

discourse as a key element of ancient diplomacy and aptly demonstrates its impact on the ‘real’ world. In this respect, B.’s larger conceptual framework greatly helps to generate new insights, though it is quite deplorable that he fails to look beyond Constructivism and Realism to explore the potential of other theoretical strands, such as Institutionalism and the so-called ‘English school’, which could arguably make a major contribution to understanding elements of order in the essentially anarchic world of ancient interstate relations. What is truly odd about this book, with its profound concern for moral issues, is the author’s persistent attempt to avoid the intricacies of historical judgement. Notwithstanding its professed impartiality, the study actually shows a marked pro-Roman bias, which to a large degree reflects the emphasis of the overwhelmingly Romanocentric sources. This has serious consequences when it comes to drawing conclusions on the nature of Roman imperialism. While B. repeatedly insists that this is not what his book is about, the truth is that he almost invariably interprets Rome’s foreign policy moves as defensive (e.g., 159 on the ‘light touch’ of *amicitia*: ‘The Romans did not seek out opportunities for aggrandizement and aggression ..., but sought to contain and control violent systemic anarchy’). Granted, he may be right to consider the debate on the defensive or aggressive character of Roman expansionism ‘an intellectual dead end’ (356), but the often one-sided readings presented in his otherwise very perceptive enquiry will undoubtedly add further fuel to this old controversy.

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D. BARONOWSKI, *POLYBIUS AND ROMAN IMPERIALISM*. London: Bristol Classical Press, 2011. Pp. xiv + 242. ISBN 9780715639429. £50.00.

The best place to start this valuable study of Polybius’ views on empire, imperialism and Rome is at the end, with the ‘Conclusions’ (164–75). Here, Baronowski is at his most effective, confident in presenting a lively summary of his own views and meticulously careful readings of his author. For B., Polybius was, like almost all intellectuals of the period, an unquestioning believer in the whole enterprise of imperialism, but had firm opinions on how it should be conducted, how empire is best retained, and particularly on how weaker states should react to superpowers. Aggression was fine, as long as it was accompanied by convincing and respectable explanations and had a realistic chance of success. Empire would be retained by the same qualities of dignified and intelligent moderation and benevolence that won it in the first place. On the whole Rome met these simple standards, and on the whole Polybius admired Rome, while remaining at heart a Greek and an Achaean. He moved in the highest circles of Rome’s best and brightest, but maintained an intellectual distance that absolves him from De Sanctis’ accusation of treachery. Rome’s opponents, on the other hand, were not very good imperialists, and even worse as minor powers in Rome’s world, especially after Pydna, they completely failed to understand how to negotiate a relationship with the new superpower. I do not think the Polybius that emerges is strikingly new, but B. brings good sense to many of the topics that have exercised scholars for generations.

Rather like Polybius himself, B. provides a great deal of background material (1–60). I am not convinced how much of it is really helpful. Part I (15–60) collects the literary data concerning the attitude of philosophers, poets and historians to Roman dominion to provide an intellectual context for Polybius, but it seems to me that it is almost another book in the distance it takes us from anything that has closely to do with Polybius. For example, the detailed, but highly speculative, discussion and lengthy endnotes on Book 3 of Cicero’s *De Re Publica* (17–27) and its sources are a long way removed from Polybius. Yes, the ethics of imperialism may have been discussed by some philosophers in the second century B.C., but Polybius’ interest was a very general and unphilosophical one. The same applies to what poetry and prophecies had to say about Roman imperialism (ch. 2), an interesting collection of material. Polybius did, of course, engage with his predecessors and contemporaries in the world of history writing, but even in ch. 3 where the subject is analysed, the relevance to Polybius of a long discussion on Posidonius (55–63), whose work was written after Polybius’ death, is not clear. This is all meticulously careful scholarship which undoubtedly gives an overall impression of imperial discourse; I am just not sure it gave me new insights into the work of Polybius.

