The second volume is a translation of Herodotus' *Histories*.[13] The text is accompanied by a short introduction, brief chronological and biographical lists, and a detailed list of proper nouns (but not of subjects). The translation flows nicely, and it successfully manages to render in English Herodotus' admirable and idiosyncratic style; the notes are kept to a minimum, but are usually helpful. Given its low price, this volume is clearly a bargain for the lay reader who is more interested in the beauty of Herodotus' tales. For the student and scholarly audience, in my view the volume cannot compete with the wealth offered by the *Landmark Herodotus*.

The final book is a selection of speeches by Demosthenes, translated by Robin Waterfield with introduction and notes by Chris Carey.[14] The selection includes nineteen speeches divided between deliberative speeches (1–3 *Olynthiacs*, 1 and 3 *Philippics*, *On the Peace*, *On the Chersonese*), public trials (*On the Crown*, *On the Dishonest Embassy*, *Against Meidias*, *Against Aristocrates*, *Against Neaira*), and private trials (1–2 *Aphobus*, *Against Lacritus*, *For Phormio*, *Against Boeotus*, *Against Conon*, *Reply to Callicles*). Apart from an informative general introduction, each speech is preceded by a short introduction and accompanied by extensive notes that allow the reader to understand the context and grasp the legal procedure and the issues at stake; less emphasis is given in the notes to issues of rhetoric, but the reader will occasionally find some very illuminating comments. The translation keeps close to the text and is eminently readable; this should facilitate access to the wider audience of the Oxford World's Classics series. The selection works well in giving the reader a view of the complexities of Athenian life, from diplomacy, warfare, and democratic politics to slavery, banking, family inheritance, and agricultural life. While the volume excludes pseudo-Demosthenic speeches, the inclusion of *Against Neaira* is justified on the basis of its importance.

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Roman History

I begin this review with a *mega biblion* that will be hugely welcomed by Roman historians of all stripes: Tim Cornell and his team's long-awaited new edition of the fragments of the Roman historians,[1] featuring more than one hundred Roman writers of history, biography, and memoir. Cornell and his team have replaced the long-outdated

Pp. xvi + 295. 1 figure, 3 maps. Hardback $40, ISBN: 978-1-60384-847-3; paperback $13, ISBN: 978-1-60384-846-6.

[13] *Herodotus. Histories*. Edited, with introductions and notes, by James Romm. Translated by Pamela Mensch. Indianapolis, IN, Hackett Publishing Company, 2014. Pp. xxviii + 540. 13 maps. Hardback $47, ISBN: 978-1-62466-114-3; paperback $16, ISBN: 978-1-62466-113-6.

[14] *Demosthenes. Selected Speeches*. Translated by Robin Waterfield. Introduction and comments by Chris Carey. Oxford World's Classics. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2014. Pp. xxxvi + 528. 3 maps. Paperback £11.99, ISBN: 978-0-19-959377-4.

[1] *The Fragments of the Roman Historians*. General editor T. J. Cornell. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013. Pp. lxvi + 2651 in 3 volumes. Hardback £295, ISBN: 978-0-19-927705-6.

edition of Hermann W. G. Peter with a state-of-the-art three-volume work. The first volume provides an excellent and comprehensive guide to the authors; the second features the parallel texts themselves, alongside new translations; the final volume comprises the commentary, plus the necessary concordances and indices. The clear layout makes it easy to match up the introductions to each author, their *testimonia* and fragments, and then the related commentary. The selection and presentation of the Roman authors is careful: the introduction describes the aim to present all that is known about the authors and their work but also emphasize 'the limits of our knowledge' (7). This is clearly a more conservative selection than before (and rightly so; the thirty-six *Historia Augusta* 'historians', for instance, are relegated to their own appendix). The coverage is broadly chronological, ending in the third century (which is of course slightly disappointing for those interested in the rich body of late Roman historiography). This is clearly a landmark achievement, and it is especially to be welcomed that it is unusually user-friendly, for students as well as for scholars. Another point might be of interest: out of the 111 Roman authors (or groups of authors) featured there is but one woman: Agrippina the Younger (no. 77), whose memoirs were cited by both Tacitus and Pliny the Elder. Of the ten historians involved in this project, incidentally, just one is a woman. These figures have led me to consider the gender ratio of the books under review this time and the results are striking: out of the sixteen books under review, just three have female authors.

