location, type of land, and fertility. This important publication provides further documentation of the significant diversity that existed within ancient Egypt and offers welcome balance to the dominance of middle Egypt in modern reconstructions, owing to the preponderance of surviving evidence from this area.

The final work in this review is Boris Chrubasik and Daniel King's edited volume on the interaction between Hellenism and local communities between 400 BCE and 250 CE.[13] The book includes a short introduction by the editors and eight chapters that follow three general axes. The first is institutions and political practices, exploring the interaction between Greek and local traditions as regards kingship (the Seleucid Empire), the *polis* and public practices (Babylon, Palmyra, Dura), and associations (Egypt); the second is the interaction between different cultural traditions in specific texts or corpora; and the third is the exploration of the impact of Greek culture and Hellenization on whole regions (Asia Minor, Caria, Judaea). Individual chapters present fascinating evidence and raise stimulating questions, such as the uses of Greek medical texts in an Egyptian temple context, or the political motivations for the use of Greek and Greek practices by Anatolian communities before Alexander. Nevertheless, it is rather disappointing that most chapters fail to define Hellenism and Hellenization and do not engage with the fruitful debates on these issues that have emerged over the last twenty years. What could have been achieved is shown by Chrubasik's chapter, which explores fruitfully the variety of processes involved in Hellenization by comparing Hecatomnid Caria and Hellenistic Judaea. Finally, the very extended temporal framework adopted raises some important questions which should be addressed: if we need to avoid the idea that each period is characterized by a single and distinct form of cultural interaction, should we not also observe that certain important events and developments affected the processes of interaction in significantly new ways?

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Roman History

The first time I visited Pompeii, I was walking along one of its iconic paved streets when another visitor in front of me stumbled over a rough patch of pavement. Looking down resentfully, she turned to her friend and said in an irritated tone, 'Look at this! They really need to do something about these roads…'. If that sore-toed tourist had found Eric Poehler's new book, *The Traffic Systems of Pompeii*, in the Pompeian gift shop, she would have been much illuminated.[1] This long-gestated project represents an exciting new type of scholarship on the ancient world, using evidence gleaned from the

[13] *Hellenism and the Local Communities of the Eastern Mediterranean 400 BCE–250 CE*. Edited by Boris Chrubasik and Daniel King. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2017. Pp. xxii + 232. 2 maps, 4 figures, 1 table. Hardback £60, ISBN: 978-0-19-880566-3.

[1] *The Traffic Systems of Pompeii*. By Eric E. Poehler. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2018. Pp. xvi + 276. 62 illustrations. Hardback £61, ISBN: 978-0-19-061467-6.

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scratched and rutted roads of Pompeii and other urban sites across the empire to expose both how ancient traffic worked and the constantly evolving negotiations between residents and government over its control.

After an introduction that, among other things, lays out common myths about ancient traffic ripe for debunking, Poehler surveys how Pompeii's street grid developed from the archaic period through to the post-earthquake alterations. Here, by combining traditional approaches to street alignments and block shapes with the concrete results of stratigraphic excavation, he rejects the consensus, linear model of Pompeii's development. The next three chapters cover the archaeological detail of street surfaces (made alternately of beaten ash, cobbles, lava stone, and debris), their architecture (paving, kerb, stepping, and guard stones, which change in frequency and relationship by period and region), and the extant traces of traffic that both of the above contain, which enable the reconstruction that follows. Chapter 6, the core of the book, treats the eponymous traffic system itself. Pompeian drivers, we learn, drove on the right-hand side of the street or, if they could get away with it, the centre. A changing one-way street system allows Poehler to hypothesize four periods of distinct governance in Pompeian traffic. While the intricacy of describing road routing can at times feel rather pedestrian (sorry) – indeed Chapter 5 is unapologetically designed as a technical field handbook – what comes next in Chapter 7 is a highlight. Based on the nature of Roman schematic maps, public inscriptions of itineraries, and paintings depicting ancient knowledge transfer, Poehler has composed a fictional day-in-the-life account of a Pompeian mule-driver, bringing to life much of the previous material, including how the man in the street would have negotiated various traffic incidents (a driving test for the ancient muleteer, as it were), and how the 'rules' would have trickled down to him in the first place. This proves a wonderful demonstration of how careful archaeological work like Poehler's has the capacity to flood our imagining of the ancient world with vibrant colour. Chapter 8 widens its lens to the Roman Empire more widely and demonstrates the range of traffic solutions and experiments adopted elsewhere. What emerges is an elegant system of flexible regulation. Simple systems grew more complex as the needs of the city's users diversified and deepened, systems that were common to many other early imperial urban areas, but were not apparently adopted or adapted by later cities. To have reconstructed this new texture of antiquity from scratches on the stones of a city that can only appear to us as 'an unfinished painting on a reused canvas' (251) is an impressive achievement.

