

conto della romanizzazione (pp. 89 e sgg.) che in pratica significò urbanizzazione. Riguardo alla religione, la raccolta, di per sé utile, delle numerose testimonianze epigrafiche di divinità venerate nella provincia avrebbe approfittato da una più articolata contestualizzazione dei dati rispetto alla comunicazione religiosa, ai rituali locali e regionali, nonché al comportamento religioso dei soldati e di altri immigrati. Inoltre le diverse forme culturali e sociali osservabili all'interno del territorio provinciale meritavano di essere approfondite in modo da evitare l'impressione che si sia trattato di un'area culturalmente uniforme. Le illustrazioni sono ben scelte e la veste tipografica è di discreta qualità. Purtroppo sono rimaste nel testo alcune sviste irritanti. A p. 23, per esempio, il nome corretto di "Didius Terentius Scaurianus" (governatore nel 109/112 d. C.) è D(ecimus) Terentius Scaurianus, e "Lucius Grassus" (procuratore della Dacia Porolissensis nel 123 d. C.) deve essere sostituito da Livius Gratus.

Mika Kajava

ERICH S. GRUEN: *Rethinking the Other in Antiquity*. Princeton University Press, Princeton – Oxford 2011. ISBN 978-0-691-14852-6. XIV, 415 pp. GBP 27.95.

Ancient perceptions and portrayals of barbarians have undeniably received much attention since the publication of *Le miroir d'Hérodote* by François Hartog (1980), *Le Barbare* by Yves-Albert Dauge (1981), and *Inventing the Barbarian* by Edith Hall (1989). Since those works, the Greco-Roman literary depictions of peoples labelled as "barbarian" have predominantly been treated either through their negative connotations, or through the traditional literary *topoi* that negotiated with what was "known" about the foreigners. This twofold viewpoint was exemplified in Paul Cartledge's *The Greeks. A portrait of self and others* (1993), and of course Benjamin Isaac's widely debated *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity* (2004). Professor Gruen, however, takes his cue from a slightly earlier, although similarly influential publication: the 1975 monograph *Alien Wisdom* by Arnaldo Momigliano, and its largely unprecedented view of Greeks as being perpetually inspired by their immediate and further-away neighbours. By focusing on constructions of collective identity that sought connections between ancient groups instead of highlighting differences, Gruen intends to present a corrective to what he sees as quasi-orthodoxy in recent scholarship. He does this with remarkable erudition, a broad basis in modern scholarship, and a consistent eye for bringing variation into a subject that has recently (with some remarkable exceptions) become a rather monotonous rehearsal of a "Greco-Roman *leyenda negra*".

Part One, "Impressions of the 'Other'" constitutes a selection of case studies on some well-known ancient sources. Operating from the start in a constructive mode, Gruen begins (Ch. 1-2) with the image of Persia in Greek imagination – a construct that is often cited as one of the fundamentals of the categorical Greek view of "barbarians", and furthermore a strong influence on the whole western tradition of Orientalism. There are no great surprises in the choice of source material: Aeschylus, Herodotus, visual representations, Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*, and the postulated attitude of Alexander provide the chapters' framework. Next, Egypt's ambivalent position in the Classical imagination is taken up (Ch. 3). As was the case with Persia, it is this very ambivalence within such an intertwined field of cultural encounter that makes it possible to find support for both exceptionally positive and exceptionally negative readings.

The predominance of the "alien wisdom" paradigm in connection with Egypt has been noted in a number of studies, and most cases do seem rather *ad hoc* constructions than any sustained prejudice; for instance, Gruen's interpretation of Juvenal's *Satire* 15 goes a long way towards rehabilitating that infamous piece.

From Egypt the study travels westward, with Ch. 4 being dedicated to the concept of *Punica fides*, which seems a slightly narrow way of examining the Phoenico-Carthaginian image in Greco-Roman literature. The inevitable attempt to negate the existence of a mid-Republican Roman "categorization of Carthaginians as chronic transgressors of treaties" is hampered by our meagre sources, while, elsewhere, the lack of "unequivocal consistency" (p. 133) cannot be used to argue for a non-existence of iconospheres, as they are seldom, if ever, unequivocally consistent. Overall, Gruen has a tendency to read instances of positively evaluated individuals (e.g. Moschus of Sidon) as indications of a wider absence of negative imagery, yet he on other occasions may demand from an author a "blanket condemnation" of negative attributes instead of being similarly content with individual negative assessments.

The Gauls are the subject of Ch. 5, with emphasis on Caesar's portrayal of them, but including some preliminary words on the extensive tradition of writing about Gauls that he inherited. In this chapter, Gruen unfortunately leaves unaddressed the variegated interpretative potential of the differing registers of describing the northerners: it could be argued that poetic or aetiological accounts would bequeath quite different sets of images to the subsequent tradition than would texts of philosophical, technical or ethnographic nature. If, for instance, Diodorus' Gallic passages are not interpreted (and attributed) more closely than they are here, they produce very slight evidence indeed. Likewise, Caesar's omission of magic (*later* associated with druids by Pliny) is irrelevant, for he would probably not have admitted such a supernatural element into his *Commentarii*, judging by his general avoidance of the supernatural. Neither should reports of shocking things be discounted as relevant evidence: an author catering to an audience "more interested in the striking than the subtle" does not invalidate the currency of an iconosphere – on the contrary.

