imperial centre and the elites and how this relationship affected networks of exploitation, redistribution, and exchange. Additionally, the ideological implications of imperialism and the ideological appropriations of the imperial centres provide fruitful discussion for the questions of maintaining the empire or explaining (partly) its failure (particularly Bedford and Wiesehöfer). Morris sees the Athenian empire as not really an empire at all, but rather as a stage in the Greek processes of state formation of the classical period. Hopkins examines coin production and circulation in the Roman empire in order to argue that Roman money cannot be used as an index of economic growth. Haldon focuses on the forms of exploitation and the ideological practices of the Byzantine empire. Scheidel argues that an evolutionary perspective would enhance our understanding of imperialism: because the appropriation of resources could be seen as facilitating reproductive success, empires in some ways facilitated sexual exploitation. This is a thought-provoking volume that provides a much-needed multi-disciplinary and theoretical approach to the question of imperialism.

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Roman History

We are going east – in a way. For readers of Grant Parker's *The Making of Roman India*[1] will not expect a political history and an account of artefacts. It is not a study of 'contacts' or 'influences' but intellectual history: a study of representations in a social context (curiously part of a series on 'Greek culture in the Roman world'), which traces conceptions of the subcontinent (or parts of it) and how information was acquired and digested, from the earlier Greeks to the mid-sixth-century Cosmas Indicopleustes and beyond. This 'India' is a notional part of the Achaemenid empire and Alexander is cut to size, his expedition a performance of Achaemenid kingship. Nuggets of information are embedded in fantasy, the material being more difficult to handle because it comes as 'fragments'; the author does well in making sense of it. 'Periods', however, are moulded into themes. There are three parts, delphically named ('Creation', 'Features', 'Contexts of a Discourse') but intelligibly subdivided into the six sections 'Achaemenid India and Alexander'; 'India Described'; 'India Depicted'; 'Commodities'; 'Empire'; and 'Wisdom', a late arrival. (What an uninviting phrase 'writing wisdom' is!) This book is instructive at a high level about ways of thought, rich in inquiry and insights, and demands an *index locorum* for the sporadic reader, not just a bibliography and exiguous index. Further east we encounter F.-H. Mutschler and A. Mittag's timely collection *Conceiving the Empire. China and Rome Compared*.[2] 'Juxtaposed' is preferable: the editors, working from the end of the third century BC into the sixth AD, have assembled from their 2005 Essen conference eight pairs (one triplet) of papers divided between three periods: the birth of the imperial order, the firmly established Empire, and the waning of the imperial order. One misses discussion, for comparison comes only at the end in a methodical

[1] *The Making of Roman India*. By Grant Parker. Greek Culture in the Roman World. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2008. Pp. xvi + 357. 3 maps, 11 figures. Hardback £55, ISBN: 978-0-521-85834-2.

[2] *Conceiving the Empire. China and Rome Compared*. Ed. by F.-H. Mutschler and A. Mittag. New York, Oxford University Press, 2008. Pp. xx + 481. 35 figures, 2 maps. Hardback £85, ISBN: 978-0-119-921464-8.

