

LATIN LEXICOGRAPHY

GLINISTER (F.), WOODS (C.) (edd.) with NORTH (J.A.), CRAWFORD (M.H.) *Verrius, Festus, & Paul. Lexicography, Scholarship, and Society*. (BICS Supplement 93.) Pp. xiv + 191. London: Institute of Classical Studies, School of Advanced Study, University of London, 2007. Paper, £25. ISBN: 978-1-905670-06-2.

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During the reign of Augustus the *grammaticus* and scholar Verrius Flaccus compiled forty books *De uerborum significatu*, the first and greatest Latin lexicon of classical antiquity, a work which (with Varro's forty-one books of *Antiquitates rerum humanarum et diuinarum*) must stand high on any Romanist's list of books he would like to borrow from God's library. Verrius' work, alas, is lost; the riches that are lost with it can be gauged and, to varying degrees, appreciated from the two forms in which it has been exiguously preserved. There is, first, the epitome produced by one Sextus Pompeius Festus, conventionally dated to the second century C.E. (though the evidence is at best wispy): originally twenty books, it now exists only for the letters M–T – and not even for all those letters, since its main witness (the *codex Farnesianus*, cod. Neap. Bibl. Nat. IV.A.3, s. XI^{2/2}) suffered further losses through a series of misfortunes too complex and sad to recount here. Second, there is a further epitome of Festus' epitome, based on a complete manuscript, achieved in the last decades of the eighth century by Paul the Deacon. To judge by the number of books in Verrius' original and Festus' epitome, the latter reduced the former by about half; Paul's reduction of Festus was more drastic still, entailing deletion of entries Paul judged obsolete and of many if not most of the illustrative quotations. We are none the less grateful for every scrap.

Thus are related Verrius, Festus and Paul, the subjects of the seven papers gathered in this volume, which originated (with two other papers not published here) in a conference held in 2002 to launch the Festus Lexicon Project. The Project is an initiative of the Department of History of University College London that aims to 'make this mass of information available to researchers in a usable form [a new text, full translation and commentary is foreseen]; to stimulate debate on Festus' own work, on the antiquarian tradition from which he was drawing and on the subsequent history of the text in the Renaissance and thereafter; and to enrich and renew studies on the many particular areas of Roman life on which Festus provides such essential information' (<http://www/ucl.ac.uk/history/research/festus>). The collection marks an auspicious debut: the papers occupy a continuum that extends from the fairly wide-ranging to the very technical, and all but one of them is a success from which I have gratefully learned. The most constructive thing I can do in the space available is sketch their contents for potentially interested readers.

After an introduction by Fay Glinister, John North and Clare Woods (pp. 1–9) the papers are arranged in three parts. 'Part 1: Lexicography and Scholarship' begins with Glinister's ambitious 'Constructing the Past' (pp. 11–32), which focusses upon Verrius and has two main aims: to try to reconstruct Verrius' working methods, including the question whether (despite the absence of explicit reference) he drew on Varro's *De lingua Latina*, and to place him in his Augustan milieu, especially in relation to Wallace-Hadrill's influential argument concerning Augustus' control and organisation of knowledge (in T. Habinek and A. Schiesaro [edd.], *The Roman*

Cultural Revolution [Cambridge, 1998], 3–22). Both attempts offer plenty that is worth thinking about: I am especially attracted by Glinister's argument that there was more Varro in Verrius than the very little that meets the eye. (Verrius would not be the first or last scholar to under-report a source on which he was very heavily dependent while citing that source's sources.) John North asks 'Why Does Festus Quote What He Quotes?' (pp. 49–68): his stimulating answer is (in simplified terms) that Festus quotes what Verrius quotes (no surprise there) and that Verrius' quotations were originally collected (a bigger surprise here) *not* as an exercise in lexicography, with a view to explaining the meanings of individual words, but in works of exegesis devoted to the earliest Latin texts. (Aelius Stilo, working in the early first century B.C.E., looms large in North's argument, as common source of both Varro and Verrius.) Between Glinister and North comes what seems to me the volume's only misfire, Marie-Karine Lhommé's 'Varron et Verrius au 2ème siècle après Jésus-Christ' (pp. 33–48), which argues that Verrius largely ignored Varro because he wished to put him in the shade, and that the attempt plainly failed, since we see Festus' putative contemporary, Aulus Gellius, citing Varro very often as a great authority, Verrius far less often and with much less respect: the first of these arguments did not convince me, while the second point will not be new to anyone who has read Gellius.

