Platonists to move between language and cause. Elements of this discussion, appropriated by Philo, strongly influenced the Hellenistic Jewish and Early-Christian (Apologetic) discussions of Genesis, and hence the various strands of *gnosis*, the *Corpus Hermeticum* and Graeco-Egyptian learned magic. The final section explores aspects of the interpretation of Logos in John's Gospel up to Athanasius, showing how the tension between the idea of a creative Word and rational explanation sparked off both 'heretical' ideas and 'orthodox' rejoinders. This is a learned, well-argued book, confident in its ability to trace origins and influences, summarize the essence of claims, move between theology, philosophy, and linguistics, and chart a sure track through tangled skeins of discourse. Given that its span is so wide, it is hardly surprising that one sometimes, especially in relation to *gnosis* and magic, wishes more depth of knowledge; but even here what Lau has to offer is never lacking in value. Since the death of Polycarp has been something of a *leit-motiv* in this section, let me finally notice an interesting book on the construction of Early-Christian martyrdom by Lucy Grig (Edinburgh), a former pupil of Keith Hopkins and Peter Garnsey.[13] Just as Judith Lieu stresses the role of narrative in constructing Christian identity between the mid-first and mid-second centuries, so Grig singles out martyr-narratives as central to Church construction in the mid-fourth to the mid-fifth centuries. This focus enables her to evade the prickly historical problems presented by earlier accounts, such as Polycarp, or Perpetua and Felicitas, and problematize the role of martyr-narratives in the post-Nicaean world. She thus highlights a fact whose implications have not hitherto been appreciated: that the heyday of the martyr-narrative actually falls well after the end of the Great Persecution. Her method is to read selected highly expressive ('performed') texts, and some extremely reticent images, through the themes of authority, representation, and conflict, for the light they cast on the shifting issues of Church order and power. The central problem for the Church (as in the cases of asceticism or mysticism, for example) was that the more it heroized the martyr as the paradigmatic type of Christian, the more it created disciplinary problems for the hierarchy, of controlling how martyrs are to be imitated, how relics are to be handled and venerated, how sites of martyrdom are to be memorialized. She explores the growth of the 'martyr business' in North Africa and its popular excesses, and use of the 'qualities' of martyrdom in assaying between Donatists and Christians. The sadistic concentration on judicial violence, revelatory blood, subjective agony, is viewed as the outcome of a culture of spectacle where the need to turn the victim into the victor demands, as in the modern cinema, ever more extravagant effects. By the end, martyr and bishop stand together in an alliance of opposites, individual hero versus controlling hierarchy, *imitator Christi* versus pastoral shepherd. Plenty of suggestion here, and fascinating material, from a promising historian, though one sometimes has the feeling that the stuff refuses to go into the boxes provided.

doi:10.1093/gromej/cxi033 RICHARD GORDON

General

This issue's selection once again offers a forceful reminder of quite what a vast and varied world the Classicist has to explore. We start with two beautifully illustrated coffee-table books on the magnificence of the material culture of the Greek and Roman worlds

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respectively. **Greece. Splendours of an Ancient Civilization*[1] and **Rome. Splendours of an Ancient Civilization*[2] present the Classical world from the Bronze Age to the fall of the Roman empire in a blaze of colour illustrations (863 in total, 779 of which are colour). The captions are on the whole detailed and informative, and the accompanying text is readily accessible to the non-specialist. Both books strive to entice newcomers into the fascination of the ancient world. The splendour of the contents speaks for itself – magnificent architecture, beautifully executed art-work, and intricate jewellery all offer ample proof of the political, cultural, artistic, and technological interest of the worlds in which they were produced. However, the authors take care to give additional assistance to the non-Classicist. The Greek volume starts with a potted history of the Greek world from Minoan times until the time of *Graecia capta*; it then offers a discussion of Greek 'civilization and culture' before launching into a presentation of Greek art, followed by two big 'archaeological tours', through Greece and Asia Minor, and then through Magna Graecia. The division between 'culture' and 'art', for example, may seem a little artificial, but the overall attempt to orientate the reader is to be applauded. The format can appear at times crowded – a helpful double-page spread placing major events in Greek history in broad periods (34–5) opens out into a large and rather imaginative reconstruction of the sanctuary at Epidauros, giving the slight impression of trying to cram in too many visual tricks at once. But this is to quibble about a book which makes real efforts to draw in the as yet unconverted. A short glossary and guidance for further reading round off the work. The Roman volume follows a similar pattern by starting with a compact history, moving on to aspects of Roman civilization, and then progressing geographically from the magnificence of the Roman imperial capital itself, to Italy, and then beyond to the empire at large. The illustrations are again lavish and enticing; the variety in presentational techniques similarly imaginative – the parallel for a chronological table folding out into the sanctuary at Epidaurus is a tabular presentation of the main phases in Roman history opening out into a huge reconstruction of the city of Rome in the fourth century AD, based on the *forma urbis*. Whatever one's view of artistic reconstruction on the scale that it is used in these books, the photographs of the extant remains speak eloquently for the notion that the ancient world is not simply one of incomprehensible rubble, but one which we can go a long way towards understanding. No one could pick up these volumes and remain unimpressed by the interest and attraction of studying that world. We should note in passing the appearance of a new German guide to Athens, which takes as its focus ancient literary references to the city. *Das Antike Athen*[3] takes its readers round the sites rather charmingly and illuminatingly in the company not only of the predictable Pausanias, but also more unexpected characters such as Aristophanes. For German-readers, it will provide a new and valuable set of insights and enhancements on a visit to Athens, although for practical matters, a modern guide will still prove more useful. While we are still on our tour of the

