

Apuleius Metamorphoses: An Intermediate Latin Reader. Edited by PAUL MURGATROYD. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009. Pp. x + 151. Paper, \$29.99. ISBN 978-0-521-69055-3.

Paul Murgatroyd (M.) is a knowledgeable Latinist with several literary studies of Apuleius under his belt. [[1]] His Apuleius Reader is an ambitious and useful textbook appropriate for intermediate to advanced Latin students. M.'s stated task may seem at first sight impossibly large—to make all of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* except the tale of Amor and Psyche available to students who have just finished introductory Latin (p. ix). Indeed, the text, even as repackaged by M., might be better left to those who have already had Caesar, Cicero or both. But the level of linguistic challenge, together with the intrinsic literary interest of the work, makes it eminently suited for later second- and some third-year university-level students.

It is obvious that a Reader such as this cannot realistically include all of the *Met.*, even with the omission of the long fairytale. M. in fact cuts out large chunks of text, such as the proem, the Festival of Laughter, and Lucius' sojourn with the catamite priests. But the Reader does manage to offer continuous narratives from every Book except 5 and 10. Much of what makes the *Met.* special and memorable is included, such as the stories of Aristomenes, Thelyphron, Charite and Tlepolemus, and the Isiac salvation. R-rated passages such as Lucius' night with Photis and the anecdotes of adultery also make it in. When an omitted section is crucial for the comprehension of the overall narrative, M. supplies a brief English paraphrase.

The included passages are nonetheless often abridged (cf. ix). The following serves to illustrate M.'s method (1.6 = M. p. 11):

ecce Socraten contubernalem meum conspicio. humi sedebat scis<s>ili palliaastro semiamictus, paene alius lurore, ad miseram maciem deformatus, qualia solent fortunae decermina stipes in triuiis erogare. hunc talem, quamquam necessarium et summe cognitum, tamen dubia mente propius accessi. "hem," inquam "mi Socrates, quid istud? quae facies? quod flagitium? at uero domi tuae iam defletus et conclamatus es, liberis tuis tutores iuridici prouincialis decreto dati, uxor persolutis <in>ferialibus officiis luctu et maerore diuturno deformata, diffletis paene ad extremam captiuitatem oculis suis, domus infortunium nouarum nuptiarum gau | diis a suis sibi parentibus hilarare compellitur. at tu hic laruale simulacrum cum summo dedecore nostro uiseris."

This is Helm's Teubner, [[2]] and I underlined the words M. includes. By stringing together the underlined portions, one can see that while the text is radically abridged, what is left still conveys the

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basic narrative information as well as a taste of the characteristic Apuleian style. Anyone accustomed to classical Latin will see something foreign in a phrase like *scissili palliastro semiamictus*. On the other hand, much material that would be tedious to students and cause headaches to instructors is left out. The resulting text strikes a sensible balance between authenticity and readability for classroom purposes. The amount of Latin in the Reader, thus considerably reduced, would still keep a good intermediate class occupied for a semester.

Each short selection of about 100 words is followed by a set of notes, mostly grammatical. Here I appreciate M.'s brevity and his refusal to provide translations except when absolutely necessary. Proficient students will have all the help they need with these notes and the comprehensive vocabulary at the back. Those who need to work hard, on the other hand, will be forced to do so without the crutches they may have come to expect. The notes are occasionally followed by suggestions for basic grammar review keyed to Wheelock and the *Oxford Latin Course*. But students who are ready for this Reader probably will not need this.

A distinctive feature of the Reader are the sections entitled "Appreciation" that follow every episodically arranged set of excerpts (usually corresponding to roughly 10 chapters of *Met.*). These are mostly brief discussions (each about 1–3 pages long) of the overall narrative structure, and specific examples of Apuleius' literary art as seen in the preceding excerpts. More literary-minded students will enjoy reading the passages on their own, and they may sometimes be examined in the classroom with profit. But while what M. says is pertinent and displays an admirable critical acumen, it is disappointing that references to secondary literature are few and far between. In these sections, as well as in the brief "Introduction" (in which M. races through Apuleius' life and works, the ancient novel, and the literary and religious contents and contexts of *Met.*), the citations are sparse. The typical undergraduate language student today will not be required to come up with a professional research paper in a class that uses this Reader. But the reality of higher education today is that such a class often includes graduate students from contingent fields (and, sometimes, ambitious undergraduates). On the linguistic side, this Reader is eminently suited to those with a professional need to begin reading Ammianus, Tertullian or Erasmus. M. might have produced a perfect resource for such students, had he offered a bit more guidance on secondary literature. [[3]]

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In sum, M. has produced an excellent textbook for adventurous teachers and students who want to explore Latin prose literature somewhat different from the normal classical fare. The Reader will be especially welcome in classrooms where serious wrestling with Latin is expected and encouraged. If advanced and ambitious students want to explore issues raised by the text, they will need additional help, But M.'s aim was clearly to produce a Reader rather than a research guide, and in this he has succeeded.

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[[1]] See P. Murgatroyd, *A Collection of Translations into Latin Verse and Original Compositions* (Lewiston, 1991), for his linguistic expertise.

[[2]] It is a bit surprising that nowhere does M. say what his Latin text is based on.

[[3]] Cf. the "List of Works Cited" on pp. 150–1. Here the absence of the long-running Groningen commentaries (e.g. W.H. Keulen, *Apuleius Madaurensis Metamorphoses Book I: Text, Introduction and Commentary* (Groningen, 2007), reviewed by Cueva in CJ-ONLINE 2009.08.06) is especially surprising. Although it is an online resource, the *Petronian Society Newsletter* (<http://www.ancientnarrative.com/PSN/index.htm>) might have also been mentioned as an essential research tool on the Greco-Roman novel.