

elements operate together to constitute that larger rhetorical and apologetic force of Justin's literary work. There is much of value in this study, as well as several points that remain open for debate. In the end, Nyström has enlarged the scholarly understanding of strategies and structures present in Justin's apologetic writings.

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Thecla's devotion. Narrative, emotion and identity in the Acts of Paul and Thecla. By J. D. McLarty. Pp. viii + 257 incl. 20 ills. Cambridge: James Clarke & Co, 2018. £65. 978 0 227 17609 2

JEH (70) 2019; doi:10.1017/S0022046919001532

J. D. McLarty undertakes a study of emotion in the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* through a literary analysis of plot and characterisation. She compares each of these elements with the second-century Greek romance *Chaïreas and Callirhoe*. The comparison allows McLarty to identify elements that are unique in the *Acts*. This book is a lightly revised version of the author's 2011 doctoral thesis.

McLarty's analysis brings a number of interesting points to light about the emotional responses of Thecla. Her close reading of the first episode emphasises how Thecla is characterised as one in love. Although readers of the story know that Thecla is drawn to Paul's teaching, the characters in the story interpret many of Thecla's responses as a romantic attachment to Paul. Another important emotion, and one that is infrequently mentioned in scholarship, is Thecla's joy. McLarty brings out the emphasis on joy, an interesting feature of a work that otherwise shows emotional restraint.

The comparison with *Callirhoe* also yields an insight that the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* evoke a relatively narrow emotional response. *Callirhoe* often records internal monologues of characters processing the emotion of their situation, so a greater range of emotion is on display. By contrast, readers of the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* experience the restraint of the characters and are not invited to consider the possible anguish that their situation might yield.

McLarty also makes a contribution in her attention to the relationship between class status and emotion. The ancient virtue of self-control was cultivated through *paideia* and thus was thought to be an achievement of the upper classes. Thecla is characterised as a leading woman of her city, which confirms the social expectation that her achievement is appropriate to her status.

McLarty accepts some traditional interpretations of the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* that may warrant further inquiry in light of her study. For example, Paul's supposed rejection of Thecla after the Iconium episode may make more sense given McLarty's assertion that characters on the story level see Thecla's actions as expressing love for Paul. Her apparent love leaves her achievement of self-control unresolved after the Iconium episode. McLarty also draws attention to the importance of the return home of characters in the Greek novels. However, she skips quickly over Thecla's return home to emphasise her subsequent travels. Additional consideration of this feature of Thecla's story may be fruitful.

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