

with other current scholarship. Addressing the present state of research on exemplary discourse in studies on Pliny's letters, for instance, would have been particularly helpful in the book's introduction. Exemplarity comes into focus intermittently over the course of the book, but is never theorized, which is perhaps why the failures of virtue discussed in chapter 5 seem somewhat miscellaneous. Rather than "Arbiter of Virtue," Pliny comes off in chapter 5, as elsewhere, as Provident Defender of His Own Image.

The book is handsomely produced, and I noticed few errors, although two occur in the introduction on a single page. One is minor, a misspelling of John Nicholson's name, which is elsewhere spelled correctly. A potentially more serious mistake is the incorrect publication date for Janet Gurkin Altman's study, *Epistolarity: Approaches to a Form* (Columbus 1982), which is misdated also on page 168 in the text, and in the bibliography.

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Ewen Bowie and Jaś Elsner (edd.), *Philostratus*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009. Pp. xii + 401. Cloth (ISBN: 978-0-521-82720-1) \$135.00.

In the past few years, there has been an increasing academic interest in Philostratus "the Second," one of the most prominent authors of a literary and cultural movement which he himself famously coined the Second Sophistic (*Lives of the Sophists* 1.481). Whereas recent studies have explored individual works by this author (see, for example, T. Schirren, *Philosophos bios: die antike Philosophenbiographie als symbolische Form: Studien zur Vita Apollonii des Philostrat* [Heidelberg 2005] and K. Demoen and D. Praet (edd.), *Theios Sophistes. Essays on Flavius Philostratus' Vita Apollonii* [Leiden 2009]), this volume is the first collection of essays to explore a series of themes throughout the entire Philostratean corpus. The book comprises sixteen chapters, distributed over seven parts. The first of these seven parts serves as an introduction, whereas each of the other six centres around one Philostratean work in particular: *Lives of the Sophists*, *On Apollonius, Heroicus*, *Gymnasticus*, *Letters* and *Imagines* respectively (see 29–32 for details on their genuineness). The only works that are not dealt with in separate chapters, but merely briefly discussed in the introduction, are the dialogue *Nero*, an epigram in the Planudean Anthology (*Anth. Plan.* 110) and the second *Dialexis* or *Discourse* (31–32 and 41–45). The latter is included in an appendix (356–57) and translated in English by Swain (42–43).

In my view, there is no doubt that this volume is a success. It elegantly combines cultural-historical and literary approaches and at the same time firmly focuses on a number of key historical and cultural concepts. As

such, it creates an enjoyable tension that reflects Philostratus' own literary versatility. This approach is perfectly illustrated by Elsner's introductory chapter ("A Protean corpus"). This chapter discusses differences between Philostratus' works (5–6) and each text's specific re-workings of literary genres (7–13), but it also highlights tradition, *sophia*, and *paideia* as loci of thematic convergence throughout the entire corpus (15–17). There is a similar contrast between divergence and convergence when Elsner discusses the position of Philostratus vis-à-vis other authors, the elements he has in common with them (13–14) and those that set him apart (14–15). In the second introductory chapter, Bowie ("Philostratus: the life of a sophist") complements Elsner by focusing primarily on Philostratus as a historical person, his biographical information, and cultural context (19–25). In addition, he supplements Elsner's discussion of the Philostratean corpus by providing a survey of literary genres that are likely to have inspired Philostratus (25–28). Swain ("Culture and nature in Philostratus") also interacts with Elsner's chapter, in that he explores the central importance of tradition, *paideia*, and *sophia* from one particular angle. He traces the intimate connection between nature and (Hellenic) culture through most of Philostratus' works, which he interprets as responses to a changing world and conscious attempts to gather and define Hellenism. In Swain's view, Philostratus foregrounds a more exclusive model of Hellenic culture than had been accepted before and presents this as the natural culture of his elite peers. To explain this agenda, Swain does not turn to the usually adduced account of Greek cultural self-consciousness under Roman dominion. Instead, he briefly and somewhat tantalizingly hints at the possible importance of Christianity as a new cultural force that progressively exposed the weak points of Greek culture (45–46).

Three essays on the *Lives of the Sophists* (*VS*) approach this text from radically different angles. Schmitz ("Narrator and audience in Philostratus' *Lives of the Sophists*"), firstly, provides a narratological counterpart to Bowie's description of the historical Philostratus. He analyzes rhetorical strategies of narratorial self-presentation aimed at creating authority and credibility. The two other essays, by Sidebottom and Rife, deal with *VS* in the light of historical analysis and both focus on the self-presentation of sophists. Sidebottom ("Philostratus and the symbolic roles of the sophist and philosopher") draws upon *VS* and other works to examine cultural self-fashioning and the perception of sophists and philosophers. He qualifies the modern view that in this period one man could combine these two roles. He concentrates on the symbolic role of sophists as conveyed by their appearance, display of outward beauty, characteristic patterns of behaviour, facial expressions, and gestures, thus complementing (but not citing) other recent scholarship on *VS* (for example, C. Castelli, "Ritratti di sofisti. Fisiognomica ed ethos nelle *Vitae sophistarum* di Filostrato," in E. Amato and J. Schamp (edd.), *Ethopoïia. La représentation de caractères entre fiction scolaire et réalité vivante à l'époque impériale et tardive*. *Cardo* / 3. *Études et Textes pour l'Identité Culturelle de l'Antiquité Tardive*. [Salerno

