

perspective” as well in appreciating the music’s transformative, redemptive possibilities.

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## Greece, Rome, Greco-Roman Period

**WHY PLATO WROTE.** By Danielle S. Allen. Blackwell Bristol Lectures on Greece, Rome, and the Classical Tradition. Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010. Pp. xii + 232. \$69.95.

This ingenious yet problematic book introduces a new vision of Plato. Far from being abstract and elitist, Allen’s *Plato* is pragmatic, politically engaged, and eager to address a general audience. He thus becomes a participant—even an instigator—in the culture wars of fourth-century Athens. Allen’s thesis depends on a reinterpretation of the divided line from *Republic* 6. The analogy, she argues, distinguishes between models (*paradeigmata*) and images (*eidola*). Model makers, who must be philosophers, pivot between the perceptible and imperceptible worlds, translating the latter into clear terms via symbolic language. Models therefore provide access to abstract reality, whereas images—including poetic mimesis—are restricted to the perceptible. Models give the philosopher’s audience a “psychological feeling of discovery,” an intellectual experience that motivates new behaviors. Thus, Allen answers her book’s titular question: Plato writes because vivid language can inspire practical action and political reform. She tests this thesis by examining Plato’s impact on Athenian politics, tracking the use of Platonic language in fourth-century orators. These provocative arguments face several challenges. First, Allen does not fully explain how the mental spark of reading is transferred into action. Second, her claim that Plato views writing as an effective form of mass communication depends on the *Seventh Letter*, which may be spurious. Third, it is difficult to prove that Platonic language in political discourse reflects direct influence, as a TLG (*Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*) search reveals that some of these political images predate Plato. Despite its speculative nature, Allen’s fascinating interpretation demands attention from all Plato scholars.

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**BRILL’S COMPANION TO LUCAN.** Edited by Paolo Asso. Leiden: Brill, 2011. Pp. xxi + 625. \$256.00.

This edited volume contributes to the recent surge in scholarship on Lucan’s *Bellum Civile*. It claims no unified theme, instead dividing its thirty essays into six thematic units: (A) Author; (B) Intertexts-Contexts-Texts; (C) Civil Warriors; (D) Civil War Themes; (E) Reception; (F) Retrospective. Individual chapters explore issues of Lucan’s

literary, historical, and contextual background; dominant themes; poetics; reception; transmission; and translation. All are in English, and each is helpfully preceded by an abstract. The following chapters are especially recommended for offering new insights or approaches: Caston on “Lucan’s Elegiac Moments” (chapter seven); Seo on “Lucan’s Cato and the Poetics of Exemplarity” (chapter ten); Thorne on “Memory in Lucan” (chapter nineteen); and Newlands on Statius’s *Silvae* 2.7 (chapter twenty-three). Esposito on “Early and Medieval *Scholia* and *Commentaria* on Lucan” (chapter twenty-four) highlights a major gap in our knowledge of Lucan’s text and its earliest commentators. Editorial problems are pervasive enough to necessitate comment. Most common are English spelling mistakes, poorly reproduced Latin, and inconsistent formatting between chapters. In chapter eleven, editorial comments are repeatedly printed in the final text. These distractions notwithstanding, this companion promises to be useful for scholars of Lucan, those seeking an overview of approaches to the *Bellum Civile*, and those interested in Lucan’s *Nachleben*. Many will benefit from the companion’s lengthy bibliography (41 pages). Readers may wish to begin with Henderson (chapter 30), which aspires to be a guide to the companion and offers initial criticism of its contents.

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**POMPEII IN THE PUBLIC IMAGINATION FROM ITS REDISCOVERY TO TODAY.** Edited by Shelley Hales and Joanna Paul. Classical Presences. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. Pp. xix + 417. \$160.00.

Stemming from a 2007 conference with 25 participants from the United Kingdom, United States, Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands, this volume offers a wide-ranging study of the reception of Pompeii since its rediscovery in 1748, with the chapters arranged chronologically from Goethe to the modern *Cambridge Latin Series*. The intended audience ranges from those with interests in German literary studies and the modern Italian state, to film studies, American history, and nineteenth-century literature and art. As the book is arranged chronologically, there is no thematic organization, which the editors concede in the preface. It is clear, though, that any thematic grouping of the chapters such as aesthetics, archaeology, erotica, philology, politics, and religion would have been impossible, given the number and breadth of the contributions, along with their often overlapping contents. Of special interest in the volume are the chapters that engage Bulwer-Lytton’s novel *The Last Days of Pompeii*, which opposed Greece and Rome, as well as pagan and Christian. For example, Malamud’s chapter presents nineteenth-century Americans identifying themselves in the work with the pious, Christian Greek characters, countering the pagan Pompeians. Indeed, the debate in the volume is lively about Bulwer-Lytton, from scholarly (Harrison) to emotional (Bridges) readings of his novel. Additionally,

Moorman's contribution on Christians and Jews at Pompeii advances the notion of the morally pure Christian versus the libidinous pagan in nineteenth-century literature. The biggest drawback to the volume is its price, which is prohibitive for most.

