John Ma, *Antiochos III and the Cities of Western Asia Minor*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999. xvii + 403 pp., 2 maps + 7 appendices + epigraphical dossier + bibliography + indices. ISBN 0 19 815219 1.

This brilliant study of hellenistic imperialism (a revised version of an Oxford doctoral thesis) focuses on the reign of Antiochos III the Great (223-187 BC) and on epigraphic evidence from the Greek *poleis* of western and southern Asia Minor. It reassesses the detailed narrative of Seleukid conquest and administration, and delivers important insights into king-city relations, particularly the oft-discussed topic of royal euergetism.

The Introduction sets out the methodology and sources of evidence, with brief nods towards archaeology and landscape. The reader is invited to '[take] the inscriptions seriously as texts' (p. 19), an aspiration that shapes the rest of the book.

Chapter 1 (pp. 26-52) considers the Seleukid presence in Asia Minor before 223. Bickerman's thesis that the legal underpinnings of Seleukid rule were the right of conquest and the right of inheritance is essentially upheld, but is nuanced in the light of recent insights into Greek law as political discourse rather than statute. The narrative of Seleukid violence in Asia Minor is reexamined in detail. The structures of rule became more intensive under Antiochos II (261-246). Most interestingly, the Ptolemaic presence, which inscriptions show was more extensive than literary sources lead us to believe, was written out by later Seleukid documents. Conversely, Seleukos I's brief 'possession' of Asia Minor after Kouroupedion (281) was used to justify later incorporation. Yet Greek cities preserved their identities and could shake off Ptolemaic or Seleukid institutional accretions as soon as opportunity arose, as when P. Sulpicius Galba challenged Antiochos III's claims in 193.

Chapter 2 (pp. 53-105) examines Antiochos' repeated efforts to (re)conquer Asia Minor in 223-197. The quelling of Achaios' revolt in 214 led to repression and reorganization under the governor Zeuxis, at least in Sardeis. Polybios' observation that Antiochos' campaigns in the upper satrapies (212-204) helped secure the western empire as well is given due weight. There may even have been campaigns in Asia Minor. The letter to Amyzon (203 BC; Welles, *Royal Correspondence*, no. 40), now attributed to Zeuxis rather than Antiochos, indicates the nature of such a takeover. M. identifies a process of 'simplification by conquest' as typical of such moments (p. 71). He tentatively accepts Antiochos' alleged pact with Philip V as historical; Philip's aggressions, which 'had the effect of complicating the political mosaic' (p. 81), evoked varied responses from cities. The construction of 'Seleukid space' by Antiochos and Zeuxis involved the elimination of the Ptolemaic presence from Asia Minor by 196, followed by the consolidation and extension of Seleukid power. Embassies to Rome sent by Smyrna, Lampsakos and Alexandreia Troas, however, allowed Seleukid geography to be contested by a Roman 'geography of anxiety' (p. 99), which we should take seriously and which was efficacious, not merely rhetorical. Antiochos' attempts to contest this alternative representation were ultimately unsuccessful.

Throughout these narrative sections, intricate military campaigns and complex source evidence are engagingly, if sometimes lengthily, brought to life. The several

Syrian wars and their consequences are explained subtly and convincingly, and the discussion makes intelligent use of modern theories of empire and of language. The final phase of aggressive Roman diplomacy, M. shows, can be elucidated sharply if we consider that 'conquest and empire ... are not natural objects, but constructions' (p. 103). Likewise, 'power and empire are about language as much as about physical constraint' (p. 104). These and other insights are fed back into the second, longer half of the book, where Seleukid rule is considered more synchronically.

Chapter 3, 'Empire as structures' (pp. 106-78), emphasizes the violence (or the threat of it) that lay behind the superficially smooth process of takeover. Some western cities may not have been garrisoned; Ephesos was; but a chain of forts was valueless without a wider structure of power and legitimation. M. analyses the role of the governor (especially Zeuxis) as both superior and subordinate, and pulls no punches regarding the extraction of wealth from territories and cities (see the excellent discussion on pp. 130-7). The roles of minor officials reveal both the separation of powers and a degree of collaboration between different branches of the administration; there was also interplay between the centre and the provinces. The new régime was made to seem natural and all-powerful through statements in public texts. M. resolves the long-standing debate about whether the Greek cities were, or were not, ruled through legal structures; they were indeed ruled, even those that remained formally independent. Although the latter did not pay tribute, they were subjected to financial demands. The king could even own property within a *polis*. The concept of *autonomia* was not watered down, but legal relationships admitted of local variations, and some cities made an alliance with the king. M. shows that cities' relationships with Antiochos were neither smoke-screens for royal power nor mere flattery of the king. Formal expressions of their status had real effects and were, in an important sense, a way of making empire actual. For the king, this meant 'the integration of the *polis* within an imperial space' and its 'provincialization' (p. 173).

