Introduction

The twenty-first century could justifiably be deemed an era that was highly fertile to examining ancient readerships of classical historiography. This is because recent decades have contributed to the liberation of modern scholarship from the nineteenth century's persistently positivist outlook in scrutinizing the "objectivity" of ancient historians, which often led scholars to view them as no more than celebrated exemplars of critical acumen and scientific conscientiousness. As a counterpoise to this, if we try to summarize the prevailing modern perspectives on classical historiography, we can refer to a modern focus on four particular dimensions: (a) the ancient historians' views of the nature of historical development, (b) their goals in preserving the past by writing history, (c) the literary qualities of ancient historical accounts, and (d) the techniques which the ancient historians used in order to disseminate certain ideological and interpretive messages and to create specific emotions in their readers.

The questions emerging from these perspectives cannot be satisfactorily answered unless they are examined against the backdrop of the ancient readership of classical historiography. This is because the ancient historians' views of historical development are closely associated with several features of their readerships (e.g. current philosophical trends, the readers' interests in the past, and their awareness of natural science), while topics such as the literary qualities of classical historiography and the rhetorical strategies which ancient historians used in order to lead their audience towards certain ideological and emotional reactions cannot be fully interpreted if we neglect the readers' mentality, as well as their literary and linguistic competence, as is attested both in the historical works themselves and in theoretical treatises of antiquity.

The present volume applies this perspective of reader-response criticism to the field of historiography during the period of Late Republican and Imperial Rome.¹ The historical texts of the Roman Era are a particularly suitable topic for such a reader-oriented approach because of the double expansion which characterizes the development of historical writing in this period: the audiences of historiography widen, and the number of writers in the genre increases. This evolution of the field is well attested, among others by Cicero, Strabo, Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Lucian.

¹ For the most influential reader-response studies on Classical literature, see Liotsakis 2015, 281 n. 14 and 282–283 n. 29.

1 The pleasure – and utility – of reading history

Many chapters of this volume refer to Cicero's comments about the readership of historiography in his own lifetime. This is not only because the Ciceronian corpus provides us with an extraordinary number of explicit statements about the reception of historical writings, which, when they are all taken together, almost assemble a reader-response theory of historiographical texts.² Moreover, Cicero's comments on reading history testify to two trends which form the backdrop against which the historians of Late Republican and Imperial Rome write: the audience of such texts has widened, both in number and in its sociological make-up, and reading history for pleasure is an established and, as it seems, common mode of reception. The famous question from Cicero's *de Finibus*: *quid, quod homines infima fortuna, nulla spe rerum gerendarum, opifices denique delectantur historia?*, "What of the delight that is taken in history by men of the humblest station, who have no expectation of participating in public life, even mere artisans?",³ neatly links these two trends – even *opifices* read history, and they do it for pleasure, as do (according to the same passage of *de Finibus*) readers in general who are lured by the intrinsic appeal of historiographical accounts: *ipsi enim quaeramus a nobis [...] quid historia delectet, quam solemus persequi usque ad extremum: praetermissa repetimus, inchoata persequimur*, "Let us ask ourselves the question [...] why we derive pleasure from history, which we are so fond of following up, to the remotest detail, turning back to parts we have omitted, and pushing on to the end when we have once begun".⁴

The pleasure of history is also the focus of Cicero's reasoning in his letter to Lucceius, where he provides an explanation of the basic mechanism behind the *delectatio lectoris*: the reader is made *involved* by a good historical narrative, but he is also kept at a distance; the safety of his temporally and spatially removed position enables him to enjoy the depiction of past events. Or, in the words of Cicero, referring to his consulate which he wants to be treated by Lucceius in a historical monograph:⁵

nihil est enim aptius ad delectationem lectoris quam temporum varietates fortunaeque vicissitudines. quae etsi nobis optabiles in experiendo non fuerunt, in legendo tamen erunt iucundae. habet enim praeteriti doloris secreta recordatio delectationem; ceteris vero nulla perfunctis propria molestia, casus autem alienos sine ullo dolore intuentibus, etiam ipsa misericordia est iucunda.

