



Reading the Letters of Pliny the Younger: An Introduction

Roy K. Gibson, Ruth Morello

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This is the first general introduction to Pliny's Letters published in any language, combining close readings with broader context and adopting a fresh and innovative approach to reading the letters as an artistically structured collection. Chapter 1 traces Pliny's autobiographical narrative throughout the Letters; Chapter 2 undertakes detailed study of Book 6 as an artistic entity; while Chapter 3 sets Pliny's letters within a Roman epistolographical tradition dominated by Cicero and Seneca. Chapters 4-7 study thematic letter cycles within the collection, including those on Pliny's famous country villas and his relationships with Pliny the Elder and Tacitus. The final chapter focuses on the 'grand design' which unifies and structures the collection. Four detailed appendices give invaluable historical and scholarly context, including a helpful timeline for Pliny's life and career, detailed bibliographical help on over 30 popular topics in Pliny's letters and a summary of the main characters mentioned in the Letters.

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