

much the same range of produce coming out of the desert (e.g. *P.Oxy.* 12.1439, 14.1652b; *P.Grenf.* 2.50c; *BGU* 3.697, 867; *P.Amb.* 2.117; *P.Tebt.* 2.461: imports of figs, alum, etc.).

The collected volume edited by John Scheid and Michel Zink, presentations at a *journée d'études* on north Africa held in 2018, is as compact as the Sterry–Mattingly is expansive. As Jehan Desanges indicates in his preface, the study of the indigenous ethnic groups of north Africa has made substantial advances since he first provided a systematic catalogue of the known tribes in 1962. Although small in scale, these studies do add substance to that knowledge. Lofti Naddari's study, undergirded by new epigraphical discoveries, clarifies the identity and structure of the Musunii Regiani, an ethnic group whose lands lay south and east of Roman Sufetula (Sbeitla), and outlines their gradual development of Roman-type institutions. There follows a pair of contributions, by Michel Christol and Christine Hamdoune, on ethnic groups in Mauretania Caesariensis which, as both authors emphasise, was a very different environment from that of the proconsular province to the east. Christol presents new epigraphic evidence on an important Roman administrator of indigenous *gentes*, an official who often functioned as a high-ranking subordinate of the provincial governor. Hamdoune, by contrast, is more concerned with the self-presentation of the tribal elites themselves—how they used Latin writing in public but preferred to exploit indigenous themes in iconographic representations of themselves and their activities. She points out the importance of fortified redoubts on their *fundi* or highland estates as a core of their identity. Both contributors emphasise the role of military service and the focus of the Roman tribal administrators on recruitment of manpower. Konrad Vössing's study of the representation of African ethnic groups by Procopius and Corippus argues that, despite their manifest generic differences, both writers had a strong interest in presenting Maures and other African 'barbarians' as undifferentiated 'hostile masses'. The argument has some force where Procopius is concerned, but seems much less convincing for the detailed ethnographic picture found in the Byzantine epic poet. The attempt by Ahmed M'charek to trace continuity in the identity of the Misiciri into the post-Arab conquest period, based mainly on linguistic similitudes, seems more open to question. The argument for continuity is not as compelling, say, as the one that he made for Maghrawa in central Tunisia (*MEFRA* 100 (1988), 731–60). Finally, a detailed survey by René Rebuffat on Tripolitania provides a synoptic overview of the various ethnic groupings over the whole of Graeco-Roman antiquity.

Taken together, the two volumes provide a global overview of the Roman and extra-Roman faces of the northern half of continental Africa. Whatever judgements one might make on the success (or not) of their inroads into the problem of state formation or tribal identities, they are worthy of investigation by those in the field. The Mattingly–Sterry project, in particular, offers not only a necessary supplement to Mediterranean-centred perspectives, but also a vivid demonstration of how much our knowledge of the Saharan environments of antiquity has been transformed by the acquisition of very large numbers of new archaeological data.

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doi:10.1017/S0075435821000630

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JASPER DE BRUIN, *BORDER COMMUNITIES AT THE EDGE OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE: PROCESSES OF CHANGE IN THE CIVITAS CANANEFATIUM* (Amsterdam archaeological studies 28). Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2019. Pp. ix + 297, illus. ISBN 9789463728102. £104.

Jasper de Bruin's synthesis of a little-studied part of Germania Inferior (encompassing modern Leiden, The Hague and Rotterdam) confidently wields textual and material evidence and presents a new understanding of the '*Civitas Cananefatium*'. B. presents two main threads: firstly, a narrative of occupation in the region which relies upon textual evidence and, secondly, a high-level description of archaeological evidence. While the archaeology is interpreted within the rubric provided by texts, B. does not assert that this narrative derives from archaeological material, which he describes at length across three chapters. The archaeology from three

geographical areas is presented in groups, what B. terms ‘communities’: military (ch. 3—rural and military settlements along the Rhine and the North Sea), urban (ch. 4—settlement of Forum Hadriani) and rural (ch. 5—majority of the sites, clustered in the south). The data chapters are bookended by an introduction (ch. 1) and ‘Synthesis’ and ‘Conclusions’ (chs 6 and 7), which might be best read first.

The narrative can be summarised as: sparse Iron Age settlement ended in abandonment c. 50 B.C. because of a combination of rising water levels and ‘socio-political circumstances’ (147) during Caesar’s campaigns. The area was devoid of occupation until new military settlements appeared c. A.D. 40 to guard transport on the Rhine. The military and officials encouraged migration, probably from other coastal areas of the Netherlands, and newcomers built rural settlements near the forts. The military/officials constructed roads and a canal and more immigrants arrived to ‘colonise’ rural areas in the south later in the first century. The authorities named these new people the Cananefates, although they were not a unified group, and created a *civitas* as an administrative unit for taxation and troop-raising. In the early second century, a small town (Forum Hadriani, modern Voorberg) emerged as a product of official policy, and was later given *municipium* status (despite its lack of amenities) so that the authorities could artificially create a sense of cohesion. Prosperity followed, imported goods arrived, and material culture as well as architecture changed over time. Around 275, coinage disappeared along with the collapse of the Gallic Empire and the area was completely abandoned again before A.D. 350, also as a matter of official policy.

The book has been created from a large database and the evidence described within each ‘community’ forms a strong foundation for new questions and analyses. Although the opportunities are too numerous to illustrate fully here, I take the liberty to note four, in the hope of encouraging future work on this curious corner of the Empire.

Statistical and quantitative analyses would greatly enhance the interpretations that are reliant on, e.g., coins and pottery. For example, a quantitative analysis of the coin assemblage — standardising the chronological distribution of coins and comparing it to the regional average — would amplify its significance to the interpretations of occupation intensity and connections between sites.

Contextualising and comparing the evidence from this region to other parts of the western provinces would aid analyses of significance and meaning of, e.g., ritual or architecture. For example, the appearance of architectural elaboration in the early third century would be better understood within the context of architectural changes that developed as a means of communicating status, power and identity or of negotiating relationships to community and empire than in terms of the availability of durable materials and a corresponding lack of timber.

Addressing social questions would push both the historical narrative and the synthesis of evidence into the realm of interpretative archaeology. For example, ritual deposits in water, the prevalence of travel by water, frequent flooding, the coast, rivers and canal as *foci* of settlement and large areas of uninhabited bogs/marshes prompt the question: what was the significance of the relationship between people and water in this very watery place?

Finally, critical engagement with theoretical perspectives that have become more common in Roman archaeology would complement the ideas suggested in the title and introductory chapter, such as those related to borders, group identity and social change. Theorising borders, for example, might include examining the military zone as culturally liminal or transitional, as an area of hybrid culture, a zone of contact or exclusion, a symbolic expression of empire, and so forth. Indeed, B.’s core interpretation of a socially cohesive group of people (*civitas*) being artificially created in an uninhabited landscape by state-facilitated migration and external identification is one deserving of more detailed treatment.

Overall, B. presents an invaluable introduction to the region: a high-level synthesis of a large dataset of mostly rural settlement deriving from published and unpublished sources, many of them in Dutch. The peculiarities of this unique corner of the Roman Empire are certainly worthy of more attention.

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doi:10.1017/S0075435821000605

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