

These points, however, do not diminish the value of this collection of contributions on a topic that has reclaimed more attention from late antique scholars. As has been already stated, the chapters are varied in the topics they address as well as the methodology used to survey the texts under discussion, but the reader will not be left with the feeling of having read a miscellaneous volume. Instead, readers will have a sense of the ποικιλία of topics and forms in late antique Christian poetry.

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THOMAS M. BANCHICH: *The Lost History of Peter the Patrician: An Account of Rome's Imperial Past from the Age of Justinian*. Routledge, London – New York, 2015. ISBN (hardback) 978-0-415-51663-1; ISBN (paperback) 978-0-367-86696-9; ISBN (e-book) 978-1-315-71458-5. XII, 185 pp. GBP 75.

The sixth-century historian Petrus Patricius (also known by his anglicized name *Peter the Patrician*) has to date been largely overlooked by a wider readership, partly due to the lack of a proper edition and a translation of what survives of his text. Banchich's book aims to correct part of this deficiency by providing the first full English translation of the fragments (some having been translated earlier by E. Cary in his LOEB Classical Library edition of Cassius Dio), including those whose origin has been disputed over the years (i.e. the fragments sometimes referred to as *anonymous post Dionem*). The book is part of the Routledge Classical Translations series, which attempts to provide easy access in English to the otherwise less well-known works that have either not been translated before or are no longer easily available.

The book contains a short introduction to the subject matter and the state of research (pp. 1–16), an English translation of both the *Testimonia* about Petrus' life and career, and the full collection of *Excerpta* assumed to have originated from Petrus' work (pp. 17–150), and a selected bibliography and indexes (pp. 151–185). As the Routledge series is mainly meant to provide English translations of these less well-known authors and thus provide easy acquaintance with their works, the other elements around them, such as deeper discussions concerning the structure of the works, their impact and the controversies currently debated in scholarly works, are naturally given less space.

The short introduction to the topic covers Petrus' life as a diplomat and official in the Byzantine court, as far as we know it (pp. 1–3), the structure and nature of the main source (the *Excerpta Constantiniana*) of the excerpts (pp. 3–9), a discussion about the nature of the lost work (pp.

9–11), and an explanation about the translation and commentary (pp. 11–12) followed by related notes (pp. 13–16). As a short introduction to the subject matter the topics covered provide essential aspects to readers who are new to Petrus' work. Some critical aspects are covered by references for further reading, while other issues are often covered with a single sentence or two. Due to the nature of the series format, the introduction is limited, although it does provide a rather insightful exposition of a number of topics for further reading.

The main part of the book is taken up by the translations and their commentaries. The translations are divided into two groups: *Testimonia* and *Excerpta*. The twenty-two references to Petrus' life as a literary figure that are given first originate mostly from other sixth-century authors (i.e. Petrus' contemporaries), such as Ioannes Lydus, Procopius, Menander Protector and Cassiodorus (pp. 17–22). These excerpts are mainly given without commentaries, but the source references to multiple editions and translations often include some prosopographical references to the mentioned individuals (mainly in the *Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*).

The 215 fragments assumed to have originated from Petrus are presented (pp. 22–150) in columns accompanied where possible by material originating from Petrus' sources (mainly Cassius Dio and Eunapius) or later authors who used Petrus as a source (Ioannes Zonaras), or provided collaborative evidence to the subject matter (Ioannes Xiphilinus). The material is presented in chronological order, the eldest being given first on the left, followed by Petrus' text and on the right by material from later Byzantine historians. The presentation of these different sources side by side enables easy comparison and provides an indication of Petrus' methodologies and interests as a historian.

The English translation tends to follow the original Greek quite closely, thus keeping the original sense of the work more intact, and making it useful for anyone attempting to read the original Greek version of the text. Each fragment tends to be followed by a commentary section that provides some quick references for further reading concerning the topic discussed in the preceding fragment. These commentaries are noticeably lengthier in the section covering the latter half of Petrus' work, starting from the third century onwards, including long discussions about historical events or Petrus' narrative dealing with these events. This unevenness most likely reflects Banchich's deeper expertise and interest in Late Antiquity rather than the earlier periods covered by Petrus.

There are, nevertheless, some mistakes in the translation and commentary sections (especially with names). In fragment 22 (p. 34), which deals with the Parthian embassy sent to Tiberius, the name of the Roman emperor is incorrectly stated in the translation to have been Trajan. Similarly, the name of Vespasian in fragment 112 (p. 80–81) has been incorrectly changed to Nero. It should be noted that the original Greek has the correct names in these cases. The commentaries also contain similar issues. While fragment 93 (p. 72) deals with Otho's suicide, in the commentary the

suicide is instead credited three times to Vitellius. Thus, the more advanced students of the subject matter are advised to always examine the Greek original before making any judgments about Petrus' work.

In addition to these minor mistakes in translation, there are a few emendations to Petrus' text that, if taken as such, would affect our understanding of the quality of the lost *History*, and also of Petrus himself as a historian. As an example, in fragment 51 (p. 52–53) the well-known sayings of Agrippina are indicated to have been stated by Octavia by adding Octavia's name in square brackets to the text. If Petrus truly had meant that these statements were spoken by Octavia, then that would testify either to the poor quality of Petrus as a historian if he had misunderstood his source (Cassius Dio) so badly, or, that he had altered the original text on purpose for some unknown reason. As the Greek text remains today, this emendation follows a strict grammatical indication, but more likely Agrippina had been introduced as the main character of the incident just prior to the selected elements in the excerpt, which makes this emendation rather misleading.

In addition to the bibliography (p. 151–161), the end of the book contains very helpful indexes (p. 162–185) of referred literary sources, people, gods and places mentioned, and correlations of fragment numbering with Müller's edition (*FHG*). All in all, this is a very welcome book, enabling a wider readership to gain easy familiarity with Petrus' work. This is by no means a minor feat, bearing in mind the fragmentary nature of the original Greek and the still ongoing debate regarding Petrus' merits as a historian.

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ARSENII VETUSHKO-KALEVICH: *Compilation and Translation: Johannes Widekindi and the Origins of his Work on a Swedish-Russian War*. *Studia Graeca et Latina Lundensia* 26. Lund University, Lund 2019. ISBN 978-91-88899-69-9; ISBN (e-book) 978-91-88899-70-5. 219 pp. EUR 0.

The works of Johannes Widekindi (ca. 1620–1678), a historiographer of the Swedish Realm, have drawn much less scholarly attention than those of some more famous seventeenth-century royal historiographers, such as Johannes Loccenius and Samuel Pufendorf. Widekindi's literary production is typical of a learned writer of his time, including historiographical works, genealogies, letters, panegyrics, orations and poems, both in Latin and in the vernacular. Among his historiographical writings there are histories of King Gustavus I Vasa (now lost) and King Gustavus II Adolphus. Arsenii Vetushko-Kalevich's doctoral dissertation studies Widekindi's work dealing with Swedish