

REVIEW–DISCUSSION

ESSAYS ON LIVY’S TWO MILLENNIA

Gianluigi Baldo and Luca Beltramini, edd., *Livius noster: Tito Livio e la sua eredità*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2021. Pp. 904. Paperback, €130.00. ISBN 978-2-503-59298-5.

The genesis of this fat volume was the celebration of Livy’s bimillenary in 2017 (retaining rightly his traditional dates) centring on Padova, with an extraordinarily rich programme of events (9–11).¹ The volume is subdivided into five parts, with thirty-eight contributions. It is a shame that some biographical identification on these writers (‘established scholars as well as younger researchers’) is not included. The introduction by Baldo is bilingual in Italian then English, surveying the various contributions to show, as long-standing custom dictates, that they make a ‘book’. The other thirty-seven chapters are mainly (29) in Italian, with five in French and three in English.

John Briscoe begins with a brief survey of editions of Livy, highlighting those of Carlo Sigonio and Johann Friedrich Gronovius.² Most interesting is the complicated history of the OCT edition, which included ‘facetious or even downright offensive comments’! The next paper by Marielle de Franchis concerns the double manuscript tradition (Puteanus and Spirensis) and their complicated stemmata for Livy Books 21–30. Although probably comprehensible only to textual critics (the abstract does not help), it reveals the recent reassessment of the contributions of vital figures such as Petrarch and Giovanni Billanovich, and emphasises the most fundamental matters of method: *eliminatio codicum* (derivative manuscripts have no independent value). Next Marco Palma deals with the fascinating matter of the *editio princeps* of Livy, published in Rome in 1469 by Konrad Sweynheym and Arnold Pannartz. The editor was Giovanni Andrea Bussi (1417–75), bishop of Alatri in Corsica. Palma examines his use of MS Riccardiano 487 from the Biblioteca Riccardiana in Florence.

¹ I myself commemorated this vital event in 2017 with a lecture at the British School at Rome in November (‘The Unessayable Essay: Livy, a Life’, published in *Studi Romani* n.s. 1 (2020) 5–30), not known to any contributor. Perhaps it appeared too late. It would have helped at 97 n. 1; and 347 n. 1.

² This volume follows the usage of referring to people only by surname.

There follows a series of studies on very particular matters. Charles Guittard focusses on the hymn (*carmen*) composed by Livius (Andronicus: Livy had already referred to him only by *nomen* 7.2.8, and again 31.12.10) in 207 in expiation of the birth of a hermaphrodite. Livy does not quote it because it was uncouth (*inconditum*: 27.37.13). Guittard compares a few other cases (out of dozens), where Livy is not so reticent in quoting, but the parable of Agrippa elicits similar reserve (2.32.8). The study also raises again the tormenting conflict in the chronology of Andronicus: did he come to Rome in *ca.* 270 or 209? The evidence clearly prefers the former. Sieges in Livy occupy the next two contributors. Luca Beltramini analyses Livy's use of Polybios for the siege of Cartagena, highlighting the significant divergences of the Roman, notably in the representation of Scipio's character. Vincenzo Casapulla examines the siege of Locri (Livy 29.6–7), and plunges us once again in to the quagmire of source criticism: relations between Livy and Dio and Zonaras. It is exactly in this connection that Fergus Millar warned: 'Source-criticism usually ends in mere speculation.' Casapulla offers no fewer than *three* possibilities for the relationship of Livy and Dio—and admits that all three might apply, but each at different points! It would help if the correct references were given (149): Dio 67 (not 57).12.4! And this reference, it should be noted, is no evidence at all that Dio himself used Livy: it was only the charge against Pompusianus. We come away with the insight that Livy likes to stress the unpredictability of events, involving here a criticism of Scipio, in conflict with Polybios' forceful judgement. Tommaso Ricchieri analyses the reason for the expulsion from the senate of Lucius Flamininus by Cato (Livy 39.42–3). Livy cites two conflicting sources: Cato and Antias. There is nothing 'official', however, about Cato's version: it is simply his speech as censor, a *source* (but the primary one) to be evaluated like any other. Plutarch had accused the new man attacking a degenerate noble of aggravating the charges. Ricchieri supports this by comparing other speeches of Cato. Livy followed Cato's version because it accorded with his own moral preferences. Most surviving later sources, such as Cicero, however, followed Antias. The intriguing question is, where did Antias find the other version of the identities of Flamininus' lover and his victim? Did the Quinctii leave a rebuttal? Giovanna Todaro draws attention to Livy 25.33 and the famous problem of the use of mercenaries, Livy's 'rule', and later 'inner conversations' on this matter.