survey by the editors, though one author appends questions and another inserts comparative material into his essay, anticipating his partner. Some essays are riveting: those in the central (fourth to sixth) sections, on geographical representation, epigraphic pronouncements (the Chinese emperor announces his achievements to the cosmic spirits!), and the power of images. Some seem vapid, perhaps because of uncertainty about the audience, and there are several unnecessary entanglements with the word 'empire'. We are told that Livy was an Augustan writer, but have to wait to know Wendi's dates. Each contribution has its bibliography, and there is a merciful chronology, glossary of Chinese characters, and indexes of names and subjects; but the publishers could have given the English a polish. Further enquiries will follow this worthy initiative, notably about the economy, as the editors suggest. Coming to specifics, Peter Bang's *The Roman Bazaar*[3] seeks a solution to the long-standing debate on the 'modern' or 'primitive' Roman economy by severing the link between the Roman and pre-modern European economies and tracing a closer connexion with those of the Mughal, Ottoman, and Ming/Ch'ing regimes. The subject is complex, the title misleading for tourists who see only remnants of the system. This does not look like a book for beginners, but Bang gives a lucid account of types of empire: 'tributary' means that the subjects pay tribute instead of being commercially exploited as European colonies were, and 'aristocratic and tributary order had very different needs from capitalism' (296). Lines between the contestants in the main debate also have to be drawn, and again the author is helpful. Furthermore, he provides a step-by-step way (accompanied by an engagingly simple pie-chart) of arriving at a higher estimate of the proportion of GDP taken by the state than has been supposed, though less than the one-third taken by the Mughal state. It is useful to have such calculations at hand, however uncertain one may feel about individual items: for example, the 'guestimate' that equestrian income in the central aristocracy was half that of senators (112). It is one great merit of this book to have uncoupled two systems, another to have subjected 'the Roman economy' to a thorough scrutiny from a fresh viewpoint. By coincidence, we meet Cosmas again, on the Red Sea coast, in James O'Donnell's *The Ruin of the Roman Empire*.[4] The opening sentence of its 'Overture' begins 'The night sky changes every night and yet never seems to change', and the cover comes with an endorsement from Madeleine Albright. A good read for the retired, then. For some pages they will lie stuffed and stupefied on their loungers: telling a fresh story with old materials O'Donnell has 'tried to recount the whole of it for the benefit of the reader who knows none of it' (x). Eventually argument emerges: we must do without the *Völkerwanderung* Theoderic: after his death and that of his daughter (535), Italy as a whole would know no comparable unity, prosperity, and freedom from warfare until the 1950s. For then came 'Justinian's world', with chapters on 'Opportunities Lost' and 'Wars Worse than Civil'. The author is well up with the 'small war' (409, from a page entitled 'Further Reading'; there is no bibliography and the reader is referred to the sparing notes) between those who believe that the empire fell and those who need the larger canvas of 'late antiquity'. As for the

[3] *The Roman Bazaar. A Comparative Study of Trade and Markets in a Tributary Empire*. By Peter Fibiger Bang. Cambridge Classical Studies. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2008. Pp. xvi + 358. Frontispiece, 18 figures, 4 tables. Hardback £55, ISBN: 978-0-521-85532-7.

[4] *The Ruin of the Roman Empire*. By James J. O'Donnell. London, Profile Books, 2009. Pp. xii + 436. Illustrated, 7 maps. Hardback £25, ISBN: 978-1-86197-935-3.

author's view, perhaps limitations on individual achievement, good or bad, deserved more consideration. But he is prepared for controversy. For contributors to Edward Bispham's *Roman Europe*[5] the end came, not surprisingly, in the fifth century (William Bowden's penultimate chapter covers the fourth), and the next volume in the History of Europe series is *The Early Middle Ages*. But Peter S. Wells, on peoples beyond the imperial frontiers, stresses discrepancies between Roman accounts of invasions and archaeological evidence for gradual change (tensions between history and archaeology are a theme of Bispham's trenchant introduction). Like O'Donnell, Wells bans those arrows that pierce borders in late Roman Empire maps. The terminus brings out the exceptional features of this volume, and possible problems. It is salutary and refreshing to see the Empire in the European context, bereft, some might think, of its better half. The perspective changes entirely, even though people outside the law occupy only two chapters by Wells of the overall ten. Two are the work of the editor and such continuity helps to obviate gaps and discrepancies between authors that the general editor of the series mentions as a danger, as do their meetings and mutual readings. The result is a coherent, handy, and reader-friendly volume, useful for classicists and modern historians alike. (It is hard to believe, though, that the sculpture on the cover belongs to 180 BC.) Seemingly we arrive back at familiar notions of the Empire with Dylan Sailor's *Writing and Empire in Tacitus*[6] – only to learn that the fuss made by our two earlier authors was justified. Is 'Principate' thought off-putting for readers? Sailor's thesis is that, by writing, Tacitus established a position for himself that was distinct from, and more creditable than, the political career dependent on *principes* and monumentalized in *CIL* VI 1574. The beauty of this idea depends on the detail. Thucydides and Sallust provide a germ but, as the author points out, Tacitus' two careers proceeded in parallel, the inscription sharpening the effect – not that Tacitus denied his success. Sailor starts with the overall problem, not shirking Tacitus' ambiguous dealings with the 'Stoic' martyrs, and here and elsewhere effectively applying the useful idea of 'safe criticism'. Subsequent chapters deal with *Agricola* and *Histories*. 'Elsewhere than at Rome' is followed by an extended discussion of Tacitus' treatment of Cremutius Cordus and by a brief conclusion on knowing Tacitus. Paradox abounds: the reputation of the independent Antistius Labeo still depended on the *princeps*' (dis)approval (26 f.). This is a fine study, heavy-going for students, falling into wilful fantasy at the end. There is no doubt where we are with Mary Beard's *Pompeii. The Life of a Roman Town*:[7] on *terra firma*, and 'life' is the word. The stratified gamut of archaeology is there, with plentiful lucid description: the excavated remains, what may lie below or beyond, afterlife, war damage, restoration, interpretation. So the author cleans up a tired canvas ready to recreate, as far as she legitimately can, the life of the town, starting from 'Living in an Old Town' and passing through eight further chapters on various aspects. Common notions are found wanting: the date of the eruption, the proportion of the population wiped out, furnishing styles (not as minimalist as they seem), the

