

texts of science fiction seems to be the sole purpose of the book. The work is focused not on explaining but on classifying the phenomena described. The classifications are in some cases the more pointless since they are based on criteria unconnected with and external to the object considered. For instance, the arrangement of the information about the characters in SF is not determined by the observation of the textual phenomena but by the order of the personal file questions: name, nationality, job, sex, and age (p. 124–128). The excess of classification seems to be symptomatic of a certain concept of a scientific activity in which classifying and labelling become the main purpose and the end of research procedures.

The book is disappointing also as a source of information about Polish science fiction. In spite of the interest in is announced in the *Introduction*, the reader is offered no insights into particular texts which are treated as a source of details extracted only in order to illustrate the created model of stereotype. The book never suggests that a literary text (at least one belonging to the "popular" literature) is worth of interest for its own sake. As it has been already indicated, the application of the abstract model to the study of an individual text, which could have verified the descriptive and explanatory value of generalizations, is unfortunately lacking in A. Smuszkiewicz's book.

The convention of strict, scholarly treatment of the material is breached at the end of the book by the normative tenor of the *Conclusions*. The author condemns the considered texts for their conventionality and lack of originality. The perplexity of the reader is the more profound since in the *Introduction* it was explained that the book would be focused on the "popular" science fiction. The word "popular" was taken to imply works of lesser quality, conventional and unoriginal. Thus, the SF texts considered in the book appear to be condemned because of the same reasons exactly for which they were selected. Moreover, the evaluation would be perhaps more appropriate in a critical essay than in a scientific study. The evaluative approach seems to be a reflection of a strongly rooted critical prejudice against all "popular" genres which are often treated as either unworthy of a literary scholar's attention or, if discussed at all, then only to

compare unfavourably with the „mainstream” texts.

The book is addressed to literary scholars interested in science fiction and in problems of literary stereotypes. It does not seem to satisfy the reader's expectations in either of these respects.

Jadwiga Węgorzka, Gdańsk

Janina Ławińska-Tyszkowska, BUKOLIKA GRECKA (ANCIENT GREEK BUCOLIC). Prace Wrocławskiego Towarzystwa Naukowego, Seria A, Nr 227, Wrocław 1981, ss. 185.

Although the creator of literary bucolic, Theocritus of Syracuse, is rather popular among classical scholars, no comprehensive book on the genre he initiated has been written for many decades. One should mention in this connection that not all the bucolics, even those of Theocritus, were of interest to philologists, to say nothing of his later imitators whose works have not drawn enough attention of the Greek scholars. In such a situation a newly edited book by J. Ławińska-Tyszkowska, constituting a critical synthesis of the most recent interpretations dispersed in various and not always easily available articles, is an extremely useful undertaking. Her work contributes also to philological investigations by interpreting some neglected poems (especially those of Theocritus' imitators).

The book pertains rather to the history than to the theory of literature. It is partly due to objective reasons, since—as J. Ławińska-Tyszkowska emphasizes in the *Introduction*—any attempts to define the genre precisely are rendered difficult by the fact that the so called bucolics greatly differ in their features and may be reckoned among different genres. From the genological point of view Chapter III: *The name of the genre* (pp. 24–25) and Chapter V: *Bucolic as a literary genre* (pp. 34–42) are of special informative value. Chapter III is concerned with the relation between the terms idyll and bucolic. Bucolic is a literary form (*subspecies*) delimited from within the category of *eidyllion* (idyll) which means simply "a short poem". The name derives from the Greek word for "herdsman" (*boukólos*) and in fact the pastoral elements are typical of

bucolic proper. The ancient and modern views on the place of bucolic in genealogical classifications are presented in the fifth chapter; it makes us realize how difficult is to go beyond the statements of the Greek commentators for whom the bucolic (according to linguistic and structural criteria) belongs in some measure to all the types of poetry in its tripartite division. A diachronic analysis of Greek and Roman bucolics reveals their main characteristics such as short length (rarely exceeding 100 lines), hexameter pattern (considered to be an epic element), the form of a dialogue or a monologue delivered by fictitious characters (some narration being also admissible).

Further discussion about the genre may be found in Chapter VI: *The origin of bucolic* (pp. 43—45). J. Ławińska-Tyszkowska starts from the assumption that bucolic, a typical literary product of the Alexandrian period, combines two trends characteristic of those times: the one which sought inspiration in the life of ordinary man and—on the other hand—a tendency to show the learnedness of the author. The works of Theocritus are distinguished by frequent references to Doric (mostly Sicilian) folklore where he found prototypes of singing herdsmen and the motif of singing contest for a prize. Song form, love theme, and pastoral scenery are the essential features of bucolic singled out by scholars (Legrand, Van Groningen). J. Ławińska-Tyszkowska modifies to some extent their opinion pointing out that the main qualifier of the bucolic proper is the pastoral scenery. The two other elements are not obligatory and do not need to appear together (for the details see Chapters IX—XI, pp. 130—164).

The learned trend of the Alexandrian poetry is to be seen in making literature the source of poetic inspiration. Theocritus utilizes widely the topics of Sicilian legends with their pastoral heroes (such as Daphnis or Polyphemus the Cyclop) following in this respect his earlier countrymen Stesichorus, Philoxenus, Sophron, and others. The character and parentage of the mythical shepherds appearing in bucolic poetry is shown with full particulars in Chapter VII (pp. 46—68). The literary references in Theocritus' poems, however, are not confined to the ancient Sicilian authors; equally familiar to him seem to have been his contemporary poets, but all the allusions to them are well concealed and sometimes almost illegible. J. Ławińska-Tyszkowska tries to decipher some of them in her detailed analysis of texts (Chapter VIII, pp. 69—129) which forms the bulk of the book. That very chapter (together with "biographical" Chapter II, pp. 13—23, and the description of the "Corpus Theocriteum" in Chapter IV, pp. 26—33) meets perfectly the expectations of those readers who want to have a competently written companion not only to Theocritus' bucolic poetry but also to the poems of his anonymous imitators as well as of Moschus and Bion.

J. Ławińska-Tyszkowska's book will remain important and useful source of information both for the scholars working on literature of the Hellenistic period and for the students as an up-to-date monograph of one of the most interesting literary genres created in antiquity.

Jerzy Danielewicz, Poznań