Barbara Levick, my predecessor as Roman History reviewer for this journal and a contributor to the *Fragments* project, is a highly-esteemed biographer of members of the Roman imperial family (her previous subjects include Tiberius, Claudius, Julia Domna, and Augustus), and her new book, on not one but two empresses, is a model of its kind.[2] Faustina I and II, mother and daughter, the wives of Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius respectively, featured prominently in the public image of the Antonines, appearing with striking frequency in the numismatic and epigraphic record. Levick argues convincingly that the Antonine dynasty was basically a monarchy (in all but name) and that the role of women (particularly 'successful' wives and mothers such as the highly fecund Faustinas) was important in presenting the imperial family as ethically superior and, most crucially of all, in smoothing succession. This focus on the public image of the Faustinas is key to Levick's analysis. She is realistic about what we can know of the *real* women behind this public image, which she nicely presents as an aspect of imperial theatre:

> that imperial women of the Antonine age, in particular the empresses, were significant not only as marital links and the producers of valid heirs but as components of that theatricality, a vital part of the imperial family's public face and its construction as a durable dynasty. (91)

This volume will be both useful and attractive for scholars and students interested in Roman imperial history but also in the role of prominent women more generally.

[2] *Faustina I and II. Imperial Women of the Golden Age*. By Barbara Levick. New York, Oxford University Press, 2014. Pp. xi + 248. 12 illustrations, 2 maps. Hardback £41.99, ISBN: 978-0-19-537941-9.

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The *consecratio* of members of the imperial family was routine by the time of the Antonines, but the complex process by which deification of both men and women became an accepted aspect of Roman culture and religion continues to receive a good deal of scholarly attention. Cicero's plans for the deification of his beloved daughter, Tullia, have generally been seen as the result of his terrible grief at her premature death. In this new study, based on his doctoral thesis,[3] Spencer Cole argues that we should take the project more seriously, and he goes on to incorporate it into a properly nuanced understanding of religious innovation at the end of the Roman Republic, building upon advances in the study of Roman religion in the last thirty years or so. The book takes us through a detailed study of several of Cicero's treatises, set in their context, moving through the rapidly changing political scene in the 40s BCE. The general contours of the rise of deification at Rome are well known but Cole claims to bring a new perspective to the subject with his focus on Cicero, stressing his 'pioneering role in the cultural transformations of the late Republic' (198). Cicero's texts here have undoubtedly found a subtle interpreter, but non-Ciceronians may well feel that, as so often, Cicero' side of the story is allowed to dominate somewhat.

Cicero's side of the story is also taken seriously in Isak Hammar's account of accusations of immorality in Ciceronian oratory (again based on a doctoral thesis).[4] While Cicero's attacks on the morality of his adversaries have long been seen as conventional and generic, indeed as part of the game, as entertainment, Hammar argues that these accusations were not lacking in substance. He states, quite reasonably, that morality had its place in Roman discourse and that therefore it makes sense to try to understand better *im*morality and its place in Roman culture. His discussions of the 'logic of immorality' to be found in Cicero's oratory and his demonstration of its working in Ciceronian argument are, furthermore, not without merit. However, one might feel that previous scholars, working on the generic dimension of immorality, have nonetheless taken it very seriously indeed, and come to conclusions more striking and stimulating than those of Hammar.

Staying in the area of religion, the latest volume from the *Collection Latomus* brings together a number of (largely) Belgian scholars considering the theme of competition in religion in antiquity.[5] The papers draw on recent scholarship, including new ideas about competition, as well as advances in the sociology of religion, in order to look at the key subject of religious change in antiquity. The geographical and chronological scope is wide, ranging from ancient Babylon to early Islam, though there is a notable concentration on the period of late antiquity. Throughout, certain key themes return: in the pre-Christian period instances of outright competition are vanishingly rare (for instance, oracular sites in Greece were not really in competition with each other). The rise of Christianity, meanwhile, involved a range of approaches to traditional and local religious cultures, from co-option, to rejection and indeed takeover. Different readers will inevitably find different chapters interesting. I was struck by

[3] *Cicero and the Rise of Deification at Rome*. By Spencer Cole. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2014. Pp. vii + 208. Hardback £60, ISBN: 978-1-107-03250-7.

