

study stays safely within the walls of Sophistopolis (the much used metaphor for declamatory arguments and truths introduced by D. A. Russell, *Greek Declamation* (1983), which constitutes the world in which the orators act). Helpfully, B. includes the Latin texts with translations of the themes of the cases discussed (Appendix 2) and a comprehensive bibliography. In sum, B.'s book will serve as a good research tool for the preparation of commentaries on individual speeches as well as both a reliable and readable introduction for all those interested in this formerly neglected backwater of Latin literature.

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A. J. QUIROGA PUERTAS (ED.), *THE PURPOSE OF RHETORIC IN LATE ANTIQUITY: FROM PERFORMANCE TO EXEGESIS* (Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum 72). Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013. Pp. xi + 265. ISBN 9783161522697. €69.00.

It is traditional in a review of any multi-authored volume to complain that the editor(s) have failed to ensure that their contributors have stuck closely to the party line set out in the title and/or the introduction. This seems unreasonable: academic work is scarcely at its best when squeezed into a predetermined form, and especially when the scholarship is interpretative in nature. Hence this volume presents twelve essays on the theme of literary culture in Late Antiquity, divided into sections emphasizing 'Theology', 'Late Antique Literature' and 'Political Speeches'. In fact the division is to a large extent notional, and the most striking thing is the diversity on show. Since it will be difficult to comment in detail on each essay, I have naturally focused on those that most closely match my interests. But I will say first that — without exception — the contributions are valuable and interesting. They may not pursue a common thesis, but each is worth reading in its own right.

The title of the volume raises all the same a particular problem which is not always made central to the contents. This owes less to any failure of the editor to crack the whip than it does to the undeniably 'protean nature of rhetoric' to which the publisher's blurb draws attention, and to the real difficulty of thinking about what 'the purpose of rhetoric' might be. Robert J. Penella, who contributes a prologue, seems to present the book's project in terms of the continuing influence in Late Antiquity of 'the fundamentals of rhetorical culture — the educational system, rhetorical theory, and the various rhetorical genres and modes' (4). Laura Miguélez-Cavero, on the other hand, in her illuminating analysis of the Christianizing poems of the fifth-century *Codex Visionum*, quotes with approval the remark of Averil Cameron, that 'rhetoric in the technical sense' is often less useful than is 'its wider sense, denoting the manner and circumstances that promote persuasion' (96–7). In fact, Miguélez-Cavero never quite commits to this difference: she makes much of the poems' conformity or otherwise to the 'rules of biography' (97) — largely equated with those of classical encomium — and supposes that they accordingly required an educated audience which was able to spot the difference.

Yet effective rhetoric is surely not so restricted in its reach. Miguélez-Cavero strikes me as nearer the mark when she suggests that 'rhetorical rules mattered only if they boosted the authority of the protagonist, or the emotional drive of the text' (106): that is, if they helped to achieve a persuasive aim. Nicholas Baker-Brian's close analysis of Augustine's invective *De moribus Manichaeorum* takes the scenic route to a similar conclusion: that all the 'carefully-formulated and classically-aware' rhetoric in the text received its real pay-off when it began to influence the attitudes of ordinary Christians (50). The means by which Augustine achieved this — exploiting the secrecy of the Manichees to encourage scurrilous rumours — is interesting and neatly set out; but the purpose of his rhetoric, here as elsewhere, was to achieve a particular end. Even though it might be codified in the schools, rhetoric was not an optional extra but an inescapable part of communication.

