which is too cursory to be effective. But this was an impossible assignment. Who could adequately cover the period from the Sullan reforms to the death of Caesar in just two pages? The book contains a lot of valuable information, but it does not really provide the 'comprehensive overview of the history of both the Republic and the Empire' promised by the dust jacket.

In most chapters, institutions and structures take precedence over individuals and events, a welcome departure from the many introductions that emphasize 'great' figures and historical 'turning points'. The book is quite traditional, however, in its consistent focus on the period from the Late Republic through the High Empire. Early Rome and the Later Empire are mostly ignored. Roman law is another topic that does not receive much attention, and one can read the book from cover to cover without getting a real sense of the regional and local diversity that was such a characteristic feature of the Roman world. One topic that is perhaps overemphasized is the cultural influence, and dominance, of the Greeks. The theme appears in nearly every chapter and is itself the subject of a chapter by the editor. Emphasis on the Greeks is most evident in Swain's 'The Empire of Letters', in which pages and pages are devoted to Polemo, Philostratus and Aelius Aristides, while discussion of Sallust, Livy, Virgil, Ovid, and Tacitus is confined to two paragraphs. The imbalance in this chapter is patent. No one disputes the significance of Greek culture within the Roman world, but in this book it is sometimes inflated out of proportion.

In general, though, the *Cambridge Illustrated History of the Roman World* offers an excellent introduction to the subject. The picture of the Roman world that emerges from this volume is dynamic and often arresting, and will surely stimulate interest in the subject. The book is particularly successful as an *illustrated* history. Throughout the book, text and image are subtly integrated in a manner that is always suggestive, never pedantic. Illustrations are not numbered, and the reader is never directed to consult a specific image. Instead, carefully placed illustrations, along with frequent quotations from ancient authors located in the margins, invite the reader to reflect on the material and to make connections. It is an ideal format for arousing curiosity and for encouraging independent thinking. The book can be recommended without hesitation, then, to its target readership of students and 'general readers'.

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THE WISEMAN EFFECT

D. Braund, C. Gill (edd.): *Myth, History and Culture in Republican Rome. Studies in Honour of T. P. Wiseman*. Pp. x + 358, maps, ills. Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2003. Cased, £40. ISBN: 0-85989-662-5.

The editors of this handsome volume of papers from the conference held in 2000 to honour Peter Wiseman's sixtieth birthday are well aware of the potential dangers of the *Festschrift*, and have succeeded admirably in producing what can best be regarded as a themed miscellany. These studies are diverse in their subject matter, but nevertheless combine to provide a fascinating and enriching account of the subject described in the title. The theme itself (myth, history, culture) and the diversity of Wiseman's own work both contribute to the volume's success: Roman myth, emerging from scholarly neglect, has come into the light in a climate where totalizing

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narratives have given way to an awareness of the value of close reading and the specific contexts of mythical moments and forms of expression. Myth is no longer seen as a discourse independent of or having priority over historical or literary impulses, and this volume is a tribute to Wiseman's own pivotal rôle in dismantling barriers to more creative juxtapositions of different kinds of texts: literary, historical, visual, and archaeological. The editors' introduction makes a clear-sighted evaluation of the character of Wiseman's own writings, and on that basis is able to provide an equally cogent account of how the topics chosen by the distinguished contributors build on the different potentials which Wiseman's studies have helped open up, and the range of different fields in which his influence can be felt: materialist historical reconstruction no less than *belles lettres*. There is no artificially deferential quality to these tributes: each scholar presents their own encounter with Wiseman (in some, naturally, he is more prominent in the details than in others), and at the same time succeeds in producing a stimulating vision of their particular topic. Some topics are more ambitious in scope than others: Purcell, for example, beginning the volume, is a dense and remarkably wide-ranging analysis of Roman historical consciousness which ought to make any reader rethink their understanding of Roman historiography at a profound level; a hard act to follow, but I would not suggest that less demanding or more narrowly focused contributions are less worthwhile: all demonstrate their authors in characteristically fine form.

