The book's third deficiency is the complete absence of any sources other than literary texts. Coins, inscriptions, images, architecture and urban layouts do not feature among the sources B. – and indeed the whole series – deem worthy of being included in the evidence used by historians to reconstruct the past. While S. and D. at least discuss the Roman Forum and the Forum of Augustus (of which their book contains plans), the wealth of information material sources convey appears to be off the radar of authors and series editors alike. This is a missed opportunity, as undergraduate students of Ancient History are often unaware of the potential of non-literary evidence.

With its explicit inclusion of structural history – culture, economy and society – and by addressing the whole geographical scope of Roman politics and rule, S.'s and D.'s volume presents a reasonable narrative of Roman history from Sulla to the death of Augustus. There are some minor issues with terminology: using, wholesale and uncritically, the term 'propaganda' for Augustan literature and art as well as other media of representation, which is so popular with students, is of course grossly simplistic, if not downright wrong, and would certainly have required some explanation; calling Arminius 'Hermann the German' is daring and should have been underpinned with some reference to the reception of the Battle of the Teutoburg Forest in early modern and modern Germany. By and large, however, S. and D. give their readers a lucid, coherent and convincing account of Roman history, which should create awareness for the major factors shaping Rome, Italy and the Roman provinces in the first century B.C.

While the two volumes under scrutiny here are, for all intents and purposes, useful teaching tools, they regrettably share the generic shortcomings of the series: their reduction of 'sources' to material evidence, their overly positivist approach to history and, coupled with this, their almost complete lack of any proper source criticism make this 'source-based approach' to key periods of Ancient History somewhat shallow. If, on the other hand, students are encouraged to engage more easily with political history while going back *ad fontes*, these books probably meet their purpose.

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THE GREEK GODS

BREMMER (J.N.), ERSKINE (A.) (edd.) *The Gods of Ancient Greece. Identities and Transformations*. (Edinburgh Leventis Studies 5.) Pp. xxii + 528, ills, maps. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010. Cased, £95. ISBN: 978-0-7486-3798-0.
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This volume originates in the fifth Leventis conference, held in Edinburgh in 2007, which accompanied B.'s tenure as the Fifth Leventis Visiting Professor of Greek. In the preface, the Editors explain that they brought together this team of scholars 'with a view to generating new approaches to, rather than providing a comprehensive survey of, the nature and development of the Greek gods in the period from Homer until late antiquity', their aim being to 'present a synchronic and diachronic view of the gods as they functioned in Greek culture until the triumph

of Christianity' (p. viii). These are admirable ambitions, and, in numerous ways, the volume does succeed in meeting them, but its route, as we might expect from the subject, is not straightforward.

The articles lay out a kaleidoscopic view of different, sometimes conflicting, approaches to studying a variety of aspects of the Greek gods, across time and place, using different kinds of evidence and diverse theoretical stances. The emphasis is on literary sources, with three of the twenty-six chapters focussed explicitly on visual material (Klöckner, Lapatin and Carpenter), and one that examines ways of seeing (Auffarth); but a number of chapters manage to bring into play a broad range of evidence. The chronological scope is impressively wide, 'from early Greece to late antiquity' (p. 506). And this is a good reminder, made explicit in the epilogue, that the subject should not be limited by modern mental boundaries: religious beliefs do not, of course, stop, start and shift neatly within historical periods, and students of ancient religion must not only resist the temptation to tidy things up, but also, perhaps, should attempt to shift their perspective from the usual focus on classical religion. It is certainly true that, as E. says, these articles forcefully illustrate the dynamism of the gods over time and place, and that the volume usefully brings together an impressive range of individual examples of such change and variety. However, the suggestion that this allows for 'an opportunity to examine the development of the gods and ideas about the gods over time' (p. 506) may overestimate the reader's ability to create coherence from what is a dizzying vision of diversity.

