Classical Scholarship between Extremes

Bas van Bommel, *Utrecht University, Netherlands*

Diego Lanza and **Gherardo Ugolini**, eds., *History of Classical Philology: From Bentley to the 20th Century*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2022. Pp. 366. €119.95 (cloth).

Franco Montanari, ed., *History of Ancient Greek Scholarship: From the Beginnings to the End of the Byzantine Age*. Leiden: Brill, 2020. Pp. 709. US$99.00 (paper).

Margaret Malamud, *African Americans and the Classics: Antiquity, Abolition and Activism*. London: Bloomsbury, 2019. Pp. 290. US$150.00 (cloth).

There was a time when the history of classical scholarship naturally meant the history of the study of classical texts in Western Europe. In recent decades, the discipline has seen the accretion of various new subfields that have significantly stretched the definition of classical scholarship. Engagement with classical texts in the New World or in other countries beyond Europe is now receiving a great deal of scholarly attention. The reworking of classical themes in nontextual media such as film and music is now also regarded as belonging to the history of classical scholarship in a broader sense. The consequence of this diversification is that what was once considered a unified discipline is no longer seen as having a coherent object of study. New and traditional fields often move in very different directions, as the three works under review in this essay illustrate. Margaret Malamud's *African Americans and the Classics* belongs to the most notable newcomer in the history of classical scholarship—"Black classicism," or *Classica Africana*. These terms denote a field of study that explores the role that classics has played in African and African American history. For a long time, research in this field focused mainly on the uses of classical sources by African American poets and visual artists, as well as on classical scholarship practiced by African American scholars. In recent years, Black classicism has developed in a distinctly normative direction: many recent studies are aimed at exposing the (bad) uses to which the classical

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heritage has been put by white supremacists in both the past and the present.[1] Although being controversial for its often one-sided emphasis on how classics has underwritten the perpetuation of racial and social inequality, present-day Black classicism has contributed to proving that the history of classical scholarship is anything but an unworldly academic discipline.

DE-IDEOLOGIZING BLACK CLASSICISM

The distinctive merit of Margaret Malamud's *African Americans and the Classics* is that it decidedly moves away from the normativity that is still rampant in Black classicism. While amply showcasing the historical importance of classical studies, Malamud refrains from writing history in straightforward, ideological terms. Her main aim is to demonstrate the remarkable extent to which knowledge of classics has been instrumental to both the social and the economic emancipation of free African Americans and to the abolition of slavery. Given the reputation of classical education of having been a largely white privilege, it is surprising to discover that classics has been successfully used to bolster the identity not only of White American patriots but also of the very people that these patriots are known to have oppressed or enslaved. The most important conclusion of Malamud's book, then, is that the history of American classical studies has not progressed along clear-cut racial divides.

In the first chapter, Malamud goes to great lengths to expose the depth and intensity of the African American engagement with the classical world. The majority of nineteenth-century African American abolitionists, educators, pastors, and scholars valued classical education not as a calculating strategy to gain positions of power but out of a profound belief in its inherent emancipatory value. As the African American minister C. N. Grandison publicly stated in the 1890s, classical education was of particular value to Black people because the republic of (classical) letters is "the one republic where we are equal," where "no white man can say he has what the black man has not" (38). It was this belief that "there is no color in thought" that underlay the establishment of the first classical high schools for Black people from the 1820s onward (such as Canal Street High School in New York [1831] and Noyes Academy in Canaan, New Hampshire [1835]) and that of the many Black graduate institutions with classical curricula after the Civil War (such as Atlanta University in Georgia [1865] or Howard University in Washington, DC [1867]).

In the second chapter, Malamud demonstrates that Western classicism's contribution to Black emancipation extended well beyond the field of education. African American as well as White abolitionists seized eagerly upon ancient history and myth to find

1. The online classical journal *Eidolon* (http://eidolon.pub) is a popular platform for such studies.

authoritative exempla that could inspire their cause. Toussaint L'Ouverture, for instance, who led the successful Haiti Revolution of 1791, was widely hailed as a "Black Spartacus." The enslaved woman Margaret Garner, who in 1856 famously tried to kill herself and her four children after a failed escape from her Kentucky owner, was eternalized on canvas by Thomas Noble as *The Modern Medea* (1867). The painter's aim was to emulate Euripides by portraying Medea as a noble victim of an unjust social institution rather than as a barbarian woman at the mercy of abysmal impulses.