[1] *Greece. Splendours of an Ancient Civilization.* By Furio Durando. Thames and Hudson, London, new compact edition, 2005. Pp. 292, with 430 illustrations, 390 in colour. Hardback.

[2] *Rome. Splendours of an Ancient Civilization.* By Anna Maria Liberati and Fabio Bourbon. Thames and Hudson, London, new compact edition, 2005. Pp. 292, with 433 illustrations, 389 in colour. Hardback.

[3] *Das Antike Athen. Ein literarischer Stadtführer.* By Hans Rupprecht Goette and Jürgen Hammerstaedt. Verlag C. H. Beck, Munich, 2004. Pp. 325, with 57 figures. Hardback €25.60.

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Greek and Roman worlds, we should perhaps mention a number of new publications which, though not strictly 'classical' in their focus, remind us yet again of the breadth and variety of the worlds with which the inhabitants of classical antiquity came into contact, thereby making them of interest to the modern Classicist too. *King Hammurabi of Babylon. A Biography*[4] does precisely what it says on the tin. The chronological scope (early second millennium BC) lies outside the period of classical history for which we can present parallel material, and the geographical focus is further east than the narrowly Mediterranean, or worse still European, focus which some scholars might adopt. However, the problems of how to approach a relatively unknown world through scant and fragmentary, but significant, evidence, are familiar to all who have tried to piece together episodes in, for example, archaic Greek history. Indeed, Hammurabi's fame as a giver of laws, carved on stone, places him conceptually close to the figure of the *nomothete* familiar from Greek history. The aim of this book is explicitly modest in intellectual terms – not to analyse or construct in an abstract sense, but to introduce a historical figure and to present, in translation, the evidence relating to him – in this case many inscriptions and pieces of royal correspondence, which make fascinating reading. Still in the Fertile Crescent but moving forward in time, *The Age of Empires*[5] takes as its theme the history of the ancient Near East during the last millennium BC. In particular and as its title suggests, it focuses on the way in which power in that vast region constantly changed hands, as one extensive empire ceded to another, and the boundaries between the rule of different groups and individuals were continually renegotiated. The organization is logical and clear, moving from the Assyrians, to the Babylonians, to the Achaemenids, and finally the Seleucids and Parthians. For each of the Assyrians and Babylonians a chapter on political history is followed by two further thematic chapters (on control of the imperial territory, and the nature and exercise of royal power; and socio-economic themes, and religion and culture, respectively). A particularly attractive and worthwhile feature of this book and much to be commended is the presentation of documentary evidence in translation at the end of each chapter, with the focus on one or two key documents which best illuminate and exemplify the themes of the chapter. Thus what might potentially be a work of narrative history goes far beyond that in bringing the reader into direct (or at least translated) contact with the reality of the world related. Our tour through the Fertile Crescent brings us finally to Egypt, with a work on *War in Ancient Egypt*.[6] This forms part of the Blackwell 'Ancient World at War' series, most of which is still in preparation, but which has already given rise to Angelos Chaniotis' *War in the Hellenistic World* (also reviewed in this issue). Although one might consider that this is a work for the specialist – with part of its focus on technological advances and their effect on the conduct of wars and of warfare – in fact, there is much to interest the more general reader. Social and religious consequences of changes in warfare, economic issues, and a short chapter on the figure of the Pharaoh in the context of military campaigns, might appeal to a broader constituency. Although the text is quite dense and detailed, the most tightly-

[4] *King Hammurabi of Babylon*. By Marc van de Mieroop. Blackwell Publishing, Oxford, 2004. Pp. xii + 171, with 1 map and 10 illustrations. Paperback £14.99.

