Roman History

The thought and labour (see its small-scale charts) invested in Constantina Katsari's *The Roman Monetary System*[50] can hardly be over-estimated. Both were well spent. The subject is less forbidding than it sounds, and the restrictions of the subtitle are sometimes infringed, advantageously. Besides, the author goes into the Roman economy, fitting Roman practice into modern theories. A sure-footed introduction, largely on methodology, leads to seven chapters moving through coinage to economics (macro and micro), and to the metallism vs. chartalism debate, ending with a list of finds, hoards, and collections. The first chapter deals with statistics and related problems. The subject of the second is state financial policy, affected in the third century by the needs of the military. Chapter 3 is one of the most interesting, on trimetallism and the bimetallic laws, and abuses of the system: the aureus was kept stable and so guaranteed the value of the denarius. A familiar theme is reached with the application of quantity theory to third-century economics (there is an untranslated text of the Mylasa Inscription, *OGI* 515). Katsari offers new hypotheses and recurrent themes (over-stress on the influence of the military is one). Reaching 'integration' we have quibbles, the 'middle class', and antique lack of class consciousness. Discussion will continue, but with constant reference to this invaluable volume. Another work offers help in a controverted area: population. This is Alessandro Launaro's *Peasants and Slaves*,[51] which starts from the census figures of 69 and 28 BC and their relation to the orthodox view of a decline in Italy's free population during his period. The problems are complex. First, how to interpret the sharp rise of Augustus' citizen figure: adult males (that has my vote), all citizens, or *sui iuris*? Launaro provides a clear and detailed survey of scholarly views. Then there are the archaeological results achieved over fifty years by selfless work in the field. How can they be used alongside the census figures? Everywhere the author offers instruction on methodology. Importantly, he argues that trends rather than synchronic snaps provide a way forward, and shows how archaeological results can be integrated into one analysis. His conclusion from the data is that 'in the vast majority of cases rural areas did experience either growth or stability in their free population' (164). A brief review cannot do justice to Launaro's progress towards his concluding narrative of a three-part development, with the century 50 BC–AD 50 the central peak (no absolute figures). A 132-page appendix sets out the archaeological data. After accolades for austere volumes must come a warm welcome, tinged with sadness, for John North and the late Simon Price's collection *The Religious History of the Roman Empire*.[52] One of the Oxford Readings in Classical Studies series, its aim is to bring to a wide readership current debates in a most important and radically developing area, and it succeeds in both scope and quality, with seventeen contributions from distinguished writers

[50] *The Roman Monetary System. The Eastern Provinces from the First to the Third Century AD*. By Constantina Katsari. Cambridge and New York, Cambridge University Press, 2010. Pp. x + 304. 43 tables. Hardback £60, ISBN: 978-0-521-76946-4.

[51] *Peasants and Slaves. The Rural Population of Roman Italy (200 BC to AD 100)*. By Alessandro Launaro. Cambridge and New York, Cambridge University Press, 2011. Pp. xiv + 349. 29 b/w illustrations, 5 maps, 66 tables. Hardback £65, ISBN: 978-1-107-00479-5.

[52] *The Religious History of the Roman Empire. Pagans, Jews, and Christians*. Oxford Readings in Classical Studies. Edited by J. A. North and S. R. F. Price. Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 2011. Pp. xxii + 577. 58 b/w/ illustrations. Hardback £105, ISBN: 978-0-19-956734-8; paperback £45, ISBN: 978-0-19-956735-5.

