

no broad African literary style behind Ap.'s remarkable diction. She suggests that the latter may have been influenced by local rhetorical schools, but we need more evidence here (how were these different from those at Rome, for example?). Luca Graverini (112–28) looks for African colour in the *Metamorphoses* through Ap.'s use of the Vergilian figure of Dido, suggesting (amongst many good points) analogies between Ap.'s Hypata and Vergil's Carthage as places of diversion and entertainment (interesting) as well as between Byrrhaena and Dido (even more interesting given the latter's quasi-erotic interest in her guest). Wytse Keulen (129–53) compares the careers of Ap. and Fronto, suggesting persuasively that they knew each other at least by reputation, that both play on their exotic outsider/African status and span both Greek and Roman culture, and that Lucius becomes a kind of Fronto at the end of the *Met.*; Ap. is interestingly seen as a 'Ciceronian' new man with vim and panache, Fronto as a more elegant and established 'Caesarian' figure. David Stone (154–73) suggests that the real complexity of identity in Ap.'s work consists not of his self-presentation but of his presentation of other characters, based not on national/ethnic considerations but on a range and combination of categories and habitual actions. Emmanuel and Nedjima Plantade (174–201) look at potential links of the story of Cupid and Psyche with Berber folktales collected in the modern period; some of the parallels are striking, but for the reviewer it is hard to let go of the Fehling thesis that modern folk versions are likely to derive from the post-classical diffusion of the literary story.

The third and final section is devoted to theoretical approaches. Daniel Selden's remarkably rich and wide-ranging chapter (206–68) argues that some key features of Ap.'s style find their origins in Afro-asiatic poetics, taking issue with Adams' restriction of these features to sub-literary texts; his argument that Ap.'s florid prose style is more like Libyac and Punic poetry than post-classical Latin prose (for example, in its use of parallel phrasing) could be countered by the idea that it indeed derives much of its colour from Latin poetry. Sonia Sabnis (271–96) suggests that Ap.'s descriptions of India reflect elements of post-colonial resistance and criticism of the usual Roman exoticizing discourse; this is an interesting view, but I would suggest that domestication of this material for a Rome-oriented audience is more important than she allows here. Richard Fletcher (297–312) points out that there is little African colour in the Platonic works, and that even when Ap. talks about his origins, the point is at least as much philosophical as ethnic, a salutary reminder that we need to consider the author's whole output in this context. Finally, Benjamin Lee (313–26) picks up the reference to *Africae uiri* in the transmission of the *Florida* and rightly points to the central significance of the work's Roman/African audience as an identifiable local élite with particular cultural concerns.

Overall, this volume succeeds in giving a higher profile than before to Ap.'s African context and cultural identity, and in advancing (if not always concluding) debate on many connected issues. Scholars should be duly grateful to the editors and contributors for a significant milestone in modern Apuleian studies.

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C. WHITTON (ED.), *PLINY THE YOUNGER: EPISTLES BOOK II* (Cambridge Greek and Latin Classics). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013. Pp. xiii + 328, illus. ISBN 9781107006898 (bound); 9780521187275 (paper). £60.00/US\$95.00 (bound); £21.99/US \$34.99 (paper).

Pliny the Younger has long inhabited a liminal place in classical scholarship. Respected for his prose, admired for his *humanitas*, and mined for historical and legal details, he and his writings have not been marginalized as such, nor have they been granted the study and scrutiny devoted to Cicero, Livy or his overshadowing contemporary Tacitus. Balanced between the margin and the centre, Pliny has historically suffered from a lack of attention, which has become circular in its continuity — little has been written on his literary achievement, and so there seems little reason to explore what he might have achieved as a writer. Christopher Whitton's list of editions, commentaries and translations (x–xi) demonstrates the paucity of resources available to the student or scholar looking to read critically Pliny's *Epistles*. It still remains largely true that if one wants to do a close reading of the *Epistles*, one has to turn for insight to individual scholarly articles or

monographs such as Stanley Hoffer, *The Anxieties of Pliny the Younger* (1999) (for Book 1) or Ilaria Marchesi, *The Art of Pliny's Letters* (2008) (for the collection generally) rather than a scholarly commentary.

Into this scholarly milieu, W. has offered a novel publication — a commentary on Pliny's *Epistles* — for as W. points out (1), his commentary is the first in English on a single book of Pliny since Mayor's on Book 3 well over a century ago (1880). W.'s commentary is most welcome for a number of reasons. First, this is a commentary that can be used in the classroom, a long-standing desideratum. Any student who is ready to read an author critically will find W.'s commentary an invaluable aid for exploring the rich prose of Pliny's letters. The introduction is robust (forty-two pages) and touches upon the matters salient for understanding the letters and the man. There are two sections that will be most useful to students: §4 Prose d'Art and §8 Transmission, Text, Indexes. Both of these address important technical matters in a highly accessible manner; the former is essential for understanding Pliny's literary style. Scholars will also benefit from W.'s edition which offers, in commentary form, a close reading of Pliny's prose informed by recent scholarship. W. convincingly describes Pliny's prose as 'often understated, always highly worked, his Latinity lays claim to a place among the great achievements of Roman prose' (28). Here W. hits the mark, and his contribution will help solidify Pliny's rightful place among Latin prose luminaries.

The commentary itself admirably fulfills the expectations set by the Cambridge Greek and Latin Classics series. The notes are a combination of textual analysis, grammatical elucidation and contextual information. Each letter comes with an introduction on the addressee, the topic of the letter, and the political, social or literary background. W. nicely situates each letter within both the book and the collection as a whole. Any critiques on the commentary will likely come from the readers' perspective: students may find the innumerable references to *isocola* and *chiasmus* an obstacle to grammatical understanding, while scholars may find the frequent translation a disruption to the flow of reading. This is more a concern of the series as a whole rather than of W., as these commentaries try to strike the perfect balance between the needs of the student and the scholar. Most readers will find that W. in particular, as with the series in general, more often than not strikes that balance. As a last nod to W.'s close attention to detail, this reviewer was unable to find a single erratum in the entire book.

A parting question on the direction of scholarship on Pliny: Whither now? Commentaries on the remaining nine books of the *Epistles* to be sure. Yet at long last, we are coming to an awareness of Pliny's literary accomplishment, striking for its rhetorical precision and poetic allusivity. While current scholarship has matured significantly from the days when Pliny was judged on his ability to provide prosopographical detail, what kind of world Pliny was seeking to create through his writings is a question that remains unanswered. This gets close to the quagmire of authorial intent, but lacking a fuller explanation one comes away with the impression that Pliny wrote just to make himself look smart. He was undoubtedly trying to do that, but also certainly more. Scholars would never be satisfied with such an impression for an author like Tacitus. Such matters can never be fully answered for any author, but there at least need to be some plausible answers in the offing, lest we merely demonstrate that Pliny was capable of wielding a sharp stylus.

As evidenced by his excellent commentary, there is no doubt that W. himself will provide some possible answers. W. has created an important tool for the student and scholar of Pliny, which one hopes will encourage emulation.

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III. LATE ANTIQUITY

C. HARRISON, C. HUMFRESS and I. SANDWELL (EDS), *BEING CHRISTIAN IN LATE ANTIQUITY: A FESTSCHRIFT FOR GILLIAN CLARK*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014. Pp. xii + 302, illus. ISBN 9780199656035. £65.00.

This superb festschrift volume forms a fitting tribute to Gillian Clark's immense contribution to late antique and early Christian studies. A stellar cast of international scholars offer essays that range