One of the distinctive feature of Pompeii's roads were the endless shops that lined them, and Poehler's book can be read fruitfully alongside that of his friend and long-term collaborator Steven Ellis, *The Roman Retail Revolution* (the two are warmly mentioned in each other's acknowledgements, and repeatedly referenced in mutual footnotes).[2] Like that of Poehler, Ellis' book is rooted in detailed work on Pompeii (especially his excavations of insulae VIII.7 and I.1) but enhanced by extensive field survey at over a hundred other urban settlements throughout the empire, from Volubilis to Dura-Europos, covering several thousand shops. Ellis' interest is

[2] *The Roman Retail Revolution. The Socio-Economic World of the Taberna*. By Steven J. R. Ellis. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2018. Pp. xxi + 298. 84 illustrations, 2 tables. Hardback £65, ISBN: 978-0-19-876993-4.

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the history of retailing in the Roman world, in particular point-of-sale retailing of food and drink. The first half of the book covers introductory material. We begin with questions of practical archaeological methodology, such as how one can identify bars and shops on the ground (some issues here, like that of mediating between philology and archaeology, echo similar problems addressed by Poehler) before widening the lens to socio-economic questions of motivation, location, and investment: who opened bars and shops, where did they do so, and why? The results – the predominance of retail outlets on street fronts, their affiliation with both non-elite and elite residences, and the apparent economic irrationality of some outlets – have important consequences for our view of larger issues such as ancient attitudes to trade. Indeed, Ellis' discussion of the socio-political advantages to elite patrons of their freedmen's retail ventures and the networks to which they served as hubs, as well as the consequences therein for elite/non-elite power dynamics, is one of this book's most intriguing sections.

The second half of the book is a chronological survey from the seventh century BC to the fifth century AD (though focused on 200 BC to 200 AD) that walks us through what Ellis considers the three Roman retail 'revolutions', or explosions in the numbers of retail outlets. The first, in the second century BC, can be tied to the influx of wealth, persons, and culture that impacted Roman society in so many ways as the result of Roman conquest in the east. The second, as part of the urban boom of the early Empire, also saw increasing specialization, and the replacement of earlier workshops for both production and retailing with *tabernae* that dealt only in the latter. It is at this point that we get the emergence of specific food and drink outlets (and the boom of the distinctive masonry sales counter that remains one of the most distinctive images of Pompeii, and graces the cover of Ellis' book). This specialization has consequences for our thinking about both the Roman economy, since specialization indicates confidence in regular supply and demand, and the Roman cityscape, as the look and feel of Roman streets evolved. The third revolution, from the Flavian period into the early second century AD, saw much greater homogenization, as the many shapes and sizes of retail outlets of the earlier periods were gradually replaced by a one-size-fits-all model across the whole empire (one-room shops, shuttered thresholds, right-sided entry). A final chapter fills in some of the sights, sounds, and tastes one might have missed so far – the extraordinarily varied menus enjoyed at both high- and low-end establishments, and the lifestyles of those who frequented them.

Poehler and Ellis are experts in their fields, and both occasionally assume archaeological knowledge or veer into a highly technical tone that may leave non-expert readers feeling slightly adrift. Poehler's book could also do with the frequent high-quality colour images that Ellis' provides (maps without road names are of little help in tracing routes along Roman roads...). But any reader of either should bear such minor difficulties, because both represent not just fascinating windows into the textured daily reality of ancient life that so often alludes us, but also crucial contributions to bigger, and pressing, issues of Roman urbanism and economics.

