*Chapter 1*

FROM 'PROVOCATION' TO 'DISCUSSION'
*A PLEA FOR CONTINUATION*

T HE CURRENT DEBATE on the political culture of the Roman
republic began almost twenty years ago and has lost little of its
momentum since. For the first time in decades, the focus was not
on the countless individual issues but on the really basic questions. The
status, identity, functions, and interactions of citizen body and popular
assemblies, of Senate and magistrates were problematized and reopened
to discussion, thus raising fundamental questions about the very charac-
ter and structure of the *libera res publica*. Essential issues in this debate
are the relative importance and relations of institutions and procedures
of deliberation and decision making, the nature of social hierarchies,
rank, and reputation, of influence, authority and, last but not least, power
and participation in the political life of this Republic, and indeed its
whole political culture. There began a search for adequate terms for the
peculiar sociopolitical order of the imperial Republic that attempted to
clarify the basic meaning of terms like 'constitution,' 'democracy,' and
'sovereignty,' 'process,' 'structure' and 'ritual,' 'city-state' and its character
as a 'state' (in whatever sense of this controversial concept), 'aristocracy,'
'meritocracy' and 'oligarchy,' 'élite' and 'ruling' or 'political class.'

This international discussion was triggered by Fergus Millar, who rad-
ically questioned a basic consensus, which had—in spite of many differ-
ences concerning approaches, perspective, and interpretation—been ac-
cepted in the field without serious challenge for almost a century.[1] Up to
then, it had been agreed that the social and political order of the *libera
res publica* had been aristocratic or even 'oligarchic,' meaning that all
institutions and positions of power were controlled by a particular kind
of ruling class, which recruited not only magistrates, generals, priests,
and senators from its ranks, but also the official representatives of the
people, the *tribuni plebis*. Scholars had generally taken for granted that
this ruling (or 'political') class—often called an "aristocracy of office" or

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[1]Millar, 1984; idem, 1986; idem, 1989 (review of Raaflaub [Ed.], 1986, and Hölkes-
kamp, 1987); idem, 1995a and 1995b (review of *CAH*, ix). These contributions have been
reprinted in Millar, 2002a. I will cite from this collection in the following (cf. my review in
*SCI* 21, 2002, 308–11; Benoist, 2004, 371ff.).

the "senatorial aristocracy"—had an inner circle, the true *nobilitas*, consisting of those families with a consular tradition and a kind of virtually, though not formally, hereditary claim to the highest magistracy. This nobility also controlled the Senate, because the (higher) magistrates regularly returned into its ranks after their year of office; the Senate was taken to have been the central institutional organ of this aristocracy and, therefore, the actual decision-making and thus, in the full sense, 'ruling' body.

Millar has accused this established "orthodoxy" of a "remarkable distortion" of the true importance of the constitution's central institutions; he even calls it a distorted, if not completely false, view of the entire political order. He criticizes two specific aspects. According to him, the *populus Romanus* itself, "as represented by the various forms of assembly," was "in a formal sense the sovereign body in the Republican constitution"—and "the fact of this sovereignty has to be central to any analysis" of the "Republic as a political system." The Senate, on the other hand, was never a "parliament," let alone a "legislature" of a "representative" government. He believes that the traditional perspective not only plays down the institutionalized participation of the people (which no one in fact has ever doubted), but also dismisses it as merely "formal," "passive," "powerless," and "nominal," even as a "charade, managed from above"—namely, "determined by a self-perpetuating oligarchy."[2] Since Matthias Gelzer's classic book on the *nobilitas*,[3] the idea that Roman citizens, the inhabitants of Rome and Italy, and the whole *imperium Romanum* were linked in a complex system of patron-client relations had been generally accepted without further discussion. This dense network of vertical dependencies, mutual obligations, and duties was thought to include the 'ruling class' as well as all the other groups of citizens, reaching down even to the great mass of *plebs* and provincials. For Millar, it has been this "modern myth" that legitimated—again without further discussion—the conclusion that these complex interrelations secured the oligarchy's control over all votes, processes of legislation and jurisdiction, and, above all, the elections to the highest magistracies. And as a consequence, it was this control that in turn allowed the oligarchy to reproduce itself and ensure its position. These main points are—according to Millar—the basis of the generally accepted "fiction of a collective parliamentary rule of the Senate" and "misleading presuppositions" of a ruling class as a closed shop.[4]

