

current US predicament in Iraq: ‘sometimes you *can* go home again’. (If only they had taken care not to misspell Xenophon. . . .) The actual book is, in fact, a sensible, elegantly told account of the ‘survival epic’ of the *Anabasis*, one which folds into its retelling of Xenophon’s story well-grounded digressions on topics as diverse as mercenary armies, Persia, logistics, or (inevitably?) Xenophon’s youthful homosexual exploits. For Waterfield, Xenophon’s exploits fall at the cusp of two eras in Greek history, between ‘the optimism, adventurousness, and high values of the fifth century . . . “golden age”’ and ‘the more pragmatic, materialistic and cynical realism of the fourth’. The clash between East and West that Waterfield finds in the *Anabasis* is also seen as the first of a series of clashes through history, from Alexander to the present day. While I still have this pulpit from which to preach, I do worry – and this applies to some of the contributions to *Cultural Responses to the Persian Wars* also – about what we are doing in emphasizing the ancient origins of modern crises: whether we may in fact be playing to the prejudices of the *Clash of Civilisation* doom-mongers by suggesting – falsely – an inevitability to current problems. Now that even the War on Terror has lost some of its sharp edges, perhaps we should examine our post-9/11 rhetoric?

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Roman History

If a review could begin with a headline, this should: ‘Late Antiquity subverted’. B. Ward-Perkins’ **The Fall of Rome*¹ attacks the doctrine that the end of Roman government in the west was comparatively painless, even beneficent. Starting from the ‘conventional’ (but it no longer is that) hypothesis of catastrophic decline due to barbarian invasion, Christianity, lead in the pipes, the author expounds the current emollient view (just the thing for a unified Europe) which focuses on spiritual issues; he then responds with evidence for the misery of ordinary people as Rome lost the financial basis for its defence and complex structures of civilization collapsed. How liberating this will be to those who have felt in their bones that the dark side was being played down! The presentation too is brilliantly clear, the illustrations arresting. Only occasionally has the Press allowed the popularizing author to sell himself short, as with a note on his mother’s thatched house and graphs on economic complexity suggesting quantitative certainty. Long may this howitzer fire and provoke!

F. Millar’s *A Greek Roman Empire*² will certainly be in service for many years. Scrupulously examining rich but difficult and under-used material, historical writing, legal collections, above all the *Acta* of Church Councils (there is an invaluable guide to the fifth century *Acta*), he realigns our view of the reign of Theodosius II in revelatory style. One main theme concerns the places of Greek and Latin in the ‘twin’ Empire of the East (at least thirty million souls) after its almost accidental sundering from the West, which belied the principle of imperial collegiality. The reign covered much of the first part (395–476) of the life of this Greek

¹ *The Fall of Rome and the End of Civilization*. By Bryan Ward-Perkins. Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 2005, p/b 2006). Pp. xii + 239. 2 maps (‘endpapers’, actually pp. viii–xi), 45 figs. Paperback £8.99.

² *A Greek Roman Empire. Power and Belief under Theodosius II (408–450)*. By Fergus Millar. Sather Classical Lectures 64. University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 2006. Pp. xxvi + 279, including 11 figs. Hardback £32.50.

Empire, the remainder lasting until Justinian's conquests. Latin was used at the official level, for almost everything else Greek – the bishops did not understand Latin, though Syriac had its place in the Church, and the officials were necessarily bilingual – and the 'leges' of the age, readily distinguished as belonging to one of the 'twins' or the other, were in fact letters addressed to officials, or the Senate, usually in response to memoranda. For it is the second theme of the book that such exchanges are part of the literature of persuasion, the 'rhetoric of Empire'. There is no question of narrative; rather topics are analysed, such as 'Security and Insecurity', 'Integration and Diversity', and the coherence of the military and governmental system, set against recalcitrant individuals. So the large-scale picture of State and Church in their operations yields instructive stories, notably that of Nestorius, woven into 'State Power and Moral Defiance' and with doctrinal issues lucidly set out. It reveals too the petty failings that the Emperor still had to note, even baths exacted from provincials. Hence, too, illuminating insight into the roles of imperial women and other advisers – and the uncanny insight of subjects into where power lay at court. This is a prodigious work, a grand landscape set with human figures.