2005] 1–10, and E. Bowie, “Portrait of the sophist as a young man,” in B. McGing and J. Mossman (edd.), *The Limits of Ancient Biography*. [Swansea 2006] 141–53). Rife (“The deaths of the sophists: Philostratean biography and elite funerary practices”), finally, sets out to offer a balanced account of differentiation within the social class of sophists. He ingeniously reads their funerary practices described in *VS* as a means of shaping elite social identity and communicating about social status, local affiliations, and cultural achievement.

Two of the three essays on *The Life of Apollonius* (VA) explore the themes of wisdom and tradition. Platt (“Virtual visions: *Phantasia* and the perception of the divine in *The Life of Apollonius of Tyana*”) discusses how significant the Ethiopian debate in book 6 is for our understanding of the use of art and its interconnections with vision, knowledge, wisdom, teaching, education, *phantasia*, and the divine (possibly useful in connection to some of these points is A. Manieri, *L’immagine poetica nella teoria degli antichi. Phantasia ed enargeia* [Pisa 1998]). Flinterman (“‘The ancestor of my wisdom’: Pythagoras and Pythagoreism in *Life of Apollonius*”) focuses on Pythagoras (and to a lesser extent, Socrates) as a paradigm of wisdom underlying the construction of Apollonius. His essay resonates with Van Dijk’s (“The *Odyssey* of Apollonius: an intertextual paradigm”), which deals with Odysseus as a paradigm of Apollonius and, like Flinterman, points out the conscious construction of ambiguity in Philostratus’ narration.

The two chapters on *Heroicus* also have a common thematic focus (the *Heroicus*’ central concern with Greek culture and identity), which is again explored from two very different angles. Whitmarsh (“Performing heroics: language, landscape and identity in Philostratus’ *Heroicus*”) considers the representation of Greek identity and culture in this text to be intimately interwoven with the construction of geography, social class, and literary self-consciousness. Like Swain, Whitmarsh examines connections between nature and tradition, and, like Flinterman and Van Dijk, he emphasizes the importance of consciously-constructed ambiguity, indeterminacy and elusiveness. Rutherford (“Black sails to Achilles: the Thessalian pilgrimage in Philostratus’ *Heroicus*”), for his part, primarily sees the Thessalian pilgrimage sent to the tomb of Achilles as an instantiation of Greek culture. He analyzes Philostratus’ representation of this event against the background of Greek tradition as we know it from other (primarily historical) sources.

Almost all chapters dealing with *Gymnasticus*, *Letters*, and *Imagines* thoroughly explore *paideia* as a central theme. König (“Training athletes and interpreting the past in Philostratus’ *Gymnasticus*”), firstly, offers a rich and balanced reading of *paideia*’s careful positioning of gymnastics within the contours of *paideia* (notably in dialogue with Galen). His chapter is reminiscent of Whitmarsh’s chapter, as it also identifies the connections between the text’s subject matter on the one hand, and the meta-literary and self-reflexive concerns of the author on the other. Goldhill (“Constructing

identity in Philostratus' *Love Letters*"), secondly, reads Philostratus' letters as manuals on rhetoric and erotic self-expression, concerned primarily with the central issue of performativity in relation to the Greek intellectual and cultural environment. The emphasis on *paideia* is also present in two of the three chapters in the last part of the volume, which deals with *Imagines*. Dubel ("Colour in Philostratus' *Imagines*") points out that the attention that this work pays to colours is unusual in the tradition of ephrastic depiction (and differs significantly from representation in *VA*, 320–21). She discusses a number of characteristics of Philostratus' representation and connects them with the central importance of *paideia* (317–20). She also underlines the importance of liminality in the representation and hermeneutical functions of colour (313), which echoes Whitmarsh's account of the significance of liminality in geographical representation in *Heroicus* (215–16). Newby ("Absorption and erudition in Philostratus' *Imagines*") explores interconnections between *paideia* and the perception of visual art. She focuses on the tension between absorption in the world of the image on the one hand, and a detached intellectual, cultivated, or philosophic viewing on the other, which seeks to constrain the power of the visual by textual or verbal explanations. Bann's chapter ("Philostratus and the *Narcissus* of Caravaggio"), finally, at first sight seems a bit tangential to the overall aim of the volume because it focuses on Caravaggio's *Narcissus*, which arguably draws upon Philostratus' text of the same name in *Imagines*. However, it describes the relationship between word and image and therefore is thematically consistent with the rest of this section, and Newby's chapter in particular.

As this review indicates, this excellent volume is not only a highly useful, well-documented, and accessible starting point for newcomers in the field, but also a solid and coherent collection of subtle, rich, and innovative essays that make it indispensable to students and specialists of Philostratus in particular and the Second Sophistic in general.

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