

Rome of the Late Republic and Early Empire: *dignitas* in the *œuvre* of Oxford's Miriam Griffin

K. R. Bradley

MIRIAM T. GRIFFIN (edited by Catalina Balmaceda), *POLITICS AND PHILOSOPHY AT ROME: COLLECTED PAPERS* (Oxford University Press, Oxford 2018). Pp. xvi + 775. ISBN 978-0-19-879312-0.

Any book of almost 800 pages is a monument: in this case to a lifetime of patient, persistent and painstaking scholarship from a recently departed colleague who will be warmly remembered by those who knew her and whose work will be long admired by many more. This collection of Miriam Griffin's papers, with Prologue included, was in proof at the time of her death on May 16, 2018; sadly, she did not live to see the final product. Her pupil C. Balmaceda is all the more to be congratulated therefore for bringing to completion a project she initially inspired. The volume contains some 50 items from rather more than a half-century (1962-2017) of scholarly labour. Balmaceda has arranged them under three heads: Roman history, Roman historiography, Philosophy and politics. The categories are entirely appropriate, as anyone familiar with Griffin's major works will appreciate: the monograph on Seneca, the biography of Nero, and the commentary on Seneca's *De Beneficiis*.¹ No review of reasonable length can do justice to the depth and breadth of the collection — which is in fact incomplete, for (e.g.) Griffin's two chapters from *CAH*² ("The Flavians" and "Nerva to Hadrian") are not reprinted here, possibly for reasons of length.² My intent accordingly is firstly to comment briefly upon the range of the material covered, and secondly to address two features of particular historical interest the collection raises. Griffin said of herself that, while throughout her career she had concentrated on "the overlap between philosophy and politics", she wrote "as an historian" (viii). It is the character of the history she wrote that is of interest, one that remained remarkably consistent over time.

Content

Variations in format and length are due to the circumstances under which the 50 papers were composed: some were originally substantive contributions to major journals to be read by peers; some are less intensive items written for the broader readership of handbooks and *Festschriften*; some were published after delivery as public lectures on honorific occasions. A few previously unpublished lectures intended for general audiences are also included. The tripartite arrangement is nevertheless arbitrary. The boundaries between history, historiography and political thought are fluid, so that a discussion (chapt. 8) of how radical or otherwise Claudius' reign was perceived to have been in the half century after his death, centred as it is largely on Tacitus, is as historiographical as it is historical, while a chapter (40) on political thought in the age of Nero, if drawing mainly on Seneca, is as historical as it is philosophical. This reflects the interconnectedness of Griffin's interests and the methodological approach she brought to bear upon them. Above all, her papers are critical analyses of literary texts from a relatively small number of historically consequential authors. Her purview expanded at times to embrace epigraphical texts, but it was chiefly, if not exclusively, to the writings of Cicero, Seneca, Tacitus and Pliny the Younger that she repeatedly turned to uncover what she considered in them to be of historical importance, whether politically, intellectually or both; and, as that group of names implies, it was Rome of the Late Republic and Early Imperial age that commanded her attention.

The first section combines overviews of the Roman revolutionary era and the emergence of the Principate with detailed studies of Roman institutions and dominant political figures. A

1 M. T. Griffin, *Seneca: a philosopher in politics* (Oxford 1976, repr. with postscript 1991); *Nero: the end of a dynasty* (London 1984); *Seneca on society: a guide to De Beneficiis* (Oxford 2013).

2 A. K. Bowman, P. D. A. Garnsey and D. Rathbone (edd.), *CAH*² XI. *The High Empire, A.D. 70-192* (Cambridge 2000) 1-83 and 84-131.

comprehensive examination (1973; chapt. 2) of *leges iudiciariae* and a thorough prosopographical investigation (1973; chapt. 3) of the career of C. Cornelius, tribune of 67 B.C. illustrate the Late Republican contributions. For the Early Imperial age, a paper on Tiberius (chapt. 9) is representative: it proposes that the emperor's personal flaws and hypocrisy allowed Tacitus to take Tiberius' reign as the starting-point for the *Annals* as a way of revealing the flaws and hypocrisy of the Principate as a system of government, with Augustus emerging as the true hypocrite.³ Politics throughout is understood to be based on what Griffin termed "the striving for influence and glory" that she took to be "natural" among men of the senatorial and equestrian orders (589). A practical aspect was involved, as when Seneca during his period of preeminence under Nero gave advice within the court circle and managed appointments to office (387, 389), but, as that example confirms, politics is construed as always the sphere of the Roman élite, a "Roman political class" (589). A paper (1991; chapt. 5) on the ideological roots of the Augustan system — optimate rather than *popularis* — takes note of Rome's "ordinary citizens" (73), but only as an undifferentiated "mob" to be militarily controlled, under the Principate, by an authoritarian government (86, 165).⁴ There is an inherent conservatism, therefore, in Griffin's studies from beginning to end. At a late stage, in the paper on the age of Nero, thought was briefly given to politics in theoretically formal terms, but terms at once judged inappropriate.

The second section is devoted principally to studies of Tacitus, rightly regarded as historically authoritative and artistically masterful. Two papers (chaps. 11-12) on compositional techniques and aesthetic manipulation of source material are reliably informative, although, unless I am mistaken, Tacitus' all-important words on the didactic intent of his work (*Ann.* 3.65) are surprisingly overlooked.⁵ Two further studies (chapt. 14 of 1990; chapt. 21 of 2010) in quest, respectively, of material in the *Annals* from Claudius' original speeches and Tacitus' childhood memories of Nero's Rome are suggestive, if necessarily speculative. Particularly intriguing is Griffin's exposition (1997; chapt. 15) of what was then the new *senatus consultum de Cn. Pisone patre*. The standard edition of the decree had appeared a year earlier, but for some time beforehand the text had prompted re-examination of Tacitus' narrative of the tragic death in Syria of Germanicus, Tiberius' presumptive heir, and of the trial of his presumed assassin, Cn. Calpurnius Piso (*Ann.* 2.69-83; 3.1-18). Griffin's important re-assessment carefully distinguishes the intricacies of presentation in Tacitus' narrative from the version of events that the senate saw fit to make public, disclosing simultaneously the potential for further insights gradually to emerge — in which connection the emphasis G. Rowe was to place on the senate's appeal in the decree to the Roman soldiery in the aftermath of Piso's trial is worthy of note.⁶ A late ancillary study (chapt. 22) of family relations perceptible in the decree reveals awareness of the development — now almost a generation ago — of family studies as a field of Roman social history.⁷ In contrast, famous passages from Tacitus' *Agricola* and *Histories* are placed and assessed among a valuable collection of texts on Roman views of anti-imperialism (chapt. 17). Engaging in a different way is a paper (1999; chapt. 16) directly comparing Tacitus and Pliny. The style of Pliny's *Letters*, which differs enormously from that of Tacitus, suggests a strong contrast between the two men. Griffin was sensitive, however, to the easy assumption that

3 Griffin was aware that Tacitus must always be the principal source for judgements of Tiberius' personality — Velleius Paterculus does not appear in the book's index — and came close (147) to acknowledging her argument's circularity.