[5] *Roman Europe. 1000 BC–AD 400*. Edited by Edward Bispham. The Short Oxford History of Europe. Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 2008. Pp. xx + 377. Hardback £55, ISBN: 978-0-19-926600-5; paperback £18.99, ISBN: 978-0-19-926601-2.

[6] *Writing and Empire in Tacitus*. By Dylan Sailor. New York, Cambridge University Press, 2008. Pp. xii + 359. Hardback £55, ISBN: 978-0-521-89747-1.

[7] *Pompeii. The Life of a Roman Town*. By Mary Beard. London, Profile Books, 2008. Pp. viii + 360. 23 colour plates, 113 illustrations, 21 figures. Hardback £25, ISBN: 978-1-86197-516-4.

search for brothels ('a category mistake', 237). There is an appendix on 'making a visit' and up-to-date advice on 'further reading' ('still useful is R. Ling…1991' [325]), for there are no notes or bibliography (it would have been vast). The diagrams and illustrations are excellently clear and well placed. Beard's *Roman Triumph* was reviewed here last time; she is to be congratulated on another unputdownable work, which will instruct students and the general reader and entertain the eminent scholar to whom she dedicates it. Pompeii figured in any early emperor's list of trouble spots, but not as high as Alexandria. Half a century since H. Musurillo's editions,[8] it was time to reconsider the literature that those troubles spawned, and here is Andrew Harker's *Loyalty and Dissidence in Roman Egypt*,[9] on *Acta* proper and related documents, distinguished by the author. The first of four sections is devoted to the embassies to Gaius and Claudius, which the author believes gave rise to the genre; the second is a survey of the *Acta* to the Severans; the third examines the historical and documentary background (this is not *samizdat* but entertainment for a wide readership); and the last relates the *Acta* to contemporary imperial literature of loyalty and dissent, notably the *Sibylline Oracles*, justifying the broad title. Among problems to which the author draws attention, quite apart from the condition of the texts and the reasons for the decline of the genre, is that of distinguishing documents from literature (enhanced versions and plain fiction); there is a spectrum, and Claudius' letter comes under suspicion. Discussions are careful, but the claim that Avillius Flaccus 'became paranoid that Gaius might use complaints' (12) is doubly objectionable, and it is not necessarily an indication of a date 19–26 AD that Drusus is referred to in *POxy.* 2435 *verso* as 'son of Caesar' (73). One appendix contains a list of editions of the texts, which deserved numbering for its annotations; another has an indispensable discussion of the status of Alexandrian Jews. For 'reception', we reach the west, even westerns, with Margaret Malamud's *Ancient Rome and Modern America*.[10] The most illuminating chapters come early, on the period after the War of Independence and on nineteenth-century social unrest. For the opening phase invokes 'Exemplary Romans in the Early Republic', and the last, 'Imperial Consumption', carries us into yesterday's extravagances, while three that precede it – 'Manifest Virtue' on Christians, 'Screening Rome during the Great Depression', and 'Cold War Romans' – are hackneyed.[11] It is when we pass from Cincinnatus to the Gracchi ('Working Men's Heroes') and to 'Corporate Caesars and Radical Reformers' that we learn most about American history. For that is the subject, and Roman history is seen in more distant perspective (Marius is a 'provincial', 36). Overall, the author's chapters, which naturally include one on slavery, demonstrate how malleable Rome (ever building and blabbing) has been in the hands of politicians and moralists. Imperialism receives attention, especially in 'The Pleasures of Empire', but focussed on successes of more