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(Richard Gordon has two essays), the earliest from 1994; nearly half are translations. Moreover, the editors end with useful suggestions for further reading. The focus becomes explicit in the first, longest section, 'Changes in Religious Life', devoted to Roman and civic cults. Next come four papers on elective cults, and five on the co-existence of religions, where Judaism and Christianity come into their own. Only two papers make up 'Late Antiquity', where Averil Cameron republishes, with a 2009 afterword, her paper on 'The Discourse of Female Desire', which offers a now rightly familiar platform for women in this area. Nicole Belayche on Hypsistos, Andreas Bendlin on oracles, and Judith Lieu on the forging (!) of Christian identity caught this reader's attention, but John North's own paper on paganism and polytheism seemed to have particular explanatory value. *Foreign Cults in Rome*, by Eric M. Orlin,[53] tackles a subject of perennial interest, and advances it. It focuses on Roman preoccupation with delimiting boundaries, and sees the phenomena in that context ('adopt and adapt'). Yet boundaries inevitably come into question whenever foreign cults obtrude, so one might ask what Orlin says that is new; on the other hand, it seems peculiar that Romans should seek out so indirect a method of solving such problems. The answers may be that the author does not exclude other factors, and that the protocols of religion allowed delicacy in dealing with problems of relations with outsiders (given Rome's prized 'openness'). In any case, there is no doubting the richness of the material that Orlin brings forward, nor the interest of individual cases, which offer useful insights, as on the death of Remus – ties of loyalty above biological ones – and the Roman cuckoo in the nest of the *feriae Latinae*. (The material is divided both chronologically, with the last three centuries BC each occupying a chapter, and by scope, with priests, prodigies, and *ludi* each taking up another chapter.) And it is significant that the questions cluster round times when related political problems arose. Cults technically Roman, socially alien, allowed Rome to have things both ways. By implication, religion becomes the handmaid of the state, but Orlin evades such brutal cynicism. Brent D. Shaw's impressive *Sacred Violence*[54] embraces more than the 'small story of sectarian violence' that he introduces (from the end of the fourth century to the Vandal conquest) – naturally, given the book's length. Violence floats in one society and another, at various levels and differing intensities and with varied outcomes for the state. Hence, innumerable questions: why Africa? And, more generally, where does religion come in? How is the violence related to the sect? Sectarianism is not necessary for community violence. But religion, with traditionally rooted convictions, trumping all others, embeds and aggravates it. Peculiarly sectarian violence comes to be autonomous, the state studied by the author. After Africa comes a chapter on the betrayal that, rather than heresy, tore apart the Church there, and false memories of it. There were still centres of paganism, and of aesthetic resistance to Christianity, defended by violent youth; the Calama rioting allowed appeal to the imperial authorities. Shaw passes to the Jews, their late efflorescence, their near-invisibility, and Christian hostility. His range is remarkable,

[53] *Foreign Cults in Rome. Creating a Roman Empire*. By Eric M. Orlin. Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 2010. Pp. xii + 248. 2 b/w illustrations, 2 maps. Hardback £45, ISBN: 978-0-19-973155-8.

[54] *Sacred Violence. African Christians and Sectarian Hatred in the Age of Augustine*. Cambridge and New York, Cambridge University Press, 2011. Pp. xx + 910. 6 maps. Hardback £100, ISBN 978-0-521-19605-5; paperback £40, ISBN: 978-0-521-12725-7.

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including circumcellions (in an Appendix) and suicide. So, too, in his modern instances (for example, the contrast of the language of Ballymurphy and the Falls Road on the one hand and Sinn Fein and British officialdom on the other); for this is a dismal tale, or rather analysis, sprightly in the telling. Another way of creating a volume of essays is to corral an assembly of renowned scholars and get them to talk to each other, making for a greater unity of effect. That is how Björn C. Ewald and Carlos F. Noreña approached editing *The Emperor and Rome*,[55] though Paul Zanker's paper on 'popular' architecture goes back to a German version of 1997 and Klaus Fittschen's defence of typological method (with criticism of Caroline Vout's *Antinoos*) was separately commissioned. The other ten papers tackle the vast subject, heroically but not formally divided up in the editors' subtitle, stressing recent archaeological achievements, and developments after Augustus. This work could continue indefinitely, and that is why one may feel a pang of disappointment, in spite of the distinction of contributors and the generosity of the illustrations. I recommend Michael Koortbojian's interpretation of Roman cuirassed statues, Mary T. Boatwright's analysis of the in-turning Antonine monarchy, and Elizabeth Marlowe's teasing out of Maxentian and Constantinian Rome. Other contributions are more austere: Werner Eck proves that the aristocracy, deprived of commemorative space in Rome, filled niches elsewhere; James E. Packer has useful descriptions of Pompey's theatre and the Temple of Concord; Egon Flaig, after a theoretical preface in which predecessors suffer, deploys the new clothes of the 'Akzeptanzsystem' to explain Nero's fall. In volumes such as this, Scylla and Charybdis lurk – impressions of patchiness, and repetition; the last two contributions, on imperial funerals, do not evade the latter. Before we move to a further collection, Carlos F. Noreña's own *Imperial Ideals in the Roman West*[56] deserves scrutiny – and commendation. He works at three different levels. At one is his argument for the emperor as the unifying symbol for the empire. Sustaining this is his view of the conceptual system that promoted that position. This is where his great contribution lies. We have seen 'virtues' discussed before, but the author painstakingly analyses them and shows how one benefit fits another (as Victoria and Felicitas), how and why they come and go (AD 69–235), and how they are distributed, many arguments being illustrated by clear diagrams. In short, it is a dynamic approach, and quantitative (over 185,000 coins and nearly 600 inscriptions). Lastly, and most importantly (Part III), he discusses the reaction of provincials to this fabric and its exploitation by elites for their own advantage, here passing from the imperial numismatic corpus to the epigraphic evidence. The book is remarkable both for industry and for insight (the connexion between *indulgentia* and the *Constitutio Antoniniana*; how *dominus* supplanted *optimus*). Of course Noreña cannot explain everything: why did Domitian, with all his salutations, neglect *Victoria*? But he is always rewarding and clear. *Rome, Ostia, Pompeii. Movement and Space*,[57] edited

