

Introduction

The High and Late Imperial periods have, for most of the 20th century – not to mention the 19th – attracted little interest in classical scholarship. Even after attention shifted away from an approach to literature and material culture predominantly directed at their respective qualities as art, both Classical Archaeologists and Classicists tended to limit themselves to the study of the ‘classical’ periods – pre-Imperial or, even better, pre-Hellenistic Greek culture on the one hand, and Roman culture from the first century BC to the first century AD on the other. Studies of the High and Late Imperial periods concentrated above all upon those objects and questions which involved political history in a narrow sense, the history of events, and state ‘propaganda,’ such as state reliefs, portraits of the Emperors, self-representation of the élites, specific inscriptions or texts by ancient historians (the exceptions confirm the rule). As for the rest of the material and literary remains, in the best cases scholars tended to present these in editions and catalogues, but still to accord them relatively little consideration beyond that, because of their (allegedly) low artistic or literary quality and because of the (allegedly) limited historical value of the information they supplied.

However, this has changed considerably within the last 15 to 20 years. Scholars increasingly recognize that much of what used to be considered epigonal and unoriginal, merely an expression of alienation from the world or of a general retreat into the private domain, in fact occupied a central position within the symbolic capital of Imperial society. This communication on a symbolic level functioned not merely as the representation or image for other, more vital domains but was itself a decisive and active factor in the discourses of power. *Paideia* as knowledge about the past and about tradition means “knowing the world”, as Marco Galli phrased it, and thus means knowing what is important in the present. Representing the past, either in words or in images, has a vital significance. It is from this point of view that Imperial Greek literature in particular, which re-appropriates the Greek traditions of the Classical age of the fifth and fourth centuries BC, has been ‘discovered’ in recent scholarship. Works from this period, be they ‘literary’ in the narrow sense, or historical, medical, physiognomic etc., are thereby often discussed with regard to a phenomenon, to which the name ‘Second Sophistic’ has first been assigned by Philostratus. Even now the exact meaning of the term remains controversial, in Philostratus himself and

in the usage of his contemporaries, as well as in modern discussions. Regardless of such terminological disagreements, however, recent scholarship has made it clear that (1) texts by some authors whom Philostratus does not mention likewise possess formal, thematic, and functional qualities in common with the productions of the Philostratean sophists, and that (2) what is involved is not a purely literary phenomenon, but a value system and mode of thought which is expressed in a variety of ways.

Yet, these statements, as familiar as they may sound by now, have consequences which have not yet been entirely appreciated. If it is indeed the case that the concepts and evaluations which lie behind the texts of the Second Sophistic, correspond to a general ideal or even a common élite *habitus* in Bourdieu's sense of the word, as Thomas Schmitz has most forcefully argued, a number of questions spring immediately to mind. First, what media and cultural spheres were involved? We should expect to find these concepts and value systems not only in texts (let alone texts just of particular genres) but in material from various aspects of life and in different media. Despite some recent and most encouraging studies, 'art' and material culture in general have received particularly little attention in this connection. But these areas should play a crucial role when we explore the scope of the phenomena at stake here and even in the realm of texts, various genres have been much neglected so far. Second, how might this mode of thought and this *habitus* be more precisely described? What exactly are the common points which the various genres share, over the course of a long period of time, in different regions of the Empire? On the other hand, what are the differences arising from individual generic requirements, from varying contexts of production and reception, from different functions, from the personal preferences of producers or patrons, or from regional peculiarities? Third, what purpose did this *habitus* – if indeed it was a *habitus* – serve? Or, to put it more carefully, what were its results? It has been argued that the Second Sophistic was primarily about Greek identity. But whether or not we agree to apply the term Second Sophistic to texts (as well as images and actions?) concerned with Greek identity alone, there are many phenomena quite typical of the sophists and their writings which, at the same time, have nothing to do with this notion and which are accepted even by individuals and groups of people without any interest in Greek identity at all.

