

the similar Byzantine excerpts.

The second chapter (pp. 65–100) examines Movsēs' claim to have used the *Universal Chronicle* of Iulius Africanus extensively in his section dealing with the Artaxiad dynasty of Armenia. As in the previous chapter, Topchyan begins his examination with a short introduction to Africanus and with a more detailed presentation of the argumentation used by earlier scholars in favor of the view that all of Movsēs' references to Africanus actually originated from either Josephus' *Jewish War* or Eusebius' *Chronicle*. To demonstrate that this dominant view is based on erroneous interpretations, Topchyan examines in detail the information given by Xorenac'i and the precise nature of the terminology used and sentence construction. In many cases, Topchyan is able to show that Movsēs' version contains information not found in either Josephus or in Eusebius, but strong similarities can be discovered in other sources which are known to have used Africanus as a source. It would thus seem quite certain, as Topchyan himself says, that Movsēs was able to use Africanus to a certain degree either directly or indirectly, and that the previous opinion, that all such references are just interpolations from Eusebius, cannot be upheld any longer.

The third chapter (pp. 100–16) deals with Movsēs' claim to have used an otherwise unknown historiographical narrative by Firmilian. Again, Topchyan gives a short presentation of Firmilian, the reference to his work(s) in Xorenac'i and the currently held explanations for the references. Much of the chapter deals with the possibility that Firmilian could in fact have written a work that might have included some historiographical information. The main issue in the polemic has been the discussion about Peter, the sixteenth bishop of Alexandria, by Movsēs as originating from the Firmilian "narrative", which Topchyan attempts to explain to have originated from a confusion of sources used by Xorenac'i. In the end, Topchyan concedes that this issue must remain uncertain, although the opinion now current is clearly not without problems. The book also contains a short observation of the implications (pp. 117–20) these results will have on further studies, an appendix (pp. 121–6) dealing with the quotations from Abydenus, an extensive bibliography (pp. 127–40) and an index (pp. 141–5).

In a time when the Greek and Latin literary sources are more or less completely known it is refreshing to discover that there still are some unexplored areas which may provide new perspectives for further studies. In addition, for a scholar not acquainted with the previous research published in modern Armenian or Russian, the book provides a thorough insight into the polemic at hand. The book is also a delightful reminder that although some sources seem rather confused and erratic they may still contain some precise and useful information. Indeed, it is quite possible that Movsēs' narrative may yet provide more information than first meets the eye.

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*A Companion to Greek and Roman Political Thought*. Edited by RYAN K. BALOT. Wiley-Blackwell, Chichester – Malden 2008. ISBN 978-1-4051-5143-6. 688 pp. GBP 95, EUR 114.

Just five years ago, in this periodical (*Arctos* 39 [2005] 242–243), I published a review of a volume edited by C. Rowe and M. Schofield, *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Political Thought* (Cambridge 2000), which I hailed as "the very first general and comprehensive

treatment of its subject in the English language". Here we have another multi-authored tome, in that very same language, dedicated to Greek and Roman political thought. The "history of" element is not present in the title of this enterprise, but this absence does not *a priori* announce a major difference in scope – given that the entire subject matter is hard to deal with in any other manner than diachronically.

The obvious way to begin a review of this book, competently edited by Ryan K. Balot, is to compare its organization with that of its predecessor. The defining characteristic of the *Cambridge Companion* was its very broad and inclusive conception of *political thought*, as opposed merely to *political theory*. Expressly stressing the evident fact that it is possible to think and reflect politically without doing so in a systematic or philosophical manner, the volume is not concerned exclusively with the renowned political works of antiquity. These receive their due share of attention, but the book effectively provides a chronological scrutiny of much of the corpus of Greek and Roman authors in its quest for political thinking and reasoning. The range of literature is striking: included are poets such as Homer, Hesiod and Tyrtaeus, early natural philosophers, the great names of the Greek classical period, the historians, philosophers and jurists of the Roman Empire as well as fourth-century Christian and pagan writers reflecting on divine and human order. This range is matched by the sheer diversity of the contributions, in terms of approach, scope and overall objectives.

