

and relative) dependence of the *Posthomeric* on the Epic Cycle', whilst warning that the problem of direct imitation may be 'unsolvable' (p. 318).

Part 5, 'Re-Readings and Re-Workings', proves the most novel (no pun intended) section. T. Gärtner gives a brief biography of the sixteenth-century scholar Lorenz Rhodoman, 'philological editor and protestant pedagogue'. Rhodoman seems to demote Quintus, whilst using the *Posthomeric* to glorify himself: *Once in the past, Neander [Rhodoman's teacher] at the foot of the Harz communicated this clever imitator (Q.S.) ... to his flocks* (p. 330), obviously evoking *Post.* 12. Similarly, V.F. Lovato provides an entertaining look at John Tzetzes' reception of Quintus, who features in his twelfth-century *Carmina Iliaca*, a piece to 'showcase' his marketable talents. What emerges is a shameless self-publicist, who inserts himself in the narrative to his subject's detriment, i.e. complaining that Quintus' Nestor could not have conversed with Memnon due to battle noise and the language barrier, whilst Quintus listened in (*Carm. Il.* 3.280–6; 290; pp. 359–60). S. Renker ends with a modern and original, postmodern reading of Quintus and 'fan fiction'. Renker maps onto Quintus consideration of the scholastic challenges faced when defining, historically, what type of literature fan fiction is. Renker finds J. Derrida complementary for re-reading Quintus and his interaction with Homer in a postmodern light.

An appetising offering for all tastes, showing still much fertile ground to sow, on which a brief apology to the contributors, as the task of reviewing is like condensing small attractive haystacks into the tip of one sharp needle.

Brighton

BELLINI BOYTEN  
[belliniboyten@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:belliniboyten@yahoo.co.uk)

## A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF PROCLUS

CALMA (D.) (ed.) *Reading Proclus and the Book of Causes, Volume 1. Western Scholarly Networks and Debates.* (Studies in Platonism, Neoplatonism, and the Platonic Tradition 22.) Pp. x + 495, b/w & colour ill. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2019. Cased, €168, US\$202. ISBN: 978-90-04-34510-2.

CALMA (D.) (ed.) *Reading Proclus and the Book of Causes, Volume 2. Translations and Acculturations.* (Studies in Platonism, Neoplatonism, and the Platonic Tradition 26.) Pp. viii + 492, colour ill. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2021. Cased, €159, US\$191. ISBN: 978-90-04-34511-9.

CALMA (D.) (ed.) *Reading Proclus and the Book of Causes, Volume 3. On Causes and the Noetic Triad.* (Studies in Platonism, Neoplatonism, and the Platonic Tradition 28.) Pp. viii + 649, b/w & colour ill. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2022. Cased, €194, US\$233. ISBN: 978-90-04-50132-4.

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With the publication of the third and last volume of *Reading Proclus and the Book of Causes*, Calma concludes his fascinating reconstruction of the Proclean Western tradition: a reconstruction that takes account of the two main works circulating in the Arabic and Latin Western culture, namely the *Elementatio theologica* and the *Liber de causis*. The three volumes collect contributions from some of the main international experts on this area of research, covering a chronological range from the fifth to the fifteenth centuries, from Proclus to Gasparo Contarini, extending over Athens and Rome, Paris and Oxford, Bagdad and the Caucasus.

This work engages in the task – which is far from obvious – of satisfying a wide-ranging audience. First-time readers will find some introductory chapters, through which they will become familiar with Proclus' thought, Neoplatonism and fundamental authorities of Western Latin culture. Expert readers will be brought to the heart of the debate, through analytical, well-detailed chapters that tackle the state of the art and, in some cases, add new arguments and textual or bibliographical evidence. In addition, several chapters (A. Beccarisi, A. Bertolacci, J. Brumberg-Chaumont, T.S. Cory, D.N. Hasse, E. King, S.-A. Kiosoglou, E. Ludueña, F. Retucci) provide useful tabs and textual comparisons, thus basing any further theoretical speculation on hard data.