[5] *The Age of Empires*. Mesopotamia in the First Millennium BC. By Francis Joannès. Translated by Antonia Nevill. Edinburgh UP, 2004. Pp. vii + 292. Paperback.

[6] *War in Ancient Egypt*. By Anthony J. Spalinger. Ancient World at War. Blackwell Publishing, Oxford, 2004. Pp. xx + 291, with 5 maps and 34 illustrations. Paperback £16.99.

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packed and technical discussions of logistics are reserved for a clearly-marked 'excursus' at the end of each chapter, allowing the dilettante to skip quickly past. Plenty of illustrations and maps, as well as a chronological table, provide further assistance to the uninitiated. The series, when further advanced, promises to offer a serious and valuable collection of treatments of an almost omnipresent aspect of the ancient world. While we are on the subject of ancient warfare, we note with pleasure the appearance of a major new work on Greek warfare to set alongside Chaniotis' contribution to the Blackwell series. Hans van Wees' *Greek Warfare*[7] adopts a thematic approach to this huge subject, with sections on war and peace, citizens and soldiers, amateur armies, agonal and total warfare, the experience of combat, and ruling the waves, each subdivided into smaller chapters. These major categories are followed by three appendices on more specific historical points, notes, and an extensive bibliography. The work is remarkable for the way in which it combines a strong sense of the reality of warfare (and of individual wars) created through the collocation of vivid and detailed evidence, with synoptic views of broader trends, issues of representation, concepts of power, which underpin and overarch the book. This combination yields an important scholarly challenge to the dominance of ancient literary sources in our understanding of the nature of warfare in the Greek world, since the nuts and bolts of different types of engagement, when studied in sufficient detail, bring one to a much less heroic picture. The contrast between the 'myth' and the 'reality' of war is excellently drawn out and reinforced as van Wees performs his systematic analysis of one form of warfare after another. The phenomenon of *polemos* here receives the kind of detailed treatment which might at first seem to reflect the fact that it was the 'normal' state of the Greek world, except that this is precisely one of the myths which van Wees wishes to debunk, arguing instead that enmity was not a natural state, but one which required a cause. This book seems set to provoke much rethinking on the nature of inter-state relations in the Greek world. But now, after that digression, back to our tour of the ancient world, and extending our gaze westwards from Egypt, we take in the subject of the next offering. The April 2004 issue of this journal carried a brief review of the tripartite Volume 14 in the series on *L'Africa Romana*, an ongoing project carried out by the history department at the Università degli Studi di Sassari. It was noted that any fears of African neglect in classical scholarship could be safely laid aside at this point. The appearance now of another massive tripartite collection of essays, *L'Africa Romana*,[8] this time with its focus on the position of this part of the world at the edge of the Roman Empire, simply provides spectacular confirmation that this continent is getting the attention it deserves. Yet again, the schedule for the underlying conference looks gruelling in the extreme, with a stunning array of papers stretching unrelentingly across four days in December 2002. It is impossible to do justice to well over 2000 pages of scholarship in this short review; one can only note that this will be yet another valuable addition to the bibliography of those with interests in this part of the ancient world, or indeed more generally in Mediterranean history. This brings us neatly to the subject of our next offering. *Rethinking the*

[7] *Greek Warfare*. Myths and Realities. By Hans van Wees. Duckworth, London, 2004. Pp. xiv + 349, with 26 plates and 24 illustrations. Paperback £20.

[8] *L'Africa Romana*. Ai confini dell'Impero: contatti, scambi, conflitti. Edited by Mustapha Khanoussi, Paola Ruggeri, and Cinza Vismara. Carocci, Rome, 2004. Three volumes. Pp. 2119, with black and white plates and illustrations. Paperback €107.53.