[55] *The Emperor and Rome. Space, Representation, and Ritual*. Edited by Björn C. Ewald and Carlos F. Noreña. Yale Classical Studies 35. New York, Cambridge University Press, 2010. Pp. xxii + 365. 128 b/w illustrations, 4 maps. Hardback £60, ISBN: 978-0-521-51953-3.

[56] *Imperial Ideals in the Roman West. Representation, Circulation, Power*. By Carlos F. Noreña. Cambridge and New York, Cambridge University Press, 2011. Pp. xxii + 456. 79 b/w illustrations, 11 tables, 3 maps. Hardback 65, ISBN: 978-1-107-00508-2.

[57] *Rome, Ostia, Pompeii. Movement and Space*. Edited by Ray Laurence and David J. Newsome. Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 2011. Pp. xx + 444. 77 illustrations, 13 tables. Hardback £75, ISBN: 978-0-19-958312-6.

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by Ray Lawrence and David J. Newsome, shares a shift away from architecture to activities. It is based on conference sessions, and, as the editors claim, will be of interest not only to students of the past but even to today's town planners. After an introduction, three sections: 'Articulating movement and space', 'Movement in the Roman city: infrastructure and organization', and 'Movement and the metropolis'. For all the alluring topics in each ('Movement and space in Martial's *Epigrams*', 'The power of nuisances', 'Walking for transport and leisure'), this is no coffee-table book. While Ostia occupies least space, Hanna Stöger's analysis of its *scholae* presents 'space syntax' and 'isovists' (shaped visual fields). Hence the conclusion that *scholae*, along the most 'integrated' streets, were accessible to people seeking them, attracting direct, purposive movement: 'The shift from intuition to theory-led analysis is justified through the importance of recognizing the fundamental relationship between the urban grid…and human movement' (241). In his 'Endpiece', Laurence rightly sees the papers as opening a new historiography: archaeologists, starting from the eighties' 'spatial shift' and recovering the significance of movement, are urged towards cultural histories of mobility. Riches and a comparison with gardening come to mind in reading Ted Kaizer and Margherita Facella's *Kingdoms and Principalities in the Roman Near East*.[58] This book offers an international 'enquire within' for those interested in a wide but coherent field, and essays of more than passing significance and richly documented with footnotes, such as the editors' introduction, criticizing use of the word 'client' (contributors not all heeding). There are four sections: 'Outlook', with Olivier Hekster and Richard Fowler on Roman and Parthian perspectives (valuable observations on relations of power); 'Themes', on Roman citizenship, coinages, religion, and Llewelyn Morgan sprightly on Bithynia in poetry, 'Case Studies', and 'Variants'. 'Case Studies' contains the most essays, with Cleopatra VII, by Rolf Strootman, as a contributor to the future empire, and substantial sections on Pontus and Commagene; particular features of Emesa and Osrhoene are brought out; Nabataeans and Herodians are understandably omitted. Last come two 'Variants': Palmyra and Ulf Scharrer's 'nomadic allies'. The editors regret the absence from their garden of three papers read at the colloquium, and note the addition of three others specially commissioned. Scharrer's stands at the end like a great thicket more than ninety pages long: informative, analytic, and out of scale as it is slightly out of line with the main theme. To continue in the east, with a broad range of social levels, Benjamin Kelly, in *Petitions, Litigation, and Social Control in Roman Egypt*,[59] examines how far the legal system achieved its goals – the resolution of disputes through judgments – and how it promoted informal methods of social control, while also being abused for vengeance and feud. It is a complex enquiry, the materials documented in appendices, concluding with an *index locorum*. In his introduction, Kelly discusses constraints on his work and reasons for his time frame (30 BC–AD 284), including the distribution and condition of available materials. There is no question of writing a history of 'crime', and no adherence to a particular model that

