

Augustalis', but rather to his court (cf. 1.13 of the same text), and the use of μέγα in conjunction with courts (see now P.Oxy. LXIII 4394.21–2, 29–30 *συνήγορος τοῦ Ἀγούσταλιανοῦ φόρου*). It is doubtful whether the Coptic **ΑΠΟΤΡΙΒΟΥΝΟΝ** provides secure evidence for the existence of the word *ἀποτριβούνος, or whether one should understand ἀπὸ τριβούνων to be the prototype; compare **ΠΑΠΟΔΟΥΚΩΝ** in R.-G. Coquin, *BSAC* 30 (1991), 5. On the other hand, the deletion of the lemma *ἀπονουμεράριος* is rash. To the literature on *archistatores* add H.-G. Pflaum, *Scripta Varia* i.155ff. For the *dux et augustalis* see also CPR V 18 introd. No bibliography is given on the *augustalis* of the Arab period; one should consult Grohmann's works cited by F. Morelli, *ZPE* 115 (1997), 199 n. 5. P.Lond. III 1135 and 1322, said to be unpublished (p. 79), have been edited by G. M. Parássoglou, *Hellenika* 38 (1987), 31, 38.

But these are minor quibbles that in no way tarnish this splendid work. The *Lexikon* will be invaluable to papyrologists, philologists, historians, Byzantinists, and other scholars for many decades to come. C.-E. and D. deserve our warmest congratulations and thanks; and we look with anticipation to the future fascicles ('Faszikel II' [β–η] is planned to appear in 1998).

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N. GONIS

P. JONES: *Learn Latin: The Book of the Daily Telegraph QED Series*. Pp. 176, ill. London: Duckworth, 1997. Paper, £7.95. ISBN: 0-7156-2757-0.

Peter Jones is to classics what Simon Schama is to history. A popularizer in the best sense of the word, the Senior Lecturer in Classics at Newcastle University is seldom out of the newspapers. Best known for his weekly 'Ancient and Modern' column in the *Spectator*, in 1995 he was commissioned by the editor of the *Sunday Telegraph* to write a fifteen-part series designed to teach readers the rudiments of Latin so that by Christmas Eve they would be able to read St Luke's story of Christ's birth in St Jerome's Vulgate version of the Bible. The lessons were an extraordinary success: over 700 readers wrote to the author, delighted at their new-found accomplishment. A second, expanded series appeared in the *Daily Telegraph* from October 1996 to March 1997 and it is this that forms the basis of the book under review.

Learn Latin aims to provide the reader with enough Latin to translate selections from the *Carmina Burana* and the poems of Catullus as well as prose selections from the Bayeux tapestry and St John's Gospel in St Jerome's version. Each chapter contains brief articles on Roman history and culture and the influence Latin has had on English. The course is, by the author's admission, constrained by its origin as a newspaper column with restricted space and a limited target. Explanation is only provided where it is essential to the understanding of the prescribed texts; for this reason neither the future simple nor the future perfect tenses are discussed. J. suggests, rather impractically, that the exercises are done with a group of friends, one of whom already knows a little Latin. More reasonably, he suggests laying in stocks of wine to stimulate the brain cells.

J.'s approach is light-hearted, though never flippant. He is a natural teacher with an enviable gift for simple explanation. Most Latin courses start with the present tense of *amo*, and this is no exception. The lessons then gently take the reader through the verb conjugations, the declension of nouns (with a brilliantly concise account of the inflection of Latin nouns and the use of the accusative), prepositions, the imperative, plural nouns, the perfect tense, the principal parts of verbs, personal pronouns, the dative case, the imperfect tense, participles, the perfect passive, the ablative and genitive cases, the declension of adjectives, the pluperfect, the passive voice, and the use of the subjunctive (notoriously difficult for beginners in Latin but here rendered simple by its use in constructions involving *cum* and *ut*).

