

sufficient intellectual harvest to justify 140 pages of text and is better suited to article-length publication. There seems to me a bigger issue with a debate that spends much time on loud discussion of method instead of quietly developing new insights.

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JARED SECORD, *CHRISTIAN INTELLECTUALS AND THE ROMAN EMPIRE: FROM JUSTIN MARTYR TO ORIGEN*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2020. Pp. xi + 202. ISBN 9780271087078. £79.95/US\$112.95.

Jared Secord's argument in this book is that the Christian writing of the second and early third centuries, especially the work of Justin, Tatian, Origen and Africanus, is much more closely linked with the Greco-Roman intellectual culture of the imperial period than we usually assume. That argument extends work others have done recently (for example, Kendra Eshleman) in bringing early Christian literature more into dialogue with its Greco-Roman equivalents, but S.'s account is in some ways quite distinctive in its emphasis. Among other things he is interested in the importance of gaining imperial attention as a goal for intellectuals in many different fields. He also has a particular interest in the way in which many different authors debate the value of cultural purity in Hellenic identity. In many cases that involved asserting the antiquity and continuity of the Greek heritage; in others it involved arguing for the value of barbarian culture: as S. shows, both of those poses were widespread in Greco-Roman writing from this period and also in the Christian texts he examines. He shows how Christian writers came to be increasingly successful in accommodating themselves to the norms of Greco-Roman intellectual culture; in the process he resists the standard narrative which explains the improved prospects of imperial approval for Christian writers in the third century C.E. simply as a consequence of increasing tolerance of Christianity.

Ch. 1 lays out some of those broader trends in Greco-Roman culture with reference to a wide range of authors: Galen, Nicolaus of Damascus, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Philo of Alexandria, Josephus, among many others. S.'s focus is above all on authors who value purity in Greek language and culture; also on the challenges faced by authors who were unable to claim that kind of purity for themselves: we have to wait until later chapters for a glimpse of the many non-Christian authors who resist those assumptions and construct a positive narrative about their own barbarian origins. This chapter in particular will be valuable as a free-standing study for researchers whose primary interests are in non-Christian intellectual culture in the Roman empire.

Ch. 2 turns attention to Justin. S. focuses on inserting Justin into the competitive context of imperial intellectual culture, using Galen among others as a comparison point, and taking Justin's criticism of the Cynic philosopher Crescens as case study. S. also shows, however, that this is a relatively rare example for Justin, who was less involved in this kind of agonistic interaction than many of his Greco-Roman contemporaries. He offers some thought-provoking suggestions on the way in which the threat of denigration (of the kind that Galen so often seems to have faced) and even persecution could be a badge of honour and a sign of intellectual importance, shared between Christian and non-Christian intellectuals, rather than something just directed at Christians and shaped purely by negative attitudes to Christianity.

Ch. 3 focuses on Tatian's use of the miscellany genre, and the way in which it allows him to demonstrate his own engagement with the broader knowledge-ordering culture of the Roman empire even as he uses that format to criticise Greek tradition. S. also shows how Tatian's criticism of ideals of Attic purity and his willingness to define himself as a barbarian again brings him close to some Greco-Roman intellectual contemporaries, many of whom similarly resisted conventional models of Greek identity in favour of more expansive models of cultural value (although, as S. shows, this espousal of barbarian identity may also have contributed to Tatian's reception as a heretic in the eyes of his fellow Christians, many of whom were less willing to make that move).

Chapter 4 focuses on the increasing willingness of the Severans to give their support to intellectuals from outside the centres of the Greek world (for example to jurists like Ulpian), and argues that it is this context, rather than the increased religious tolerance of Christianity, that explains the greater success of Christian intellectuals like Africanus and Origen in winning imperial approval. As S. shows, both of these figures displayed their mastery of an encyclopaedic range of traditional knowledge, while also arguing for the greater antiquity of barbarian culture and civilisation.

Every so often I wondered whether there is more to say about the variety of Christian models available for representations of intellectual authority in this period. I was struck by the fact that there is no mention of the model provided by Jesus in the Gospels (he does not make it into the index), or by the apostles, not least in the Apocryphal Acts, which were written around the same time as the texts S. discusses. These are figures who have provocatively estranging relationships with Greco-Roman motifs of intellectual self-representation quite different from what we find in the more philosophical texts S. discusses. At times, too, the attention to context is so rich that one might feel it distracts attention from opportunities for close reading of the texts themselves: some readers might wish for more of a sense of the reading experience these works offer when we tackle them from end to end, particularly in the chapter on Justin, where S. rarely gives attention to the question of what it is like to read Justin's (long and complex) works from end to end.

On its own terms, however, this is a rich and thought-provoking account of the relationship between Christian and Greco-Roman texts that are not often enough read together. It should be required reading for anyone who works on the intellectual culture of the Roman empire.

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II. ART AND VISUAL CULTURE

LEA K. CLINE and NATHAN T. ELKINS (EDS), *THE OXFORD HANDBOOK OF ROMAN IMAGERY AND ICONOGRAPHY* (Oxford handbooks). New York: Oxford University Press, 2022. Pp. xiii, 578, illus. ISBN 9780190850326. £97.00.

As an approach to the visual, iconography has tended to be used in a rather isolated manner, in large part due to scholarship failing to embed the study of images and their meaning in an evaluation of their social, political, cultural and historical context. By narrowing down Panofsky's much broader theory of iconology and focusing on attempts to pinpoint supposedly lost originals and the analysis of isolated media and genres, scholarship has often neglected both the historical context and the overarching communicative system of images. The methodology of iconography can, however, be exceptionally illuminating, for it reveals a complex cognitive process across all ancient media. Immobile media like friezes, life-size sculpture and even media of everyday use like coins or tableware all required a great deal of visual literacy among contemporary viewers, who were, of course, not homogenous but embedded in diverse communities of knowledge, experience and lifestyle. There is therefore a pressing need to re-establish iconography as an approach to ancient images that must, as Panofsky enjoined, be utilised in close connection with the study of images' production and reception.

Edited by Lea K. Cline and Nathan T. Elkins, *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Imagery and Iconography* addresses this desideratum, uniting twenty-two high-quality contributions by leading and emerging scholars of Roman imagery in a volume of almost 600 pages. It combines essays with a methodological and theoretical focus and case-studies addressing a wide range of media, arranging them in a balanced and stimulating way which offers the reader a smooth transition from theory to practice. This handbook will have great value for scholars, instructors and students alike, for its articles not only illuminate the methodology of iconography, but first and foremost