[58] *Kingdoms and Principalities in the Roman Near East*. Edited by Ted Kaizer and Margherita Facella. Oriens et Occidens 19. Stuttgart, Franz Steiner Verlag, 2010. Pp. 453. 22 plates, 13 tables. Paperback €68, ISBN: 978-3-515-09715-4.

[59] *Petitions, Litigation, and Social Control in Roman Egypt*. By Benjamin Kelly. Oxford Studies in Ancient Documents. Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 2011. Pp. xx + 427. 2 maps, 10 tables. Hardback £75, ISBN: 978-0-19-959961-5.

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fits Egypt, though the idea of litigation as a 'last resort' is tested. Again, Kelly enquires into the changes that Roman administration brought; the governor's tour, called a *conventus* (29), was a basic one. As to informal control, eighteenth-century England, with savage punishments and clemency from the king, offers an example. Ideologies find a place, as also do group solidarity (women included or alone) and 'private' resolutions. But an important feature of the work is the indication of the disruptive effect that petitioning might have. Throughout, apart from its avowed use, this exemplary book is instructive on methodology. Back to Rome's heart for *Consuls and* Res Publica, edited by Hans Beck and others.[60] Another compilation, then, from a Spanish research project and Zaragoza conference (2007): the first book-length treatment. The editors claim only a contribution to an ongoing debate and note the consulship as a nebulous office, its analysis better suited to cultural history. They have organized their fifteen papers into four parts: 'Creation', 'Powers and Functions', 'Symbols, Models, Self-representation', and 'Ideology, Confrontation, and the End of the Republican Consulship'. The view is fragmented, seen through a lattice and through disparate spectacles. After Christopher Smith on the early magistrates (an antidote to scepticism), come Gianpaolo Urso commending Dio's account of origins, and Alexander Bergk on the third-century development of the praetorship. That is coherent; less so the transition from Francisco Simón on the *Feriae Latinae* to Nathan Rosenstein's 'War, wealth and consuls'. Beck's paper on the nuances of *imperium* is central. Then we pass on to the Cunctator, the consular as social type, and interaction with Italian elites. The last section takes in consular appeals to armies, *consules populares* (Duplá's handling of Cicero is unsatisfying), the Stoic optimate Q. Catulus, and a judicious closure on Augustus by Frédéric Hurlet. One still misses the single-authored volume, but Francisco Pina Polo's *The Consul at Rome. The Civil Functions of Consuls in the Roman Republic*,[61] from the same stable, deals with a prime aspect. It is divided into two parts – pre- and, more briefly, post-Sullan (altogether 367–50 BC) – and offers an index of ancient sources, besides names. It is empirical and concerned with actual workings, such as taking office, jurisdiction, promotion of public works, and presiding over elections. Pina Polo has a good discussion of the way in which a consul took this job, but the word *professio* needs setting in its contexts.[62] In 'Consuls as Legislators', the author conducts a salutary review of Kaj Sandberg's thesis that pre-Sullan legislation was all tribunician; while most of the entries in Giovanni Rotondi's *Leges Publicae* are hypothetical, the consuls' role was significant. It is sad that he still has to consider the question of the post-Sullan consul abroad and the '*lex Cornelia de provinciis ordinandis*', rebutted by J. P. V. D. Balsdon before the Second World War, but, firmly basing his view on the work of Adalberto Giovannini, he discusses the dates when consuls did leave Rome for their provinces. This is a valuable and serviceable book. From the grand to the touching – the child on

[60] *Consuls and Res Publica. Holding High Office in the Roman Republic*. Edited by Hans Beck, Antonio Duplá, Martin Jehne, and Francisco Pina Polo. Cambridge and New York, Cambridge University Press, 2011. Pp. x + 376. 1 table. Hardback, £65 ISBN: 978-1-107-00154-1.