Focusing on detail we come on two further books whose authors should have been born under Gemini: each deals satisfyingly with two themes. First, in *Cicero and the Jurists*,³ J. Harries tackles Cicero (from a *colonia*, 20, 51?) who has never left the limelight, and the jurists, whose lives seem obscure, their status uncertain, recognition coming only with the Severi. For it is from Cicero that much of our knowledge of the earlier jurists comes. With Cicero's identification of the importance of *societas* for community, jurisprudence at last came into its own, contributing to the enhanced stature that Harries attributes to Cicero's last years. Harries has opened doors on the jurists and elucidated priestly law, the role of precedent, their reliance on antiquity, and many points of detail, such as *adrogatio*. She acknowledges the downturn in social standing that the jurists underwent as the Republic declined, but stresses the connectedness of the early practitioners with the intellectual and political life of their time, so that this book represents a continuation of the work of Elizabeth Rawson. On Cicero, who engrosses attention in the final chapters, one must agree that his 'conceptualising of the *res publica* was more inspiring than his practice' and that 'his emphasis on the collective . . . may have evolved partly in response to the individualistic excesses of his rivals'. There is a glossary that will be useful to students coming freshly to this part of Roman intellectual life, but no footnotes or index of passages treated.

The main title of L. M. Yarrow's *Historiography at the End of the Republic*⁴ postpones one of her two themes. For she has written of substantial authors of diverse provincial origins and times (that is dealt with in an appendix): Trogon, Diodorus, Memnon, Posidonius, Nicolaus of Damascus, and the author of *I Maccabees*. She does not treat them separately, but in a series of chapters, each presenting them with finesse in a richly documented context of coevals; *en route* she tackles identity, original language, cultural assimilation, and the nature of 'fragments'. The two central pieces deal with universalism and the place of Rome in the several narratives, and Roman internal

³ *Cicero and the Jurists. From Citizens' Law to the Lawful State*. By Jill Harries. London, Duckworth, 2006. Pp. 256. Hardback £45.

⁴ *Historiography at the End of the Republic. Provincial Perspectives on Roman Rule*. By Liv Maria Yarrow. Oxford Classical Monographs. New York, Oxford University Press Inc., 2006. Pp. xiv + 396. Hardback £65.

affairs, but she starts with ‘The power of the intellectual’, not only as teacher but, rightly, as issuing ‘speech-acts’, which were themselves part of the political scene and its history. Hence straightaway the successful yoking of the two themes, writing history and being subject to Rome. As to the first, the book is indispensable for students of her authors; on the second they come in the main to a favourable verdict: Roman rule is acceptable. The last chapters, ‘Romans abroad’ and ‘Enemies of Rome’ put that claim to the test. We have to accept it, if the authors are indeed uttering ‘speech acts’, and may not ask what some admitted even to themselves.

Back in the history of the Empire we find stimulating variety. In the last chapter of his **The Roman Empire. A Very Short Introduction*⁵ (short but not conventional), C. Kelly has interesting remarks on reception in the land of Boadicea and on the reaction of Hitler to Mussolini’s buildings. We have more imperial Greek authors than Roman roads, though the chapter titles themselves promise good coverage: ‘Conquest’, ‘Imperial Power’, ‘Collusion’ (this is central, revealing *the arcanum imperii*), ‘History Wars’ (Hadrian’s dreams and rulers’ ability to mould their subjects’ histories are the themes), ‘Christians to the Lions’, ‘Living and Dying’, where Kelly indulges a taste for statistics, with due health warnings, and ‘Rome Revisited’ – finally, by Hollywood. There is a good map, a Chronology, suggestions for reading, and telling photographs. Kelly assigns emperors a modest place, yet troubles with Agrippina’s death; but such things are set against different, provincial, conceptions of the Empire. More of Spain and Gaul might have appeared, as also the trade in oil and pottery stressed by Ward-Perkins, but readers will enjoy and be instructed by what they have.