[4] *Making Enemies. The Logic of Immorality in Ciceronian Oratory*. By Isak Hammar. Lund, Lund University, 2013. Pp. 381. ISBN: 978-91-7473-613-7.

[5] *Religion and Competition in Antiquity*. Edited by Peter Van Nuffelen and David Engels. Brussels, Éditions Latomus, 2014. Pp. 307. Paperback €51, ISBN: 978-2-87031-290-3.

Peter Van Nuffelen's discussion of religious disputation in late antiquity, in which he convincingly argues *contra* Simon Goldhill that religious dialogue did not simply end with the rise of Christianity (Averil Cameron is arguing on similar grounds in her brand-new book). Danny Praet provides a useful historiographical study of the great religious scholars Ernest Renan and, in particular, Franz Cumont. (Cumont, I learned, was denied a chair in Roman history owing to Catholic suspicion of his comparativist approach to ancient religion.) This is a worthy library purchase but a little more attention to the English would have improved it still further.

Moving to consider some volumes aimed at a rather broader audience, we can start with a readable account of the Roman conquest of Greece.[6] Its title comes from Shakespeare's Julius Caesar, at the point where Brutus (who speaks) and Cassius are discussing the civil war with Caesar:

> There is a tide in the affairs of men
> Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
> Omitted, all the voyage of their life
> Is bound in shallows and in miseries.
> On such a full sea are we now afloat;
> And we must take the current when it serves,
> Or lose our ventures. (*Julius Caesar* 4.3.218–24)

The point Brutus is making is that human affairs – in particular, power – ebb and flow, and one must go with the flow when the opportunity allows. The nature and rationale of Roman imperialism continues to be a much-debated subject: was it opportunistic, or more calculated? Robin Waterfield, who has honed his expertise in the field through years translating Polybius, takes on the debate with a close study of the Roman conquest of the Macedonian Empire, which he sees as the crucial enabling process in the growth of Rome as a superpower. Waterfield is straightforward and robust when it comes to taking sides in the Roman imperialism debate: he falls squarely on the side of William Harris, arguing that Rome practised aggressive imperialism. He is also unapologetic about making parallels between imperialism in the ancient world and today: in this particular case, comparing the 'indirect' Roman rule with that practised by the US today, notably in Iraq. One of the particularly interesting issues that this comparison throws up is that of retreat: the Romans invaded Greece and Macedonia, and then returned home again, just as the Americans 'left' Iraq. This lively topical resonance adds more bite to what in any case would be a highly useful volume, as there is no other comparable narrative account of this important period in Roman history.

An account of Pliny the Younger and his world based on his letters is a fine idea for a book, especially one aimed squarely at the non-specialist reader.[7] Pliny's letters have received a new wave of attention thanks to current literary interest in epistolography

[6] *Taken at the Flood. The Roman Conquest of Greece*. By Robin Waterfield. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2014. Pp. xxiv + 287. 25 b/w illustrations. Hardback £20, ISBN: 978-0-19-991689-4.

[7] *Pliny the Younger. A Life in Roman Letters*. By Rex Winsbury. London and New York, Bloomsbury Academic, 2014. Pp. viii + 246. Hardback £65, ISBN: 978-1-4725-1458-5.

but this is a more straightforwardly historical account as Rex Winsbury seeks to find the real man behind the letters. Syme's view of Pliny as an unconscionable hypocrite is considered but carefully rejected, with Winsbury preferring to see him as an honest man who did his job diligently. The book does a good job of placing Pliny in his immensely status-conscious world. This is not a panegyric of Pliny, of course (though Winsbury defends Pliny's Praise of Trajan as representing a serious attempt to push a senatorial agenda vis-à-vis autocratic rule). As Winsbury allows, even the most generous reader of Pliny tends to be put off by his passion for self-praise, as well as his 'insistent geniality' (227). There is very little engagement with the Latin nor with a very large scholarly bibliography, but this is a lively book to set before the interested general reader or intermediate student of Roman history.

