

But the book is aimed at those who would study history rather than those who are already doing so. The historical examples they adduce are straightforward and familiar, and the philosophical speculation does not venture much beyond a confirmation of Santayana's claim that those who do not know history are condemned to repeat it. Their survey of the sorts of history one might study covers everything from the old-fashioned to the up-to-the-moment: from Intellectual and Diplomatic to Environmental and Digital History. Collins is British, and Stearns American; and they want to be as encouraging and informative as they can to those who might study history in either a British or American university. It is interesting to see how differently history is done on either side of the Atlantic; but given the book's stated aim and intended audience this means that any given reader will have to get through or around a fair amount of irrelevant content. Nevertheless, wherever and however history might be studied, 'students choosing history, and the anxious parents of those students, can rest assured that a history focus is a solid career move.'

It is good that we have this book; and that it is a book of this sort. The nature, practice, pursuit, or future of history does depend on there being people who want to study it. Those who have studied it may be keen to teach it, but we cannot assume that the students will come; nor should we assume that those who do intend to enter our line of work. Everything has a history, and so those who study it should be able to do anything. It is in the best interest of the discipline, both intellectually and institutionally, to make history truly practical where it might otherwise become merely instrumental.

doi: 10.1017/S2058631021000283

Leading the Roman Army. Soldiers and Emperors 31 BC- 235 AD

Eaton (J.). Pp. xiv+205, colour pls. Yorkshire and Philadelphia: Pen & Sword Books, 2020. Cased, £19.99. ISBN: 9781473855632

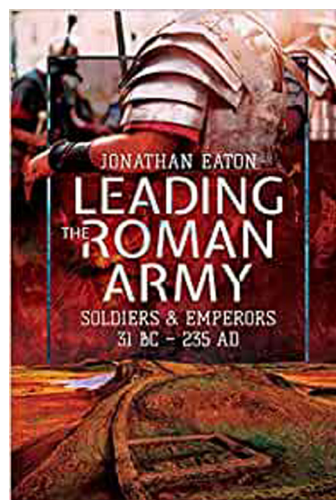
Danny Pucknell

Cardiff and Vale College
Pucknell_3@hotmail.co.uk

At its core, this volume offers a survey of the relationship between the Roman Emperor and the Roman army, a narrow exploration of the co-dependency between these two entities. Eaton carefully introduces his intentions for this 130-page study: 'My research is not limited to the relationship between the emperor and the soldiers but aims to encompass the power relationship which existed between different levels of the army.'

In order to achieve this, Eaton has divided his work into six separate, yet interconnected, chapters. The first chapter deals with the military unit which commands perhaps the greatest name recognition of all Roman forces, the Praetorian Guard. Instead of a general history of the Guard, (of which there are some fine examples), Eaton uniquely focuses on the office of the Praetorian Prefect.

In his examination of the Prefecture, Eaton selects examples of 'notable' holders of the position of Prefect. In particular, he is interested in why these individuals were promoted and whether this



was a result of valorous deeds, a personal friendship with the emperor, or just good timing on the part of that Prefect. Alongside his examination of the Prefects, Eaton suggests that the Guard was vital for the emperor's survival. He uses the example of donatives given to the Praetorians by various emperors and the control of the watchword by personal issuance. In essence, Eaton suggests, the emperor had to secure the loyalty of the Praetorians as they were the closest military force to hand. On occasions this meant

sourcing trusty allies from across the empire. Overall, this first chapter is a well-argued and constructed one, although, early on, it is apparent that this read is intended for those with an already keen interest in the Roman army and a passable working knowledge of the Guard and individual emperors over the span of the first and second centuries AD.

Chapter two takes a deeper look into the inner workings of the armies, assessing the maintenance of military discipline and morale among the legions. Eaton astutely isolates the key factors of Roman military ideals and attacks the perceived wisdom. He notes that the Roman ideals of *virtus* and *disciplina* are too polarised (p.25). Instead, Eaton uses the ideals and provides examples of each; he contends that *virtus* could also be shown through manual labour and an ability to endure hardship as well as great deeds achieved on the battlefield. For this, he suggests that the emperor is the example which all legionaries should follow. This is best exemplified by a lengthy discussion on the legionary standard being seen as inextricably linked to the person of the emperor, as he was the source of all military glory. Here Eaton has broken some new ground, rather than maintaining the polarity, which is a subject of other works; he has revealed that the concepts of *virtus* and *disciplina* are bound together in a system of praise and reward for both the martial (winning a military honour), and the menial (constructing the palisade, digging the latrines) tasks within the military system.

Naturally, this leads Eaton to next focus on the career of the empire's centurions in Chapter 3, discussing the office in general, the requirements for advancement, and examples of how far an individual may rise once he has reached the level of the 'centuriate'. Overall, the author suggests that the emperor was forced to walk a fine line between military disciplinarian, exemplar of *virtus*, and benefactor. He managed this carefully, using the centurions as his rank which enforced discipline, yet inspired others around them to feats of martial valour.

Chapters four and five have a greater political angle, focusing on who leads the army, and whether soldiers in the legions were aware of political changes, perhaps far from their own positing. Chapter five, in particular, addresses the idea of community within the legions, through letters, or 'gossip' shared by those who had been away in postings elsewhere. Yet, Eaton argues, the major method of receiving information was through official statements via the emperor, which did not always have to be literary. An example can be seen through Eaton's images of coins. Small phrases in Latin meant that the messages they conveyed were accessible to all. Eaton

notes that this method of communication may have been vital in securing the support of the legions. For example, Vespasian was hailed as a particularly attractive prospect for the soldiers because he had sons who could succeed him, which empathised the secure nature of the potential new imperial dynasty.