The three volumes are organised according to a precise – though sometimes fluid – thematic division of the different aspects of Proclus' reception in Western culture. The first volume focuses on the Western scholarly networks influenced by the *Elementatio theologica* and the *Liber de causis*. Part 1 of this volume explores the impact of the *Liber de causis* on major scholastic authorities in thirteenth-century Paris and Oxford: Thomas of York, Albert the Great, Duns Scotus, Thomas Aquinas and Henry of Gent. The chapters of Part 2 sustain the analysis over the next two centuries: starting from Henri Bate, continuing with Berthold of Moosburg, Giles Charlier and finally moving on to Gasparo Contarini. This volume provides a remarkable overview of the transmission of many Proclean manuscripts within Western Latin culture. Calma states: 'the main objective of this volume is to bring new insights to our understanding of the teaching of the *Elements of Theology* and the *Book of Causes*' (1, p. 2). With this purpose, Calma scours manuscript collections from religious and university libraries (e.g. by I. Caiazza, Retucci, L. Miolo, M.E. Malgieri, I. Székely), in order to enlarge the corpus of texts that may indicate the circulation of Proclus' philosophy.

The second volume examines translations of Proclus' treatises and their impact on Western culture. This volume is divided into five parts, encompassing the five cultural groups influenced by the *Liber de causis* and the *Elementatio theologica*. Part 1 explores the Byzantines, and especially the works by Eustratios of Nicaea, Nicholas of Methon, Procopius of Gaza and Proclus Lydius. Then we move to the Caucasians, with a chapter concerning Ioane Petritsi's interpretation of Proclus. Part 3 concerns the Arabic tradition and includes chapters on Porphyry, al-Amiri, al-Farabi and Ibn Bājja. In this section an enlightening paper by R.C. Taylor analyses how the *Elementatio* and the *Liber* are related, and it highlights the impact of Arabic mediation on the genesis of the *Liber de causis*. Part 4 examines the Latin Western tradition, starting from the translators, Dominicus Gundisalvi and Gerard of Cremona, and continuing with Aquinas, Eckhart, Dante and Ficino. Two final chapters constitute Part 5, devoted to the Jewish tradition (Hillel de Vérone, Elijah del Medigo and Flavio Mitridate). Among the many merits of this second volume it is worth noting the philological meticulousness in the reconstruction of the *traditio textus* in its Arabic, Jewish and Latin versions: J. Janssens offers a detailed description of translations and omissions that generated the Latin *Liber de causis*.

Unlike the previous two volumes, which deal with the impact (either theoretical or textual) on the later philosophical tradition, the third volume stands out for its different approach, as it provides a systematic analysis of two central issues: namely, the Causes

and the Noetic Triads. The opening chapters of Part 1 concern the One and the ontological Participation. J. Opsomer, C. Steel, A. Vasiliu and M. Vlad explore this topic within the Neoplatonic *familia*, from Plotinus to Dionysius. Then, the analysis is expanded to Maximus the Confessor (J. Greig), Ioane Petritsi (L. Gigineishvili; L. Alexidze) and Berthold of Moosburg (Ludueña). The second section of Part 1 focuses on the issues of causality and free will, through the Arabic and Latin traditions. O. Lizzini and Bertolacci analyse the relation between the *Liber the causis* and Avicenna's *Ilahiyāt*, while J.-L. Solère, O. Boulnois and I. Moulin discuss Albert the Great, Aquinas and Scotus. Part 2 deals with Noetic Triads: Being – Life – Intellect. J. Dillon and I. Ramelli focus on the theory's genesis, sources and first circulation. Then, J. Casteigt, Cory and Brumberg-Chaumont extend the analysis to the Latin reception (Albert the Great, Aquinas, Gilles of Rome, Sigier of Brabant, Roger Bacon and Ps. Henry of Gent). The volume ends with an intriguing chapter by D.J.-J. Robichaud on Marsilio Ficino and the reappraisal of ancient demiurgic theories.

After detailing the contents of the three volumes, it is useful to circle back to the five considerations that Calma lists at the beginning of the first book, as this overview of the purposes and challenges of the work can be used to draw conclusions. Firstly, Calma underlines that Proclus' circulation was not solely limited to the University of Paris (the so-called 'Centre'), but also to the 'periphery', i.e. central Europe (Erfurt, Prague) and England. Secondly, the volumes describe an interesting dialectic between the 'global circulation' of Proclus' entire system and the 'local reception' of specific issues, often connected by single intellectuals on specific manuscripts. Thirdly, the volumes offer an expansion of the corpus of commentaries on Proclus. Fourthly, the volumes tend, with significant exceptions such as Taylor's chapter, to consider the *Liber the causis* disconnected from the Aristotelian tradition and instead group it with a Platonic-Christian interpretation of the *Commentaries on Sentences* (Thomas of York, Berthold of Moosburg, Giles Charlier). Finally, the volumes leave the floor open to further discussions, one of which concerns the lack of English commentaries on Proclus, despite the availability of his texts in Oxford and Cambridge.