It goes without saying that these questions cannot be answered by any single scholar since it is indeed the "*World of the Second Sophistic*" which is at stake here. In March 2003, Angelos Chaniotis, Glenn W. Most and I invited a group of experts on various fields concerned with this world to a conference held at the University of Heidelberg. Most of the contributions to this volume are based on

papers given on the occasion. Some participants chose not to publish their papers and some central questions were not addressed at the conference. So, it seemed appropriate to round off the publication by inviting a few additional scholars to provide contributions. Though it was clear from the start that the present volume would not be able to provide a manual to the “World of the Second Sophistic”, or to cover the period as a whole, the following chapters aim to clarify the connections between individual phenomena shaping this world – the complexity of their interrelations as well as the historical impact of contemporary symbolic discourse.

The first chapter, “Beyond Greek Identity and the Sophists”, includes contributions exploring the margins of the Second Sophistic, while also questioning some of the widely held opinions concerning what it is all about. Christopher Jones takes a fresh look at the issue of ethnic identity. He argues that the preoccupation in recent scholarship with a perceived opposition between Greek and Roman resulting in Greek patriotism (sometimes identified with Hellenism), has distracted scholars from recognising various other loyalties. Taking Pausanias and Aelius Aristides as examples, he demonstrates that the central common element in their writings is not Hellenism but antiquity and tradition. The real identity of these *pepaideumenoi* proves to be a complex affair, in which Hellenic identity is just one kind among others. Local patriotism as well as civic, regional, and even barbarian loyalties are anything but mutually exclusive and instead create multi-faceted identities.

Bahadır Yıldırım’s contribution supports these conclusions, showing that not only individuals but also entire cities proudly present multi-faceted identities. The mythological reliefs decorating the basilica of Aphrodisias, a prominent building within the city, are far from being just illustrations of foundation narratives. Yıldırım reads them as part of the civic diplomacy of Aphrodisias and as a “visual encomium” for its people and lands. The reliefs claim for themselves the virtues and value systems common to the entire civilised (i.e. Greek) world corresponding to *topoi* known from encomiastic literature, including *eugeneia* and great antiquity. At the same time, they boast their local identity, with its strong ties to the Near East through founders like Semiramis, Ninos and Gordios. The inextricable connection between these double loyalties is highlighted by the fact that Semiramis and Ninos are presented as the exemplary couple of civic benefactors.

Glen W. Bowersock locates an outsider like Artemidorus in the context of the Second Sophistic as an important witness of his age. After proposing a late second to early third century date for the *Oneirokritika* on the basis of the personal names referred to in book 4, he examines two sorts of dreams, those refer-

ring to things particularly Roman, and those referring to the sophists' public performances before finally studying Artemidorus' language. Bowersock shows that Artemidorus' view of the Second Sophistic is exceptional in that he distances himself deliberately not only from the practitioners of the occult sciences but also from sophists, orators, and other theatrical performers all of whose arts he regards as arts of deception. Though Artemidorus is both a learned figure and a good orator, his language clearly deviates from the norms of high sophistic rhetorical Greek, referring instead to local forms of *paideia* based in Asia Minor. His view on Hellenized Roman culture and what it has to offer is both knowing and uniquely critical, introducing us to a perspective on the world of the Second Sophistic which may have been more widespread than we can know.

Ewen Bowie's contribution might seem not to fit the rubric of this chapter exactly, since it certainly does not go 'beyond the sophists' and it results in a quite coherent picture. However, this is not what he had asked for. Rather, the question he poses is about the regional differences and cultural variations to be expected within a real world *as opposed* to what, in Philostratus, appears to be a coherent and unified sophistic whole. Bowie analyses three aspects of sophistic activity, relating them to the sites where sophists are recorded to have been born or buried, to places where they have performed, or been honoured etc.; he also provides some interesting statistics and new data. He begins with an exploration of the linguistics and stylistic preferences in, as well as attitudes towards Attic purity, and proceeds to examine the types of declamations and particularly the declamatory subjects chosen, before finally looking at the literary genres preferred by the sophists in general. In all three respects, Bowie finds less variation than he had expected. The variations which he does find seem, with the exception of the novel, to be determined not particularly by geographical factors but by the idiosyncrasies of certain sophists.

