

lon's essay is as concise as it is suggestive. Were he to give the thesis more consideration, others might as well.

In sum, then, a worthy collection of essays. I spotted few misprints, though Maud Gleason's name is twice misspelt on p. 12. There is an index of passages and a general index. There is no general bibliography, however. Let me close with a plea concerning methodology. Plutarch, owing to the enormity and range of his writing, is more susceptible than most to an exegesis that involves assembling numerous snippets from various compositions. Under such circumstances, it becomes all too easy to overlook the whole of the original context when these snippets are deployed. For instance, *Dem.* 3. 2 is no proof that 'originality of the individual is likely to have a divine provenance', as p. 61 claims by removing Plutarch's image from its rhetorical setting; *Amat.* 756E-F is misappropriated on p. 76 (see Russell on p. 101 for its full and fair context); nor does *Ad Princ. Inerud.* 780E indicate that Plutarch 'certainly .. held that the monarch is the image (*eikon*) of God on earth' (p. 234), since the full passage in Plutarch's essay describes an ideal and is admonitory.

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David Braund: *Ruling Roman Britain: kings, queens, governors and emperors from Julius Caesar to Agricola*. Pp. 217, Illus. 34. Routledge, London and New York, 1996. £40.00.

There are many books available which discuss Roman Britain but few which have very much that is new to say. This book is one of the few and provides a variety of interesting new insights into the history of the province.

To understand the historiography of Roman Britain it is important to appreciate that it has several strands, two of which are currently dominant. Traditional histories (best exemplified by Frere's *Britannia*) have been based on attempts to write narrative history from the textual sources, supplementing these with information from archaeological sources. Such attempts draw principally upon the excavation of military and urban sites where the evidence has most relevance to the history of events. They tend to provide a straightforwardly Romano-centric view with an emphasis on military history and short term events and are primarily the product of authors educated in the Classics. In the last couple of decades those (like this reviewer) who have come to the subject through the archaeology of the 1960s and 70s have tried to write different types of history based primarily upon an analysis of excavated evidence from a variety of sites but with a principal emphasis on those

away from the frontiers. They place less reliance on literary sources, instead preferring to draw on interpretative models drawn from the social sciences to examine broader long-term social and economic trends.

In recent years these two strands have tended to diverge and much debate amongst the current generation of research students has concerned problems like the character of Roman imperialism and issues of ethnicity and gender. However, there has been little evidence that those specializing in the study of archaeological material from Roman Britain have been fully aware of the exciting and relevant new work on the contextual study of Classical texts. As a result, traditional scholars have continued to read the sources as the unproblematic raw materials of history, while many working on archaeological material have remained largely uninterested in the texts.

David Braund's new book provides an important and complementary new perspective, bringing to bear contemporary approaches from the mainstream of Classical research, looking at the literary sources within their appropriate historical and cultural context and attempting to understand them on their own terms. In doing this he draws on a wide range of information from across the Graeco-Roman world. His approach thus attempts to explain not only how and why Rome became involved in Britain, but how the changing character of Rome's interests determined the nature of the sources with which we are left. Such studies have become common in other branches of Classical research and Braund has done a fine job in presenting his ideas in an accessible way and in a new context.

His overall approach is extremely successful and produces a book which should be read by all with a serious interest in the study of Roman Britain. It complements the current archaeological accounts and provides an important corrective both to those who have ignored the texts and those who have used them without any thought of the people and processes which produced them.

Braund's text is concerned only with the period down to Trajan and explores three principal themes: imperialism, geography and monarchy. I found all three fascinating and generally finely interwoven. There is some unevenness; the discussion of monarchy in the second chapter might have been better integrated elsewhere as it tends to break the flow of the text. Equally, the useful and sober comments on coins and dynasts (chapter 5) seemed a little out of place on their own in a separate chapter. There are also one or two points of detail which perhaps deserve reconsideration. For instance the archaeological dating evidence for the quadrifrons arch at Richborough is not sufficiently precise to allow it to be dated to AD 87-88 (p. 173), whilst its height was probably not as much as 100 ft/30m (cf. D. E. Strong in *Richborough V* [1968] 47, where it is given a broad date range of AD 80-90 and a reconstructed height of 86 ft/26m). Equally, in a few places

points are presented too briefly to allow full assessment. Thus, the discussion of Cogidubnus' citizenship (p. 110) suggests that he was probably a Roman placeman under Claudius rather than a son or grandson of Tincommius or Verica, because both 'should have been Julii'. This is certainly a sustainable position but hardly one which is unproblematic. Did they necessarily obtain citizenship from Augustus? If they did, were they sufficiently Romanized to have known to pass it on to their heirs? What assumptions would have been made in their society about the status of those who claimed filial descent from a 'king' or who obtained power through acclamation? We surely know too little about the character of Iron Age society to make assumptions on the basis of analogy alone, especially as our information points towards social organization being highly variable. Here and elsewhere a little more debate of such issues would have been valuable and would have lessened the danger of implicit assumptions developing into new 'factoids'.

Despite these points the text works well and draws attention to Braund's important ideas about the place of Britain within the Empire. In particular, his emphasis on the relationship of the texts to the changing priorities and perspectives of the Imperial House sheds valuable new light on the development of Rome's involvement in Britain. His valuable discussions of Strabo and Cassius Dio demonstrate how they have been misunderstood in the past whilst his comparison of the different accounts of the Boudiccan revolt casts new light on the character of that event. In this sense Braund may be seen to have given new life to the subject. My only real objection is that, like the course of lectures on Roman Britain I attended as an undergraduate, it stops too early! Could we not have these ideas developed on the second, third, fourth and fifth centuries?

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Norma Thompson, *Herodotus and the origins of the political community: Arion's Leap*. Pp. xiv + 193. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996). ISBN 0300 06260 5

In Michael Ondaatje's *The English Patient*, the central character, the Englishman, has a copy of G. C. MacCauley's 1890 translation of Herodotus' *History* which serves a number of purposes. It is a valuable source of information for him in his exploration of the Egyptian desert in search of the lost Oasis of Zerezura in the 1930s; it acts as a commonplace book, as the Englishman pastes in pages cut from other books and adds his own observations; and when Katharine Clinton reads from it the story of Gyges and Candau-