In Chapter 4, 'Empire as interaction' (pp. 179-235), M. focuses on royal euergetism, shedding much new light through a close reading of Antiochos' letters to cities and of the cities' honorific decrees for him and his officers. King and city are 'interlocutors in a dialogue' (p. 184). Each attempts to turn the exchanges to advantage by a careful choice of language. Antiochos tries to guarantee continuity for his dynasty's rule by linking his acts to those of his predecessors, generalizing them to 'all Greeks', endowing himself with virtues, and providing cities with guidelines for good behaviour. Talk of 'gifts' naturalizes royal power and dissuades cities from declining them or showing disloyalty. Civic documents, on the other hand, assign a different role to the king, partly in the hope that petitions for favours will succeed. They assert the city's freedom of action, and may socialize the king's officers within a civic context. They impose obligations on the ruler and — like the king in his letters — create norms and expectations from which, they hope, he will find it hard to deviate. The integration of ruler-cult into city festivals was, like the language of euergetism, two-edged: it allowed the city to claim control of the situation, but necessarily implied the acceptance of the ruler's version of history and of the present. As before, the rhetoric of public utterances exchanged by rulers and ruled was neither a crude diplomatic fiction nor a smokescreen; it was a very real tool for both parties.

Negotiations had practical consequences, and language itself created and recreated the imperial relationship.

M. assembles the epigraphic evidence for Antiochos III's relations with the Greek cities of Asia Minor in an impressive 'Epigraphic dossier' (pp. 284-372), which presents 45 key inscriptions, including many recent discoveries. He gives each text a translation and a detailed commentary on its language and historical implications (a concordance of numbers in previous editions would have been a helpful addition to the indexes). Through his own inspection of many stones, M. offers important new readings. Even on its own, this would be a major contribution to the study of hellenistic history.

M.'s text breaks much new ground. His rigorous and learned re-examination of the narrative history leads to convincing new explanations for many particular episodes. His treatment of the workings of Seleukid rule goes beyond previous studies and is informed by modern theoretical work on imperial structures and discourse. Concepts are adopted from the philosophy of language and from studies of the language of power-relations, in order to sustain wide-ranging arguments about the texts. M. does more with the specifics of their language and formulae than one would previously have thought possible. It must be acknowledged that the writing is often technical; paragraphs and sentences are often long, the language is often complex, and syntax and style occasionally leave something to be desired.

> Although there are a few trivial errors in Greek accents, note that ἐννοῶ (p. 195 n. 58) should read ἐπινοῶ (cf. p. 330). The frequency of editing mistakes is disappointing in an OUP book; a few examples may suffice. On p. 6, the missing comma before 'in person' alters the sense. On p. 9, add 'to' before 'get away with'. On p. 10, remove the colon after the Latin quotation, and in n. 16 read 'Davies'. The choice of prepositions and conjunctions can be infelicitous (e.g. p. 43, 'simultaneously to'; p. 93, 'movements along fixed points'; p. 157 n., 'the difficulty to determine'; p. 209, 'came to [i.e. into] play'). Awkward neologisms abound, such as 'supra-poliad' (pp. 25, 239), 'Smyrnians' (for Smyrnaians; pp. 49, 50, 173), '*polis*-centric' (p. 218), 'extra-poliad' (p. 219), and even 'extra-poliadic' (p. 225). False forms include 'unstability' (p. 105), 'targetting' (p. 133), 'unexactly' (p. 199), 'descendent' (p. 240), 'the second-century' (p. 246, 251), and 'detailled' (p. 250). Although 'Kilikia' is used elsewhere, 'Cilicia' appears on p. 41.

The index is mainly good, though selective and somewhat short, with a number of unhelpfully long strings of page numbers.

This is a strictly academic work that makes no concessions to the 'general reader', but such is its importance that many sections will be required reading for final-year undergraduates and will enthral both researchers and interested non-specialists. M. offers his readers new insights into the workings of a hellenistic empire and into the way in which the imperial relationship was viewed and handled by participants on both sides. His book is a major contribution to hellenistic history.

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