Beyond this Pompeian double act, this issue's batch of books has a focus on unusual biography. We can consider first two new contributions to the Women in Antiquity series edited by Ronnie Ancona and Sarah B. Pomery and published by Oxford University Press. The first, *Sabina Augusta* by T. Corey Brennan, gathers all the evidence for the

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largely neglected wife of one of Rome's more ambiguous emperors, Hadrian.[3] Seeking to complement the thin and fairly pejorative picture provided by later literary sources, Brennan gathers the material evidence, primarily epigraphic and numismatic. Here there is a surprisingly large amount to work with, in no small part because Sabina was the first empress to have her own ongoing coinage. Indeed, we even have Sabina's own autograph (or, perhaps better, graffito) on the lower left leg of the statue of Memnon in Thebes. Brennan is clear that, rather than a traditional biography, he offers an 'extended meditation' on the sources that 'illustrates the development of Sabina's partnership in Hadrian's principate' (xxiii). The 'extended meditation' gives at times a rather unfocused feel, and it certainly takes a while to get to Sabina – we begin with an initial survey of the role of the 'empress' in Rome from the Late Republic (covering the various honours granted to Livia at home and abroad, the regular appearance of living imperial women on coins that began with Agrippina the Younger, and the systematic approach to deification of the Flavians) and a further chapter on the prominence of empresses in the early stages of the Nerva-Antonine dynasty. A brief chapter on Sabina's personal history is then followed by two more focused instead on her husband's personality and relationships. It is thus only halfway through the book that the picture of partnership starts to emerge, as we turn to the later travels of this wandering ruler, on which his wife joined him. It is with the so-called third journey (from 128 CE) in particular that Sabina's public role is transformed. In the first decade of Hadrian's rule, Sabina appears on only one isolated (and provincial) coin, but from that date we have a whole run of them, as well as a plethora of public honours and civic commemorations. It is no coincidence, Brennan argues, that it is also in 128 that Sabina was awarded the title 'Augusta', the same point at which Hadrian finally accepted the title 'Pater Patriae'. Rather than the prickly personal relationship painted by the literary sources, Brennan instead posits a carefully planned and consolidated media campaign that deliberately used the empress initially only to symbolize continuity with the Ulpian line, but later thrust her into the spotlight in a key period of imperial policy. The nature of the available evidence, and some slightly opaque structural choices, can make this at times a rather repetitive and disjointed read. But those same features mean that what we get in practice is not just a treatise on Sabina but a fresh take on neglected aspects of Hadrian's reign using Sabina as a focusing lens.

The second work in the same series, by Duane W. Roller, author of a book on Cleopatra VII (of Elizabeth Taylor fame) that was an early contribution to this series, is more of a collective biography, surveying lesser-known women of the Augustan period.[4] After a survey of possible role models, from Homer's Penelope, through the Persian satraps, the Hekatomnids in Karia, and the Hellenistic kingdoms up to Cleopatra VII, Roller, starting with the latter's daughter, Cleopatra Selene, introduces us to the brief days in the political sun of Glaphyra of Cappadocia, Salome of Judaea, Dynamis of Bosporos, Pythodoris of Pontos, Aba of Olbe, and Mousa of Parthia. Via

[3] *Sabina Augusta. An Imperial Journey*. By T. Corey Brennan. Women in Antiquity. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2018. Pp. xxiv + 302. 19 illustrations. Hardback £61, ISBN: 978-0-19-025099-7.

[4] *Cleopatra's Daughter and Other Royal Women of the Augustan Era*. By Duane W. Roller. Women in Antiquity. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2018. Pp. xi + 207. Hardback £25.49, ISBN: 978-0-19-061882-7.