[8] H. Musurillo (ed.), *The Acts of the Pagan Martyrs. Acta Alexandrinorum* (Oxford, 1954); *Acta Alexandrinorum. De mortibus Alexandrorum nobilium – fragmenta papyracea graeca* (Leipzig, 1961).

[9] *Loyalty and Dissidence in Roman Egypt. The Case of the* Acta Alexandrinorum. By Andrew Harker. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2008. Pp. vi + 256. Hardback £55, ISBN: 978-0-521-88789-2.

[10] *Ancient Rome and Modern America*. By Margaret Malamud. Malden, MA, Wiley-Blackwell, 2009. Pp. xii + 296. 53 illustrations. Paperback £19.99, ISBN: 978-1-4051-3934-2.

[11] See, e.g., S. R. Joshel, Margaret Malamud, and D. T. MacGuire, Jr. (eds.), *Imperial Projections. Ancient Rome in Modern Popular Culture* (Baltimore, MD, 2001), reviewed in *G&R* 51 (2004), 126.

than a century ago and ending with a section on 'Imperial Amnesia'. Justification has retreated to academe[12] but it is entertaining that Malamud employs the juxtaposition noticed above, of 'republic' vs. 'empire': 'The republic of George Washington's day lasted only a generation…. Vast new territories were added' (18). Help is at hand: John Richardson's *The Language of Empire*.[13] The author's previous work commends this austere book, for which he has used electronic resources, and students would benefit from it. Richardson states the difficulties straightaway: the first is one of (changing) modes of empire; the second of how the Romans understood their own modes, especially in their use of the key words *imperium* and *provincia* (I would have liked more on *dicio*). Sensitive to the difficulty of grasping ancient intentions of individuals, let alone those of groups, Richardson focuses on the 'mental wallpaper' of the ruling class. The chronological treatment is imperative and involves other arguments: the period Hannibal to Sulla means challenging T. Corey Brennan's conception of the allocation of praetorships; then come Cicero's empire, the Augustan empire, the period after Augustus, and conclusions on presuppositions and patterns. Two appendices list Ciceronian occurrences of the key words and show them in Livy as percentages of total words. The reader is convinced of what he or she may have thought s/he had learnt previously, partly from this author. But how did the big change in '*imperium*' to mean a territorial empire take place? Augustus himself and exiled Ovid are eventually in evidence, so many will accept that it was due to that wizard, Augustus, as one accepts the role of Pompey that the author urges. But he has nothing on the Second Triumvirate, which divided up the Empire on a territorial basis. From the heart of Rome comes the *bonne bouche*, or rather a series of them, T. P. Wiseman's *Remembering the Roman People*.[14] Overall the book contributes weightily to the 'democratic' conception of Roman politics advocated, for instance, by Fergus Millar and Andrew Lintott. Although the essays may be taken separately (the programmatic first is not new, and halfway comes 'Macaulay on Cicero'), they are neatly linked and move forward in time. The second, on 'The Fall and Rise of Licinius Geta' is outstanding. Licinius who? That is the point: 'Being able to answer the big questions…depends on paying proper attention to the little ones' (3). Geta is brilliantly rescued, and Wiseman goes on to the famous Macer, politician and contentious historian (he insists), writing during Sulla's dictatorship, and his connection with Juno Moneta and Veiovis. Then Varro, of farming stock, who found the 'principle of equality at the very origin of Rome' (98). So, after an essay on Menippean satire, to the contrasting Cicero, who has perniciously imposed his ideology on readers. First, his return to the political stage, which Wiseman (ever attentive to topography) constructs also for the Lupercalia. Increasingly impassioned chapters follow: 'The Ethics of Murder' (that will get students going) and 'After the Ides of

[12] See the review of Arthur M. Eckstein, *Rome Enters the Greek East. From Anarchy to Hierarchy in the Hellenistic Mediterranean, 230–170 BC* (Malden, MA, 2008) in *G&R* 56 (2009), 118.