This impression may be given, at least in part, by the arrangement of the volume. Following the preface, B. provides an introduction, in which he anticipates some of the later work in the volume, and offers, as context, an overview of the work of Wilamowitz, Gernet, Nilsson and Burkert. This is followed by a stand-alone chapter by A. Henrichs, 'What is a Greek God?', in which he identifies three characteristics of the gods – immortality, anthropomorphism and power – which he feels are currently neglected. From its positioning, it is tempting to see this stimulating chapter as setting up a provocative programme for the rest of the volume. Certainly some of his points reappear in later chapters; but there is also a separate section in this volume for the study of individual gods – an approach he argues against – so this seems unlikely. The remaining 24 chapters are arranged unequally around four sections: 'Systematic Aspects', 'Individual Divinities and Heroes', 'Diachronic Aspects' and 'Historiography'. The chapters in these sections are gratifyingly rich and range widely over time, place and genre, but there are no introductory or concluding remarks explaining either this structure or how the chapters in each section might be taken to relate to that section's title (which is not always clear).

However, although it is hard to find one's way around, time spent exploring, comparing and contrasting the chapters in this book pays dividends, revealing a set of concerns which are not made explicit in the introductory material, but which reinforce the message of the title: the identities and transformations of the gods. Most of the essays succeed in demonstrating how we might wring meaning from different kinds of evidence, or, in a number of cases, how we might assemble several different forms of evidence, in order to analyse the many ways in which, over time and place, mortals express, describe and communicate with and about divinity, and their reasons for doing so.

Part 1, 'Systematic Aspects', includes: a methodical account of the possible origins of the gods (I. Rutherford); a paradigmatic and wide-ranging case study

illustrating the many different uses of epigraphic evidence to study cult (F. Graf); some well-honed observations by R. Buxton on the metamorphoses of gods into animals and humans which whet the appetite for his book on the subject, *Forms of Astonishment*; S. Georgoudi's detailed overview of current interpretations of sacrifice (although omitting Naiden's recent contribution in *JHS*, 2007); and, finally, two chapters ably analysing artistic representations of divinity – reliefs portraying human–divine encounters (A. Klöckner) and the evolution of chryselephantine statuary (K. Lapatin). While each of these chapters is fascinating, it remains unclear how they relate to the category 'Systematic', or to each other.

Part 2, 'Individual Divinities and Heroes', is the most straightforwardly organised: each chapter focusses on a particular god or selected cults. C. Calame and B. each offer a *tour de force* of analysis, bringing together evidence from (at least) anthropology, aetiology, literature and archaeology to examine the cultic association between certain divinities and heroes (Calame) and the development of the identity of Hephaestus (B.). The other chapters, although they roam less widely, dig deep and are equally compelling: J. Barringer sets Zeus in his archaeological context at Olympia; in contrast, I. Petrovic explores the literary manipulation of identity in her careful analysis of the Hellenistic treatment of Homeric Artemis. E. Stafford's interesting overview of the problem of Heracles' status ranges across evidence from myth and cult (she does not raise here political aspects of his representation, but perhaps this will be part of her larger work to come); while R. Seaford's argument that conceptions of Zeus's power, in Aeschylus and elsewhere, were influenced by the 'perceived omnipotence of abstract monetary value' is ingenious, but in the end confusing (why not, for example, the other way round?).