The present volume, which is expressly designed to introduce "the central concepts of Greek and Roman political thought to students and teachers of political science, classics, philosophy and history" (p. 3), is arranged in a strictly topical fashion. According to the editor, this kind of approach – by contrast to an author-by-author and chronological approach – "is far better suited to bringing out both the historical specificity of classical political thought, and its potential to be fruitfully set into dialogue with modern political practices, ideologies and theories" (p. 15). As a result, the centre of gravity of the whole volume is the canonical philosophers, especially Plato and Aristotle (p. 17).

The book consists of altogether thirty-four chapters (all written by scholars associated with American or, in some cases, British universities) grouped into eight main sections (Parts I–VIII), each addressing a specific aspect of political thought.

The first part, entitled *The Broad View*, contains eight contributions of introductory character. In several of these Greek (Athenian) and Roman conditions are compared. In the formal preamble, "Introduction: Rethinking the history of Greek and Roman political thought" (pp. 3–19), the editor defines the themes of the book and provides much of the general conceptual framework; there is also a whole section, within the chapter, on the "significant editorial choices" that has guided the conception of the volume. Another entry of equally fundamental character is Dean Hammer's discussion "What is politics in the Ancient World?" (pp. 20–36). The following chapters all deal with more specific topics. One of the single most important discussions of the whole book is undoubtedly Kurt A. Raaflaub's contribution, "Early Greek political thought in its Mediterranean context" (pp. 37–56), in which new ground is being broken. Summarizing some of the preliminary results of research that he has himself organized across disciplinary boundaries, involving intensive and focused collaboration between specialists in various fields, Raaflaub discusses the emergence and early evolution of Greek political thought against a background of cultural transfers and interactions involving the whole of the Eastern Mediterranean, including the ancient cultures of the Near East. An interesting preliminary result pertains to two basic values in later democratic ideology: while there seem to be

Eastern influences in legal thought, the ideas of freedom and equality appear to be genuinely Greek novelties. There are five more chapters in this section of the volume, all of them offering good reflections on interesting themes: "Civic ideology and citizenship" by P. J. Rhodes (pp. 57–69), "Public action and rational choice in classical Greek political theory" by Josiah Ober (pp. 70–84), "Imperial ideologies, citizenship myths, and legal disputes in classical Athens and Republican Rome" by Craige B. Champion (pp. 85–99), "Gendered politics, or the self-praise of *andres agathoi*" by Giulia Sissa (pp. 100–17) and "The religious contexts of ancient political thought" by Robin Osborne (pp. 118–30).

The second part, *Democracies and Republics*, is concerned with various forms of popular rule. It is constituted of six chapters, of which at least two provide rewarding reading also for people outside specialist circles. The first one is Peter Liddel's discussion "Democracy ancient and modern" (pp. 133–48), which provides a good overview of a most fundamental theme, namely that of democracy itself and how ancient and modern democratic values relate to each other. The second one is Robert W. Wallace's chapter on "Personal freedom in Greek democracies, republican Rome and modern liberal states" (pp. 164–77), which deals with another central topic with a similar outlook. The rest of the contributions inevitably have less universal appeal, but are thematically relevant and in every respect important pieces: "'Rights', individuals and communities in Ancient Greece" by Paul Cartledge and Matt Edge (pp. 149–163), "The mixed constitution in Greek thought" by David E. Hahm (pp. 178–198), "Republican virtues" by Malcolm Schofield (pp. 199–213) and "Roman democracy?" by W. Jeffrey Tatum (pp. 214–27).

The discussions on democracy in the Ancient World are followed, in part three, by entries dealing with its opposite. This section of the book, entitled *The Virtues and Vices of One-Man Rule*, contains three chapters which take the reader from the Age of Tyranny (as represented in later Greek traditions) via the Hellenistic Monarchy (shown to be a specific political category of monarchy, applicable to the whole range of the kingdoms in question) to the Roman Empire: "The uses and abuses of tyranny" by Sara Forsdyke (pp. 231–46), "Hellenistic monarchy in theory and practice" by Arthur M. Eckstein (pp. 247–65) and "The ethics of autocracy in the Roman World" by Carlos F. Noreña (pp. 266–79).