For Millar this leads to a second fundamental question, which he raised in his characteristically provocative way: "Was there a 'governing class,' an 'aristocracy,' or an 'élite'? Was it defined by descent, and if so, in what way?" He does not deny that there were—of course—patricians, who

[2] Millar, 2002a, 111, 124, 127, 137, 145, and also idem, 1998, 1, 4ff., 197ff. and passim.
[3] Gelzer, 1912, in idem, 1962, 17–135; new edition 1982.
[4] Millar, 2002a, 137, 145f., 150, cf. 92, 149; idem, 1998, 7ff., 11, 216.

were "descendants of earlier generations of patricians." However, "nothing guaranteed a patrician a public office, a priesthood, or a seat in the Senate." Also there were "some persons in public life," who were called *nobiles*, because one of their ancestors "had held a major public office." But, according to Millar, this term was "social or political, not constitutional": a *nobilis* cannot be compared to—for example—an English peer and his hereditary constitutional rights. Millar denies the existence of such a situation in the Republic: "Even a person who was both a *patricius* and a *nobilis* had to compete for office." In his opinion, the resulting competition took place between individuals who as such (and not as members of a political class with a specific collective identity) promoted themselves in public life. In consequence, Millar flatly denies the existence of the nobility or of any homogeneous patrician-plebeian political élite in general; for him, to put it in a nutshell, neither an aristocracy nor an oligarchy ever existed in Republican Rome.[5]

Only if we abandon these "fictions" and "misconceptions" can we truly understand the *libera res publica*. For Millar, the Republic was not simply a city-state but a true "direct democracy"—much closer to the Athenian democracy than most scholars would have been prepared to admit. This interpretation adds the Roman republic to the "relatively small group of historical examples of political systems" that "might deserve the label 'democracy'" at all—and therefore it is for Millar only fit and proper, and indeed high time, that the Roman people be restored "to their proper place in the history of democratic values."[6] According to Millar, the *populus Romanus* itself was the sovereign true and proper— and not merely in an abstract formal, symbolic, or ideological sense. The assemblies of the people—the *comitia centuriata*, *comitia tributa* and the *concilia plebis*—always had the final word in the political process. This includes not only the election of magistrates, but also matters of foreign policy, decisions about treaties, war and peace, and, most importantly, the whole spectrum of legislative competences, ranging from issues of citizenship, the founding of colonies, and distribution of land to civil and criminal law, legal procedure, and even matters of the constitution.[7]

Millar insists that real day-to-day political issues were not decided behind the closed doors of the *curia* by the Senate and its exclusive inner circle, but were publicly discussed, under the open sky, in the central civic spaces of the city-state Rome, such as the Forum Romanum, *comitium*, and the Campus Martius, and not only before and, in the true sense of

[5]Millar, 1998, 4; cf. idem, 2002a, 126f., and 87, 90ff., 95f., 104f., 111, 141.
[6]Ibid., 7, 11, 209, and idem, 2002a, 112, 132ff., 138ff., 148, 150, 158, 163ff.; idem, 2002b, 6.
[7]Millar, 2002a, 112ff., 120ff., 136f., 151ff., 165f.; idem, 1998, 15ff., 92, 209ff., 224; idem, 2002b, 6. Cf. Lintott, 1987, 41ff.

the term, under the eyes of the citizens assembled there, but also among them. Therefore, these public spaces were the essential fields of activity, in the concrete as well as metaphorical sense of the term, for the individual actors playing the different public rôles that this "direct democracy" provided—as our sources for everyday political life show. According to Millar, these actors 'performed' as office holders or candidates going around *in toga candida*—as advocates in civil lawsuits, as prosecutors or defense counsels in political trials, as spokesmen, supporters of, or opponents to, the numerous issues that had to be presented and explained to the people of Rome, and that were often discussed heatedly before the people in formal assembly finally came to a decision. Moreover, Millar calls all these different functions mere facets or aspects of the single, most fundamental public rôle in this system—namely, that of the orator addressing the crowds in the political arenas of Rome. Only orators who were able to convince the assembled citizens of their views could hope for success and higher office.[8]

Even Millar concedes that—in this sense—the political structure of the Republic was a "social system" after all, but only because it was based on human interaction in the most concrete sense. As all political action was at all times determined by the dense and small-scale topography of a 'city-state' and the direct face-to-face communication that resulted from it, political power always remained concentrated upon the space between forum and *comitium*—namely, the *rostra*, the platform from which orators addressed the crowds. What Millar calls the "direct democracy" of the Republic was clearly and obviously defined by this fundamental form of interaction in specific public spaces.[9]