Students as well as specialists make up the envisaged audience of the Key Themes in Ancient History series. Such books need not be bland overviews; indeed, in this case the author, Seth Schwartz, notes that his volume is 'unusually argumentative for a Key Themes book...because the topic demands...an argumentative rather than a magisterial style' (ix).[8] As Schwartz has himself made clear in a number of important publications, it is not possible in the case of antiquity to take 'the Jews' as a group for granted; rather, this text continues the post-1960s scholarly project to 'de-essentialize' ancient Jews and, indeed, Judaism. Nonetheless, Schwartz provides a readable narrative of the history of the Jews, from the Hellenistic period through to the end of antiquity. Of particular value perhaps is the substantial use made of the latest advances in archaeological knowledge, alongside the well-trodden literary sources. One the main aims of the book is to demonstrate the centrality of Jewish history to ancient history in general. Jewish history has often been left out of 'classical' ancient history, treated as marginal, or as a special case. Schwartz here makes a powerful case for its relevance. One obvious (and yet underrated) area here is that of Jewish literature as an important subcategory of Hellenistic literature. What is most striking, however, is the potential of Jewish history to stimulate by disrupting the standard (and lacking) narratives of ancient history. Schwartz argues convincingly that 'An account of response to Roman rule, or the impact of imperialism on provincial literary cultures cannot begin and end the story with the Second Sophistic' (152–3). It is to be hoped that his call will be heeded and, not least, that this stimulating book will be set as a useful textbook for both students of ancient history and their teachers.

A rather different attempt to look at Roman history outside a narrowly compartmentalized view is to be found in Sunny Auyang's ambitious globalizing take on Roman history, which compares the rise and fall of the Roman and Han Chinese empires.[9] These two great empires went through a joint history first of convergence and then somewhat sharp divergence, and the reasons for these differences surely have much to teach the historian of empire. Auyang, unusually enough, is trained neither as a Chinese nor as a Roman historian but is rather a physicist; as such, one cannot help but be

[8] *The Ancient Jews from Alexander to Muhammad*. By Seth Schwartz. Key Themes in Ancient History. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2014. Pp. xi + 190. Hardback £45, ISBN: 978-1-107-04127-1; paperback £17.99, ISBN: 978-1-107-66929-1.

[9] *The Dragon and the Eagle. The Rise and Fall of the Chinese and Roman Empires*. By Sunny Auyang. London, M.E. Sharpe, 2014. Pp. xxvi + 230. Hardback £39.99, ISBN: 978-0-7656-4369-8; paperback £16.99, ISBN: 978-0-7656-4370-4.

impressed by such a feat of polymathy. While comparative studies of world empires are of increasing interest to scholars, this attempt to provide an accessible comparative narrative history for the general reader is something new.

Students and their teachers alike often make use of sourcebooks; there are already so many available that the appearance of a new one will tend to attract some scepticism, as to whether it offers anything substantially new. Christopher Francese and R. Scott Smith's collection[10] begins by offering attractive and readable new translations. The layout is unusual: the texts are arranged alphabetically by author (where applicable), rather than thematically. The introduction explains the rationale for this: the idea is to encourage the reader to encounter the Roman authors as subjective individuals, rather than using extracts as exemplifying particular concepts. Users of this book will decide for themselves whether they consider this to be a helpful approach or not. The selection of material is appealing, offering a lively selection including some lengthier extracts (such as the whole of Juvenal 3), into which the reader can really sink his or her teeth. I was pleased to see the inclusion of some Christian material, often omitted from general volumes, as well as the appearance of philosophy and an interesting range of material in the 'Documentary' section, including *defixiones* and *libelli* from the Decian persecution. The editors explain that they have deliberately chosen material that would stimulate discussion, and this is likely to be successful. More copious notes would have doubtless helped this discussion, however.