Nothing tends more to the reader's enjoyment than varieties of circumstance and vicissitudes of fortune. For myself, though far from desirable in the living, they will be pleasant in the reading;

² For more detailed treatments of Cicero's view of historiography, see, among others, Fox 2007; Pausch 2011, 38–45 and 53–64; Baumann 2020b, 17–23. Cf. the chapters of Shaw, Pausch and Miquel in this volume for further bibliography.

³ Cic. *Fin.* 5.52 (transl. Rackham).

⁴ Cic. *Fin.* 5.51.

⁵ Cic. *Fam.* 5.12.4–5 (transl. Shackleton Bailey).

for there is something agreeable in the secure recollection of bygone unhappiness. For others, who went through no personal distress and painlessly survey misfortunes not their own, even the emotion of pity is enjoyable.

The pleasure of *praeteriti doloris secura recordatio* stands at the core of Cicero's explanation, a point which is remarkably similar to models employed by the modern psychology of reading.⁶

That many Ciceronian passages highlight the aspect of historiographical *delectatio* does not mean, of course, that reading for utility is absent from the broad spectrum of interactions with historiography that Cicero – or characters in his texts – unfold. Rather, different readers of history who appear in the Ciceronian corpus engage with historiography in distinct and often very personal ways, at times leaning more to one side of the utility versus pleasure debate,⁷ but often combining both approaches. We thus hear Antonius claim in *de Oratore* that he reads Greek historiographers *non [...] utilitatem aliquam ad dicendum aucupans, sed delectationis causa*, “not because I am on the look-out for aids to oratory, but just for pleasure”,⁸ while Cicero portrays himself in the *Brutus* as a reader with a multifaceted interest in historiography: he has read Atticus' *Liber annalis*, and this rather short summary of Roman history proved to be pleasurable as well as useful because it gave Cicero solace in a moment of crisis and motivated him to take up writing again.⁹

The picture of a diverse audience which emerges from Cicero's texts is mirrored in historiography itself: historical writers of the Roman Era are aware of the existence of multiple kinds of readers and often try to address as many of them as possible.¹⁰ Two telling examples are Strabo and Dionysius of Halicarnassus who explicitly state this aim.¹¹ Strabo does so when he compares his *Geography* to his *Historical Treatise*:¹²

Ἀπλῶς δὲ κοινὸν εἶναι τὸ σύγγραμμα τοῦτο δεῖ καὶ πολιτικὸν καὶ δημωφελὲς ὁμοίως ὥσπερ τὴν τῆς ἱστορίας γραφὴν. [...] ἔτι δὲ τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον, ὅνπερ ἐκεῖ τὰ περὶ τοὺς ἐπιφανεῖς ἄνδρας καὶ βίους τυγχάνει μνήμης [...], κἀνταῦθα δεῖ τὰ μικρὰ καὶ τὰ ἀφανῆ παραπέμπειν, ἐν δὲ τοῖς ἐνδόξοις καὶ μεγάλοις καὶ ἐν οἷς τὸ πραγματικὸν καὶ εὐμνημόνευτον καὶ ἡδὺ διατρίβειν.

6 Cf. e.g. Thomas Anz's seminal book on the pleasure of reading. See especially his remarks on “the satisfaction about one's own safety” (“die Befriedigung über die eigene Sicherheit”), Anz 1998, 149. In the present volume, several chapters focus on the reading pleasures that can be derived from historiography (see especially Pausch and Liotsakis); Cicero's letter to Lucceius also figures in the contributions by Shaw and Duchêne.

7 See Marincola 2017, xlv1-1 for a brief outline of this debate in historiography and related texts.

8 Cic. *de Orat.* 2.59 (transl. Sutton / Rackham). It is noteworthy that Antonius nevertheless admits that reading historiography “colours” his speech (§ 60).

9 Cic. *Brut.* 10–21. See Baumann 2020a for a detailed analysis (with further references).

10 For Sallust as a historian who deliberately *restricts* his audience, see Shaw in this volume.

11 For Arrian as another example of a historian who writes for several types of readers, see Liotsakis in this volume.

12 Str. 1.1.22 (transl. Marincola). On the fragments of Strabo's *Historical Treatise*, see Ambaglio 1990.

In short, this work [sc. the *Geography*] is meant to be both for the man in public life and useful to the common people, just as was my history. [...] And just as in that earlier work only that which concerned distinguished men and lives was remembered [...], so too here we must leave aside what is small and obscure, and spend time instead with what is renowned and great, or which has practical use, or is easily remembered, or affords pleasure.

