bard'. Hall closes the volume with the afterlife of the ancient actor, appearing in both tragic and comic guise from the Jacobean to the Victorian stage.

No essay here disappoints, but the volume as a whole seems truer to its subtitle of 'Aspects' than the ambitions of the main title. While the editors quite rightly note the value of examining certain key anecdotes and figures from multiple perspectives (we do hear a lot about Polos and that urn), one yearns for a little more flesh on some of the other 3000 recorded *technitai*. Hall pays deserved tribute to Mary Renault's reimagination of the life of a Hellenistic actor in *The Mask of Apollo*. I thus find myself wishing that narrative history and the judicious use of imaginative reconstruction were more fashionable these days, especially given this topic.

The collection is nonetheless welcome and likely to stimulate more discussion. Each essay closes with a brief discussion of suggestions for further reading, which will be welcome for students and more experienced scholars alike. An ample glossary assembles nearly all the technical terms for the benefit of non-specialist readers (though I do miss one essayist's 'choreut' here). Only one feature prompts lament, but that a heartfelt one. While editing and general production standards are superb, in the absence of the usual explicit claim to the contrary, one must assume that the already yellowish and flimsy paper is neither acid-free nor of long-lasting quality. We have been down this unhappy road before, and one hopes this is a temporary aberration: both readers and authors deserve better from Cambridge.

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HISTORIOGRAPHY

T. E. Duff: *The Greek and Roman Historians*. Pp. 136, maps. London: Bristol Classical Press, 2003. Paper, £9.99. ISBN: 1-85399-601-7.

Duff's concise but stimulating survey of the principal Greek and Roman historians from Herodotus to Cassius Dio offers a helpful introduction for students of ancient history and classical civilization seeking access to a genre which transcends boundaries between the Greek and Roman worlds and evolves in complex ways over almost a thousand years. Amidst such terrain, the need for a clear and sensible guide becomes particularly vital. The story begins with Homer's *Iliad* (Chapter 1) as a text that set the agenda for later Greek and Roman historians through its focus on warfare and its creation of a moral universe which sees the generic boundaries between epic and historiography become blurred. D. then divides his material: there is a Greek half (Chapter 2, 'Herodotos'; Chapter 3, 'Thucydides'; Chapter 4, 'Fourth-century Historians', including Xenophon, the Oxyrhynchos historian, Theopompos of Chios and Ephoros of Kyme; Chapter 5, 'Hellenistic Historians', including Douris of Samos, Phylarchos and Polybios) and a Roman half (Chapter 6,'Roman Republican Historians'; Chapter 7,'Livy'; Chapter 8,'Imperial Rome'; Chapter 9,'Historians of Imperial Rome: Tacitus'; Chapter 10,'Historians of Imperial Rome: Other Voices', including Velleius Paterculus and Suetonius; Chapter 11, 'Greek Historians of the Roman Imperial Period', including Plutarch, Arrian, Appian, and Cassius Dio). D. therefore covers much ground, although he does omit Ammianus Marcellinus.

Extracts from the Greek and Latin throughout the volume are given in English

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translation. The only oversight is in the chapter on Livy (p. 78): 'The initial plan was to trace Rome's history from its foundation (hence its title *Ab Urbe Condita*)'. In accordance with the series format, there are no footnotes. The volume also includes maps of (i) Greece and the Aegean in the fifth and fourth centuries, (ii) the Hellenistic world, (iii) the Roman world, and (iv) the Roman empire *c.* A.D. 120, and tables of (i) historical periods, (ii) Roman emperors, and (iii) historians and major events arranged chronologically. Finally, there are suggestions for further study, offering salient questions relating to each chapter, and suggestions for further reading. This highly selective bibliographical appendix could perhaps have been fleshed out more extensively, particularly given the absence of footnotes: the material on Sallust, for example, includes only one item. Also, readers wanting to know about the fragmentary Roman historians could usefully have their attention drawn to the forthcoming re-edition of Peter's *Historicorum Romanorum Reliquiae*, which will include English translations. The volume has a few typos ('C. Sallustinus Crispus', p. 66; 'Cloelius Antipater', pp. 67, 132; 'prestige to which Alexander attained', p. 52; 'at his disposable', p. 72).

Each chapter is self-contained and may be read on its own, but one of the strengths of D.'s concise narrative is that it demonstrates clearly how and why historiography evolved as a genre, and thus transcends the potential limitations of an author-by-author format. In this respect, the discussion of the fragmentary historians is particularly helpful: even when the perils of manuscript survival make historiographical developments difficult to trace, D. contextualizes authors such as Fabius Pictor (pp. 63–4) and clarifies their rôle in the evolution of the genre. Yet although D. is careful to highlight overarching connections retrospectively, he could have perhaps done more to point ahead as well. So, when D. observes that 'geography and ethnography . . . were to remain for the ancients an important component of history' (pp. 19–20), mentioning Sallust *Jug.* 17–19 and Tacitus *Agricola* 10–12 would have anchored the observation, and when D. discusses Thucydides' description of the battle in the harbour in Syracuse ('This virtuoso piece became one of the most famous passages of antiquity', p. 53), he could also have cited instances where later historians arguably imitated the passage (e.g. Polybius 1.44.4–5, Sallust *Jug.* 60.3–4).