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As Millar himself says, his intention in putting forward such deliberately one-sided claims is to force a debate with the supporters of the received "orthodoxy" about their fundamental "preconceptions," which he believes to have remained unchanged for decades: These "assumptions" are alleged to have dominated research on Republican Rome throughout the twentieth century.[10] His implicit opponent in this dialogue turns out to be one of the prominent supporters of an older, indeed truly orthodox variant of the basic consensus—namely, Millar's own teacher Sir Ronald Syme.[11] With a

[8]Millar, 2002a, 141f. and 105, 111f., 143ff.; idem, 1998, 1, 44ff., 217ff., 223ff. and passim.
[9]Millar, 1998, 38ff., 209ff.; idem, 2002a, 91, 101, cf. 117, 171, 179f., 208f.
[10]Ibid., ix. Also cf. Hopkins, 1991, 492, whose view of the "conventional scholarly opinion over the last few decades (misled [. . .] by the elitist preoccupations of leading scholars)" is just as undifferentiated.
[11]This becomes clear in his author's prologue: Millar, 2002a, 12f.

characteristic kind of aristocratic self-confidence, Syme had already formulated the inspiring principle of this orthodoxy in terms of a broad generalization in his famous book on the "Roman Revolution," magisterially declaring it a metahistorically valid universal truth: "In all ages, whatever the form and name of government" or "whatever may be the name and theory of the constitution," "be it monarchy, republic, or democracy, an oligarchy lurks behind the façade." Even Robert Michels's well-known 'iron law'—insisting on the "historical necessity of oligarchy"—could hardly be more explicit. And for Syme, "oligarchy" (be it "open or concealed") is not "a figment of political theory, a specious fraud, or a mere term of abuse," but "something real and tangible"—that is, "very precisely a collection of individuals," whose "shape and character" clearly "stands out, solid and manifest."[12] And that was certainly true for Rome: "In any age of the history of Republican Rome about twenty or thirty men, drawn from a dozen dominant families, hold a monopoly of office and power." On the receiving end, the amorphous and anonymous "other classes" were (at best) "susceptible to *auctoritas*, taking their tone and tastes from above"—in fact, the "lower classes" not only "had no voice in government," but Syme even denied them a "place in history."[13]

As a consequence, political life was not characterized, according to Syme, "by the ostensible opposition between Senate and People, *optimates* and *populares*, *nobiles* and *novi homines*," let alone "by parties and programmes of a modern and parliamentary character," but simply consisted in nothing but "the strife for power, wealth and glory"—a never-ending struggle that invariably and exclusively took place within the closed circles of the senatorial aristocracy, "in the heart of the governing oligarchy, in court and cabinet." In the same context, Syme stated in his typically 'imperious' tone that the whole of Roman history, "Republican or Imperial," is "the history of the governing class"—"an aristocracy unique in duration and predominance." For him, this "oligarchy of government" and its "composition" always remained the "guiding," indeed "dominant theme of political history, as the binding link between the Republic and the Empire."[14]

Sir Ronald Syme, Friedrich Münzer, the recognized and (rightly) revered doyen of Republican prosopography,[15] and Matthias Gelzer—who has been listed among the founders of the consensus mentioned above, in

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[12]Syme, 1939, vii, 7, 18, 346, cf. 10ff.; also see idem, 1991a, 323ff., and generally Michels, 1989, 369, cf. 351ff. Cf. the trenchant criticism by Ober, 1996, 18ff. Cf. also Galsterer, 1990, 12ff.; Walter, 2002, 137ff.; Hölkeskamp, 2001b, 94f., with additional references.

[13]Syme, 1939, 459, 476.

[14]Syme, 1939, vii, 11, 405; idem, 1986, v, 13, and idem 1991a.