4 The opening chapter from 1986 surveying Late Republican history shows no sign that a major debate was then under way about the extent of constitutional democracy in the age of Cicero, in which the Roman citizenry was situated at the heart of Roman politics; see especially F. G. B. Millar, *The crowd in Rome in the Late Republic* (Ann Arbor, MI 1998).

5 *Exequi sententias haud institui nisi insignis per honestum aut notabili dedecore, quod praecipuum munus annalium reor ne virtutes sileantur utque pravis dictis factisque ex posteritate et infamia metus sit.* Seasoned readers will be reminded of how much is still to be gained from B. Walker's classic *The Annals of Tacitus: a study in the writing of history* (Manchester 1952).

6 G. Rowe, *Princes and political cultures: the new Tiberian senatorial decrees* (Ann Arbor, MI 2002) 154-72.

7 Cf. M. Corbier, "La Maison des Césars," in P. Bonte (ed.), *Épouser au plus proche* (Paris 1994) 243-93.

style is an index of personality, and here (260), charmingly, imagines the two friends vinously socialising together.⁸ A rivalry between them is nonetheless admitted — one, as Griffin saw it, analogous to the competitiveness in her own Oxford world between her mentor Ronald Syme, author of the great *Tacitus* (1958), and A. N. Sherwin-White, who some years later produced the massive and still-unsurpassed commentary on Pliny's *Letters*.⁹ The analogy may have implied (as with Tacitus and Pliny) a certain disparity of achievement, for the commentary was critically received in some quarters and Syme was not averse in the sequel to pointing out its technical shortcomings, chagrined perhaps by some of its caustic comments on views of his own. This should never have mattered much beyond the confines of St. Giles and Magdalen Bridge (and perhaps it does not matter at all any longer), but it is clear where Griffin's sympathies lay. All the same, readers might wish to note the magnanimous conclusion Sherwin-White reached when he reviewed Syme's *Tacitus*, if only to complete Griffin's charitable characterisation (253) of him.¹⁰ Rivalry did not exclude generosity of spirit here any more than in the case of Pliny's acknowledgement of Tacitus' superior accomplishments.

The obituary of Syme which Griffin wrote for *JRS* 1990 (chapt. 23) is a beautiful composition: it humanises a man who was to some a remote and formidable figure and by all accounts notoriously private. Griffin's words communicate a depth of feeling that underlay a transition from pupil to friend, expressing a bond between the two explicable in part perhaps by their common origin as outsiders (a New Zealander and an American) who became pillars of the Oxford establishment. Her final lapidary sentence (322) is deeply moving:

The reader who is engaged by the energy and imagination of his narrative, and amused by his aphorisms and insights into human nature, is in the presence of the man himself.¹¹

It is no surprise that Syme's influence is apparent everywhere in Griffin's work, not least in her promotion of the idea, undoubtedly true to some degree, that Pliny's *Letters* as a whole constitute a kind of autobiography. The question is to what degree, or of what kind of life-story. Pliny postures and preens for his public, but he permits no glimpse of an unconstrained inner life to be seen. His autobiography consequently lacks that total honesty of personality Virginia Woolf was to celebrate in the autobiography of Thomas de Quincey, a figure superficially much like Pliny:

For page after page, we are in company with a cultivated gentleman who describes with charm and eloquence what he has seen and known ... Then suddenly the smooth narrative parts asunder, arch opens beyond arch, the vision of something for ever flying, for ever escaping, is revealed, and time stands still.¹²

Such rapturous moments are scarcely to be found in what Syme termed Pliny's "carefully con-

8 One of several touches of humour throughout (e.g., 250 and 661).

9 R. Syme, *Tacitus* (Oxford 1958); A. N. Sherwin-White, *The Letters of Pliny: a historical and social commentary* (Oxford 1966).

10 "A lesser man would have made a reputation with a third of the riches here revealed. Perhaps the most impressive fact about the book is its bold march across the too often separated domains of literature, philology, and history. Syme has outstripped his own performance in the *Roman Revolution*. In his *Tacitus* the School of Literae Humaniores may salute what in this age of specialization is the most remarkable and the most successful of its products" (A. N. Sherwin-White, review and discussion of R. Syme, *Tacitus*, *JRS* 49 [1959] at 146). The review of this "tremendous book" had opened with the observation (140) that it "is also a contribution to literature rare in the writing of professional history". Sherwin-White's commentary remains a mine of information on Roman social life and manners in the early Antonine age.

11 It is in this item alone, I think, that Velleius Paterculus appears (p. 320). On Syme's origins and career, see M. Edmond, *The expatriates* (Wellington, NZ 2017) 104-79. In "Imago suae vitae: Seneca's life and career," in G. Damschen and A. Heil (edd.), *Brill's companion to Seneca: philosopher and dramatist* (Leiden 2014) 3-31, T. Habinek surprisingly found Griffin's book on Seneca, of which he disapproved, "a characteristically British empiricist attempt to separate fact from fiction" (3 n.2, my emphasis). A second paper on Syme is controversial: see my End-Note.

12 V. Woolf, *The common reader, second series* (London 1932/1965) 139.

trived" pages,¹³ and Griffin did not remark on the fact; but her revelation (2007; chapt. 43) of light philosophical undertones in the *Letters* is effective (624):

Pliny may not have had much formal training in philosophy, and there is no reason to attach him to a particular school. His echoes of Stoicism reflect its dominance at Rome in his day, a position no doubt enhanced by its persecution under successive tyrants.

