EPITOME DE CAESARIBUS

M. Festy (ed., trans.): *Pseudo-Aurélius Victor*, Abrégé des Césars (Collection des Universités de France publiée sous le patronage de l'Association Guillaume Budé). Pp. cix + 302. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1999. Cased. ISBN: 2-251-01410-1.

It is a pleasure to salute the appearance of a Budé edition of the so-called *Epitome de Caesaribus* that does something to atone for the Budé editions of two other similar Latin historical texts of the late fourth century, namely, the *Caesares* of Aurelius Victor and Festus' *Breviarium*, whose respective deficiencies are catalogued in the long reviews by R. J. Tarrant, *Gnomon* 50 (1978), 355–62, and M. D. Reeve, *Gnomon* 69 (1997), 508–13. Michel Festy may be too conservative an editor for some tastes, but the text which he has edited is well preserved and contains virtually no passages where the author's meaning is seriously in doubt.

F.'s edition conforms with the recent practice of the Budé series in including, besides the Latin text with French translation *en face*, a substantial introduction of nearly ninety pages (pp. vii–xciii), a bibliography (pp. xcv–cv), and detailed historical notes on individual passages (pp. 59–238). To this standard formula F. adds three appendices: the first critical edition of the vulgar Latin version of the *Epitome*, which is an important indirect witness to the text (pp. 239–78); 'les *hapax* historiques de l'*Épitome*' (pp. 279–86), which will perhaps be the most valuable part of the book to historians; and a comparative word-count of the space devoted to each emperor in Victor, Eutropius, and the *Epitome* (pp. 287–9).

F. has done his job competently on the whole: his edition is superior to Franz Pichlmayr's Teubner of 1911 (reprinted with addenda and corrigenda by R. Gruendel in 1961), while both his notes and his introduction provide accurate and informative guidance for those unfamiliar with the uncertainties that confront those who attempt to assess the historical value of the *Epitome* and to identify fully the sources that the unknown author employed. The criticisms which follow must not be allowed to impair these important and praiseworthy facts. F. concludes his introduction by stating that he saw the task before him as to constitute the text 'sur des bases entièrement nouvelles' and 'réaliser la synthèse des recherches les plus récentes' (p. xciii): when he continues by claiming merely that 'c'est sur ces points que nous espérons avoir fait oeuvre utile', he is being unduly modest, for his achievement is substantial. Although I do not always agree with his judgements, F. usually sets out the relevant evidence clearly and fully, and he summarizes succintly the pertinent modern scholarship, which is both voluminous and controversial.

The one area where F. seems to me go badly astray is in his *apparatus criticus*. He has chosen to follow Pichlmayr in using minuscule Greek characters as sigla to designate individual manuscripts and capital Roman characters as 'sigles collectifs', for hyparchetypes. This will surely confuse and mislead casual users of his edition, since it is flat contrary to the normal practice of modern editors of classical texts (see M. L. West, *Textual Criticism and Editorial Technique* [Stuttgart, 1973], pp. 74–5). Moreover, F. presents the indirect evidence of the vulgar Latin version and authors who quote or use the *Epitome* as if it had the same status as directly attested manuscript readings.

The text of the *Epitome*, unlike that of Aurelius Victor, presents few serious difficulties. In some passages, however, I find it hard to accept what F. prints. Let me discuss two. In 16.4, the text as transmitted and printed is ungrammatical: the transitive verb

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gignit lacks an object and there is no plural noun to serve as the subject of *leniantur*. The grammatical anomalies require the insertion of some phrase such as *ea mala* (referring to the disasters listed in 16.3), as was proposed in the early sixteenth century. I suspect also that *aliudve quid* ought to be emended to *aliquid* so that the passage reads: 'ut, dum mundi lex seu natura aliquid incognitum [meaning something like 'unprecedented', cf. *OLD* 871, s. v. 3c] gignit, <ea mala> rectorum consiliis tamquam medicinis leniantur'. In 16.7 F. prints *philosophiae studens litterarumque Graecarum*: he sees no need to add *peritissimus*, as other editors do, or *gnarus*, as Rossbach proposed, because '*studens* est ici construit avec le génitif de relation' (p. 118). The note in which F. makes this assertion is unusual in containing any discussion at all of literary or linguistic features in the text. However, it does not produce any other example of *studens* (as opposed to *studiosus*) governing a genitive—which is what was required.

Proper names often present problems of orthography for an editor, and the *Epitome* is no exception. It is perhaps not surprising that F. fails to achieve perfect consistency when he prints *Phryx* and *Euphrate* for the *Frix* and *Eufrate* of the manuscripts (40.20, 24.2), while allowing *Bendobonam* to stand unchanged (16.12) and printing *mons Vesubius* with the majority of the manuscripts. But a Latin author *c*. 400 might well have written *Commagene quam hodie Augustofratensem nominamus* (9.13), where F. corrects the transmitted spelling to *Augustophratensem*. The normal name of the province in the fourth century was Euphratensis or Augusta Euphratensis, as the notes correctly state (p. 89): the portmanteau form used by the *Epitome* appears to occur first in the *Peregrinatio Aetheriae*, where the sole manuscript spells it *Augustofratensis* (18.4, 6).

