The Classical Review

<http://journals.cambridge.org/CAR>

Additional services for *The Classical Review*:

Email alerts: [Click here](#)

Subscriptions: [Click here](#)

Commercial reprints: [Click here](#)

Terms of use : [Click here](#)

**Pais's *Storia di Roma Storia di Roma*, di Ettore Pais.
Vol. I. Parte 1. Critica della tradizione sino alla caduta
del Decemvirato. Torino. Carlo Clausen. 1898. 8vo. Pp.
634. Lire 16.**

A. S. Wilkins

The Classical Review / Volume 12 / Issue 08 / November 1898, pp 419 - 422

DOI: 10.1017/S0009840X0003345X, Published online: 27 October 2009

Link to this article: http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0009840X0003345X

How to cite this article:

A. S. Wilkins (1898). The Classical Review, 12, pp 419-422 doi:10.1017/S0009840X0003345X

Request Permissions : [Click here](#)

purposes of writing' (p. 16). The psychology of primitive man is a field offering much latitude to conjecture, as Mr. Andrew Lang shows in 'The Making of Religion'; but it is hardly wide enough to contain the obiter dictum that 'in the driving of the cattle man first became conscious of the fact of motion' (p. 14). Few people, again, will agree that Sanskrit and the Vedas give us the earliest picture we can obtain of the original Aryans. Fewer still will be prepared to admit either that the Aryans in their primeval home had a registration system, with lists of the members of every household and the number of cattle in the possession of each (p. 270), or that 'statistics in their primitive state date back to the Aryan mother-nation' (p. 272). Some readers, while admitting the importance of tribal custom, will dispute the existence of law in the original Aryan home; others will consider it more likely that the names of the Hirpini and Picentes point to some form of animal worship than that the Hirpini 'were so called by their neighbours because of their rapacious tendencies' (p.

300) and that 'the Picts owed the name to their national characteristics expressed therein: it describes them as circumspect, cautious, cunning' (p. 304). Anthropologists, in view of the wide-spread occurrence of 'holy days,' are not likely to agree that 'the Sabbath was a purely social institution ... an institution of a social and political kind, like our present labour regulations' (p. 115); nor to accept the speculations about the *ver sacrum* which occupy a large part of the book and explain the institution as commemorative of the first emigration from the Aryan home—we must rather regard it as a taboo and as probably to be explained as one of the taboos, incidental to a state of consecration, which at first was the necessary consequence of engaging in the sacred function of war, and then became an optional engagement, in which the restrictions 'have to be expressed when the vow is taken' (Robertson-Smith: *Religion of the Semites*, p. 481). In conclusion it should be stated that the work is incomplete owing to the author's premature death.

F. B. JEVONS.

PAIS'S *STORIA DI ROMA*.

Storia di Roma, di ETTORE PAIS. Vol. I. Parte 1. Critica della tradizione sino alla caduta del Decemvirato. Torino. Carlo Clausen. 1898. 8vo. Pp. 634. Lire 16.

PROFESSOR ETTORE PAIS, of the University of Pisa, is known to English scholars by the elaborate *Storia della Sicilia e della Magna Grecia*, of which the first volume was published some four years ago, and reviewed at the time in these columns. That work still remains a fragment, the second and third volumes being as yet only 'in preparazione.' But partly perhaps owing to his transference from a Sicilian to a Tuscan University, the author has now taken in hand a task of wider compass, of which, however, the earlier book forms an integral part, and proposes to write the *Storia d'Italia dai tempi più antichi alle fine delle guerre Puniche*. The present volume is mainly critical. It narrates, with almost too much fulness, the traditional history, and submits it to a severe analysis. 'To justify to the reader the reconstruction of the history of Rome which has taken shape

in my own mind, it was necessary,' he says, 'to set forth in detail the value and the genesis of materials very often spurious, which formed, as it were, the basis of my building, and I saw that it was impossible for me to lay its foundations without having first cleared the site of its rubbish. Thus this volume has grown to be much larger than I had desired.' But even so he has found it necessary to throw a great deal of the discussion of details into a complementary volume, entitled *Fasti ed Annali, Culti e Leggende dell' antichissima Roma*, in which, or in a separate volume, the author promises to give his views as to the true history of the early years of Rome. It is unfortunate for the critic that this has not yet been issued, and that he has to report and to discuss theories without the author's final statement of the arguments on which they are based, and to consider merely or mainly the negative results of his researches, without knowing how much he thinks may be saved from the wreck of the traditional account.