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**WRITING ANCIENT PERSIA.** By Thomas Harrison. Classical Essays. London: Bristol Classical Press, 2011. Pp. 190. \$24.00.

This provocative book examines recent trends in Persian historiography. In keeping with the polemical character of the series, Harrison offers a vigorous critique of the Achaemenid History Workshops, founded in 1980 by scholars seeking to reshape negative, Hellenocentric views of ancient Persia. He identifies several problematic features in the work of such scholars as Pierre Briant, Amélie Kuhrt, and Heleen Sancisi-Weerdenburg. Harrison objects primarily to their uncritical reading of Greek sources, arguing that many scholars simply identify and dismiss Greek chauvinism without considering its narrative function. Herodotus's exaggerated tales of Persian imperialism, for example, sometimes strive for ironic commentary on Athens, not historical accuracy. Harrison further suggests that some Achaemenid scholars sanitize the empire by overemphasizing its benignity. Conquest is inherently oppressive, and Persian inclusivity usually stemmed from pragmatism—to unify a diverse empire—rather than principle. Another argument concerns the self-representation of contemporary Achaemenid scholars, who consider their work a dramatic break from older research perpetuating Greek stereotypes. Harrison challenges this position by producing numerous examples of early twentieth-century works that avoid Hellenocentric interpretations. Despite addressing basic questions with admirable clarity, the book is not an introductory text. Understanding Harrison's arguments, sure to provoke controversy and counter-criticism, requires familiarity with primary and secondary sources. Some may question his perspective as a classicist who studies Achaemenid historiography peripherally, but Harrison is no apologist. His arguments are balanced and manifest appreciation for the overall advance of Achaemenid historiography. This book should inspire productive debate among all scholars concerned with ancient Persia.

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**HESIOD: THE OTHER POET. ANCIENT RECEPTION OF A CULTURAL ICON.** By Hugo H. Koning. Mnemosyne Supplements, 325. Leiden: Brill, 2010. Pp. ix + 439. €108.00/\$153.00

Influenced by collective memory studies, Koning examines how Greek authors reconstructed and discussed Hesiod from the archaic period to the Second Sophistic.

Initially, Koning studies passages treating Hesiod and Homer together as a special category of authorities on religion, ethics, philosophy, and factual knowledge. Subsequently, he explores reconstructions of Hesiod without the explicit involvement of Homer, focusing mainly on the poet's biography and the reception of his demonology, his authority on justice and civic conduct, and his perceived attitude toward truth, knowledge, and language. The third part looks at Hesiod as the opposite of Homer in the content, veracity, and effect of his poetry, as well as his ethico-political orientation. Of particular interest are Koning's treatment of the poets' contest, a tradition best known through the *Certamen*, and his account of the ever-changing attitudes toward Homeric and Hesiodic poetics. As the author acknowledges, this survey relies on explicit references to Hesiod and his poetry. Koning has integrated an impressive range of primary and secondary sources, but the Hesiodic corpus is practically reduced to the *Theogony* and the *Works and Days*, and in-depth readings are often sacrificed for the sake of broad overviews. Nonetheless, Koning's book brings forth interesting arguments, offers answers to important questions, and ultimately furthers our understanding of Hesiod's varied reception in antiquity.

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**GREEK ARCHAEOLOGY: A THEMATIC APPROACH.** By Christopher Mee. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011. Pp. xli + 330. Hardcover, \$104.95; paper, \$46.95.

This introduction to the archaeology of ancient Greece fills a serious gap in publications available for classroom adoption or quick scholarly reference. Bridging the artificial divide between two chronologically bound academic disciplines—Aegean prehistory and Classical archaeology—Mee focuses on settlement and landscape to define the "Greek" in his title. His years as a field archaeologist contribute to an informed and up-to-the-minute overview of the material culture and sites of a diverse geographical expanse that includes the Greek mainland and islands, Italy, Sicily, the Black Sea, Africa, and, after Alexander the Great, Asia. The stated purpose to "move away from a period-specific mentality" is admirably achieved by emphasizing carefully selected themes. Within each thematic chapter is a chronological arrangement (Neolithic/Bronze Age-Hellenistic) that will allow readers interested in a specific area to dip into it diachronically. Such a layout enables the book to be used equally well as a stand-alone textbook in an introductory Classical art, archaeology, civilization, or history course, or rather more selectively in a seminar or discussion section on ancient technology, warfare, or religion. Timelines and a glossary take into account an audience unfamiliar with the terrain, as do the selected figures and plans. The illustrations, especially of painted and sculpted objects, are of inferior quality and will

need to be supplemented with digital color examples to be fully appreciated.

