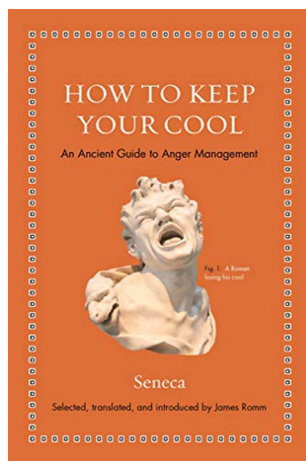


Seneca: How to Keep Your Cool. An Ancient Guide to Anger Management

Romm (J.) (ed., trans.). Pp. xviii + 220. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019. Cased, £13.99, US\$1695. ISBN: 978-0-691-18195-0.

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In these days of Twitter trolling and other social media outbursts, a guide to how to control your anger is just the ticket, and let's face it, Seneca had plenty of cause to control his anger living at the imperial courts of Caligula and later Nero. The Ancient Wisdom for Modern Readers is an excellent series which combines accessibility with sensible advice and gruesome anecdotes and as the jacket says: 'Seneca's thoughts on anger have never been more relevant than today, when uncivil discourse has increasingly infected public debate'. The Latin on the left-

hand page is helpful, mostly corresponding with the sections of English on the right and certainly well-translated; on several occasions I found myself searching for the actual Senecan words just to see how it was done. In particular, and relevant to our post-truth society, I liked *magis enim veritas elucet quo saepius ad manum venit* (truth gets shinier the more it is handled) which according to the helpful notes is a reference to coinage. It is impossible for those who know of Seneca to read this without thinking of the context in which he was writing, but for those new to him, the references to the cruelties of Caligula and Nero are well explained and there is no necessity to study Seneca's life beforehand so it will be accessible to a younger audience. The opening section contains a vivid description of what anger looks like (blazing eyes, red face, trembling lips, feet pounding the earth, and laboured breathing), and Seneca calmly precedes this with a description of someone who has gone mad, which interestingly repeats some signs such as threatening expression, agitated gait, changed skin colour and rapid breathing. He admits that other emotions display themselves equally clearly, but anger is different in that it causes harm to others and this is why it should be curbed. Seneca goes on to describe different types of anger, including that of the prosperous man who has no sense of perspective and is enraged at minor incidents or the man who has unlimited power. The treatise was probably composed in the mid-40s so after Caligula's timely death and therefore not quite so potentially dangerous to the author, though doubtless he would have had plenty more anecdotes had he survived Nero's principate, and the story he tells about Pastor suffering the death of his son with equanimity because he had another whom he wished to preserve, is heart-breaking. Sadly there was more than one story of this kind and Seneca's reaction may well be coloured

by his need to stay alive at court – restrain your anger, do not give your protagonist the pleasure of seeing your ire! The most useful piece of advice to my mind was that revenge, a by-product of anger, should not be taken immediately as it can often fall upon the wrong person; in the same way that in a court you should hear both sides of the story and make a balanced judgement, so you should when you feel someone has done you wrong. What would Clytemnestra do? She certainly employed the delaying tactic, no crime of passion for her, but a dish served cold. The conclusion which Seneca reaches is that everyone is fallible, we are all human, and that the annoyance you feel towards one or two other people for some perceived slight is a minor issue in the scheme of things. We should all attempt to control our anger and the self-importance from which it often springs, (he was writing for the Roman elite) and allow ourselves to be merciful; after all we all die and why should we waste our brief span on such a dangerous emotion? How very stoic, Seneca; perhaps you could have a word with some of those internet trolls?

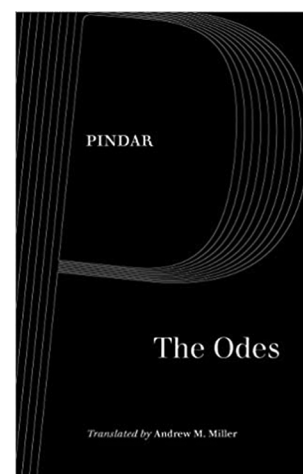
doi:10.1017/S2058631020000288

Eusebius of Caesarea: The History of the Church. Eusebius

Schott (J) (trans). University of California Press: Oakland, CA. 2019. Pp. 552 £14.99 ISBN 978-0-52029-110-2

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Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*, recounting in Greek the history of the Christian Church from Jesus Christ to the Emperor Constantine, is one of the most historically valuable works in the European literary tradition. It is also one of the more difficult ones for students, due to its complex, uneven narrative style and frequent, extensive quotation of (now lost) earlier historical sources.

Students of the 'Christian Herodotus' have generally had to rely on G.A. Williamson's translation for Penguin (1965/1990), which, while elegant and reliable, lacks the sort of supplemental apparatus to make the text really accessible to the modern student. Consequently, Eusebius' *History* has been long overdue for a new translation with comprehensive notes for classroom and scholarly use.

Jeremy Schott's new translation for the University of California Press, containing just such an accessible translation and the requisite supplementary material for the college student, is thus a welcome event in the study of Early Church and Roman imperial history. Schott's translation is also a welcome companion to his