Late antiquity is not very well represented in this current crop of books. However, there is a newly updated and expanded edition of Alexander Demandt's *Der Fall Rom*,[11] which first laid out thirty years ago a striking range of the different explanations for the fall of the Roman Empire, most famously combined in a list of 210 causes (increased to 227 in this new edition!) on the final page (719), beginning with *Aberglaube* (superstition) and ending with *Zweifrontkrieg* (war on two fronts). This new edition does not represent a full revision: although corrections have been made, the expansions are largely confined to a short section at the end, including a brief response to reviewers of the 1984 edition (including the harsh criticism of Peter Ghosh in *JRS* 75). The question of the Fall of Rome is clearly just as stimulating thirty years on from the original version and the impact of contemporary political events on interpretation – most notably, of course, the collapse of the Iron Curtain – is perhaps clearer than ever.

The same publisher has produced a brief history of the later Roman Empire in the form of the final part of its six-volume *Geschichte der Antike*, aimed squarely at a general audience.[12] It is unlikely to entice Anglophone readers as it does not offer any particular new insights or approaches to the period. The only other volume in this series to have

[10] *Ancient Rome. An Anthology of Sources*. Edited and translated by Christopher Francese and R. Scott Smith. Indianopolis, IN, Hackett Publishing Company. Pp. xxx + 548. 4 maps. Hardback £49.95, ISBN: 978-1-62466-001-6; paperback £18.99, ISBN: 978-1-62466-000-9.

[11] *Der Fall Roms. Die Auflösung des Römischen Reiches im Urteil der Nachwelt*. By Alexander Demandt. Munich, C.H. Beck Verlag, 2014. Pp. 719. Hardback €68, ISBN: 978-3-406-66053-5.

[12] *Die Spätantike. Der eine Gott und die vielen Herrscher*. By Rene Pfeilschifter. Geschichte der Antike. Munich, C.H. Beck, 2014. Pp. 304. 6 illustrations, 8 maps. Paperback €16.95, ISBN: 978-3-406-66012-2.

appeared thus far is Armin Eich's account of the Roman Empire,[13] while those dealing with the Greek world (archaic, classical, and Hellenistic period) and the Roman Republic are yet to appear. Eich takes a traditional approach, strongly focused on military and political history.

Rather more unusual as an approach to writing Roman history for a general audience is *Augustus und seine Zeit. Die 101 wichtigsten Fragen*,[14] in which the author approaches the emperor through a series of questions and answers. This makes for a lively approach that could be especially appealing to students and makes one wonder why popular histories can't more often take an explicitly problematizing approach.

Only one out of the 101 questions about Augustus deal explicitly with finances (no. 49, on Augustus' tax reforms) and economic history is still not generally tackled in works aimed at a popular audience. However, thanks to the Oxford Roman Economy project, scholarly monographs on Roman economic history are continuing to undergo a boom. Philip Kay's new book focuses on the huge changes in the Roman economy from *c.*200 to 50 BCE.[15] In accordance with the generally empiricist line associated with this project, Kay eschews 'the dead hand weight of Finleyan primtivism' (6); moreover, he adopts a boldly monetarist approach: as an investment fund manager, he does not share the fear of the intricacies of finance felt by many of his scholarly counterparts. Kay's argument is clearly stated: that a large injection of bullion, in particular silver, into the Roman economy brought about measurable, per capita economic growth in this period. He makes his case clearly for those less well versed in the world of finance, and often with a lightness of touch perhaps unexpected in this field. For instance, at the start of his final chapter proper, 'Forecasting the Past', he quotes Douglas Adams' famous answer to the ultimate question regarding life, the universe, and everything: 42. The problem, Kay admits, is that if we wish to quantify the Roman economy, we need to find the right question. Kay is not afraid of giving concrete numbers (although some of us are less convinced that we can use those found in ancient historiography in this way), even if he does provide the caveat that his estimates are 'assumptions, not facts' (325). Approaches to the ancient economy continue to diverge widely and this striking account is bound to stir debate.

