

intrinsic ambiguity of the monuments engender multiple interpretations? Or does it simply mean that we can never know how ancient viewers might have read them? B. vacillates between these two responses to the evidence.

At times too, B. interprets material evidence with more certainty than it deserves — or else simply misinterprets it. The nail-holes for a metal adornment on a sarcophagus at Hagia Eirene can perhaps be connected into a star-shape (which might indicate that the sarcophagus was once C.'s), but they can just as easily be connected to form other motifs as well (fig. 126). C.'s eyes on the famous Ticinum medallion do not appear upturned to me (204). The impression of 'intoxication' with 'divine spirit' that B. alleges for a portrait of Commodus (fig. 11) is more likely an accidental product of its missing nose and paint, and modern installation at an incorrect height. B. also makes much of a steelyard weight at Princeton in the form of a mantle-clad, seated figure holding a globe and shield (164). On the shield is incised a pair of horns terminating in goat heads, which, as A. Alföldi pointed out, is not unlike the motif featured on the shields of C.'s soldiers on the Arch in Rome. Like many before him, B. is so excited by this iconographic match and its apparent implications (namely that this 'statuette' must be modelled on the large-scale statue of C. erected in Rome after the Milvian victory) that he ignores — indeed, does not, apparently, even see — the steelyard figure's large, rounded and entirely female breasts. The breasts, in my view, rather complicate the identification of the figure as C.

Despite these questions about some of his claims, B.'s monograph is a major contribution to Constantine studies. His over-arching argument, that the emperor's monuments offered an open-ended set of associations that may have resonated differently for different viewers, but which cohered into a consistent vision of divinely sanctioned solar monotheism, is a welcome response to more one-dimensional interpretations of the reign. The volume is well written, thoroughly researched and handsomely produced. Its abundant illustrations include illuminating reconstructions of several key monuments in their ancient environments, such as the Constantinople hippodrome and the colossal seated statue of C. in the Basilica Nova in Rome, as well as the porphyry column in the Forum of Constantine.

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A. D. LEE, *FROM ROME TO BYZANTIUM AD 363 TO 565: THE TRANSFORMATION OF ANCIENT ROME*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013. Pp. xviii + 337, illus. ISBN 9780748627905 (bound); 9780748627912 (paper). £95.00 (bound); £29.99 (paper).

This valuable volume completes the new Edinburgh History of Ancient Rome by providing an overview of the period from the death of the emperor Julian to that of Justinian. While the preceding two volumes in the series, by Clifford Ando and Jill Harries, dealt respectively with ninety-one and seventy-nine years of Roman history, Doug Lee covers two centuries in a book of similar length. This relatively large chronological span means that individual figures, with the possible exception of Justinian, do not receive the same detailed coverage given, for example, to Constantine and Julian by Harries. In working with a larger canvas, however, this volume is successful in illuminating broader trends for the reader, not only by examining the most famous themes of the end of Roman rule in the West and the development of a Christian empire, but also by tracing continuities in other areas, such as the mechanisms of court intrigue and imperial succession, and the workings of the Empire's great urban centres.

After a brief first chapter that sets the scene by outlining the state of the Empire at the death of Julian, chs 2 and 3 establish the book's general working principle of looking at each sub-division of the period from the perspectives of political events, foreign policy and religious issues, examining each in turn. Part I is concerned with the three decades from Jovian to Theodosius I, with the first half of ch. 2 providing a political narrative, while the second half looks successively at the Persian frontier, the Rhine and middle Danube, and finally the lower Danube, giving, as one would expect, significant attention to the Battle of Adrianople and surrounding events. Ch. 3 covers the religious history of these decades, exploring relationships between Christians and pagans, as well as internal divisions within Christianity. This account proceeds through the key moments that often appear in narratives of this period, such as the Altar of Victory controversy, Justina's confrontation with Ambrose and the destruction of the Serapeum, although this is far

from a traditional story of conflict and triumph, with the work of Alan Cameron and Neil McLynn informing this account. This is followed by a chapter on the cities of Rome and Constantinople, exploring their physical, administrative and social changes, including discussing the contentious issue of the ‘paganism’ of Roman senators.

Part II, on ‘The long fifth century’, opens with three chapters that are split on the same thematic lines as in Part I. Ch. 5 looks at political events in the West up to A.D. 455, followed by the East in the same decades before repeating this geographical division for the rest of the century. The next chapter looks at the ‘barbarians’ across the same period, including assessing the argument between Walter Goffart and Guy Halsall over the mechanisms of barbarian settlement. This pair of chapters does suffer a little from the book’s thematic division, since readers completely unfamiliar with the period may have difficulty understanding the political narrative until they have read the subsequent discussion of interactions between barbarians and Romans. In contrast, ch. 8, on Anastasius, provides an integrated account of all aspects of his reign within a clear chronological framework. The last chapter of this part of the book is a thematically-organized exploration of the western successor states, largely stressing continuity but also highlighting variations between the different kingdoms. Britain is, however, a notable absence here, as it also is from the regional survey that appears in the (otherwise excellent) subsequent chapter on cities across Late Antiquity. Ch. 11 on the economy also provides a very clear and useful introduction to this topic, with salutary advice on approaches and methodology to accompany the presentation and analysis of material, which incorporates recent re-evaluations of issues such as *coloni* and *agri deserti*. The final part of the book, on Justinian, returns to the thematic structure, although ch. 12 covers ‘secular’ policies up to the capture of Ravenna in A.D. 540, while ch. 13 deals with religious matters across his reign. This sets the stage for a final chapter that deals with the last twenty-five years of Justinian’s life, emphasizing his military problems, but giving a relatively positive assessment of his reign as a whole. This chapter also deals with the idea of the end of antiquity, not only by providing a brief account of events leading up to the Arab conquests, but also by reflecting on the new eastern, Greek-speaking, Christian conception of Roman identity that had developed.

Although its focus is mostly on political, military and religious history, this volume provides the reader with some insight into other aspects of late antique culture, as well as a survey of economic matters across this period. More importantly, it gives significant attention to the fifth-century East. Narrative histories often pay less attention to eastern affairs after the death of Theodosius I, seeing the collapse of the West as the more important story, with eastern emperors reduced to minor rôles in this drama, at least until the appearance of Justinian. In contrast, L., despite being seriously concerned with many aspects of ‘traditional’ narrative history, does not tell a simple story of ‘decline and fall’, but instead provides an account of the whole Roman world during this period. This book, like the rest of the series in which it appears, can be regarded as striving to occupy a space between brief introductions to Roman history and more detailed, multi-volume works, such as the Cambridge Ancient History. L. has certainly been successful in this endeavour, producing a very useful book that will undoubtedly find a prominent place on many university reading lists.

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B. D. SHAW, *SACRED VIOLENCE. AFRICAN CHRISTIANS AND SECTARIAN HATRED IN THE AGE OF AUGUSTINE*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011. Pp. xx + 910, illus. ISBN 9780521196055 (bound); 9780521127257 (paper). £100.00 (bound); £40.00 (paper).

At just over nine hundred pages, Brent Shaw’s study offers a compelling and meticulous history of violence for late Roman North Africa, with a focus on the ‘sanctified violence’ of the fourth and fifth centuries. S. defines such violence as the ‘direct result of commitments and quarrels of a religious nature’ (773), and, in view of the period under discussion, the study’s inevitable cynosure is the sectarian struggle between Catholic and dissident — rightly preferred by S. to the ‘othering’ label ‘Donatist’ — Christians, which came to be the defining struggle for generations of African Christians of the time, including Augustine of Hippo. As S. makes clear from the beginning, the