Chapter 6 is devoted to the Germans as they are treated by Tacitus, with little attention paid to other contemporaries, which would have complicated the picture beyond Tacitus' own literary agenda. Tacitus is, famously, occupied with a complex moralizing project that sought its aims through irony among other techniques, but even so the effect that he strove for depended on some sort of shared "knowledge" of Germans – and as with all outgroups, this "knowledge" would surely have included negative connotations as well. Chapter 7 concerns Tacitus' alleged defamation of Jews, which obviously has attracted a lot of attention in the past, while Ch. 8 ("People of Color") examines a group which similarly have been easily seen as suffering discrimination in antiquity – partly on account of the treatment they have received more recently. Set behind the inevitable early modern and modern backdrop, both the Jewish and "Aethiopian" representations are relatively easily demonstrated as quite nuanced.

Part Two, "Connections with the 'Other'", breaks new ground with much less effort than Part One, where Gruen engages in a case-by-case debate with scholars such as Hall and Isaac among others. While Part Two suffers from occasional repetition, it nonetheless brings up many topics perhaps under-discussed since Momigliano, and makes a valuable addition to the understanding of the dynamics of cultural appropriation in antiquity, a subject which has even more recently been well served by *Tales of the Barbarians* by Greg Woolf (Wiley-Blackwell, 2011). To begin with, Chapter 9 deals with foundation legends; though perhaps underestimat-

ing (globally) the prevalence of myths of foreign descent, Gruen nonetheless makes several good points concerning the limited currency and effectiveness of myths of autochthony (he is very probably correct in imagining other Greeks to have been rather underwhelmed by the Athenians' pretensions). Pelasgians, the Trojan and Arcadian origins of Rome, and Israel's origin stories are treated extremely competently.

Ch. 10 examines fictitious kinships between Greeks and "Others", approaching the theme through such legendary figures as Perseus. Regarding this famous case, Gruen may be over-interpreting our evidence by envisioning the famous Persian claim for kinship between the Argives and Persians as much more than an *ad hoc* device of argumentation. Similarly, to interpret the "Greek *agones*" of Egyptian Chemmis in Hdt. 2,91, held reportedly in honor of Perseus, as genuine multiculturalism is not as uncontroversial as Gruen makes it sound: since Herodotus says that the Chemmitans are the only Egyptians to have such games, this would in all likelihood classify them as following a "Greek style" in his thought. The largely Hellenistic cases of mythical Athenian-Egyptian connections and the "legend of Nectanebos" are on the whole much more secure, and attest to a desire to forge links between the cultures. Chapter 11 looks at the theme of fictitious kinships regarding the Jews, while Ch. 12 already foreshadows the brief "Conclusions" section, recapitulating many of the earlier points of the book. Greco-Jewish and Greco-Phoenician constructions, the Jewish portrayals of the Gentiles, and the many forms of Roman adaptations and appropriations are all included, with an abundance of perceptive remarks regarding all.

*Rethinking the Other* and Benjamin Isaac's *Invention of Racism* have both been published by Princeton University Press – and the books contain many similarities. Both, for instance, proceed by combining historical developments with highlighted geographical foci, which generally works better than the cumbersome and abstract method of Dauge. Indeed, ideally they should be used as goal posts by subsequent students to the subject. Following either one by itself would result in a skewed viewpoint concerning the ancient perception about foreign groups, while ultimately the most interesting interpretations are almost sure to lie somewhere between these interconnected, indeed mirrored, studies.

What is slightly perplexing in *Rethinking the Other* is the frequency with which a "playful one-upmanship" is postulated as one of the main motives for authors of cultural commentary (e.g. Herodotus, Artapanus). Readings based on humor, upsetting the expectations of the audience, and ironic subversion of commonly held stereotypes (which apparently does not qualify as evidence for ethnic prejudice for Gruen) abound. Yet, particularly with fragmentary or incompletely transmitted sources, we have very little grounds for reconstructing the epistemic regime which such literary satire is imagined to subvert – something that does not come across consistently in the book. Certainly, "the ancient Mediterranean was a multicultural world" (p. 253), but, realistically speaking, multiculturalism has seldom meant the eradication of partisan or xenophobic stereotypes through the whole breadth of the population. As sympathetic as it might be to envision an overriding "relish in cultural difference" among the ancient literary elites, taking such a posture too far leads to a misleadingly general sanitization of our sources' ideologies. Despite this determined over-optimism, however, *Rethinking the Other* is an extremely valuable departure from a scholarly viewpoint that has threatened to become ossified of late, and as such is very worthwhile to everyone involved in the study of ancient conceptions of foreignness and belonging.

*Antti Lampinen*