

endnotes that contain the references to journal articles from all sorts of scientific sources, not just the normal citation of historical articles that most academics at least are used to. To the general reader this is an invaluable tool to greater understanding of all the changes that the Eastern Empire faced.

In the first two chapters of the book, Stephenson deals with the end of the lead age, the family in Byzantine society, slavery and the widespread economic nature thereof, the land question and the importance of ownership (because fundamentally this would be a question of taxation) and last, but certainly not least, monks and eunuchs. Although not as important as economic questions or the central theme of Byzantine society (namely the family), monks and eunuchs were often at the heart of court life with some being mutilated to an extreme extent - mostly because political intrigue and ambition followed them as it had always done and would continue to do for hundreds of years more. The main source for the introductory chapters was the chronicle of the *Life of St Theodore of Sykeon*, which Stephenson has used to great success, bringing out all the surprising events in glorious detail to paint the picture of power, family and society in Byzantium. This chapter reveals Stephenson's real training as an historian, apart from the wide effects of history that were discussed earlier.

Stephenson then goes on to discuss cities in the next chapter. A lively discussion for lively places, he describes the inheritance of these cities as former city states and the lives of the people that walked the colonnaded streets or the market place. Also, Stephenson discusses cities as the nodes central to governance in a wide and expansive empire. During this chapter we see the emergence of the three great cities: Constantinople, Antioch and Alexandria. These cities would often appear at odds with each other regarding who among them could lay claim to be the greatest city of the empire. The next chapter focuses on the winner of that debate: Constantinople - the 'New Rome', the seat of imperial and even spiritual power. The importance of the position of the clergy had already been established in the previous chapters.

Stephenson's description of Constantinople and the functioning of the city makes for absorbing reading. From the Imperial Palace to the Hippodrome, and the fish markets to the great churches, the sketch can only be described as extremely vivid. Stephenson also goes into great detail on how the city was governed and how it in turn tried to govern all the far-flung provinces. The idea that this city is the 'New Rome', as in the title of the book, is proven in this detailed chapter and the reader is left in no doubt that this place really is the seat of power.

Part two of the book begins with an historical account of three of the most well-known emperors during the period 395–700: Theodosius II, Justinian I, and Herakleios. Each of the three is famous for different reasons: Theodosius, for the creation of Christian Orthodoxy; Justinian, for trying to restore the traditional European boundaries of the Western Empire; and Herakleios, for the fragility and collapse under Arab invasion. Stephenson highlights in this chapter that although through this period the Empire went through an incredible transition, this transition was certainly not in the minds of the citizenry. They clung on to the old idea of the Empire even though that didn't exist anymore. They looked at provinces that had long since been lost as still being part of the Empire - a nostalgic wanting for past glory.

In the final chapters Stephenson discusses the effects of climate change and plague on the Empire. The volcanic eruption of 536 blanketed most of Europe in a cloud, diminishing sunlight and dropping temperatures significantly. The plague that started in 545 is also put into context and, together with persistent earthquakes,

that promotes the theme of an impending apocalypse that seemed to be realised with the Arab conquests after the Persian war. Stephenson also goes into a technical description of what iconoclasm was and ends this massive, detailed work with the sentence 'This was the world we called Byzantium'. A massively bold claim from a massively bold author who has created in this volume a *tour de force* of the long-duration historical study, a masterful piece of work that future historians should be envious to try to emulate.

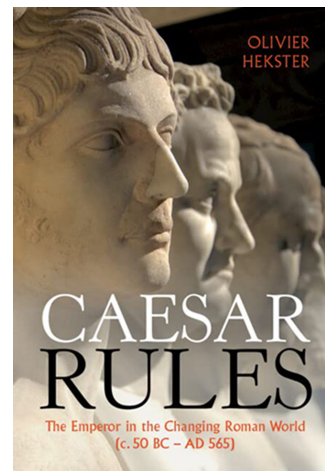
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Caesar Rules. The Emperor in the Changing Roman World (c.50 BC – AD 565)

Hekster (O.), Pp. 414. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023. Cased, £30. ISBN: 978-1-00-922679-0

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Caesar Rules, by Olivier Hekster, sets itself the very ambitious goal of defining the indefinable, filling the gap left by the lack of definition of what the Roman Emperor was and how he was perceived. In this book Hekster is remarkably successful in colouring in this blank image by not just relying on historical source material, but by going further into the image of the emperor left for posterity in art and in numismatics. His engaging analysis of this world-ruling enigma will certainly be the

starting point for many years of continued research into the nature of what it was to be a Roman Emperor.

Hekster's work is singular in that it is a new application of study as it departs from the previous studies on what it was to be Emperor. Most notably it is a departure from the seminal work of Fergus Millar published in 1977. Hekster's change of emphasis is to focus on the changing nature of the concept of Emperor from a time when no one thought of such a thing even existing to going beyond the static nature of the period of Constantine to the eventual reign of Justinian where the Western Empire was fading from the imperial view. Whether you called him 'Caesar', 'Augustus', 'Imperator' or 'Basileus', Hekster noted that the role of the man went far beyond the civil or even the legal – past an empirical rational definition to a quasi-divine figure that was just as much religious as he was soldier in nature.