[15]Münzer, 1920 (=1999). Cf. Hölkeskamp, 2001b, 92ff. (on the man and his work), with further references.

spite of his reservations about an all-too-schematic model[16]—agreed that the aforementioned "strife for power, wealth and glory," and indeed political conflict in general, took only one concrete form throughout the whole Roman republic: The formation of "aristocratic parties" or "factions" inside the *nobilitas*, which confronted each other in meetings of the Senate or even (at least during elections and in criminal trials) in the assemblies. However, this does not mean that these institutions were anything else but two stages of contest—and eventually even less than that: at least for the *princeps*, the "senate no less than the assembly of the sovran people was a cumbrous and unsatisfactory body to deal with."[17] According to Syme, apparently alluding to a famous saying attributed to Caesar,[18] "the Roman Commonwealth, "*res publica populi Romani*,'" was not only just "a name"—the "constitution" of the Republic (as well as, for different reasons, that of the Principate) was indeed nothing but a "façade," "a screen and a sham."[19]

As a consequence, the kind of aristocratic 'parties' that Münzer and Syme envisaged could never influence the ordinary citizen body, let alone split the people as a whole into political groups. On the contrary, these 'parties' or 'factions' were exclusively alliances of leading families, sealed and stabilized—often for several generations—by typically "dynastic" forms of personal relationships—that is, by marriages and adoptions, personal obligations, political friendships and alliances between *nobiles* as heads of "noble houses," and downright "dynasties," patrician and plebeian. According to another prominent advocate of this approach, Howard Scullard, "an elaborate system of groupings and counter-groupings" had emerged by the mid-Republic, and it was this "system" that "formed the real, if unadvertised and unofficial, basis of Roman public life"; John Briscoe insisted as late as the early 1980s that it was "entirely natural, indeed inevitable, that such groups should have existed." At last, Roman Republican 'factionalism' had achieved the status of a metahistorical law of nature.[20]

As Münzer and Syme explicitly pronounced, the one and only purpose of these "parties" was to obtain and maintain "power" in the state by holding the two highest offices, the dual magistracy of the consulship.

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[16]Gelzer, 1912; idem, 1921, 186ff. Cf. Bleicken et al., 1977; Burckhardt, 1990, 77ff.; Jehne, 2006, 5f. See below at n. 28 for details. Cf. on Gelzer's work as a "turning-point" Ridley, 1986, and Simon, 1988.

[17]Syme, 1939, 408.

[18]Suetonius *Divus Iulius* 77, quoting T. Ampius, who recorded Caesar to have said in public: "nihil esse rem publicam, appellationem modo sine corpore ac specie."

[19]Syme, 1939, 11f., 15, 340.

[20]Scullard, (1935) 1980, 333; Briscoe, 1982, 1076; cf. also idem, 1972 and 1992.

The machinations of the "parties" and the typical "weapons" that their noble leaders held and wielded in order to achieve this one and only end were the true *arcana imperii* of the *nobilitas* throughout the entire Republic, from earliest times to its fall—and even beyond.[21] And as "hardened prosopographers," they were confident that these *arcana*, though "concealed by craft or convention," could and did not "evade detection" by means of their particular method of investigating personal relations.[22]

These assumptions and presuppositions gave rise to a specific concomitant "conception of the nature of Roman politics" that by definition, as it were, excluded the possibility that concrete issues, pragmatic problems, and programmatic differences could be (or ever become) the stuff that 'politics' was made of. Accordingly, 'politics' was understood as a kind of perpetual, unending hustle and bustle among the aforementioned leading figures as heads of individual families and representatives of their respective coalitions, the rise and "rule," "domination" and fall of dynasties and of one "governing party" following another, revolving around the central pivot of the consulate as an end in itself: to quote Syme again, it was the "lust of power" that was the "prime infirmity of the Roman noble."[23]

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Long before Millar started the current discussion, however, some scholars had already felt uneasy about this concept of politics, with its implicit preconceptions and downright ideological assumptions in the guise of apparently self-evident axioms—a concept of (and a methodological approach to) the fundamental character of Republican politics that simply took for granted what should have been questioned, analyzed, and put to the test of empirical research in the first place.[24] Already in the 1980s, Chester Starr ironically but accurately observed that "the popularity of chasing down who was whose uncle may at last be waning," referring to fastidious, and increasingly speculative, traditional prosopography. A decade later, Allen Ward (who self-critically remarked that he had himself been one "who sometimes too zealously tracked down uncles—and aunts

