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# Writing Ancient History

Neville Morley



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### Writing Ancient History Neville Morley

How do ancient historians pursue their craft? From the evidence of coins, pottery shards, remains of buildings, works of art, and, above all, literary texts?all of which have survived more or less accidentally from antiquity?they fashion works of history. But how exactly do they go about reconstructing and representing the past? How should history be written? These and related questions are the subject of Neville Morley's engaging introduction to the theory and philosophy of history. Intended for students and teachers not only of ancient history but of historiography, the philosophy of history, and classics, his book addresses the implications of debates over methodological and theoretical issues for the practice of ancient history. At the present time, Morley says, students of ancient history are left to come to their own understanding of the field through a process of trial and error. In his view, too many professors regard "questions of theory and methodology . . . as pointless distractions from the business of actually doing history. Worse, [these questions] may even be perceived as a threat to the subject." Asserting that more attention must be given to fundamental matters, Morley considers such topics as the nature of historical narrative, style in historical writing, the use and abuse of sources, and the reasons for studying history.

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