F.'s introduction and notes are devoted almost exclusively to two topics. The greater part of the volume as a whole illustrates and assesses the value of each item in the *Epitome* as historical evidence. F. is thorough and judicious in most cases. One of his rare lapses concerns the death of Diocletian, which the *Epitome* explicitly dates to 313, not long after Licinius married the half-sister of Constantine in Milan in February (39.7). F. accepts this date as correct and adduces Lactantius, *Mort. Pers*. 42.3–43.1, as confirmation that Diocletian died before Maximinus, who perished in the summer of 313. He fails to mention, however, that Lactantius contradicts the *Epitome* and expressly presents Diocletian as dead before Constantine defeated Maxentius in 312—which is the principal reason why I have long maintained that Diocletian died on 3 December 311 (as proposed in *JRS* 63 [1973], 32–5).

The other main topic discussed in both introduction and notes is the identity of the written sources which provided the author with the considerable amount of accurate and authentic information which he reproduces in his account of Roman emperors from Augustus to Gratian (31 B.C. to A.D. 383). There is now general agreement among scholars that Chapters I–XI draw on Aurelius Victor and Suetonius (the latter perhaps indirectly rather than directly), XII–XXIII on Marius Maximus, and XII–XXXVIII probably on both Eutropius and Eutropius' source, the lost *Kaisergeschichte*. But there continues to be serious disagreement about two other lost sources. First, was the main source of the lives of the emperors between Hadrian and Caracalla in the *Historia Augusta* Marius Maximus, as F. (p. xxv) and many others believe, or the sober biographer postulated by Hermann Dessau and dubbed by Ronald Syme 'Ignotus, the Good Biographer'? Secondly, what period did the *annales* which Nicomachus Flavianus dedicated to the emperor Theodosius (*ILS* 2948 = *CIL* 6.1783, cf. pp. 4760–1) cover, and by what later writers was Flavianus' work used? F. sets out the competing views with commendable brevity (pp. xv–xx): he rejects the thesis argued by Jörg Schlumberger in 1975 that the *Epitome* used Flavianus throughout, but

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he accepts Flavianus as a source from Chapter XXIV onwards, where the *Epitome* shows so many close similarities with Zosimus that either the *Epitome* derives material from Eunapius (as argued in *CP* 71 [1976], 265–7) or both have used a common written source.

In conclusion, the title of the work and its date require brief discussion. The conventional title of *Epitome de Caesaribus* has no claim to authenticity: it was bestowed upon it by Johannes Arntzen in 1733, and even the designation *epitome/a* is due entirely to a modern editor (namely, Andreas Schott in 1579). The manuscripts head the work: 'libellus de vita et moribus imperatorum breviatus ex libris Sexti Aurelii Victoris a Caesare Augusto usque ad Theodosium'. Despite F.'s plea on its behalf (pp. viii–xii, esp. p. xi: 'l'authenticité du titre est possible'), this can hardly be authentic either: it is not an author's title for the work but a librarian's attempt to describe its contents for a catalogue. Hence both convenience and the necessity of easy reference dictate that the conventional title be retained. No harm is done, provided that all remember that there is no reason to think that the author styled his work an 'epitome'.

The final sentence of the *Epitome* as transmitted and printed by all editors records the burial of Theodosius (48.20: *corpus eius eodem anno Constantinopolim translatum atque sepultum est*). F. duly notes that Socrates, *HE* 6.1.3, and the Paschal Chronicle (565.20–566.3 Bonn) state the date of Theodosius' burial as 8 November 395 (p. 238). Unfortunately, he omits to state that the sentence quoted also appears with the change of only one word (*adlatum* for *translatum*) in the sixth-century chronicle of Marcellinus (*Chr. min*. 2.64). In a paper which he kindly showed me before publication (*CQ* N.S. 51 [2001], 324–7), Alan Cameron has argued (and in my opinion proved) that the sentence does not belong in the *Epitome* at all, but has been interpolated from Marcellinus in the course of transmission.

If the final sentence is deleted, then the *Epitome* ends with the death of Theodosius and speaks of his two sons as the reigning emperors (48.19: I suspect that the words *id est Arcadio et Honorio*, unnecessary for a contemporary, should also be expunged as a later gloss); it was therefore written between 17 January 395 and the death of Arcadius on 1 May 408. F. inclines to place the composition of the *Epitome* after 402, perhaps even after 406 (pp. liii–lviii). If I were to hazard a guess, I would opt for an earlier date: the emphasis on the fact that Augustus secured a copious supply of grain for Rome by making Egypt a province (1.4–6) sounds uncannily appropriate for the winter of 397–8, when Gildo had cut off the supply of grain from Africa, which had long since replaced Egypt as the city's main provider.

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MACROBIUS ON THE DREAM OF SCIPIO

M. ARMISEN-MARCHETTI: *Macrobe. Commentaire au Songe de Scipion. Livre I* (Collection des Universités de France publiés sous la patronage de l'Association Guillaume Budé). Pp. cv + 200, ills. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2001. Cased, frs. 390. ISBN: 2-251-01420-3.

It is good that Macrobius is at last receiving a critical edition and translation that does justice to an important and influential work, his *Commentary* on Cicero's

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