Prof. Pais sets about his work with

thoroughness and on sound methods. He examines first the materials which the earliest Greek historians of Rome may be supposed to have had at their command. The existence of the songs sung at banquets, as described by Cato, he does not deny; but he denies that any definite trace of them can be detected, and points out that in any case their historical value would be worthless. The main sources for the early history of Rome were Greek writers of Sicily and especially of Syracuse; in their fragments we find some features of the traditional story already recognised. But the most fruitful period for the development of this story was the earlier part of the second century B.C., and it took its final shape in the hands of Pergamene or Alexandrian scholars. As for the *annales maximi*, he says, 'the little that we know of them reveals such a direct imitation of the Greek writers, such abundance of words, or, we might better say, such garrulity as was worthy indeed of that gossip of barbers, which Polybius censures in Sosilus and Chaerea, the historians of Hannibal, but which did not suit in any way the redaction of state-documents compiled at a tolerably early date.' Again, 'there has not come down to us a single fragment of the *annales maximi* which can be referred to a redaction earlier than the third century': Ennius indeed may well have had much influence in their compilation. In any case they were re-edited at a comparatively late date under the influence of family traditions, and the rhetoric of the Greeks. The very fact that Greek writers were beginning to collect or to invent various legends as to the early history of a power which was now taking a prominent place in the western world, led to the formation of an official and canonical tradition, which, however, was often based on authority no better than that of the conflicting stories which it tended to suppress, and which have often survived only by accident. Prof. Pais well discusses the part which the poets and the annalists took in moulding this tradition. Cato's *Origines* he finds to have been, though written in Latin, an imitation of the Greek writers, from whom he largely drew. 'To consider this work as a fruit of Roman erudition is a gross and vulgar error.' Cassius Hemina, Calpurnius Piso, Caelius Antipater, are all regarded as largely dependent on the Sicilian writers.

After treating of the various influences which led to falsification of the tradition, Prof. Pais goes on to discuss our chief

extant authorities. While recognising the justice with which modern critics have almost unanimously preferred Diodorus to either Dionysius or Livy, he points out that this superiority is only relative: 'non è che un mediocre compilatore, il quale, come qualunque Greco culto, era in grado di sapere quali fossero le opere più importanti che dovevano essere compendiate.' He is not without diffuseness at times, and his brevity is often arbitrary. There are some excellent remarks upon Livy, the 'rose-water republican,' and his style of writing history. After touching upon the later compilers, the author goes on to treat of the materials at the command of the historians, the falsified monumental records, the exaggerated family traditions, repeating the same incident again and again, the misleading etymologies of local and personal names, of festivals, and of ceremonies, the love of assimilating Roman with Greek history, and the perversion due to national pride, or to party feeling. 'Quella storiografia che nelle sue origini era stata l'espressione delle pretese genealogiche e delle varie alleanze di famiglie, che non mano si era svolta sino al punto di diventare organo delle opinioni politiche dei partiti ed infine di tutto quanto lo stato, finiva per piegarsi anche essa all'impero nascente, e diventava uno degli instrumenti con cui Roma ed il cesarismo giustificavano davanti al mondo civile le loro nobiltà e le loro vittorie.'