Bernard Mineo, focussing on structures, draws attention to Livy 31.1, 'remarkable in every respect', revealing Livy's working methods. His discussion of the grouping of books is useful. The discussion of the relationship of this libral organisation to the content of the history is another matter. Mineo has tried to convince us for many years that Livy followed an artificial scheme, namely, cycles of 365 years: foundation to Camillus, then Camillus to the foundation of the principate in 27. Any *one* of the following objections will undermine all this numerological fantasy. Neither of the two cycles, in fact,

adds up to 365 years. Mineo, in fact, fudges: the cycle is 365/360 years (206). If this is so fundamental to Livy's understanding of Roman history, why does he not alert his readers? Were they supposed to be constantly counting books and chapters? In fact, he offers various calculations around 390 (5.40.1, 45.4, 54.5). The first 'cycle' = Books 1–5; Livy's stress on that pentad's unity has nothing to do with a cycle, but is determined by documentation (6.1). The second 'cycle' would be Books 6–134! Given Livy's structural concerns, it should have ended with a pentad, a decade, or a 'pentakaidecade'. Mineo is, in fact, not sure if the terminus is Actium (208) or the 'First Settlement'. If it is the latter, *why did Livy not stop then?* More worrying, how then could he have thought of writing on up to 150 books (218)? The actual terminus with the death of Drusus worries Mineo: Livy did not indulge in panegyric!³ And underlying all this is the misunderstanding of Livy's relations with Augustus, as implied by Mineo's stress on the cycle ending in 27.⁴ I leave aside Mineo's comments on the *Res Gestae*: contrary to all the Republican theory, he himself admits the regime was 'dynastic and authoritarian' (216), which Livy did *not* like (217, but compare eight lines lower!). One thing is certain: no contemporary was deceived (modern contempt for the intelligence of Augustan Romans is breath-taking).

Marine Miquel offers a charming and instructive essay analysing Livy's authorial asides, as a refutation of the old dismissal of Livy as a robot historian. This is a broad-ranging discussion of interesting examples. Livy appears as 'the possessor of knowledge historical, even antiquarian, quite vast, which allows him to document this or that institutional or geographical point evoked by his account. These remarks create the persona of an historian anxious to accomplish his work to the best of his ability, perfectly in control of the tradition' (227).⁵ His notes were often meant for a non-specialist audience. Two of the most appalling examples of sources in conflict are the trial, then the death and burial of Africanus (Book 38). For those of us trying to keep our heads in a renewed sea of hypercriticism, an example of fantasy as late as the 180s is truly disturbing. But this has nothing to do with 'the beyond normal aspect of the Roman general, whom historiography could not perceive

³ See R. T. Ridley, 'Death and the Historian: Livy's *benignitas*', *Latomus* 72 (2013) 689–710.

⁴ See R. T. Ridley, 'Eulogy of the Lost Republic or Acceptance of the New Monarchy?' *Antichthon* 44 (2010) 68–95.

⁵ 'le détenteur d'une connaissance historique, voire antiquaire, très vaste, qui lui permet de documenter telle ou telle réalité institutionnelle ou géographique évoquée dans son récit. Ces remarques, qui façonnent le *persona* d'un historien soucieux d'accomplir au mieux son travail et maîtrisant parfaitement la tradition ...'

perfectly' (235).⁶ It is evidence of the deadly factionalism which already pervaded Roman politics, and which set about perverting and destroying the historical record. That factionalism could tear down the greatest Roman of his time—and he was the grandfather of the Gracchi. Miquel understands that the deaths of generals were 'constituent parts of the narrative of Roman history' (234).⁷ Livy's prefaces are discussed, but he does not claim to be a greater historian than Thucydides (21.1.1); rather that the Hannibalic war was more memorable than the Peloponnesian. Miquel notes Livy's refusal to privilege any one kind of source. The bibliography should include Wilhelm Wiehemeyer, *Proben historischer Kritik aus Livius XXI–XLV* (Emsdetten, 1938).