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literary, epigraphic, and numismatic evidence, he teases out the greater or lesser prominence that each of these women achieved beyond their husbands, fathers, and brothers. His intriguing thesis is that these women offered greater political stability than their menfolk, who were more prone to unexpected fatality. Each biography is well sketched, and approaching local regional history through the lens of these women is an exciting innovation. Roller does particularly well to link these mini-*bioi* together, with most protagonists appearing as background characters in the previous biography. Moreover, consideration of this group of women together pays unexpected dividends, as the shared legacy of Augustus' ally-turned-nemesis Antony in these women's prominence, and the repeated role of Augustus' wife, Livia, as interlocutor, connector, and even patroness, emerge more and more clearly with each passing chapter. By considering these women together, Roller captures a coherent snapshot of a transitional period between the famed Hellenistic queens beforehand and the powerful imperial women to come.

However, the problems of evidence with which Brennan also wrestles are even more obvious here. Bringing these women out of the shadows is a worthy goal. But, while the ever-present problem with such history – that literary references to women may well tell us less about them and more about the men they are associated with – is acknowledged, the severe problems it causes for an enterprise such as this are not, I think, fully processed. The book is at its best when dealing with material evidence; with the (very limited) literary evidence, Roller at times squeezes the evidence rather harder than it can bear (in particular when he surmises impact, influence, or consequence that these women might have had) or else has a tendency to ascribe undue credit to familiar pejorative tropes about powerful female protagonists. In both Brennan's and Roller's books, in practice, we spend a lot of time dealing with the men around these women, and I wonder how much of the ancient authors' patriarchal interest we are really bypassing. Still, even making the attempt is both necessary and worthy, and if the picture that emerges in *Cleopatra's Daughter* is one of women being moved, married, and manipulated in the service of the provincial machinations of men themselves being pushed and pulled by puppeteers in the imperial house at Rome, we are probably not far from the truth.

Similarly biographical in some ways is Daniele Miano's *Fortuna*.[5] Showcasing a new methodological approach to Roman religion that explores the complex relationships between concepts and deities in Roman polytheism, Miano offers a case study of one of Rome's most long-lasting yet difficult-to-pin-down goddesses. Situating his study in contrast to past work on Roman religion that has either sought to fit deities to one-dimensional interpretations, reduced deities to static powers and functions, or even turned its attention away from gods altogether, Miano argues instead for fundamental change and inconsistency in Roman religion. Put another way, since concepts have multiple meanings because they can be redefined by people, so conceptual deities, such as Fortuna, are also capable of being different things to different worshippers. It was precisely that flexibility, Miano believes, that meant certain deities were of

[5] *Fortuna. Deity and Concept in Archaic and Republican Italy*. By Daniele Miano. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2018. Pp. xiv + 242. 15 b/w illustrations, 3 maps. Hardback £60, ISBN: 978-0-19-878656-6.

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continuing relevance, because they found new purpose (or better, worshippers found new purposes for them) in changing circumstances.

On this foundation, Miano proceeds with a geographical and chronological survey of the detailed and multifarious evidence for Fortuna. An initial chapter considers the multiplicity of meanings given to Fortuna at her most prestigious site of worship, the Italian town of Praeneste. The next extends our view to Italy more widely, and finds a further range of attitudes towards this goddess in Latium, Campania, and elsewhere. But thematic continuities also start to emerge here, such as the association of Fortuna with borders, or the capacity of this concept deity to bear negative as well as positive connotations. The next three chapters proceed chronologically. First, Miano considers the likelihood of temples of Fortuna in archaic Rome, specifically at the Forum Boarium, of Fors Fortuna, and of Fors Muliebris, concluding that Fortuna was worshipped at Rome from the monarchical period. Next comes Republican Rome, where we see how worship of a plethora of Fortunas allowed the construction and renegotiation of further meanings for the goddess (my personal favourite being Fortuna Barbata, whose identity and worship alas lies hidden behind later Christian mockery). Particularly interesting here is the apparent concentration of plebeian aristocrats dedicating either temples or vows to Fortuna. Third, Miano considers the extent to which Fortuna can be considered a goddess of or for women (about which he is sceptical), as well as the relationship of the Late Republican dynasts with Fortuna. Though from the first century there is certainly a proclivity for seeing *fortuna* as the attribute of successful individuals, Miano rejects the idea that Sulla or Caesar treated Fortuna as a personal tutelary goddess (as Hellenistic monarchs had done). Perhaps Pompey, as the most prominent plebeian among these high-flyers, did do so, but our evidence here teases rather than satisfies. The penultimate chapter considers the translation of the goddess – that is, her relationship with the Greek goddess Τύχη. Rather than a straightforward linguistic equivalence, Miano finds a more complex and changeable relationship. A final chapter turns to the negative associations of Fortuna encountered from time to time in earlier chapters, which Miano takes as useful evidence of 'the inextricable symbiosis of goddess and concept'. Rather than seeing a Hellenic corruption of the Italian goddess, he argues instead that these negative meanings depend on the specifics of the particular socio-political contexts in which they are found, in particular the civil wars of the mid-first century BC.