Part four, *The Passions of Ancient Politics*, contains three chapters dealing with political psychology or with political performances as sociological phenomena: "Political animals: Pathetic animals" by Giulia Sissa (pp. 283–93), "Anger, Eros, and other political passions in ancient Greek thought" by Paul W. Ludwig (pp. 294–307) and "Some passionate performances in late Republican Rome" by Robert A. Kaster (pp. 308–20).

Part five, entitled *The Athens of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle*, is the only section of the book which is dedicated to a specific political milieu. Though I have no objection whatever to the introduction of this particular theme, I should note that there is no corresponding treatment of any period of the Roman Republic later on, which could perhaps have been anticipated. The editor would do well, in a possible second edition of the book, to pair this section with a group of entries addressing themes pertaining to the Rome of Cicero and Caesar. At any rate, this section contains good and stimulating discussions. After Debra Nails' chapter on "The trial and death of Socrates" (pp. 323–38) the focus is on individual works and authors: "The politics of Plato's *Socrates*" by Rachana Kamtekar (pp. 339–52), "Freedom, tyranny, and the political man: Plato's *Republic* and *Gorgias*. A study in contrasts" by Arlene W. Saxonhouse (pp. 353–66), "Plato on the sovereignty of law by Zena Hitz (pp. 367–81), "'Naturalism' in Aristotle's

political philosophy" by Timothy Chappell (pp. 382–98) and "The ethics of Aristotle's *Politics* by David J. Depew (pp. 399–418).

In part six, *Constructing Political Narrative*, the interdependences between a set of narrative genres – biography, history, philosophy (including, of course, the political dialogues) and drama – are explored in connection with certain ideas of politics, which were often embodied as traits in the character of political leaders: "Imitating virtue and avoiding vice: Ethical functions of biography, history and philosophy" by Charles W. Hedrick, Jr (pp. 421–39), "Greek drama and political thought" by John Gibert (pp. 440–55), "Character in politics" by Philip A. Stadter (pp. 456–70).

Part seven, *Antipolitics*, is dedicated to political thought attributable to exponents of the cosmopolitan ambiances of the Hellenistic World and the Roman Empire, as opposed to the narrow frameworks provided by the traditional Greek *polis* or the *res publica* of the Roman Republic. As David Konstan demonstrates, in an intriguing chapter entitled "Cosmopolitan traditions" (pp. 473–84), a distinct cosmopolitan way of thinking emerged in the fourth century BCE and is attested throughout the imperial period, by which time the universal hegemony of Rome had facilitated the emergence of humankind as a conceptual category. Also the two other contributions, respectively on withdrawal from an active political life and on Augustine's political ideas, provide stimulating reading: "False idles: The politics of the 'Quiet Life'" by Eric Brown (pp. 485–500), "Citizenship and signs: Rethinking Augustine on the Two Cities" by Todd Breyfogle (pp. 501–26).

The final part of the book, *Receptions*, contains a mere two chapters. Considering how much political thinkers and actors of the modern period have cited and pondered classical authors, along with actual conditions in the Ancient World, there would certainly have been plenty more to say. That being said, this section provides good discussions on two interesting topics. In the first one, "Republicanism: Ancient, medieval and beyond" (pp. 529–41), Christopher Nadon examines post-classical notions of republicanism, a theme which is central to the reception of ancient politics, both expressly as 'thought' and as models. However much the present generations have been accustomed to celebrate Classical Athens as the cradle of democracy, the great example of popular rule for the modern world has been the Roman Republic (though modern republican ideologies have also absorbed ideas presented by Aristotle and other Greek writers). In the second discussion, "Twentieth Century Revivals of Ancient Political Thought: Hannah Arendt and Leo Strauss" (pp. 542–56), Catherine H. Zuckert – writing about two political theorists who, in the wake of WWII, urged their contemporaries to turn to the writings of the Ancient World in order not to lose merely their liberty, but their very humanity – demonstrates the continuing relevance of ancient political thought.

The whole volume, which is warmly recommended to anyone interested in the politics and the political thought of the Ancient World, concludes with an extensive bibliography (*References*, pp. 557–619) followed by an *Index of Subjects* (pp. 620–49) and an *Index Locorum* (pp. 650–59).

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