remarks do not go further than short explanations of the historical background and do not use the information of modern literature, mentioned in the bibliography, on the various aspects of the Catilinarian conspiracy. He pays small attention to specific problems of the Bellum Catilinae. He hardly informs us about the trustworthiness of Sallust (and Cicero) on the motives of Catiline's supporters, the change in Catiline's policy at the elections of 63 BC, the role of the plebs urbana and the participation of slaves. The treatment of the last question is an example of the way Ramsey deals with historical topics. In Cat. 24,4 Sallust writes: Catilina credebat posse servitia urbana sollicitare, and in Cat. 56,4: (Catilina) servitia repudiabat. Ramsey clears up this contradiction in a very simple, and, in my opinion, incorrect way: "The apparent inconsistency is most easily resolved by assuming that Catiline was not adverse to covert assistance from this class—particularly in causing intrigue and confusion in the city on the night set for the uprising—while he was unwilling to compromise his position as the arrived champion of the downtrodden Roman populace by enlisting slaves in his army" (p. 134-35). This explanation contrasts with the thorough research of Yavetz (Historia 12 (1963) 485-99) and Bradley (Class. Phil. 74 (1978) 329-36), who both completely reject slave participation.

In my opinion Ramsey offers a useful textbook for those who want philological assistance. The student with an interest in the historical problems of the Bellum Catilinae will be less pleased.

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The commentaries of Asconius on Cicero's speeches are a most important source for Roman Republican history, and for a long time there has been a need for a modern historical commentary on Asconius' work. Marshall's book has supplied this requirement, although it is not the first recent commentary on Asconius. Already has appeared in typescript J. M. Flambard (ed.), Q. Asconii Pediani commentarii. Texte, traduction, commentaire historique, Diss. Paris 1974 (apparently unknown to M.), which is still awaiting publication in the Budé series.
The first page of M.'s Preface (IX) is an apology of his incomplete bibliography and of his reliance on publications in English. The fact that "a commentary is out-of-date almost as soon as it appears", however, is not a good excuse for being selective. If we only look at the pre-1981 period (when M.'s access to European literature was not yet hindered by his residence in Australia), there are some works which should not have been missed. E.g. in the discussion on the name of P. Clodius' foremost gang leader (Sextus Clodius or Cloelius), M. (95) aligns himself to the interpretation of Shackleton Bailey, without taking into account the article by J. M. Flambard, MEFR A 90 (1978), 235-245. In the discussion of the lex Clodia annonaria or frumentaria (Asc. 8C: M. 97), G. Rickman, The Corn Supply of Ancient Rome (Oxford 1980). Ch. VII, should have been included.

M. starts his commentary with four sections on the range, the purpose, the sources, and the reliability of Asconius' commentaries. Most of Asconius' commentaries are no longer extant. In Section One, M. schematically lists the cross-references to the lost commentaries in Asconius (6-11), and the references to those commentaries in the Scholia Bobbiensia (12-17) and in Pseudo-Asconius (17-19). Section Two is very instructive on Asconius' social background. Section Three examines the sources Asconius has and has not used (e.g. Cicero's Letters to Atticus).

In Section Four, M. unsuccessfully tries to play down the reliability of Asconius as a historical source. M. has made an extensive collection of all kinds of errors and misinterpretations by Asconius (63-75), but he has to admit that the great majority of the "errors" are only minor ones (75). Some of the errors, which M. considers the most serious, are no errors at all: Asc. 8C deals with quattuor leges perniciosae, which Clodius proposed in 58 B.C. According to M. (71 and 96) this is a serious mistake, because Clodius proposed more laws during his tribunate. But it is obvious from the text that Asconius only refers to the four laws with which Clodius started his tribunate, especially because Asconius lists them (the corn law, the abrogation of the lex Aelisa et Fufia, the repeal of the ban on the collegia, and the law on the censorship). M. is overcritical here.

M. (72) doubts Asconius' statement (23C) that M. Aemilius Scaurus, cos. 115, had to toil like a new man in order to reach the consulate. Since we have no evidence on a career by any of Scaurus' ancestors, however, we will have to believe Asconius. Besides, career difficulties of members of obscure patrician descent