Both here and in one of the unpublished essays (chapt. 19), she was able to take some account of the recent renaissance of critical interest in the *Letters'* literary qualities, rightly acknowledging (291) the impact of S. E. Hoffer's pioneering book of 1999.¹⁴

The final section again combines rewarding surveys with brief discussions of technical points and extended presentations of views firmly held. The opening chapter (1989; chapt. 26) on Roman interest in, and assimilation of, ideas originating in the various schools of classical Greek philosophy illustrates the first; a paper (1997; chapt. 37) on the stages of composition of Cicero's *Academica* the second; and a comprehensive analysis (2003; chapt. 42) of Seneca's *De Beneficiis* the third (much of this last was to find its way into the guide a decade later). It is indeed to Seneca and *De Beneficiis*, "Seneca's most creative thinking" (566), that Griffin repeatedly turns in this section. The burden of her position is that the exchange of favours considered so important a feature of Roman social praxis occurred on a horizontal rather than a vertical plane, meaning that exchange took place predominantly between social equals rather than between individuals of widely separated status. She also questioned the extent to which the conferment of benefits involved for Romans the operation of patronage and a complement of intermediate negotiation. Evidently enough, it is a stance adopted in response to the views on benefits and patronage put forward in 1982 by R. P. Saller, who pointed to the social imbalance of the partners involved in exchange relationships, stressing the all-important function of "brokerage" between them as favours were dispensed and returned.¹⁵ Engaged predominantly, like Griffin, with Rome's upper orders, Saller's starting-point nonetheless was a demonstration of the ethic of reciprocity between partners of unequal status reasonably judged to have permeated all areas of Roman life. I note in passing that Seneca acknowledged (*Ben.* 3.29) that it was possible for a slave to confer a *beneficium* on his master, a situation not, I think, merely theoretical but one in which the disparity of status between the parties concerned could not be greater. Griffin dismissed the passage as one among others she judged "marginal" and "problematic" (593). Readers will have to decide the issue for themselves. Certainly the range of social contacts enjoyed by prominent aristocrats of the Late Republic, women included, can be taken to have been broad.¹⁶

One paper (chapt. 47) that now seems particularly poignant concerns "the treatment of health and sickness" (677) in the four writers of Latin letters: Cicero, Seneca, Pliny and Fronto. In origin a lecture of 2011, it attractively suggests that a quasi-Foucauldian "care of the self" was important to élite Romans required to speak in public, who for the sake of oratorical success had to be able to project their voices effectively in an age when artificial means of voice enhancement were non-existent. Fronto is also in view in another late (2014; chapt. 49) essay, where Griffin responds to the thesis of A. Richlin that the relationship with the young Marcus Aurelius was homoerotic in nature.¹⁷ The central question the section raises, however, is clearly posed in its introductory survey (347):

13 Syme (supra n.9) 542.

14 S. E. Hoffer, *The anxieties of Pliny the Younger* (New York 1999). For one view of the autobiography, see K. R. Bradley, "The exemplary Pliny," in C. Deroux (ed.), *Studies in Latin literature and Roman history* (Coll. Latomus 323, 2010) 384-422. For Syme's original view, see id. (supra n.9) 98.

15 R. P. Saller, *Personal patronage under the Early Empire* (Cambridge 1982). The investigation was anthropologically informed, an approach not to Griffin's taste (surprisingly, perhaps, in view of the sensitivity to cultural difference displayed in the works of the much-admired Tacitus).

16 S. M. Treggiari, *Servilia and her family* (Oxford 2019) 217-50.

17 A. Richlin, *Marcus Aurelius in love: Marcus Aurelius and Marcus Cornelius Fronto* (Chicago, IL 2006). Cf. chapter 30, a discussion of suicide, reacting to Y. Gris , *Le Suicide dans la Rome antique* (Montr al, QC 1982).

What effect did philosophy have on the conduct of Roman statesmen who were exposed to philosophical lectures in Rome and abroad, and who, for whatever motives, frequently had a philosophical companion in their entourage?

It is asked specifically of Cicero and Seneca, always Griffin's "heroes of the story" (viii), in a 1987 item (chapt. 31). The answer, perhaps Griffin's most important proposition, is as follows (362; cf. 405, 431, 459):

The doctrines of the dogmatic sects were too complex to provide definite directives on particular occasions. But they provided the moral vocabulary for weighing alternatives and justifying decisions. To write or speak in philosophical terms, even insincerely, is to think in those terms. Philosophy thus played an important role in a society where religion had little metaphysics and less ethics.

It is difficult, of course, to determine the extent to which individual Roman statesmen were conscious, when they reached decisions and took actions, of doing so as philosophy dictated, "according to what one's reason told one what was right" (431). The central proposition cannot be quantified. And while for one generation Cicero's correspondence seems to indicate among his peers a common currency of philosophical doctrines (chapt. 33), no independent index is available for comparison. As always, the limitations of the sources are insuperable. At times, consequently, the only recourse is grand speculation. A case in point concerns the precise stance (or stances), whether Stoic, Cynic or both, of those affected by the expulsion of philosophers from Rome instigated under Vespasian by Licinius Mucianus (Dio epit. 66.12.1-2; 13.1-2; 1a-3). This is Griffin's cautious assessment (478):

Dio may here not be entirely false to history, for Mucianus' concern would clearly have been to silence criticism of the regime, particularly from senators like Helvidius Priscus. Like Cosutianus Capito and Eprius Marcellus under Nero, he might well have been prepared to misrepresent the Stoic teachings and attitudes of these senators. To that end not only is conventional Cynic behaviour ascribed to undoubted Stoics like Helvidius Priscus, but the offending philosophers (whether they were actually Stoic or Cynic or some of each) have conventional Cynic behaviour attributed to them even while being labelled as Stoics.

Philosophy nonetheless is distinct from philosophers, and ideas may hold more purchase than their proponents. Seneca's philosophical works can understandably induce approbation, and Griffin has great admiration for the author of *De Beneficiis* and the *Epistulae Morales*, the guide along "the path to virtue and happiness" she believed (647) his works reveal. But as she observed in her early examination of his career (chapt. 29, one of her most celebrated papers), the disjunction between Seneca's words and deeds is unmistakable: Seneca, as Griffin bluntly put it, was "never a man of rigid principle", and as a courtier he unforgettably compromised with evil (386, 398-99). She is right also to have detected in another early paper (chapt. 27) self-interest as one of the motives behind the composition of *De Brevitate vitae* — the same might surely be said of *De Clementia* — while the speech composed for Nero after Agrippina's death (Tac., *Ann.* 14.10-11) is crucially damning.¹⁸ For all the comfort, even inspiration, to be found in the writings, it remains a question whether Seneca should ever properly be called a statesman: the dramatic familiarity of the murderous events in which he was implicated ought not to blind historians to their sheer horror.

