

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

set out to collect every case of *asyndeton bimembre* in the texts consulted, but inevitably some omissions will have been made ... but the evidence presented is I hope tolerably complete' (p. xxv) – the result is a vast collection of cases of *asyndeton bimembre* from texts spanning a broad time frame and a selection of different genres. Partial comparisons are also offered with Greek, Umbrian and Vedic, and between authors. An indication of the sheer magnitude of works included in A.'s corpus can be seen in the chapters on Plautus, which covers his entire output (on the basis of W. de Melo's Loeb edition), and on Cicero, which has been prepared after reviewing more than 1,000 pages of the OCT editions (p. 405). If we add to this volume of data A.'s philological finesse and the depth of his analysis, we will immediately understand that this book is of enormous value.

The work is divided into two different sections. The first, which A. calls 'typological', defines the concept of *asyndeton* and other theoretical aspects. The second section, which A. names 'literary', contains a detailed description of each of the types classified in the authors reviewed. These two sections are conceived as almost two different works (p. xxvi): the first, the 'typological' one, is based on the material found in the second one; the second, the 'literary' section, presents in great detail the cases classified in the first section and is intended to be consulted rather than read in full. ('I am aware that anyone looking at the literary chapters is likely to be not so much reading the whole as consulting a chapter on a particular author or passage. I have decided to make each of these chapters as self-contained as possible', p. xxvi). However, the multiple and very useful cross-references between both sections make them complement each other perfectly.

The 'typological' section is divided into four parts. The first part comprises a five-chapter introduction, which discusses general issues, including the definition of *asyndeton* and its types, which cases of *asyndeton* are dubious and why, and the proposed effects of *asyndeton*. Here, A. provides a thorough review of the generalisations and clichés about *asyndeton* in secondary sources that turn out to be inaccurate or downright false in the light of the data he collects (especially in Chapters 3–5). Part 2 is devoted to the presentation of 'Grammatical Types' (Chapters 6–12), which lists the pairs that have a common (usually morphological) feature in one or both members (e.g. pairs with negative prefix, simple + compound, verbs in the same or different tense and mood etc.). The many details contained in this group are well summarised in a 'Recapitulation' (pp. 143–5). Part 3 ('Semantic Types', Chapters 13–15) deals with the more or less systematic semantic features that can be recognised in *asyndetic* pairs (mainly pairs of opposites of different types). Part 4 ('Structures', Chapters 16–21) is devoted to the structures in which these pairs appear (e.g. in words of ascending length, in correlative distributions, in lists, in accumulations of *asyndetic* pairs etc.).

Some chapters could perhaps be more concise. A couple of examples: Chapter 2, on adjectives and other combinations of words modifying each other, contains unnecessary material (the title of the chapter, "Asyndeta" That May Not Be Asyndeta: Roles of Adjectives; Appositional Compounds; and "Asyndetic Hendiadys"), indicates that A. is aware of this). For the section on adjectives, the functional classes proposed by R. Risselada (*Glotta* 62 [1984], 202–31) would have been useful to clarify which combinations of adjectives could be considered as *asyndetic* and which could not and why. The same applies to the terms that modify each other (pp. 44–52). Despite the dubious interpretation, this material is included because, according to A., 'they could also be rewritten with a coordinator, and are thus *asyndetic*' (p. 54). If Risselada is right, this is not the case for all of them. A similar situation can be found in Chapter 20, especially in the section on the conjunct hyperbaton, which has a tenuous link with the problem at hand.

The second section (Part 5, ‘Genres and Texts’) analyses different corpora, seeking to combine chronology and literary genres: laws and prayers; Plautus; Virgil (and Homer) and early high-style poetry; Cicero; Catullus; Caesar’s *Bellum Civile*; Horace, with a selected corpus from Pindar; the annalists, Sallust and Tacitus; and Livy. These chapters, in addition to the abundant material covered, provide different types of commentary depending on the features that characterise the pair, such as its representation in the different genres or the secondary sources available (e.g. the chapter on *Bellum civile* is devoted to textual criticism based on C. Damon, *Caii Iulii Caesaris Commentariorum libri III de Bello Ciuili* [2015]).

Part 6, ‘Conclusions’, summarises the trends observed and the refuted opinions and comments of secondary sources. In addition, there are fourteen pages of bibliography (more philological [c. 90%] than linguistic [c. 10%]), an impressive subject index, an index of selected pairs and longer sequences (with more than 1,100 items) and a selected *index locorum*.

The book is not always easy to read because of the immense amount of different material it covers, but reading can be guided by an excellent summary in the six-page preface and the detailed table of contents. The general conclusion that emerges is that it is impossible to generalise about asyndeton for Latin as a whole, except that it is a coordination procedure that coexists for a long time with others, it is of variable presence in genres, and it is used depending on the personal taste of authors, trends etc.

The work contains much more description than linguistic interpretation. The philological analysis is strong, but a study of the material from a pragmatic point of view seems essential in order to explain some of the trends observed (e.g. why pairs of imperatives are so frequent, structures with anaphora etc.). It is also surprising that no mention is made of metrics, despite the fact that several verse genres are covered, since this is an aspect that may be relevant to the use of asyndeton.

This book makes two significant contributions to the discipline: first, it provides philologists and linguists with an immense and extraordinary collection of material accompanied by a wonderful philological commentary, which will allow in-depth linguistic and even metrical study that has not been possible until now. Secondly, it provides textual criticism with criteria for refining the texts. The book is a source of ideas; it is immensely interesting. It is a real pity that it is A.’s last book to be published (*requiescat in pace*).

Universidad Autónoma de Madrid

ESPERANZA TORREGO  
esperanza.torrego@uam.es

## BUILDING AND METAPOETICS

REITZ-JOOSSE (B.) *Building in Words. The Process of Construction in Latin Literature*. Pp. xii + 271, ills. New York: Oxford University Press, 2021. Cased, £64, US\$99. ISBN: 978-0-19-761068-8.  
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If classical philologists can agree on anything, it is that the Muse of Latin literature is a self-conscious one. Readers have long delighted in identifying metaliterary gestures and metaphors in canonical and non-canonical works alike. R.-J.’s debut monograph is a sturdy new brick in this edifice. This book contends that Roman authors, artists and builders were keenly sensitive to the ways in which construction was a process involving many agents