Virginia Fabrizi considers Livy and the Forum, an ingenious subject. She notes the paradox that this space, the political centre of the *urbs*, often features in Livy's early books as the scene of battles. This situation, of course, returned in the late Republic, and so was quite familiar to Livy. Eliza della Calce takes up Livy's recognition of clemency among the virtues of Rome's enemies. Her three examples are Hannibal, Philip V, and Antiochus III. The first is treated shortly: Hannibal's clemency was only a show. Despite the fact that clemency and generosity were two fundamental virtues of Hellenistic monarchy, Philip also uses clemency for his own ends. Antiochus was a different character to Philip: not a tyrant, but vain and munificent, capable of fighting in the front line, but a thoughtful strategist, yet his clemency was of the same kind yet again. The difference is that this 'policy of clemency' was much more important to Hannibal than to the other two. Let us spare a thought, however, for these two great kings, for all their grave faults, suddenly confronted with a superpower 'liberator' totally oblivious of Greek history—a situation too frequently paralleled in history. The Romans, indeed, were responsible for a degeneration in Philip's character (Pol. 4.27.9–10). They can never be forgiven for brainwashing his son Demetrios, resulting in his execution.

We now transition to Part II: Livy as an historical source. There seems no rational explanation for the order of the following papers. Francesca Cenerini briefly discusses women in Livy: the 'paradigmatic' Lucretia and Verginia, the way women in Livy often appear in groups, and the definition of correct behaviour by married women, especially ostentation in jewellery, which was necessary in religious rituals. Despite these ideals, the other side of the story is mass adultery (Livy 10.31), and mass poisonings (8.18; 39.41; 40.37). But *omnia pudore saepta* (*animadvertit*) does not mean literally 'the barriers erected by *pudor*' (306),⁸ and *concordia* can hardly be described as a basic Augustan value: it appears nowhere in the *Res Gestae*. Paolo Desideri turns to the Conflict of the

⁶ 'l'aspect hors-norme du général romain, que l'écriture historique ne peut parvenir à cerner parfaitement.'

⁷ 'constitutives du récit de l'histoire romaine'. See n. 3.

⁸ 'letteralmente "le barriere erette dal pudore"', from Livy 3.44.4.

Orders, a most complicated matter in Livy.⁹ He may have praised the plebeians for their restraint in the secession, but to resist the levy was to imperil the state, and he always had grave doubts about the usefulness of the tribunate (in 2.33.1 he does not call this a ‘private magistracy’), and detested the *leges agrariae*. In sum, although eventually *concordia* (a concept dear to *Livy*) grew out of the struggle, as a conservative Livy was much concerned at these events. To label Livy simply as ‘sympathetic’ will not stand. Yet his narrative allows *us* to understand the brilliance of the plebeian tactics. Desideri wants to use the word ‘democratizzazione’, a concept totally foreign to Livy. ‘Equality’ for the leading plebeians simply created a new ruling class. Attention is drawn to La Penna and Funari’s edition (2015) of the fragments of Sallust: what of Patrick McGushin’s edition (1994)? Desideri notes that, unlike Livy, Dionysios had no idea of the political changes occurring in his own time, but had his own historical programme: the relations between Greeks and Romans. His basic misunderstanding was the equation ‘plebs = clients’ (2.9.2), and he then offered Greek parallels, but these were all non-free groups. This is merely the most fundamental of many differences from Livy. We know—or think we know—Livy’s sources: what of those of Dionysios?