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Mediterranean[9] sets itself apart from the works so far reviewed for the degree to which it is self-conscious and self-critical about its place in the history of scholarship, the validity of its subject, the methodological strengths and weaknesses by which Mediterranean scholarship has been and still is helped and hindered. With a few notable additions, the majority of the volume represents the findings of a conference held in Columbia in 2001 to consider the usefulness of the 'Mediterranean' as a concept for articulating and understanding the ancient world. It thus clearly and explicitly uses a combination of Braudel and the recent, long-awaited, and provocative work by Purcell and Horden on *The Corrupting Sea* to provide its conceptual, scholarly, and argumentative frame of reference. The notion that studying the classical world required no more than a map of Europe, grudgingly extended far enough south and east to include the main Mediterranean islands, but no further, has been so completely overthrown that an enterprise to challenge the new orthodoxy is bold and valuable. The advances made since Braudel opened the eyes of classical scholarship to the value of extending the map, rewriting conceptual geography, and re-focusing on the interconnected world of the sea (and its hinterland) have been spectacular. But this approach will flourish and move forward most effectively if it is subject to challenge and self-justification. The roll-call of distinguished contributors, including Purcell and Horden themselves with a riposte to critics of their work, is in itself tribute to the seriousness of the critical enterprise and the value of ongoing and vibrant debate. And of course the level of thought and argument provoked by the core concept, the Mediterranean Sea, offers perhaps the strongest testimony of all to its importance as a frame of reference for our subject. A quite different matrix against which the ancient world may be constructed is the theme of our next book, *Sexuality in Greek and Roman Culture*.[10] Skinner offers an interesting and effective survey, which covers a vast range of subjects, using diverse literary, artistic, and material evidence. After a theoretical introduction, in which she seeks to establish the value of identifying and studying sexuality in the ancient world, she adopts a broadly chronological approach, but uses this as a frame on which to hang a rich variety of debates and problems. She succeeds in combining discussion of ancient evidence with a constant awareness of modern debates and approaches, and a keen sense of the pitfalls (as well as advantages) of reading a concept across time. There is a great deal of valuable material and discussion in this book, especially perhaps for undergraduates struggling with a theoretically difficult subject of considerable appeal. From sexuality to speech-making. Habinek's new little book on **Ancient Rhetoric and Oratory*[11] belongs to the series of Blackwell Introductions to the Classical World. It is refreshingly upbeat about its subject matter, refusing to be embarrassed by the notion of trying to persuade the audience of a viewpoint, a process which can sometimes be seen as a rather shameful threat to personal liberty and freedom of thought, a very unhelpful and distracting approach to adopt when analysing and appreciating oratory in the ancient world. Habinek naturally focuses on two of the greatest orators of all time, Demosthenes and Cicero, both of whose works survive in large

[9] *Rethinking the Mediterranean*. Edited by W. V. Harris. Oxford UP, 2005. Pp. xxii + 414, with 3 maps and 16 illustrations. Hardback £65.

[10] *Sexuality in Greek and Roman Culture*. By Marilyn B. Skinner. Blackwell Publishing, Oxford, 2004. Pp. xxx + 343, with 4 maps and 33 illustrations. Paperback £16.99.

[11] *Ancient Rhetoric and Oratory*. Blackwell Introductions to the Classical World. By Thomas Habinek. Blackwell Publishing, Oxford, 2005. Pp. xi + 132. Paperback £13.99.

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quantity, at the same time as adopting a broadly thematic approach to consider the place of rhetoric in political life, the education system, and so on. He concludes by looking forward to the role of rhetoric beyond the classical age – no small task and one which results necessarily in a rather cursory and selective trawl. One might extend this gentle criticism to the work overall – the subject is so broad as to be barely skated over in a book of 100 pages, allowing little room for detailed discussion or careful differentiation between different periods and different contexts. One wonders how much room there is left in the market for another general introduction to a central activity of the ancient world, and precisely what kind of reader will derive most gain. It will surely be 'accessible for all students of ancient literature and culture', but one hopes that they will takes its valuable introductory role seriously and move on from here to more detailed studies. A still broader approach to the subject of oratory is taken in *Oratory in Action*.[12] This volume draws together contributions from specialists in ancient rhetoric and those in other disciplines, notably law and English literature, in the common pursuit of revealing how oratory works in practice. This reviewer is not qualified to comment on the modern contributions, although noting with interest such chapters as 'Margaret Thatcher and the Gendering of Political Oratory' (Christopher Reid) and, even more intriguingly, 'Pronouncing sentence on medical murderers in the nineteenth century' (Paul Robertshaw). The ancient contributions include Blanshard on the birth of the law-court and Heath on advocacy in Roman Egypt, to name but two. The final chapter on 'Video Cicero' (Lynette Hunter) draws a comparison between the most famous Roman orator and modern-day political speech-makers in terms of their creation of a sense of affinity with the audience, neatly encapsulating the liveliness of the volume as a whole. Links between classical antiquity and the present day are further explored in yet another in the steady stream of classical studies flowing from the University of Gran Canaria, *Mitología Clásica y Literatura Española*,[13] which, as one might deduce, considers a range of themes from classical mythology as they are adopted and adapted by authors of Spanish literature. While we are on the subject of reception, we should also note with pleasure the appearance of a volume by Kenneth Haynes on *English Literature and Ancient Languages*.[14] The focus of this book is very much on language as a medium for expressing cultural and social ideals, rather than on the influences exerted by classical literature on that of a later age or on the development of English as a descendant of the linguistic tree in which Latin occupies a fundamental branch. The author identifies three main phenomena – the use of a foreign language to express prestige, or affiliation, or some other concept; the issue of language purism; and finally, that of 'interference'. The whole makes a very refreshing change from the many works on purely literary reception, and indeed the linguistic emphasis should be of immediate interest to classical scholars, already familiar with these phenomena in the ancient world. Cicero's frequent use of Greek words in his letters, the linguistic pride and one-upmanship demonstrated by the concerted attempts of Lucretius, for example, to express in Latin a subject which had previously been confined to Greek,

