Introduction

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Among the Scrolls

Picture yourself in Rome around AD 115, standing in the new Forum of Trajan. Beside you is the great equestrian statue of the emperor, before you the vast Basilica Ulpia, crowded with the usual mêlée of jurists and scribes, officials and petitioners. High above its roof is another statue of Trajan, glinting down from the summit of his victory column. As you make your way further into the forum, your eye is caught by the colourful carvings on the column's shaft; but you can't help also being struck by the buildings that flank it, the two monumental wings of the Bibliotheca Ulpia.[1] One of them houses a copy of Trajan's *Dacian war*, a textual account of his Danubian victories to complement the triumphal scenes winding up the column outside.[2] What other scrolls you might have found in this double library is now a matter of speculation. Archival material for sure, such as the praetors' edicts that would one day be called up by Aulus Gellius;[3] but it is a fair bet that literary works featured too,[4] Greek and Latin.[5] If so, here was a building grandly proclaiming its imperial patron's investment in the written word, both documentary and literary, and in both world languages.[6] The Bibliotheca Ulpia was not a public library as we know them, with borrowing rights and hushed reading rooms for research.[7] As well as consulting the collection, visitors may have come to marvel at the statuary or attend

[1] For an architectural description of the library, see Packer 2001: 78–9; on its position, Packer 1995: 353–4.
[2] Or so we might assume: see e.g. Coarelli 2000: 11–14; Nasrallah 2010: 160. We know of this work only from Priscian, who cites *Traianus in I Dacicorum* (*GL* II 205.6; cf. Fein 1994: 24).
[3] Gell. *NA* 11.17.1; also *HA Aur.* 1.7, *Tac.* 8.1.
[4] As in Augustus' library on the Palatine (cf. schol. Juv. 1.128 *bibliothecam iuris ciuilis et liberalium studiorum*); Neudecker 2013 discusses the likely contents of imperial libraries.
[5] Perhaps divided between the two wings (but the point is moot: see Nicholls 2010).
[6] Libraries were included often enough within a larger complex (see Bowie 2013 for a survey of other imperial foundations), but this central positioning was novel.
[7] Modern reconstructions are all too often 'disquietingly' familiar (Johnson 2013a: 347).

public lectures, even, perhaps, for senatorial meetings or judicial proceedings that had spilled over from the nearby Basilica Ulpia:[8] like other Roman libraries (and there seems to have been a flurry of construction around the turn of the second century),[9] it had a range of functions which alert us to the interconnectedness of literary, administrative, legal, religious, political and social activity – in short, to the full range of elite Roman culture. Its position at the heart of the forum signals the centrality of the written word in Trajan's capital. And while this library may or may not have contained all the works that will feature in the present volume, its function as repository and hub, bringing together all manner of texts for readers to walk past, scroll through, and set beside each other, makes for a good way of visualising what *Literary Interactions* is all about.

The book in your hands (or on your screen) is concerned with the connections, conversations and silences between texts composed in the years just before and after Trajan's Forum was built, during the principates of Nerva, Trajan and Hadrian. Like the Bibliotheca Ulpia, many of these texts are grandiose in scope or ambition: not just the lofty histories of Tacitus, but Frontinus' account of an aqueduct network that puts the pyramids to shame, Juvenal's monstrous satires, Martial's 'twelve' books (that epic number) of epigrams, Pliny the Younger's claims on posterity in *Epistles* and *Panegyricus* alike – all these assert monumental status, in their different ways. But, behind the imposing façades, the literature of this period is also a fluid, organic space, site of a myriad of interactions between writers and readers, characters and discourses, the living and the dead. Then as now, libraries may have served not least as repositories of the arcane;[10] but they were also 'place[s] of encounter between living generations, as well as between authors of the past and present'.[11] The same is true of the broad corpus of Nervan, Trajanic and Hadrianic texts. Many of their

[8] See Nicholls 2013. Senatorial meetings are attested for the Palatine library in the first century (see Bowie 2013: 241; Petrain 2013: 341).