Throughout, Miano has gathered, weighted, and discussed a vast amount of literary and material evidence. If the survey approach to the evidence is at times a little dry, he is nonetheless an authoritative guide, and his restraint in not forcing conclusions onto the evidence that it cannot support – as well as identifying where traditional readings rest on weak support (usually passages of Cicero taken out of context) – means that his central hypothesis concerning the fundamental *usability* of Roman religion should carry weight in future scholarship.

Biographies of place in antiquity have become increasingly common, to which scholarly corpus can now be added Richard Hingley's new biography of Roman London.[6]

[6] *Londinium. A Biography. Roman London from its Origins to the Fifth Century*. By Richard Hingley, with illustrations by Christina Unwin. London, Bloomsbury Academic, 2018. Pp. xv + 383. 75 b/w illustrations. Hardback £75, ISBN: 978-1-3500-4730-3; paperback £22.50, ISBN:

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Hingley takes on the challenge of trying to synthesize the vast and ever-changing archaeological work on Roman London, the fragmented nature of which means that only the already initiated can hope to understand one of the most excavated of Roman cities. He does not aim for comprehensivity (much material is anyway unpublished), but rather seeks to gather the most important information relating to Londinium's economy, industry, trade, status, and urban infrastructure. Consciously inspired by the work of Ralph Merrifield,[7] Hingley is interested in what the archaeological record can tell us about power, status, gender, and identity in our capital's Roman past. It is therefore the ritual and religious context that emerge most powerfully from *Londinium*. Also noticeable is the attention given not just to landscape but to waterscape. Taken together, these interests mean that the life of London we receive here is one interested in the construction of place, and how it was filled with living people.

The biography proceeds chronologically, beginning with the ritual significance of the Thames waterways in the pre-Roman Iron Age, which Hingley argues may well have impacted the nature of the Roman conquest and their earliest settlement. Chapter 2 proceeds to Londinium's early years as a rapidly expanding, ethnically diverse trading port, based around Cornhill, between 45 and 60 AD. That thriving settlement was destroyed by Boudica in 60 AD (though many of the inhabitants may have been able to escape), and was then rebuilt beyond its original boundaries in the following decade as the city grew in administrative and strategic importance, as Hingley traces in the next two brief chapters. Chapter 5 treats the significant development of the city between 70 and 120 AD, and the growth in elite residences and amenities – and concomitant urban inequality – that accompanied it. Once again, however, disaster struck the city, and Chapter 6 details the curious fires during Hadrian's reign in the 120s and 130s, which only affected the western and central areas of the city (and only private residences there), after which a military unit took up residence. The next two chapters moves us into London's heyday through the rest of the second-century 'Golden Age', including the increasing pressure on space in the city's centre (*plus ça change*), and on into the relatively stable third century (though this may have seen a drop in the residential population and in the importance of the port). Chapter 9 considers Londinium's lasting importance through the fourth and fifth centuries, allowing for some challenge to traditional narratives of decline.