The second chapter on "Modes and Media" includes contributions which seek to extend the corpus of material and phenomena relating to the Second Sophistic and its major features. Thomas Schmitz aims to rehabilitate the fictional letters of Alciphron, not as literary master pieces but as telling caricatures of sophistic habits. Presenting us with letters by such marginal characters as fishermen, country-folk, parasites, and courtesans, all surprisingly knowledgeable in Athenian history and topography and strangely using techniques and topoi known from rhetorical handbooks, Alciphron unmasks the Athens of the sophists as a sort of "fairy-tale land where even simple country-folk are Atticists and sophists." Through his self-reflexive, unmistakably artificial texts, so Schmitz argues, Alciphron offers a meta-commentary on declamations and *prolaliai* com-

parable only to Lucian's dialogues, and on sophistic literary production in general.

As might be expected from both the preoccupations of current scholarship and the objectives of this chapter, the majority of these papers refer to material culture of some kind. Ralf von den Hoff studies a strange group of mythological sculptures showing horrible acts of violence in colossal form like Medea with her dead children, Achilles with the bloodstained body of Troilos, or the punishment of Dirke, who was dragged to death by a bull. These sculptures clearly do not illustrate normative *exempla* like so many other sculptures did, but rather, in public buildings like the huge imperial baths of Rome, they are displayed as aesthetic objects, as masterpieces of artistic *techné* which overcome the restrictions posed by the material, not only in creating oversized and highly complex sculptures but also in being able to make "real *furor* [...] appear in the viewer's mind via immovable stone." In their emotionalised themes as well as in their 'rhetorical' techniques, von den Hoff argues, they closely parallel features also found in (epideictic) rhetoric and literary ecphrasis.

Ralf Krumeich introduces one of the most prominent features of Imperial age material culture, namely portraiture. If it is indeed true that some of the central ideas we find in the sophistic texts shaped the *habitus* of a much wider élite, we should find them also in *the* medium of individual self-representation of the age. Krumeich's study examines a small group of portraits, which have the rare advantage of coming from a common context, the Diogenes gymnasium near the Roman agora at Athens, and of representing identifiable individuals, *kosmetai* and other officials of this institution. While, through their office in the very centre of Greek education and identity, *kosmetai* were particularly connected with *paideia*, at the same time they were neither teachers nor specialists of any kind but members of the local élite taking over the office for a certain period of time only. According to Krumeich's analysis, the portraits belong to one of three typological groups referring to the imperial fashion or else to a greater or lesser extent to styles and even particular portraits of poets, philosophers, historians, or orators from the Classical and Hellenistic age of Greece. None of them indicates a personal preference for a particular historical person, but they refer more generally to a great tradition of *paideia*, not opposed to, but clearly compatible with, praise of the emperor and ambitions within the Roman social system, which are also apparent in the inscriptions for these same persons.

My own contribution widens the scope of this investigation to portraits of emperors and unknown private individuals, but focuses mainly on the city of Rome. Taking a stand in the highly controversial debate about whether 'intellectual' ambitions are expressed in portraiture at all, and if so, how this can be es-

tablished and what kind of 'intellectualism' patrons of portraits refer to, I argue (1) that portraiture does indeed reflect the ideal of being a *pepaideumenos*, and (2) that portraiture can demonstrate perfectly how widespread this ideal was in terms of both time and space, especially if we include portraits on sarcophagi. I suggest (3) that the *paideia* referred to is usually not a specific one (like philosophy, as has often been suggested), but that through the iconography chosen the patrons take care both to promote a rather wide range of knowledge and to present themselves self-confidently, sometimes even with ostentation, as full members of an ambitious Roman citizenry.