Arnaldo Marcone discusses the complexities of the battle of Actium in Augustan sources (mainly poetic: Hor. *Ep.* 9; *Od.* 1.37; Prop. 2.16; 3.11; 4.6 (moving from 27 to 16 BC); and Virg. *Aen.* 8.67iff), in contrast to later historians (Plutarch, Dio). Robert Gurval’s *Actium and Augustus* (Ann Arbor, 1995), described as ‘brilliant’, is referred to once. Augustus was caught between indulging his contempt for Antony and Cleopatra and the need to depict them as worthy opponents. (It is intriguing that the *Res Gestae* mentions his opponents in 42, but not the name of the battle (2.1), while Actium has to wait until 25.2, where he mentions the place, but not his opponents.) The crucial point was the queen’s flight: its timing and purpose. What, however, of the pitiful notes in Livy’s *Periochae* (132–3)? Can they be supplemented with Florus’ lurid account (2.21)? Another more limited Periochic exercise is Luca Fezzi’s discussion of Pompey the Great. This reader feels great discomfort about using such a bizarre source to reconstruct a subject so important. After all, Livy did not write the *Periochae*, but so much analysis here is linguistic (!), and so much relies on matters omitted—in a summary! Into the bargain, Leonie Hayne in 1990 already wrote on this;¹⁰ Fezzi’s purpose is revealed on the last page: ‘to offer a further contribution to Hayne’s already very convincing picture’! In conclusion it is claimed that Pompey’s abandoning Rome in 49 is reflected inversely in Livy’s account of the resistance of the Capitol in 390. This is yet

⁹ This matter was treated at length at a famous Berlin conference in 1988: see R. T. Ridley, ‘*Patavinitas* Among the Patricians? Livy on the Conflict of the Orders’, in W. Eder, ed., *Staat und Staatlichkeit in der frühen römischen Republik* (Stuttgart, 1990) 103–38.

¹⁰ L. Hayne, ‘Livy and Pompey’, *Latomus* 49 (1990) 435–42.

another example of modern cleverness, which would have left Livy open-mouthed. Pompey was thinking more of Sulla's return from the East in 82.

Francesca Cavaggioni's highly nuanced discussion of Livy's presentation of legislation in the third decade is the longest contribution (forty-five pages). She convinces us that in this time of terrible crisis, Livy's main interest was not the technical aspects of law-making at Rome. He was, after all, focussed on how Rome survived the threat of Hannibal. He was not providing material for a legal textbook: as Cavaggioni admits, this is 'the work of an historian, not a lawyer' (387).¹¹ Laws were of interest to Livy primarily as part of the political and military narrative, yet he also showed the complexity of the process, the balance between senate, magistrates, and (soveran) people. Marco Rocco next takes us backwards to consider Livy and the *leges regiae*. These can hardly go back to any reliable sources. They are interesting, therefore, as proof of Livy's own view of basic Roman institutions and practices as founded on 'law', not simply custom, and laws which should be observed still in his own day. Their introduction also helps to delineate Livy's characterisation of each king. The following two chapters return to the fourth decade. Feda Milovojevic considers the Third Illyrian War (168 BC). This paper is seriously marred by the level of English, which contains many infelicities, and is sometimes incomprehensible: Pleuratus 'died until 181 BC' (449). This also badly affects, for example, the description of the Roman Protectorate (454). It is unforgivable that a native speaker was not employed to edit.¹² It is a great shame, because the author has a strongly analytical mind and understands the vital geography (two good maps). Moving backwards, Benoît Sans considers the rhetoric of Polybios and Livy from Zama to Kynoskephalai—but really only these two battles, and even here we move backwards, surely the opposite of the way the two historians worked. Polybios' account (18.19–32) is so much more analytical and understanding of Philip than Livy's (33.6–10). For Zama, there are some differences: the battle opens with cavalry engagements (Pol. 15.12.1); much more dramatically, while Hannibal is still speaking, the elephants are stampeded (Livy 30.33.12), but Scipio's foresight about the elephants is common to both (Pol. 15.12.4; Livy 30.33.1: Sans wants to make Livy a story-spoiler here). Both stress the mixture of nationalities in Hannibal's army (Pol. 15.12.9; Livy 30.34.1), obviously a drawback, and both give Hannibal his due (Pol. 15.15–16; Livy 30.35.4–9). Here is rich material for understanding Livy's use of a major source. Sans' explanation is dominated by rhetoric ('stratégies rhétoriques'), but there is a world between the two historians and their purposes.

¹¹ 'opera di uno storico e non di un giurista'.

¹² I remember the time (happily) spent helping a non-native speaker of English with his chapter in the volume cited in n. 9.