Part 3, 'Diachronic Aspects', examines the representation of the Greek gods not only through time, but also among individual writers, literary genres, fourth-century Apulian pottery and ritual contexts. No explanation is given about the choice of subjects. First, S. Trepanier examines the presence or absence of Olympian gods in early philosophy. R. Fowler contrasts Herodotus' attitude to the gods with those of his predecessors (although much on the mythographers ends up in the footnotes, and more on Herodotus' intellectual context, perhaps with a reference to R. Thomas's *Herodotus in Context*, would have been helpful). Then to Apulia to investigate the local perception of gods using fourth-century vase paintings (T.H. Carpenter) and fast-forward to a careful scrutiny of the religious attitudes of Lucian (M. Dickie). This is followed by a valiant overview of the diverse roles of the gods across the Greek Novel (K. Dowden) and a plea from V. Pirenne-Delforge not to write off Pausanias as simply a religious database. The next five chapters provide a fascinating but limited view of ritual practice: two chapters clarify the role of the gods in different types of spells in the *PGM* (C. Faraone and S. Iles Johnston); one examines later Orphic material (A. Bernabé); and the last two explore different aspects of the interaction between the Greek gods and the emerging cult of Christianity – L. Lanzillota discusses the rhetoric of Christian apologists as they rejected polytheism and pagan deities, and C. Auffarth succinctly presents a compelling theory for analysing the construction of mortal relationships with the divine, and the changing role of the cult image.

Part 4, 'Historiography', contains only a single chapter, examining the influences on and contributions of Roscher, Curtius, Usener, Farnell and Harrison, and the relationships between their approaches (M. Konaris). It is a compact reminder of the ways in which context shapes scholarship, but it sits in strange isolation from the similar material in B.'s introduction.

The size and range of this volume may encourage readers to select and cherish particular chapters, but reading it from beginning to end reveals internal comments and connections. For example, Rutherford's chapter benefits from the evidence adduced by B. in his introduction; similarly, E.'s comments on ruler-cult take issue with Henrichs' three characteristics of Greek gods, and in particular his remarks on the nature of deification and immortality (p. 509). The detailed but well-structured index provides a useful alternative approach to the diverse interests in this volume; a comprehensive bibliography would have been equally welcome.

As one of the Editors, B., concludes his chapter: 'Thinking about the gods still can teach us many things about mortals', and, as the chapters in this volume demonstrate, vice versa. In some ways, the nature of this collection mirrors both the subject it studies and those who study it. Like the multiple and dynamic identities of the gods themselves, this book offers a fascinating assembly of individual voices, topics and insights which can be conceptually arranged and rearranged to offer different and differently compelling visions of the ancient Greek gods and of the mortals who worshipped them.

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A HISTORY

PRICE (S.), THONEMANN (P.) *The Birth of Classical Europe. A History from Troy to Augustine*. Pp. xviii + 398, ills, maps, colour pls. London: Allen Lane, 2010. Cased, £30. ISBN: 978-0-7139-9242-7.
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This is the Ur- and apparently foundational volume of a projected eight-volume series described as 'The Penguin History of Europe'. Three of the remaining volumes have already appeared in print, and, as will become clear, the commissioning of Richard J. Evans and Ian Kershaw, two experts on Nazi Germany, to compose, respectively, the nineteenth- and twentieth-century volumes, seems particularly auspicious. Rather than offering yet another dry, bare-bones summary of classical history for the general reader, P. and T. here perform a miracle akin to Ezekiel's, knitting these bones together with meaty skeletal muscle. The particular framing device is memory, both in antiquity and in more modern periods, and they place this 'first and overarching theme' front and centre early in the Introduction. In an elegant, sophisticated and ultimately convincing analysis, they contend that all history is 'an act of remembering', promoting 'the self-understandings of particular peoples', regardless of whether these memories are strictly '"true"' or '"false"' in any objective sense. Accordingly, 'The development of Greek society between the seventh and fourth centuries BC was driven not by what *we* know about their early history, but by what *they* thought they knew' (pp. 6–7).

The book fully validates this claim, and it leads to several further, though closely related, postulates. Historical memory did not end with the Greeks and Romans, but rather continued to be 'used' by later scholars, artists and intellectuals of all types, particularly in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This theme is illustrated in a series of trenchant shaded box-panels on modern interpretations of the past, scattered throughout the chapters (though these are remarkably concentrated in the central chapters, 3–7). Memory forms the basis of two other 'major themes', the