

historians and the relative scope of their works, which makes it also extremely important for the study of historiography in the middle Byzantine period.

This translation began as a group effort, with John Wortley translating the text into English, Bernard Flusin translating it into French, and Jean-Claude Cheynet providing the editorial notes to both translations. The introduction (pp. VII–XXXIII) provides essential information on the life of Skylitzes (or at least on the little we know about him), his self-proclaimed intentions, the sources he used, his adopted narrative method, and also on the manuscript tradition. The translation itself is highly readable, while not deviating from the original Greek, a feat that is laudable in itself. The text follows the chapter divisions of the Greek edition, while the page numbers of Thurn's edition have also been provided within square brackets. The subnotes are plentiful and full of essential information for the understanding of the events that are being described by Skylitzes. One can only conclude by observing that this translation is a superb work, and that it will be a great asset to anyone studying either the history or historiography of the middle Byzantine era.

*Kai Juntunen*

*Rudimenta linguae Finnicae brevier delineata: Suomen kielen varhaiskielioppi ja sen tausta.* Edited by PETRI LAUERMA. Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura, Helsinki 2012. ISBN 978-952-222-375-3. 110 pp. EUR 34.40.

The discovery of the anonymous *Rudimenta linguae Finnicae brevier delineata* in 2008 proved a sensation for the study of Finnish literature. The previously unknown and unpublished text turned up in a small booklet auctioned at Sotheby's as part of the Macclesfield library, bound between two published 17<sup>th</sup>-century works: *Linguae Finnicae brevis institutio* (1642) by Bishop Aeschillus Petraeus and *Synopsis Chronologiae Finnonicae* (1671) by Laurentius Petri. The compilation had presumably been made on the basis of its subject matter, and the *Rudimenta's* companions are pioneering works in their own right: Petraeus's *Institutio* is the first published Finnish grammar, whereas Petri's brief *Synopsis* is the earliest extant Finnish-language text on the history of Finland. Although the provenance and authorship of the *Rudimenta* remain shrouded in mystery, it has emerged that it may, in fact, be the very earliest grammar of the Finnish language. This edition, with its thorough discussion of codicological, palaeographical, grammatical and linguistic aspects of the manuscript reads like a mystery novel: how did this text, with its 16<sup>th</sup>-century content, written on mid-17<sup>th</sup>-century paper and bound around 1700, come about and why has it previously been unknown?

As the authors<sup>1</sup> of the articles in this volume point out, the writer can hardly have been any of the early Finnish authors known to us: he was obviously unacquainted with the early grammars of Petraeus and Matthias Martinius (1689), and the absence of the "Melanchthonian" features of

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<sup>1</sup> Ilkka Paatero and Sirkka Havu on the most recent history of the manuscript and its acquisition (pp. 9–11), Tuomas Heikkilä on codicological issues (pp. 12–14); Anneli Mäkelä-Ahitalo on the dating of the manuscript's handwriting (pp. 15–16), Pirkko Kuutti on the earliest Finnish and Estonian grammars (pp. 17–23), Suvi Randén on the Latinity of the *Rudimenta* and its relationship to Latin grammars (pp. 24–37) and Riitta Palkki on its Finnish (pp. 39–48).

Reformation grammars may even suggest that the work could be derived from a non-extant and probably unpublished Counter-Reformation grammar commissioned by the Jesuit College at Olmütz (Olomouc) in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century (pp. 17–18, 23). However, the author's disparaging remark on the "swearing adverb" *Ja Mar* (p. 89), which he characterizes as a vulgar expression that smacks of popery (*Ja Mar est apud vulgus iurandi forma, quae sapit...Pontificiam*), seems to counter this hypothesis, although the statement could be a later interpolation (the passage is partly illegible and has obviously been revised). Nonetheless, some parallels with Martinius's grammar, as well as with Friedrich Stahl's 1637 Estonian grammar and Michael Wexionius's discussion of Finnish in his 1650 *Epitome Sueciae, Gothiae, Fenningiae et Subjectarum Provinciarum* (pp. 21–23), indicate that the *Rudimenta* may have influenced these works and enjoyed a wider circulation than its later obscurity suggests.

The grammar itself is sparse, and although it is clearly modelled after the Latin grammars of the Early Modern period (this is manifest in the author's postulation of merely six nominal cases for the Finnish language as well as his redundant presentation of the vocative), the author shows some original, not to say eccentric, touches that suggest that the *Rudimenta* was aimed at highly educated native speakers of Swedish (the text has numerous Swedish glosses) rather than for the use of the Cathedral Schools and Trivial Schools, as the editor Petri Lauerma proposes (p. 97).