With all the attention she pays to the classical world as a source of antislavery inspiration, Malamud does not close her eyes to the daunting racial prejudice that many African American promoters of classical education encountered. Hardly anyone was oblivious to the notorious remark by John Calhoun, vice president of the United States from 1825 to 1828 and proslavery senator from 1832, that until he found "a Negro who knew the Greek syntax" he would not "believe that the Negro was a human being and should be treated as a man." The pioneering, racially integrated Noyes Academy in Canaan, New Hampshire, founded by New England abolitionists in 1835, was brutally taken down the same year by a large group of local White residents, who with ninety yoke of oxen carried the building off into a swamp. At times, the danger came from surprising sides, for example, from Black educators such as Booker T. Washington (1856–1915), who recommended manual and industrial training as the most appropriate education for African Americans. Most African American activists vehemently opposed such a "negro curriculum," which they saw as perpetuating the social inferiority of Blacks.

In the arts, too, racial prejudice was not easily eradicated. For instance, *The Greek Slave*, a famous statue by Hiram Powers (1844) that depicts a young nude Greek girl about to be sold on the Turkish slave market, moved many White Americans to sympathy with the modern Greek struggle for independence against Ottoman domination. Ironically, however, most of them did not extend their sympathy to the great number of their Black compatriots who shared the Greek girl's fate.

In the third and fourth chapters, Malamud demonstrates that apart from racial prejudice, the legitimation of abolitionism by classical example was also hampered by the cherry-picking mentality that has always been rampant in classical reception at large. Being aware of the oddity of preaching abolitionism by means of examples drawn from slave-owning societies, some abolitionists emphasized that ancient slavery was less bad than modern slavery because it was induced by fate instead of racism. Others made the totally different point that it was slavery that had caused Rome's moral and political collapse.[2] Proslavery advocates could easily counter such arbitrary arguments,

2. After the Civil War, this argument made its way into histories written by African Americans, e.g., in William T. Alexander, *The History of the Coloured Race in America* (Kansas City: Palmetto, 1887).

for example, by referring to Aristotle who regarded "barbarians" as "naturally fit" for slavery or by pointing out that in both ancient and contemporary America slavery was the basis on which civilization flourished.

A similar argumentative impasse arose with regard to African American genealogy. Many abolitionists insisted to trace the ancestry of African Americans back to the ancient Egyptians, whose wisdom and knowledge were recognized by Homer, Plato, and especially Herodotus as the source of much that was valuable in Greek culture. Proslavery advocates objected either that this genealogy could never be proven or pointed out that Egypt had historically been the home not of philosophy and free inquiry, but of slavery and theocratic power.

With its lively and detailed presentation of abundant source material, *African Americans and the Classics* makes for a very engaging read. The book's most salient quality is that the author approaches her sources with an open mind, without trying to push them into an ideologically desirable direction. Thus, the book contributes to de-ideologizing an academic discipline in which scholarship and politics have become woefully intertwined. Only sporadically does Malamud go against the salutary tendency characteristic of her book as a whole. In the short afterword, for instance, she reflects on the initiatives taken by African American activists such as W.E.B. Du Bois (1868–1963) to describe African history on its own terms and underline the important contribution Africa has made to world history. Such initiatives were driven by an increasing awareness that the emancipatory appropriation of Western classicism was ironically predicated on an acknowledgment of the superiority of Western culture. Whether this is in fact true, and whether Malamud is right that appropriating classicism put Black people at risk of "yoking" themselves to a culture that did not acknowledge "the fullness of their history and identity" (5) is a delicate question that would have deserved to be explored in much more depth.

ANALYSIS AGAINST SYNTHESIS

Whereas Black classicism attracts a lot of public attention due to its interference with much-discussed social and political topics, more traditional interests of historians of classical studies, such as textual scholarship in Western Europe or ancient Greece, are pursued in relative silence. In both fields, Rudolf Pfeiffer's monumental studies on classical scholarship in Greek antiquity and in the period 1300–1850 were long regarded as the last proper survey works.[3] With the abundance of specialized studies in recent decades,

3. Rudolf Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship: From the Beginnings to the End of the Hellenistic Age* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968), and *History of Classical Scholarship from 1300 to 1850* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1976).

the need for works of overview has become particularly strong in recent years.[4] The *History of Classical Philology*, edited by Diego Lanza and Gherardo Ugolini, and the *History of Ancient Greek Scholarship*, edited by Franco Montanari, are both intended to meet this need. The *History of Classical Philology* sketches a historical outline of classical philology since the eighteenth century, when it began to evolve as an autonomous discipline. Although the editors present the book as a "revised, adapted and updated" version of the Italian edition of 2016, it is in truth an almost literal translation.[5] Changes are limited to single footnotes or bibliographical additions. Therefore, it remains wholly obscure what Lanza and Ugolini mean by stating that while the Italian edition was "mainly intended for university students," the English edition "aims at a more international approach" (vi).

