

reviews the complex arguments for the organization of the assemblies of the Achaean League.

The five papers in the second section are historiographical. W. begins with a chapter on Timaeus showing how the Sicilian historian sought to capture the character of the Greek west as it faced the struggle between the two barbarian powers of Rome and Carthage. The next chapter focuses on Polybius and his treatment of the more distant past; interestingly, Polybius' knowledge of earlier Greek history is fairly superficial until he reaches the fourth century, with the rise of Philip's Macedon and the foundation of his own hometown Megalopolis. A recurring example throughout the collection is Demetrius of Phalerum's prediction that Macedon would fall just as Persia had before; this, suggests W., made a great impression on Polybius, who had seen in his own lifetime the fulfilment of this prophecy. Nonetheless, as W. shows in 'The Idea of Decline in Polybius', the historian was never able to come up with a satisfactory theory of decline. Both this and the next chapter, 'Polybius' Perception of the One and the Many', necessarily involve discussion of the constitutional chapters of Book 6, but in each case setting them within a broader context. The section concludes with a chapter on the relative rôles of practical utility, moral guidance, and pleasure in the works of Hellenistic historians; Polybius was unusual in prioritizing practical utility, but this did not mean that he neglected the latter two.

The next section, on Polybius and Rome, continues some of the themes raised in earlier essays. It opens with 'Supernatural Paraphernalia in Polybius' *Histories*', an examination of *tyche* in the *Histories* and in Demetrius of Phalerum's prediction. The Roman constitution is again addressed in 'A Greek Looks at Rome: Polybius VI Revisited', which explores the mix of Greek theory and personal observation that contribute to Book 6. Polybius' eventual accommodation with Rome has led him to face accusations of 'treason' in more recent times, the subject of two papers here. W. is sympathetic to the dilemma faced by men such as Polybius and Josephus; Gaetano de Sanctis, on the other hand, was decidedly hostile to Polybius, a hostility that W. traces to de Sanctis's own resistance to the Fascist government in Italy. The chapter on de Sanctis occurs in the final section on the transmission of Polybius. One other paper is included with this, a fascinating examination of the appearance of Sheeres's translation of Polybius with its accompanying essay by Dryden in the aftermath of the Glorious Revolution of 1688.

This is an impressive and stimulating collection by a historian who is an example to all, not merely for the quality of his research but for his generosity to his colleagues—again and again he notes scholars whose work has led him to re-think his own. Cambridge University Press has done all interested in Rome and the Hellenistic world a service by bringing these essays together in a single volume.

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## THE IDEA OF ROME

F. GIORDANO (ed.): *L'idea di Roma nella cultura antica*. (Pubblicazioni dell'Università degli Studi di Salerno: Sezione Atti Convegni Miscellanee 58.) Pp. 422. Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 2001. Paper, €26.86. ISBN: 88-8114-977-X.

From Melinno to Mussolini, writers and politicians have seen fit to endow the city of

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Rome with a special destiny of world-historical significance. War, conquest, and imperial ambition, yielding a just and sovereign government over pacified land and sea, are the core themes of a discourse that found its classic articulation in writers of the Augustan age and received periodic revivals, from the Florence of Cosimo I to the fascist regimes of the twentieth century. Classical scholars, in particular in Italy and Germany, did not always resist the temptation to chime in: instead of subjecting the ancient discourse to critical analysis, they insisted on its contemporary relevance, waxing eloquent on the grandeur of the city and its people, on *Römertum* and Rome ideology. Giordano, in his lengthy and informative introduction to the collection of papers under review here, offers an interesting survey of the history of scholarship on the subject, as he crosses to and fro within a field marked by the coordinates ‘the idea of Rome’ (*Romidee*, ‘l’idea di Roma’—the notion is easier expressed in German and Italian than in English), ‘the discipline of classics’, and ‘modern European history’. A potential fourth coordinate of some significance—papisty—is by and large elided.

But *Wissenschaftsgeschichte* remains confined to the introduction. The papers proper, which have their origins in a conference held in Salerno in 1996, all focus on ancient views of Rome. The topics covered are as follows: reflections on Rome in Greek historiography (E. Gabba); the pull Rome exerted on Livius Andronicus, Naevius and Ennius (E. Flores); Lucretius on Rome and permanence (A. Grilli); musings by L. Nicastrì on Virgil, *Georg.* 2.498 (*res Romanae perituraeque regna*); religious sentiments in the Rome of Horace (G. Polara); Rome in the Latin elegists (P. Fedeli); Rome in Lucan’s *Bellum civile* (D. Gagliardi); Rome and imperial ideology in Tacitus (A. de Vivo); tradition and innovation in Pliny’s *Panegyricus* (Giordano); Rome and Europe in the speeches of Dio Chrysostom (L. Torraca); ancient views on Rome’s geographical location (F. Stok); the idea of Rome in Plutarch (I. Gallo); harmony and order in Aelius Aristides’ encomium of Rome (P. Volpe); prophecy and politics in the third and fifth books of the Sibylline oracles (M. Mazza); and Rome and its empire in Augustine’s *de civitate Dei* (S. D’Elia).