Throughout this volume, Eaton also makes use of images, and there are several fine examples in colour; one in particular is a coin issued by Vespasian upon his accession to the 'purple' in AD 69. This was a key example of the emperor making use of both written and visual forms of communication to gain the support of the troops. This is not the only image used in the volume, which boasts six pages of attractive, and well-chosen images which display monuments, both imperial and personal as a means of conveying a particular message.

Overall, Eaton notes that the Roman army was not the shepherds who guarded the emperor, but wolves who would turn upon him if he did not strike a balance between master and patron. If there was one criticism of this volume, the work does expect a certain amount of background knowledge, as emperors, prefects, and legates are mentioned in great numbers and in quick succession. Despite this, Eaton has produced an interesting and unique study which will offer useful examples for those studying A Levels in Ancient History and Classics, particularly for the Julio-Claudian and Imperial Image modules, although it should be noted, that this would probably be an extension text, rather than a core work.

doi: 10.1017/S2058631021000295

Vincent Obsopoeus: How to Drink. A Classical Guide to the Art of Imbibing.

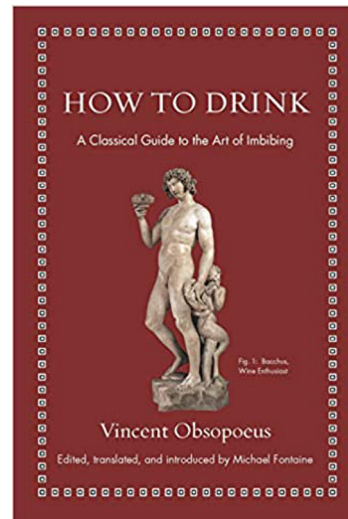
Fontaine (M.) (ed., trans.). Pp. xxxii + 285.
Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020.
Cased, £13.99, US\$16.96. ISBN: 978-0-691-19214-7.

Gary Vos

The University of Edinburgh
gvos@ed.ac.uk

Abolitionists and teetotalers may wish to stop reading here, for this review will contain nothing but praise for the *Ars Bibendi* expounded in spirited Latin elegiac distichs by Vincent Obsopoeus (c. 1498–1539) and translated into intoxicating prose by Michael Fontaine as the punning *How to Drink*. Hard drinkers, too, may be disappointed, as this didactic poem, perhaps contrary to expectation, does not endorse inebriation. Rather, Obsopoeus advocates drinking with moderation in a humorous three-book poem inspired by Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*, while showing up the excesses of his time. He moves from a light lesson on responsible drinking to the headier stuff of the vices of excessive intake (though pardonable from time to time, as long as it does not become a habit) and tips for winning at drinking games, where he does not shy away from cheating to gain eternal fame as Franconia's greatest barfly.

Obsopoeus is well-served with a reader so attuned to puns and humour as Fontaine, author of, inter alia, *Funny Words in Plautine Comedy* (Oxford, 2010) and translator of John Placentius, *The Pig*



War (New York, 2019) (as Michael Phontaine) and the forthcoming *Marcus Tullius Cicero: How to Tell a Joke. An Ancient Guide to the Art of Humor* (Princeton, NJ) in the same series as the book under review. At all times, the translation is lucid and faithful to the Latin in terms of *inventio* (although not literal), while the endnotes are kept to a sober minimum. The introduction is a brief, informative and entertaining survey of the life and times of the author and the contents of his poem. While not intended as a standalone edition (see

below), I expect that Fontaine's vintage effort will be the port of call for some time.

As Fontaine explains, his edition is a 'third edition' (xv, xxii–xxiii), which is something of a blend of the first edition of 1536 and the expanded second edition of 1537. Although the latter edition is the basis for his text, Fontaine uses the first to silently correct typos in the latter and vice versa, while implementing some (eminently sensible) corrections of his own (273–274). At times, he omits expansions from the second edition (e.g. 1.202–8, 555–824; 3.403–624 with, resp., 277 n. 4, 277–8 n. 15, 281–2 n. 10) and once rearranges lines (2.568–72) to maintain the flow of the argument. Sometimes, he prints digressions from the second edition (so 2.811–862 with 280–1 n. 29). In all cases, the line numbering vis-à-vis the second edition has been retained. In short, this is a serviceable diplomatic edition aimed primarily at readability and not designed as an *editio maior*: not quite a Grand Cru, then, but certainly no Château Migraine.

Especially noteworthy is Fontaine's style of translation (to which this review gestures). He not only effectively conveys Obsopoeus' classicising Latin into idiomatic American-English, but also transports it into the binge-drinking 'bro culture' of American 'college kids' (xxiii–xxvi). This modernising frame works quite well to illustrate how Obsopoeus' strict Reformation-era environment of learned German aristocrats and clergy functioned and only very rarely becomes forced or irksome (the translation of *heus* as 'dude', twice at 3.244–5, to enhance the atmosphere of frat boy shot-taking, may be taking the colloquialisms a tad too far for some). Rather than offering the translation as a way into the Latin, Fontaine's translation is very readable on its own and will give the Latinless reader a good sense of the poem. Conversely, the Latinate reader will want to look at the translation for help in uncovering the poem's rich sediment of puns and wordplay. The reader is furthermore assisted by Fontaine's ([sub]sub)headings and visual aids such as bullet points when Obsopoeus assumes the mantle of the discursive schoolmaster.

A wee nip from a section entitled 'German Drinking Habits Are Appalling' and subtitled 'Frat Culture' (p. 138, 2.425–428): 'That's how great the excess is; that's how great the waste of wine is; that's how many cups are drowning and overflowing with alcohol. Nobody's upset by at this outrageous sight; they're saying "Here, here! Good ol' German *hermanos* are partying here!"' (Fontaine's emphasis; *Tantus adest luxus, tanta est profusio vini, | tot submersa mero || pocula plena fluunt. | Non movet haec*