
This collection of eight papers, given at a conference at the University of Texas, Austin, in 1988, revealed, in Peter Green's words, 'a whole range of illuminating and unforeseen agreements'. Efforts to provoke controversy, or at least lively debate, were unsuccessful (2).

N. G. L. Hammond's contribution, 'The Macedonian Imprint on the Hellenistic World', comes first (13-23). Hammond deals with Macedonian kingship, Macedonian soldiers as citizens, and Macedonian cities. His views in this area are already well known. The argument comes down to a tale of two cities: 'the Greek city was a city-state, fiercely independent, riven by stasis, racially exclusive, and intolerant of royal rule' (23). A. H. M. Jones' Greek City—the one 'from Alexander to Justinian'—was by contrast (so Hammond) actually a *Macedonian* city, and 'perhaps the greatest contribution which the Macedonian State made to human civilization'. E. N. Borza's reply (23-35) sets out in moderate tone some points where Hammond's ideas could be questioned: was there a real distinction between Alexander's being King of the Macedones and King of Asia? (25) Did the Macedonian army have a constitutional right to choose the king? (25-9) What is a polis? (29-31).

In 'The Hellenistic Fringe: the Case of Meroe' (38-54), S. M. Burstein traces evidence for contact between Ptolemaic Egypt and Nubia, concluding that third century relations brought Egyptian influence, rather than Hellenizing influence, to bear on Meroe, so that it 'actually facilitated the restoration of contact between
REVIEWS

Meroitic culture and its Egyptian roots, and helped make possible the Meroitic renaissance of the late Hellenistic and early Roman imperial periods' (53). Frank Holt in his response (54-64) stresses the importance of frontier studies: 'the enormous Hellenistic world was essentially a frontier society' (54).

Martin Robertson in 'What is "Hellenistic" about Hellenistic Art?' (67-90) discusses examples but does not enunciate a clear central thesis, and J. J. Pollitt’s response (90-103) finds nothing of substance to disagree with. Peter Levi in 'People in a Landscape: Theokritos' (111-27) asks 'what kind of world are [Theokritos'] herdsmen living in, and what are their social relations as presupposed by the bucolic idylls?' (113). His summary creates a vivid picture, as David M. Halperin observes in his response (127-32): 'Professor Levi’s Theocritus is a poet of nature, a Hellenistic Mandelshtam, tuning his verse to the rhythm and cadence of the seasons, capturing in language the sonorities of the classical landscape' (129). Halperin’s alternative is to see Theocritus as the first great academic poet: a writer whose artful language, lavished on uncouth subjects, creates an effect of deliberate incongruity which is designed to forestall any reader’s attempt to wallow complacently in Theocritus’ sensuous images.'

'Hellenistic Ethics and Philosophical Power' (138-56) by A. A. Long is perhaps the best paper in the collection, focusing on Socrates as having developed new ways of thinking about self-control: a self-control which became both a paradox and a paradigm for Hellenistic philosophers. Long argues that Hellenistic philosophy as a whole represents development of Socratic tendencies rather than response to political or social conditions. A. E. Samuel in 'The Ptolemies and the Ideology of Kingship' (168-92) argues for another kind of non-response to conditions, characterizing the Ptolemaic civil service as a bureaucracy which 'developed its own momentum' (178), while royal directives 'betrayed an optimistic lack of understanding of what was happening' (179). Samuel quotes Harry S. Truman’s answer when asked what Eisenhower would find most difficult about the presidency ('When he gives an order, and nothing happens'). Whether Ptolemaic kings were in practice as
irrelevant to government as Samuel claims is a matter for further debate. Truman and J. Edgar Hoover illustrate the complexity of the issues at stake: mutual dislike and occasional minor confrontations never brought on a final crisis, and Truman was shrewd enough to use Hoover even while Hoover had his own fish to fry. If civil servants have agendas of their own, the civil service does not necessarily therefore cease to be usable as a tool for implementing policy. There is a danger in coming to believe in ‘Yes, Minister’ (cf. 10): the interchange of real politics is more nuanced.

K. D. White’s paper on “The Base Mechanic Arts” (211-2) surveys some highlights of Hellenistic science and technology, and discusses attitudes to scientific enquiry. John Scarborough’s response (220-33) stands out among these harmonious essays in revisionism (cf. 11) as an unusually flatteringly expressed piece of agreement and elaboration. More real debate arose after E. S. Gruen’s paper on ‘Hellenism and Persecution: Antiochus IV and the Jews’ (238-64). Gruen examines Antiochus’ motives for the attempt to eradicate Judaism in 167, concluding (263) that ‘Antiochus would answer any potential questions about his withdrawal from Egypt by taking the offensive in Palestine’. This is an attractive argument. Popillius Laenas meant business, as Gruen notes (245), when he drew the circle round Antiochus on the ‘Day of Eleusis’—and it might have been worth making more explicit that Antiochus backed down not just because he believed the Romans would take Egypt from him if he occupied it, but because he was afraid of losing his whole empire if Rome intervened. M. Gwyn Morgan in his response (264-69) minimizes the importance of the ‘Day of Eleusis’ (mistakenly, I think), and so cannot accept Gruen’s line of reasoning. The discussion which follows (269-74) has a better standard of relevance and argumentation than most of the open discussion reported in the book, even though S. M. Burstein (269) brings in the old canard about Antiochus’ not aiming to eliminate worship of Yahweh (neither did Hitler).

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