[9] Not just in Rome, with the rededicated Palatine library (Mart. *Epig.* 12.2.7–8) and others restored by Domitian (Suet. *Dom.* 20), perhaps including the one in the Temple of Peace (so Tucci 2013). Pliny founded a library in his hometown Comum around 96/7 (*Ep.* 1.8 with Dix 1996); one featured among the projects of Dio Chrysostom in his native Prusa fifteen years later (Plin. *Ep.* 10.81–2 with Jones 1978: 111–14). T. Flavius Pantainos dedicated a library at Athens *c.* 98–102 (Platthy 1968: 113 no. 37), as did Tiberius Julius Aquila Polemaenus, in honour of his father Celsus, at Ephesus *c.* 125–7 (Hueber and Strocka 1975; Sauron 2010). Hadrian built several libraries, private (at Tivoli) and public (in Athens and Rome). Some other private libraries are mentioned by Martial (*Epig.* 7.17, 9.*pr.*, 14.190) and Pliny (*Ep.* 2.17.8, 4.28); even poor Cordus has his basket of books (Juv. *Sat.* 3.206–7). On the libraries of the Roman Empire, see especially Neudecker 2004; Dix and Houston 2006.

[10] Johnson 2013a: 354–6, 362; Zadorojnyi 2013: 396; Neudecker 2013: 328–9; cf. Tucci 2013: 303.

[11] Nicholls 2013: 264.

authors knew each other personally; some collaborated in literary production, attending recitals and exchanging drafts; several mention each other or converse intertextually, whether unilaterally or in dialogue. They are joined by a host of personal acquaintances and public figures who walk off the street and into their pages to mingle with literary characters, past and present, in what thus becomes a complex and multifaceted tangle of socio-literary intercourse.

Our volume sets out to probe those interactions and conversations, both as a literary-historical phenomenon and as an opportunity for methodological reflection. Some chapters consider dialogues between one contemporary author or text and another; others tackle more complex nexuses of three works or more. Several look beyond 'allusion', to set texts in conversation (with or without their authors' conniving), to explore 'extratextual' dialogue, or to confront head-on the challenges posed by *absent* dialogue. In unpicking interactions between very different kinds of texts – historical, epigrammatic, biographical, satirical, epistolary, philosophical, pedagogical, legal, technical, administrative . . . – we seek to embrace the full range of literary production, and indeed to expand it. We look beyond texts, too, at the spaces – recitations, dinner parties, the schoolroom, philosophical debates – in which literary interactions were generated and refracted; the interface between textual and personal encounters will be a particularly recurrent theme. Between them, our eighteen contributors offer new readings of a wide range of texts. Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria*, Frontinus' *De aquis*, lawyers' letters, imperial rescripts and an anonymous Greek treatise claim attention alongside Martial's *Epigrams*, Pliny's *Epistles* and *Panegyricus*, Plutarch's dialogues, Tacitus' 'major' and 'minor' works, Suetonius' *Lives* and Juvenal's *Satires*. In the process they explore some of the implications of the term 'interactions': the strengths and limits of inherited approaches to intertextuality; potential alternatives; how, in short, we can most productively study relationships which exist both on and off the page. The scholarly conversation that results, we hope, not only sheds fresh light on the dynamics of Nervan, Trajanic and Hadrianic literary culture as a whole, but offers new provocations and challenges to students of other periods too. How can and should we read textual interactions in the increasingly cosmopolitan world of the principate?

Nerva, Trajan and Hadrian

More on the ramifications of 'interactions' in a moment, along with a methodological case study of our own. But first a pressing question arises: *is*

there such a thing as 'Nervan, Trajanic and Hadrianic literary culture'? Why stake out the years 96–138 as a discrete period?[12] Compared with convenient monikers such as 'Flavian' or 'Severan', it certainly makes for a mouthful. 'Ulpian' might be stretched to cover Nerva and Trajan, but hardly Hadrian too; it's too early for 'Antonine', and 'the adoptive principate' will run for several decades more; a negative designation like 'post-Flavian' is unsatisfactory, not just for its insistence on 96 as a watershed; and the world is doubtless a better one without 'Nerjadrianic'. But these problems of naming only point up an artifice of all conventional periodisations for imperial history and literature, constructed as they are around emperors or dynasties: our period is no different, except that it features three emperors whose successive extra-familial adoptions did not produce continuity of nomenclature. In staking out three reigns and four decades as a coherent object of literary study, we are certainly adopting a periodisation of convenience. But it is not an entirely arbitrary one, inspired as it is by the rich crop of writing that those years witnessed, and to which we still have access.

