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## [G. B. Bowersock, Greek sophists in the Roman Empire - suite]

**Auteur : Foucault, Michel**

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*imperium*.<sup>1</sup> Theirs was a valuable, if often frustrating work: what confronted them constantly was the petty factional strife and city rivalry of which the quarrels of sophists were themselves a manifestation. But Dio and Plutarch, unlike the sophists, did not take sides and inflame local sentiment. They tried rather to restore harmony and to encourage a degree of sound, independent local government which would be welcomed by the Roman regime.<sup>2</sup>

From a lofty social and cultural plane Dio and Plutarch addressed themselves, as did the sophists, not merely to the cities and magistrates of the East, but also to the aristocrats and emperors of Rome. Their role in East-West relations at the turn of the century was closely comparable to that of the sophists in the decades following. Dio spoke intimately with the emperor Trajan and proffered philosophic counsel.<sup>3</sup> Plutarch surveyed the battlefield of Bedriacum in the company of L. Mestrius Florus, from whom he received the Roman citizenship;<sup>4</sup> and he presented learned sympotic discussions as well as parallel lives of notable Greeks and Romans to none other than Trajan's marshal (and Pliny's friend), Q. Sosius Senecio.<sup>5</sup> Nor will Plutarch's association with the Avidii be forgotten, for that was a family which produced proconsuls and legates in Greece in successive generations during Plutarch's lifetime.<sup>6</sup> Then there was C. Minicius Fundanus, another friend of Pliny, who went out to govern Asia under Hadrian: some years previously he had received mention from Plutarch in a treatise on spiritual tranquillity, and had appeared as a speaker in a dialogue on controlling one's wrath.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Plutarch's *Præcepta rei publicae gerendae* and the many admonitory addresses of Dio. On this whole point, cf. G. W. Bowersock, *JRS* 58 (1968), 261 f.

<sup>2</sup> Bowersock, loc. cit. (previous note) and D. Nörr, *Imperium und Polis in der hohen Prinzipatszeit* (1966).

<sup>3</sup> Cf., e.g., *VS*, p. 488.

<sup>4</sup> Plut. *Otho* 14; *SIG*<sup>3</sup> 829a (Mestrius Plutarchus).

<sup>5</sup> Cf. C. P. Jones, *JRS* 56 (1966), 67 and 73.

<sup>6</sup> Plutarch and the Avidii: C. P. Jones, op. cit., 71-3, in regard to the *De fraterno amore* and the *Quaestiones convivales*. Cf. the summary account of the Avidii in this period by A. N. Sherwin-White, *The Letters of Pliny* (1966), p. 388. Sherwin-White should not assume, however, that T. Avidius Quietus, suffect consul in 111, was ever proconsul of Achaia.

<sup>7</sup> *De tranquillitate animi* 464 E; cf. *De cohibenda ira*. Fundanus governed Asia in 122/3: Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.* 4. 8. 6.

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