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**HOMER, THE ILIAD.** Translated with an introduction and notes by Stephen Mitchell. New York: Free Press, 2011. Pp. lxiii + 466. \$35.00.

Mitchell's *Iliad* translation is notable in part for what it leaves out: approximately 500 lines deemed questionable by M. L. West and others, the "baroque and nasty" book ten, and epithets that have no immediate bearing on their context. The result is strikingly direct and natural sounding, even if (arguably) incomplete. Mitchell's introduction focuses on a vivid portrait of the Homeric worldview that helps the reader understand how a mother can "rejoic[e] at her son's return from battle with the bloody armor of [his] enemy as if she were watching him . . . graduating from college." The translation is particularly effective when it comes to battle scenes and blunt Homeric insults (a dead man falls "like a tower"; Achilles calls Agamemnon an "insolent son of a bitch"). Scenes of domesticity and mourning are less stylistically distinct, but nonetheless skillfully rendered. Mitchell's translation is likely to be especially useful in the classroom or for any reader who wishes to experience the "filler" battle scenes as something fresh and new.

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**ANCIENT GREECE FROM HOMER TO ALEXANDER: THE EVIDENCE.** Edited by Joseph Roisman with translations by J. C. Yardley. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011. Pp. xlv + 642. Hardcover, \$99.95; paper, \$54.95.

Roisman intends this sourcebook to introduce nonspecialists to the basic materials for the study of ancient Greek history, acknowledging openly that his selection of evidence is not comprehensive and based in part on his own interests. Accordingly, instructors who adopt this book will need to supplement it with additional materials. Roisman's approach is traditional, focusing on political and military narratives, especially those pertaining to Athens and Sparta. Surprisingly, little attention is given to Macedonia, which is covered in the final two (out of thirty-nine) chapters. Some material evidence is presented, but literary and epigraphic texts predominate. There is a companion web site that might have been used to host high-resolution color images or interactive features but instead offers essentially the same kind of evidence as the printed book. Roisman gives a helpful introduction and explanatory notes for each item. Critical-thinking questions follow each section, and every chapter ends with review exercises and a bibliography for further reading. Yardley's translations are elegant and readable. An impressive apparatus of learning aids (e.g., glossary, maps, table of weights and measures) renders some of antiquity's

most unfamiliar aspects intelligible. Readers may quarrel with some of Roisman's omissions, but on the whole, the book constitutes a very solid choice as a core text for a course in Greek history or civilization.

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## Christian Origins

**THE EERDMANS COMPANION TO THE BIBLE.** Edited by Gordon D. Fee and Robert L. Hubbard, Jr. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011. Pp. xvii + 834. Cloth, \$40.00.

This book attempts the nearly impossible task of covering all the background material a layperson needs to know about the entire Bible in a single edition. The volume opens with a number of introductory articles that touch on important subjects behind the text, e.g., lands, languages, archaeology, hermeneutics. Each chapter then outlines a book of the Bible with a brief section-by-section commentary, supplemented with overviews on issues raised in the texts (e.g., warfare, Temple, parables). Without delving in depth on any one topic, the editors have produced a volume that gives a succinct overview of each biblical book with enough detail to introduce a novice to the field of biblical studies. The editors are successful in creating a useful tool for evangelical laypersons, although the lack of depth will make this book less than desirable for the scholar or student of the Bible.

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**DICTIONARY OF SCRIPTURE AND ETHICS.** Edited by Joel B. Green. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2011. Pp. xix + 889. Cloth, \$59.99.

Three brief essays orient the reader through a general overview of the content, history, and methodology of examining ethics in scripture. Close to 500 entries contributed by an array of biblical scholars and ethicists fall into three broad categories: ethics and scripture (e.g., deontology, utilitarianism, social contract), ethics within scripture (e.g., purity regulations, economics, individual biblical books), and issues in Christian ethics (e.g., health care, ecology, sexuality, business). Despite the title, the clear emphasis herein is on *Christian* ethics, albeit with various entries dealing with aspects of Jewish moral codes. That is to say, missing are entries on the ethical perspectives of rabbinic traditions, and even the entry on Torah ends by discussing the "OT" portrayal in light of the mistaken Christian sense of Jewish legalism. To be fair, this Christian emphasis is clear from the outset. The editor notes that this introduction to scriptural ethics and their relevance to contemporary moral questions primarily aims to provide pastors with a reference tool for preaching, teaching, and counseling and to help biblical scholars and ethicists understand how to understand and embody Christian ethics. Overall, it is a