

EUTROPIUS

F. L. MÜLLER: *Eutropii Breviarium ab Urbe Condita: Eutropius, Kurze Geschichte Roms seit Gründung (753 v Chr–364 n Chr)*. Einleitung, Text und Übersetzung; Anmerkungen; *Index Nominum* a) *geographicorum*, b) *historicorum*. (Palingenesia, 56.) Pp. iii + 336. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1995. Paper. DM/Sw. frs. 136/öS 1061. ISBN: 3-515-06828-7.

S. RATTI: *Les empereurs romains d'Auguste à Dioclétien dans le Bréviaire d'Eutrope; Les livres 7 à 9 du Bréviaire d'Eutrope: introduction, traduction et commentaire*. (Annales Littéraires de l'Université de Franche-Comte, 604.) Pp. 447. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1996. Paper. ISBN: 2-251-60604-1.

The *Breviarium ab Urbe Condita*, a short account of Rome's history from its foundation in 753 B.C.E. to the death of the emperor Jovian in 364 C.E., is the only known work of Eutropius. In their introductions, both M. (pp. 1–2) and R. (pp. 13–14) consider whether or not he wrote other works too, as the Souda claims; clearly, he was not prolific. The work is dedicated to the emperor Valens and is assumed to have been commissioned by him to serve as a summary of Roman history for the many uneducated men in his court—an 'All you need to know about Rome in eighty-or-so easy pages'.

Two further common assumptions drawn from the dedication are the date 369–70 for its publication and the position of Eutropius as *magister memoriae*. Both are plausible: the victory title *Gothicus*, which appears in the dedication, was taken by Valens after his campaign of late 369; and in Eumenius and Festus we have two parallel examples of late antique literati who held the post of *magister*. Both M. and R. accept the date and the detail of Eutropius' position, but point out that the evidence for them is restricted to one MS (Bambergensis E III 22). In the 1994 Budé edition of Festus, Arnaud-Lindet pointed out that the two assumptions concerning Eutropius are not unassailable (pp. vi–vii). The questions are vital because the same Festus, as *magister memoriae*, was also commissioned by Valens to publish a *Breviarium*. His work—'All you need to know in twenty-or-so easy pages'—appeared soon after 369. Clear appreciation of the relative chronology of these two summaries of Roman history and the relationship of their respective authors to Valens would illuminate the notoriously vexed *Quellenforschung*, and crystallize our understanding of the *purpose* of the texts. M. and R. put Eutropius first and write of the text's popularity—it was translated into Greek within ten years and is thought to have influenced, amongst others, Ammianus, Jerome, and Augustine. However, with this has to be squared the implication that if Festus wrote after Eutropius, then presumably the former's work was somehow unsatisfactory to Valens and needed to be replaced. Was the first *Breviarium* not brief enough? Or unsuitable because of some aspect of its content? These interesting issues deserve consideration.

M. and R. differ in their ambitions. M.'s aim is to increase Eutropius' accessibility, to provide a comprehensive and uncontroversial work; the book is in many senses a German equivalent of Bird's 1993 work in English (*Translated Texts for Historians* 14, Liverpool University Press), although with fewer concessions to the Latinless. The

introduction covers Eutropius' career and the nature of the *Breviarium*, briefly touches on the question of the sources, and concludes with a close account of the manuscript tradition. M. is judiciously reticent about Eutropius' career after Bird's enthusiastic reconstruction of it. The simplicity of the Latin text is related to its uneducated original audience. A useful table demonstrating the number of years covered in each of the ten books of the *Breviarium* highlights distinct fluctuations; at most 365 years are covered (Book 1), at least 25 (Book 5). If it is right to assume that the book divisions are original, then M. is surely partly right to relate these fluctuations to the availability of sources—Rome of the regal period was and is less fully documented than, for example, the late Republic. But it is also possible to see in these fluctuations that Eutropius was deliberately selective in his distribution of material.

The publication of the complete text with a facing translation is a fundamental step in increasing accessibility. In the translation the year of the events is written in bold type. This format is excellent. This anglophone reviewer does not feel qualified to comment on the translation other than to observe that Eutropius' unelaborate style is suitably captured.

Given the vast number of years covered by Eutropius and his complicated use of sources, annotation and citation could increase exponentially. In line with the general intention of his book, M.'s commentary is necessarily selective. Comments are limited to matters of content rather than style. The commentary is concise and well-judged, although it is chastening to observe that we need a modern commentary to explain a text that was originally written for the uneducated! Two indices complete this conservative and useful book.