In 'Part 2: Festus and Roman Society' Philippe Moreau argues very interestingly that the consistent use of certain technical kinship terms in Festus (that is, Verrius) – *gradus* ('degree of kinship'), *persona* ('type of kinship'), and *ego* (to denote the centre of interest from whose point of view a given kinship web is viewed) – justifies us in regarding the work as an Augustan 'Témoin de la naissance d'une science de la parenté à Rome' (thus Moreau's title, pp. 69–86); he also elaborates, speculatively but responsibly, on the work of Aelius Gallus, who appears to have been Verrius' main source for such matters. In the other paper in Part 2 – the most spirited in the volume by a good distance – Rebecca Flemming uses Festus and a range of other antiquarian sources to mount a strong argument against the view that in Roman religion's most important practices – rituals that entailed offerings of blood and wine – women were marginalised by a 'sacrificial incapacity' ('Festus and the Role of Women in Roman Religion', pp. 87–108).

Clare Woods begins Part 3 ('The Transmission of Festus and Post-Classical Scholarship') with the paper I admired most for its sheer craftsmanship: an account of the origin and fortune of Paul the Deacon's epitome of Festus, based upon a new, expanded hand-list of the pre-humanist manuscripts of Paul's work, it is in every respect a deft and lucid introduction to the subject ('A Contribution to the King's Library: Paul the Deacon's Epitome and its Carolingian Context', pp. 109–35). Finally, in the volume's most technical paper, Claudia Mancini argues that the two most important extant apographs of the *codex Farnesianus*, Vat. lat. 1549 (X) and 3369 (W), each stands in a different relation to it, X being a direct copy, W a copy of a copy, and that these differences help to explicate the relationship between the *Farnesianus* and the copy of Festus used by Paul, which differed both in textual readings and in the order of presentation ('I codici vaticani latini 1549 e 3369 e le *pagellae* perdute del *codex Farnesianus*', pp. 137–58).

The collection is rounded off by a bibliography, a general index, and indexes of works cited (Festus, Paul, other authors) and of inscriptions and manuscripts. Typos are few and negligible, and the standard of editing is generally high (though Fay Glinister will have, or perhaps has already had, a forehead-smiting moment upon realising that she allowed herself to refer to Varro's *De rerum humanarum* [sic] and

Antiquitates as distinct works, p. 14). We can hope that the Festus Lexicon Project will prosper.

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ISIDORE

BARNEY (S.A.), LEWIS (W.J.), BEACH (J.A.), BERGHOF (O.) (edd., trans.) *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*. Pp. xii + 475. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. Cased, £85, US\$150. ISBN: 0-521-83749-9.

HENDERSON (J.) *The Medieval World of Isidore of Seville. Truth from Words*. Pp. xii + 232, ill. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. Cased, £55, US\$99. ISBN: 978-0-521-86740-5.

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English-language scholarship of late antique and early medieval Spain has undergone something of a renaissance in recent years, with the publication of a number of monographs on various aspects of the political, religious and social history of the period. The two works under review take us deep into the mind of the most influential intellectual of the era, Isidore of Seville, by their treatments of his *Etymologies*. Soon after its publication in the early seventh century the *Etymologies* became the central educational text of the medieval West: over one thousand manuscripts survive. Isidore's key role in the transmission of classical knowledge into medieval Christian culture has long been recognised, but what these two books have done is to make the process of selection, cogitation and dissemination more visible and intelligible to a far greater number of people.

The approaches of the scholars responsible for the two works under review are very different, but this should prove extremely productive in the long run. By providing the first complete English translation of the *Etymologies*, B. et al. have exponentially increased the potential audience for this vital source. The translators have taken a very traditional approach, and they do not really engage with the deeper meaning of etymological thinking for Isidore. H., on the other hand, really gets into the etymological spirit of things. He attempts to tell us what Isidore meant the *Etymologies* to be, what the text means as a whole.

H.'s work is not easy to read. However, patience brings rewards. Every few pages there are pieces of information and thoughts – many of which are Isidore's own – which invite reflection on the significance of Isidore's position at the very end of the ancient thought-world and the start of the medieval experience. The book is divided into two unequal parts. In his ten-page introduction H. outlines what he sees as the underlying significance of etymology for Isidore: that tracing the origins of things (words) facilitated access to the truth. In Part 1, 'Preliminaries' (pp. 11–24), H. takes this to the next step. He lays out his plan for dealing with the *Etymologies*: 'I track the *Etymologiae* in its main outline, resisting the peremptory intercession of the apparatus of headings, as so many obstacles and deterrents to reading, and instead paying them respect only where they point up exegetic continuity, proportion, or direction'. In sum, by reading the *Etymologies* as a whole – so, looking at how Isidore