Discussion

I turn now to two subjects of personal interest where I think it fair to take wider historical views than those of Griffin. Both cases elaborate previous passing remarks.

1. Slavery

This is Griffin (606) à propos again of *De Beneficiis*:

The Romans knew that they had a hierarchical society, and defended it, but in social relations between individuals of the upper classes, notably senators and equites, a pretence of equality

18 An illustrative line was preserved by Quintilian (*Inst.* 8.5.18): *salvum me esse adhuc nec credo nec gaudeo*. Griffin 1976/1991 (supra n. 1) 79 n.7, hesitated to accept it.

was supposed to be maintained by the superior party, whatever deference was actually shown, and indeed expected, from the inferior.

In such an instance, readers have to remind themselves that Griffin's "Romans" made up a very small fraction of the entire population. R. MacMullen's impressionistic description from decades ago is still worth recalling: in a notional empire-wide population of 50 millions, the upper classes amounted to a senatorial element of "something like two-thousands of one percent", with the *equites* numbering "less than a tenth of one percent"; adding in the local aristocracies of small cities would scarcely make a difference.¹⁹ From time to time Griffin's papers speak of a "literate public", the "public at large", a "potentially large middle-brow readership" for certain kinds of literature (439), and a "general public" (393, 439, 678).²⁰ But the character of these categories and the "social relations" between and among their varied constituents — social relations, that is, within a "hierarchical society" as a whole — are unexplored.²¹ Roman slavery, however, is one subject that seems to matter here, because the relations between slave-owners and slaves were of interest to Seneca and other philosophers, as Griffin reminds her readers especially in relation to Seneca's *Epistle 47* — "one of the most humane statements on slavery preserved from antiquity" (547).²² The case it makes for the generous treatment of slaves derived from the Stoic conception of a human spiritual equality much in evidence in Seneca's writings. But concentration on the letter's lofty thoughts alone can lead both to underestimation of the conditions of life experienced by slaves, and to overestimation of its author's views on slavery at large. Consider, for example, the remark that Seneca, in contrast to some slave-owners later chastised by Pliny, "could never have thought of a slave as a piece of property and his death as a mere 'financial loss'" (293). It is the first part of this remark that makes me pause. If true, a mode of thought is required that combines two seemingly irreconcilable elements: first, the Stoic tenet that equality of the soul renders social status irrelevant, while sovereign reason makes possession of one human being by another impossible; second, actual real-life ownership of the slave by a slave-owner as defined in Roman law and evident in the everyday transaction of sale.²³ Such a combination is baffling — particularly since *Epistle 47.9* refers explicitly to the sale of a slave, that of Claudius' later freedman Callistus, which ought to be enough in itself to show that Seneca could easily think of the slave as an item of property, with confirmation provided by any number of references elsewhere (*Ep.* 80.4, 9; *Const.* 3.1 and 13.4; *Ben.* 4.13.3 and 6.12.2; *Clem.* 1.18.1) to the sale of *mancipia* and *captivi* by *mangones*. In her monograph, Griffin rightly allowed that the ideas represented in *Epistle 47* led to no practical social reform of slavery during Seneca's period of political prominence.²⁴ But her papers seem to give him much credit for humanity regardless, despite "some traces" of evidence to the contrary (547). Once more, the mentor's lead may have been followed:

The lot of the slave on the land or in the mines does not bear thinking about. Domestic slavery was another matter. Common humanity could not deny its claims, and emancipation was fairly common.²⁵

19 R. MacMullen, *Roman social relations: 50 B.C. to A.D. 284* (New Haven, CT 1974) 88–89. Note Griffin 1976/1991 (supra n.1) 252, on the senate: "one rarely hears of the submerged majority in that body".

20 Cf. Griffin *ibid.* 138 on "the reading public" for which she believed the *De Clementia* was written.

21 It is as if Syme's dictum (*The Roman revolution* [Oxford 1939] 7) — "and Roman history, Republican or Imperial, is the history of the governing class" — is a dictate. The phrase "governing class" appears in Griffin's prologue (viii) to connote the pool from which the readers of Cicero and Seneca were drawn.

22 It is not obvious to me that many humane statements from antiquity remain, or that slavery and humanity are mutually compatible terms.

23 Tenet: P. Veyne, Seneca: the life of a Stoic (transl. D. Sullivan; New York 2003) = *Sénèque: Entretiens lettres à Lucilius* (Paris 1993) 140. Ownership: W. W. Buckland, *The Roman law of slavery: the condition of the slave in private law from Augustus to Justinian* (Cambridge 1908/1970) 10: "He was the one human being who could be owned The slave is a chattel, frequently paired off with money as a *res*. Not only is he a chattel: he is treated constantly in the sources as a typical chattel".

24 Griffin 1976/1991 (supra n.1) 256–85.

25 R. Syme, *Roman papers VI* (ed. A. R. Birley; Oxford 1991) 186, from a paper with the ironic title,

To which it might be replied that if Roman history, like a biography of Seneca, for instance, is to be written “in the round” (vii), the lot of the slave on the land or in the mines must be thought about, and the assumption tested that domestic slavery was somehow tempered by “common humanity”.²⁶

For the former category, the best evidence comes from the Latin handbooks on agriculture, in which instructions are provided for the exploitative management of rural slave-workers, and from a few chilling descriptions of the harsh conditions to which slaves were exposed in mining regions. Material evidence offers support.²⁷ For the latter, however, it happens that Seneca, a keen social observer, is one of the best witnesses available for the domestic test. A cluster of details from his various works permits a summary statement.²⁸ The slave as he saw it was not only a chattel, but an animal-like piece of property to be managed, or ruled, with alternating rewards and punishments, a being naturally associated with disposal, obedience and service, who existed either in a state of subjection to compulsion, or in a kind of living death from which he would do anything to escape (saving money, for instance, by going hungry).²⁹ Seneca appreciated the edifying tale of a Spartan boy who killed himself rather than submit to slavery. But it caused him no disquiet that a slave criminal should be burned alive; and while aware that the number of functions domestic slaves filled was limitless in a household of the sort he himself maintained, he understood that domestics could be regarded as burdens by their owners due to their cost (they had to be fed and clothed), their unreliability (they tended to run away), and their need for discipline (they had to be punished). He approved consequently of moderate punishment, recognising, however, that flogging was usual even in trivial circumstances such as when the slave made too much noise during the master’s dinner or when the owner was reviewing his financial accounts. And he knew that individual inadequacies, or simple mischance, could provoke a slave-owner’s rage, which in turn could motivate a slave to run away for the sake of self-survival, or even to commit suicide: the master’s response to the slave’s behaviour had to be anticipated and the slave’s adjusted accordingly. He knew also that a slave could be forced to eat no more than meagre rations, be ordered to tiptoe around the house to avoid disturbing an insomniac owner, or be required to assist the owner in an act of suicide; he might jump from a roof and kill himself to evade the taunts of a dyspeptic master, or fall on the sword to avoid recapture when on the run.³⁰ And there was the common view with which to contend: the slave was essentially his owner’s enemy, always involved in murderous plots of revenge.