At this point I must come clean. To my deep regret, I only studied Latin to 'O' level standard. What little I learnt thirty years ago I have largely forgotten. I have long wanted a Latin primer that would enable me to translate simple inscriptions on church monuments and take my knowledge of the language beyond rhyming lines on the gender of Latin nouns. *Learn Latin* has performed that service, covering as it does approximately two-thirds of a GCSE Latin course. Old-fashioned schoolmasters used to say that one had to be 'birched into Latin'. J.'s approach, though far from easy, is never painful. Inevitably, there is much vocabulary and grammar: as the author remarks, 'Latin is not a subject for sissies'. And I have to admit that I did supplement the book with my school edition of Kennedy's *Shorter Latin Primer*. But for those with no Latin, or

only a nodding acquaintance, *Learn Latin* can unhesitatingly be recommended. Latin masters with fractious pupils please note!

Royal Pavilion, Libraries and Museums

DAVID BEEVERS

P. BRIANT: *Histoire de l'empire perse de Cyrus à Alexandre*. Pp. 1247, 59 ills. Paris: Librairie Arthème Fayard, 1996. ISBN: 2-213-59667-0.

There are not many syntheses of the history of the Persian Empire coming from the pen of a single author. The best known and most used are A. T. Olmstead's magisterial work *History of the Persian Empire* (Chicago, 1948) and J. M. Cook, *The Persian Empire* (New York, 1983). To write a general history of the Persian Empire is an extremely difficult task: there is a huge quantity of evidence of all kinds coming from the Near East itself, plus the Greek perspective given by contemporary Greek writers. For a long time, the vast majority of academics relied upon the Greek view. The situation is currently in flux. More attention is being paid to Near Eastern sources but not to the exclusion of all other perspectives. B.'s is the best reflection of the new approaches to the subject. It is long, but B. puts this length to very good use. It is architecture on a grand scale and it is very difficult to review it except at length and in detail.

This is not just a general history of the Persian Empire, bringing together all existing literature. It is a high-quality academic book in its own right. In the prologue (pp. 23–40) B. gives a short discussion of existing sources, identifying their strengths and weaknesses. The history itself is divided into six parts, mainly chronological but also thematic, and eighteen chapters. Here is not just the history of the Persian Empire but of the whole of the ancient world in relation to the Persians. All aspects are treated with great care and knowledge. Wherever possible, the author gives straightforward answers and his own opinions; where lack of evidence prevents this, he explains the problem and discusses what evidence does exist.

The reader will find in this book material on every facet of the Persian Empire: politics, economics, religion, diplomacy, culture, art, communications, etc. The book is impressive testimony to B.'s ability to handle all kinds of evidence—much of it extremely diverse. The bibliography (pp. 1079–1145) and the extensive bibliographical commentary (pp. 905–1078) would stand alone as a great contribution to the subject, being full and up to date.

Of course, in a book such as B.'s it is always possible to find something with which there is disagreement—it is in the nature of wide-ranging works, especially those such as this which are no mere exercise in mechanical synthesis but the outcome of many years of investigation and thought by a particular author. Obviously B. is more familiar with some regions than others. The main point is that he has created a magisterial new history of the Persian Empire, much broader than Olmstead's, and drawing on the expanded knowledge of the last fifty years. Olmstead's book was a testimony to the study of problems by his own and previous generations. B. has the advantage of presenting much that was unknown or uncertain to his predecessors.

The importance and interest of the book are not confined to academic specialists. All students of the subject should regard it as essential reading. Thus, the sooner an English translation of it is made the better.

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GOCHA R. TSETSKHLADZE

C. CALAME: *Mythe et histoire dans l'Antiquité grecque: La création symbolique d'une colonie*. Pp. 185. Lausanne: Editions Payot, 1996. Paper, Sw. frs. 36.70. ISBN: 2-601-03189-1.

This book continues the study of myth, a topic well established and popular in modern classical studies. It demonstrates once again how difficult it is to determine what is myth and what is history. It is a slightly uneasy mixture. Its first part discusses mythology (pp. 9–55); the rest (pp. 57–162) is the story of the foundation of Cyrene, a Greek colony in modern-day Libya; there is a coda (pp. 163–9) entitled 'Ni Mythe ni Histoire'.

The first chapter is theoretical, discussing myths and mythology in ancient Greek society. This is a useful short essay, largely summarizing existing knowledge and themes. It is difficult to detect the author's own thoughts and interpretation. Those wanting a more comprehensive discussion should read works such as: L. Edmunds (ed.), *Approaches to Greek Myth* (Baltimore and