The calibre and quality of the papers vary. Quite a few (Flores, Polara, Giordano, Torraca), despite having merits of their own, contribute little to the overarching theme of the collection. Their omission could have produced an arguably more coherent, and definitely slimmer, tome—no small virtue in a volume where the writing tends towards the prolix. The same is true of those papers that offer little more than summary accounts of the primary sources (Gallo, Volpe) or are out of touch with recent developments in scholarship (Gagliardi, whose readings in the bibliography on Lucan seem to have stopped around 1980). But most of the other contributions claim attention, notably those of de Vivo and Mazza. De Vivo deftly illuminates the paradoxes that lie at the heart of Tacitus’ view of Rome and its empire, such as the fact that the scourges of imperial rule who are given a voice in his texts (Calgacus, Civilis) speak in the idiom of a specific strand of self-critical Roman historiography (Cato the Elder, Sallust) or the analogy Tacitus consistently draws between the dominion of Rome over her provincial subjects and that of the *princeps* over other members of Rome’s ruling élite. As de Vivo points out, the historiographer was well aware of the painful truth that the bonds of *servitus*, both in the provinces and in Rome itself, could only be broken at the risk of civil bloodshed. Unlike the Tacitean figures who inhabit texts written in the centre of power, the Sibylline oracles, the subject of Mazza’s contribution, offer authentic outside views on the ‘empire of evil’. Mazza’s focus is on how these oracles, which contain some of the most relentless articulations of *Römerhass* that have survived from antiquity, employed the notion of *translatio imperii* as the metahistorical ground on which to advance the eschatological hope that,

eventually, Rome too would fall. He also pays meticulous attention to the thorny philological problems raised by this collection of texts, of which both the dating of specific passages and the overall mode of compilation are highly controversial.

The range of the volume is wide, in terms of both chronology and authors covered, and bears out the claim made in the introduction that it would foreground provincial and subversive voices. The title, however, which leads one to expect a comprehensive and systematic survey of ancient writings on the city, promises too much. There are some conspicuous lacunae. Cicero, for instance, would surely have merited a chapter of his own (though his thoughts on the location of Rome in *de lege agraria* and *de republica* are competently discussed by Stok). And apart from D'Elia's paper on Augustine, which the last footnote reveals as the potted version of an article first published over twenty years ago, the collection sidelines Christian authors, despite the fact that some of the most intriguing texts on the subject come from the period when pagans and Christians tussled over the notional ownership of the city. There is nothing on Symmachus and Ambrose, Claudian or Prudentius. And there is, finally, no attempt to establish some measure of contact between the theme of the volume and current theorizing in cultural studies about the powers and pitfalls of constructing Rome in discourse, of the kind one finds, for instance, in Catharine Edwards, *Writing Rome. Textual Approaches to the City* (Cambridge, 1996). Still, the volume is definitely worth dipping into, and the three exhaustive indices of names, modern scholars, and passages cited facilitate the hunt for what are, in some cases, genuine nuggets of insight and information.

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## PERCEPTIONS OF THE ROMAN REPUBLIC

F. MILLAR: *The Roman Republic in Political Thought. The Menahem Stern Jerusalem Lectures*. Pp. xi + 201. Hanover, NH and London: University Press of New England, 2002. Paper, US\$25. ISBN: 1-58465-199-7 (1-58465-198-9 hbk).

This is the latest in a sequence of publications now extending twenty years in which M. presses his view that 'the Republic should be seen as a form of democracy' (p. 6). M. here sets foot in territory that he confesses is largely new to him. Much of the book is devoted to an inevitably selective survey of perceptions of the Roman Republic articulated by political thinkers from the later Middle Ages to the present, prefaced by discussion of ancient Greek observers, notably Polybius and Dionysius of Halicarnassus. M. is at pains to stress his own amateur status as a commentator on most of this material, and his indebtedness to authorities like Quentin Skinner and Paul Rahe.

M. is clearly delighted by what he has found in his reading. The very title used by John Thelwall in 1796 in republishing a pamphlet on the Roman constitution by Walter Moyle (1672–1721) says it all: *Democracy Vindicated: An Essay on the Constitution and Government of the Roman State*. Not many of the writers M. considers shared such enthusiasm for Roman democracy. M.'s point is that whether they liked what they saw or not, the great tradition—as we might call it—perceived the Roman Republic as a state in which popular sovereignty was real and powerful. Unsurprisingly he presents the climactic moment for knowledgeable and productive

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