I do not see that evidence of this kind, the transactional material included, gives reason to believe that Roman slavery was systemically mitigated by deeply held convictions and widespread displays of common humanity. Instead, I think that Seneca was fully alert to the ubiquitous cruelties and indignities of slavery, but found in philosophy cerebral reasons to accept them as normative. Within Stoic thought, slavery was an indifferent, a highly convenient notion from a slave-owner’s point of view — it is not cynical to say so — and Griffin captures the philosophical consequence precisely (727):

“Human rights and social status at Rome”.

- 26 Griffin observes in her obituary that it would be wrong to believe that Syme “had no concern for the lower levels of society” (320). If so, it received little attention in his writings.
- 27 For an overview of relevant evidence and bibliography, see K. R. Bradley, “The bitter chain of slavery,” *DHA* 41 (2015) 149-76.
- 28 See, for what follows: *Ben.* 7.4.4; *Ira* 3.37.2; *Ep.* 94.1; *Marc.* 10.6; *Const. Sap.* 3.2; *Ben.* 1.2.5; *Ep.* 61.3, 77.18, 80.4, 77.14 and 86.10; *Const. Sap.* 13.3 and 14.1-2; *Vit. Beat.* 17.2; *Ep.* 17.3; *Tranq.* 12.6; *Ben.* 1.3.10; *Ep.* 43.4; *Tranq.* 8.8; *Ep.* 17.3 and 107.7; *Brev.* 3.2; *Clem.* 1.18.1; *Ira* 3.35.1-2; *Ep.* 122.15; *Ira* 2.25.1, 2.25.3, 3.4.4 and 3.24.2; *Ep.* 18.8, 56.7, 77.7, 4.4, 18.14, 4.8, 77.6 and 80.9.
- 29 The principle of slave management was essentially the same as that Seneca advocated in the upbringing of children (*Ira* 2.21.1-5), which Griffin quotes (537). Cf. E. Wilson, *The greatest empire: a life of Seneca* (Oxford 2014) 188-90.
- 30 Griffin’s discussion of philosophy and Roman suicide (chapt. 30) overlooks the servile perspective of suicide as a means of escape from oppression (see especially 419 n.49).

the Stoics thought that Providence has already ensured a benign condition of humankind, so that great strides in social improvement are not to be sought. A key example of this is that, although the Stoa did not think there were slaves by nature (*SVF* 3.352), slavery being a condition imposed by fortune ([Cic.] *Off.* 1.41), they did not go beyond preaching good treatment for slaves.

The fact remains, however, that this dogma permitted the slavery system to continue for centuries without intellectual challenge. (The notion, incidentally, that Roman law gradually improved servile living conditions in the High Empire is easily refuted³¹). Yes, many slaves were set free; yes, many of those who were set free prospered (careers were open to talent); and yes, many of those who were set free were educated Greeks, though perhaps not in every case a budding Aristotle or Aeschylus (cf. 433).³² What cannot be known is the number of Stoicising slaves there might have been who regarded their condition as indifferently as Seneca and his social peers: the obligatory reference to Trimalchio's garbled puffery (*Petr.*, *Sat.* 71) serves no representative purpose. I suspect, however, that for every Epictetus there were untold numbers who had never heard of the brotherhood of mankind; and that to many who had, it was meaningless. Think, for instance, of the rural slaves throughout Italy prepared to follow T. Curtisius in starting a slave war during Tiberius' reign, only to have the attempt fortuitously stamped out (*Tac.*, *Ann.* 4.27). Or, again from the real world, think of enslaved war captives, as sometimes graphically represented in Roman art: not those immediately killed after battle, but those kept for disposal as commodities in the markets, instantly deprived of freedom, separated from family members, their only prospects being the panoply of indignities to which Seneca *ipse* is an expert guide. (An important point for seeing him "in the round".) How many accepted this as part of a providential plan in which "a benign condition of humankind" was "ensured"? A definitive answer is beyond reach, but I think the question matters. What is known is that the slavery system, in all its inherent brutality, never changed in the central era of Rome's history. Seneca's letter, climaxing as it does with a powerful argument against excessive manumission, has to be read in that context, and in terms resistant to apologetic temptation (cf. 401).³³

2. Nero

Naturally, the volume contains much on Nero, papers composed both before and after the author's biography, an example of a genre that under any circumstances is a challenging enterprise. A sense of what biography as a literary form can, or ought to, accomplish should presumably be a basic requirement for imperial biography in general — at a minimum, one would think (with Virginia Woolf in mind), a comprehensive portrait of an individual that includes assessment of the subject's personality. Examples tend, however, to be little more than chronographies of events that took place during the lifetime of a given subject, as too with lives of imperial women (Nero's mother comes to mind). The problem concerns the type and quantity of evidence available. In an unpublished lecture from 2009 (chapt. 20), Griffin stated that the stereotypically monstrous portrayal of Nero in the ancient source-tradition meant that until the late 20th c., when signs of rehabilitation first began to appear, Nero had always been regarded as a despot. She cited in support (227) C. Merivale, who in 1858 described Nero as an "arch-tyrant, the last and most detestable of the Caesarean family". In 1863, however, in

31 P. A. Brunt, *Studies in Stoicism* (ed. M. T. Griffin and A. Samuels; Oxford 2013) 394–406, on Marcus Aurelius, especially 398.