[61] *The Consul at Rome. The Civil Functions of Consuls in the Roman Republic*. By Francisco Pina Polo. Cambridge and New York, Cambridge University Press, 2011. Pp. x + 379. 2 b/w illustrations, 2 tables. Hardback £65, ISBN: 978-0-521-19083-1.

[62] Cf. B. Levick, '*Professio*', *Athenaeum* n.s. 59 (1981), 378–88.

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the cover of Christian Laes's *Children in the Roman Empire. Outsiders Within.*[63] Much is written on children, and Laes acknowledges his debt to Beryl Rawson. What can this volume offer that is new? First, Laes intends a focus on experience (hence the cover); secondly, the genesis of the book: a Leuwen doctorate (2004), reworked and published in Dutch (2006), with an eye to the general public as well as professionals, and again reworked and translated: it is to be accessible as well as scholarly. Besides his particular perspective, Laes examines the way that cultivated males perceived children. In fact, his chapters cover demography, early childhood, children at school (should a Tanagran terracotta illustrate the *paedagogus*? There are other Greek intrusions), children at work, and, in a startling category change, paedophilia. Equally startling is the suggestion (101) that a coin reverse shows L. Verus' consort ('Domitia'!) breastfeeding. In a concluding chapter, Laes notes that insignificance of age, social interpretation of 'childhood', and the ambivalence between the outsider model and the child as a source of expectation exemplify how antiquity differed from contemporary society. Rightly, he insists that change was gradual. This is indeed a readable, well-informed work; whether a distinctive focus is achieved is another matter. Foreigners on Rome in Roman writers are the subject of Eric Adler's *Valorizing the Barbarians*,[64] not that that title, which means stabilizing or enhancing their value (*OED*), tells us so: that is left for the subtitle. The author takes pairs of speeches that Sallust, Trogus, Livy, Polybius, Tacitus, and Dio put into the mouths of Rome's enemies; he laudably gives his own translations of those speeches in their entirety (some repetition here, then) and includes discussion of other, related passages. Despite references to 'post-colonial theory', the style is sprightly. It is a valuable exercise, in that the author proffers careful examinations of important passages in significant writers, though necessarily hedged about by ifs and buts, so that Polybius stands out for pragmatism in the complex and moralizing discourse of the rest (even Livy displays ethical concerns); but paradoxically, in spite of the author's avowed difficulty in drawing positive conclusions (for example, about the impact of authors' ethnicity) from the material put into the mouths of barbarians by ancient authors, it remains rather too neat an exercise, still reminiscent of its dissertation origins. Nonetheless, the author makes a good point about the development of charges from Republic to Empire (from greedy aggression, one might say, to aggressive greed). The history of Rome, in particular its expansion, by a foreigner is the subject of Donald Baronowski's *Polybius and Roman Imperialism*.[65] Like other intellectuals, Polybius was in two minds, Baronowski thinks (and says so more than once): the Romans' aim of expansion was intrinsically noble and pursued in a noble way, but intellectual detachment forced other ideas on Polybius: abstract principles, acknowledgment of a universal aggressive drive, concern for subjects, the urge to impress his views on his contemporaries, and, unusually, envisaging the end. Hence the book's two parts: one-third devoted methodically to attitudes of other intellectuals – philosophers, poets and prophecies

[63] *Children in the Roman Empire. Outsiders Within.* By Christian Laes. Cambridge and New York, Cambridge University Press, 2011. Pp. xvi + 334. 6 b/w illustrations. Hardback £65, ISBN: 978-0-521-89746-4.

[64] *Valorizing the Barbarians. Enemy Speeches in Roman Historiography.* By Eric Adler. Austin, TX, University of Texas Press, 2011. Pp. xiv + 269. Hardback £37, ISBN: 978-0-292-72628-4.

[65] *Polybius and Roman Imperialism.* By Donald Walter Baronowski. London, Bristol Classical Press, 2011. Pp. xiv + 242. Hardback £50, ISBN: 978-0-71563-942-9.