Strabo in this self-referential comment combines a wide social definition of his audience with an extensive set of “bonuses” his various readers can expect from his works. In a similar vein, Dionysius of Halicarnassus envisages a broad readership for his *Roman Antiquities*:¹³

σχῆμα δὲ ἀποδίδωμι τῇ πραγματείᾳ [...] ἐξ ἀπάσης ιδέας μικτὸν ἐναγωνίου τε καὶ θεωρητικῆς, ἵνα καὶ τοῖς περὶ τοὺς πολιτικούς διατρίβουσι λόγους καὶ τοῖς περὶ τὴν φιλόσοφον ἐσπουδακόσι θεωρίαν καὶ εἴ τισιν ἀοχλήτου δεήσει διαγωγῆς ἐν ἱστορικοῖς ἀναγνώσμασιν, ἀποχρώντως ἔχουσα φαίνεται.

The form I give my work [...] is a mixture of every form of public eloquence and theoretical reflection, so that those who dedicate themselves to political eloquence, as well as those who are engaged in philosophical contemplation, and (if there are any) those who want only undisturbed amusement when they read history, will find it advantageous.

Again a historian names a whole range of possible reasons for reading history and promises to cater for all these interests or needs.¹⁴

2 Readers turned into writers

Penetrating into the readership of history-writing in the Late Republican and Imperial Eras becomes even more intriguing in light of the fact that the expansion of a historical readership was achieved in such a way that it affected the very physiognomy of historical literature. Lucian, whose ideas about historical narratives are also exploited in the papers of this volume, reflects in a very illuminating way on how the widening of this historical readership, already pointed out by Cicero in the first century BCE, was consolidated until the second century CE as a dominant and formative parameter of historiography. First, according to Lucian, historians were fully aware of the fact that one of the audience’s main motives in reading history is the pursuit of pleasure (*Hist. Conscr.* 9–10). Many authors thus colored their accounts with a laudatory flavor, poetic embellishments, myths, and plenty of other elements which they believed would render their works more attractive to readers (*Hist. Conscr.* 7–8, 22). Of course, in many cases Lucian’s satirical eye is a misleading kaleidoscope of the likely truth, given that he often overstates the practices he wishes

¹³ D.H. 1.8.3 (transl. Marincola). On this concept of “mixture” and its various implications, see Fromentin 1993. Cf. also Schultze 1986 for a sociology of Dionysius’ audience.

¹⁴ Cf. Miquel and Pulice in this volume for discussions of further texts of Dionysius.

to criticize in order to emphasize the flaws he finds in them. However, as a number of papers in this volume demonstrate, Lucian can also be taken as a trustworthy witness to the view that in the Imperial Era readerly demands dictated to a significant degree the thematic and stylistic orientation of Greco-Roman historical narratives.

Greco-Roman readerships also influenced the development of historiography as a literary genre in one further and much more energetic way. An increasing number of readers now venture out to embrace the challenge of becoming themselves authors of historical accounts. Lucian clarifies from the outset that the reason why he decided to compose a theoretical treatise on how to write history was the immense increase of the number of aspiring historians during the Parthian War of 161–166 CE (*Hist. Conscr.* 2). Individuals who were not already trained in composing historical accounts – described by Lucian (*Hist. Conscr.* 16 and 27) as ἰδιῶται – decided to move beyond the role of a reader of the classical models Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon, and to actively follow in their footsteps by writing history. Among them is the doctor serving in the sixth legion of spearmen who decided to compose a military diary and give it the title *History of the Parthian War* (*Hist. Conscr.* 16). Lucian mentions philosophers too as one further class of non-specialist historians. Many of the ancient authors examined in this volume belong to this wide group of non-specialist historians that were originally readers who decided to write history (*Hist. Conscr.* 17). Included in this group are Pliny and the philosopher Arrian. These authors can be seen as readers who defined their works on the basis of their own readerly expectations and tastes. In the period covering the years between Cicero and Lucian, historians were stylistically and ideologically molded by the combination of two intellectual activities inextricably bound to each other: both the process of *writing* historical works and the simultaneous delight of *reading* those of others.