In discussing the purpose of rhetoric, therefore, we should take care not to be misled by the modern understanding of classical rhetoric as a game. This has real value in drawing our attention to one purpose of the conspicuous use of familiar rhetorical tropes: it was a way to impress connoisseurs with your technique, and so acquire social capital. But though tennis fans may swoon at Roger Federer's technique, this is to some extent to miss the point of the exercise:

unorthodox players are often equally effective in achieving their aims. Equally, the purpose of rhetoric was not always that it should be recognized as rhetoric. Professional rhetors, of course, did indeed have to demonstrate their technique; for them, as Alberto J. Quiroga Puertas argues in regard to Libanius, silence could mean ‘powerlessness’ and even ‘social death’ (234, 237). (This essay by the editor himself, oddly enough, is the only one in the collection that seems not to have been proofed with sufficient care.) But authors did not necessarily mean to draw attention to their rhetoric. Hence Ilaria Ramelli on Evagrius Ponticus, whose use of allegory in the *Kephaleia* is here presented as simply the best means of communicating his eschatological views; or Josef Lössl on Firmicus Maternus, whose use of classical techniques of profaning and proscribing are shown to have suited his aims as a Christian as much as they would any pagan.

What emerges for me from this volume is that the most successful analyses of rhetoric are those that study the use of a particular rhetorical trope to achieve a particular effect: whether as a hint to the careful reader, as in Aglae Pizzone’s brilliant explication of Heliodorus’ use of rhetorical jargon in the *Aethiopica*; or as an unsubtle blast at one’s rivals, as in Julian’s parade of his scholarship in the *Misopogon*, which Lieve van Hoof and Peter van Nuffelen suggest is likely to have backfired. As that hint of a poor reception for Julian’s rhetoric may suggest, it is vital to keep in mind that rhetoric happens in a historical context. It is directed towards others, to persuade them to think or to act in a certain way. It aims to change or affirm their beliefs and attitudes towards us, themselves, and the world at large.

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A. P. URBANO, *THE PHILOSOPHICAL LIFE: BIOGRAPHY AND THE CRAFTING OF INTELLECTUAL IDENTITY IN LATE ANTIQUITY* (Patristic Monograph Series 21). Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2013. Pp. xvii + 353. ISBN 9780813221625. £40.95/US\$49.95.

The best work on late ancient philosophy is genuinely interdisciplinary. Historians cannot write histories of philosophical communities without attending to the philosophies of their subjects. Philosophers understand that philosophical discourse is shaped by, and in turn shapes, wider cultural and social processes. Historians and philosophers alike ignore the literary character of their sources at their peril.

Arthur Urbano’s volume balances these demands adroitly. The source and subject of U.’s study is late ancient *Bios* literature, both individual lives and biographical collections. U. makes a convincing case that *Bios* literature offers a particularly useful site from which to explore the complex collage of social context, philosophical discourse and literary production that we call late ancient intellectual culture.

U. brings together within a single study many of the major works and figures that lie at the centre of current studies of historical relationships between Christians and philosophers. The book is organized around themes illustrated by textual pairings. Ch. 2 compares Porphyry’s and Iamblichus’ biographies of Pythagoras with Gregory of Nyssa’s *Life of Moses* to illustrate how biography functioned in competition over *paideia*, while ch. 3 focuses on Porphyry’s *Life of Plotinus* and the sixth book of Eusebius’ *Ecclesiastical History* to examine competition over philosophical pedigrees. Chs 4 and 5 present, respectively, an assessment of *Bioi* of emperors (Eusebius’ *Life of Constantine*/Libanius’ *Funeral Oration for Julian*) and a comparison of the mutual production of ‘philosophers’ and ‘monks’ (Athanasius’ *Life of Antony*/Eunapius’ *Lives of the Philosophers and Sophists*). A sixth chapter compares *Bioi* of the Cappadocian ascetic Macrina the Younger and the philosopher Sosipatra. A final chapter presses the investigation into the fifth century, tracing the themes identified in earlier chapters within Theodoret’s *Religious History* and Marinus’ *Life of Proclus*.

U. also does a fine job of addressing some significant theoretical and methodological questions, worth discussing at length. The principal theoretical framework for the project is Pierre Bourdieu’s theorization of ‘fields’ of cultural production (8). Rather than positing ‘Christians’ and ‘philosophers’ as distinct social and/or ideological groups locked in a polarized conflict with ‘others’, U. understands the producers of late ancient *Bioi* as constituting a shared field of