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(including the Sibylline), and historians; two-thirds to 'Polybius on' six topics. All this is preceded by an introduction containing matter helpful to tiros, whom Baronowski hopes to interest as well as students and scholars: life, chronology, Roman views of Polybius, modern interpretations, and so on. Baronowski's assessment of Polybius' judgements on expansion, administration, Rome's enemies, his service to Rome (with an appendix on constitutions imposed by Rome), and his views of fate (more problematical) and the future is also careful and well documented. This book may not excite, but it can instruct. Illustrations are a prize feature of David Breeze's *The Frontiers of Imperial Rome*,[66] for their number, their clarity, and the brilliance of the colour plates; only the map frontispiece is rather dim. But serious issues, down to the beginning of the fifth century, are discussed in the text, especially in the final chapter. The author has done all he can to help the general reader: a list of emperors, a section on further reading, a list of places to visit, and those illustrations. He divides the book into three parts: the first is concerned with sources, with Roman comments (description of the *Historia Augusta* is not happy); the second consists of sections based on types of frontier or their terrain, taken chronologically; and the third offers interpretation. The supply of men and materials is not included, nor the hinterland. Part 2, analysis of different types of frontier – linear, river, mountain, desert – is particularly enlightening. On their purpose, Breeze peels off several possibilities, the last, generalizing, word being 'security'; as to success, he is also judicious. To my mind, the 'grand strategy' was to expand, and frontiers were a confession of failure. This is a thoughtful book, and a pleasure to use. Now for revolution at the centre, with Raymond Van Dam's *Remembering Constantine at the Milvian Bridge*.[67] Only the guileless would take this for a nostalgic ramble past a historical turning point. Rather (to quote praise on the dust jacket), 'Van Dam uses contemporary memory theory to arrive at a new interpretation of an age-old problem', making a 'clarion call for an updated historical criticism' and 'combining the retro perspective of modern media and post-modern concerns with meticulous historical analysis'. Baldly, the author examines stories about the conflicted episode, verbal and visual (illustrations would have been welcome). Hence he provides a backwards 'timeline', and his chapters work from modern scholarship through Eusebius, who promoted Constantine to a Christlike figure in accordance with his Arian theology, panegyrics, and arches, to Maxentius and ('Backword') the bridge. Constantine's own account depended on those of others. But the battle had other contexts than the religious: Maxentius, rescued from the Tiber, presents Constantine as another Gallic threat. We moderns inevitably also 'construct', and Van Dam recommends ancient rhetoric and cinematic techniques to contemporary writers. His work is penetrating and subtle, but could a scholar of an earlier generation, his equal, have written this book without its theoretical trim? It was amazing to discover from Adam M. Schor's *Theodoret's*

[66] *The Frontiers of Imperial Rome*. By David Breeze. Barnsley, S. Yorks, Pen and Sword Books, Barnsley, 2011. Pp. xxiii + 272. 1 map, 48 figures, 28 plates. Hardback £25, ISBN: 978-1-848-84427-8.

[67] *Remembering Constantine at the Milvian Bridge*. By Raymond Van Dam. Cambridge and New York, Cambridge University Press, 2011. Pp. xiv + 296. 3 maps. Hardback £55, ISBN: 978-1-107-09643-1.

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People[68] that, in plotting Julio-Claudian factions for a book now thirty-six years old, I was practising a primitive form of 'social network theory'. Schor expounds it in his introduction: 'If individuals connect by performing certain words and gestures a meaningful network can be identified by tracing exchanges of…these cues' (10); and 'modular scale-free networks feature cliques linked together by a handful of hubs' (11). Henceforward, cues and hubs are all. Theodoret was a hub and the author is immensely scholarly in establishing and illustrating his networks (bibliography and figures). He traces their development through two sections, the Antiochene clerical network, ending with the network's fall, and late Roman networks of patronage (more terminological refinement). He explores the main relationships and throws up interesting insights on the way (e.g. on linguistic difficulties). Nagging questions arise. Where are the lower orders (they hardly riot)? And what is the relation between doctrine and networks? Schor attempts that question late, but his analysis of the ups and downs of Theodoret's network is valuable, and well illustrated by his at-a-glance diagrams. Scholarship would have been enough, without the 'science'. Theodoret features in a work fully concerned with the lower orders and their (not always unsuccessful) dealings with their superiors: Cam Grey's *Constructing Communities in the late Roman Countryside*.[69] For 'Roman' here embraces both parts of the empire, disparate though they seem to be in history and types of evidence. Grey, too, works to models; however, they are not oppressive (in spite of the chapter on 'Constituting communities: peasants, families, households') but more like themes, and acceptable ones: the avoidance of risk, reciprocity, and reputation. The theoretical layer self-consciously achieves what might be done more unobtrusively, but the arguments, balancing the diversities with basic resemblances, are backed up with effective 'vignettes', deftly and usually convincingly interpreted, for all that they normally present the point of view of the elite. The author does not flatten out complexity, rather stresses it, and his picture is the more realistic for that, as well as emerging in brighter colours than we have usually been shown, even when soldiers were present; some *rustici* (peasants) were quite mobile, and they were capable of their own forms of exploitation. A particularly valuable section is devoted to the new taxation system, which is first of all explained and then presented as a feature that did not transform late Roman societies but rather mapped itself out along their contours. A final 'late Empire' work moves from peasantry to palace, from class to individual: Hagith Sivan's *Galla Placidia*.[70] The author is equally beset by the problem of want of evidence, even for a life of such reversals, for it is a woman's life, though one of an imperial regent. Her solution presents, in the frame of events, comparable situations, in part offering a 'virtual' Placidia. Thus, although we do not have the actual compositions addressed to Placidia at her wedding, we have comparable ones, and the guidelines in Menander

