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Review

Reviewed Work(s): *Flori Carmina* by C. Di Giovine

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Source: *Mnemosyne*, Fourth Series, Vol. 46, Fasc. 2 (May, 1993), pp. 287-288

Published by: Brill

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Flori *Carmina*, Introduzione, testo critico e commento a cura di C. DI GIOVINE (Testi e manuali per l'insegnamento universitario del Latino, 24). Bologna, Pàtron editore, 1988. 166 pp. Pr. Lire 17.000.

The Silver Latin poet Florus is chiefly known for a short poem directed to the emperor Hadrian (*ego nolo Caesar esse ...*), to which Hadrian responded in a poem of his own. In the *Anthologia Latina* some other verses are attributed to the same poet: a dactylic poem on roses, and eight short pieces in trochaic tetrameters dealing with popular themes such as women, wine and poetry. These poetical

remains, amounting to a meagre 35 lines, are rather mediocre and have not been given much attention by scholars. Now Mr. Di Giovine has devoted a book of no less than 166 pages to them.

In two introductory chapters he discusses in detail various problems related to the poems. It is concluded that the poet Florus is identical to the well known historian and rhetor Florus, but is not the author of the *Pervigilium Veneris*, as has sometimes been assumed. Two other sections deal with themes, style and metrics, as well as the manuscript tradition. The Latin text is supplied with an extensive 41 page commentary. In an appendix, three other poems of the *Anthologia Latina*, varying the motif of roses are presented and commented upon. These are often said to be composed by the same Florus (e.g. by J.W. Duff and A.M. Duff in their Loeb-edition of the *Minor Latin Poets*), but this attribution is rejected by Di Giovine. A bibliography and indices complete the book.

Di Giovine's discussions on the identity of the poet and on what poetical fragments may safely be attributed to him, are careful and convincing. The commentary is useful, though not exhaustive. To mention one or two points: Hadrian's remarkable poem *ego nolo Florus esse* is not quoted at all, though it is mentioned repeatedly. Poem 8 (*sperne mores transmarinos* ...) is said to reflect opposition to the prevalent philhellenism in Hadrian's time, but the possibility of a more humoristic, light-hearted intention is left unmentioned.

Florus' verses will probably never rank among Rome's most glorious poetical achievements. Nonetheless, Di Giovine has rendered a service to Latinists in making them easily accessible in this convenient edition.