

For a hundred years and more the study of Roman history meant the study of Roman politics, wars and institutions. Theodor Mommsen's seminal scholarship in the 19<sup>th</sup> century focused on the political and legal institutions of Rome, in part because of his formative work with the *CIL*; similarly, his mastery of Roman inscriptions helped shape the *Prosopographia Imperii Romani*, a project he proposed in Berlin in 1874. Most scholars, including English-speaking ones, long followed Mommsen's lead. R. Syme's voluminous publications suggested that a man's origins, peers and honors were key for his decisions and activity. T. R. S. Broughton's more particularized *Magistrates of the Roman Republic* filled in for the Republic what *PIR* did for the principate, and led to specialized works on magistracies (e.g., E. Badian, C. Brennan) or on periods viewed from the vantage of those holding office at the time (e.g., E. Gruen, *The Last Generation of the Roman Republic*). Such concerns were essential to the 1935 textbook of M. Cary and H. H. Scullard. Long the college standard, Cary and Scullard now seems out of date.

Many students' – and teachers' – interests currently center on cultural and social issues, as signaled as early as the 1962 edition of Heichelheim, *A History of the Roman People* (rev. 1984, 2003). Yet gender, race, ethnicity, religion, identity, theatricality, and performance figure but little in the earlier work informed by epigraphic and prosopographical evidence. Such interests can be pursued in the classroom and beyond, thanks to increasingly sophisticated readings of literary and documentary evidence, to the current availability of images, and to access to databases and information about material culture. The study of the Roman Empire is particularly suited to newer approaches as seen in (e.g.) M. Goodman, *The Roman World: 44 BC – AD 180* (1997), and J. Shelton, *As the Romans Did* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1998), although the very abundance and heterogeneity of the ancient sources can militate against an integrated comprehension of the sweep of Roman history. Further, newer, more theoretical textbooks may not satisfy the growing number of students who come to Roman history because of an interest in warfare honed by gaming: among scholars Roman military history is increasingly marginalized as a specialty. My illustrated paper looks at some of the ways in which Roman historians can respond to current student concerns. In particular, I address the question of sources – what types of ancient sources are accessible and can be used profitably in the classroom? – and interpretation – how can the professor introduce an analysis of these often recalcitrant or mute sources? Other questions include: How does one avoid anachronism but encourage engagement by students? How can one utilize the many resources at our students' fingertips and on their screens, while reinforcing central themes and quality control? While advocating incorporation of sources and new approaches, the paper reaffirms the crucial role of political, institutional, and even some military history as the essential background for the investigation of Roman History.