There is much exciting content here (most recently, of course, the writing tablets discovered at the Bloomberg site) and the book is undoubtedly good to dip into, as well as being the most up-to-date way in to a topic of very wide interest. Hingley is perhaps to be commended most for simply being willing to take on a no-win topic. The sheer difficulty of ingesting and combining the information available in so many different formats, the inevitability of the results being immediately outdated, and the resistance that such overviews often meet from site specialists, all mean that this is a brave undertaking. But it is one that performs a public as well as a scholarly service, and it is to be hoped that the example is copied more widely.

978-1-3500-4729-7. See too the same author's earlier *Hadrian's Wall. A Life* (Oxford, 2012), though this is much more interested in reception than the current work.

[7] R. Merrifield, *London. City of the Romans* (London, 1983).

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Similar, if not described explicitly as biography, is another detailed geographical study, Carolynn E. Roncaglia's *Northern Italy in the Roman World*.[8] Roncaglia aims to provide a history for the region the Romans called Cisalpine Gaul. In providing such a detailed *longue durée* local study, she hopes to come at 'Romanization' from a different angle, namely how Roman conquest changed the human and natural landscape of the areas conquered. It is thus the interaction of Roman political history with long-term local tendencies that is Roncaglia's main interest. As a secondary consequence, her study sheds light on the creation and concept of Roman Italy (and could thus be read profitably alongside Carlà-Uhink's study of the latter, reviewed in the last issue[9]).

The book is divided into three sections. The first considers the creation of the region. Chapter 1 looks at the pre-Roman period from the Bronze Age to the fourth century BC, in which there was a diverse selection of tribal groups with limited political, cultural, or economic ties. It was in the Iron Age, and the tenth and ninth centuries BC in particular, that the area took the form that the Romans coveted and ultimately annexed. The second chapter considers that period of conquest from the third to the second centuries BC, as the Romans, in a series of – for them unusually long-lasting and invasive – campaigns, claimed this rich but vulnerable (to Gallic threats in particular) territory. Chapter 3 turns to the consequences of conquest, with a focus on what the Venetic, Lepontic, and Etruscan epigraphic records can tell us about citizenship and group and individual identity. Part II, the core of the book, investigates Roman rule and its impact in more detail. Chapter 4 considers the structures of (the minimal) Roman government in the region, with a particular focus on changes implemented under the Antonines in the second century AD. Chapter 5 is then a case study of the town of Comum, whose most famous sons, the two Plinys, give us much of our information about her. Chapters 6 and 7 turn to the circulation of people and goods, first within Italy (the Tanaro valley was most famous for its textiles, with Rome of course the central consumer) and then in the empire more widely (with Aquileia serving as a key hub of imperial trade networks). The short Part III contains one chapter considering the fate of northern Italy from the third century on, when it passed out of Roman hands into Ostrogothic control, and Cisalpine Gaul ceased to exist as a separate and defined region.

This local approach to history, inspired of course by the work of both Fernand Braudel and the collaboration of Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell, is both fashionable and highly worthwhile.[10] In practice, though, this is a much slimmer book than its models, and the large chronological span means that we move at great pace through the material, at times with the evidence behind the survey relegated to the endnotes rather than debated in detail in the text (in particular in the earlier chapters). Nevertheless, Roncaglia's argument that the history *of* a region and the history *in* a region must be studied together is well made. Considering this region's changes over

[8] *Northern Italy in the Roman World. From the Bronze Age to Late Antiquity*. By Carolynn E. Roncaglia. Baltimore, MD, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2018. Pp. xxi + 232. 10 b/w illustrations, 4 maps. Hardback £33.50, ISBN: 978-1-4214-2519-1.

[9] F. Carlà-Uhink, *The 'Birth' of Italy. The Institutionalization of Italy as a Region, 3rd–1st Century BC* (Berlin and Boston, MA, 2017).

[10] F. Braudel, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II* (London, 1972); P. Horden and N. Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea. A Study of Mediterranean History* (Oxford, 2000).

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time certainly helps to put Rome's impact in perspective, and all such 'outside' approaches to Roman history are to be welcomed.