R.'s book is less measured. This stems partly from the fact that only four of the ten books are covered and partly from R.'s passionate ambition to present Eutropius as a more partisan writer than has usually been assumed, and his *Breviarium* an 'oeuvre sans naïveté' (p. 65). There is a lengthy introduction, translation of Books 7–10, commentary on Books 7–9, and the Latin text of Books 7–10. In comparison to M., who covers the whole work, R.'s decision to limit himself to the imperial period has a disfiguring effect on the *Breviarium*. This would not have been the case had R. written a conventional commentary, but some of the discursive and provocative insights made in the introductory chapters might be better placed in a more ambitious book which addressed the whole *Breviarium*, or, more realistically, in article or monograph form.

The introduction consists of seven chapters. Chapter 1 is concerned with the author and his career. A reconstruction of Eutropius' sources (Chapters 2–4) is fundamental to R.'s work because the choices the breviarist made in source-material are illustrative of his intentions. Much has to be speculative, as the sands of time have buried Suetonius 'Auctus', the Epitome of Livy, the *Kaisergeschichte*, and Nicomachus Flavianus (if, in some cases, they existed), and only fragments of Marius Maximus survive. R. also considers Livy, Suetonius, the *Periochae*, Aurelius Victor, Velleius Paterculus, and, in an original departure, Augustus' *Res Gestae*. R.'s comparison of the duration of emperors' reigns as recorded in such texts is stimulating, his analysis of lexical similarities between some authors less convincing. In Chapter 5, a relationship between *priuatus* and *ciuilitas* is asserted which is therefore seen to denote Eutropius' attitude towards the Emperor; in Chapter 6, Eutropius' characterization of the emperors is seen to be both moral and political; in Chapter 7, his support for the Senate is highlighted. R.'s approach is not as new as he might have us believe—see the items in the bibliography by Bird or Scivoletto—but this introduction is nonetheless forceful and challenging.

The inclusion of the text and translation of Eutropius' tenth book is bizarre. R.

rightly says that it has 'une unité propre' (p. 7) because of the nature of its sources (i.e. the *Kaisergeschichte*), but that constitutes an argument for its complete exclusion from this project, not just for the lack of a commentary. The translation—the first in French since 1934—and text are separated by the commentary, which is a less than helpful layout. The broad-ranging commentary itself covers such matters as people/s, places, dates, themes, sources, and style; there is much to be gleaned here, and some useful references to modern bibliography.

Both books are to be welcomed; M.'s because it meets a pressing need if more people are to read Eutropius, and R.'s for its strong and varied lines of argument.

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ROGER REES

CHRISTIAN EPICEDES

M. BIERMANN: *Die Leichenreden des Ambrosius von Mailand: Rhetorik, Predigt, Politik*. (Hermes Einzelschriften, 70.) Pp. 232. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1995. Paper, DM 761/Sw. frs. 76/öS 593. ISBN: 3-515-06632-2.

This monograph studies the four funeral speeches of Ambrose: the two for his brother Satyrus, delivered early in his bishopric, and those for the emperors Valentinian II and Theodosius I. For Satyrus he gave one address at the burial the day after his death and another seven days later; Valentinian was thus honoured in Milan some weeks after his death in May 392, and Theodosius in the same place forty days after his death in January 395. These details, and the different relationships of Ambrose to the deceased, have a bearing on the purpose and character of these *Leichenreden*, as B. explains in his introduction. Chapter 1 is a short, general survey of *Ambrosius als Prediger*. Together with the appendix, which collects comments by Ambrose on his activity as preacher, this is an important sub-theme of the book, though the chapter on *Elemente der Predigt und der Schriftexegese* is rather disappointing given the abundance of potential material. Chapter II examines the works as consolations. Although one of B.'s stated objectives (p. 13) is to assess the function in Ambrose's discourses of previous practice and theory of consolation literature, the reader is given even less than a bare outline of the development of the genre. A mere eleven lines is given to pseudo-Dionysius and Menander Rhetor, while the existence of other relevant writers has to be inferred from compressed citations in footnotes. This is obviously inadequate, especially since B. is aiming to prove that consolatory elements are very rare in these speeches. Here as elsewhere it would have been illuminating to refer to other Christian works. Chapter III has rather more to say. Before trawling through the texts section by section—his favoured method—B. makes a short preliminary study of the traditional schema of the cardinal virtues, which is used by Ambrose in the first oration on Satyrus. This adds some interest to the bland exposition, and makes his study a little less generalized; one can at least note the orator's ingenuity, for example, in seeing *prudentia* when in an emergency at sea Satyrus takes the sacrament and is saved. The study of the speeches for Valentinian and Theodosius are preceded by a sketch of traditional *Herrscherlob*, again short but better than nothing. A distinctly Biblical approach is found to dominate: there is *mansuetudo*, but *humilitas* too. Chapter IV, already mentioned, is mainly concerned with tracing