In political terms this is a distinctive period, especially at its outset.[13] The assassination of Domitian on 18 September 96 put a bloody end to nearly twenty-seven years of rule by imperial Rome's second dynastic family, Vespasian and his sons Titus and Domitian. An epigram attributed to Martial sums up the view of that trio widespread from the late 90s to the present day:[14]

> Flauia gens, quantum tibi tertius abstulit heres!
> Paene fuit tanti non habuisse duos.
>
> Flavian race, how much the third heir took from you!
> It would almost have been worth not having had the [sc. other] two.

Domitian's last years had been marked by difficult relations with the senate, to put it mildly, a reign of terror, to put it dramatically.[15] Within hours of his murder the senate had elected the new emperor Nerva, twice consul and now in his mid sixties; subsequently Domitian suffered *damnatio memoriae*, and Rome (so the story goes) breathed a sigh of relief. Nerva allegedly succeeded in combining 'things long immiscible, principate and freedom',[16] but that did not mean calm: settling of scores in the senate, the

[12] A problem with which editors of all such volumes as this must wrestle: see e.g. Boyle 2003, Dinter 2013b and Zissos 2016: 5–14. All dates here are AD unless signalled.

[13] For the historical context, see Griffin 2000, Bennett 2001 and Grainger 2003. Much speculative reconstruction is required, given the paucity of detail on Nerva and Trajan in the literary record. For biographical details on emperors, Kienast 2004 is invaluable.

[14] Preserved in the scholia to Juvenal (on *Sat.* 4.38).

[15] See especially Syme 1983.

[16] Tac. *Agr.* 3.1 *res olim dissociabilis, principatum ac libertatem.*

threat of a pretender in the provinces and a revolt by the praetorian guard at Rome made for a turbulent first year, settled only by the adoption of Trajan in October 97. Four months later Nerva died, and 'Nerva Trajan Augustus' became emperor at the age of forty-four; the year 98 thus joins (and jostles with) 96 as the great moment of avowed renewal. From perhaps unassuming beginnings, Trajan would win renown in the historical record for military success abroad and political stability at home.[17] Victories in Dacia and Parthia swelled the empire to its greatest extent; at Rome literature flourished, dignity was restored to the senate and courts, and the 'best of emperors' governed by authority and respect instead of savage domination.

Such at least is the rosy picture painted by many of our ancient sources, above all those from the first years of Trajan's principate: in the *Agricola*, probably completed in 98, Tacitus made his literary debut with a biography of his father-in-law which integrates praise of Nerva and Trajan into its barbed attack on Domitian;[18] some years later, he began his *Histories* with the famous claim that he could write his account of the Flavians (and defer a history of Nerva and Trajan) 'with the rare good fortune of an age when you are allowed to think what you like and say what you think'.[19] Pliny's speech of thanksgiving to Trajan as consul, delivered in autumn 100 and written up as his *Panegyricus*, tirelessly works a polarity between Domitian, worst of emperors, and Trajan, the ideal opposite: false praise to the slave-master can be forgotten, as we offer genuine tribute to the man who 'commands us to be free'.[20] His nine-book collection of *Epistles*, apparently written between late 96 – after Domitian's death – and around 109, starts with buoyant celebration of literary revival,[21] and (more discreetly) works the same dichotomy as the *Panegyricus*.[22] A book of letters to and from Trajan,

[17] Trajan's military career before his accession was apparently not so distinguished as many have assumed; see Eck 2002a: 213–16, especially p. 215 n. 16.

[18] For three contrasting readings of the *Agricola*, see Whitmarsh 2006b; Sailor 2008: 51–118; Woodman 2014.

[19] *Hist.* 1.1.4 *rara temporum felicitate ubi sentire quae uelis et quae sentias dicere licet* – a claim taken very differently by different readers.

[20] In the famous paradox of *Pan.* 66.4 *iubes esse liberos: erimus* ('you command us to be free: we shall be'). Rees 2012b is a convenient overview of recent work on the *Panegyricus* (probably called *Gratiarum actio* by Pliny); see especially Bartsch 1994: 148–87, the essays collected in Roche 2011, and Roche's chapter in this volume.

