

BOOK REVIEW

Quintilian, Institutio Oratoria Book 2. Edited by TOBIAS REINHARDT and MICHAEL WINTERBOTTOM. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2006. Pp. lii + 435. Cloth, \$160.00 ISBN 0-19-926265-9.

My brother-in-law, a skilled mechanic, has a special rate for do-it-themselves who bring him the jobs that defeated them. The policy is hardly new: the musician Timotheus charged new students double if they had previously studied with another teacher. That gem is but one of the many pithy, practical bits of educational lore and psychological insight to be gleaned from the second book of Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria*, which has at its core important discussions of the preliminary exercises called *progymnasmata*, of declamation, and of their roles in the curriculum. All that is not nothing, but from a practical point of view, is it enough to justify so much attention (360 pages of commentary on 34 pages of Latin text) at such a price (\$160.00) for just one of Quintilian's twelve books? It is indeed, but a few caveats are in order.

The volume presents an uncompromisingly professional combination of introduction, text and commentary. The text is a modified version of Winterbottom's 1970 OCT, including 32 changes (some noteworthy) in wording, and rather more, often quite helpful, changes in punctuation and paragraphing. The annotation begins each chapter with a brief synopsis and analysis, followed by detailed linear commentary running the gamut from textual to factual to interpretive problems. There is no translation. Readers are referred instead to D.R. Russell's excellent Loeb, which would be fair enough except that the commentary includes much additional, largely technical Latin (and Greek) that also goes untranslated. Many notes consist almost entirely of such passages, offered by way of explanation or comparison. Technical terms—the simultaneous bane and glory of the rhetorical tradition—are not explained. Thus, for example, readers learn that Quintilian's remark about Timotheus "has the tone of a *chria*" (p. 66 on 3.3), but not what a *chria* is. A helpful hint lies elsewhere (p. 106, quoting a summary in Lausberg's *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric*: "an instructive, short anecdote"), but it takes serious digging through the General Index, not the Latin or Greek one, to find it. That's uncompromising. There are also references of the sort (p. 165 on 10.5), "see the sensible remarks of G. Fleiter, *De minoribus quae sub nomine Quintiliani feruntur declamationibus* (diss. Münster, 1890), 12." That's uncompromising, too; Fleiter's comment on the practical value of fantastic themes in declamation is indeed sensible, but those dependent on interlibrary loans to pursue such references might appreciate a clearer indication that the search will be worth the trouble. Getting the most out of this volume requires serious effort.

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Nor is that inappropriate: serious effort went into producing it. The commentary began as Winterbottom's (W.) 1970 doctoral thesis. The partnership with Reinhardt (R.) adds to W.'s profound understanding of Roman rhetoric and education new technical interests in the Greek underpinnings of Quintilian's knowledge. This perspective proves helpful not just for examining specific matters, such as how Quintilian's discussion of the *progymnasmata* shows him modifying Greek doctrine to suit his requirements, but because it raises much larger issues. Thus it soon becomes clear that Book 2 cannot be fully understood without considering the master plan behind the whole of the *Institutio oratoria*. The editors' Introduction observes that the book falls into two parts, Chapters 1–13 treating the teaching of rhetoric in the schools, and Chapters 14–21 introducing the grand survey of rhetorical knowledge that continues through Book 11. This latter section therefore forms a pair with section 12.1–2 to frame the technical survey, highlighting its purpose and justification. Analysis of Book 2 therefore cannot be self-contained: it necessarily looks both backward and forward.

To bring this out, the Introduction itself also falls into two parts. The first half (largely W.'s work) surveys the procedures and principles that characterize Quintilian's school, a valuable discussion even for readers who already know what a *chria* is. The second half (owing most to R.), supplemented by an appendix of parallel passages, discusses Quintilian's relationship to his sources (Theon and Hermogenes, or writers much like them), the definition of rhetoric, and its presentation in the *Institutio*. The overview here sets up the detailed discussions that follow in the course of elucidating Quintilian's text.

Some of the topics treated are controversial, and the editors' handling of controversy is itself noteworthy. The moral underpinnings and even urgency of Quintilian's approach to the training of orators, for example, are inextricably bound to larger issues the Introduction treats as "Historical Background" (pp. xxxiv–xxxvii). The most significant of these is oratory's putative "decline" under the Principate and Quintilian's commitment to restoring its respectability. W. first discussed this problem years ago in a seminal article entitled "Quintilian and the *vir bonus*" (*JRS* 54 (1964) 90–7). Much has been written since, including significant challenges to the views advanced there, especially concerning the *delatores* and their style of oratory; the editors now take the opportunity to review the discussion to date. It is clear from their summary that W. has not himself changed his mind, but he does something better: this palmary discussion gives readers the wherewithal to understand the issues for themselves and to amend the views championed here if and as they think appropriate. Such intellectual honesty is another kind of un-

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compromising professionalism, this one in the very best tradition of the profession.

One final quibble. The Introduction notes Quintilian's ability to write on two levels: "At times he may be found to be working on what one might call the principle of calculated unintelligibility, employing a notion or a tenet which would be lost on a reader who is just seeking basic instruction on a particular problem but which adds an integral step to a broader argument once a reader brings a somewhat wider expertise to the text" (p. xlix). Much the same could be said of this work. I am not sure that the editors' calculation of the two levels is right—unintelligibility is rarely a virtue, calculated or otherwise—but there is much to be gained here by readers at every level. They only need the patience and commitment to seek it out.

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