

## AMMIANUS

J. FONTAINE (ed., trans., comm.) (with E. FRÉZOULS, J.-D. BERGER): *Ammien Marcellin: Histoire: Tome III: Livres xx–xxii* (Collection des universités de France publiée sous le patronage de l'association Guillaume Budé). Pp. lxxviii + 358, 4 maps. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1996. ISBN: 2-251-01394-6.

J. SZIDAT: *Historischer Kommentar zu Ammianus Marcellinus Buch XX–XXI: Teil III: Die Konfrontation*. (Historia Einzelschriften, 89.) Pp. 286, 7 maps. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1996. Paper. DM/Sw. frs. 88/öS 687. ISBN: 3-515-06570-9.

The past few years have been high season for studies of the central books of Ammianus Marcellinus. The field is dominated by the series of magisterial 'philological and historical' commentaries issuing every four years from Groningen (XX in 1987, XXI in 1991, XXII in 1995: see *CR* 46, 253–4; 47, 59–61); to which can now be added, after a long interval, the third and final part of S.'s historical commentary on XX–XXI (Part I appeared in 1977, Part II in 1981), as well as the plugging of a gap in the Budé Ammianus with the publication of Volume III on Books XX–XXII. This last is principally the work of F., with the assistance (on Book XXII) of the late E. Frézouls, who died in 1995, and J.-D. Berger. The format follows the standard pattern of the series. Readings which differ from those of the principal manuscript are conveniently indicated by the use of italics and brackets in the printed text, and (where they part company with other standard recent editions) included in the apparatus: some note has been taken of the Groningen volumes, to which F. and his colleagues had pre-publication access. Commentary is provided in the form of 'notes complémentaires' at the end, attached to reference numbers in the translation which run consecutively through the entire volume—the practical effect of which is that there is no means of finding one's way around the 1065 notes without constantly having to turn back to the text. This arrangement does not best suit the convenience of today's readers of Ammianus, most of whom (I suspect) are likely to want to consult the commentary directly on matters of historical content, and would be better served by having the notes independently identified by the use of chapter/section divisions from the text.

F.'s introduction offers a somewhat impressionistic *aperçu* of the form and content of Books XX–XXII viewed as a whole (e.g. 'lignes et rythmes de la composition', 'la diversité tempérée du discours historique'), arguing from the basic principle that the three books constitute a unified triad in the course of Ammianus' unfolding depiction of Julian (he labels it a *pro Iuliano*): the lengthy digression on Egypt, for example, which takes up the last two chapters of XXII, is seen as a climax integral to this unitary composition. Such a view is more convincingly applied to XX–XXI alone, where there is undeniably a dramatic coherence about the narrative of the looming confrontation of Julian and Constantius directly echoed in balancing episodes, speeches, and characterization; XXII, on the other hand, is a book which seems rather to stand alone as an interlude between major military enterprises, thin on historical content and 'padded out' with digressions, not much more than a device to get Julian from the Balkans to Syria and the eve of the Persian adventure. F.'s attempt to tie

XXII into a triad with the two preceding books hardly does justice to its peculiarities: the fairly minimal and unenthusiastic attention to key aspects of Julian's civilian government and his religious reforms, the undermining of his supposedly exemplary virtues by sharply directed criticisms (lapses from *iustitia*, for example, repeatedly laid at Julian's door in the course of this book, do not rest easily with F.'s *pro Iuliano*), and—perhaps most oddly of all—the disproportionate amount of geographical excursus: nearly half of its contents are taken up with the digressions on the Black Sea peoples and on Egypt. While Ammianus accords each of these a passing *raison d'être* in the narrative (Julian's reception of distant envoys at 7.10, the news of the discovery of an Apis bull at 14.6), they are noticeably marginal to surrounding events, and classic instances of the kind of seemingly erudite diversions characteristic of the historian's trade. To seek to integrate them into some grandly coherent Julianic vision, and—following F.—to see significant emphasis on the Hellenizing mission of the Greeks in the Black Sea region, or on the rôle of Egypt as the fountain-head of ancient religion, is surely to over-interpret them: especially since Ammianus' account of Julian's affairs in the rest of Book XXII evinces little sympathy either for his 'Hellenic' objectives (e.g. the reform of city councils) or for his idiosyncratic brand of the old religion.

