de poursuivre la discussion et la recherche, mais intéressera égale-
ment tous ceux qui s'occupent d'autres domaines de l'antiquité
classique; c'est pourquoi nous avons appelé l'attention surtout sur
diverses perspectives nouvelles qui résultent de l'étude des comptes
et inventaires.

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W. WILL, Der römische Mob. Soziale Konflikte in der späten
Republik (WB-Forum; Bd.62). Darmstadt, Wissensch.

After reading W.'s Introduction, one turns back a few pages to
check whether one has read the year of publication correctly, only
to find out that the book indeed has been published in 1991, i.e. two
years after Die Wende in East Germany. The Introduction would
seem to indicate that the reader should brace himself for a historic-
materialistic study by a West German author, despite all which had
become apparent since 1989, and which confirmed suspicions of
many of us, about the subservience of science to ideology in the
former Warsaw Pact states. Fortunately, however, apart from some
exceptions the rest of the book is rather traditional in its narrative.
The Introduction, therefore, would seem more of an expression of
(personal) support for H. Schneider, whose publications along
historic-materialistic lines have met little approval, least from Chr.
Meier, the German prima donna of late Republican history.
Throughout the book, however, W. quotes Meier far more fre-
quently than Schneider and mostly approvingly'.

W. attempts to give an overview of social conflicts in Rome
during the late Republic. In the first part of his study W. outlines
social structure and social issues in general. In the second part the
focus is on Clodius and the behavior of the plebs. W.'s overview
is quite exhaustive. All the important issues such as corn laws,
violece, the collegia, the popular leaders, elections, voting,
assemblies, contiones, the social stratification of the plebs, the biased
ancient authors, etc. are treated extensively. Sometimes too exten-
sively, one may add, particularly for the non-specialist reader to
whom the book is addressed. Given the level of detail, it is some-
times difficult for the author to decide what to explain and what
not. For example, does the non-specialist know why the triumvirate

Mnemosyne, Vol. XLVI, Fasc. 3 (1993)
suddenly was transformed into a duumvirate in 53, without the explanation of what became of Crassus against the Parthians (p. 92)?

W. interestingly analyses a specific group of Clodius' supporters (pp. 62-66): the iuvenes barbatuli. These were Clodius' peers, the sons and daughters of the Roman élite. These youngsters observed the corruption of Roman politics and mocked and criticized their fathers in their poetry and by supporting Clodius' anti-establishment politics. These youngsters, type bon chic bon genre, were perhaps not as much showing moral disapproval, as W. would have it. It would rather seem a manifestation of a generation who had grown up with different values: the values of imperialist Rome as opposed to the traditions of the peasant-soldiers and the effective and unselfish senatorial élite. A generation, too, who clearly saw the competition at the top and for which they prepared themselves. This and the declining prestige of the senate due to failing government was particularly apparent to these young men and women, born from that very élite. Mark Antony and the younger Curio and their likes were accused of unmoral behavior by Cicero and other contemporaries, yet they simply followed the example of their elders.

The new interpretations W. hopes for in the section on Clodius and the urban plebs are difficult to see, unless it is in his slight bias towards interpreting social conflict as class antagonism. (e.g. p. 131). Suppression of the lower classes and corruption seem to feature more prominently as causes for the crisis of the late Republic than the inadequate political structures for the government of an empire. (e.g. pp. 19-26). The corn distributions were indeed an instrument of social control (p. 140), but they equally were an expression of the patron's obligation towards his clients. By adhering to such traditional norms, the Roman nobility and later the Emperors legitimized their power over the plebs.

The author has attempted to increase the accessibility and utility of his study by numerous instrumental appendices. Thus, the book features various chronologies, an appendix of illustrative passages from the sources in translation, a glossary of political terms, a table of measures, a map of the Forum, an overview of ancient authors and translations, a list of abbreviations, an extensive bibliography, an explanatory list of dramatis personae, and two indices. In total these appendices cover about one third of the total number of pages.