Peter Weiß introduces another vast class of materials into the discussion, namely coins. He presents a synopsis of how the cities of the Imperial East and their élite employ the local mints to promote their respective virtues, using coins as a mass medium for a kind of visual panegyric. As in the first two papers, a picture emerges which shows various interconnected loyalties. According to the analysis of Weiß, three of them are particularly prominent – the Roman Empire, the norms of Hellenic culture, and the network of competitive cities of Asia Minor which proudly boasts local identities. Reference to a great past and to foundation myths is as important a part of topical praise of cities as the achievements of these cities and their élite in the present, and both can be closely connected with and supplemented by the praise of an emperor.

Three papers are particularly concerned with the human body either as a focus of sophistic writing or as a major component of Greek élite identity. These are, accordingly, grouped together in the third chapter. Onno van Nijf argues strongly against the view that physical education in the Greek East was in decline while, at the same time, literary *paideia* became 'the hallmark of élite identity'. Focussing on the case of Oinoanda in Lycia without, however, limiting his study to this site, he demonstrates the crucial role of athletics for the self-esteem of members of the local élites, a role not opposed to that of literary *paideia* but complementing it as a mark of Greek as well as local identity. Basing his argument primarily on epigraphic evidence, van Nijf goes on to suggest that, in reality, athletics and athletic victories were of even more interest to the local élites than literary education since the former was one of the rare fields in which the young could demonstrate their *philotimia* while the latter was not only less attractive to this age group but also to a great extent in the hands of specialists.

Björn Ewald, too, finds athletics at the heart of the Greek value system when he analyses the iconography of sarcophagi produced in Athens. In a systematic comparison of Attic and Roman sarcophagi, he discovers that the ideal of *paideia* as knowledge of tradition serves as the common framework for the whole of Mediterranean society, with myth being the common mode of expression. Con-

tent, however, differs dramatically and tellingly. Roman sarcophagi present a much wider range of subjects using myths as *exempla* for personal experiences (in particular the severe feeling of loss caused by the death of a loved one) or for virtues their patrons claim for themselves. Attic sarcophagi, on the contrary, show a restricted and much less personalised range of subjects all concerned with the social norms, roles, and institutions particularly relevant to a Greek or even Athenian identity. This relates to the subjects chosen, like battle scenes and in particular the Trojan War or the battle at Marathon as parts of the great myth-historical past, but it also refers to the ways these and other subjects are presented. Mythological scenes are conspicuously lacking in narrative elements but are, instead, preoccupied with the presentation of the male body and on what it can achieve. A considerable part of the decoration thus focuses on an Athenian (and/or Greek) identity constructed through the male body, referring, so Ewald argues, to the old and still important institution of *ephebeia*.

In Manfred Horstmanshoff's contribution, the body also plays a major part, although his interest is directed at medicine and its position in the world of the Second Sophistic. He explores the role of Hippocratic medicine and its close connections with in the religious sphere during the imperial age, taking Aelius Aristides, the "professional patient" as his example. Although he discerns certain differences between temple medicine of 4th century Epidaurus and Aelius Aristides' conception of medicine (in particular in the *ways* in which the god is believed to contribute to the healing process), Horstmanshoff demonstrates that there was no 'progress' towards a more 'enlightened', rational, or 'scientific' form of medicine in the 2nd century AD. By contrast, it appears (1) that medical knowledge and religion were interwoven, not only for Aelius Aristides but for doctors of the imperial age in general, who typically practised in sanctuaries of Asklepios, and (2) that both medicine and religion were a central feature of intellectual activities in the age of the Second Sophistic.

The two papers in the fourth chapter are particularly concerned with places and spaces providing the physical framework for *paideia*-related activities. While the functions of public libraries might seem to be self-evident, Richard Neudecker's study sheds an interesting light on the the ways their architecture and organisation encouraged particular kinds of intellectual activities – and one which we might not necessarily have expected. Public libraries, so Neudecker argues on the basis of archaeological, epigraphical, and literary evidence, were everything but places of *otium*, of reading or writing poetry or of learned conversation. They would provide neither the appropriate architectural framework, nor the books required for such activities, since they housed, besides books on poetry, philosophy or rhetoric, many of the archives of the imperial (or local) administration.

