

Greek Literature in Late Antiquity: Dynamism, Didacticism, Classicism



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Late Antiquity has attracted a significant amount of attention in recent years. As a historical period it has thus far been defined by the transformation of Roman institutions, the emergence of distinct religious cultures (Jewish, Christian, Islamic), and the transmission of ancient knowledge to medieval and early modern Europe. Despite all this, the study of late antique literary culture is still in its infancy, especially for the Greek and other eastern texts examined in this volume. The contributions here presented make new inroads into a rich literature notable above all for its flexibility and unparalleled creativity in combining multiple languages and literary traditions. The authors and texts discussed include Philostratus, Eusebius of Caesarea, Nonnos of Panopolis, the important St Polyeuktos epigram, and numerous others. The volume makes use of a variety of interdisciplinary approaches in an attempt to provoke discussion on change (Dynamism), literary education (Didacticism), and reception studies (Classicism). The result is a study which highlights the erudition and literary sophistication characteristic of the period and brings questions of contextualization, linguistic association, and artistic imagination to bear on little-known or undervalued texts, without neglecting important evidence from material culture and social practices. With contributions by both established scholars and young innovators in the field of late antique studies, there is no work of comparable authority or scope currently available. This volume will stimulate further interest in a range of untapped texts from Late Antiquity.

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