Sulpicia), even as she scrupulously avoids claiming that their arrangement is that of the poets themselves. Her discussions of both the alternating voices in the *amicus* cycle and the internal movement in the Sulpicia cycle should be required reading for students interested in these poems. She is also good on connections between the cycles, noting (although she would not claim to be the first to do so) the ways in which the *amicus* builds on points in the Sulpicia poems and observing the programmatic qualities of the first poem in each cycle. The initial poems of the Lygdamus and *amicus* cycles (3.1 and 3.8) are closely linked (although she might put it less strongly) by their shared themes (Mars, the Matronalia, gifts to the girl, and instructions to the Muses).

Readers of the *Appendix* will want to compare Fulkerson's commentary with those of Hermann Tränkle (de Gruyter, 1990), who treats the entire

collection, including the *Panegyricus Messallae*, and Fernando Navarro Antolín (Brill, 1996), who treats only Lygdamus. Tränkle's work, regarded as indispensable for the text of the whole *corpus*, and undoubtedly sound on matters of strict philology, is also undoubtedly weak on literary matters by modern standards (and was so even in 1990); his treatment of Sulpicia almost ostentatiously ignores important literary bibliography. To get an idea of its strengths and weaknesses, see J. L. Butrica's review (*Classical Review* 42, 1992, 45-7) and Mathilde Skoie, *Reading Sulpicia* (Oxford University Press, 2002, 256-307). Navarro Antolín's work, unaccountably ignored by Anglophone reviewers (even though it is in English), is extremely valuable. It presents the author's own text with a very full apparatus, a Spanish translation of the text, and the best modern summary I know of the textual transmission of the whole *Corpus Tibullianum*. Navarro Antolín is less conspicuously literary than Fulkerson, but he is very good on literary matters and especially on line structure, literary figures, and word order. He often provides English translations of difficult passages.

Any commentary must stand or fall by the quality and usefulness of its notes. Fulkerson's notes on Lygdamus should be compared with those of Navarro Antolín; they are outstanding on the elegies of the *amicus* and those of Sulpicia. I provide a few examples.

In the case of Lygdamus Fulkerson almost never provides a translation in her notes even when the text is difficult or contested (Navarro Antolín generally does). She occasionally gets things wrong. Thus on 3.1.5-6 (*dicite, Pierides, quonam donetur honore / . . . cara Neaera*): "The practice of asking the Muses for inspiration is, of course, as old as Homer; L. here does something different, merely enquiring of them who should receive his book" (p. 79). This is obviously a *lapsus animi*: Lygdamus asks the Muses what he should give to Neaera, not to whom he should give his poetry. 3.1.15 *per vos . . . oro*: "it is strange to beseech the Muses by their own name" (p. 87). But *per* governs, not *vos*, but *Castaliamque umbram* etc. in 3.1.16. As Navarro Antolín (pp. 126-7) notes: "the *tmesis* between *per* and the phrase it governs . . . is frequent in imprecations and oaths." Fulkerson gets the postponed object right, however, at 3.11.7-8 *per te . . . / . . . rogo*: "*te* is the object of *rogo*, and the object of *per* is postponed" (p. 257). In 3.1.15 she takes *auctores* to mean "authors," saying that it unusual for the Muses to be "credited with authorship" (p. 85). In its context, however, *auctores* means "inspirers"; Navarro Antolín (p. 127) points out that "the formula *carminis auctor* [is] traditionally reserved for Apollo." On 3.2.1-2 (*Qui primus caram iuveni carumque puellae / eripuit iuvenem*) she floats the idea that *primus* implies that "the raptor of the *puella* or *iuvenis* is a man" and veers off into a reference to Tibullus' homoerotic poetry before noting that *primus* "might simply be a generalizing masculine" and briefly referring to "the notion of the *protos heurtes* in Greek" and other "elegiac

firsts" in Tibullus" (p. 86). Navarro Antolín (150-51) is much better here. In the headnote he gives a nice account of the topos of the *primus inventor*; on 3.2.1 he notes that the nominative *primus* is superior to Achilles Statius' *primum* and refers to the headnote for parallels.

These cases give the advantage to Navarro Antolín, but he is not always superior. The two commentaries are complementary, and readers will do well to consult them together. In 3.1, for example, it is difficult to decide on the text and attribution of lines 7-14, and Fulkerson and Navarro Antolín are both worth reading. Fulkerson, like most editors, accepts Muret's emendation *tuis* for the manuscript reading *meis* in line 8 and attributes all the verses to the Muses, while Navarro Antolín reads *meis*, taking the verses as a dialogue between the Muses and Lygdamus with Lygdamus as the speaker of line 8. I also like Fulkerson's willingness to think of occasional wordplay and ambiguities, although perhaps not all readers will agree. At 3.2.19, where wine is to be sprinkled on Lygdamus' bones when they have been gathered from the pyre, she says: "There may be a bilingual etymological pun here in the antonyms *collecta* and *Lyaeo*" (107). Of 3.2.26 (*sic ego componi versus in ossa velim*) she very cautiously makes the interesting suggestion that the line has two possible meanings: "I, turned into bones, would like to be laid to rest in this way", but also 'I would like verses to be composed over my bones'" (p. 110). In 3.4.24, on *visus* used of the appearance of Apollo in Lygdamus' dream: "*Visus* takes advantage of the ambiguity of this verb in the passive voice, as normally in dream-sequences. . . . Here, the god was both *seen* to appear (suggesting that he really did) and *seemed to* appear (though perhaps he did not)" (p. 144).

In the case of Sulpicia and the *amicus Sulpiciae*, Fulkerson is in a class by herself in interpretation and literary sophistication; scholars should probably consult Tränkle only if they require especially thorough textual or philological discussion of a difficult point. She is very good on the connections between the Sulpicia and *amicus* cycles. Her notes on the complexities of Sulpicia's syntax are helpful and often point to interesting ambiguities in her expression. Fortunately for the reader, she offers much more help with translation than she does with Lygdamus; indeed, she provides three different translations of the difficult couplet, 3.13.1-2 (pp. 270-3). She pointed out possible metapoetical allusions in her notes on Lygdamus (e.g., on 3.1.8-14, pp. 81-7 and 3.2.26-8, pp. 109-11), but these cycles contain more metapoetical hints, and her notes are correspondingly frequent, especially on 3.8 and 3.13. Thus, on 3.8.1 (*Sulpicia est tibi culta tuis, Mars magne, kalendis*): "A metapoetic claim is implicit: the poetry about S. is also carefully wrought, such that praise of her is also praise of the corpus" (224). She has several metapoetical notes on 3.13. Thus on 3.13.1-2: "we might (also) take this couplet metapoetically: S., waiting for her Muse, has at last been inspired, and so casts off her feminine reluctance to write because the quality of her

poetry is simply too good to keep under wraps” (271). Fine notes abound throughout these cycles. I particularly like that on *dissimulare* in the last couplet of 3.16, where Sulpicia regrets leaving Cerinthus in the night (. . . *te solum. . . nocte reliqui / ardorem cupiens dissimulare meum*). Fulkerson says: “At the end of her cycle, S. attempts *dissimulare*, as opposed to 3.13, where she wanted to make all public (or did she?). Are we to read the poems chronologically, and, if so, is this new stance accounted for by the deepening of her feelings, or something else?” (294). The note not only captures the ambiguity of Sulpicia’s poetry, but typifies Fulkerson’s openness to the sort of difficulties on every level that one finds in dealing with the *Appendix*.

To sum up. This is an important and timely book that belongs in college and university libraries as well as in those of individual scholars interested in the *Appendix*.

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