There is a whiff of Channel 4 about A. Murdoch’s **Rome’s Greatest Defeat* (another German reaction to the Empire).⁶ Nothing need be the worse for that. Murdoch’s presentation is vivid, his narrative gripping, his judgment of Roman aims in Germany persuasive, his trip round the site critical, his assessment of the impact of the Arminius figure on recent history just. In particular, the reader is presented with up-to-date archaeological evidence and shown in the notes where it comes from. I have two ‘buts’. The first concerns extravagances that scrutiny would have eliminated. The dust jacket has Tacitus writing the *Annals* in 109 BC; by the end of Chapter 1, Cannae is fought in 218 and Parthia is ‘levelled’; Lollius with Watergate creates ‘Lolliusgate’; Augustus confirms his position as Emperor at Brindisi; Livia (‘Lady Bracknell’) runs Tiberius’ eastern policy from her salon. Second, there is one contourless sketch map of Germany (50 km to 1 cm) and one of ‘Varus’ Asia Minor’ (actually the Levant). No photograph shows the lie of the land; we are dependent on Murdoch’s words, excellent as they are. Students and general readers will learn and enjoy the process; they could have learnt more with better illustration.

From Rome’s lost province to her most problematical: it is significant that D. Mattingly’s *An Imperial Possession. Britain in the Roman Empire*⁷ is the first in a nine-volume history; but the constraints that that imposes have not prevented the author from producing an

⁵ *The Roman Empire. A Very Short Introduction*. By Christopher Kelly. Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 2006. Pp. x + 153. 1 map, 25 illustrations, Paperback £6.99.

⁶ *Rome’s Greatest Defeat. Massacre in the Teutoburg Forest*. By Adrian Murdoch. Stroud, Gloucestershire, Sutton Publishing, 2006. Pp. xiv + 234. 2 maps, 15 plates. Hardback £20.

⁷ *An Imperial Possession. Britain in the Roman Empire 54 BC – AD 409*. By David Mattingly. The Penguin History of Britain, 1. London, Allen Lane, an imprint of Penguin Books, 2006. Pp. xvi + 622. 17 figs, 14 tables. Hardback £30.

original and provocative work. We Brits have taken both Boudica and Roman Britain to our hearts, research being focused on villas and forts, complains the author. For Mattingly is hostile to Roman, indeed to all, exploitation, as the title hints and as he repeatedly makes clear: 'For every winner there were a hundred losers'. (Were they worse off than before?) Moreover, he cuts the material in fresh ways, not 'Roman' and 'native', but military, urban, and rural, stressing the predominance of the first community: he develops the idea of 'identities' recoverable from the remains. Care is needed. Are the names scratched on Samian cups evidence of superior barrack-room literacy, rather than of enhanced liability to theft? Mattingly makes a convincing and well-documented picture, bringing out smaller differences within his three categories. Despite lacunose evidence, he is able to offer suggestive quantitative estimates, as for requirements of meat for the Scottish garrison, or of prostitutes for the whole occupation. Another merit is his attention to areas outside Roman control. There are maps but not a single photograph, except on the jacket; there is a bibliographical essay, but no notes or bibliography, and a minor hiccup is caused whenever an ancient place name is italicized, as in 'Antioch in (*sic*) *Pisidia*'. But the index gives access to the book's enriching information and controversy, which forcefully demand our attention.

The more welcome Judith Ginsburg's *Representing Agrippina*⁸ is, the more saddening to know that it is her last book, completed by colleagues and friends. They have done the work sensitively, and have indicated exactly where her words end and theirs, identified with five sets of initials, begin: largely in the Introduction by E. S. Gruen, and in the conclusions to each of three chapters; the manuscript was planned and nearly complete. Ginsburg passed from her analysis of *Tradition and Theme in the Annals of Tacitus* (Salem, 1981) to a figure presented by many authors and in art. There are recent works, but Ginsburg aimed to examine the portraits literary and artistic and the stereotypes from which they grew, and did so with clarity and finesse. She confronted both literature and artwork with 'resisting' readings, and resisted any temptation to use the second to 'correct' the first: each has its own agenda. The studies of literary set-pieces (notably Tacitus') are most resonant, but there are smaller points to savour, such as Agrippina's association with Sejanus. I could suggest greater refinement only when the unsatisfactory 'Julian/Claudian' dichotomy appears. In dealing with visual material, Ginsburg has made acute use of the distinction between 'prospective' and 'retrospective' imagery, finding monuments that combine the two. The study of imperial women as provincial deities, notably Ceres, is especially rewarding. As to the stereotypes, Ginsburg shows unmistakably how failings imputed to imperial women stand for failings in the regime. Altogether the results are refreshing and stimulating, and while, in Gruen's words, Ginsburg does not become enmired in 'a fruitless search for the elusive historical "truth"', one may still wish to say that her work contributes to that worthy search.