A special category of readers of history who affected its generic physiognomy the most is, of course, orators. In the Roman Era, individuals of a robust rhetorical education begin making themselves felt in the field of historiography both as writers of historical works as well as *litterati* who express in a systematic fashion their views on how to write history. We have already mentioned Cicero, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, and Lucian. All three of them at times explore historiography through stylistic and compositional criteria akin to those pertaining to oratory, a fact which justifies modern scholars co-examining, say, Lucian's *Teacher of Rhetoric* and *On how to write history* as two communicating vessels which elaborate on different but interconnected sub-genres of prose.¹⁵ Equally plentiful are the passages in which Cicero analyzes the reasons why orators should read historical accounts and use history in their speech (*Brut.* 41–44), and recognizes the ways in which they can profit from their engagement with past narratives, either as readers (*Orat.* 120) or as authors (*de Orat.* 2.28–64). This realization, on those literate readers' part, that historiography and oratory have much in common and that these genres can establish numerous paths of

15 See, e.g., Fox's (2001) similar approach of Lucian (and Dionysius); cf. Billault 1997.

fruitful mutual communication contributed to the enrichment of the perspectives of reflection upon historical prose's style and its usefulness in a plethora of communicative situations in the lives of its readers.

3 Outline of the present volume

The contributions are organized in a chronological order. However, even chapters devoted to different authors or periods are closely linked by a number of common ideas and perspectives. First, many authors of this volume focus on the testimonies offered by the ancient readers themselves in non-historical works, such as treatises into literary theory, commentaries, and satirical prose (cf. especially the contributions by Aurélien Pulice and Pauline Duchêne). Greco-Roman literature offers a variety of passages in which these readers discuss their intellectual and affective reactions to past narratives, the process of reading them, and what they expected from such works with regard to issues of style and reliability. The treatises of literary theory, whose production had begun increasingly to flourish since the Hellenistic Era, can be seen as the first efforts, on the part of readers, to systematically penetrate their own evaluative mechanisms and their interaction with current literary genres, including historiography. These readers, who must have represented the Greek and Roman *litterati*, composed works that themselves constituted meta-reception, as it were, in which they aimed to coin terms to describe the emotions experienced by the audience of historical narratives as well as the qualities of the accounts that sparked those emotional reactions and conveyed certain impressions of a historical work. By exploiting testimonies of this kind, the authors of this volume investigate certain aspects of reading as a procedure (oral recitation, use of past narratives in language courses), which aspects of historical accounts enthused or disappointed ancient audiences, as well as the influence of current intellectual trends on the reception of narratives involving the past.

Some other papers add to the aforementioned ones the complementary movement “from the text to the reader”. This means that they engage in close readings of historical works and explore how these texts imply and “shape” a specific audience. To this end, the authors employing this perspective focus on the use of certain stylistic or narrative techniques which allow a definition of the texts’ “imagined readers”, and on explicit discussions of the readers’ roles in prefaces or similar programmatic passages. In the context of the present volume, three findings are particularly important: (1) the texts analyzed in those studies all imply an active audience. Their narratives involve the reader, their style and programmatic statements call for critical reflection, and in the case of Pliny’s letters (cf. Ari Zatlin’s contribution) it is even up to the reader to create a history in the first place. (2) The writers of history consciously exploit the widening of the audience for historical texts in Republican and Imperial Rome, be it to make full use of the enlarged readership, as in Livy’s case (cf. Dennis Pausch’s contribution), or to deliberately restrict the audience, as Sallust does (cf.

Edwin Shaw's chapter). (3) Even texts which do not present the reader with a historical narrative may take up these "historiographical" modes of appealing to and activating the reader, in order to create their own specific audience.

Moreover, most contributors share the belief that the "implied reader" of historiography in (and of) the Roman Empire is an active one who is willing to engage with the text. In this respect, special emphasis is laid on what is arguably the strongest form of involving the readers, i.e. stirring their emotions. Chapters as e.g. Dennis Pausch's, George Baroud's and Vasileios Liotsakis' study a broad spectrum of affective responses which the texts stimulate; they range from feelings of insecurity and suspicion to sheer pleasure of reading. In doing so, these contributions show that the emotional reactions elicited by the texts form an inextricable part of the historians' strategies to make their audiences understand the historical processes.