32 Horace, *Ep.* 2.2.1–19, on the sale of Florus is instructive.

33 I have redeployed here material from my "Seneca and slavery," in J. G. Fitch (ed.), *Oxford readings in Seneca* (Oxford 2008) 335–47. Griffin 1976/1991 (*supra* n.1) 515 considered my discussion inconsequential in its original version. So be it. Yet for one illustration of the context into which Seneca's views and remarks need to be placed, see N. Lenski, "Violence and the Roman slave," in W. Riess and G. G. Fagan (edd.), *The topography of violence in the Roman world* (Ann Arbor, MI 2016) 275–98. (Griffin's bibliography contains no more than two items on ancient slavery.) A connection might be made between the maintenance of the slavery system and the continuing desire among the Roman élite to acquire military glory, an aspect of culture well brought out by Griffin (150). *Epistle* 47 is now well discussed by C. Edwards (ed.), *Seneca: selected Letters* (Cambridge 2019) 177–92.

an essay in the *Cornhill Magazine*, G. H. Lewes absolved Nero of responsibility for several of the major crimes traditionally attributed to him — the murders of Britannicus and Agrippina, the burning of Rome — by bringing to the fore the prime issue: the principal extant narratives for Nero's life are few (just three); they are not contemporary accounts; they cannot be verified; and they are full of illogicalities. To follow them unreservedly is therefore a mistake, and Lewes answered the title of his essay ("Was Nero a monster?") firmly in the negative, writing of the sources as follows:

Suetonius, Tacitus, and the Greek Dion Cassius, are the three historians cited as witnesses against Nero. What credit can they claim? Suetonius, from whom the worst stories proceed, was not born till many years after Nero's death, and did not write until some forty years after the events. Tacitus was six years old when Nero died, and wrote many years after the events. Dion Cassius lived some hundred and fifty years later. Let us ask what would be the credibility of historians writing about Cromwell long after the Protectorate had been destroyed, and with nothing but the rumours current in royalist circles to furnish the facts; in such narratives what sort of figure would that heroic man present?

You do not have to agree on Cromwell's heroism to see that Lewes had a point (as Griffin well knew), one that also needs qualification: Cassius Dio's account survives only in Byzantine excerpts, as E. Champlin in his dazzling study circumspectly reminded his readers.³⁴ In his major monograph of 2019, J. F. Drinkwater now reaches the same non-monstrous conclusion as Lewes, and with far more authority.³⁵ But the issue of sources still remains: without an abundance of documents from the main protagonists, and most pertinently without their correspondence ("the most direct material evidence for the inner life of their writers that exists", as personal letters have been called³⁶), true biography is unachievable. The capturing of character, the progress of personality over time, identification of the many selves that constitute an individual life — these are essential biographical elements impossible to portray in the absence of private correspondence. For imperial biography in particular, where an attempt to convey a sense of a subject's 'inner life' would seem to be a *sine qua non* for the investigation of political motivation and action, their absence is critical.³⁷

Griffin knew well the hazards involved in writing a life of Nero, not least because of the longstanding disdain for imperial biography *tout court* expressed by Syme, who from an early date complained of its flatness and schematic nature, and its distortion of history through concentrating on a single figure (he once called biography "the enemy of history"³⁸). Consequently, Griffin set out to do more, her innovation being to provide through Nero's life-story a historical explanation of the fall of the dynasty to which he belonged. (It is to this that Drinkwater duly responds.) Nevertheless, the sources being what they are, little that is biographically new seems possible; and even at the chronological level, basic events are often no more than imperfectly known. Of necessity, classical historians are frequently obliged to date their course by years, rather than by days, weeks or months, and the familiarity of the convention can encourage a sort of obliviousness to the weaknesses of the evidence and the high degree of conjecture (or rhetoric) on which conclusions often depend.³⁹ Griffin's discussion (1976/77;

34 E. Champlin, *Nero* (Cambridge, MA 2003) 241-42.

35 J. F. Drinkwater, *Nero: emperor and court* (Cambridge 2019), on which see my review in this issue.

36 I. Watt, *The rise of the novel: studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding* (London 1957; Berkeley, CA 2001) 176. Notably, Tacitus was more sensitive to the complexity of human personality than many modern imperial biographers; see especially *Ann.* 6.51.

37 From the Late Republic, there are Cicero's letters, the importance of which is brought out incontrovertibly in Griffin's chapt 1. These letters are not evenly distributed over time, however, and there is precious little else from his contemporaries to compare with them. Since so many of his other works have survived, biographical prospects are not unrealistic for Cicero, though whether this unique situation will support the contention that Cicero allows historians to "recapture the intellectual habits of his generation" (5) remains questionable. The section of a paper on the Dictator headed "Enduring problems in fathoming Caesar" (chapt. 4, especially 67-68; cf. 359) speaks for itself.

38 Syme (supra n.21) 7; id. (supra n.25) 122; cf. id. (supra n.9) 91: "the easy approach to history".

39 Syme (supra n.25) 71: "As so often in conjecture, it might be so, it does not have to be". For the

chapt. 7) of the date of, and reasoning behind, Nero's recall of Suetonius Paullinus from his governorship of Britain — A.D. 60 or 61? — illustrates the point, treating as it does discrepant accounts in Tacitus' *Agricola* and *Annals*. This is its conclusion (121):

Tacitus no doubt received from his father-in-law the favourable picture of Suetonius found in the *Agricola*. But he might also have been told the story we find in the *Annals* and omitted it in the earlier work. Or, if there was an account by Suetonius of his British campaigns, Tacitus could have been directed to it by *Agricola* and then have deliberately neglected the full *apologia* in his earlier work.⁴⁰

When so very much, not only of chronology but also of the texture of everyday life and events remains unknown, how might new advances be made? "In recent years", Griffin wrote (64) in her chapter on Caesar,

the direction of scholarship in ancient history has largely shifted away from an emphasis on great rulers and generals, even from a concentration on the governing class, towards the population of the city of Rome and its subject peoples, towards the social structures and the cultural attitudes current in the Roman Empire.

One subject that illustrates the cultural shift, yet remains relevant for the upper orders, has been the preparation of Roman boys for adult life: their upbringing, education and socialisation from infancy to early adulthood. I note the perceptive study (1997) of W. M. Bloomer of the inculcation in upper-class boys of a nexus of traditional ideals and virtues through the rhetorical education received in their years of schooling.⁴¹ Agrippina contrived Seneca's return from exile in Corsica to serve as Nero's tutor precisely because of his literary eminence; his remit, as Griffin wrote, was to instruct the young Nero in "eloquence" and "practical wisdom".⁴² It ought to be feasible, therefore, to say something fairly substantial about Seneca's tutelage of him, especially when the vast amount of educational material in Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* is available as a control (cf. 400).