I finish, however, with something completely different. What made the Romans laugh? And what can this tell us about them? These are the questions that Mary Beard seeks to answer in her fascinating new book.[16] On the way we encounter a diverse range of anecdotes, texts, and characters, some familiar to most classicists (the famous anecdote of Dio Cassius stuffing his mouth with the leaves from his wreath lest he laugh at Emperor Commodus), others less so (the joke book known as the *Philogelos*, or

[13] *Die Römisch Kaiserzeit. Die Legionen und das Imperium*. By Armin Eich. Geschichte der Antike. Munich, C.H. Beck, 2014. Pp. 304. 10 maps. Paperback €16.95; ISBN: 978-3-406-66012-2.

[14] *Augustus und seine Zeit. Die 101 wichtigsten Fragen*. By Marcus Junkelmann. Munich, C.H. Beck, 2014. Pp. 160. 36 illustrations, 2 maps. Paperback €10.95, ISBN: 978-3-406-65895-2.

[15] *Rome's Economic Revolution*. By Philip Kay. Oxford Studies on the Roman Economy. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2014. Pp. xv + 384. 3 illustrations. Hardback £80, ISBN: 978-0-19-968154-9.

[16] *Laughter in Ancient Rome. On Joking, Tickling, and Cracking Up*. By Mary Beard. Berkeley, CA, University of California Press, 2014. Pp. x + 319. Hardback £19.95, ISBN: 978-0-520-27716-8.

'laughter lover'). As ever, Beard is a shrewd interpreter, deconstructing long-held understandings and interpretations, pointing out complications, ambiguities, and contradictions. Similarly, she is keen to demonstrate throughout the impossibility of really being able to think (or rather *laugh*) like the Romans. In terms of structure, the first part of the book deals with theories of laughter (there is, of course, no single, overarching theory), laying out the framework, while the second part looks at different aspects of Roman laughter. In these chapters Beard does her best to restore Cicero's reputation as a renowned wit (an aspect somewhat underrated by generations of readers), examines the relationship between autocracy and laughter, investigates the role of mimicry, and explores the Roman joke. In this way, the book considers various approaches and interpretations of Roman laughter as 'a marker of areas of disruption and anxiety' (196), as a means of negotiating boundaries (especially those of power and status), and as a distancing mechanism. Some readers might, nonetheless, wish for clearer answers; others (such as this one) might have wished for more of an attempt to investigate *non*-elite laughter. Overall, Beard wears her learning lightly and this is a rich book and a good read. A solemn book about ancient laughter, after all, would be a very sorry thing.

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Art and Archaeology

The archaeologist Heinrich Schliemann once met, in London, the poet Alfred Tennyson – who, though he saluted Mount Ida tenderly, never travelled much south of the Dolomites. In the course of conversation, Schliemann remarked: 'Hissarlik, the ancient Troy, is no bigger than the courtyard of Burlington House'. 'I can never believe that', Tennyson replied.[1] Most of us, I dare say, would understand Tennyson's disbelief – and agree, accordingly, with the sentiment that Troy the site is not a marvellous 'visitor experience'. The location may be broadly evocative – for those imaginatively predisposed to survey a landscape of epic combat. Yet the excavated remains are rather underwhelming, and difficult to comprehend. The huge trench cut through the Bronze Age settlement by Schliemann, and the resultant spoil heap left on the northern edge of the citadel, certainly contribute to a sense of confusion. But that aside, the multiple layers of habitation, from *c.*3000 BC until Byzantine times, customarily represented like a pile of pancakes in archaeological diagrams, will test even those pilgrims arriving with some expertise in ancient construction methods. Choice finds from the city are lodged in remote museums; and the substantial extent of Troy in Hellenistic, Roman, and possibly earlier times, indicated mainly by geophysical prospection, is hardly discernible. So archaeologists, post-Schliemann, have to work hard to make the 'Trojan stones speak' – at least if they also wish to avoid the charge of being obsessed (as Schliemann notoriously was) with establishing some kind of

[1] H. Tennyson, *Alfred Lord Tennyson. A Memoir* (London, 1898), ii.217 (the encounter took place in March 1877).