

His self-castration is treated as an aetiological myth for the custom of self-castration by the Galli, which is said to have originated in the reaction of his friends, who castrated themselves out of sympathy for his sufferings. At this point, as Lightfoot says at pp. 384–5, the story seems flimsily attached to the foundation of the temple, and unsatisfactory as an account of the self-castration. However, the ritual mentioned in the last sentence obviously echoes and yet reverses the sealing up of Combabos' genitals: the first shavings of the beard are symbols of identity at the moment of acquiring the very manhood that Combabos was losing. So a thoroughly Greek tale set in the third century BCE finds expression in the very Syrian ritual of manhood that proves the narrator's non-Greek identity. The last few words are designed to challenge all our assumptions about what has gone before.

It is the complexity and subversiveness of this text that must never be forgotten or underestimated. At times, the narrator's claims of autopsy tremble on the edge of self-refutation. One of the most elaborate of all (at §48) tells us that the narrator has seen one part of a certain ritual, but not the part that took place by the sea, so that his scrupulousness as a witness makes a special claim on our belief; but what is it that he asks us to believe he saw, when the procession returned from the sea? A cock that could open sealed pots of water and collect the money from the pilgrims. Such recurrent playfulness must by itself ensure that the nature and credibility of *DDS* and its value as evidence for religious history will continue to be the object of debate in the future as it has been in the past. Jane Lightfoot will not have put an end to such debates, but we can be sure that they will be conducted in future on the sure foundations she has laid by her scholarship, acuity and insight. However, no interpreter should forget the wild tales scattered through this work: 1800-foot stone phalluses, oracles that float in the air, a cock that opens bottles and cattle that drop off the propylaeum — the final sentence of Tristram Shandy must come to mind:

...what is all this story about?

A COCK and a BULL ...

J.A. North

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Simon Goldhill (ed.), *Being Greek under Rome. Cultural Identity, the Second Sophistic and the Development of Empire*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. 395 pp. ISBN 0 521 66317 2.

This collection of articles addresses a fundamental issue of the ancient encounter between Greece and Rome, namely the question of how Greek writers saw themselves as Greeks while living in the new context of the Roman Empire. As the subtitle of the book suggests, emphasis is given to cultural aspects of identity and to the time span between the first and the third century CE. Given this framework, it is conspicuous that the individual essays in this volume differ significantly with regard both to their inherent quality and to their relevance to the book's overall concern. Some sections of the book make an important contribution to the ongoing discussion of Greek culture and identity in a Roman context, while others do so rather less.

Simon Goldhill opens the volume with a two-fold introduction, offering in part I 'snapshots' of tensions between Greek and Roman perspectives, while problematizing in part II the notions of culture, identity and the Second Sophistic. The development of Empire, also mentioned in the subtitle, is not discussed and should perhaps have been dropped altogether since it plays hardly any role in the book. The snapshots are very lucid as well as appetizing and the discussion of culture and identity is indeed useful. The term Second Sophistic, however, remains somewhat problematic. Goldhill himself dislikes the term, finding its disadvantages greater than its benefits (14). He uses it nevertheless, partly for reasons of convention, even though he includes in the book two contributions which patently exceed the scope of the Second Sophistic: Henderson's study of

Polybius and Schwartz's investigation of rabbinic sources. This naturally raises questions of boundaries: should Strabo, Philo and perhaps Paul not have been given separate treatments before other sources, outside the given limits, were called onto the stage?

The first section of the book, entitled 'Subject to Empire', is also the weakest. The first two contributions are not of the same standard as later ones, while the third essay by Rebecca Preston is excellent, but could equally well have appeared in the second section. Henderson's article on Polybius, which was included, as Goldhill explains in the introduction (15), because Polybius 'provides a foundational text of how to write history under Empire', avoids precisely the question of Polybius' own identity. Henderson is instead preoccupied with condemning Polybius for having 'wormed his way into intimacy with those who had flattened his Macedonian worldscape (sic)' (39). He appeals to the readers who, if they have 'any decency', will find Polybius' narrative 'pitiful' (47). Questions of how Polybius himself negotiated his past and present as well as his own views of being a Greek under Rome are surprisingly avoided. Similarly disappointing is Gleason's article 'Mutilated messengers: body language in Josephus'. Josephus is a key figure in the book's overall project. Having grown up in Jewish Palestine of the first century, he not only became a historian at the Roman court, but also acquired a Greek education and published his works in that language. His position equals to some extent that of Lucian, yet Josephus is obviously placed much closer to the centre of Roman culture and power, and so is of even greater interest. The question of how he constructed Greek culture in a Roman context could have been discussed here with great benefit. Martin Goodman initiated such a discussion by showing that Josephus' notions of the Greeks and their culture are deeply rooted in the contemporary Roman discourse.¹ Gleason instead discusses body language as expressed by Josephus himself, as deceptively set up by the Zealots and as applying to the body politic, ending with a note on spectacular violence. The reader is indeed impressed by the violence displayed in body language and its political implications. Yet what can be learnt from this about the sense of being a Greek under Rome? Very little, it seems, as Gleason herself concludes that 'The semiotic body as we find it in the narratives and metaphors of the *Jewish War* has yielded us some clues to the general mentality of Josephus' contemporaries ...' (85).

