

Ethopoia. La représentation de caractères entre fiction scolaire et réalité vivante à l'époque impériale et tardive. Édité par EUGENIO AMATO – JACQUES SCHAMP. Cardo: Études et Textes pour l'identité culturelle de l'Antiquité Tardive 3. Helios Editrice, Salerno 2005. ISBN 88-88123-10-5. XV, 231 pp. EUR 38.

Ethopoia was one of the progymnasmata, or exercises, that formed part of rhetorical education from the Late Antique until the late Byzantine period. Amato and Schamp have edited a sophisticated selection of studies ranging from the definition of the concept and its place in the progymnasmata, to the use of ethopoia in the literary tradition during Late Antiquity. The work is crucially important for the understanding how literary characters were created in ancient literature.

Mika Hakkarainen

From Hellenism to Islam. Cultural and Linguistic Change in the Roman Near East. Edited by HANNAH COTTON – ROBERT HOYLAND – JONATHAN PRICE – DAVID WASSERSTEIN. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge – New York 2009. ISBN 978-0-521-87581-3. XXX, 481 pp. GBP 65, USD 125.

From Hellenism to Islam is dedicated to long-term changes in the Middle East from Alexander the Great until Muhammad the Prophet. (Actually, its scope extends to the second millennium CE as far as Egypt is concerned.) The fascinating book sprang from the research initiative at the Institute for Advanced Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 2002–3 and the project known as "Corpus inscriptionum Iudaeae-Palaestinae".

As Fergus Millar states in his Introduction, the work makes evident the changes of focus of recent scholarship in ancient history: the central role is given to documents, not to literary texts, from the Eastern Mediterranean. Important parts of the book are dedicated to language use, language choice and language contact. The emphasis is on written evidence, and archaeological material is the focus of only one contribution (by Ernst Axel Knauf, on the monument of the Benei Ḥezir at Jerusalem). The 18 articles are distributed into five sections, which deal with Latin as the language of power, the social and legal institutions in the documentary evidence, the epigraphic language of religion, linguistic and cultural metamorphoses and continuities, and the rise of Arabic in the area. My review does not follow this grouping.

To begin, Werner Eck and Benjamin Isaac discuss the use of Latin – in epigraphy – in the Roman Near East in separate contributions. The approach is fairly similar in both: after a look at the use of Latin in the east in general, the scholars discuss the most important cities. Eck concludes that Rome's representatives in the eastern provinces "never sought to impose the use of Latin" (39). However, a certain power dimension is present: in bilingual inscriptions the Latin text almost always comes first. For Eck, the notable amount of epigraphic evidence in Latin in Caesarea Maritima implies the presence of Latin speakers, i.e., the establishment of a veteran settlement. Isaac, who has argued against the existence of a veteran settlement in Caesarea, starts his article with an entertaining sociolinguistic quotation from rabbi Jonathan of Eleutheropolis on the distribution of languages into different domains of use: "Four lan-

guages are appropriately used in the world. And these are: Greek for song (= poetry). Latin for war. Syriac (Aramaic) for mourning. Hebrew for speaking." In his conclusions, Isaac goes somewhat further than Eck; he stresses the variation between the individual contexts in which Latin was used. The position of Latin also depended on the local traditions in the cities, and the local allegiance to Hellenism (my term) probably also played a role. He emphasizes that the use of Latin "set apart" or "differentiated" its users from the surrounding communities. One could think that after two contributions by such distinguished scholars, little more could remain to be said; but in my view, Isaac's contribution in particular opens up new avenues for future research.

Three articles focus on Jewish and Christian epigraphy and euergetism; the authors are Seth Schwartz, Walter Ameling and Leah Di Segni. Schwartz plausibly argues that the unusual epigraphic culture of Jerusalem in the period before its destruction in 70 CE, with no evidence of euergetism, was due to the special position of the city as the host of the Temple and a center of pilgrimage. Josephus' views on euergetism are cited in support of this. Ameling detects differences in the epigraphic habit of the Jewish communities in Asia Minor and in Syria, arguing that Jewish cultural resilience was stronger in the latter. In the poleis, the Jews organized themselves into associations and generally did not participate in euergetism. Di Segni discusses Christian building inscriptions from the three Palestines, Arabia and southern Phoenice during the transition to Islam. The large amount of dated texts allow her to conclude that the number of urban building projects declined, but the non-urban building projects became relatively more numerous.

