

Jesper Majbom Madsen and Roger Rees, eds. *Roman Rule in Greek and Latin Writing: Double Vision*. Impact of Empire 18. Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2014. Viii + 303 pp. ISBN 9789004277380. Hbk \$162 (€125).

This volume, from a conference between departments of History (Southern Denmark) and Classics (St. Andrews), enters the popular academic discussion of identity and imperialism between Greek and Roman culture reflected in Greek and Latin writing. It engages recent scholarship on Greco-Roman historiography and continues the trend of seeing imperialism and identity reflected rhetorically in writing. Center stage is the tension between Greek culture and Roman “superiority” long noted by scholars. This volume muddies the waters, exploring contextualized writings as reflective of human experience and thus representing the decided ambiguity that characterized many Greek and Latin writers in antiquity.

Madsen and Rees note ambivalence in an introductory chapter: Arrian, *legatus Augusti*, provides practical Latin reports and Greek “literary posturing” (2) by distinguishing provincial barbarism from Roman elitism (*Periplus* 1.1–4, 6.2); Tacitus presents Agricola’s “enculturation” of Britain (*Agricola* 21), yet cites Calgacus’s subversive criticism of Romanization (*Agricola* 30). Others betray clearer preference: Pliny the Younger’s correspondence with Trajan bolsters Roman authority/culture, while Dio of Prusa prefers Greek *paideia* (*Or.* 13.31, 34). Under Empire Greek was less acceptable, although Latin speakers (Cicero, Seneca, Pliny, Claudius, Gellius and Fronto) used Greek as “social performance.” This “nexus of personal preference, cultural norm and change over time” renders “characterisation of the relationships between Greeks, Romans and power very difficult” (9).

Chapters 1–2 (Madsen, Bowie) treat Greek culture under Rome. In chapter 1, Dio Chrysostom, among others (Cassius Dio, Pliny, Tacitus, Suetonius), argues for “Roman values” of free speech, protection of law, and moderate rule (*Or.* 13.1). Even loyal Romans courted Greek culture (Plutarch) and criticized Rome constructively (Pausanias), even while esteeming Rome highly (Aelius Aristides). Madsen problematizes, arguing that Greek and Latin authors under Empire criticized and supported Rome. In chapter 2 Bowie stresses cultural dissonance, demonstrating that Greek elites were surprisingly unengaged in Roman military affairs, conspicuous in Philostratus, Aelius Aristides, and Plutarch. Bowie suggests Greeks remained culturally aloof, pursuing ἀρετή and ἀνὴρ via “panhellenic *agones*” and rhetoric rather than the military. (Lengthy appendices survey Greek Roman-military careers.)

Chapters 3–4 present challenge to (*Luke-Acts*) and establishment of (Pliny) *Romanitas*. First Moles explores *Luke-Acts*’s response to Roman rule. Moles engages Lang,¹ who

¹ M. Lang, *Die Kunst christlichen Lebens. Rezeptionsästhetische Studien zum lukianischen Paulusbild. Arbeiten zur Bibel und ihrer Geschichte 29* (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2008); “The Christian and the Roman Self. The Lukan Paul and a Roman Reading,” in C. K. Rothschild & T. W. Thompson (eds.), *Christian Body, Christian Self: Concepts of Early Christian Personhood* (WUNT 284; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011).

reads *Luke-Acts* as protreptic to Christianity; Rowe,² whose *Luke-Acts* presents an alternative theological-political *Weltenleben*; and Yamazaki-Ransom,³ whose *Luke-Acts* represents God's Empire contra (Satan-controlled) Rome. Unlike Lang and Rowe, Moles treats *Luke-Acts* together, tentatively adding 'good Romans' to *Luke-Acts*'s readership, and locating elements pro-Roman (Julius's in *Acts* 27.1) and anti-Roman (Augustus's *Res Gestae* in *Luke* 3.1). *Luke-Acts* draws Roman interest as a "radically different" school of thought. Rees (chapter 4) explores Pliny the Younger's *Panegyricus* as clever combination of praise, acceptance, and enculturation. He argues that in a diversifying senatorial climate Pliny lauds Trajan but omits mentioning his Spanish origin. He seeks to avoid political tension and to develop a Roman praise form, establishing himself among Trajan's elite. Pliny bolsters *Romanitas* while rejecting multiculturalism.