The notes are more extensive than might have been expected from a volume which combines discussion of three books: 'literary' observations about structure and vocabulary seem to predominate (a keen eye, for example, for Ammianus' 'Virgilianisms' and Tacitean echoes), but certainly not to the exclusion of historical data (I noted a confusion of two different Florentii at nn. 14, 50, and 156). The different editors working on Book XXII have left their imprint in a more straightforwardly matter-of-fact style of annotation, which may be better suited to expounding the contents and literary pedigree of the great digressions on the Black Sea and Egypt (both of which are massively documented) than to navigating the subtle depths of Ammianus' Julianic narrative: the emperor's arrival in Antioch (9.15), for example, on the occasion of the local festival commemorating the fate of Adonis, attracts a note (n. 902) on the survival of pagan cults and the chronology of Julian's movements, but not on the ominously dramatic significance of ritual lamentation being made to provide the accompaniment for this imperial advent in the East; similarly a note (n. 563) recognizing the 'politique assez cynique' which Ammianus attributes to Julian over his amnesty for Christian exiles (5.4: his desire to foment internecine strife) fails to expand on the place of the historian's criticism of a central plank of Julian's policy in his overall treatment of the emperor (how to fit this into a *pro Iuliano*?).

More attention to the techniques of Ammianus' composition is evident in F.'s notes to Books XX and XXI. I found particular interest in the notes appended to the four extended passages of direct speech which Ammianus gives to his principal characters (XX.5.3–7, 8.5–17; XXI.5.2–8, 13.10–15: three to Julian, one to Constantius). Through his discussion of the themes and language deployed, F. effectively demonstrates the dramatic purpose of these sections (which 'historical' readers of Ammianus are unduly inclined to neglect), showing how they bring into focus key elements of the confrontation between the imperial rivals which is being played out in the surrounding narrative. Thus, the words given to Constantius addressing his troops at Hierapolis in Syria before the march against Julian are seen (nn. 412ff.) precisely to echo—and so to caricature—the terminology of success, justice, and legitimacy which had been used to characterize Julian's activities in Gaul. Similarly, the language of Julian's own rallying call to his men is revealed as a clever defence of the legalities of

the march against Constantius, to the narrative of which the speech provides the prelude (n. 262: 'une sorte de fiction politique').

It will be apparent that F.'s notes to Book XXI are not primarily concerned with the sheer practicalities of events described, the routes and timing of armies on the move (when Constantius set off from Antioch late in 361 'autumno iam senescente' [15.2], the phrase is noted as one of 'une accumulation de présages défavorables' [n. 433], and not as an indication of the chronology of his movements). The Budé volume thus stands in sharp contrast to S.'s 'historischer Kommentar', which is devoted to expounding the detail of what was happening 'on the ground', and when: the route, for example, of Julian's advance from Gaul and through the Balkans, and the chronological problems associated with it, are extensively treated. S. provides a solidly informative companion to historical study of the military confrontation between Julian and Constantius in 361, using the text of Ammianus to generate discussion of a wide—if rather miscellaneous—range of factual material, and careful comparison with other relevant sources (Christian as well as pagan); his commentary is also supplied with twenty-five useful pages of bibliography of secondary works. S. openly acknowledges his debt to the recent Groningen commentary on the same book (much more frequently cited than by the Budé editors), but with a work dedicated solely to historical matters he is often able to pursue discussion further than the more varied concerns of the Dutch team permit.

