

as an articulation of complex networks of interaction.

Small draws widely upon archaeological research on prehistoric and historical Greece and highlights the role of feasting as a context for interaction, transformation and the solidification of social structures. This is, however, not really a book about feasting in Greece (for such a study, with particular emphasis on the classical period, see Floris van den Eijnde, Josine Blok and Rolf Strootman (eds), *Feasting and Polis Institutions*, not referred to by Small), but one which

makes reference to feasting as an node of social interaction.

The book opens with a survey of the ecology of the Greek world (chapter 2) and then moves on (chapter 3) to a terse exploration of the possibility of hierarchical relationships between households during the Neolithic period in Greece (6800-2900 BC). Chapter 4 interprets the evidence for communication, defence and exchange as an indication of increasing social complexity in Greece during the Early Bronze Age (3200-2200 BC); Small suggests a shift in feasting gatherings from small to larger groups. Chapters 5 and 6 survey the indications of cultural complexity in the form of palace centres, towns and rural peak sanctuaries in Crete, the Cyclades and mainland Greece during the second millennium BC: cult facilities including banqueting halls are indicative of the significance of shared feasting. Small argues also that the emergence of an Aegean way of life gave rise to the development of complex commemorative administrative institutions. The collapse of the Palace cultures at the beginning of the first millennium (chapter 7) is treated as the impetus for dynamic re-organisation over the course of the eighth century BC. This gives rise to the institutions of a 'Brave New World', that of Greece of the archaic and later periods (chapter 8). Small champions the view of the classical *polis* as a 'stateless' institution with an 'underdeveloped political community' with 'weak arrangement of social contexts within the community' but rightly flags the controversy of this view (p. 171). The top-down approach of chapter 9 emphasises institutional continuity in the Hellenistic and Roman periods of Greek history and suggests that it was used by territorial rulers to 'control the direction of much of the Greek world'; recent scholarship, such as the work of John Ma (*Antiochus III and the Cities of Western Asia Minor*) offers a more nuanced assessment of the complexity of Hellenistic institutions. Chapter 10 brings us back in time to the Cretan Iron Age (1100-700 BC), where Small emphasises the distinctive aspects (and heterogeneity) of Cretan institutions and practices in that period.

Much of the underlying narrative that runs through this book is familiar and the volume draws upon a wealth of well-known material. Small revisits the notion of social complexity in each substantive chapter and his conclusion (chapter 11) highlights the unevenness of structural change across space and time. Chapter 12 briefly compares the characteristics of Greek organisation with those of the Classic Mayan period (AD 250-900); this chapter certainly enriched this reviewer's knowledge of the institutions of the latter civilisation, but I lack the expertise to assess how far it progresses the modern understanding of that culture.

The book's main contribution is to offer an interesting overarching perspective on how it might be possible to analyse the Greek world in a way that cuts across conventional chronological param-

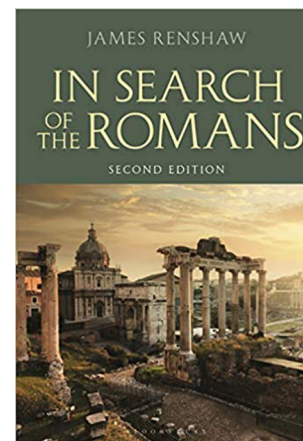
eters. This volume could be suitable a volume for undergraduates (who may find its introduction to the prehistoric periods of use and its general direction interesting), graduate students and scholars of ancient Greek history and archaeology.

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## In Search of the Romans (second edition)

Renshaw (J.). Pp. 450, b/w & colour ills, colour maps. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020 (first published 2012). Paper, £19.99. ISBN: 978147429916

Alan Clague



This stimulating book will, it seems to me, attract two distinct clienteles – the school student at GCSE or equivalent level and the more general reader looking for an overview of Roman history and culture (in its widest sense).

For the former group, James Renshaw has concentrated on the topics that tend to reoccur at intervals on GCSE specifications for Classical Civilisation and the Roman Civilisation option of the Latin examinations of both OCR and Eduqas, often expanding on and attractively illustrating the information in the *Cambridge Latin Course* and other coursebooks. These include such perennial favourites as the Roman Army, Entertainment and Leisure (with the section on the amphitheatre being particularly well illustrated and satisfyingly gory), Religion and Pompeii. There are plentiful suggestions for further reading of both ancient and modern sources, although I think students would need considerable guidance on how best to access many of these and which are most valuable. Each section has a 'Review and Reflect' box. Some of the questions therein are straightforward GCSE-style questions (e.g. 'In what ways can Roman chariot racing be compared with modern sporting events?') whilst others will cause a more than slight flutter of hesitation (e.g. 'How do the attitudes to workers in Roman times differ from those held in different parts of the world today?'). The book itself is supported by its own website with links to sources, quizzes, extra illustrations etc.