The book's first part ("Towards a Science of Antiquity"[6]) moves from the model of English philology as represented by Richard Bentley to the institutionalization of the discipline by German scholars such as Christian Gottlob Heyne and Friedrich August Wolf. The second part ("The Illusion of the Archetype: Classical Studies in Nineteenth-Century Germany") discusses the main methodological theories and disputes in nineteenth-century German philology. Surely most innovative is the book's third part ("Classical Philology in the Twentieth Century"), which pays extensive attention to some leading figures of early twentieth-century philology, such as Werner Jaeger (1888–1961) and Giorgio Pasquali (1885–1952), as well as to newer disciplines and recent developments that are commonly excluded from histories of classical philology: for example, papyrology, reception studies, and the innovative paths taken by renowned postwar classicists and ancient historians such as Eric Dodds (1893–1979), Jean-Pierre Vernant (1914–2007), and Bruno Gentili (1915–2014).

One of the book's consistent qualities is that it refrains from narrating the history of philology as a linear succession of groundbreaking innovations. It also pays close attention to important continuities and possible downsides of what is usually seen as scholarly progress. Wolf, for example, is portrayed as an important pioneer of nineteenth-century

4. In 2014, Brill published the *History of Classical Scholarship: A Biographical Dictionary*, containing biographies of over 700 scholars from the fourteenth century onward who have made their mark on the study of antiquity. This was followed in 2017 by Jeffrey M. Hunt, R. Alden Smith, Fabio Stok, and Craig W. Kallendorf, *Classics from Papyrus to the Internet: An Introduction to Transmission and Reception* (Austin: University of Texas Press).

5. The Italian title is *Storia della filologia classica* (Rome: Carocci, 2016). Since Diego Lanza died in 2018, Ugolini has dedicated the English edition to his former teacher. The English translation is by Antonella Lettieri.

6. The phrase "science of antiquity" is used consistently throughout this book to translate the Italian *scienza dell'antichità*. Since it is very uncommon to call philology a "science" in English, it would have been better to use the standardized German term *Altertumswissenschaft*, which needs no translation.

German philology, but also as having in many ways continued the tradition of classical studies from Italian humanism onward. Meticulous attention is paid to both the revolutionary importance and the shortcomings of Karl Lachmann's "stemmatic method," which aims at reconstructing a textual "archetype" through the critical collation of manuscripts. The critical stance that Giorgio Pasquali took toward Lachmann's theory in the early twentieth century is explained in a superbly nuanced way by Luciano Bossina. Equally outstanding is Gherardo Ugolini's unnerving interpretation of the famous Nietzsche-Wilamowitz controversy, whose real crux was not an ideological battle between academic philology and visionary philosophy, but a more modest *querelle* between two rivaling conceptions of classical philology, both of which were academically defensible and both of which have earned their spurs in academia.

An important belief underlying the *History of Classical Philology* is that classical philology can no longer be considered a coherent subject of study. In the introduction, the editors observe that since the second half of the twentieth century, classical studies have been enriched with the perspectives of so many new disciplines (such as psychoanalysis, anthropology, and semiotics) that classical philology now appears as "a coterie of different studies joined together only by a relative unity of the subject, which is classical antiquity" (5).[7] Although the plurality of present-day classical philology is an indisputable fact, the editors' embrace of it goes much further than is justified by the discipline's changing nature. In fact, in their book, the editors refrain from any attempt at interpretive synthesis or argumentative unity. First, the book doesn't offer an explanation as to what makes it stand out from previous histories of classical scholarship. Rudolf Pfeiffer's *History of Classical Scholarship from 1300 to 1850*, Hentschke and Muhlack's *Einführung in die Geschichte der klassischen Philologie*, and Ulrich von Wilamowitz's *Geschichte der Philologie*—all works of eminent scholarly merit—are dismissed without explanation as being "mostly outdated and in many ways obsolete" (v).[8] Second, the editors do not account for their selection of materials. The reader is left wondering why eighteenth- and nineteenth-century philology are each exemplified by only one country (England and Germany, respectively), whereas an international perspective is chosen for the twentieth century (75).[9] Third, argumentative coherence

7. This is a quote from Giorgio Pasquali, whose view the editors endorse.

8. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*; Ada Hentschke and Ulrich Muhlack, *Einführung in die Geschichte der klassischen Philologie* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1972); Ulrich von Wilamowitz, *Geschichte der Philologie* (Wiesbaden: Teubner, 1921).