[68] *Theodoret's People. Social Networks and Religious Conflict in Late Roman Syria.* By Adam M. Schor. Berkeley, CA and Los Angeles, CA, University of California Press, 2011. Pp. xvi + 342. 20 illustrations. Hardback £34.95, ISBN: 978-0-520-26862-3.

[69] *Constructing Communities in the Late Roman Countryside.* By Cam Grey. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2011. Pp. xiv + 269. 1 map. Hardback £60, ISBN: 978-1-107-01162-5.

[70] *Galla Placidia. The Last Roman Empress.* By Hagith Sivan. Women in Antiquity. New York, Oxford University Press, 2011. Pp. x + 224. 3 maps, family tree, 24 images. Hardback £65, ISBN: 978-0-19-537912-9; paperback £17.99, ISBN: 978-0-19-537913-6. This review must be simply factual, as the reviewer is preparing a work for the same series.

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Rhetor. Where the literary sources are unsatisfactory – though at least we have her letters to Paulinus of Nola and to African bishops – there is much in the way of art and coinage. The volume is one of a series, 'Women in Antiquity', offering 'compact and accessible introductions' to lives and historical times. That does not mean that there is a lack of documentation: notes, timeline, bibliography, and index. The author has divided her material into successive episodes with a concluding chapter: wedding, funerals, the making of an empress, restoration, 'A bride, a book, and a pope', Rome, and Ravenna. The only treatment of a text to be considered here is Plutarch's *Caesar*, translated with introduction and commentary by Christopher Pelling.[71] The author apologizes for the length of time it has taken in the completion – as if the intervening years had not yielded Pelling's other works of the first importance on Plutarch and enriched the commentary through changing notions of Roman politics (Symean, Millarian, and beyond; see the introduction). At the same time, Pelling delicately stresses his life as a historian as well as a student of literature, which is something that makes the present work so useful. Moreover, to this reviewer's joy, he admits to being a historian who is not afraid of the positivist question of Plutarch's reliability. The long period of gestation may also have contributed a certain density to the commentary, as well as generosity (hence the importance of the general index; there are also elegant maps): on 66.12 Pelling comments on what Plutarch does *not* say, by discussing Caesar's alleged last words, with bibliographical references to authors who have also discussed them. This brings us to Shakespeare, to whom Pelling devotes a section of his indispensable introduction, giving his work an additional dimension. Here is a work for undergraduates and all beyond. Finally, another conference collection and moves towards legacy: Benedict Kingsbury and Benjamin Straumann's *The Roman Foundations of the Law of Nations. Alberico Gentili and the Justice of Empire*.[72] The late seventeenth-century Regius Professor of Civil Law at Oxford and author of *De iure belli* and the recently translated *De armis Romanis* was concerned with contemporary rights and wrongs as well as Roman, and, basing his writing on the *Corpus*, took a favourable view of Roman imperialism. The editors of a fissile body of materials, after surveying ways in which Roman theory and practice have exercised influence, divide the essays between three sections: 'The Roman Model', 'Gentili and the Law of War', and 'Law Between, Beyond, and Within Sovereigns'. Those of the first part may be of most direct interest to readers here, three of them immediately concerned with Gentili: his *De armis* and the Roman model of the just empire and the exemplum of Roman imperialism; and his consideration of the *Corpus iuris* as a source of law. John Richardson, renowned for work on *imperium*, offers 'a brief report' on it, and Clifford Ando on 'Empire and the laws of war: a Roman archaeology' seeks what Gentili might contribute on the Livian theme of cloaking deceits with some semblance of legality. Daniel Kapust's

