

that the city remained secure and wealthy in the ninth and tenth centuries. However, there is a notable decrease in the number of military inscriptions after the fourth century, when Ankyra was still the capital of Galatia. Following the creation of dioceses in 313, Ankyra became the seat of the *vicarius* of Pontica. Three important inscriptions of this period contain dedications for Constantine in 324, two erected by the praetorian prefect Fl. Constantius (inscriptions nos 329–330), one by the *vicarius* of Pontica Lucilius Crispus (331). These inscriptions erected by senior civilian officials show the importance of the city, previously under the control of Licinius.

The inscriptions are presented in six sections: fourteen inscriptions from fortifications, five imperial inscriptions (Constantine–Arcadius), fifteen building inscriptions, three remarkable collections of biblical exempla (two previously unpublished), 150 funerary inscriptions and eight medieval inscriptions from the imperial temple and churches. Around 19 per cent of the inscriptions in the first volume are precisely dated; far fewer of the inscriptions published here can be dated exactly, including the three dedications to Constantine in 324 (329–331), one for Julian in 362 (332) and one for Arcadius and Honorius between 395 and 402 (333). The next precisely datable inscriptions are from 859, when the citadel was constructed by the emperor Michael III and/or his protospatharius Basil (324–328). Though some other texts can be dated roughly, most (c. 90 per cent) cannot. The funerary inscriptions are divided into three groups: the first contains fifteen inscriptions dated between 250 and 450, and the latter two the more numerous grave monuments dated to the late fifth or sixth centuries, separated into larger and smaller monuments. The fourth-century epigraphic documents on public buildings (mostly fortifications) do not bear any sign of Christianity, while a Justinianic inscription above the city gate refers to Ankyra as the city of the Virgin Mary (323). The earliest evidence for church building dates to 358, when the synod of bishops who constituted the first draft of the Homoian Creed was organised there by Basil. The earliest epigraphic evidence for monastic institutions seems to come from the late fifth or sixth century. Secular professions can be traced in a small number of inscriptions, including a goldsmith (384), a silversmith (275), a linen-merchant (383), a marble worker (424), a vicarian official (433) and an infantryman (385). The onomastic repertoire is more or less similar to the picture in the rest of Anatolia.

All the inscriptions are well described, translated, and receive thorough commentaries, together with discussions of their dating. The book completes the Ankyran corpus of inscriptions, and is evidently a product of great effort and time; it is now the most comprehensive work on late Roman Ankyra.

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RICHARD MILES (ED.), *THE DONATIST SCHISM: CONTROVERSY AND CONTEXTS* (Translated Texts for Historians, Contexts 2). Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2016. Pp. xi + 394, illus., maps, plans. ISBN 9781781382813. £80.00.

Like that of many other groups who lost out to imperially sanctioned orthodoxy, the history of the Donatists in late antique North Africa remains elusive and opaque. There may be a relative abundance of surviving textual material, including much of the stenographic transcript of the Conference of Carthage in 411, but, as many authors in this engaging volume make clear, these writings present interpretive difficulties that are common to the literature of religious conflict: most derive from the victorious side, incorporating heresiological discourse and tendentious interpretations of events, actions and doctrines, together with vehement responses to their opponents' texts, many of which are no longer extant. We therefore glimpse the Donatists cast in a limited set of roles, assigned to them by hostile pens: accused and assailed through the polemic of Optatus; classified and condemned in the fulminating pronouncements of emperors; debated and defeated in the sermons, letters and tracts of the prolific Augustine of Hippo. The contributors to this volume seek both to look beyond these constructions, including by utilising material evidence and less studied texts, and also to study the constructions themselves, not merely as partisan records of conflicts but also as powerful weapons in their own right. In doing so, they build upon a number of significant advances in scholarship from recent decades, most notably the

work of Maureen Tilley and Brent Shaw, with the impact of the latter's 2011 tome *Sacred Violence: African Christians and Sectarian Hatred in the Age of Augustine* being felt throughout.