The more general reader will find a comprehensive survey of Roman history from its earliest beginnings to the abdication of the last emperor in the west in 476 CE, in over 130 pages. There are reassuring caveats about the unreliability or limited range of sources at various times. There then follows a chapter on the running of the Empire, with its administrative structure explained and some of the problems identified (Boudica, Judaea in the 60s CE). There are also well-presented sections on Architecture and Transport. Other topics discussed *passim* include the position of women in Roman society, education,

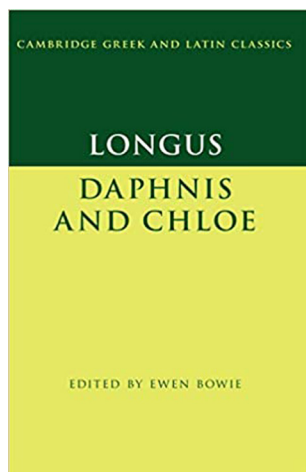
the *domus* versus the *insula*, the changing tastes of theatre audiences and attitudes to slaves, freedmen and freedwomen. The book ends with Appendices on currency, clothing, names and the calendar. This general reader might just ponder why virtually a quarter of the book is taken up with Pompeii and Herculaneum but those places tell us a tremendous amount about the Romans – as does this book!

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## Longus: Daphnis and Chloe (Cambridge Greek and Latin Classics)

Bowie (E). Cambridge University Press 2019,  
ISBN-10: 0521776597

Emily Rushton



Bowie's commentary on an old favourite - Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe* - is preoccupied with the language of Longus, and the style of his writing in relation to other prominent novelists of the Roman imperial period. Without being too *meta*, Bowie's work does well to educate an audience about to enter a text that is preoccupied with education and new experience.

The introduction to the text briefly discusses a range of key, 'need to know' themes in the novel, but with an artful brevity that many commentaries can often lack. The discussions of

religion, city and country and art and nature compartmentalise and situate many of the textual references that are discussed throughout the commentary, and provide an opportunity for a new reader to enter the text with anchors upon which to situate a new translation.

Bowie's discussion of the manuscript is useful, concise and to the point. The textual background focuses predominantly on *Daphnis and Chloe's* position as a unique text within an already distinctive genre, but does try to give a whistle-stop tour of the plot in a single sentence almost as complex as the novel itself.

He highlights and signposts key poetic intertexts within the novel and the bucolic motif that interweaves and underpins the individuality of this tale. The discussion of Longus' plethora of poetic intertexts is a whistle-stop tour from epigram to tragedy, without compromising on his examination on much the text evokes and he celebrates Theocritan idyll and Sapphic desire.

The commentary is in equal part rich with linguistic knowledge as well as stylistic interpretation. There is enough translation aid within the commentary to set a small section of the text as an unseen, with ample grammatical scaffolding.

This commentary is relevant, timely and - above all - useful, and would be a beneficial and purposeful education text to give a broad

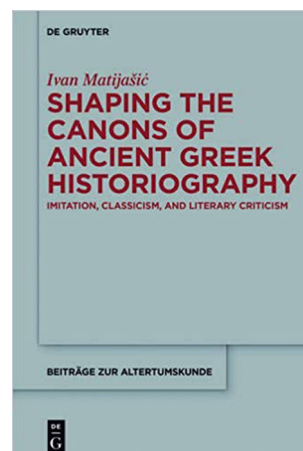
overview and taste for the story for someone new to the text. As an educational text, there is enough useful background and explanation for someone entering the text for both a close, textual read, or to make a thematic comparison to other works. But as Bowie himself emphasises, this commentary is intended as an examination of language, so, in that view, certainly provides more use as a close reader rather than a thematic overview.

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## Shaping the Canons of Ancient Greek Historiography. Imitation, Classicism, and Literary Criticism

Ivan Matijašić. Beiträge zur Altertumskunde, 359.  
Berlin and Boston: de Gruyter, 2018. Pp. xi + 293.

Juliana Costa-Veysey



In Harold Bloom's obituary in the New York Times, Adam Begley asked the question that was behind Bloom's sponsorship of literary canons, a question that avid readers have asked themselves over the centuries 'What, in the little time we have, shall we read?'

Ivan Matijašić (henceforth IM) in this well-researched expansion of his Italian PhD thesis, deals with the formation and development of ancient Greek historiography. IM approaches it from an ancient rhetorical tradi-

tion as historiography was then regarded and judged as a branch of rhetoric, with most texts and fragments surviving as they became models to be copied and emulated by schoolchildren.

IM starts with a definition of the word canon. The word itself has religious connotations ('rule') and it was only in the 17th century that it started to be used in the sense of a list of books by the best authors in a given literary genre. IM prefers canons in the plural, meaning 'the variety of selections by different individuals for diverse purposes', as it encapsulates the paradigmatic nature of canons in that they are authoritative and prescriptive but also open, that is, bound to change with the needs and tastes of each era. Pinning down the definition of canon is not the only problem IM encounters, as the majority of non-canonical works and even a good number of canonical ones have not survived through the medieval tradition. This is particularly true of historians of the Hellenistic period. For this reason, IM had to rely on literary criticism, on what ancient rhetors and school teachers said about the canons of ancient Greek historiography.

The supremacy of rhetoric being therefore unavoidable, it is fitting that IM's starting point is Quintilian's influential *Institutes of Oratory* and Cicero's mentions of Greek historians in his letters,