Roncaglia ends her survey with the devastating wars in northern Italy between the Ostrogoths and the Eastern Roman Empire, led by Justinian. It is precisely those western campaigns of reconquest that form the basis of Peter Heather's latest romp through late antique military and political history.[11] After an initial survey of the state of play at Justinian's accession from Constantine's victory at the Milvian Bridge in 312 AD, in which Heather considers the nature of the Byzantine world that Justinian inherited, we proceed through Justinian's reign at home and abroad. Heather treats in turn Justinian's accession, the domestic crises (including the Nika riot) that, he argues, prompted the gamble of the western front (rather than any long-term, systematic policy of reconquest), the initial successes of the campaign in North Africa and then in Italy, Justinian's legal and theological initiatives, the return of the Persian threat, and fightbacks in both the new African and Italian territories. In closing, Heather turns directly to his underlying question – whether the great man of this men-and-movements historiography deserves his epithet. The author seeks to defend Justinian from the charge that his reign's overstretching of the Eastern Empire's resources catalysed the latter's struggles in the coming years.

This book combines superb knowledge of the sources for the period with an eye for entertaining detail and a capacity to make extensive campaigns and the twists and turns of military alliances easily comprehensible. It is a highly readable work, and the picture that emerges of Justinian's reconquest as an evolving, context-contingent reaction to events, rather than a systematic policy, is very convincing. The project as a whole is based, however, on a series of more or less explicit assumptions. First, Heather is of course highly reliant on Procopius and, while he is perfectly prepared to be critical of particular passages, the entire project of writing a narrative history of Justinian means a broadly optimistic approach must be taken towards the main narrative source for his reign (indeed, the same is true of narrative history of any Roman emperor). Second, Heather seems aware that the kind of military history on which he here embarks is in many ways out of fashion in a scholarly world more interested in the social and cultural history of late antiquity. Much of the early part of the book thus stands as an apology for this entire approach. Part of that defence involves emphasizing that military imagery and victory were at the core of what it meant to be a Roman *imperator*. Heather's primary interest in the military aspects of imperial rule was, he implies, the dominant interest of the Romans too. He is not wrong that military ideology was at the root of the idea of the emperor. Equally, emperors short of wars to fight had for centuries before Justinian developed alternative strategies of self-representation, and the day-to-day existence of emperors was filled as much with administrative and cultural as with military matters. It is therefore not true to say that 'often the *only* real function of premodern government was making war' (43). My third quibble would be that Heather's defence of Justinian's policy requires a limited view of causation. While he shows convincingly that the wars of reconquest did not directly cause the troubles to

[11] *Rome Resurgent. War and Empire in the Age of Justinian*. By Peter Heather. New York, Oxford University Press, 2018. Ancient Warfare and Civilization. Pp. vii + 393. 7 b/w line art, 15 halftones. Hardback £22.99, ISBN: 978-0-19-936274-5.

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come, a more detailed analysis of the latter would be required to analyse the indirect role played by this swashbuckling sixth-century emperor.

Last, but certainly not least, is a new collection, *The Science of Roman History*, edited by Walter Scheidel.[12] Seven essays and an introduction by the editor seek to highlight the value of modern science to Roman history. A hugely useful summary of climatic studies on data from tree rings, ice cores, stalactites, sedimentary layers, and other natural archives by Kyle Harper and Michael McCormick tentatively indicates that the rise, flourishing, and fall of Rome may all have depended on the relative relationships of water, temperature, and stability – from the so-called 'Roman Climate Optimum' of 200 BC to 150 AD (25), to the recently identified Late Antique Little Ice Age (26). Marijke van der Veen's essay surveys what can be achieved by an archaeobotanical approach in the study of Roman food production, distribution and trade, preparation, consumption, and disposal. Such research gives us not just technical detail about ancient plants, but insight into human–plant relationships – that is, the daily realities of those ancient people whose lives revolved around these plants. Michael MacKinnon's essay on zooarchaeology involves a similar study of ancient animals and their role in daily life. He demonstrates a range of ways in which the study of ancient animal bones can help with problems of dating, placement, activity, identity, and explanation. The co-authored essay of Alessandra Sperduti, Luca Bondioli, Oliver E. Craig, Tracy Prowse, and Peter Garnsey on human bones and teeth offers a lengthy critique of past attempts to use human skeletal and dental data in producing sex, age-at-death, demographic, dietary, ethnic, and migration estimations, and a mission statement of how such work should be better done in future. Rebecca Gowland and Lauren Walther's study of human growth and stature similarly identifies problems in past attempts to use skeletal data to perform average height calculations in antiquity, and offers a new methodology for future calculations. Finally, Noreen Tuross and Michael G. Campana's essay on ancient DNA, and Roy J. King and Peter A. Underhill's comparable one on modern DNA, together explore the means by which we can study ancient populations, as well as their complicated and controversial relationships with their modern equivalents.