Preston's article 'Roman questions and Greek answers: Plutarch and the construction of identity' is focused precisely on the topic of the book and offers a fascinating as well as meticulous analysis of a key text. Preston begins by pointing to the well-known paradox of the Greek élites in the Roman East: they were the most Romanized parts of society, while at the same time functioning as the guardians of the Greek heritage (91). Preston then explores expressions of Plutarch's identity in his *Roman Questions* and *Greek Questions*. She discovers that the implied audience of both works is Greek, assuming familiarity with Greek institutions and culture, while raising basic questions of why things are the way they are on the Roman side (96-7). Preston moreover shows how Plutarch actually provides Greek answers to Roman questions, thus translating Rome into Greek terms and asserting Greek superiority. Preston corrects some earlier research on Plutarch's position between Greece and Rome, which argued for a more conciliatory stance.² Preston's comparison to Dionysius of Halicarnassus shows Plutarch as rather more reserved and aware of Rome's barbarian origins. A look at Strabo would have been helpful here: Daniela Dueck recently showed that Strabo assumed a similar Greek perspective on Rome.³ At the same time, however, Plutarch is shown to be realistic about Greek shortcomings as well. He neither idealized his heritage nor used it to challenge Roman rule. Indeed, Preston points to the striking fact that topical issues are completely avoided in Plutarch's *Questions* (110ff.). This significant silence indicates

¹ M. Goodman, 'Jewish Attitudes to Greek Culture in the Period of the Second Temple', in G. Abramson and T. Parfitt (eds.), *Jewish Education and Learning. Published in Honour of Dr. David Patterson on the occasion of his Seventieth Birthday*, Chur 1994, 167-74.

² J. Boulogne, *Plutarque: un aristocrate grec sous l'occupation romaine*, Lille 1994.

³ D. Dueck, *Strabo of Amasia. A Greek Man of Letters in Augustan Rome*, London and New York 2000.

some discontinuity in Plutarch's identity, since the (glorious Greek) past does not find a natural culmination in the present.

The second section of the book deals with 'Intellectuals on the margins'. The first essay, by Elsner, treats a particular text, namely (pseudo?-)Lucian's *De Dea Syria* (*DDS*), while Goldhill's and Zeitlin's contributions each deal with a more general topic of visual culture. The visual dimension indeed unites these essays since Elsner, too, treats visual monuments, namely the temple at Hierapolis and its rituals as described by Lucian. Elsner stresses the complexity of identity, which can sometimes rely even on mutually exclusive strategies. His example is Lucian, whom he takes to be the author of *DDS*. With regard to language and style, Lucian proves to be a Greek imitating Herodotus and translating the names and terms of his native cult into Greek notions. At the same time, however, Lucian reveals a rather strong sense of indigenous Syrian pride in matters of religion, especially when describing Apollo (139-40). Elsner thus argues for a path of negotiation between the poles of Greek and Syrian identity, maintaining a situation of tension 'which is never entirely resolved' (149). Rome enters the picture mostly by her absence. Whereas Lucian assumes the *Pax Romana*, which enables him to embark on his pilgrimage, he avoids any explicit reference to the world-power. Elsner interprets the latter as an expression of a silent resistance to Rome, the kind that later characterized many Christian positions. The most important general conclusion of this paper is the idea of compartmentalized identity. It clearly emerges that the latter is not only subject to change and revision over time, but differs at any given moment with regard to different matters. Lucian can identify himself as a Syrian in one respect and as a Greek in another. This model of ambiguity and diversity is highly useful, enriching Frederik Barth's seminal notion of different social roles making up identity in multicultural contexts.⁴