Part II (61–163) is the meat of the book, with six chapters devoted to various aspects of Polybius’ attitude to Roman dominion. Only the four pages of ch. 8 (‘Polybius, Rome, Barbarism and Fate’)

disappoint. Fate (*Tyche*) is an odd concept for such a humanist as Polybius, but it ties up in some way with his ideas on empire, and less than a page of analysis is a strange brevity. The rest is full of close reading and interesting argumentation. There is a good discussion, for instance, of the pretexts for war (*prophaseis*) (73–7). If pretexts are ‘decent’ (*euskhemon*) they create ‘the veridical appearance of justice’, which brings with it practical advantages. Is B. perhaps too anxious to exonerate the Romans? His interpretation of fragment 99 B-W is certainly benign: he argues that it means ‘the Romans took great care not to commit injustice and aggression, but to make people see that they were in fact acting in self-defence’ (73). A darker alternative seems much more convincing to me. Unbelievable pretexts seem to annoy Polybius. The Aetolian excuse for inviting the intervention in Greece of Antiochus III — they wanted to free the Greeks (3.7.3) — was particularly unreasonable and false, but I am not sure I agree with B. (92) that it was false because Polybius believed the Greeks were already free (after Flaminius’ declaration). Polybius just did not like the Aetolians and their actions manifestly had nothing to do with freeing anyone: they were relentlessly aggressive and now seeking to get back at Rome for what they regarded as her mistreatment of them.

The freedom of the Greeks does raise an interesting problem which B. recognizes: how can Rome have extended its dominion over Macedon at the same time as leaving the Greeks free? (92) I am not convinced that Polybius was distracted by his pleasure in seeing the Antigonids and Selucids removed from the Greek sphere. Missing from the intellectual context set out in such detail in Part I is any discussion of what ‘freedom’ meant — and the discourse had a long history, as manifested both in literary texts and inscriptions. What did Polybius understand by the term ‘freedom’? Could you, in fact, be free while under Roman rule? Philopoemen seems to have thought not (24.11–13), and I do not think Polybius had reconciled empire and freedom either.

There is much that is old-fashioned about this book. But B. has spent a career studying his author, and his detailed arguments on this important topic warrant our closest attention.

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C. SMITH and L. M. YARROW (EDS), *IMPERIALISM, CULTURAL POLITICS, AND POLYBIUS*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. Pp. xiv + 351, illus. ISBN 9780199600755. £75.00.

Although not explicit in the title, this collection of essays by students of the late Peter Derow is very much a *Festschrift* in his memory. The chapters derive from a conference held shortly after his death, originally intended to celebrate his sixty-fifth birthday. They fall into three even sections of five chapters dedicated in turn to Polybius, Hellenistic imperialism, and Hellenistic culture.

The introduction by the editors briefly sketches Peter Derow as a teacher and scholar. The editors abruptly leave Derow, however, after two pages and launch into a polemic against Arthur M. Eckstein. In the debate on Roman imperialism, Peter Derow saw, and the editors see, Rome as ‘an unusually ruthless and determined player’ (11), rather than one of many aggressive states in an anarchic political system, as Eckstein argues on the basis of Realist international relations theory. The editors discuss several points of disagreement with Eckstein and briefly critique Realism as a theory. They provocatively claim, however, that Eckstein’s remarks about September 11 drive ‘[his] book towards the justification of a policy rather than an academic argument’ (9). Whether September 11 or ‘the dismal events following’ it justify Realist pessimism, as argued by Eckstein, is debatable, but the insinuation that through his scholarly work Eckstein advocates the policy of unilateral aggression behind the American invasion of Iraq under President George W. Bush — surely a triumph of Fantasy rather than Realism — is unwarranted.

Andrew Erskine opens Part I with a valuable essay that questions rosy characterizations of Polybius’ detainment in Rome. Although privileged to be in Rome, Polybius probably did not enjoy great freedom of movement, and analysis of Polybius’ own language reveals that he saw his detainment in Rome as a flagrant injustice. Brian McGing offers a modest corrective to the view that Polybius either ignored or was ignorant of Herodotus. Despite certain similarities of approach, though, the extent to which Polybius consciously engages with Herodotus remains uncertain. Tim Rood argues that Polybius ‘engaged with Thucydides in a far more extensive and suggestive way than has been appreciated’ (51). Rood draws attention to similarities between Polybius’ narrative of the First Punic War and Thucydides’ account of the Sicilian expedition. It is unclear, though, whether similar passages reflect Polybius’ literary motives or the similarity of