



Jerome, Vita Malchi: Introduction, Text, Translation, and Commentary (Oxford Classical Monographs)

Christa Gray

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This volume offers a full analysis of one of the more intriguing works by a figure who is central to our understanding of Late Antiquity and early Christianity: the translator, exegete, and controversialist Jerome (c.347-419/20AD). The neglected text of the *Vita Malchi* - or, to use Jerome's title, the *Captive Monk* - recounts the experiences of Malchus, a monk abducted by nomadic Saracens on the Eastern fringe of the fourth-century Roman Empire, in what today is the border region between southern Turkey and Syria. Most of this short, vivid, and fast-paced narrative is recounted by Malchus in the first person.

The volume's introduction provides background information on the author, Jerome, and the historical and linguistic context of the *Life*, as well as detailed discussion of the work's style and its reception of earlier Christian and classical literature, ranging from its relationship with comedy, epic, and the ancient novel to the Apocryphal Apostolic Acts and martyr narratives. An exposition of the manuscript evidence is then followed by a new edition of the Latin text with an English translation, and a comprehensive commentary. The commentary explores the complex intertextuality of the work and provides readers with an understanding of its background, originality, and significance; it elucidates not only literary and philological questions but also points of ethnography and topography, and intellectual and social history.

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