They were places for the investigation and the compilation of knowledge. Their very organisation contributed to the sort of intellectual activities depicted for instance in Athenaios' *Deipnosophists* and to other sorts of writings so typical of the Second Sophistic. Entry to these libraries was restricted, and they were run and controlled by members of the *familia Caesaris* or the local governor, thus making it clear that knowledge and cultural identity were both under state control. This is in perfect accordance with the fact that *paideia* had become a crucial factor in the struggle for status and positions, and that dedications of libraries made by important figures could be used as a perfect means for their own self-representation.

Marco Galli focuses on Greece and explores the transformation of religious space. He draws attention to the often overlooked or even disregarded architectural changes in the most important religious centres of Greece – Epidauros, Olympia, Delphi and others – showing that these building activities, often resulting in dramatic changes in the overall picture of the sanctuaries, were organised and purposeful, and that two particular groups of people, the rich and powerful *energetai* including the emperors, and the *collegia*, took a leading role in shaping them. Buildings for the meetings of these *collegia* turn out to be a prominent feature. Galli regards the sanctuaries as micro-societies, in which *paideia* as knowledge of myths, ritual objects and narratives is not a sign of antiquarianism but a central part of the symbolic discourse negotiating power structures. The buildings for the *collegia* were used as spaces for social networking and for controlling knowledge, being controlled in turn by important and powerful *energetai*.

The last chapter, “Paideia and Patronage”, deals with the special function of *paideia* in the social hierarchy and in shaping social relationships. Jaap-Jan Flinterman demonstrates that the results of Johannes Hahn's study on early imperial concepts of philosopher and sophist hold true for the High Empire as well. Drawing primarily on Philostratus' *Bioi* and the writings of Aelius Aristides, he first describes the ideal conception of the philosopher, which is based on the assumption (not always met by reality) that the philosopher takes care to demonstrate his independence from the rich and powerful – even from the emperor –, and remains disinterested in status and any material gains, thus retaining his liberty to exercise *parrhesia*. While some of the sophists approve of similar ideals, most of them prefer not to stand at the margins of society. Instead, they seek close relations with the emperor, accepting his opinion on various matters, even including their intellectual performance. They try to use their *paideia* and their good relationship with him for improving their own reputation and for gaining material favours both for themselves and for their hometowns.

Tim Whitmarsh approaches the subject from a literary perspective, taking literature as a medium for class definition. Through the poems of Mesomedes he explores more sophisticated kinds of patronal literature, while refuting the modern bias towards prose literature. He argues that poetry can be patronal even if it is neither openly encomiastic nor dealing explicitly with the relationship between poet and emperor. His analysis of Mesomedes' hymns and their presumed choral performance results in the overall picture of an ordered and well governed *cosmos* referring to Hadrian and his reign not in the sense of an allegorical, underlying 'real' meaning, but through allusions. The fact that the poems do not take a more direct line but remain open to various interpretations, he explains by the two distinct audiences patronal poetry must address, the patron himself and the wider public. The result is a triangle of relationships between these two and the poet in which all participants need to recognise each of the other two.

Finally, Carsten Drecoll takes us into Late Antiquity, showing how some central aspects of the social role *paideia* plays during the age of Philostratus' Second Sophistic continue to be important for much longer. Taking a close look at Libanios' correspondence with Anatolios of Berytos, Drecoll demonstrates that Libanios establishes his friendship with the powerful *archon* by referring to common ideals regarded as the essence of *paideia*. *Paideia* not only serves as a sort of *lingua franca* in their communication, but also has strong moral implications, putting both parties under an obligation to behave exactly according to the rules implicit in this concept. *Paideia* and being a sophist are the virtues of any good holder of office while at the same time protecting the less powerful from despotism and injustice.

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