In *Caesar Rules* we find that the Roman Emperor was defined by not only what he did but also by those people that he had around him at the Imperial Court. From senators and bishops to wives and mothers, all helped or hindered the changing nature and appearance of the man at the apex of the Roman world. In Chapter 1 Hekster explores how the emperor was portrayed in public. This is done by examining how the emperor was portrayed in art, sculpture and on coinage, from the titles he used, or the offices he held to his interactions with the people both in small intimate groups or large public spectacles; a redefined image of the Roman Emperor emerges. This changing image (which is reflected by the latest trends in archaeology) is defined throughout the first chapter and then condensed and expanded in later chapters to follow. The first chapter is particularly successful in challenging notions that had been widely held such as the distinction between 'official' and 'unofficial' names. Indeed, throughout the whole work the picture that emerges is one where such representations are actually the result of negotiations not just of an egomaniacal ruler imposing his will. The 'Changing Caesar' is indeed a far more subtle creature.

Chapter 2 continues by showing that of all the things in *Caesar Rules* the term and title of Augustus is the most constant throughout this 600-year examination of the man and the office. The focus continues on more historically known roles such as the civic, military and religious functions that the emperor traditionally embodied. These are more commonly brought down to us through the most widely read historians active in the Roman Empire. Hekster does this very well given the complex changes in the function of the emperor in the religious sphere after the advent of Christianity in the reign of Constantine. He condenses this subject without losing any of the important contributions this makes to the changing image of the emperor. This is indeed masterly as the voluminous nature of the time period from 312 AD could well have consumed the whole chapter and forced other aspects of rule to be highly neglected.

Chapters 3 and 4 deal with relationships with the emperor and are thus the most different from the traditional scholarly approaches of the study of the Imperium. It focuses on the relationships of the Imperial Court and family as well as exterior special relationships with the emperor. It is thus a unique blend of intrigue, discord, harmony and propaganda. In his treatment of these subjects Hekster shows us again the workings of a master scholar. He moves effortlessly from Julio-Claudian family dynamics to the actions of Christian Empresses in the 5th and 6th centuries AD. This description shows us how fluid the continuity of Roman Imperial history was. Again, Hekster uses a very effective blend of both historical and visual sources to prove his argument. These are indeed a treat to any reader. With regard to the spatial relationships, Hekster pays equal amounts of attention to both Rome and Constantinople, showing the reader the substantive challenges that were faced given each city's unique geography to the possibilities of how the emperor could interact with his subjects. Even here, re-evaluation of traditional views can be seen: these once seemingly static scholarly pictures are infused with new life and new possibilities of continuing research. Just one example could be the significant periods of time that the Roman Empire had two or more co-emperors or Caesars.

Caesar Rules is meticulously researched. It presents the reader with excellent images, datasets and family trees. These have all been expertly chosen by Hekster, and this does more than just an admirable job of creating this book. It goes far beyond. The book manages to incorporate the slightest nuance with a sort of warm

embrace that will evoke new scholarship and further the debate on the idea and notion of who or what the Roman Emperor was.

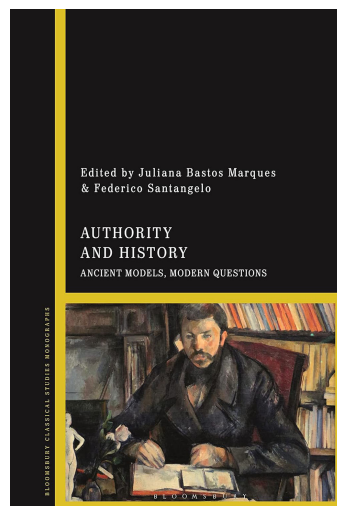
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Authority and History. Ancient Models, Modern Questions

Bastos Marques (J.), Santangelo (F.) (edd.) Pp. viii + 196. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2023. Cased, £85. ISBN: 978-1-350-26944-6

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In this anthology of essays from Ancient to Modern Scholars, the central driving force behind the creation of *Authority and History* has been the bitter disputes of the 21st century. And Marques correctly states in the book's introduction that the most bitter and often the most poisonous disputes in this century have happened in the field of Classics. From issues of race and gender to the ideologies of the modern Classical writers, all have been brought into question. Ultimately though this must be seen from the angle of truth and legiti-

macy, how those definitions have changed in the course of the 21st century and who gets to establish what Classical studies are.

This anthology goes a long way to prove the point that while many other disciplines within or outside the Humanities have tried to say that the Classics are no longer relevant, given the level and intensity of debate in the field it must make them one of the most intellectually active fields of study in the entire world today. Even if the debates are centred on controversy, the importance to modern times and the individual cannot be underestimated. The editors have gone a long way also to provide such a diverse perspective on the ethos of Classical Studies, but they certainly have also not neglected the traditional perspectives of Classics. This is why this anthology is such a compelling read for anyone in the field, whether you are a tenured professor or a teacher in Classics in whichever curriculum.

The editors of this anthology have also included amongst the essays several which directly mention the subversion of the Classical ethos and the ways and instances that this has happened. Many of the authors would argue subversion of this ethos in the modern world is made far easier than it once was, because of the ease in which your audience can be influenced. Any audience