[21] Especially *Ep.* 1.10 and 1.13.1. See Hoffer 1999: 3 ('restoration propaganda') and *passim*; Gibson and Morello 2012: 25–6.

[22] See Whitton 2013: 7. The precise dates of *Epistles* 1–9 are a topic of debate: for some different views, see Sherwin-White 1966: 20–65; Murgia 1985; Whitton 2013: 15–19; Bodel 2015. On Pliny's Trajanic self-presentation, see at length Geisthardt 2015, who identifies an '*optimus princeps* discourse' running through all his works (and those of Tacitus).

known as *Epistles* 10, appears to confirm this impression, both for Trajan's first years in power and during Pliny's governorship of Bithynia–Pontus a decade or so later, *c.* 109–11.[23]

Together Pliny and Tacitus, especially in their earliest works, have contributed in large measure to the judgment of history on Domitian, and on Trajan.[24] Others joined in the chorus: Martial, one of the few extant writers who published both under Domitian and after him, celebrates the Nervan 'Saturnalia' in *Epigrams* 11 (apparently dating to late 96)[25] and welcomes Trajan, renouncing his former flatteries, in the revised version of Book 10 two years later;[26] compliments to both emperors feature in his twelfth book (*c.* 101), though Martial's retirement to Spain by then is seen by some as a sign of disenchantment.[27] Another writer to bridge the gap is Frontinus, who wrote a four-book military manual (*Strategemata*) under Domitian,[28] then an account of Rome's water supply and its maintenance (*De aquis*) under Nerva, an emperor whose 'care for the state' he duly applauds.[29] But both Martial and Frontinus were dead within a few years of Trajan's accession.[30] How well the enthusiasm of Pliny and Tacitus for his brave new world held up is harder to say: quite apart from the ambiguities of the *Dialogus*,[31] many modern readers have detected a 'darkening' in Tacitus' view of the principate refracted through the *Histories* and subsequently the *Annals*, written later in Trajan's reign and perhaps into Hadrian's;[32] the final instalments of Pliny's *Epistles*, which certainly nuance his initial celebration of Nervan Rome, may reveal shadows lengthening over Trajan

[23] For these dates (not certain), see Millar 2000. The recently reopened question, whether Pliny published *Epistles* 10 himself and how far it should be read as a 'literary', how far a 'documentary' text (see Whitton and Gibson 2016: 43–6), is central to the chapters of Harries and Lavan in this volume.

[24] Modern scholars have been sceptical about both the blackening of Domitian and the claim of a watershed in 96; see e.g. Waters 1969; Coleman 2000; Wilson 2003; Galimberti 2016.

[25] Especially *Epig.* 11.1–7 and 15; see e.g. Sullivan 1991: 44–51 (on Books 10 and 11); Hinds 2007; Rimell 2008: 162–80; Fitzgerald in this volume.

[26] See especially *Epig.* 10.72, mentioned by both Rimell and Fitzgerald in their chapters. Such professions have not convinced all; see e.g. Fearnley 2003; Merli 2006a; Rimell 2008: 65–82.

[27] Howell 1998; Fearnley 2003: 603–5; Kelly's chapter in this volume. On the lively world of Greek epigram in our period, see Bowie 1990: 53–66; Nisbet 2003; Whitmarsh 2013: 137–53.

[28] For Domitian's role in the *Strategemata*, see variously Turner 2007; Malloch 2015; König 2017.

[29] See especially *Aq.* 1–3 with A. König 2007.

[30] Martial perhaps in 101 (depending on the date of Pliny *Ep.* 3.21), Frontinus perhaps in 102 or 103 (*Ep.* 4.8.3 with Sherwin-White 1966: 79–80 and Birley 2000a: 16).

[31] Commonly seen as Tacitus' death notice for oratory in the principate (including Trajan's); for a revisionist reading see van den Berg 2014. On *Dialogus* as a response to Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria*, see Whitton's chapter.