[12] *Oratory in Action*. Edited by Michael Edwards and Christopher Reid. Manchester UP, Manchester and New York, 2004. Pp. 216. Paperback £15.99.

[13] *Mitología Clásica y Literatura Española*. Siete Estudios. By Germán Santana Henríquez. Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, 2003. Pp. 192. Paperback.

[14] *English Literature and Ancient Languages*. By Kenneth Haynes. Oxford UP, 2003. Pp. xiv + 210. Hardback.

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and the multiple examples of dialectal and linguistic hybrids in ancient inscriptions seem neatly to illustrate some of Hayne's points, and it is cause for celebration that these interesting phenomena are here so well brought to the attention of students of English literature, stressing that the classical heritage is neither purely literary, nor purely linguistic, but can be both simultaneously. Still on the subject of reception, but this time that of a literary genre (or genres), Erich Segal's *The Death of Comedy*[15] traces the life-cycle of comedy from the notion of the *komos* in the Homeric epics, through the works of Aristophanes, to the evolution of New Comedy, and then through a range of 'modern' western authors – Molière, Marlowe, Machiavelli, and Shakespeare, to take a selection. This is something of a treasure-trove of studies, linked by their participation in the story of an identifiable genre, but each allowed its own appropriate and specific treatment. Scholars and students of the texts concerned will find much to interest them here, but it is particularly welcome to see such infectious enthusiasm for the subject on every page, which will make this book appeal to the inexperienced amateur no less than to the expert. And finally, in a different genre altogether, we come to one of the lesser-read authors of antiquity, Valerius Maximus. On the whole, it is not hard to find explanations for why some works have been read more avidly over the years than others, and Valerius does not offer a striking counter-example to this rule. However, his *Memorable Deeds and Sayings*[16] might just live up to their name sufficiently to merit the last word in this review. Walker has produced a very readable translation, together with a helpful and extensive introduction (particularly valuable given Valerius' relative obscurity) and a short glossary at the end. In spite of the disparaging way in which this review has introduced Valerius, it is indeed the case that his work was popular in antiquity and that its thematically organized contents provide countless insights into the life and mentality of Rome in the early Principate. Wardle's commentary on Book 1 in the Oxford Ancient History Series reveals how much of value can be derived from a closer study of Valerius than he is usually accorded. Furthermore, it is possible to read Valerius with considerable interest as an author who exemplifies the importance of the exemplary in Roman thought and whose world-view is largely dominated by the moral issues of virtue and vice. In this, he forms a useful comparandum with some of the historians, such as Sallust, or indeed Tacitus. One simply wonders whether it was really necessary for him to compile quite as many as 'One Thousand Tales from Ancient Rome'.

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CHRISTOPHER BURNAND AND
KATHERINE CLARKE

[15] *The Death of Comedy*. By Erich Segal. Harvard UP, 2001. Pp. xi + 589. Paperback £16.95.

[16] *Valerius Maximus*. Memorable Deeds and Sayings. One Thousand Tales from Ancient Rome. Translated by Henry John Walker. Hackett Publishing Company, Indianapolis, 2004. Pp. xxxi + 361, with 3 maps. Paperback £12.95.

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