

REVIEWS • RESENSIES

John E. Atkinson, *Curzio Rufo. Storie di Alessandro Magno*, Volume 1. Translated by Virginio Antelami. Fondazione Lorenzo Valla, Arnoldo Mondadori editore, 1998. Pp. C, 449. ISBN 88-04-43468-6.

The first of a two-volume edition of Q. Curtius Rufus' *History of Alexander* in Italian, this is an impressive contribution to Alexander studies and scholarship in general. The lengthy introduction treats the standard issues: the date of the work (vocabulary and style point to the first century AD, but the arguments for both Claudius and Vespasian have their merits); the author's career (this points strongly to the Julio-Claudian era); sources; value of the history; characterization of Alexander; literary style; transmission of the text. These are followed by a sizeable bibliography, a chronological table, and six maps (though these vary in quality).

The text is that of K. Müller, which is clearly superior to Henri Bardon's Budé, which was used by the author in his *Commentary on Q. Curtius Rufus' Historiae Alexandri Magni*, two volumes to date (Amsterdam, 1980, 1994), and by the reviewers for their Penguin edition, in both cases because, as Atkinson notes, Müller's text 'is virtually unobtainable'. That problem is now remedied by the present edition. The Italian translation is by Virginio Antelami.

It would be presumptuous for us to comment in detail on a translation of a Latin text into Italian. Nevertheless, it is easy to see that Antelami's rendering is accurate and clear, though it does tend towards prolixity in places, with the translator sacrificing Curtius' conciseness in order to 'get everything in'. A few examples from the opening chapter:

3.1.8 ut circumsederi arcem ... viderunt ('when they saw the citadel under siege'): 'Quando tuttavia videro la rocca tutta circondata dall' apparato dell'assedio ...'

3.1.9 petentes ut capti apud Granicum amnem redderentur ('requesting the return of the prisoners taken at the River Granicus'): 'con la richiesta di riavere indietro quanti dei loro erano caduti prigionieri presso il fiume Granico'

3.1.13 utroque in artas fauces compellente terram ('the two [seas]

compressing it into a narrow isthmus’): ‘entrambi esercitano sulla terra una forte spinta, fino a provocarvi una strozzatura.’

The commentary at the end is extensive, roughly 170 pages, and, although it draws heavily on the above-mentioned *Commentary* (1980) for Books 3 and 4, it brings into the discussion much that has been published in the intervening eighteen years. The presentation of the notes is, however, somewhat confusing. Lemmata in Latin pick up specific points (historical or textual), but are keyed not to the chapter and section but rather the *line number* in the text, each chapter having its own line-numbers in the left-hand margin; more general discussions are provided following the lemmata in Italian. Points for discussion marked by < in the right-hand margin of the translation are deemed essential to the understanding of the text (‘Il segno < ... indica la presenza, nel commento, di note indispensabili alla comprensione del testo ...’): for example, Ninus and Belus, the ‘Immortals’, the ‘cidaris’; religious and cultural practices are frequently ‘tagged’ in this way. The notes are dense, informative, generously seasoned with references to primary and modern works, and the same high standard of scholarship that characterizes Atkinson’s *Commentary* is present here despite the need for compression.

It is with no disrespect to Italian scholars or their language that we express our regrets that this work did not appear in English. This is an example of what Loeb texts ought to look like – though, in fairness, we might point to P.A. Brunt’s *Arrian*, which updates Robson’s translation and reprints A.G. Roos’ Teubner text, as something that compares in scope and scholarly depth.

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D. Wardle, *Valerius Maximus: Memorable Deeds and Sayings, Book 1*. Translated with Introduction and Commentary. Clarendon Ancient History Series. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998. Pp. ix + 301. £40.00.

Those familiar with the broad-ranging and judicious scholarship of David Wardle will not be disappointed by his commentary on Book 1 of Valerius Maximus. It consists of an Introduction, a Translation and the Commentary itself (on the English translation, not on the Latin text), a Bibliography and an Index.

The Introduction does not speculate on the person of Valerius Maximus:

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