I list a few instances more or less at random where S.'s commentary seems to me to be an improvement upon the alternatives. On 6.2 he elucidates something of the puzzling past history of the former tribune Amphilochius, alluded to in Ammianus' anecdote of an audience with Constantius in Antioch; at 7.3 he is alone in mentioning the apposite parallel at XXII.14.4 for Gaudentius' confidence in the cause of Constantius; he notes the importance of 7.5 for appreciating the extent of Julian's control of the Italian peninsula and his ability to command a southern fleet off Sicily (unremarked on by other commentators); at 7.7 the mention of Constantius' move to Edessa is the occasion for a short note of general interest on crossing-points of the Euphrates; at 9.2ff., Julian's passage down the Danube, S. draws attention to Ammianus' engagement with the comparable section of Mamertinus' *Panegyric* (ignored by the Budé editors), and finds in the phrase 'e navi exiit improvisus' (9.6) an echo of Mamertinus not previously noted; he provides more relevant documentation than others on Julian's reported criticism of Constantine as 'novator turbatorque priscarum legum' (10.8); his understanding of the expression 'ut superstitis' at 11.3 (the troops at Aquileia stirred rebellion against Julian 'because Constantius was still alive' and hence legitimately in control of the region) effectively removes a chronological problem which bothered the Dutch commentators (as also the Budé editors); the short digression on personal *genii* at 14.3–5 receives more copious treatment than elsewhere, especially its interesting list of distinguished personnel said to have benefited from such close protection (in the Budé volume merely dismissed in a brief note, n. 431, as a 'curieuse liste'); on Ammianus' celebrated criticism of Constantius' dabbling in ecclesiastical affairs (16.18) S. rightly emphasizes the important comparison with XXX.9.5 on Valentinian (mentioned in passing by the Groningen editors, not at all by the Budé), and the common ground which Ammianus shares in this passage with orthodox Christian views of Constantius (the burden of the complaint is not an exclusively pagan one); in the same passage, on Ammianus' jest that excessive use by bishops threatened the capacities of the *cursus publicus*, S. is alone in observing the similar argument put into the mouth of bishop Liberius of Rome by Theod. *HE* II.16.17–18 (along with the Dutch he notes the same sentiments

expressed in the synodical letter of the eastern bishops at the council of Sardica, *CSEL* 65, p. 64, but mistakenly follows them in attributing this directly to Hilary of Poitiers).

These two volumes amply testify to the depth and diversity of current interest in Ammianus, and the wide range of international scholarship now pointed in his direction. While it will be clear that the Budé edition and S.'s commentary are to some extent aimed at different audiences (and the present reviewer's historical bias is likely to lead him more often to consult S.), it is none the less beyond question that 'late Romanists' of all persuasions will find much in both to enlarge their understanding of the fourth century's principal historian.

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## DONATUS

R. JAKOBI: *Die Kunst der Exegese im Terenzkommentar des Donat*. (Untersuchungen zur antiken Literatur und Geschichte, 47.) Pp. ix + 210. Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1996. DM 148. ISBN: 3-11-014458-1.

The Terentian commentary of Aelius Donatus is preserved not in its original fourth-century form but in a compilation of uncertain date marred by repetitions, self-contradictions, omissions, and disordered scholia. It has long been recognized, however, as containing many perceptive comments on the language and dramatic art of Terence, not least by Lessing, whose praise of Donatus in the *Hamburgische Dramaturgie* is J.'s starting point. The only critical edition of the whole work is Wessner's Teubner text (1902–5), on which, as supplemented by J.'s teacher Otto Zwierlein, he relies for his knowledge of manuscript readings. It is not his purpose to contribute, except through occasional conjectures, to the establishment of the text, or to investigate the genesis of our extant Donatus—essentially he follows Wessner—but to make a systematic analysis of the contents with reference to ancient notions of the grammarian's task and in comparison with a wide variety of ancient commentaries and writings on grammar, rhetoric, and literary criticism.

J.'s book is the first such overall analysis to be published. In successive chapters he discusses groups of scholia dealing with: *anagnorisis*, the correct reading of the text involving voice, gesture, and punctuation; *diorthosis*, the establishment of the text; metre (a very small part of the commentary); grammatical analysis, considered under parts of speech, accident, and syntax; linguistic analysis, largely concerned with etymologies, the distinction between near-synonyms, and *proprietas*; style, particularly Terence's use of ellipse, asyndeton, and pleonasm, and his cultivation of an educated colloquial style at the level appropriate to comedy; rhetoric, for example in connection with *status* and the structure of speeches; humour, as derived from wordplay, comic error, and stock characters; dramatic structure; and finally *ethopoeia*, under which the main themes are the consistency and plausibility of characters, the degree of their conformity to type, and their observance of moral propriety.

J. conducts the reader through this wide range of contents with admirable clarity and conciseness. Quotations from Donatus are plentiful and well-chosen to illustrate