[32] On Tacitean 'Verdüsterung' see e.g. Fraenkel 1964, Woodman 1997: 92–3 and Woodman 2009b: 41–3. Syme 1958: 219–20 was sceptical (he doubted that Tacitus was enthusiastic with Trajan to start with).

too.[33] Juvenal was apparently writing into the 130s,[34] but his earliest Satires are usually counted as Trajanic. Whether that means the 110s (as many think) or as early as 100, his first poems join in the Domitian-bashing with abandon – or is it mocking exaggeration?[35] Either way, his satirical spin on the 'indignation industry' neatly underlines perhaps the most salient common point among our Nervan and Trajanic writers, the vilification of Domitian and concomitant celebration of the present. That these complementary aspects seem to be concentrated in the first years after Domitian's death must reflect in part sheer chance: no epigrammatist takes over from Martial, and the presumed death of Pliny around 111 leaves us with no (explicit) contemporary literary reflections on Trajan's later years. His demise also marks an end, for us, of overt personal and literary interactions: the teens are marked rather by Tacitus' increasingly austere history of Julio-Claudian Rome and Juvenal's ongoing *Satires*, which, for all their quotidian, contemporary qualities, can seem as reluctant as the *Histories* and *Annals* to join in contemporary conversations.

If Trajan's later years leave a patchy literary and historical record, the circumstances of his death in 117 and the accession of his former ward Hadrian are even more opaque, with allegations of a falsified deathbed adoption and the bloody suppression of a suspected early plot.[36] Like his predecessor, Hadrian was slow to return to Rome as new emperor; he would spend over half of his principate absent from the capital, sometimes on campaign, more often on pacific travels, above all in the Greek east. After Trajan's expansionism, Hadrian was more cautious: 'uninterested in extending the empire',[37] he pulled back from newly won territory and preferred to consolidate, as witness the wall in Britain and renewed fortifications along the Danube and Rhine. Yet his relentless travelling meant that the imperial centre of gravity was as much on the peripheries of the empire as at Rome;[38] an emperor who wore his philhellenism on his face, he also

[33] Respectively Gibson and Morello 2012: 27–31 and Gibson 2015.

[34] *Sat.* 15.27 gives a *terminus post quem* of 127; Courtney 1980: 2 and 571 (on *Sat.* 14.99) sets a *terminus ante* in 132.

[35] Domitian features most heavily in *Sat.* 4 but his shadow hangs over *Sat.* 1–5; like Tacitus (*Annals*) and Pliny (*Ep.* 7.29 and 8.6), Juvenal later looks back further, to the Julio-Claudians (especially Nero in *Sat.* 8). For two different interpretations of Juvenal's assaults on Domitian, see Ramage 1989 and Freudenburg 2001: 209–41. On the dating of *Sat.* 1 (late for e.g. Syme 1979, but early for Uden 2015: 219–26), see Kelly's chapter in this volume.

[36] So Dio Xiph. 69.1–2; *HA Hadr.* 7. See again Griffin 2000; also Birley 1997 (esp. p. 77); Syme 1984: 31–4. Contemporary sources are even scarcer here than for the events of 96–8.

[37] Tac. *Ann.* 4.32.2 *proferendi imperî incuriosus* – explicitly, at least, describing Tiberius.

[38] Athens enjoyed particular attention, but see Boatwright 2000 on Hadrian's investment in many cities around the empire. Zissos 2016: 13–14 identifies (loose) parallels with Domitian.

made cultural and intellectual interaction between Greece and Rome more fashionable than ever.[39] Hadrian's reign ended with as many tensions as it had begun,[40] and Aelius Aristides would give a speech in Rome some years later which implicitly painted him as an inconsistent, irrational and violent ruler.[41] Of course Aristides (if the speech is his) had his own agenda, not least to ingratiate himself with Antoninus;[42] but his oration suggests that contemporaries – Greeks among them – did not look back on Hadrian's principate with wholehearted approval.[43]

One notable exception was Arrian, a historian writing in Greek who rose high in Roman government under Hadrian's patronage and who wrote warmly to and about him in some of his works.[44] Other literary responses are harder to trace. Ronald Syme's celebrated theory that Tiberius' unwholesome succession in *Annals* 1 is a meditation *à clef* on Hadrian's in 117 is tantalising but moot;[45] so too the questions whether Juvenal's seventh Satire celebrates a new, Hadrianic age of literary patronage,[46] and how his fifteenth Satire, on cannibals in Egypt, might resonate with Hadrian's famous sojourn there in 130–1.[47] As for Suetonius, the other (for us) central Hadrianic author, and himself a Palace secretary, his *Lives of the Caesars* dwell firmly in the years before 96, offering, like Tacitus' *Histories*, only brief explicit testimony to the 'happier and more blessed state of the republic' thereafter.[48] All in all, this is a more diffuse literary

[39] For a subtle account of Hadrian's philhellenism, see Syme 1985b. His reign saw the continued integration of 'Greeks' (i.e. easterners) into the senate (see Halfmann 1979: 71–81) and their appointment to positions of administrative responsibility (Syme 1982a).

