

# EIRENE

## STUDIA GRAECA ET LATINA

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Centre for Classical Studies  
Institute of Philosophy of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Prague

APULEIO, *Florida, Introduzione, testo, traduzione e commento*, a cura di FRANCESCA PICCIONI. Cagliari, CUEC Editrice 2018, 116 pp.  
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Studies on Apuleius are still dominated by interest in his fascinating and elusive novel *Metamorphoses*. New editions and commentaries of his less widely read *Florida* are, therefore, welcome in advance. The new publication by FRANCESCA PICCIONI is clearly

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directed at an Italian readership, for which no readily available separate edition of the *Florida* as a whole existed until now. Full disclosure: the reviewer has published an edition with full literary commentary (in English) of Apuleius' *Florida* (Amsterdam 2001).

Piccioni's modest volume presents a Latin text with facing Italian translation of all 23 fragments, and of the five fragments that have been transmitted as the "preface" to another work, *De Deo Socratis* (64 pages), followed by a "commento" of about the same length (61 p.). A bibliography and indices complete the volume, which opens with a 20 p. Introduction, dealing with the author and the work, language and style, the MSS tradition and history of editions, and the present edition.

The opening pages present very much a standard account of Apuleius' life, largely based on a biographical reading of the *Apologia*, apparently taken at face value, that is, as an historical document. The *Florida* are briefly analyzed as a collection of 23 *excerpta* of larger speeches by Apuleius held in Carthage, to be dated 160–170, with special attention for the so called "false prologue" of *De Deo Socratis*, which is argued to have been part of the *Florida* (while still receiving a distinct numbering even here). Piccioni's remarks on Apuleius' brilliant style seem a little uninspiring, but her brief surveys of manuscripts and early editions are valuable and helpful.

The present edition shows itself to be a sequel to Piccioni's doctoral dissertation devoted to the 23 fragments traditionally assigned to the *Florida* (Sassari 2014), of which it reproduces the Latin text. In turn, the present Latin text will be followed by a new critical edition of *Florida* (and *Apologia*) by the same author. This will be published in a new OCT-volume in preparation, which will contain all Apuleian texts apart from the *Metamorphoses* (already edited in OCT by M. Zimmerman in 2012) and the philosophical works (which will receive what will become a third OCT volume). Piccioni's commentary is presented as predominantly directed at textual, stylistical, literary, and linguistical problems, while also paying some attention to historical detail (p. 27).

To illustrate the approach in this book, it may be useful to briefly describe the lemmata on *Fl.* 1 at pp. 92–93. Separate notes are given on: *ut ferme religiosus... ignorantibus* (a general description of the piece); *uiantium* (neologism); *atqui lucus aut aliqui locus sanctus* (parallel with *Apol.* 56,5 and textual issue); *mihi ingresso sanctissimam istam ciuitatem* (style and syntax); *festinem* (textual problem); *habenda oratio et inhibenda properatio* (style); *aut ara floribus redimita... uel lapis unguine delibutus* (style); *frondibus inumbrata* (textual problem); *sepimine... dolamine... libamine... unguine* (hapaxes and style).

That is, Piccioni delivers what she has promised, and there seems little room for complaints. Still, one wonders why Piccioni limits her observations to just these terse notes, which do not bring in much scholarly literature either: the notes on *Fl.* 1 twice refer to earlier work by Piccioni herself, and only three times to works by earlier scholars (Callebat 1964; Ferrari 1969, and Caracausi 1978). By contrast, not a single mention is made of either the full commentaries of Lee 2005 or Hunink 2001, who both devote some five large pages to *Fl.* 1, or, for that matter, to recent editions by Martos 2015 or Jones 2017 (Loeb). Still, these four contributions to Apuleian studies are known to the author, since they are duly mentioned at p. 25. Piccioni's analysis of *Fl.* 1 does not amount to a real commentary on the Apuleian fragment, but could best be described as "philological notes".

Given this limited nature of Piccioni's "commento", one may ask which readership will profit most from the present edition. First, Italian students of the *Florida* will have a useful and practical text and translation. Second, those who study Apuleian manuscripts and textual transmission will find old and new points of discussion. For this, however, they will have to go through the whole book, since a list of textual changes adopted here (as against the commonly accepted and printed texts) is sadly missing. Other readers and scholars of Apuleius' *Florida* will perhaps be best advised to wait for the announced OCT volume.

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