Special attention is also paid to those cases in which readerly expectations dictated the authors of historical narratives to adopt manifold authorial masks. It is true that writing history in the Roman Empire was in many respects affected by the author's concern for a number of readerly demands. The treatises, for example, of literary theory reflect, if anything, on how literate a fashion readers expected historians and biographers to compose their works. Simultaneously, Roman monarchy imposed one further, and far more peremptory, agenda of what was "allowed" to be written down or not, and of how everything was supposed to be written. These, sometimes dangerous, readerly demands were to be respected especially by authors of non-Roman origins, who struggled through their accounts to defend their cultural identity while also showing the highest respect to their Roman readerships. The authors of this volume (especially Vasileios Liotsakis and Adam M. Kemezis) make the case that ancient historians and biographers took into serious consideration all these readerly expectations and defined their style and rhetoric on the basis of these demands. One from among their many tools in fulfilling this purpose was the fashioning of a multi-dimensional – and thus flexible – authorial "I", through which authors endeavored to satisfy (cf. e.g. Liotsakis' paper) or, sometimes, to play (cf. Kemezis' contribution) in the most provoking way with readerly tastes.

Last, two papers (those of Marine Miquel and Christoph G. Leidl) focus on descriptions or narrations of spaces (both in a geographical and in a topographical sense) in Latin historical texts. They explore the relation of such depictions to the texts' audiences by reconstructing the ancient readers' "horizon of expectations" (H.R. Jauss) as to geography and topography, thereby allowing them to interpret the specific – and, for modern readers, often peculiar – ways in which Roman historiography refers to spaces and places as strategies to engage with ancient audiences' expectations. These two contributions converge in one main result: historiographical descriptions or narrations of spaces mirror the experience of their Roman readers vis-à-vis the growing (cf. Miquel's chapter) or contested empire (cf. Leidl's contribution), and thus offer an interpretation of the contemporary state of affairs.

Here are the summaries of the papers: in his contribution, Edwin Shaw explores the idea that the form and content of Sallust's works imply – and construct – a par-

ticular audience of their own. Against the context of a fairly wide audience for various forms of historical writing in the late Republic, Sallust deliberately restricts access to his texts to an intellectual and political elite. He does so by setting up various “barriers to entry” within the text itself: (1) he emphasizes the difficulty of reading his works and thus explicitly problematizes the role of the audience; (2) he uses a difficult style characterized by broken syntax, a fondness for antithesis, archaic vocabulary and above all extreme *brevitas*; (3) by selecting Thucydides as a literary model, he marks off his texts as something which requires serious and sustained consideration; (4) he opens his monographs with prefaces whose content configures the texts right from the beginning as being aimed at a philosophically engaged audience. In light of these findings, Shaw concludes that the restriction of Sallust’s audience to an educated elite serves to distinguish its lessons from the didactic model of Latin *annales* and exemplary memorialization, in order to highlight the need for critical reflection on the historical content, and to link it into a wider intellectual context, for example to texts such as Cicero’s philosophy, which formed part of a contemporary literary exploration of Republican values.

Marine Miquel focuses on geographical descriptions in Latin historical works of the first century BCE. She reaches a twofold conclusion. First, she suggests that the historical texts of this century were intended for an audience who was no longer the political elite, but who consisted of a broader part of the general population. The latter now had access to common ethno-geographical knowledge which was conveyed by texts, by orally transmitted information, by the images located all over the cities, and by spectacles like funeral or triumphal processions. Miquel contends that the spatial depictions in historical works were destined for the same audience, and therefore that they contained the same common ethno-geographical knowledge. Historians seemed thus to try to shape their descriptions to fit to the expectations of their audience. Second, Miquel points out that both Roman and Italian audiences were eager to be told about unknown territories and longed for marvellous depictions, but also showed a deep interest for the new world that had been built by Roman conquest and most of all by the new ways of representing and looking at it. Ethno-geographical depictions were thus written by historians as a means to understand better the new setting of the world. They no longer taught the elite how to rule the empire; they rather offered to a broader audience debates and questions on the role that spaces had in the realization of Roman conquest and its future.