Calma's fourth consideration is particularly significant; so, it deserves a further, specific analysis. Calma recognises that the Platonic-Christian exegetic line of the *Liber de causis* is 'admittedly scarce', but very interesting. This unusual perspective, however, remarkably conditions the structure of the volumes and the targets of the introduction. In fact, if we want to establish which cultural contexts influenced the composition of the *Liber the causis*, we should not start with how Latin Western culture interpreted the origins of the *Liber the causis*; rather, we should first consider which was the historical context in which it was written. The *Liber de causis* was composed in al-Kindi's circle, through Proclus' *Elementatio* (and not only), but also as independent text, with its own transmission (as C. D'Ancora has repeatedly pointed out). Taylor, in his enlightening chapter, underlines this very clearly (2, p. 228): 'as I have suggested here, the *Arabic De causis* is much more than an assemblage of extracts from the *Elements of theology*. Read in its proper context, it is rather a philosophical product of the "Aristotelian" *Circle of al-Kindi*'. In addition, Taylor makes a fundamental point on the relationship between the two texts: 'in the case of one of the most important metaphysical chapters of the *Arabic De causis*, there is no direct use of any text of the *Elements of Theology* at all' (2, p. 213). Therefore, the two texts – and the corresponding traditions – should be considered separately, since they have different origins, different influences and different conclusions.

When reading the three volumes, one sometimes gets the impression that the so-called *Procliana Graeca* and *Procliana Arabica* are taken as equivalent. In other words, the introduction to the volumes takes it for granted that the *Elementatio* and the *Liber de causis*

are almost the same thing (which is not the case) and that talking about the former is like talking about the latter. This assumption, which does not impact on the quality of the individual contributions, may sound somewhat ambiguous for non-expert readers. First, such readers might think that the *Liber de causis* is a work written by Proclus, thus ignoring that there is a fundamental intermediary (namely, the Arabic-Aristotelian tradition). Second, such readers might wonder why, in a volume titled 'Reading Proclus and the *Book of Causes*', more than a half of the chapters concern the *Elementatio*: why do we come and go from one text to the other? This question ought to be discussed in the first page of the first volume. In addition, the title combines two levels of historical exegesis that ought to be considered distinctly: likewise, we would not title a book 'Reading Aristotle and the *Isagoges*', without a preliminary discussion of the relation between Aristotle and Porphyry.

That said, the chapters of these three huge books provide an answer to all the questions and objections that I took the liberty to expose. The great merit of this work is to gather almost all the best voices from the chorus of Neoplatonic studies. This ensemble offers a wide-ranging portrayal of the subject – even including philological details – that will surely satisfy those starting their studies on Neoplatonism. The same can also be said for more experienced readers, who can contemplate new discoveries, innovative textual analyses and a high-quality overview on Proclus and his fortune. At the same time, it lays the foundations for further analysis on some less-debated issues, starting with the circulation of Proclus' *Elementatio physica* (a much less-considered text in these volumes).

These volumes are the culmination of six years of intensive study on Neoplatonism and Proclus' impact on the Western philosophical tradition: a path of research that can be dated to 2016, with Calma's two volumes of *Neoplatonism in the Middle Ages*. These five books can be included among the numerous volumes concerning Proclus printed in the last ten years. Scholars of this branch of the philosophical tradition cannot but enjoy such a *congeries* of different readings and interpretations of Proclus and his fortune, especially when organised with a systematic order and open to further debate.

KU Leuven

LUCA BURZELLI  
[luca.burzelli@kuleuven.be](mailto:lucaburzelli@kuleuven.be)

## ASYNDETON IN LATIN

ADAMS (J. N.) *Asyndeton and its Interpretation in Latin Literature. History, Patterns, Textual Criticism*. Pp. xxx + 751, ill. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021. Cased, £130. ISBN: 978-1-108-83785-9. doi:10.1017/S0009840X22002505

Anyone who has studied asyndeton in Latin will have experienced how enormously arduous it is to research this phenomenon because of the difficulty to collect the material. Without the ability to search in digitised databases due to the absence of the coordinator, there is no other way of collecting data than reading the texts directly. It is this lack of material that this book aims to resolve. The book focuses on *asyndeton bimembre*, that is, pairs of functional members (noun phrases, adjectives, adverbs, verbs, clauses etc.) set in a coordinative relationship without a conjunction. Despite A.'s caveats – 'I have