Part III is Livy and archaeology. Paola Carafa finds illuminating Jacques Poucet's analysis of Livy's narrative:¹³ pre-Fabian, Fabian, post-Fabian! That narrative is here reduced to tables, always alarming, because they suggest artificiality. The archaeological record is similarly represented. What do the tables show? The extension of each dig in square metres. The main result, however, is important. The formation of the city was earlier than Livy suggests: the late seventh century, when the first public buildings replaced habitation. Monica Salvadori and Luca Scalco discuss the 'archaeology' of Cannae. Livy's narrative concentrates on the aftermath of the battle. This suggests to the authors connections with scenes on the columns of Trajan and Marcus Aurelius. But Cannae was a disastrous defeat, while the columns celebrate Roman victories. And what do the columns tell us about Livy? It is suggested that Livy here created a model for the depiction of defeat: a long bow. Maria Busana and Claudia Forin offer a study of the villa in Livy, a term he uses twenty times, and a check of him by archaeology. In general he is found to be reliable, although the limitations of the archaeological evidence are continually stressed. Guido Furlan writes an intriguing essay on Livy and drains (1.59.9 (the importance of their regular cleaning); 5.55.5 (their difficult location); 39.44.5 (the censors' responsibilities)).

Part IV studies the posthumous adventures of Livy. Antonio Pistellato focusses on *Per.* 49: Andronikos, the false Philip. There has been a long debate over the authenticity of the text, which Pistellato supports. Andronikos is one of a long history of imposters (which is what this essay is all about), but Pistellato also suggests a fourth century date for the *Periochae*. Mariella Tixi turns to Livy and Obsequens, a late fourth century source who believed in prodigies and their expiation. Tixi stresses the tight interweaving in Livy of the religious and political narratives from Book 21 onward. She examines five cases (from the years 190–167) out of the forty Livy offers starting in 218, where we can compare the two texts. Concetta Langobardi provides a most learned examination of later readings of Livy, by Augustine, the Oxyrhynchos papyri, and the scholiasts on Horace and Lucan. She shows that the last were reading not the full text but only summaries. Maria Iulietto turns to Livy's survival in north Africa, examining sources which will be familiar to few classicists: the *Anthologia Salmasiana*, Fulgentius bishop of Ruspe, and the poet Dracontius, all for the treatment of Mucius Scaevola, the hero against Porsenna. Although the latter two sources are negative in their view of the hero, the anonymous poet in the *Anthologia*, who, she stresses, was using Livy's whole text, followed Livy's much more positive view. The coincidences, however, are not very convincing (more thought than words) and she ironically confuses Scaevola with Porsenna (637, top line—not the first time he was involved in mistaken

¹³ J. Poucet, *Les origines de Rome: tradition et histoire* (Brussels, 1985) and *Les rois de Rome: tradition et histoire*, vol. 1 (Brussels, 2000).

identity). Marco di Branco discourses most learnedly on the Arabic translation of Orosius—but Livy is hardly mentioned!

Ann Vasaly compares Livy's preface with Petrarch's in *Fam.* 1.1, which refers back to it. She explains what *imitatio* meant to Petrarch (see *Fam.* 23.19), and the demands made on the readers' education. She also evinces a remarkable understanding of secret men's business (the *virilis pars*, a phrase used by Petrarch to refer to a portion of his own correspondence, drawing on the *pro virili parte* from Livy's preface: see 664–7). Giuliana Crevatin turns to another figure unknown to most Livian scholars: the author of the first known commentary, Nicholas Trevet. It might be useful to give his dates: *ca.* 1265–after 1334. Trevet's commentary on the preface is given (pp. 685–98). It is amazingly densely didactic, but he misunderstood Livy's reference to 700 years as meaning he began writing then—at the age of six! Andrea Rossi turns to Machiavelli's *Discorsi*, and an out-of-place reference to the Hannibalic War (2.15, from Livy 24.28). Twenty pages to explain one passing reference is *una cosa un po' esagerata*. This reviewer's name suddenly appears as a quoted authority (705), but without bibliographical reference.¹⁴ Rossi also thinks that I am English, although actual perusal of that article would show that I am, although recently granted honorary Italian citizenship, in fact, Australian. Lucio Biasiori stays with Machiavelli: his relations with Pietro Ragnoni, author of a commentary on 'Pliny the Younger's' (now attributed to Aurelius Victor) *de viris illustribus* (Siena, 1506). Biasiori is confuting Carlo Dionisotti.¹⁵ Ragnoni's work was well known to Machiavelli, and there are both many parallels between the two authors, and reactions of Machiavelli against his predecessor. The two, in fact, almost certainly met in Siena. This paper is intriguing and convincing.