9. Here, Ugolini describes the eighteenth-century Dutch school of philology—exemplified by scholars such as David Ruhnken (1723–1798)—as "by far the most dynamic and advanced" of the time. It remains unexplained, however, why this has not been a sufficient reason to include a chapter on Dutch philology.

can be found within, but hardly among the book's chapters. The second chapter, on Heyne, for example, which follows a chapter on Richard Bentley, fails to mention Bentley's name, nor does it discuss the relationship between seventeenth- and eighteenth-century philology or between English and German traditions. In the third chapter, on Wolf, Heyne is introduced as a new character, as if he had not been extensively discussed in the preceding chapter (59). In other words, the *History of Classical Philology* is a collection of *capita selecta* rather than a comprehensive history of classical philology.

A certain degree of synthesis would have paid off especially for the last two chapters on reception studies and postwar classical philology. For despite the remarkable diversity of these postwar approaches, they all seem to bear the stamp of anticlassicism: whether it is reception studies' farewell to the concept of the "classical tradition," Eric Dodds's revisionist interest in the irrational aspects of ancient Greek culture, or Bruno Gentili's emphasis on historical and cultural inconsistencies and contradictions: common to these postwar approaches to the ancient world is a fundamental skepticism toward the long tradition of classicism and its normative and idealizing approach to the ancient world. The anticlassicist tendency of present-day philology is noted only in passing and does not receive the attention it deserves. How does present-day anticlassicism relate to the anticlassicism inherent in late nineteenth-century positivism? On which axiomatic assumptions is postwar anticlassicism based? What are its most important causes? Not to address such questions in any depth seems hardly defensible in a work that purports to be a history of classical philology.

BETWEEN ENCYCLOPEDISM AND HISTORY

A different manifestation of the antisynthetical tendency sketched above can be found in Montanari's bulky *History of Ancient Greek Scholarship*. This work presents itself as the first comprehensive overview of the state of our knowledge of ancient Greek scholarship from the beginnings of Greek culture to the end of the Byzantine era. Since the history of ancient Greek scholarship covers an unusually long period of time, the subject has never been treated as a whole and often receives unbalanced attention. For instance, while textual scholarship in Hellenistic Alexandria has been extensively studied, the ensuing Roman imperial age is often treated quite poorly.[10] Byzantine textual scholarship, on the other hand, receives wide scholarly attention but is mostly treated as a subject in its own right, detached from the long tradition that has prepared

10. Although many readers hoped that Pfeiffer's study of ancient Greek scholarship (*History of Classical Scholarship*) would be followed by a second volume on Rome, this never happened. Instead, in 1976, Pfeiffer picked up the thread from the year 1300 (*History of Classical Scholarship from 1300 to 1850*).

it. Given this unbalanced state of affairs, a survey work of ancient Greek scholarship from its early beginnings to the fall of the Byzantine Empire seems very much needed.

Like Ugolini, Montanari is not transparent about the relationship of his volume to the edition that it is an adaptation of: the first part of *Brill's Companion to Ancient Greek Scholarship*, coedited and published by Montanari in 2015.[11] Throughout the book, one searches in vain for the "reorganisation" and "rethinking" of the subject matter that Montanari presents as the key feature distinguishing the present volume from the former one (1). In fact, three of the new book's four chapters are nearly verbatim reprints of the same chapters from the 2015 companion, expanded with only a few footnotes. Aside from the updated bibliography, the only notable change from the 2015 companion is the substantial expansion of the first chapter, covering the pre-Alexandrian period, by approximately sixty-five pages. Why this expansion would justify a new edition under a new title remains unexplained.

One of the most distinctive features of Montanari's book—and, for that matter, of the corresponding part of the 2015 companion—is its encyclopedic and analytical character. The book's main aim is not to sketch outlines or draw synthesizing conclusions but to compile and structure the available source material in an as exhaustive as possible manner. The book takes explicit positions in vexed interpretive questions in only a few instances. Against Pfeiffer, for instance, Montanari insists that the key impulses and inspirations for the rise of Hellenistic scholarship are to be found in the work of Aristotle and his Peripatetic school (6–7). Furthermore, it confirms the view of Alexandrian scholarship as a decisive intellectual turning point that lies at the origin of what we today call classical philology (7).

