

Though *Flavian Rome* supplies a wealth of information and incorporates some stimulating papers, the volume does not, in effect, create an 'image' of what Flavian Rome was like. Economy, legions and the law defined Flavian Rome as much as the literature of the time. All are only rarely mentioned. Religion, of course, was an important aspect of daily life throughout the Roman world. But Ando's 'A Religion for the Empire' (pp. 323-44), exciting as it is, does not actually deal with Flavian Rome, perhaps because 'Flavian Religion' is an erroneous concept to begin with. When reading the book, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's words about the Colosseum – an obvious presence in many of the articles assembled here – came to mind: 'When one looks at it all else seems little; the edifice is so vast, that one cannot hold the image ...'. *Flavian Rome* is a vast accomplishment. In the end, however, there *is* no general image to be held. The book will, and should, be used in discussing many aspects of Flavian Rome; but it is far from the definitive book on the subject.

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Leofranc Holford-Strevens, *Aulus Gellius: An Antonine Scholar and his Achievement*, revised edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003. xxiii + 436 pp. ISBN 0-19-926319-1.

H-S's immensely erudite *Aulus Gellius* (1988) immediately established itself as the leading general book on Gellius. Its three sections cover (1) the external circumstances of Gellius' life, the aims, style, and language of his book, and the question of source criticism, (2) the various personages that appear in it (orators, rhetoricians, and philosophers, most notably Favorinus), and (3) the views and information contained in it, organized by topic: Gellius' scholarly sources, his views on language and literature (both Latin and Greek), history, philosophy, religion, and 'weak spots' (names, foreigners, and other arts and sciences). Two remarkable and interrelated features of the book are the astounding erudition casually displayed in its English vocabulary and in the footnotes, and the uncanny fit between the modern scholar and his ancient author. H-S's English is studded with recondite or nonce words, indeed many of them in describing Gellius' 'mannerist' style, and thereby imitating it as well (one thinks of the laconic and sardonic Tacitean style of Syme's *Tacitus*). Words such as 'floscules', 'etymologisms', 'pretiosity', 'a fardel of facts', 'rodomontaded', '*verschlim[m]bessert*', 'formantia', and 'our apparatus' (355, 360, 358, 286, 358, 55, 49, 57) all exemplify aspects of Gellius' own style (cf. 54-5 on neologisms, Graecisms, and archaisms). The suggestion on the difficulty of imitating eighteenth-century English (360) is realized in a delightful and highly convincing 'Elizabethanizing' translation of elegiacs in praise of Gellius that are found in one of the manuscripts (170). The footnotes are studded with such jewels of scholarship as the historical shifts in the meaning of *Schwärmer* (146) or how the etymology of 'jennet' parallels a corruption in Ennius (87); the occasional Arabic, Hebrew and Russian characters that grace the notes give a hint of the author's formidable polyglot expertise.

More importantly, the book is informed by an infectious passion about words, languages, books, and ideas similar to that of Gellius himself. And although H-S clearly aims at 'unfracturing' Gellius' dispersed comments into organized topics, the passion to collect, compare, and display the abundant intellectual treasures creates a somewhat miscellaneous (or perhaps encyclopedic) organization. The chapters on language are especially outstanding, being well suited to this approach; the discussion of calques and misunderstandings of Greek is one of many jewel-studded passages (228-31). On the other hand, the omission of topics such as Gellius' narrative technique weights the book in the direction of factual and lexical accumulations, though the numerous fine discussions of individual passages show that this regrettable omission (xiv) is most certainly not due to a lack of comprehension of a literary work as a whole such as H-S attributes to Gellius (213).

The book provides exhaustive evidence from Gellius for the many topics that it covers, along with important discussions of numerous passages. We can therefore be grateful for the publication of a second edition with an *index verborum* and an *index locorum* that now make this wealth of information available for convenient reference. In addition, although the structure and aims, and even the bulk of the text, are unchanged, the bibliography has been greatly expanded and updated, with a corresponding reworking of the footnotes, and new sections have been added on sexuality, women, Hadrian, punishment, embassies, manuscripts and editions, and second-century archaism. Furthermore, the division into subsections with subheadings makes for easier reading and navigation, numerous passages of opaque allusiveness have been clarified for the benefit of readers less learned than the author (e.g. 'Torquatus' opponent' is explained to be Hortensius, 208), and numerous minor points, such as the fate of Apollodorus of Damascus (7) or the text of the Arabic version of Polemo (99) have been updated or corrected. Some shifts of emphasis are given by minor rephrasing: H-S has become more certain that Gellius was African (ix, 15) and exchanged works in progress with Apuleius (22-6), and less certain that Favorinus is the speaker in his *de exilio* (102). Finally, the alteration in H-S's dedicatory elegiacs to Gellius, where his book is now *hoc ... munus quodcumque* instead of *haec ... munuscula parva*, may reflect an increase in the author's confidence in the value or unity of his book. (It is not often that one gets to review a book in which the author has already archly taken his anticipatory revenge: 'Reviewers, if they are not as indolent as Tennyson supposed them, may care to seek out the changes for themselves', vii.)

H-S recognizes the controversiality of his willingness to make speculative suggestions (ix). Others, including myself, will sometimes feel that the superstructure of hypothesis is not supported by adequate evidence. For example, in the new material on sexuality (103-7, 306-13), much is made of scurrilous attacks on Favorinus' supposedly omnivorous sexual appetites found in Polemo, Philostratus, and others, in combination with Gellius' supposed 'relaxed' view of pederasty (313), to address such unanswerable questions as whether Gellius had sexual relations with Favorinus or whether his views on sexuality affected his attitude toward Hadrian. I am not sure that the accounts of dolphins' passionate love for handsome youths *miris et humanis modis* (6.8.3) or Scipio's youthful affair with an *amico* (7.8.5) prove that Gellius has 'no problem' with pederasty (106, 308). Ancient authors, no matter how much they approve or disapprove of homosexual relations, typically assume that it is common and normal for men to feel sexual desire for attractive young men; similarly, a modern writer might refer to promiscuous or adulterous urges without approving of such actions. In fact, phrases such as *fama ... haud sincera* and *adversus ceteros ... scriptores de Scipionis moribus sensisse* (7.8.5-6) might indicate disapproval, in keeping with Gellius' persistent moralistic thread in praise of restraint; Gellius' alternating reticence and judgments about his material can be perplexing. I am also not sure whether the resemblance between *homo ille fandi dulcissimus* (16.3.1), and Vergil's description of the nymph Cymodocea (*fandi doctissima*, *Aen.* 10.225), suffices to imply that 'Favorinus' speaking voice was feminine but none the less delightful' (103). And can the lost discussion (8.6) of Cicero's phrase *amor amicitiae*, from a passage denouncing powerful sexual and homosexual passion (*Tusc.* 4.68-76), along with Gellius' and Favorinus' exchange of noteworthy words in Greek and Latin (8.2), really be used to show 'virtual assent, and rather an acknowledgement of *impudicitia* — on both sides, given Favorinus' reputation and the mutuality of 8.2' (106)?

Congratulations are due for the improvement and reissuing of this delightfully rich and stimulating book.