[71] *Plutarch. Caesar.* Translated with introduction and commentary by Christopher Pelling. Clarendon Ancient History Series. Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 2011. Pp. xxii + 519. Frontispiece, 5 maps. Hardback £95, ISBN: 978-0-19-814904-0; paperback £35, ISBN: 978-0-19-960835-5.

[72] *The Roman Foundations of The Law of Nations. Alberico Gentili and the Justice of Empire*. Edited by Benedict Kingsbury and Benjamin Straumann. Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 2010. Pp. xiv + 386. Hardback £65, ISBN: 978-0-19-959987-5.

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Republicanism, Rhetoric, and Roman Political Thought. Sallust, Livy, and Tacitus[73] comes with garlands of praise on its cover from all over the US. First, then, the reader needs to know that 'Republicanism' here does not refer directly to the Roman phenomenon but is a modern doctrine, essentially American. Secondly, the author is professor in a department of political science, and it is a merit of this book to bring tools of that trade, if not such words as 'redescription', to bear. (The ancients are increasingly seen as relevant to political philosophy.) He 'develops readings' centring on authors' treatment of liberty, rhetoric, and social and political conflict. So armed, he puts forwards three schematic views: Sallust is an 'antagonistic republican', for whom rhetoric might have made resolutions of conflicts possible (Kapust is not consistent on the importance of *metus hostilis* ['fear of the enemy']); Livy is a 'consensualist republican', who held that rhetorical confrontations were a beneficial part of public life for interaction between the many and the few; Tacitus, seeing that a silent politician might still be an endangered poet, concerns himself with prudence. Of course, Kapust visits many other authors, such as Cato, Plato, and Aristotle (allowing accidents to breathings and accents), and, as the book moves on, it becomes richer and more interesting. However, it is Nouvelle Cuisine, and I did not come away replete.

B. M. LEVICK
barbara.levick@st-hildas.ox.ac.uk
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Art and Archaeology

Classical archaeologists are accustomed to the frustrations of finding only sparse relics from ancient monuments. The frustration is diminished, perhaps, when we know of some grand project in the past that was not intended to endure. Yet the lure of imagining what might have been is still irresistible. Such is the case of the *skenê* (the 'tent' or 'pavilion') erected in Alexandria by Ptolemy II Philadelphos, subject to a new study entitled *The Ephemeral and the Eternal*.[74] Elena Calandra introduces the structure by way of the dynastic tradition of pomp at the Ptolemaic court, a tradition best known as evoked in Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* – 'the barge she sat in', etc. – and documented in the *Peri Alexandreias* by a Rhodian called Callixenus, as quoted in Athenaeus. The pavilion would have been dismantled by the time of Callixenus, but he gives an enraptured account of its size and decoration. Wooden posts, 22 metres high, supported a fantastic canopy of tapestries, animal skins, and painted panels: a peristyle was created, with statues, paintings, and all sorts of regalia displayed between the columns, and a mass of flowers and greenery beyond. The central banqueting area could accommodate 130 couches for a 'happy few' of courtiers and royal confidantes. The verbal evocation of this magnificent marquee was sufficient to transmit its influence: Nero surely set about trumping it with elements of his Domus Aurea. So

[73] *Republicanism, Rhetoric, and Roman Political Thought. Sallust, Livy, and Tacitus.* By Daniel J. Kapust. New York, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2011. Pp. viii + 196. Hardback £55, ISBN: 978-1-107-00057-5.

[74] *The Ephemeral and the Eternal. The Pavilion of Ptolemy Philadelphos in the Court of Alexandria*. By Elena Calandra. Tripodes 13. Athens, Quaderni della Scuola Archaeologica Italiana di Atene, 2011. Pp. 191. 29 figures. Hardback €96, ISBN: 978-960-98397-8-5.

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