The emperor-to-be was just 13 or so when Seneca's instruction began, the age when, as Griffin observed, he will have been ready to begin the study of rhetoric. Included in Quintilian's programme for the formation of the perfected young orator, equipped to assume a rôle of public leadership and responsibility, was the memorisation of moralistic proverbs encapsulating elements of conventional wisdom and morality that had an inherently acculturative impact (*Inst.* 5.11; 8.5). Such *sententiae* are well illustrated by an extant catalogue compiled from the mimes of Publilius Syrus, some of which were known to Seneca himself (cf. 599).⁴³ They resembled the *chriae*, on which Seneca set great store (*Ep.* 33.7; cf. Quint., *Inst.* 1.8-9), that younger children learned with the *grammaticus*, and might easily be regarded as essential elements of Seneca's instruction of Nero. Suetonius (*Nero* 20.1) knew of one occasion from Nero's adult life that drew a proverbial outburst from him.⁴⁴ Comparably included in Quintilian's syllabus was the reading of poets, for both younger and older boys; equally, Nero can be imagined to have read the classical Greek epics and tragedies with his instructor, perhaps to lasting effect. After all, Seneca was a tragic poet, and his plays are full of *sententiae*; the dates at which the plays were composed is highly controversial, but some belong well before he returned from Corsica, and in any case familiarity with the Greek tragic corpus at large can be presumed from an early point in his life.⁴⁵ In view of the blatant theatricality of Nero's reign illustrated

convention, see Griffin 1976/1991 (supra n.1) 76-84.

40 Cf. A. R. Birley, *The Roman government of Britain* (Oxford 2005) 49.

41 W. M. Bloomer, "Schooling in persona: imagination and subordination in Roman education," *ClassAnt* 16 (1997) 57-78.

42 Griffin 1984 (supra n.1) 32; cf. ead. 1976/1991 (supra n.1) 63-66.

43 K. R. Bradley, "Publilius Syrus and the anxiety of continuity," *Mouseion* 16 Supp. 1 (2019) 65-89. Note especially *cuivis potest accidere quod cuiquam potest* (Sen., *Cons. Marc.* 9.5; *Tranq.* 11.8); *alienum est omne quicquid optando evenit* (*Ep.* 8.8-9); *iniuriarum remedium est oblivio* (*Ep.* 94.27); *avarus animus nullo satiatur lucro* (*Ep.* 94.43); *desunt inopiae multa, avaritiae omnia* (*Ep.* 108.9); *in nullum avarus bonus est, in se pessimus* (*Ep.* 108.9).

44 Cf. Aul. Gell., *NA* 13.31.3.

45 On dating, see R. G. M. Nisbet, "The dating of Seneca's tragedies, with special reference to *Thyestes*,"

by Champlin, collocation of tragic composition with educational influence ought to be allowed. Indeed, effectively postulating connections between Seneca's tragedies and his life's course, E. Wilson now speculates that Seneca "acted out scenes from his own tragedies with the boy", making irresistible the question whether it is just an accident that one of the stage rôles Nero was remembered for performing was that of Hercules Furens (Suet., *Nero* 21.3).⁴⁶ The topic as a whole is one of biographical relevance: it suggests that escape from the flatness of traditional imperial biography is possible if evidence is explored imaginatively.⁴⁷

Seneca the playwright, however, held little interest for Griffin: Seneca the politician and moral philosopher was her concern, rendering comprehensible her probing of the impact made on Nero of the *De Clementia* and apparently of the views eventually formalised in the *De Beneficiis*. She concluded in 2007 that Nero was "too young and too unintelligent to understand how to apply Seneca's lessons of clemency and beneficence" (154). From which position, given the sequel, and notwithstanding the Tacitean Nero on his rhetorical instruction (*Ann.* 14.55-56), valid questions might arise both about Seneca's capacity as a teacher of worldly wisdom and about Agrippina's judgement in his initial appointment. In hindsight, the *De Clementia* may well have come to be seen as an exercise in futility; even at the moment of delivery, its project of making regally clear to an 18-year-old that he was now an unfettered absolute ruler could have seemed contentious. Perhaps, as Griffin put it in 2002 (chapt. 40), the treatise was a reaction to the cruelty of Claudius, intended "to keep Nero on course" (564); but she also agreed with Syme that *clementia* was the virtue of a despot (572). How to determine Nero's intelligence satisfactorily is a challenge for a future biographer to meet, even as the dynastic impact of his life and reign is weighed.

Conclusion

Alternative perspectives are no barrier to appreciation, and it is fitting, in conclusion, to remark on the final paper (2017) which again illustrates Griffin's commitment to scholarship and devotion to Roman antiquity right until the end. In its disposition it is typical of her life's work as I perceive it. The subject is quintessentially Roman: *dignitas*, especially Stoic *dignitas*, and the association possibly to be drawn with the modern concept of dignity, with its necessary implication of individual human rights. This is Griffin's conclusion (731):

Speaking of the traditional election prayer that the consuls make for the good fortune of the successful candidates, their successors, Cicero suggests that the prayer 'contains as much force and religious power as the dignity of the commonwealth demands' (emphasis added). I suspect that, for the Romans, the *res publica*, with its *dignitas*, came nearer to having rights than any single human being.

The paper concentrates on texts from the socially eminent. Once more, it is not only Cicero but Seneca as well who predominate in discussion: the heroes. Yet whether the issue involved was of any concern in the lower reaches of society — say among the rank-and-file of the legions in *Pannonia* and the German provinces who mutinied when Tiberius came to power⁴⁸ — seems

in J. G. Fitch (ed.), *Seneca: Oxford readings in classical studies* (Oxford 2008) 348-71, with the summary of Fitch (ed.), *Seneca: Tragedies I* (Loeb edn. 2018) xxii-xxvi.

46 Quotation: Wilson (supra n.29) 105. See *ibid.* 9 for convenient examples from the tragedies of *sententiae*. Griffin's chaps. 20-21, which focus on the spectacles of Nero's reign, show the influence of Champlin.

47 In contrast, note this explanation of Agrippina's appointment of Seneca as Nero's tutor: she chose a Stoic philosopher for the task, though opposed to her son's study of philosophy (Suet., *Nero* 52), sharing "a prejudice that philosophy, and stoicism in particular, was irreconcilable with an active political life", because "her motive ... would have been largely political ... She would have wanted Nero to be taught by a brilliant mind whose political views on the best way to rule the Roman state coincided with her own". Agrippina and Seneca "would have seen the value of a 'constitutional' form of principate that operated through consensus ...": A. A. Barrett, in *Agrippina: mother of Nero* [London 1966] 106-7. How to validate such a view is mystifying.