[40] Not least around the succession (Hadrian adopted Antoninus late in the day); see Dio Xiph. 69.17; *HA Hadr.* 15, 23–5.

[41] *To the emperor* (*Or.* 35), dated to 144 by Jones 1972 (date and ascription are questionable: see de Blois 1986).

[42] A form of praise familiar, of course, from early Trajanic literature, but in this case not necessarily a good tactic: Antoninus professed pious loyalty to Hadrian in multiple spheres of government, if we can trust the *Historia Augusta* (*Hadr.* 27.1–2; *Ant. Pius* 5.1–2).

[43] Another apparently ambivalent Greek is Favorinus, who enjoyed a spell in Hadrian's inner circle but was later exiled (for this and other stories about Hadrian and Greek intellectuals, see Swain 1989). On Hadrian's unpopularity, including with the senate (which was reluctant to deify him), see also Dio Xiph. 69.23.2–3, *HA Hadr.* 27, and the careful words of Fronto *Ad M. Caes.* 2.1.4 = vdH² p. 25.2–9; for some holistic estimations, see Dio Xiph. 69.3–7; Syme 1984; Stertz 1993.

[44] On Arrian's career and relations with Hadrian, see especially Stadter 1980: 1–18; Syme 1982b.

[45] Syme 1958: 465–503, ruled out for those who date the first books, or even most, of the *Annals* under Trajan (e.g. Goodyear 1981: 387–93 and Bowersock 1993 respectively).

[46] Hardie 1997–8. More broadly on Hadrian and literary culture (including his own productions), see André 1993; Stertz 1993; Fein 1994 (also on Trajan); for a wider early imperial picture, Mratschek 1993: 13–40.

[47] For two different views see Uden 2015: 210–15 and Ash's chapter in this volume.

[48] Suet. *Dom.* 23.2 *beatiorem . . . laetioremque . . . rei publicae statum*. Whether any such comment appeared at the beginning of his *Lives of the Caesars* (now lost) is unknown. On Suetonius, see

scene than what we see around the turn of the century, and one lacking in the copious social glue provided by epigrams and epistles. Nevertheless, not just because both Tacitus (perhaps) and Juvenal and Suetonius (certainly) were writing under Hadrian, the emperor's death in 138 supplies us with an end-point of convenience.

Whether 96 really did inaugurate a literary revival, then, and how long it lasted, are questions we can hardly answer. Nor is our corpus easily 'packaged' through identification of a *Zeitgeist* or even common concerns or features, beyond those early claims that urgent social and political reconstruction was needed after Domitian.[49] The absence of clusters of texts from a single genre makes it harder to read works against each other than it is, for instance, in early Augustan or Flavian times, where elegists and epicists respectively rub shoulders: perhaps the more jumbled miscellany of Tiberian literature is a closer parallel. Nor did the literature of our period become a gold standard in the following generations, as Augustan literature had: like their Neronian and Flavian forebears, Nervan, Trajanic and Hadrianic authors generally get the silent treatment from classicising Antonines such as Fronto and Gellius.[50] Together, though, they represent a significant chapter in Latin literary history. This was a time of energetic generic reinvention – from epistolography to history, satire to biography – and the early days of the so-called Second Sophistic, a cultural momentum that transformed the literary landscape (not just in Greek) across the empire. Besides, whatever the impact of 'our' authors in the second and third centuries, their influence in later antiquity and again since the Renaissance has been great. More diffuse and heterogeneous than the bodies of literature from some other 'periods', their texts are nonetheless products of a relatively short span which between them have a great deal in common – and which sustain rather more dialogues, and types of dialogue, than we have tended to hear. Listening more closely to those dialogues is the goal of this volume.