Angelos Chaniotis' article on ritual performances captured on stone, namely the so-called confession inscriptions, is one of the highlights of the volume. That the genre is only attested in Greek epigraphy makes a discussion on language choice impossible, but the use of a technical term borrowed from Latin, ἐξemplάριον (< *exemplar*) to indicate that the inscribed stele is a "perpetual exemplum" for others is a most interesting detail (p. 140). Magical texts of a different kind are discussed by Gideon Bohak. He uses the second millennium material from the Cairo Genizah and discovers a magical recipe from late antiquity (if not earlier); the methodology could be used to discover other similar ancient texts. The different copying phases have produced fascinating code-switching in the document as it now stands (pp. 333–4).

The local influence of the Roman state religion connects the articles of Natalie Belayche and Ted Kaizer. Belayche plausibly concludes that the impact of Rome on the religion in the cities of Palestine was always more due to Roman presence in the area than to the actual diffusion of Roman religious practices. On pp. 184–5, the author discusses the "Roman names" of certain bishops; however, many are Roman *praenomina*, which were used as *cognomina* or individual names especially in the east. Other names, like *Cassianus* and *Maximus*, are well attested in predominantly Greek areas in imperial times, and it is not wrong to say that they had become part of the Greek name stock. The multilingual city of Dura-Europos is discussed by Kaizer, who claims that Latin and Palmyrenean were restricted to specific groups of the local population, and Greek was used as a *lingua franca*. He argues that the presence of Roman religion, immortalized by the Feriale Duranum, was superficial.

In their contribution, Jonathan J. Price and Shlomo Naeh look at the practice of transcription in the ancient world, with useful methodological considerations. The most interesting part is about the transcriptions of the Bible in rabbinic literature: Price and Naeh argue that the rabbis of the Talmuds maintained that the essential requirement for the holiness of a biblical

book was the script (i.e., the Aramaic script), not the language in which it was written. When the authors look at epigraphic texts, they overestimate their formulaicity, as for instance on p. 270–1. According to them, in *CIL* VI 15450, from Rome, written in Latin but in Greek script, the "names and age were added as if to a template". In fact, the document is not particularly formulaic: the syntactic subject changes between the first and the second sentence, and the word order, with *vixit* following *annos*, is relatively rare in Rome.

The common theme in Hannah Cotton's and Arietta Papaconstantinou's contributions is the continuity and discontinuity of language use, especially legal documentary traditions, in cases of language shift. Cotton detects continuity of Nabataean law in a Petra papyrus and offers interesting insights into the questions of why traditions of legal documents in a certain language become extinct. Papaconstantinou discusses the fate of Greek in Egypt in the seventh and eighth centuries and finds that its use, as well as the allegiance to the Byzantine Empire, evidently was not confined to small elite. Another law-related contribution is Marijana Riel's discussion on the polysemous term *θηρατικός* in inscriptions. She concludes that such inscriptions allow us to see the Greeks and Romans "at their best". A diachronic approach would have been interesting, but was apparently not possible, because the material comes from within a relatively short time span.

Sebastian Brock and Dan Barag provide overviews of Edessene Syriac inscriptions in Syria, and Samaritan written documents, respectively. Brock's contribution contains an interesting detail illustrating the changes in the functions of epigraphy that took place in late antiquity: the phraseology of the inscriptions is similar to contemporaneous colophons of manuscripts.

Robert Hoyland's article on Arabs in late Roman epigraphy is in fact more about historiography than epigraphy. He offers an important historiographical insight: the involvement of Arabs in the affairs of the Roman empire in late antiquity was in fact very similar to that of the Franks and Goths in the west: all were increasingly employed as units in the army, and wanted to be a part of the Roman world. Rome's interaction with the western and the eastern "barbarians" may have caused a tendency towards a more unitary leadership in both.

Finally, Tonio Sebastian Richter focuses on the language shift from Coptic to Arabic in Egypt. He dates the contraction of Coptic to the 13th century. According to Richter, the shift was not necessarily due to religious reasons, but to the material and intellectual prosperity associated with the Arabic language. Richter also convincingly applies Carol Myers-Scotton's "matrix language turnover hypothesis" to this particular language shift.

To sum up, the articles form a well-conceived whole. The reader is given interesting glimpses, for instance, into the multitude of languages in the ancient world (Price and Naeh, 257), on the different Syriac languages (Brock, 289, where a figure would have been useful), on the power dimensions of languages in a multilingual society, and on the different historical phases of Egyptian (Richter, 401–3).

As to the shortcomings, one could say that many articles could have made more use of onomastic scholarship and data, which is not exploited to the full (however, Papaconstantinou is a refreshing exception). On the technical side, the only thing this writer missed was an up-to-date map of the relevant area. In any case, the book represents a new paradigm of which much can be expected in the near future.