At times highly technical and thus not the easiest read, this nevertheless is a volume not just useful but capable of simultaneous entertainment and inspiration. As is noted in Scheidel's introduction, scientific enterprises such as these require skillsets possessed by no one scholar (8). Given the impossibility of competency in all these fields, a state-of-the-question collection such as this serves as a vital reference work for Roman historians, who cannot afford not to be cognisant of these fast-paced developments. And the pages of at-times-incomprehensible scientific jargon can suddenly be made worth by it by nuggets of colourful detail (English apples, for example, are genetically related not to European crab apples, but to the apples of Kyrgzstan and northwest China [64–5]) or unexpected consequences (the suggestion from skeletal diet that the differing diets of girls of higher and lower status produced variation in the age at which puberty began, potentially explaining a similar differentiation in their average

[12] *The Science of Roman History. Biology, Climate, and the Future of the Past*. Edited by Walter Scheidel. Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 2018. Pp. xiii + 258. 23 b/w illustrations, 7 tables, 3 maps. Hardback £27, ISBN: 978-1-691-16256-0.

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age at marriage [188–9]). Most importantly, the essays are united in looking forwards as well as backwards, not only summarizing the progress made in what are relatively new fields, but giving their own view on how this new science should be used in scholarship on Roman history in future. This is therefore an exercise in not just review but reflection, and even in blue-sky thinking about what is possible in our discipline, the directions we want or need to go, and how exactly we will need to work to get there. Interestingly, almost all the contributors independently highlight the study of infancy and early childhood as potentially the area in which the most productive work can be done. And coincidentally, just such a book has arrived as if summoned, but alas too late for inclusion in this review. To be continued...

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Art and Archaeology

Change is what keeps the study of classical art and archaeology in business. The stories that we tell of ancient material culture – about form, function, and modes of response – are premised on the continuities that we trace, no less than on our evidence for rift or rupture. In each case, historical analyses of *how* things developed coalesce with critical attempts to explain *why* they did so. Answers shuffle and shift. But the project of describing and interpreting change remains constant.

In a book that has been twenty years in the making, Robin Osborne tackles this theme of transformation head-on ('it is not change itself but patterns of change that demand explanation' [207]).[1] The topic is Attic vase-painting between the late sixth and mid-fifth centuries BC, more specifically 'the significant change in subject matter that accompanies the change from black-figure to red-figure' (13). Where classicists have tended to privilege change in representational form over those of represented content, Osborne proposes an alternative framework: 'The big claim in relation to art history is that style and subject matter cannot be treated separately' (249; see also 13, 22, 26–36).

The essential argument here is twofold. On the one hand, the book proposes that fifth-century Athens witnessed a 'transformation in how the world is seen' (147): this is manifested not just in the ways that artists came to depict between 520 and 440 BC, but also in their choices of the subjects depicted. On the other hand, and 'in a way that complements and reinforces' a previous monograph (xvii),[2] Osborne suggests that vase-painting supplies our best historical evidence for that cultural, political, and social change: 'pots...offer a much better glimpse of the way Athenians, and I maintain Greeks more generally, viewed the world than any text can do' (xix).

[1] *The Transformation of Athens. Painted Pottery and the Creation of Classical Greece*. By Robin Osborne. Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 2018. Pp. xx + 285. 35 colour and 67 b/w illustrations. Hardback £40, ISBN: 978-0-691-17767-0.

[2] R. Osborne, *The History Written on the Classical Greek Body* (Cambridge, 2011).

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