Yet, outside Montanari's short introduction, such synthesizing conclusions are only drawn in passing. The book's approach to the source material is overridingly encyclopedic, as is manifest at different levels. First, in view of the exceptionally long history the book deals with, it was decided to let four different scholars take charge of the four main periods into which this history falls apart. In and of itself, this editorial choice prompts a compilatory-analytic approach rather than an interpretive-synthetic one, as any serious divergence of interpretive stances would compromise the intended unity of the book as a comprehensive history. Also within the individual chapters, analysis takes huge precedence over synthesis: all chapters contain long, often very long, prosopographic stretches that document, mostly without any synthesizing comment, the names, biographical details, and main scholarly activities and works of all scholars who in a

11. Franco Montanari, Stephanos Matthaios, and Antonios Rengakos, eds., *Brill's Companion to Ancient Greek Scholarship*, vol. 1 (Leiden: Brill, 2015).

particular period are known to have engaged in textual scholarship. Even scholars about whom hardly anything is known are mentioned for the sake of completeness.[12] Finally, all chapters end without concluding or retrospective paragraphs that sum up the most important findings.

The chosen encyclopedic strategy is of value for at least two reasons. First, the *History of Ancient Greek Scholarship* is a work of exceptionally impressive learning. Its four main parts, stretching well over 500 pages and followed by a 120-page bibliography, gather an overwhelming amount of source material. The rigor the authors have applied to the presentation of detail is often stunning (see, e.g., Fausto Montana's thorough discussion of which part of Aristotle's private library is likely to have become part of the library of Alexandria [242–44], or Filippomaria Pontani's meticulous enumeration of manuscripts datable to the tenth century CE [420–21]). The *History of Ancient Greek Scholarship*, in other words, is a treasure trove of information for anyone interested in the history of ancient Greek scholarship and, thus, of great value as a book of reference.

Another fruit of the book's encyclopedic strategy is that it warns against overly generalized or simplistic conceptions of ancient textual scholarship, which are still far from being overcome. In the first chapter, "The Origins and Growth of Scholarship in Pre-Hellenistic Greece," Anna Novokhatko demonstrates that the conception of textual scholarship as an invention of the Alexandrian age has to be referred to the land of fiction. Following in the footsteps of Rudolf Pfeiffer, whose *History of Classical Scholarship* included a voluminous part on the "prehistory of Greek scholarship," Novokhatko argues that the roots of Homeric textual criticism are to be traced back to Peisistratus's famous revision of Homer's text in the late sixth century BCE and even further back to the rhapsodic practice of explaining rare or unknown epic words and phrases.[13] Likewise, Hellenistic textual exegesis and literary criticism were anticipated by Homeric allegory, which dates back to allegorists such as Pherecydes of Syros and Theagenes of Rhegium, working in the sixth century BCE. In line with the book's encylopedic stragegy, Novokhatko aims at not leaving unmentioned any development that might have directly or indirectly contributed to laying the foundation for Alexandrian philology. Even subjects relatively remote from textual philology—such as the introduction of the alphabet, the slow spread of written culture, and the development of the classical education system—receive extensive attention. Thus, while maintaining the understanding

12. Such scholars are often typically dealt with by Molinari in one-sentence paragraphs; for example, "A certain Glaucon, mentioned in Plato and Aristotle, may have been engaged in Homeric interpretation as well" (92). The book's enumerative style should also be noted: see lines such as "Pamphilus was another scholar who also came from Alexandria" (303).

13. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*.

of Hellenistic philology as marking the birth of Western scholarship, Novokhatko shows that far from coming unprepared, this birth was anticipated by centuries of growing interest in language and linguistic issues.

In the next chapter, Fausto Montana does not contest Alexandria's reputation as the undisputed capital of Hellenistic scholarship but goes to great lengths to highlight the importance of other renowned scholarly centers, such as Cos, Rhodos, Macedonian Pella, Pergamum, and Rome. Furthermore, Montana opposes the perception of the famous heyday of Alexandrian scholarship from the early third to the mid–second century BCE as being followed by an era of mere "epigones."[14] Leading Alexandrian scholars from the Augustan world, most notably Didymus and Tryphon, get a full appreciation as scholars in their own right and are credited for having assembled "an exceptional recapitulative storehouse of knowledge" without which the emerging literary trends of classicism and Atticism would have been unthinkable (259).