In his chapter on Livy’s *Ab urbe condita*, Dennis Pausch takes a close look at how Livy narrates his version of the past and, in doing so, addresses the question of what kind of reader Livy had in his mind as the ideal counterpart in his conversation with his audience. Taking Livy’s narration of Hannibal’s crossing of the Alps as a model case, Pausch shows that the historian wrote for an “imagined reader” who wanted to gain useful knowledge from his reading of historiography as well as the pleasure of being involved in a good story. To both ends of utility and pleasure, Livy uses, as Pausch demonstrates, narrative techniques which activate the reader and make him wonder about the future course of events: by shifting the object of focalization,

Livy invites the reader to adopt the perspective of different characters or groups, especially the Carthaginians, while strongly focalized previews into the narrative future are meant to unsettle the reader and to shake his confidence about the assuredly “happy ending” of the story he is reading. In both cases, the resulting involvement in the narrative leads to pleasure, but it also enhances the understanding of history by teaching the reader about what in history is contingent and what perhaps is not.

Aurélien Pulice investigates how Thucydides was received by the Greco-Roman readership during the Julio-Claudian dynasty. His paper examines the commentary (ὑπόμνημα) of the *History* that is preserved in *P. Oxy.* 853 of the second century CE, and whose prototype is dated in the period between the very end of the first century BCE and the first decades of the second century CE. In light of the Byzantine scholia on Thucydides’ work, Pulice estimates that the author of this relatively unexplored commentary deviated from the traditional interest in grammatical issues and transferred the focal point of interest to the rhetorical aspects of Thucydides’ style. Drawing from both Greek and Latin sources of the period, Pulice contextualizes the rhetorical orientation of the commentary in question and propounds the stimulating idea that the ὑπόμνημα exemplifies a general shift of Thucydides’ readership’s interest in that period towards the rhetoric dimension of his style and its utility as a prototype in the procedure of acquainting oneself with the Attic language both in schools of rhetoric and generally in educational circles. As is the case with most ancient commentaries, the ὑπόμνημα of *P. Oxy.* 853, being written by an educated reader of Thucydides and addressed to scholars and young students, reflects the way in which the interests of Thucydides’ readership influenced the development of scholarly treatises on his work.

Pauline Duchêne broadens the scope beyond the reception of the fifth-century BCE historians and examines how Seneca satirizes in his *Apocolocyntosis Divi Claudii* the historians’ inabilities of keeping up with current readerly demands in terms of reliability. Seneca programmatically explains to his readers that he will narrate the events pertaining to Claudius’ end and what happened to him after his death. Although the *Apocolocyntosis* is a non-historical work, Seneca fashions himself as a caricature of contemporary historiographers, mocking their current typical declarations about their methodological pedantry and informative validity. The satirical attitude of Seneca as well as of other *litterati* of the Roman age (such as Tacitus and Lucian) against the ancient historians’ pompous schemes of self-fashioning betray the current readership’s familiarity with the fact that Greco-Roman historians, despite the traditional practice of emphasizing the validity of their accounts, were far from reliable informants.

Ari Zatlin analyzes the intersection between epistolography and historiography in Pliny’s *Letters*. The key passage of his close reading of Pliny’s text is a programmatic statement from the collection’s opening letter: *collegi non servato temporis ordine (neque enim historiam componebam), sed ut quaeque in manus venerat* (“I have collected [the letters] here not as a slave to chronology – since I’m not writing history – but as each one came into my hands”, 1.1.1). Zatlin interprets this sentence as an

expression of how to read the letters as a whole. In a first step, he shows that this opening statement contains a strong allusion to Ovid's *Epistulae ex Ponto*, by which Pliny establishes his prose letters to be considered as a kind of poetry, and to be read not in isolation, but as a whole and polished book. Zatlin then turns to the effects of Pliny's rejection of historiography: letters like 6.16 and 6.20 (Pliny's account of his uncle's death on Vesuvius), taken on their own, stand as a kind of history; but when placed within their sequence, they betray their form as epistles, and in doing so, potentially withhold the notoriety, truth, and fame that they presented on first and separated inspection. Audiences, however, may take up the *Letters*, respond to them, and read and create from them a history that was never written. And this, Zatlin contends, is precisely what Pliny's epistolography calls for.