I end with some miscellaneous observations. (i) 'The *Hellenika* ends, or rather fizzles out, with the battle of Mantineia in 362' (p. 41). This observation could be pursued further: as John Dillery has observed, 'That Xenophon did not find Mantinea epochal is perhaps the most important feature to notice about the *Hellenica*' (*Xenophon and the History of his Times* [London, 1995], pp. 22–3). (ii) 'Sallust adopted . . . a difficult 'Thucydidean' style and the critical attitudes that went with it' (p. 67). The stylistic and moral heritage of Cato the Elder should also be highlighted here. (iii) D. characterizes Velleius Paterculus as writing an 'establishment' historical narrative which is 'an important source . . . for the details of Tiberius' reign' (pp. 102–3), yet the proportion of Velleius' *Roman History* that is actually devoted to Tiberius' principate is (eloquently) tiny, while the passage about Tiberius that D. quotes (2.129.1–3) smacks of *praeteritio*. Both points suggest that a more nuanced reading of Velleius Paterculus is possible. (iv) 'The most famous Roman historians of the first century of imperial rule are Tacitus (*c.*A.D. 55–117) and Suetonius (*c.* 70–130)' (p. 91). To categorize Suetonius as a historian (or even as writing 'biographical history' p. 103) is inappropriate and pulls against D.'s more sensitive reading of the *Lives of the Caesars* on pp. 103–6. (v) D. compares the versions of Claudius' speech at Tacitus *Annals* 11.24 and in the inscription from Lugdunum (p. 101), but could also have drawn attention to Tacitus' account of Piso's trial in *Annals* 3 and the Piso inscription.

In conclusion, D. offers a balanced, accessible, and integrated account of the Greek and Roman historians, and the volume as a whole achieves a great deal in a remarkably compact format. It should certainly serve to stimulate productive discussion amongst students who are relatively new to the genre of ancient historiography.

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LATE-ANTIQUE HUMOUR

G. HALSALL (ed.): *Humour, History and Politics in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*. Pp. xiv + 208. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. Cased, £37.50/US$50. ISBN: 0-521-81116-3.

In 1977, Keith Thomas still found it necessary to defend the proposition that the study of humour and laughter was an appropriate theme for historical enquiry. Nowadays, most researchers in this field no longer feel the need for apologies. This collection of eight essays, edited by medievalist Guy Halsall of Birkbeck College, London, forms a notable exception in this. In his introduction, H. notices the scarcity of studies on humour for the late antique and early medieval periods in Europe. As one of the main reasons for this scantiness, he refers once more to a supposed disdain for such an unserious subject. His second reason seems a better one. In contrast with the eastern part of the Roman empire, there is no abundance of humour in the literary remains of the west. As Jacques Le Goff put it: 'from the fourth to the tenth century the monastic model prevails, a period of repressed and stifled laughter'. Indeed, the author of the first essay, Danuta Shanzer, had to do her utmost to discover some possible attempts at humour in the early medieval texts. Even regarding these few discoveries, she cannot be absolutely sure that they were meant to raise laughter. She rightly states that the well-known *Ioca Monachorum* might be no more than a collection of monastic games instead of jokes. The word *ludus*, indeed, was not popular any more after the abolition of the Games by emperor Theodosius the Great, and was usually replaced by the term *iocus*, as Andrea Nuti explains in an elaborate study on these words. Shanzer's discussion of possibly humorous passages in hagiographical writings provides the reader with some interesting material, but on the whole the article is no more than a quick survey of literary passages in which she tries to establish a few continuities and many discontinuities with ancient Roman humour.

More closely related to the present discourse on humour and laughter is the essay of John Haldon on Byzantium. Reflecting on the functions that are usually ascribed to humour, such as promoting social cohesion and intimacy, or procuring an outlet for negative emotions, he recognizes these in the humour of the Byzantines. Notwithstanding the tendency of the Church to suppress spiritual levity, he observes a certain continuity of the many forms that existed in antiquity. Deformity, for instance, was still a regular cause for laughter, as was the presumed greed and incompetence of doctors. His description of the often very aggressive character of Christian laughter recalls the remarks of Tertullian and Lactantius about the final joy that good Christians will have at the Last Judgement looking at the sufferings of sinners. Haldon is a little repetitive by emphasizing too often the obvious statement that social values embedded and reflected in particular forms of Byzantine behaviour can be revealed by looking at the humour of that period, but all in all, it is an interesting essay.

Mark Humphries writes about jokes on inebriety in connection with attacks on

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