After the introduction (pp. 1-128) follow three long chapters dealing severally with the legends relating to the foundation of Lavinium, Alba, and Rome, the seven kings of Rome, and the period from the expulsion of the kings to the fall of the decemvirs. It is obviously impossible to do more than refer to a few of the more interesting points of the analysis. Prof. Pais brings out with great clearness the existence of discrepant and often contradictory legends as to the earliest history of Rome, and shows how the attempt of late historians was not to ascertain the real facts so far as possible, but simply to smooth over differences, to remove chronological impossibilities, and to weave the whole into a story fitted to glorify the state and the ruling family in particular. He finds three main currents of legend, which were blended into one in the official tradition as it took shape in the hands of Naevius and of Fabius Pictor. First, the stories of Hercules in the West, sung first by Stesichorus, and coming from the Dorians, Magna Graecia and Sicily, associated with the Arcadian

Evander, who is subsequently identified with the Italian Faunus. Second, the myth of Aeneas and the cultus of Aphrodite, brought to Lavinium from Sicily, and then transplanted to Rome. Third, the legends attached to the foundation of Rome. The personages of the legends divide themselves into easily distinguished groups. Some, like Faunus, Acca Laurentia, Tiberinus, are personifications of natural forces, and topical deities, belonging to the earliest religious patrimony of the Latin race: others like Ulysses, Diomedes, Aeneas, Ascanius were imported from the Greek traditions; others like Evander and many of the Alban kings were products of later erudition. The blending of these different elements is in itself a proof of the late formation of the official legend. In most cases their successive acceptance was a result of the adoption at Rome of the cults, as of Ceres, Hercules, and Venus, with which they were severally connected. Prof. Pais has collected with great learning, though of course in this part of his work he has been largely anticipated by earlier scholars, the parallels to the various legends, which present themselves so abundantly in Greece and elsewhere; and comes to the conclusion that it was towards the middle of the fourth century B.C. that those constituents of the tradition came to prevail which were finally recognised as 'canonical.'

In his discussion of the seven kings the most noteworthy points are the explanation which he gives of their original character, and of the genesis of the form which this legendary history ultimately took. Romulus is originally merely the eponymus of Roma; the institutions ascribed to him are the result of a long historical development; his life is only the daily course of the sun; his identification with Quirinus is certainly later than the time of Ennius. Numa is originally a river-god, closely connected with Aeneas, who perished in the stream Numicius, whose source was associated with Egeria, and belonged to Lavinium and Aricia. Tullus Hostilius, in his actions a duplication of Romulus, has himself divine character, as the god of war. Ancus Martius is in many ways a duplication of Numa; his military exploits are anticipations of events of a later date: his name points to the personification of the cultus of Mars. Tarquinius is only another form of Tarpeius, the tutelary deity and eponymus of the Tarpeian rock, and the old rites associated with the Capitol. The later Tarquinius is but a duplication of the earlier, and the actions of both but

proleptic of much later incidents. Tarquinius Superbus is the old god Tarpeius, transformed into a maleficent ruler just as Cacus, the beneficent deity, associated with Vulcan, was degraded into a vulgar robber, and as the wicked Tarpeia was differentiated from the good vestal Tarquinia or Taracia. The seven kings are, in short, no historical personages, but are personifications of the seven hills and the worships connected with them. Their history has been contaminated by anecdotes of diverse origin and old Greek legends, transferred to Italian soil and often transmuted there; but the apparently historical incidents are anticipations of events of a later date, when the horizon was quite different; and the whole was recast under the influence of historians of plebeian origin, who wished to find proofs that the constitution, under which their claims were recognized, could be traced back to the earliest days of the state.

The ingenuity of Prof. Pais's combinations, and the wide range of learning with which he supports them, are equally undeniable. But in the nature of the case many of his theories must lack the evidence which would justify us in regarding them as proved. The destructive analysis may often be considered as final, and the influences which he postulates are undoubtedly *verae causae*, anticipation, duplication, popular etymologising, imported legends, assimilation with Greek history or myth, family pride, the desire to account for customs, cults or political institutions, all have been at work. But whether it is possible to determine in each case which has been the efficient cause is a very different question: and when we remember the small proportion of instances in which we have preserved to us, often by the merest accident, and in isolated passing allusions, the variant traditions, which were for the most part suppressed by the 'canonical' account, it is impossible to feel much confidence in the reconstruction now offered us. On the other hand it would be unfair to reject Prof. Pais's conclusions without a careful consideration, such as is impossible within the present limits, of the converging evidence on which he bases them; and it is perhaps premature to express a judgment on his general view of the course of the early history until he has given that continuous account of it which he promises for the future.

