

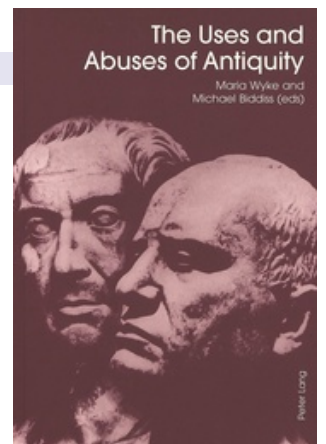
Biddiss, Michael / Wyke, Maria (eds.)

### The Uses and Abuses of Antiquity

Bern, Berlin, Bruxelles, Frankfurt/M., New York, Wien, 1999. 281 pp., 28 fig.

**Print:** ISBN 978-3-906761-64-0 pb. (Softcover)  
SFR 63.00 / €\* 56.20 / €\*\* 57.80 / € 52.50 / £ 42.00 / US\$ 68.95

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### Book synopsis

This multi-disciplinary volume brings together essays illustrating the diversity of forms in which the legacy of Antiquity has been used, and abused, by the Modern West. Here classicists and non-classicists combine to show how historiography, anthropology, philosophy, political thought, archaeology, poetry, drama, the novel, music, architecture, sculpture, painting, photography, and film can be rewardingly juxtaposed as sites rich in the appropriation of Greco-Roman culture. The book has a chronological span running from the 17th to the late-20th century, and it ranges geographically from Britain to Europe and the USA. The authors remind us that it is often not the past itself so much as constructed images thereof which do most to mould our cultural consciousness. The collection discloses the pluralism and flexibility of Antiquity as an important modern symbolic source, and the variety of socio-cultural circumstances which have oriented us towards it. At many points these essays also analyse signs of a certain desire for release from a tradition viewed as troublesome and constraining. Yet they also tend to confirm that, whenever we seek to escape classical culture, we are still likely to be held within its trammels – that, even when we think that we have thrown it off, we seem fated to remain within its protean thrall.

### Contents

Contents: Maria Wyke and Michael Biddiss: Introduction: using and abusing antiquity – Carolyn D. Williams: 'This frantic woman': Boadicea and English neo-classical embarrassment – Edith Hall: 1845 and all that: singing Greek tragedy on the London stage – Tessa Rajak: Jews and Greeks: the invention and exploitation of polarities in the nineteenth century – Athena S. Leoussi: Nationalism and the antique in nineteenth-century English and French art – Alex Potts: Walter Pater's unsettling of the Apollonian ideal – Michael Biddiss: The invention of modern Olympic tradition – Janet DeLaine: The *romanitas* of the railway station – Maria Wyke: Sawdust Caesar: Mussolini, Julius Caesar, and the drama of dictatorship – Ray Laurence: Tourism, town planning and *romanitas*: Rimini's Roman heritage – Angela Dimitrakaki: Mythoplasia and feminist intent: painting as sub/culture – Sue Malvern: The Muses and the museum: Maud Sulter's retelling of the canon – Anna McMullan and Lib Taylor: Perspectives on maternal authority: mother/daughter relationship in Sophocles' *Electra* and Beckett's *Footfalls* – Patrick Parrinder: Ancients and moderns: literature and the 'Western Canon'.

### About the author(s)/editor(s)

The editors are based at the University of Reading, where Maria Wyke (born 1957) is Senior Lecturer in Classics and Michael Biddiss (born 1942) is Professor of History.

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