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Review
Reviewed Work(s):
Pseudo-César, Guerre d'Afrique
by A. Bouvet
Review by: Vincent Hunink
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Pseudo-César, Guerre d'Afrique, texte établi et traduit par A. BOUVET, revu, corrigé et augmenté par JEAN-CLAUDE RICHARD. Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1997. LXV, 143 pp. Pr. FF 295.

After its publication in 1949, the Budé edition of the Pseudo-Caesarean 'African war' by A. Bouvet received some generally favourable reviews; e.g. by J.H. Waszink in the present journal (7,1954, 346 f.). The French edition has now been updated by Jean-Claude Richard (R.). The number of changes other than editorial technicalities is fairly limited. In the Latin text, five places have undergone modification (15,2; 44,1; 68,4; 83,2; and 98,2). The French translation has largely been left as it is, with a total of only sixty changes, mostly minor ones. The notes have been expanded with a separate section of additional notes written by R. A bibliographical supplement has been added, containing studies from the period until 1990 (with a second list adding some recent studies after 1990) and finally, the index of names has been thoroughly revised, with new references to recent secondary literature.

The new volume has been properly typeset and printed, which is clearly an improvement on the old edition. The additions or changes mostly concern historical, geographical, or prosopographical detail, and will therefore be of interest to historians rather than latinists. For instance, no new light is shed upon the discussion of the author's identity. As before, it is assumed that he was probably a young officer from Caesar's camp, perhaps a young Spanish tribune with great interest in both war and literary writing, but having experience in neither (p. XXXVII).

In some respects, the revision might have gone further. For instance, R. has refrained from substantial corrections in the translation, which, as he indicates himself (p. VI) could well have been made more literal. Furthermore, his decision to revise Bouvet's original notes only as little as possible leaves the reader with no less than three kinds of notes: footnotes, complementary notes at the end of the volume, followed by the new additional notes. In addition, there is an elaborate index of names, which in fact forms a fourth section of explanatory information. The result is confusing, which could easily have been avoided if at least the three sets of notes had been combined to a single set.

This having been said, the revision is a welcome improvement. An important document like the 'Bellum Africum' deserves regular updated editions such as this edition.

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