48 With such colourful characters as Percennius and Vibulenus as their leaders in Tacitus' narrative

to me a legitimate question, a variation on the theme emphasised above, the overall cultural import of philosophical theories known chiefly from élite members of society. I am confident, however, that Griffin will have wanted her successors to ask the question, to build upon and to refine her findings in every aspect. Her all-embracing introductory statement (viii) allows for this: "there is much more work to be done". I am equally confident that, as the process unfolds, all who engage with this book will applaud the manner in which the final paper's conclusion is reached: an issue is clearly stated, an array of evidence examined, an argument lucidly and subtly made, rival views confronted, and a judicious answer disclosed, all in a demanding style. In this, the final paper epitomises the multiplicity of qualities evident in the volume from beginning to end. Readers who reflect on the practice of ancient history will long feel gratitude for the benefits Miriam Griffin has conferred upon them.

End-Note

At one point, I believe, Syme misled Griffin. In a paper written in 2003 (chapt. 25) to celebrate his centenary, she carefully explicated his concept of "fictional history", a form of superficially serious history purposefully intended to deceive its readers. Syme's supreme example was the collection of imperial biographies known as the *Historia Augusta*, opening with a life of Hadrian. Following H. Dessau, he believed the biographies to be the work of a sole figure writing in the late 4th c., not that of its ostensible 6 authors of the era of Diocletian and Constantine. The author was an impostor who indulged in inaccuracy and fiction.⁴⁹ In her paper, Griffin referred to a lecture Syme had given in Oxford in 1984 in which, startlingly, he equated with his rogue biographer the author of the famous *Mémoires d'Hadrien*, Marguerite Yourcenar. She too, Syme maintained, was an impostor: since her name was a *nom de plume* and her nationality indistinct, she had pretended to be someone she was not; and while ignorant of the unreliability of the *Historia Augusta*, she had claimed with her novel to have written a factually faithful book. Deceit was clearly involved.⁵⁰ Griffin did not satisfactorily examine the veracity of this indictment, which was misdirected. Succinctly stated, Syme knew very little about Yourcenar's personal history; and, by relying on the original edition of her novel from 1951, rather than the definitive (and revised) final edition of 1982 (the Pléiade edition), he was unaware of the full commentary Yourcenar provided with the novel's text on her sources of information and her intent in writing it. Nor was he aware that in 1958 she had written an essay on the *Historia Augusta*, "Les Visages de l'histoire dans l'*Histoire auguste*", in which a certain familiarity with the work's controversial status was evident (its theme is the connection revealed by modern dictatorships between the Roman past and the contemporary world). Griffin did know this essay and drew (333 n.70) the appropriate (though now, as it happens, unlikely) inference for the composition of *Mémoires*. In the main, however, she did not appreciate any more than Syme what the novel's apparatus makes clear: Yourcenar has to be understood as a *poiètes historikos* (like C. P. Cavafy whose poetry she translated), and her intent with Hadrian (following a clearly defined set of rules that no serious historian could reasonably contest) was to recover, through her conception of the poetic, his inner as well as his outer life: "Refaire du dedans ce que les archéologues du XIX^e siècle ont fait du dehors".⁵¹ Syme had assumed that Yourcenar's

(Ann. 1.16-51).

49 In one formulation (R. Syme. *Ammianus and the Historia Augusta* [Oxford 1968] 198), "a retired schoolmaster, or a clerk in some government department. Perhaps a librarian or a copyist employed on classical texts". This is noticeably comparable to Griffin's Claudius of the Gallic speech (186): "a kind of academic *manqué* or a narrow civil servant with a passion for paperwork, who was out of his depth in the life of politics".

50 The lecture is most easily accessible in Syme (supra n.25) 157-81 ("Fictional history old and new: Hadrian").

51 M. Yourcenar, *Œuvres romanesques* (Paris 1982/2011]) 524 and 528-29, from the *Carnets de notes de «Mémoires d'Hadrien»*. Clues to Yourcenar's notion of poetic history were to be found in P. de Rosbo, *Entretiens radiophoniques avec Marguerite Yourcenar* (Paris 1972), to which Griffin referred for other reasons, though with some confusion. The pages cited at 334 from de Rosbo (51, 52, 61) do not show

invocation of fidelity to facts was synonymous with Anglo-Saxon empiricism, and he omitted entirely from consideration her concept of poetic history.⁵² Griffin, in turn, was unaware of key items of scholarship on both Yourcenar's biography and the historical foundations of the novel that offset Syme's assault.⁵³ The result is that her account, unwittingly no doubt, has the effect of endorsing the caricature Syme promoted. Since the present version of the paper is likely to be read more widely than the original, this is a matter of some consequence.⁵⁴ One thing, however, should be clear: there was no attempt on Yourcenar's part to deceive.

kbradle1@nd.edu

University of Notre Dame, IN/University of Victoria, BC

Acknowledgements

I have found it difficult here, as a long-standing acquaintance of Miriam Griffin, to decide between past and present tenses when referring to her papers. Practice varies according to context, with use of the present tense indicating the author's continuing influence. For much valued advice, I am indebted to Patricia Clark, Greg Rowe and Susan Treggiari.

that Yourcenar "regarded herself as a '*romancier historique*', finding a great deal in common between the historical novel and other novels, and eroding the difference between writing about a real historical setting and a fictional one", but something very different: the methodological contrast between the historian's and the novelist's reconstructions of the past. The term *romancier historique* was that of de Rosbo, not of Yourcenar, who spoke of herself as a *romancier* and a *romancier-historien*.

52 Yet note R. Syme (ed. A. R. Birley), *The provincial at Rome and Rome and the Balkans 80 BC–AD 14* (Exeter 1999) 93: "history, indeed, is a form of poetry".

53 J. Savigneau, *Marguerite Yourcenar: L'Invention d'une vie* (Paris 1990); R. Poignault, *L'Antiquité dans l'œuvre de Marguerite Yourcenar: littérature, mythe et histoire* (Coll. Latomus 228, 1995). See also now M. Goslar, *Antinoüs, de la pierre à l'écriture de Mémoires d'Hadrien* (Brussels 2007). Yourcenar's original name, incidentally, was not Marguerite de Grayencourt [332] but Marguerite de Crayencour.

54 Much more remains to be said on the subject, not least with reference to the fictional personality Syme invented (supra n.49) for the author of the *Historia Augusta*; see K. R. Bradley, "Allusive Syme," *Mouseion* 14 (2017) 125–38.