[21] Münzer, 1920, 1ff., 133, 317, 427f. (= 1999, 5ff., 127, 291, 362f.) and passim.
[22] Syme, 1939, 10ff., esp. ix and 12; idem, 1991b, 338ff.
[23] Syme, 1939, vii, 18, 22, 23, etc..
[24] See Meier, 1966/1980, 163f., 174f., 187f.; Shatzman, 1974, 197ff.; Astin, 1968, and 1989, 167ff. (who in his earlier work had still advocated, though with caution, "the consideration of 'family-group' factions and of motivation by factional rivalry" as being "indispensable for the understanding of Roman politics." He denied, however, the existence of "monolithic parties" or "coherent factions" in the mid-2nd century: 1967, 80, 95f.; Brunt, 1988, 463ff.). Cf. Ward, 1997, 66ff.; Hölkeskamp, 1987, 44ff., 53ff., and more recently idem, 2001b, 100ff., with details and references.

and cousins too!") declared, perhaps a little over-optimistically,[25] that it had long since been silently agreed that such alliances between aristocratic families and factions based on dynastic relationships had never existed, much less been stable over several generations or even decades.[26]

It is a rather telling paradox that it was Matthias Gelzer—who had been Millar's special target because his work had allegedly contributed to the establishment of the orthodox consensus[27]—who as early as 1950 had begun explicitly to doubt the concept of stable aristocratic 'parties,' factions, or "family groups as constituent factors in Roman politics" and became increasingly sceptical about "the schematic crudeness" of the all-too-simple and mechanical prosopographical method, which Münzer (and some of his followers, including Scullard) employed to reconstruct them.[28] Interestingly enough, a leading American historian of Republican Rome and a master of the prosopographical approach of the next generation, who knew only too well what he was talking about, Erich Gruen, also warned against "dogmatism or slavish adherence to a schema," "abuse" of the method, and problematic "generalizations," insisting on the fragility of "loyalties to family, class, and faction" and generally emphasizing the fluidity of associations, cooperations, and groups and "the rapidity of change, the shifting and slippery nature of political events" in the (late) Republic. Though still convinced that "the prosopographical method, its use as a tool remains indispensable for any understanding of the Roman republic," Gruen apparently did not share the optimism of the "whole new school of prosopographical research investigating marriage alliances, adoptions, *amicitiae*, and *clientelae* in order to reconstruct

[25]Twyman, 1972, not only once again tries to make a case for the existence of a "Claudio-Metellan factio" in the 70s BC, but also takes issue with general criticism of the 'factionalist' approach. His own concept of the "structure of politics," however, simply fails to meet the standards that the debate on the analytical status and value of concepts such as 'factio,' on the potential and limits of prosopography as such, and on the character of (Republican) politics had already established by the early 1970s. The same is true for the (only slightly) modernized restatement of the old orthodoxy by Briscoe, 1992.

[26]Starr, 1987, 41; Ward, 1997, 66f. Cf. also Wiseman (1976) 1987. The best detailed refutation is Brunt, 1988, 443ff.

[27]Millar, 2002a, 145ff., cf. 92, 126; idem, 1998, 7ff., and 2002b, 139.

[28]Gelzer, 1950, and the review of Gelzer, 1962–64, by Ernst Badian, in *JRS* 57, 1967, 216–22, quotation: 218. Scullard's reply (1973, xviii ff.) reveals that this "hardened prosopographer" was on the defensive: on the one hand, he relativized his concepts of "political groups," e.g., xx: "False emphasis may … arise … from conceiving such groups as self-conscious corporate personalities," et cetera; on the other, however, he did not address the fundamental issue, raised already in the severely critical review by Alfred Heuss, 1956a, whether (or not) Roman politics and political culture should be explained in terms of "factionalist" patterns or parallelograms at all. Cf. also Hölkeskamp, 2001b, 96f., for further evidence; Gwyn Morgan, 2006, 174f.

the groups that dominated Roman politics."[29] The same is true for the American doyen of Republican prosopography, T. Robert S. Broughton. It is certainly true that he was convinced that "a prosopographical approach *of some sort*" (explicitly to be "used with due caution and a comprehensive view") was "necessary for a description of the Roman governing class from the early period of the Republic through its fall" (and beyond):[30] especially for, as it were, the 'microhistorical' reconstruction of individual careers and aristocratic profiles as well as for the 'macrohistorical' analysis of general patterns of office holding, criteria of ranking and social status, the composition, definition, and identity of social groups such as the senatorial aristocracy and the *equites*, prosopography has been, and remains, "an extremely powerful tool and technique."[31] However, Broughton as well as Gruen were also well aware of the limits (and dangers) of a one-sided reliance on the method: The "evidence that prosopography provides" may in some instances give "aid, but only partial aid, in dealing with other important questions" that have indeed remained central and will therefore be raised again and again in later chapters, such as the "reasons for the acceptance by all classes of so aristocratic a government for so long" and "the reasons for Roman expansion."[32]