Turning now to *revenants*, we find M. C. Bishop and J. C. N. Coulston's *Roman Military Equipment*⁹ making a welcome

⁸ *Representing Agrippina. Constructions of Female Power in the Early Roman Empire*. By Judith Ginsburg. American Philological Association, American Classical Studies 50. Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 2006. Pp. 147, 10 figs. Hardback £26.99.

⁹ *Roman Military Equipment from the Punic Wars to the Fall of Rome*. By M. C. Bishop and J. C. N. Coulston. Second edition. Oxford, Oxbow Books, 2006. Pp. xiv + 321. 8 colour plates, 1 map, 154 figs. Hardback £35; paperback £19.95. (First edition: London, B. T. Batsford, Pp. 256.)

return in slightly reduced format, no longer in two columns, and its cover decorated with garlands won from *Britannia* and *The Journal of Roman Archaeology*. The speedy return is unsurprising: this subject advances with archaeology and there is widening interest in artefacts. I would never have thrown out my first edition without having the new one, but it is good to be up to date. The illustrations are substantially unchanged, but the scope of text and notes is widened as well as updated, to include standards and musical instruments (illustrated); *lorica segmentata* and shield blazons are given new attention, along with funerary depositions, and the bibliography is greatly increased. This is an indispensable work of reference, attractively presented. Next comes an abridgment, by M. T. Boatwright, D. J. Gargola, and R. A. Talbert, **A Brief History of the Romans*,¹⁰ hard on the heels of *The Romans, from Village to Empire*. The title has become colourless, and there are other brief histories, so what has this work to offer? The authors, besides noting recent bibliography, are looking for readers with cultural and artistic interests and claim to have enhanced their treatment of religion and slavery. Attractively laid out and illustrated, this book invites the reader in, however shy s/he may be; the occasional box encloses a literary or epigraphic document (not a perfect compromise for raw material). As to the text, it must be admitted that the emperors become one damned thing after another. (Caligula is tentatively diagnosed with brain fever; have we time for such things in this abridgement?) There is a 'timeline', glossary, gazetteer, and an alluring offer of the download of maps. Beginning with a headline, we end with 'news', C. Drecoll's *Nachrichten in der römischen Kaiserzeit*.¹¹ After chapters on definitions and the nature of the materials, ancient views of letter-writing and its status between rumour and messenger are discussed. In the central Chapter 5, eleven authors empire-wide, pagan and Christian, from Pliny to Sidonius Apollinaris, and the papyri, are scrutinized for political news. With risks of subjectivity and excessive neatness, it is divided into five categories (A1–A5): emperors, wars, provinces, disasters, the city. (B1–3 and C1–4, addressees and economic topics, prove less informative.) Each author is discussed and most results tabulated, with a chronological dimension when possible. There follow two less substantial chapters on economy and culture. The author takes a different viewpoint for the chapter on the role in historical writers of letters as bringers of news, arguing convincingly that their use, however well- or ill-founded, shows the actual importance of letters for the purpose. The author's final chapter stresses both the continuity of practice noticeable in the selected authors, and the gulf caused by differences between the ancient and modern worlds. The volume is well presented and helped by marginal headings. This is a timely book when news distribution is in lively discussion – the texting soldier, the blogger. Don't expect to be provoked or excited.

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¹⁰ *A Brief History of the Romans*. By Mary T. Boatwright, Daniel J. Gargola, and Richard J. A. Talbert. New York and Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2006. Pp. xxii + 330. 27 maps, 53 Figs. Paperback £19.99. Unabridged version: *The Romans, from Village to Empire. A History of Ancient Rome from the Earliest Times to Constantine*. New York, Oxford University Press, 2004. Pp. 511, 36 maps, 74 figs.

¹¹ *Nachrichten in der römischen Kaiserzeit. Untersuchungen zu den Nachrichteninhalten in Briefen*. By Carsten Drecoll. Freiburg, Carsten Drecoll Verlag, 2006. Pp. 260. Hardback €39.90.