

OTTO ZWIERLEIN, *Die 'Carmina profana' des Dracontius. Prolegomena und kritischer Kommentar zur Editio Teubneriana. Mit einem Anhang: Dracontius und die 'Aegritudo Perdicae'*. Untersuchungen zur antiken Literatur und Geschichte 127, Berlin-Boston: De Gruyter, 2017, xii+348 pp., € 109.95, ISBN 978-3-11-052237-2.

In analogy to his OCT edition of Seneca's tragedies (Oxford, 1986), which he brought out in the company of *Kritischer Kommentar zu den Tragödien Senecas* (Stuttgart, 1986), Otto Zwierlein (Z.) recently published the Teubner edition of Dracontius' *Carmina profana* along with its companion volume *Prolegomena und kritischer Kommentar*. This review focuses on the latter though the relevant edition of the text discussed there is, of course, the former. In the companion volume, Z. first explains the transmission of the edited texts (*Romulea, Orestes, De mensibus, De origine rosarum*). The second and most extensive part of the book is devoted to discussions of individual lines, with which the author considers to have improved Dracontius' text in his Teubner edition. In the final chapter ('Anhang'), Z. reconsiders the date of the *Carmen de aegritudine Perdicae* and the transmission and text of two individual passages of this anonymous poem. A bibliography and two indices (*locorum* and *verborum, nominum, rerum*) close the book.

For a start, the existence of a commentary on questions of textual criticism itself jars with Z.'s strong preference for a 'minimalist approach' to editing (p. IX) as it replaces an edition including an apparatus, which in Z.'s view has in recent times tended to be too detailed, with an edition including a selective apparatus, itself unnecessarily extended by references to intertextual parallels (see J. G. Fitch, "Review Article: Zwierlein's Seneca and the Editor's Task", *CPh* 84 [1989] 236–51, here 239 for criticizing this practice in Z.'s Seneca edition), and a whole second book. This conceptual problem is indicative of the general lack of principle and systematic presentation which mars the volume. There is no doubt that some readers will take pleasure in each and every individual discussion of the passages in Z.'s volume, but the majority of readers is likely to turn to the volume for either selective reading of discussions (e.g. those on one particular poem) or for the purpose of learning about the editorial principles of Z.'s edition in comparison with the earlier editions of the same texts. The volume caters for readers of details much better than for readers in search of principles as Dracontius' poems are discussed in order and an index enables access to parallel treatments of a topic. However, such readers, especially if they only want to consult part of the book, will be puzzled by the varied presentation of the passages, which are sometimes printed with an

apparatus (e.g. on *Orest.* 562. 565), but usually without (e.g. on *Orest.* 533), sometimes represent the transmission to be corrected (e.g. on *Orest.* 785), but in other instances the text of Z.'s new edition (e.g. on *Orest.* 813. 836. 814), as well as by further inconsistencies such as the discussions of textual interventions in the main text (usually) and in the footnotes (occasionally, e.g. Z.'s conjecture *dum* for the transmitted *cum* in *Romul.* 2.123) and the rare and seemingly random change of font size (e.g. p. 25f., p. 107, p. 173). On the other hand, readers in search of an understanding of the principles behind Z.'s edition and how it compares with the earlier editions of Dracontius' secular poetry will be disappointed. Firstly, the claim "sie [Z.'s new edition] ersetzt also Vollmers PLM Bd. 5, S. 108–237" (p. VII) rests mainly on the author's self-confidence that by means of his edition he has 'rejuvenated' Dracontius' work. (p. VII). This statement reflects a pride in one's editorial skills, a trust in one's sound judgement as well as a view of readers and reviewers as keen to praise the merits of one's work after studying it carefully, all of which have not been uncommon in the history of textual criticism (cf. e.g. J. Delz, "Prolegomena zu einer kritischen Ausgabe der Tragödien Senecas", *Gnomon* 61 [1989] 501-7, p. 503: "ich habe im Vergleich mit der in den letzten zwanzig Jahren massgebenden Gesamtausgabe von Giardina über siebenhundert Änderungen notiert"). In my view, however, this attitude is not in keeping with our times, where, on the one hand, far more information is available than any individual can process in a lifetime and, on the other, library budgets in many universities have been or are being cut; for these reasons alone, a book which costs more than 100 Euros should provide a systematic presentation of the material and a thorough comparison with past editions rather than a collection of critical notes. *Exempli gratia* I have compared *Romul.* 4 in Z.'s new edition and Vollmer's 1914 PLM volume. The former differs from the latter in the seven lines:

<i>Romul.</i> 4	Vollmer PLM 1914	Zwierlein 2017
6	<her>edes Duhn	[anguip]edes
28	deesse... dixi N	desse ... duxi Baehrens
29	vestibus N	retibus Baehrens
30	nec Maurus N	conversus
48	crescunt N mori N	crescant Vollmer (1905) mori?
52	praestent Vollmer	praestes Giarratano

Z.'s commentary has a note on l. 6 arguing for his conjecture *anguipedes* on the basis of the space left in the manuscript ('8-10 or, if they are broad, 5-6 letters', p. 43f. n. 132), which makes Buecheler's *heredes* seem to short, and

parallels to *Ov. met.* 1.184. Z.'s second note focuses on his other conjecture *conversus* in l. 30; in passing it also notes the changes in l. 28 "so zwingend Baehrens" (p. 45 n. 139) and that in l. 29 "so wieder überzeugend Baehrens" (p. 45 n. 140). The latter discussion also briefly mentions Bouquet's proposal of a *lacuna* after l. 30. Lines 48 and 52 are not discussed. The two conjectures defended here make good sense of the corrupt lines. On the other hand, the minor notes on l. 28 and l. 29 and the lack of discussion on l. 48 and l. 52 do not go beyond Z.'s new edition. Furthermore, it remains unclear what guided the selection of problems for discussion in the companion volume.

A more general assessment of Z.'s edition and companion volume make clear that Z. prefers emendations to a grammatically correct, but awkward transmission. With this preference, he has created a neater text in many passages (e.g. *Romul.* 8.84, 10.1, *Orest.* 445). Whether this is more likely the text that Dracontius wrote, remains to be judged in each passage individually. In cases of a corrupt text, on the other hand, Z. has often made useful suggestions of emendations. (e.g. *Romul.* 8.229, 9.48, *Orest.* 33). Finally, some interventions remain doubtful, for example *Romul.* 1.12, where Z.'s text with Baehrens's insertion of *tu* fixes the problem of the otherwise unusual prosody of *pater*, but is stylistically odd as none of Z.'s parallels contains a combination of noun, adjective and personal pronoun in the vocative. In *Romul.* 10.151f., Cupido's speech, Z.'s emendation *sagittas* is at variance with the singular *telo* already specified by *hoc* and leaves *dominae* hanging in the air, and in *Romul.* 7.123f. Z. proposes to refer *inter iura* to the brothers (not the poet) and *facunda mente peritum* (changed from *periti*) to the poet (not the brothers) while admitting that the word order remains odd. On a general note, a systematic comparison with older editions, in particular that of Díaz de Bustamante (Santiago de Compostela, 1978), the relevant volumes of the Belles Lettres edition (vol. 3 by J. Bouquet [Paris, 1995], and vol. 4 by É. Wolff [Paris, 1996]) and the editions included in recent commentaries on individual pieces (e.g. B. Weber on *Romul.* 2 [Stuttgart, Leipzig, 1995], A. Grillone on *Orestes* [Bari, 2008]) would have made the typical features of Z.'s edition more obvious (e.g. brackets and moving of lines) and also been useful for a reader without access to all these earlier editions.

In the final part of the book, Z. argues that Dracontius' poetry precedes the *Carmen de aegritudine Perdicae* in time (against W. Schetter, "Vier Adnoten zur *Aegritudo Perdicae*", *Hermes* 116 [1991] 94–113, reprinted in W. Schetter, *Kaiserzeit und Spätantike. Kleine Schriften 1957-1992*, herausgegeben von O. Zwierlein [Stuttgart, 1994] 260–79) dating it to the first half of the sixth c.) and proposes Paul. Petric. *Mart.* 3.339 – instead of *Carm. de aegr. Perd.* 35 – as the model for *Drac. laud. dei* 1.671 (*spargens aurora ruborem*). This parallel makes an interesting contribution to the assessment of Dracontius' use of near-contemporary poetry from outside North Africa (see e.g. M. L. Tizzoni, "Dracontius and the wider world:

cultural and intellectual interconnectedness in late fifth-century Vandal North Africa”, *Networks & Neighbours* 2 [2014] 96–117).

To conclude, despite the lack of systematic presentation and analysis of the transmission and of earlier editions, Z.’s Teubner edition and companion volume contribute significantly to the text of Dracontius’ secular work though it is unlikely that they will replace Vollmer’s PLM or a more recent edition.

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