Tacitus' Jewish excursus in historiographical debates. B. addresses issues which should interest a broader audience than those specializing in Roman historiography.

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## APULEIUS' APOLOGY

J. HAMMERSTAEDT, P. HABERMEHL, F. LAMBERTI, A. M. RITTER, P. SCHENK: *Apuleius:* de Magia. *Eingeleitet, übersetzt und mit interpretierenden Essays versehen.* (SAPERE: Scripta Antiquitatis Posterioris ad Ethicam REligionemque pertinentia 5.) Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2002. Cased, €32. ISBN: 3-534-14946-7.

This edition and translation of Apuleius' *Apologia sive De Magia* together with interpretative essays is the product of five scholars from diverse schools, ranging from Classical philology (Hammerstaedt, Habermehl, Schenk) to Roman law (Lamberti) and Church history (Ritter). As part of a series which aims to place in their socio-historical context texts of late antiquity relevant for ethical and religious questions, it concentrates on the interdisciplinary approach to the background of the speech. The text is prepared, translated and annotated by Hammerstaedt. It varies from R. Helm's 1912 Teubner text of the *Apologia* on numerous occasions, but has no *apparatus criticus* (variations are discussed in the notes). A list of divergences from Helm, bibliography and indices complete the volume. A similar list for Hunink's edition (V. Hunink [ed., comm.], *Apuleius of Madauros: Pro se de Magia*, 2 vols [Amsterdam, 1997]) would have been useful, since there is some overlap, and Hunink's textual choices are sometimes discussed in the notes. The text also includes a few new conjectures.

Hammerstaedt starts with a sketch of Apuleius' life and work, covering concisely what little is known of the author.

Schenk's thorough treatment of the rhetorical structure of the speech shows well how Apuleius manages to manipulate his audience through rhetorical and literary tricks. As to the speech's authentic recording of fact, Schenk makes a strong case for the situation being realistic, albeit with some tendentious colouring of the truth, arguing that some of the speech's more literary attributes, e.g. literary quotes, may also be part of a successful defence strategy. Still, he points out, the speech has a double function as a speech in self-defence and a piece of learned display, and thus shows Apuleius to be a fully paid-up member of the literary élite of the Second Sophistic.

The translation into fluent and readable German, with a sometimes precious style, explores well Apuleius' highly rhetorical and archaizing Latin (e.g. 6.1–2). This attempt to stay as close to the original as possible is true to the demands of the series.

The notes discuss textual problems, sometimes Latin phrases, and primarily the *Realien* of the speech, are overall more expansive than Helm's notes (in R. Helm, *Apuleius, Verteidigungsrede, Blütenlese* [Berlin, 1977]) and frequently engage constructively with Hunink 1997.

Habermehl traces the concept of the 'supernatural' in Apuleius' works, going beyond the concept of 'magic' alone. He concentrates on the passages of the *Apologia* which reveal that Apuleius had more knowledge of magic than he admits to, e.g. §§61–5 (the statue of Mercury), and demonstrates Apuleius' dangerous game with the

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magical properties of the god. Since Apuleius distinguishes between two kinds of magic and seems to adhere to the Platonic-theological version of it, he is guiltless in his own eyes. Habermehl then goes systematically through some of Apuleius' other works: in *De deo Socratis* Apuleius is the first to attempt a typology of daemons in Latin, and in *Metamorphoses* he gives a broad picture of the usual characterizations of witches, derived from both literary tradition and knowledge of contemporary magical instructions. Isis' 'good' magic is contrasted, Habermehl argues, with profane 'bad' magic. He deals swiftly with the problematic portrait of the goddess, steering a middle course by arguing strongly against both an autobiographical interpretation of the novel and the reading of the novel as a portrait of Lucius as a duped simple mind (thus S. J. Harrison, *Apuleius: A Latin Sophist* [Oxford, 2000]). Habermehl sees an overriding ideology in all of Apuleius' works in the wish to link religiosity and philosophy, magic and religion.

A. M. Ritter deals with magic in early Christianity and thus goes far beyond the scope of an interpretative essay on the *Apologia*, since Apuleius never certainly engages with Christianity (but whenever it has been so argued, his attitude has been represented as negative). Ritter states his interest in the influence of Christianity on the early reception of Apuleius' works and gives a general history of the surprisingly manifold evidence for magic in Jewish and Christian literary and especially non-literary sources. As such, this essay has many interesting and new things to say, but its link with the *Apologia* is somewhat tenuous.

F. Lamberti offers a thorough analysis of the speech as a legal-historical document, reassessing the law underlying the accusation. She thinks it is not the *lex Cornelia de sicariis et veneficis* from 81 B.C., but postulates a *senatus consultum* from the middle of the first century A.D., which extends the grounds for accusation from *veneficium* and *maiestas* to magic in general.

There is no conclusion to summarize the results of the essays. Some of the essays offer a close study of the text, whilst others give a wider outlook, resulting in a somewhat uneven volume. It is nevertheless greatly welcome, since it opens an unjustly understudied text to a wider audience, and demonstrates its interest for scholars of many further disciplines beyond the ones covered in the book itself, ranging from students of second century sciences through philosophers to historians interested in the social structure of contemporary Northern Africa.

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## ROMAN VIEWS OF ALEXANDER

D. SPENCER: *The Roman Alexander. Reading a Cultural Myth*. Pp. xxvi + 277, maps, ills. Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2002. Paper, £15.99. ISBN: 0-85989-678-1 (0-85989-677-3 hbk).

At a recent promotion of an Australian legal group, the chief justice of Victoria purportedly remarked: 'You should know that experience shows that launches can be risky affairs, particularly for the audience. Alexander the Great, launching a new city in Asia Minor, which he named after his favourite horse, exultantly hurled a javelin into the air and impaled the Ethiopian ambassador' (The *Australian Financial Review*, 20 February 2003; I am grateful to A. B. Bosworth for this reference).

This conflated and perhaps deliberately garbled linkage of several Alexander anecdotes might well be described as another recension of the Alexander Romance.

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