But Millar seems to have had no time (and perhaps no sense) for such nuances and the peculiar irony implied.[33] Speaking generally, the "implicit dialogue, or argument" that he wanted to conduct with what he took "to be the ruling presuppositions about Roman society and politics

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[29]Gruen, 1968, 1ff., quotations: 25, 2, 3, 4, 7, cf. also idem, 1974, 47ff., 105 etc. (and in the second edition: 1995, xi f.).

[30]Broughton, 1972, 260f. (my italics, K.-J. H.).

[31]Barnes, 2007b, 93. The classic discussions of the "payoffs and pitfalls" of "prosopography" remain Stone, 1971; Carney, 1973; Eck, 1993 (and the comment by Barnes, 2007b, 86ff.), as well as already Nicolet, 1970, and Barnes, 2007b, 82ff. (for the Roman republic in particular). Cf. on the history of prosopography as a "methodology" Galsterer, 1990, 5ff., and Barnes, 2007a, with further references. Cf. on modern concepts of the method and its potential Eck, 1993, and the other contributions in idem (Ed.) 1993; idem, 1974, republished in an updated and augmented Italian translation in idem, 1996, 27–83, and his other contributions in this volume. See also Näf, 2001, 1074f., with further references; Eck, 2002 and 2003; Magdalino, 2003, and the other contributions in Cameron (Ed.), 2003; Keats-Rohan, 2007, and the other relevant contributions in eadem (Ed.), 2007. Cf. on the prosopographical approach to a full-scale analysis of the Republican *equites* Nicolet, 1966, 147ff.

[32]Broughton, 1972, 260f. Cf. already Momigliano, 1940, 77f.

[33]Unfortunately this also applies to John North, who calls the traditional orthodoxy "frozen waste theory of Roman politics" and believes it to be the established model (1990a, 6f.; idem, 1990b, 277f.), and to Peter Wiseman, who holds "the sheer inertia of the Gelzer model" responsible for the persistence of an alleged "prevalent orthodoxy" (2002a, 309, cf. 305ff.). Already Harris characterizes this as an "artificial target" and calls North's perception "curiously insular" in idem, 1990, 291; Hölkeskamp, 1993, 15 and 17.

that have characterized historical writing" in the twentieth century has stopped short of a true debate. An "ongoing dialogue" between Millar (and his followers), on the one hand, and his critics as well as the most important advocates of a 'revisionist' school of thought who had long since embarked on a systematic deconstruction of the traditional orthodoxy, on the other, has regrettably not taken place at all. He has explicitly refused to "argue directly and continuously with any of the major interpretations" (mentioning, however, the 'elitist' variants proposed by Christian Meier and Erich Gruen in passing). He has not been prepared to be involved in a debate that he himself had demanded, nor has he responded, at least up to the present moment, to the differentiated and detailed critical responses to his publications.[34]

The following chapters have three intentions. First, I will attempt to record and review these responses[35]—this seems necessary as they are being increasingly simplified, misrepresented, sweepingly dismissed out of hand, or even simply ignored by scholars who seem to subscribe to a radical revisionism à la Millar.[36] At the same time, rather crude versions of Millar's views—"partial, superficial, and inadequate" though their author himself, in a classic *captatio benevolentiae*, has characterized them[37]—seem now themselves to be growing (or even solidifying) into a new orthodoxy. His books and articles have been characterized (not quite unjustly) as the "most significant contributions to recent debates about the character of Roman politics," revolving around the central topics of "the practice of popular participation and indeed sovereignty"(!) in the

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[34]Millar, 1998, ix, 4. His selective and somewhat opinionated comments on "some contemporary approaches" here and elsewhere (e.g. Millar, 1998, ix f. on Pina Polo, 1996 etc.; idem, 2002b, 135ff.) do not respond to the debate itself.