The book's most original contribution is Stephanos Matthaios's chapter on the most poorly researched period in the history of ancient scholarship—from the Imperial Age to late antiquity (i.e., from the late first century BCE to the early sixth century CE). The relative neglect that has befallen this period corresponds to the harrowing state of the extant source material. With hardly any original works surviving, even the most prominent philologists and grammarians from this period are bound to remain somewhat shadowy figures. Given this state of affairs, the value of a detailed prosopographic survey (numbering no fewer than eighty-seven pages) is particularly obvious. Matthaios's contribution is also valuable for demonstrating the essential role played by educational institutions in passing on and safeguarding the classical philological tradition.

The fourth and final chapter on Byzantine textual scholarship, authored by Filippomaria Pontani, has the merit of expanding the traditional focus on well-known heydays of textual scholarship, such as the "Macedonian Renaissance" of the ninth century or the "Palaeological Renaissance" around 1300. Pontani demonstrates that even periods of alleged decline, such as the Dark Ages (seventh to early ninth century) or the century preceding the revival of studies under the Comnenian Dynasty (ca. 950 to late eleventh century), were productive in their own right, thanks to, among others, outstanding scholars such as Michael Syncellus of Jerusalem (ca. 761–846) and Michael Psellus (1018–1092/3). Thus, Pontani sheds a critical light on the heyday-decline paradigm that still prevails in the historiography of Byzantine scholarship.

For all its merits, Montanari's encyclopedic strategy also has notable downsides. Due to the mass of detail gathered in the long prosopographical passages, the authorial

14. Ibid. The last chapter of Pfeiffer's volume is titled "The Epigoni: From Aristarchus' Pupils to Didymus."

voice often completely pales into the background, making these passages barely legible as a narrative text. Moreover, the encyclopedic concern for completeness and detail often prevents the authors from giving important interpretive issues the attention they deserve. For instance, Stephanos Matthaios argues that the Alexandrian scholars of the Augustan Age are to be credited with more originality and importance than their reputation as "epigons" suggests (286–87). Yet, on page 253, we read that the scholarly merit of Didymus, the foremost Alexandrian scholar working under Augustan rule, lies in "having guaranteed the survival . . . of the body of critical work of the previous generations of Alexandrian philologists and in having perpetuated their forms, objectives and method." How this can be understood other than as epigony remains unexplained. In chapter 3, Matthaios observes that imperial and late antique textual scholars distinguished themselves from their Hellenistic forerunners by working not just on classical poets, but also on poets from the recent past, as well as by having gradually transformed grammar into an autonomous, technical discipline separate from literary interpretation (288). However, of the numerous scholars catalogued in the ensuing prosopography, only a very small minority appear to be representative of this trend. In chapter 4, Filippomaria Pontani points out that the interest most Byzantine scholars took in ancient authors was based on stylistic and rhetorical excellence rather than on moral, civic, or political values. However, the many Byzantine scholars whose interest in ancient literature clearly transcended a mere interest in stylistic qualities, such as Psellus, Eusthatius (ca. 1115–1195/6), and Planudes (1255–1304/5), are labeled by Pontanari as "Christian humanists" (460, 488, 493). The precise characteristics of this Christian humanism remain undiscussed, as does the question of whether it should be seen as typical or atypical of Byzantine scholarship. These are only three examples of a characteristic tension between the book's predominant encyclopedism and its pretense to be a history of ancient scholarship. Due to the book's major investment in ideals of completeness and detail, the authors are left with little room to give important interpretive issues the in-depth attention they deserve. For this reason, Montanari's book should have been more aptly called an encyclopedia than a history of ancient Greek scholarship.

Taken together, the three monographs under review in this essay are representative of the remarkable breadth to which the study of classical scholarship has expanded, as well as of the qualitative difference between new and more traditional ways of approaching the subject. Although Malamud's *African Americans and the Classics* moves away from the stringent normativity that has come to dominate Black classicism in recent years, it still portrays classical scholarship as a potent social factor that has helped shape the development of modern society. This sociopolitical context is completely absent in Ugolini and Lanza's as well as Montanari's edited volumes on the history of

philology in ancient Greece and Western Europe. Being strongly invested in ideals of objectivity and the meticulous presentation of detail, both works dispense with normative or ideological reasoning and also largely with attempts at interpretive synthesis and argumentative unity. A greater difference in approach to the same subject could hardly be imagined.