The editors' introduction summarizes each of the papers: I will merely give a swift indication of the authors and contents. Purcell, 'Becoming Historical: The Roman Case' argues (on the back of a simply enormous bibliography) for a reshaping of paradigms in the understanding of how history worked at Rome (as part of the wider Mediterranean world), and of how that history should be written; Coarelli, 'Remoria' revisits Wiseman's *Remus* (Cambridge, 1995) and makes a detailed examination of how mythical material can be assimilated with archaeological and anecdotal evidence of cult practices; Crawford, 'Land and People in Republican Italy' suggests new ways of looking at the archaeological evidence for settlement and ethnic groups in the Appennines in the archaic period; Cornell, 'Coriolanus: Myth, History and Performance' examines the Coriolanus myth from a variety of perspectives, effectively harmonizing ancient and modern approaches to historical myth and stressing the value of a range of different kinds of evidence; Fantham, 'Pacuvius: Melodrama, Reversals and Recognitions' does an admirable job of clarifying what is likely to be of interest to students of later Roman literature, Pacuvius' main emotive thrust; Zetzel, 'Plato with Pillows: Cicero on the Uses of Greek Culture' meditates on some small examples of a central theme in Cicero's thought; Treggiari, 'Ancestral Virtues and Vices: Cicero on Nature, Nurture and Presentation' breaks down into useful categories (e.g. *imitatio*, *exempla*, *dignus*) evidence taken mainly from speeches of Cicero's vision of the relationship of individuals to the (mostly hereditary) forces which shaped their morality; Cairns, 'Catullus in and about Bithynia: Poems 68, 10, 28 and 47' gives a detailed reading of certain contextual elements in these poems with the aim of stressing the necessity for an understanding of the historical dimensions to fundamental poetic components. A similar approach is found in Woodman, 'Poems to Historians: Catullus 1 and Horace *Odes* 2.1', where historiography and poetry are refreshingly taken as part of one continuous discourse unconscious of modern generic divisions. These two chapters are particularly expressive of the influence of Wiseman's earlier work. Torelli, 'The Frescoes of the Great Hall of the Villa at Boscoreale: Iconography and Politics' is a masterful study which reads the Hall as an expression of provincial upward mobility; Gruen, 'Cleopatra in Rome: Facts and

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Fantasies' revisits the presence of Cleopatra as a guest of Caesar's in Rome, drawing on both mythography and established patterns of Hellenistic royal diplomacy. Galinsky, 'Greek and Roman Drama and the *Aeneid*' considers the relationship between theatre, poetry, and ideology, as well as their respective scholarly orthodoxies, and provides a compelling reading of Virgil as a dramatizer of a number of pressing ideological motifs; Champlin, 'Agamemnon at Rome: Roman Dynasts and Greek Heroes' takes us from Pompey to Nero and examines the meaning of heroic rôle models for Roman dynasts, beginning with the paradoxical identification of Pompey with Agamemnon. The volume continues with an appreciation of Wiseman by Fantham, an autobiographical note by Wiseman himself, and his bibliography (up to 2002), and concludes with an *index locorum* and general index.

Wiseman's short essay gives a thought-provoking insight into how what at the time seemed a series of serendipitous encounters with a range of recherché historical problems could amount, over a lifetime of energetic publication, to something like a personal methodological style capable, as in this volume, of producing work which demonstrates the influence of that style. Thought-provoking above all, of course, because methodology and theory are subjects which Wiseman's own work rarely directly addresses. There is no doubt, however, that there are concrete theoretical insights which, perhaps in the light of the wider theoretical evolution of classics and ancient history, can be derived from this collection. Most striking is the interdisciplinarity of the contributions; this itself rests upon a repudiation of notions of a hierarchy of texts, and a simultaneous freedom with the concept of history itself. Ancient history emerges from this volume as a dynamic and stimulating discipline combining formidable technical expertise with critical self-awareness. If we do not admit a Wiseman method, we can at least admire the Wiseman effect: this volume amply signals the potential excitement of Republican history. Editors and contributors alike have done a splendid job in drawing out the unity of the material while providing many moments of illumination in hitherto obscure details of far-flung material. The volume really does transcend the expected limits of its genre, and brings the Republic to life with a vigour which is the highest tribute to its honorand.

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POPULAR DECISION-MAKING

R. MORSTEIN-MARX: *Mass Oratory and Political Power in the Late Roman Republic*. Pp. xiv + 313, maps, ills. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. Cased, £50, US$75. ISBN: 0-521-82327-7.

M.-M. offers here a distinctive approach to the issue of the democratic element in the Late Republic. His focus is mainly on the process of popular decision making; in the course of his exploration of this problem he also provides some cogent observations on the composition and outlook of the contional audience, and on particular episodes of contional oratory.

M.-M.'s central thesis is that the *contio* is less a site of genuine deliberation than of the articulation and performance of consensus and the subsequent bestowal of political power. The *contio* is one of the opportunities within the Roman political system for the people to participate and express their assent to the measures being

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