The last two essays here are devoted in fact to Machiavelli; Livy again is barely mentioned. Paul van Heck, the recent editor of Giannone's *Discorsi*,¹⁶ highlights Vincenzo Dini, whose *Discorsi* in two volumes (1560) were devoted to Livy Book 21 (military matters!), Aldo Manuzio's *Venticinque discorsi sopra Livio* (Rome, 1601), and Antonio Ciccarelli, *Discorsi sopra Tito Livio* (Rome, 1598). These are valuable notes on writers unfamiliar to most classicists. Finally, Pietro Giannone, who was devoted to Livy, and composed his *Discorsi* in prison, where he spent the last twelve years of his life as a pawn between Savoy and the Papacy. Van Heck misunderstands how Giannone obtained his copy of Livy: a state prisoner would not be let loose to visit a bookshop! That someone else was sent on his behalf is shown by the fact that he brought back

¹⁴ It is 'Machiavelli and Roman History in the *Discourses*', *QS* 18 (1983) 197–219.

¹⁵ See C. Dionisotti, 'Tradizione classica e volgarizzamenti', in id., ed., *Geografia e storia della letteratura italiana* (Turin, 1967) 125–78 and 'Machiavelli letterato (1969)', in id., ed., *Machiavellerie: storia e fortuna di Machiavelli* (Turin, 1980) 224–66.

¹⁶ P. van Heck, ed., *Pietro Giannone: Discorsi sopra gli annali di Tito Livio*, 3 vols (Turin, 2019).

by mistake, and to Giannone's anguish, Pliny the Younger instead of Pliny the Elder! Van Heck shows how many times the above commentators were misled by a faulty text, or misunderstood it, notably Livy 1.18.6–10, cf. Giannone 1.4.31–33, who was misled by the Old Testament! It is striking that for an eighteenth-century commentator, Giannone never raises the question of Livy's historical reliability. Franco Biasutti also is concerned with this fundamental matter. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Livy was the most popular ancient historian: 118 editions (half in Italian) (cf. Thucydides 30, Herodotus 26, Polybios 23, then Livy was overtaken by Tacitus). Biasutti considers Machiavelli, Francesco Patrizi, *della historia dieci dialoghi* (Venice, 1560), and Sperone Speroni, *Il dialogo della Istoria* (1583). Livy is the most quoted historian, but he is used as a model for his political lessons, not examined for his historical reliability. Giulia Simeoni educates us on illuminated manuscripts of Livy. The *de luxe* Paris Lat. 5690 has been much analysed, so she turns to the Vatican Cap.S.Pietro C 132. This features illuminated initials for each book, but also has four miniatures (here illustrated) at the beginning of each decade, and at Book 27. Arguments about the date are very technical, but hinge on infra-red photographs of the owner's coat of arms to uncover reworkings: fascinating. Maria Petracchia finally considers a wonderful fresco of the Rape of the Sabines by Luca Cambiaso (*ca.* 1560) in the Villa Cattaneo Imperiale at Genoa, and attempts to identify a classical source. She analyses Livy,¹⁷ Ovid, and Plutarch, but is finally defeated by Romulus' blue cloak in the fresco, and falls back on lost sources—which we will never have, and which Cambiaso certainly did not! One may further ask, what would the identification of such a literary source contribute to our appreciation of such a work of art?

In sum, these essays of very varying interest hardly form a monograph. They do, however, constitute a contribution towards a general 'stock-taking' on Livy after two millennia. On a personal note, as an amusing test, having recently completed a biography of Camillus, I found in 900 pages on Livy, my main source, nothing to add to, or adjust in, my own text.

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¹⁷ She falls for the old canard of Livy the Augustan (818): see n. 4.