Tacitus' *Annals* and its infamously difficult language are the focus of George Baroud's chapter. Taking Tacitus' depiction of the "accession" of Tiberius (*Annals* 1.7) as a case study, Baroud zeroes in on three kinds of ambiguities: ambiguous chronology (the distortion of time), ambiguous grammatical constructions, and ambiguous diction. He argues that the resulting text is deliberately confusing, misleading and even deceptive – a puzzle that "reproduces" for the audience feelings of insecurity, ignorance, and suspicion that highlight the paranoia and confusion felt by contemporaries at this transitional and deeply uncertain moment in Roman history. Based on ancient theories of vividness – *enargeia* –, Baroud's proposition is that certain details and intricacies of Tacitus' language reflect and recreate the atmosphere of the time-periods in question, and are all designed to create a text so intensely vivid that the audience becomes implicated in the narrative itself. Thus, this style compels the audience to become active participants in the text and to undergo an analogous mental and emotional process to those which are experienced by the historical subjects themselves (as Tacitus presents them). Baroud concludes by contending that we must imagine both a private, solitary readership *and* a public audience *listening* to historical literature at recitations. He offers some examples of how these diverse modes of consuming historical literature might have conditioned the ways in which the historical writings were received.

In a second chapter devoted to Tacitus, Christoph G. Leidl analyzes the importance of the focalization of space in Tacitus' *Histories*. He highlights two main aspects of the *Histories*' narrative strategy: the spatial organization of the content is reflected in the narrative organization of the literary work, and multiple overlaying perspectives invite the reader and/or spectator to reflect on the narrative. The first effect is visible at the beginning of the *Histories*, where Tacitus hints at the limits of the annalistic scheme: it becomes more and more difficult to mirror the structure of Roman history in the structure of a literary text. His vision is that of a circle of provinces around a dominating, but no longer indisputable, Rome. Rather than the centre of power, Rome stands at the centre of narratorial perspective. Tacitus does not try to make chronological simultaneity the basic structuring principle of the book, but rather the spatial outline of the empire: events are presented to the reader's eye as they affect the city of Rome. This focalization points to a reader

who is sitting in Rome and whose experience of state affairs in his own time is mirrored by Tacitus in his book. A pertinent example of the second effect is Vitellius' visit of the battlefield near Cremona in Tac. *Hist.* 2.70 – 71.1: here, the reader is led to see the battlefield from three different points of view at the same time (Vitellius, his generals, the soldiers; as well as possibly the Cremonans too), none of which can be seen as the correct one. Moreover, Tacitus leaves it to the audience to pass their judgement on the intra-textual observers of the scene, all of whom will be consigned to a sorry destruction.

Vasileios Liotsakis examines Flavius Arrian's *Anabasis of Alexander*. Liotsakis' main point of argument is that Arrian often composes the account of one and the same event by fashioning for himself multiple authorial *personae* in order to satisfy simultaneously a number of different, and very often colliding, readerly expectations. Liotsakis organizes his study in four sections pertaining to (a) the Homeric elements of the work, (b) geographical data, (c) the criticisms of Alexander, and (d) the exploitation of myth. On all these levels, Arrian very carefully seeks to render his work a multiply targeting composition, an effort which resembles and stems in many respects from the practices of the Second Sophistic rhetoricians who rendered their speeches attractive to as many listeners as possible from among their audiences.

Adam M. Kemezis takes the crux of the identity of *Historia Augusta's* author and the work's generic peculiarities as starting points for an original, reader-oriented approach of the work. *Historia Augusta*, a collection of thirty *bioi* of Roman emperors and carrying the signature of six authors, has been the object of intense scholarly dispute mainly with regard to the identity of its author(s), with the most prevailing view being that the work is the product of a single author, who hides behind the fiction of multiple *scriptores*. Kemezis addresses the question of how ancient readers engaged with this puzzle concerning the origins and physiognomy of the work *in the process of* reading it. Kemezis proposes two hypothetical stages of reading *HA*: the first stage is that of initial contact. At this phase, readers will leaf through the codex and look for the contents and authors by selectively focusing on the *incipits*, *explicits*, and potential headings of each section. In this way, they are very soon faced with intriguing questions pertaining to the work (second stage): it was composed by more than one author, and, equally interestingly, it includes the lives of non-canonical emperors. As Kemezis puts it, “understanding how a text like the *HA* worked in its historical milieu can illuminate what people in that milieu thought of the relationship of literature to politics in constructing and deconstructing an authoritative past and indeed of the Roman monarchy itself as a continuing but ever-changing political institution”.

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