[35]Cf. Burckhardt, 1990, 89ff.; Jehne, 1995a, 1ff.; Gabba, 1997, 266ff.; Ward, 1997, 68f.; Hölkeskamp, 1993, 14ff.; recently idem, 2000a. Cf. also the (from different points of view, somewhat critical) reviews of Millar, 1998: Keith Bradley, in *Phoenix* 53, 1999, 140–47; Roberta Stewart, in *AHR* 104, 1999, 1359–60; Garrett G. Fagan in *EMC* 18, 1999, 437–41; Anton Powell, in *CR* 50, 2000, 516–18; Andrew J. E. Bell, in *JRS* 90, 2000, 220–21; Erich S. Gruen, in *CPh* 95, 2000, 236–40; Michael C. Alexander, in *AJPh* 121, 2000, 162–65; Wilfried Nippel, in *Gnomon* 73, 2001, 232–36, and the rather more positive appraisals by T. Peter Wiseman, "Democracy *alla romana*," in *JRA* 12, 1999, 537–40; Geoffrey S. Sumi, in *CJ* 95, 1999–2000, 197–99, and the balanced assessments of Millar 2002a by Timothy J. Cornell, in *JRS* 93, 2003, 351–54; Craige B. Champion, in *IJCT* 11.1, 2004–5, 114–17, and Frédéric Hurlet, in *Latomus* 64, 2005, 1021–24. Detailed discussions of Millar's argument (again from different perspectives) also include Yakobson, 1999, 10f., 231f.; Mouritsen, 2001, 2ff.; North, 2002, 1ff., and recently Benoist, 2004, 376ff.; Ward, 2004; Morstein-Marx, 2004, 6ff.; Marcone, 2005, 89ff.; Gwyn Morgan, 2006; Jehne, 2006, 14ff.; Hölkeskamp, 2006d, 360f., 363 and passim, with additional references.

[36]For example by Jeremy Paterson in his review of Yakobson, 1999, in *JRS* 92, 2002, 229f., who simply dismisses all critics of Millar as representatives of the old orthodoxy.

[37]Millar, 1998, ix.

shape of "voting in the assemblies," the general "importance of the assemblies themselves," and, last but not least, "the closely connected theme of the composition and rôle of the Roman 'élite.'" This concept, its complex meaning(s) and applicability are not discussed, but crudely denounced as "a misleading characterization of a somewhat fluid body, rather than the rigid aristocracy controlling political events that is imagined in traditional works"—which are (unsurprisingly) not even mentioned, let alone taken seriously and examined in detail.[38] Millar himself, who wanted to provide nothing but "a one-sided contribution" to a future and (in his view) "more satisfactory" comprehensive "analysis of the late Republic as a political system," can not really be content with such a development.[39]

Secondly, these different views, their preconceptions and problems, concepts and categories must be presented—especially those opinions that Millar merely skims over and leaves aside as orthodox. A careful examination will show that some of these authors had anticipated some of his central ideas, and that Millar's radical criticism of the old orthodoxy might not have been possible without the probing questions and innovative views formulated and tested already since the 1960s. Finally, I will attempt to develop some new theoretical, methodological, and empirical approaches to further research on the political culture of the Roman republic.

[38]Dench, 2005, 105f., who seems to be well aware that "the study of politics has been reinvented as the study of political culture" and then (again unsurprisingly) declares (364 and ibidem n. 7) that "Athenian political culture ... has been the subject of intense scholarly activity in recent years; the subject of Roman political culture has been somewhat quieter" [*sic*!]. Cf. Laurence, 1994, 62: "This debate has demonstrated [!, K.-J. H.] that the Roman citizen was actively involved in voting, and made conscious decisions about which candidate he should vote for at elections, and whether to vote for or against a bill at the meetings of the *comitia*." Cf. also May, 2002a, 56, and Purcell, 1994, 645, who seem to base themselves on Millar: The latter grants the *populus Romanus* "an important practical and theoretical standing" in "what could be regarded as a spectacular example of a mixed constitution." In his (otherwise thoughtful and balanced) survey of Millar's work, Guy Rogers (2002, xiv)—obviously "accepting that Polybius was right" and modern scholars were wrong—emphasizes "Millar's restoration of the citizen body to its rightful place within the constitutional structure of the *res publica*" (!, K.-J. H.). Cf. Paul Lewis, in the *New York Times*, July 24, 1999.

[39]Millar, 1998, ix, 4. Cf. the important new book by Bleckmann, 2002: his accuracy and diligence force the author himself to concede (though somewhat unwillingly) that it seems to be impossible to ignore the current debate (227ff. and 11ff.).