

CLASSICAL JOURNAL FORUM ONLINE
2008.09.05

Clodia: A Sourcebook. By JULIA DYSON HEJDUK. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008. Pp. 288. Paper, \$21.95. ISBN 978-0-8061-3907-4.

This book has everything about Clodia that you could possibly think of, which is a good thing and a bad thing, but mostly good. It is aimed at a wide audience, ranging from readers with little knowledge of Clodia and her milieu, to teachers and scholars of the period. After an introduction, the book is divided into two parts: I, Clodia (pp. 27–158), and II, Clodia's Legacy (pp. 159–230). A thorough glossary of names, places and terminology follows, along with a good bibliography.

The author, Julia Dyson Hejduk (H.), begins with the question "Who was Clodia?". In a rapid survey of the scholarship, she gives the history of the controversy and summarizes the evidence, concluding that Clodia Metelli was most likely the Clodia of Catullus and Cicero. Included in the introduction is a helpful discussion of themes in Roman love poetry (including and after Catullus), translation issues and some basic material on Roman civilization, manners and mores for the general reader.

Part I presents Clodia first in Cicero's letters and speeches, primarily the *pro Caelio*, and then in the poems of Catullus. The material cited from Cicero, which includes a short introduction to the orator and his career, is over 70 pages. The letters, which are well-chosen and beautifully translated, focus on the relationship of Clodia Metelli and her infamous brother Clodius to Cicero in the years 62–56, and on Cicero's attempt to buy property from Clodia in the year following the death of his daughter in 45. Each letter is prefaced by a short paragraph setting the stage and introducing the characters, so that the relevance to Clodia is clear. Most are given in full, which is one reason why this section is so long; H. helpfully puts Clodia's name in boldface when she is mentioned, so the reader can hone in on the relevant section more easily. But although one may wonder why so much seemingly irrelevant information has been included, the overall impression is consistent with Cicero's persona and offers valuable insights into his (and his correspondents') reactions to Clodia and her behavior.

The second part of the Cicero section is almost entirely devoted to the *pro Caelio*. This is an important speech and is particularly relevant for people teaching courses in this area. It seems to me, however, that the inclusion of the entire speech is a bit much, given that just about half of it (41 sections out of 80) concerns Clodia. That said, H. is right to point out (p. 66) that this is a "long, complex and emi-

BOOK REVIEW

nently rewarding exemplar of Ciceronian rhetoric"; thus the presentation of the whole text can be seen as a plus, though many sections could be skipped by the reader who is primarily interested in Clodia and her relationship with Caelius. Reading the speech, selectively or *in toto*, is helped by the brief explanatory headings for each section; there are useful footnotes as well.

The rest of Part I is dedicated to the poems of Catullus that chronicle the poet's off-and-on, up-and-down love affair with "Lesbia," his pseudonym for Clodia. I found this part of the book the most satisfying, due in large part to the careful selection of poems, "which includes all the pieces specifically about Lesbia and a sampling of others [and] attempts to give a sense of how the poet's odd juxtapositions and intratextual references enhance the meaning and richness of individual poems" (p. 107). H.'s translations are excellent: elegant and charming, rough and scurrilous, scandalous and witty. Moreover, they reflect well the tones of anguish and joy, delight and despair, playfulness and solemnity that mark Catullus' work. The footnotes are full of pertinent information and valuable scholarly references, and allow the reader to understand and enjoy Catullus' fascination with Lesbia/Clodia. The poems that are not about Clodia help fill out the portrait of Catullus (including his varying sexual choices) and reflect on his relationships with the other characters who populate the work. The most interesting of these, of course, is Rufus (poems 69 and 77), probably the M. Caelius Rufus of the *pro Caelio*.

Part II of the book is entitled "Clodia's Legacy," and it is here that some might say "enough." In this section H. includes selected poems of the later elegiac Roman love poets Propertius, Tibullus and Ovid (*Amores*), along with a few pertinent epigrams of Martial, with a view to comparing their poetic mistresses and love affairs with those of Catullus. H. proposes that "[t]o understand who Clodia is, it is important to understand who she is not, and that can be best done by hearing the continuation of the conversation Catullus began" (p. xv). This is a provocative proposal and the addition of this section to the *Sourcebook* is, to my mind, a good thing. Referring to her earlier suggestions about the development of the genre (see Introduction pp. 9–15), H. demonstrates how the poetic dialogue has changed; the language and terminology of these poems is different; and the ways in which the poet relates to his mistress have evolved.

To summarize: *Clodia: A Sourcebook* is not only a full and thorough treatment of a famous Roman personage, a book that will be much used and appreciated by anyone teaching the *pro Caelio* and/or Catullus at any level, but also a stimulating study of the development of the poetic language of love in the late Republic and early Empire

BOOK REVIEW

of Rome. The translations—both of the prose selections and the poetry—are excellent, striking the right tone between formality and frivolity, and the footnotes and other supplementary materials are very helpful. Though the book could have been much shorter, it would not have been so satisfying. And that is a very good thing.

JANE CRAWFORD

University of Virginia