

## REVIEW

Kai Brodersen, ed., *Polyainos: neue Studien / Polyaeus: New Studies*. Berlin: Verlag Antike, 2010. Pp. 176. ISBN 978-3-938032-39-8. €26.90. (<http://www.verlag-antike.de>)

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In January 2009 the reborn University of Erfurt, Thuringia, hosted a ‘one-day working conference on Polyaeus’, convened and organised there by its President, the indefatigable Professor Dr Kai Brodersen. The eight invited speakers were grouped into pairs, reflecting four Polyaeic manifestations: the Historian, the Philosopher, the Writer, and ‘*Scriptor Militaris et Religiosus*’. As we now see, the published volume generated thereby jettisons the Philosophy theme, which had been represented in Erfurt by papers entitled ‘Moralische Standards bei Polyainos’ (Ruth Harder) and ‘Polyainos ein Stoiker?’ (Katrin Hermann), but gains the item contributed by Brodersen himself.

One of the two major landmarks in Polyaeus studies during the last twenty years was the two-volume ‘edition’ (Chicago: Ares, 1994)—in fact a reprinting of the Woelfflin / Melber Teubner text, with a new Introduction and Translation—by Peter Krentz and Everett L. Wheeler. Its preface recorded Wheeler’s intent to provide, on a future occasion, ‘detailed argumentation and documentation’ for some of the views he had summarily presented in the Introduction there. As far as I am aware, he has waited until

now to redeem this promise (see merely the review, in *CR* 51 [2001] 36–38, of the other important recent landmark: Maria Teresa Schettino, *Introduzione a Polieno* [Pisa: Edizioni ETS, 1998]), but the wait was worthwhile. Wheeler's piece here (7–54) is by far the meatiest in the volume. Starting from the low-key position that 'a more favorable view of Polyaeus is possible' (7) than the one conventionally taken, he airs nine topics, in unequal measure: 'Chronology and the Prefaces', 'Lucian and Polyaeus', 'Stratagems and Paradoxography' (best read in conjunction with Brodersen, below), 'Stratagem Collections' (a wide-ranging *tour de force*), 'The "Top Ten" of Most Stratagems in Polyaeus', 'Historicity and Repetition of Stratagems', 'Battles from Desperation', 'Training and Discipline', and 'Polyaeus and Military Ethnography'. Still more is predicted (*imprimis* 7 n.5, a projected monograph; cf. 8 n. 7, 24 n. 71, 26 n. 82, 28 n. 89, 40 n. 124, 47 n. 153, 50 n. 164, 51 n. 169, 54 n. 180), but even without it, here is a wonderfully rich resource for those interested in any and every facet of Polyaeus—and a worthy (belated) memorial to the Greek-reading cat who had been thanked in 1994 and then lived on, we gather, for another decade. Presumably Wheeler was kinder to J. B. than he is to fellow-scholars, many of whom are scolded, here as usual, for their lack of comprehension and/or bibliographical awareness. Still, this does go with the territory where Wheeler is concerned, and it is territory through which there is no more confident a guide.

If the other six essays in the volume (three in English, three in German) cannot match Wheeler's for scope and erudition, then, they do have worthwhile contributions to make on some level or levels.

Geus (55–68), addressing the twin areas embodied in his sub-title, prefers heterodox hypotheses in both (based on the short prefaces to each of the eight books): that Polyaeus probably sought the patronage of M. Aurelius and L. Verus from a base 'in seiner Heimat Makedonien', rather than by ever going to Rome (despite the standard interpretation of *δίκας ἐφ' ὑμῶν λέγων* in the preface to book 2); and that all eight books were 'published' as a totality, in 161/162. We can perhaps expect to see these kites flying again in the 'Polyaeus' entry in the *Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Ancient History*, which Geus has authored (forthcoming 2011).

Bianco (69–84) floats an idea of another kind. Book 3 of Polyaeus covers sixteen individuals, most of them classical-period Athenians; and Bianco argues that the material on four of them is ultimately Ephoran; not only Tolmides from the fifth century (as is orthodox: compare Pol. 3.3 with Diod. Sic. 11.84.3–5) but also Iphicrates, Timotheus and Chabrias from the fourth. The case is made with all due caveats and is about as convincing as such traditional *Quellenforschung* can ever be.