Josephus and Tacitus star in chapters 5–6. Gibson (chapter 5) examines Tacitus's *Annals*, asking how diplomatic exchange's presentation interprets imperial diplomacy. Tacitus's Greek *asylum* requests appear trivial but establish Senatorial authority. *Annals* 3.62–63 investigates history, recalling myth (Cypriot Venus cult), and presenting an *imago antiquitatis* which blurs his views of republic vs. empire. *Annals* 4.13.1 records aid requests from earthquake-stricken cities in a scene where "powers of emperor and senate" uneasily coexist (133). Tacitus's records engage the "outside world" self-critically, but Gibson does not demonstrate *how* Tacitus views Rome. In chapter 6 Ash uses the proximity of Rome's 68–69 CE civil wars to the 71 Flavian triumph to complicate their representations. From his *Histories*, Ash suggests Tacitus, accentuating "otherness," may have sympathized with a fallen Jerusalem. Josephus straddles emotionalism and impartiality, recording positive and negative reflections of Rome. His disclaimer (*BJ* 7.132) and graphic language (6.212–13; 7.142–47) accentuate Jerusalem's traumatic experience. Ash juxtaposes Josephus's accounts of war and subsequent *pegmata*, arguing that Josephus portrays a complex, alternative Jewish War.

Chapters 7–9 approach non-Roman culture in Rome. Howley's chapter 7 treats Roman "study abroad:" Gellius's *Noctes Atticae* pictures Greek *paideia* as valuable yet insufficient for elite Roman education. Study at Athens can provide cultural capital, but "yawning, drunken *rhetorisci*" seeking only "Grecian veneer on their education" waste the opportunity (173). Howley concludes that, like American programs, Roman study abroad facilitated Roman self-awareness and -reflection. Harries (chapter 8) discusses Ulpian of Tyre's *De Officio Proconsulis*, which encourages Roman sensitivity and provincial perspective in imperial policy. Combining provincial identity with (Roman) legal expertise Ulpian cultivates respect between "the new *civitas Romana* and the old" (209). Carlsen (chapter 9) tackles Arrian's *Anabasis of Alexander* and Arrian's cultural indecision between Greece and Rome. Arrian attributes certain Roman policy to

² C. K. Rowe, *World Upside Down: Reading Acts in the Graceo-Roman Age* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

³ K. Yamazaki-Ransom, *The Roman Empire in Luke's Narrative* (LNTS 404; London: T&T Clark, 2010).

Alexander with a caveat (μοι δοκοῦσι; 3.5.7), yet follows Roman historians against Greek in stressing Rome's historical independence. Arrian's *Anabasis* embodies bi-cultural ambivalence.

Chapters 10–11 introduce Herodian and Philostratus to the conversation. Bekker-Nielsen (chapter 10) visits Herodian's "effective historical tableaux" (229) within historical accounts (e.g., reworking Cassius Dio's account of Caracalla's death). Herodian's originality emerges in treating tyrannicide, which he uneasily justifies by employing self-preservation, violation of *philia* norms, victim instigation, and *ex post facto* acceptance. Herodian justifies tyrannicide as he would civil war, reconciling Greek values and brutal Empire. König's chapter 11 seeks in Philostratus's *Lives of the Sophists* (preface) an elite perception of Greekness and Romanness. Philostratus implicates philhellenism in the consul Gordian, praising political status (ΤΩΙ ΛΑΜΠΟΤΑΤΩΙ ΥΠΑΤΩΙ; "to the most illustrious consul," 248) and cultural affinity (calling him ἄρρωσο Μουσηγέτα; "leader of the Muses," 251). Likewise Philostratus makes emperors and sophists metaphors for cultural cooperation. Philostratus's *Lives* envision a truly Greco-Roman culture.

A substantial bibliography follows (271–95). Finally there is an index of ancient authors and place-names (296–303). This and the substance of the footnotes make the volume more research-accessible. Typos appear (e.g., "through" for "though" on p. 1), commas being especially mishandled (typified on p. 193: "sites, a process, which both").

The book's overall impression is comfortable tension: ancient writers appear ambivalent to Roman rule and Greek culture. This reflects human experience's tensive reality, but prevents classifying authors. Perhaps this is the point. Neither is the volume necessarily coherent, as conclusions and methodologies vary widely. Yet the work does contribute to understanding Greco-Roman cultural merging by placing texts in their culturally uncomfortable contexts.

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