Unlike Petraeus and Martinius and the other early Finnish grammarians, the author of the *Rudimenta* does not postulate a system of noun declensions for Finnish (and, incidentally, is in this respect more "modern" than the scholarship of the intervening centuries). His presentation of the Finnish verb system shows striking departures from our established classification as well as wildly inconsistent use of terminology. The Finnish imperfect tense is referred to as *praeteritum simplex*, *perfectum simplex* or *perfectum* and glossed with the Latin perfect, whereas what the author calls the *praeteritum compositum seu plusquamperfectum*, *perfectum plusquamperfectum* or, more simply, *plusquamperfectum* is the Finnish perfect, although glossed with the Latin pluperfect tense. The Finnish pluperfect, on the other hand, is not presented at all. Although Finnish has no true future tense, the *Rudimenta* gives not one but two periphrastic structures with future meaning ("Minä tahdon racasta, *amabo*" for the indicative and "Mina olisin racastawa, *amaturus essem*" for the conditional). The Finnish conditional mood appears in the *Rudimenta's* nomenclature interchangeably, and without explanation, both as *optativus* and *subjunctivus*; apparently, the author expected a great deal of familiarity with grammatical terminology from his readers. Even more striking is the *Rudimenta's* use of Latin passive future imperatives (*amator*, *amaminor*, *amantor*) as translations for the Finnish passive imperative, in itself an unusual form. Although modern students of Latin may be unacquainted with these archaic and obsolete forms, they seem to have been included in the inflectional paradigms of 17<sup>th</sup>-century Latin grammars as a matter of course, as Suvi Randén points out in her accomplished commentary on the Latinity of the text (p. 32). Other idiosyncratic solutions include the presentation of four, rather than three, degrees of comparison for adjectives: *positivus*, *comparativus*, *superlativus* and what the author calls *plusquamsuperlativus*, exemplified with "iloinen, Iloisemi, Iloisin, caickein Iloisin" ('happy, happier, happiest, the very happiest'). Overall, the grammar, for all the acumen of its author, exhibits a certain *ad hoc* character, which seems compatible with the hypothesis that it is without a direct model or predecessor.

Riitta Palkki's extensive and meticulous discussion of the *Rudimenta's* Finnish (pp. 38–48) demonstrates definitively that the contents of the text must be considerably older than its sole sur-

living manuscript. The orthography shows many features that are well documented in 16<sup>th</sup>-century texts (the writings of Agricola and the so-called Uppsala Gospel Book) but already absent from the 1642 Bible translation. Dialectal features suggest that the author may have been the native speaker of a dialect spoken in the vicinity of Rauma, although some of his forms have only been documented in the eastern parts of Finland Proper or the dialects of Häme. On one instance, the author offers two alternatives for the same form, giving the third person plural of the "simple perfect" as "hee Racastit", but citing "hee Racastiwat" as the form used in Häme. Apparently, the author was thoroughly acquainted with at least two, if not several, distinctive variants of spoken Finnish.

In addition to the insightful discussions of the various aspects of the *Rudimenta* and its provenance (in Finnish), the book includes a facsimile reproduction of the original manuscript, written in a beautiful seventeenth-century hand. The text is also reproduced in an edition by Suvi Randén that is faithful to the orthography of the original (although I would have considered retaining the ligature *æ*, rendered by the editor as *a* and *e*). Randén has also written a highly competent Finnish translation of the text. I must, however, disagree with one particular interpretation of the translator: the author of the *Rudimenta* states that Finnish monosyllables are pronounced *gravi tono* (p. 90). I take this to be a reference to the system of acute, circumflex and grave accents that the Latin grammarians – for better or worse – adopted from Greek prosodic theory, and probably means that monosyllables are unstressed (Randén's interpretation at p. 75 is the opposite). Whatever the author's intent was, his generalization is of course wildly inaccurate.

The edition could have benefited from a more detailed commentary of the text, possibly with an English translation. As it is, the book only contains an English version (by Titia Schuurman, at pp. 99–104) of its concluding summary by Petri Lauerma (pp. 93–98). Although it is probably fair to expect scholars of Finnish language and history to be literate in Finnish, the text is also relevant from the point of view of the history of linguistics and, all in all, of broader interest than the authors or publishers of this remarkable volume may have realized.

Seppo Heikkinen

JONAS GRETHLEIN: *The Greeks and Their Past: Poetry, Oratory and History in the Fifth Century BCE*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge – New York 2010. XII, 350 pp. ISBN 978-0-521-11077-8. GBP 55, USD 95.

*The Greeks and Their Past* is a stimulating discussion of the representations of literary memory in fifth-century BC Greek literature. Its aim is twofold. The first goal is to "reconstruct the literary field of memory in fifth-century BCE Greece" (p. 12), the broader second goal is simply to advance our understanding of the literature of this period. Consisting of two main parts, "*Clio polytropos*: Non-historiographical Media of Memory" and "The Rise of Greek Historiography", Grethlein's book offers nuanced readings of texts from various genres, such as epinician poetry, elegy, tragedy, oratory and historiography. The first part of the book examines Pindar's *Olympian 2*, the "New Simonides", Aeschylus's *Persians*, Lysias's *Funeral Oration* and Andonices's *On the Peace* (the last two were, however, not written in the fifth century, but in the early fourth century BC), whereas the second part deals with the works of Herodotus and Thucydides. Grethlein's plan is to analyse how differ-