Pretzler (85–107) comes closest to Wheeler in value for money. (Buy one topic, get others free—here, for instance, a particularly interesting closing section [104–7] on anticipated readership.) Pretzler’s 2007 monograph on Pausanias expertly elucidated that author’s use of historical information, and here she maps out something similar, with another writer who though not an historian does, perforce, ‘use’ the past in ways that invite investigation. In this instance more questions are raised than are answered but, in the process, the nature of the Polyaeonic unit of currency, the vignette, is fruitfully explored.

Morton (108–32) writes the most obviously literary/conceptual piece in the volume, contemplating, in Polyaeus, ‘Greek’ (his quotation marks) identity and other aspects of second-Sophistic culture. Like Pretzler, Morton has many acute observations to make along the way, though one would have wished to see parallels for his reiterated suggestion (109, 132) that ‘using Macedonian *ῥώμη*’ in the preface to Book 1 is word-play.

Rosenberger (133–48) comes to his subject both as a specialist in Greek religion (*Griechische Orakel: eine Kulturgeschichte* [Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2001]) and as the author, already, of an article on Polyaeus (in a 2008 volume also edited by Brodersen). In combining, here, the two fields, he studies four specific themes; ‘Götter und ihre Bilder’, ‘Tempel’, ‘Der Gebrauch von Ritualen’, and ‘Der Umgang mit Orakelsprüchen und Vorzeichen’. Overall, however, his finding is that religion plays a ‘marginale Rolle’ in Polyaeus.

Finally, Brodersen (149–59). The eighth and final book of Polyaeus begins with male Romans from earliest times until Augustus, but then, at ch. 26, switches to the distaff side: thirty-seven individual women (Greek, Roman and others), and nine groups or collectivities (for which cf. also 7.45–50). Folio 13r of the same manuscript, *Laurentianus gr.* 56–1, that preserves Polyaeus himself and much else besides also includes a short, anonymous work *de mulieribus*, or more fully in the Greek *γυναῖκες ἐν πολεμικοῖς συνεταιὶ καὶ ἀνδρείαι*, ‘women [sc. who showed themselves] wise and brave in situations of war’—the latter phrase, as Brodersen rightly comments, too narrow in its scope. He provides here a text and facing German translation of this brief coverage of fourteen notable women: Semiramis\*, Zarinaea, Nitocris of Egypt, Nitocris of Babylon, Argeia, Theiosso, Atossa, Rhodogyne\*, Lyde, Pheretime\*, Thargelia, Tomyris\*, Artemisia\*, and Onomaris. (See also, more fully, Deborah Gera, *Warrior Women: the anonymous tractatus de mulieribus* [Leiden 1997].) The asterisked five of the fourteen are also in Polyaeus, and that fact—given a late-Hellenistic (second- or first-century) dating of the *de mulieribus*—leads Brodersen on to twin conclusions, succinctly laid out: that for his own material on such women, Polyaeus used this source but drew on other sources also.

The volume concludes with Brodersen's brief, bilingual Nachwort / Afterword (160) and a consolidated bibliography (161–76), though—lamentably—no indices. The bibliography includes the present book itself and each of its seven substantive parts. I found this a strange aspect of it at first sight, but on reflection it is a not unreasonable means of allowing the contributors to refer to one another's work (as some do, e.g. Wheeler and Morton on Geus) with precision.

Production standards are high. I noticed no misprints, beyond occasional mis-accentuation of Greek and, rarer still, typos such as 'stratatgem' (52 n. 170). Bianco's English creaks at times, but as someone who would struggle horribly to write in Italian I cannot bring myself to be too censorious. In the bibliography 'T. B.' Barnes needs to be subsumed under his homonym T. D. (Contrast the two Michael Speidels, M. A. and M. P., who are rightly kept separate.)

So is this volume more than the sum of its parts? Not really. But then, it does not pretend to be. If Brodersen had wanted to pave the way for an all-encompassing evaluation of Polyaeus along the lines of, say, the David Braund / John Wilkins *Athenaeus and his World* (Exeter 2000), he would have had to entice more scholars to Erfurt than he did, and persuade (or instruct) them to cover each and every Polyaeic angle. Short of that, what we have here is what the occasion generated and what the resulting publication's title announces: some 'new studies', and welcome ones, of an underrated Antonine author.

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