Literary Interactions

Nervan, Trajanic and Hadrianic literature has been a lively area of growth in Latin scholarship, but the trend in large-scale publications has been

first Wallace-Hadrill 1983; Power and Gibson 2014; on his partly extant *De viris illustribus*, see Kaster 1995: xxi–xxix.

[49] An obvious contrast is Neronian literature, bound up for many readers by its recurrent themes of spectacle, excess and the grotesque (see Dinter 2013b: 6–12).

[50] See e.g. Cameron 2010: 399–405.

for author-specific work.[51] Among shorter studies there have, to be sure, been broader attempts to identify spirits of the age across multiple works, often with a focus on shared concerns rather than dynamic interactions,[52] but most articles and chapters deal with discrete pairs of texts and authors. Pliny's personal and (inter)textual relationship with Tacitus is a firm favourite,[53] followed by his epistolary interactions with Martial or Suetonius;[54] then there is Juvenal's engagement with Martial and Tacitus,[55] and that of Tacitus with Suetonius and Frontinus.[56] Much attention has been paid in the process to the workings of allusion and intertextuality in our corpus, most influentially by A. J. Woodman on Tacitus (joined more recently by Timothy Joseph and Christopher van den Berg) and Ilaria Marchesi on Pliny.[57] Together this work has made great strides in unpicking individual instances of interaction and reflecting on its modes; what the period still lacks, though, is a synoptic study of the sort familiar for Augustan, Neronian and now Flavian literature.[58]

This volume grows out of a project that was developed to address that gap. Its first inspiration was Frontinus – or rather, the network of social, political and literary relationships tying him to a host of contemporaries: names such as Silius Italicus, Martial, Pliny, Tacitus, Plutarch, Aelian and

[51] To mention some recent monographs, collections and commentaries in English alone (routinely, of course, situating their author in a cultural context): Fitzgerald 2007, Rimell 2008 and Henriksén 2012 on Martial; Marchesi 2008, Roche 2011, Gibson and Morello 2012, Whitton 2013, Marchesi 2015a and Gibson and Whitton 2016 on Pliny; Power and Gibson 2014 and Wardle 2014 on Suetonius; Ash 2007, Sailor 2008, Woodman 2009a, Joseph 2012, Malloch 2013, Pagán 2012b, van den Berg 2014 and Woodman 2014 on Tacitus; Watson and Watson 2014, Keane 2015, Uden 2015 and Larmour 2016 on Juvenal.

[52] E.g. Ramage 1989; Wilson 2003; Pagán 2012a: 119–24; Kuhn 2015. An exception is Syme 1979, who identifies allusions between Juvenal, Pliny and Tacitus in the service of relative dating. Social and literary interactions in one important region, the Transpadana, are central to Mratschek 1984 and 2003.

[53] Griffin 1999; Ash 2003; Dominik 2007; Marchesi 2008: 97–206; Rutledge 2009; Woodman 2009b; Whitton 2010, 2012, forthcoming a; Gibson and Morello 2012: 161–8.

[54] Martial: Adamik 1976; Pitcher 1999; Henderson 2001, 2002: 47–57; Marchesi 2008: 62–8, 2013, 2015b; Neger 2015. Suetonius: Power 2010; Gibson 2014.

[55] Martial: Anderson 1970; Bramble 1982; Colton 1991; Uden 2015: 219–26. Tacitus: Nappa 2010; Keane 2012.

[56] Suetonius: references in Power 2014 (himself sceptical that he had even read Tacitus). Frontinus: König 2013.

[57] See respectively (e.g.) Woodman 1998, 2009b and 2012 *passim*, Joseph 2012 (also Lauletta 1998) and van den Berg 2014; Marchesi 2008 (also 2013 and 2015a). See also e.g. Schenk 1999a (translated as Schenk 2016); Hinds 2007; Whitton 2010; Gibson and Morello 2012 *passim*. More on intertextuality below.

[58] Also Antonine (see Russell 1990a) and Severan (Swain, Harrison and Elsner 2007; Kemezis 2014). Flavian literature has been a particularly vibrant scholarly scene in recent years, especially in the 'Flavian epic network': published volumes arising out of this and other similar enterprises include Nauta, van Dam and Smolenaars 2006; Boyle and Dominik 2003; Manuwald and Voigt 2013; Augoustakis 2013, 2014; Zissos 2016.