[13] *The Language of Empire. Rome and the Idea of Empire from the Third Century BC to the Second Century AD*. By John Richardson. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2008. Pp. x + 220. Hardback £50, ISBN: 978-0-521-81501-7.

[14] *Remembering the Roman People. Essays on Late Republican Politics and Literature*. By T. P. Wiseman. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009. Pp. x + 271. 6 illustrations. Hardback £55, ISBN: 978-0-19-923976-4.

March' (analysis of accounts of popular reactions). Yet, while popular ideology is unmistakable, popular power remains another matter.

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Art and Archaeology

The origins of Greek art make a loaded and vexatious topic. Loaded, because such a firm tradition of images and writing about images sits upon the monumental basis created by the Greeks; vexatious, because, despite the appearance of beginning with childlike simplicity, this process cannot have been entirely *ex novo*; the mythology of Daedalus as *protos heuretes* of various arts and crafts is so obviously partisan, and the archaeology of Egyptian and other outside influences increasingly cogent. So any new study of art in the so-called 'Dark Age' of Pre-, Proto-, and Geometric Greece must be seized with hope of enlightenment; and a full monograph from Susan Langdon, one of the curators of a virtuous exhibition, 'From Pasture to Polis: Art in the Age of Homer' (1993), is especially to be welcomed. Langdon's *Art and Identity in Dark Age Greece, 1100–700 B.C.E.*[1] offers, indeed, a new paradigm for the study of the earliest Greek art: nothing to do with Daedalus, or anywhere extraneous; rather, these are images embedded in the rites and rhythms of early Iron Age society in Greece. So it is, broadly speaking, an anthropological account, whose tenor may be judged by the introductory discussion of a well-known piece, the bowl in the British Museum often taken to represent Theseus and Ariadne (the judgement of Nicolas Coldstream on this scene, emphasizing the 'crown of light' carried by 'Ariadne', seems to me persuasive[2]). Langdon specifies the shape as neither bowl nor krater but 'spouted louterion', thereby pinning its function to that of ritual purification, perhaps in a matrimonial context. If we then inquire what pertinence an image of Theseus and Ariadne might have to this context, we must not press too hard: after all, scenes of the abduction of Helen to Troy were evidently frequently deemed suitable for the *cassoni* or marriage-chests of Renaissance Florence; and Langdon is content to allow the story of Theseus and Ariadne as illustrative of an Iron Age man's claim upon a woman as his possession. But the epic or heroic resonances are less important, for her purposes, than the functional generation of the image from a practice of providing dowry: this rite should be germane to understanding what an objet d'art meant in its time. Langdon admits that the danger of her explanatory mode is that it becomes both comprehensive and unconvincing. And, after many pages of dense and verbose argument, the reader may feel there is little substantial reward: for instance, the revelation that warriors on Geometric vases 'offered a reassuring image of defense and security to a community' (249). This Structuralist approach is valuable insofar as it 'grounds' our vision in terms of gender, rites of passage, and so on; yet it seems unable to answer quite basic questions about Geometric iconography – such as why 'Dipylon warriors' are shown apparently carrying shields from some much earlier epoch. (And one has to challenge the date range promised by the title of the book: very little material is discussed that does not belong to *c*.800–700 BC.) 'Seeing Geometric art as the visual counterpart of epic poetry is no longer supportable': Langdon's declaration (3) relies heavily upon the interpretation of the term 'visual

[1] *Art and Identity in Dark Age Greece, 1100–700 B.C.E.* By Susan Langdon. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2008. Pp. 388. Hardback £50, ISBN: 978-0-521-51321-0.

[2] J. N. Coldstream, *Geometric Greece. 900–700 BC* (London, 2003), 354–5.