The fourth chapter on the history of the early republic contains most that is original. Prof. Pais has followed the lines marked out by Mommsen in his *Forschungen*, but

has pushed his suggestions further than his master. For him almost every incident and character in the sixty years preceding the decemvirate is a proleptic duplication of something really belonging to the subsequent century and a half. The ante-dating, which Mommsen ascribes, for example, to the treaty between Rome and Carthage, is given as the explanation, not only of campaigns and sieges, but also of laws and institutions. Every student knows how much there is to suggest such an explanation, how a Valerius, a Horatius, an Appius Claudius, reappears generation after generation, to play the same kind of part. Historians have often explained the fact by talking of the traditional policy of a family; but the explanation goes but a little way to account for the repetition not only of a general tendency, but also of incidents. Prof. Pais deals unsparingly with the whole history of this period. The traditional narrative is no whit more trustworthy than that of the kings, and has no kind of solid foundation. The incidents are composed of repeated variations on one or two themes, generally borrowed from later history. Brutus and Collatinus are as apocryphal as Horatius Cocles, who is only another form of Vulcan. The myths of Claudia and of Mucius contain both topographical and religious elements, and Minucius, who denounces the conspiracy

of Maelius, is Hercules *Μηνίρως*. Even the secessions of the plebs are a duplication of a similar incident at Ardea: and the story of Verginia, which is only another form of that of Lucretia, probably also had its origin at Ardea. Of this we are promised fuller proofs than are as yet offered. On the whole it may be said of this portion of Prof. Pais's history, as of the work as a whole, that he has fully succeeded in his destructive analysis: but that in construction he has much more frequently arrived at the possible, than at the certain or even the probable. The work is certainly one which must not be neglected by students of Roman history; it is written in a pleasant easy style, though not without some needless discursiveness and repetition, and with a full command of the ancient sources, and of the best German literature:—English and French scholars are rarely if ever quoted, a neglect which will be more serious, if it is continued in the more constructive part of the work;—and a good table of contents somewhat, though not altogether, makes up for the lack of index. There is ingenuity and suggestiveness on every page, and even the boldest combinations are supported by arguments and parallels which claim for them careful consideration.

A. S. WILKINS.

MIDDLETON AND MILLS' *STUDENT'S COMPANION TO LATIN AUTHORS*.

The Student's Companion to Latin Authors.

By GEORGE MIDDLETON, M.A. and THOMAS R. MILLS, M.A. London: Macmillan and Co., Limited. 8vo. 1896. Pp. xii. 382. 6s.

THE authors of this little book have undertaken a useful piece of work, and have done it well. It is not a history of Latin literature, but a supplement to such a book as Mr. Mackail's. It furnishes the dry bones, which it is the province of the historian to clothe with life. There is no attempt to give an estimate of the literary merit of the various writers, but the facts which bear on each author's life and position are clearly stated; and (an excellent feature) quotations are given in full, as a rule, not mere references. Naturally Schwabe's edition of Teuffel has been largely utilized; but it would be unfair to speak of the book

as merely an abridgement of that standard work: there is abundant evidence of a wide and varied reading. A few slips are to be found; and one or two odd interpretations. Probably the authors are the first who ever suspected that Horace in his

Bioneis sermonibus et sale nigro

was referring 'with proud humility' to the story that his father had once made money as a 'salsamentarius.' There is something too a little comical in the suggestion that the poet who wrote 'non ego sanius bacchabor Edonis' and a dozen like passages, was priggishly reproving 'the unrestrained bacchanalian spirit of Catullus' in *Od.* i. 27. It is always a question how much should be introduced in a handbook of this kind. Some will think perhaps that if the Plautine prosody is to be expounded, it would have