Goldhill's essay 'The erotic eye: visual stimulation and cultural conflict' is a study of the connection between art and text or viewing and self-positioning in a cultural context. He focuses on two pagan and two Christian writers, showing how the Greco-Roman ideal of art criticism with composed and dignified expression is turned against Hellenic culture in the Christian sources. While Lucian and Achilles Tatius relate favourably to the desiring eye, assuming with the Stoics (and, by the way, also Plato) that seeing implies touching, Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian use the same terminology in their polemics against idolatry, yet partially retrieve it in their visions of the last judgement. Thus far, the argument is convincing and indeed beautiful, yet two further aspects seem more problematic. The first pertains to Philo, the second to the question of the Roman context. Philo is briefly treated as sharing Clement's views, and Goldhill concludes that 'this model of the eye is manipulated by Christian and Jewish apologists to engage Greek culture in a new normative way' (179). This assimilation of Philo to Clement is somewhat rash and overlooks the differences between the two. It is conspicuous, for example, that *De Opificio Mundi* 166, quoted by Goldhill, does not turn Stoic notions of seeing against Greek idolatry, as Clement later did, but against pleasure in general. Indeed, Philo never singles out Greek idolatry, but instead polemizes against Egyptian zoolatry. Philo in fact inscribes Judaism into a certain type of Greek culture, which was closely connected to and appreciated by contemporary Roman society. His Judaism thus went together with his sense of being a Greek under Rome. His involvement in the Greco-Roman world differs sharply from the resistance shown by many subsequent Christian writers. This leads me to the second point, namely the question of the Roman context. Goldhill briefly mentions it at the beginning, when stressing that composed, stylized art criticism belongs to the Roman period, and at the end, when discussing Lucian's words on the Greek mistress of the Roman emperor. Yet these treatments remain hints that do not quite amount to a study of the writers' sense of being a Greek with 'a desiring eye' under Rome. The Roman connection in fact remains somewhat unclear, relying perhaps too much on the general assumption of vision and visuality as essentially Greek characteristics that would come into conflict with any other culture.

4 F. Barth, 'Introduction', in id. (ed.), *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries. The Social Organization of Culture Difference*, Oslo and London 1969, 9-38.

Zeitlin's essay 'Visions and Revisions of Homer', aims at investigating representations of Homer, asking how he fits into visual culture (195-6). The results of this study are undermined by the fact that Zeitlin ultimately does not integrate the very disparate kind of sources and issues she refers to. The reader thus learns in 71 pages a wealth of interesting material relating to visual representations of Homer, invocations of his spirit, Roman imitations of Alexander imitating Homer's Achilles, etc., but is left with an unclear sense of where all this leads regarding the question of Greek identity under Rome.

The last section of the book, entitled 'Topography and the performance of culture', is particularly interesting. The essays by Tim Whitmarsh, Onno van Nijf and Seth Schwartz show that Greek culture and Greek identity are by no means given, but acquired and constructed, answering to particular cultural needs under Roman rule. Whitmarsh investigates strategies of positioning oneself culturally and politically by defining one's geographical place. Musonius Rufus, Dio Chrysostom and Favorinus — three writers from outside mainland Greece — are shown to construct an 'exilic persona' by appropriating ancient Greek traditions in the contemporary spirit of the Second Sophistic. Exile is no longer perceived as a horrible disaster, which prevents man from participating in the democratic assembly, but rather as a condition of alienation from the centre of power, which precisely enables one to speak up and think freely. Musonius Rufus speaks thus as a Roman nobleman, Dio Chrysostom after he has assumed leading positions in Roman society and Favorinus as a consciously Greek and Roman Gaul. In the case of Favorinus, however, the reader remains with a sense that the motif of exile has been somewhat overemphasized. Favorinus really criticises autochthonous notions of Greek identity, which he wishes to replace by cultural ones. In the text quoted on p. 300 he does not mention exile, but insists that any land of residence should be considered as one's *patria*. Nevertheless, Whitmarsh's overall argument is convincing.

Van Nijf makes a similar argument in the realm of athletics, showing that 'Greek' games were often made up during the Roman period. One became Greek or expressed one's sense of being Greek by participating in or sponsoring newly set up Greek sport competitions. Van Nijf investigates this issue from the perspective of the organizers, the competitors and the audience, stressing the continuous aristocratic context of the games. Van Nijf presents a very convincing argument, which is weakened only by the fact that most of his evidence derives from Oinoanda. One would have hoped for a more diverse picture.

Schwartz's article concludes the volume not only chronologically, as he is dealing with 3rd-century rabbinic sources, but also contextually: the reader encounters here a group of writers who are no longer as familiar with Greek culture as the authors discussed thus far. The rabbis no longer wrote in Greek, not even in the style of Greek genres, but created their own highly particular discourse, which Schwartz introduces very clearly to readers of this volume who might not have been exposed to rabbinic literature. Analyzing the famous story of the rabbi in the bath of Aphrodite, Schwartz thus shows that the rabbis, while significantly turned inward to the interpretation of Scripture, accommodated to the life of the Greco-Roman cities in their vicinity and incorporated it into their world.

As a whole the book provides many stimulating essays on diverse cultural phenomena of the Hellenistic world in its encounter with Rome.