

A. Pellizzari: *Commento storico al libro III dell'epistolario di Q. Aurelio Simmaco* (Biblioteca di studi antichi 81.) Pp. 348. Pisa and Rome: Istituti Editoriali e Poligrafici Internazionali, 1998. Paper. ISBN: 88 8147 115 9.

Few late antique authors provoke more visceral reactions than Quintus Aurelius Symmachus: I have seen grown men yawn at the very mention of his name. Yet there is no denying his usefulness as a window onto the *mentalités* of the late Roman senatorial aristocracy. It is now thirty years since John Matthews so expertly elucidated that mind-set, as expressed in Symmachus' vast correspondence, in his *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court, AD 364-425* (Oxford, 1975). For all that, Symmachus remains a difficult author to access, particularly for students intimidated by the austerity of Otto Seeck's edition (*Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Auctores Antiquissimi*, vol. 6.1 [Berlin, 1883]). Only his *Relationes*, his official correspondence from his term as *praefectus urbi*, have been translated into English (R. H. Barrow, *Prefect and Emperor* [Oxford, 1973]). But the situation is improving, with a comprehensive English translation in hand for *Translated Texts for Historians*. Such efforts reflect renewed interest in Symmachus' letters: a Budé edition with French translation nears completion, while the Italian edition and translation, in which P.'s volume appears, now encompasses studies of books 2-6 and 9.

Max: 800 words; so far 185.

Things to note: esp. that text is that of Callu's Budé, except for divergences noted in commentary (check these via index of modern author's, and perhaps list them?)

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