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*Time in Antiquity* by Robert Hanah, Routledge, New York: 2009

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Recommended Readings

*Time in Antiquity*

by Robert Hannah, Routledge, New York 2009

Reviewed by Tiberiu Popa

This study provides a comprehensive view of various means of marking and measuring time in the Greco-Roman world and succeeds in outlining the main facets of this complex and potentially daunting topic in a generally approachable manner. Hannah chooses to emphasize the perception of time of ordinary people, rather than esoteric philosophical theories. In his attempt to reconstruct what he calls "the human facet of time-keeping and time-measurement," the author relies on archaeological evidence and on an impressively extensive survey of literary texts. He often illuminates ancient practices and methods by comparing them to notions that we are better acquainted with, for instance major holidays (Passover, the Christian Easter, the Chinese New Year) whose positions in modern calendars are still determined by their relationship with certain phases of the moon. In the final segment of his book, Hannah considers aspects of the built environment in Rome that can cast light on the Romans' marking, measuring and perceiving time. He devotes most of his attention to the famous Pantheon, whose dome was presumably meant to symbolize the sky and which turns out to be an enormous sundial. Much of the book is quite richly illustrated, the photographs, drawings and tables further enhancing the clarity of the author's descriptions, interpretations and reconstructions. Readers interested in virtually everything from the history of private life and ancient architecture to the history of science and technology will find this synthesis very helpful and quite enjoyable. Reviewed by Tiberiu Popa, Assistant Professor of Philosophy

- Tiberiu Popa is an assistant professor of philosophy at Butler University.