Despite not being formally presented as a *Companion to* or *Handbook of Donatism*, this collection fulfils something of this role, with many chapters providing clear accounts of the material, issues and debates for individual aspects of the topic. After Richard Miles' introduction, John Whitehouse's two chapters — on the histories of Donatism and of scholarship — function as useful prolegomena (chs 2–3). While the first provides relatively little space to examine contrasting reconstructions, the second explores a number of different avenues of interpretation and possible directions for further research. Although Whitehouse provides only brief remarks on Donatism after the Vandal conquest, this later history is covered admirably in Jonathan Conant's concluding chapter (ch. 15), which examines the group's almost complete disappearance from religious polemic and the extent to which its followers may have been absorbed into Nicene or Homoian communities. In the main body of the volume, Noel Lenski's systematic survey of official imperial involvement in the schism (ch. 9) presents a lucid narrative divided into four distinct periods, as well as concluding with an appendix that lists and classifies all communications to and from Roman emperors concerning the dispute. Taken together, these constitute an excellent introduction and resource for any student of this issue. Mark Edwards' account of the theological issues involved in the conflict (ch. 6), together with Augustine's caricaturing of Donatist beliefs and the later development of his thought in opposition to Pelagianism, is probably less accessible to the student reader, but nonetheless makes a strong case for the centrality of theology to this 'schism'. Richard Miles (ch. 11) succeeds in skilfully combining information about different forms of literary material, including Donatist sermons, hymns and martyr acts, with an illuminating discussion of the creation and dismantling of identities. His nuanced exploration of Donatist attempts to create a textual community, including through the use of biblical material and *exempla*, is followed by an analysis of Augustine's demolition of this concept and redefinition of Donatists as 'dissidents in need of correction within a broad Christian church' (282). In doing so, Miles sheds light on many of the bishop's tactics, especially his use of stenographers, the careful presentation and framing of documents such as the acts of the Conference of Carthage and also the construction of semi-fictionalised debates by writing responses to Donatist texts. Jennifer Ebbeler (ch. 12) then provides a concise case study of one example — the *Contra epistulam Parmeniani* — in which Augustine explores the concept of 'charitable correction' by adding his own voice to an old exchange of letters between the Donatist bishop Parmenian and the layman Tychonius, both of whom were now safely dead. Éric Rebillard similarly focuses on Augustine (ch. 13), examining his anti-Donatist texts from before 411 and arguing convincingly that the bishop was already aware of Donatism prior to his ordination, even if he did not start systematically responding to Donatist writings until after 400, when he took on a role as 'the official writer of the African church' (316).

The exemplary chapters by Candida Moss and Alan Dearn (chs 4–5) combine to provide an impressive exploration of persecution and martyrdom, often regarded as central to Donatist identity. Moss argues that practices of martyr veneration in North Africa were distinctive compared to the rest of the empire, but that Catholic and Donatist behaviour in the region displayed many similarities. This excellent chapter also highlights fascinating examples of each side's employment of the discourse of martyrdom, including some distinctive Donatist approaches. Dearn then provides a critical analysis of the extant evidence, arguing against the modern identification of some martyr literature as 'Donatist' and challenging the Catholic claim that their opponents were overly keen on 'voluntary martyrdom', while also highlighting how the commemoration of persecution created a sense of community. Both Moss and Dearn also employ epigraphic and material evidence, which then takes centre stage in Anna Leone's clear chapter on the archaeology of Donatism (ch. 14), arguing convincingly against regarding it as a primarily rural phenomenon. This piece provides a very helpful introduction to methodological issues, particularly regarding difficulties in identifying sectarian allegiances from the surviving material. The contributions by Cam Grey and Bruno Pottier (chs 7–8) also dovetail neatly, with the former looking at rural life in North Africa, including challenging earlier theories regarding the origins of Donatism. This chapter considers changing patterns of land use and ownership, as well as the varying relationships between peasants, bishops and the state, and seeks to return some element of agency to the peasantry. Pottier then examines 'communal violence' and the vexed conundrum of the so-called *circumcelliones*, opposing Brent Shaw's identification of them as wage labourers and arguing instead that they were wandering ascetics.

Neil McLynn's close reading of the transcript of the Conference of Carthage in 411 (ch. 10) is an outstanding piece, both in terms of its incisive analysis and its questioning of the degree of Catholic dominance of proceedings. While Whitehouse dismisses this event as a 'kangaroo court' (31), McLynn proposes seeing the Catholic side as less united and organised than is usually assumed, as well as arguing convincingly that the presiding official Marcellinus was not significantly partisan, despite later accusations against him. As well as affecting reconstructions of the Conference, this argument could also lead to a re-examination of narratives that stress the control exerted in this period by Augustine and his Carthaginian counterpart Aurelius, the traditional Big Men in histories of the demise of Donatism. For example, Aurelius' treatment of the emperor Honorius and his court is described by Noel Lenski as 'manipulating them like marionettes on a string' (182), which also perpetuates a long-standing view of imperial weakness in the early fifth century. More generally, it would have been useful to see greater cross-fertilisation between chapters, especially other authors responding to the hypotheses of McLynn and Pottier. Nonetheless, this is an excellent collection of papers, testifying to the recent upsurge of research on Donatism. It surely deserves to become the first port of call for any Anglophone student or scholar interested in the subject.

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DAVID WALSH, *THE CULT OF MITHRAS IN LATE ANTIQUITY: DEVELOPMENT, DECLINE, AND DEMISE CA. A.D. 270–430*. (Late Antique archaeology, Supplementary series 2). Leiden: Brill, 2019. Pp. xii + 145, illus., maps. ISBN 9789004380806. €110.00/US\$132.00.

Academic interest in Roman Mithraic cult has largely focused on its high imperial moment, as opposed to its late antique. The abundance of epigraphic, sculptural and architectural evidence for Mithras-worship dating to the second and third centuries A.D. must partly account for this focus, contrasting as it does with the paucity of such finds from the fourth century onwards. The relative lack of scholarly discussion of Mithras-worship in Late Antiquity has also been compounded by two prevailing assumptions: first, that it was in precipitous decline; and second, that this can be explained, more or less satisfactorily, by its direct competition with Christianity, an understanding that relies on combative references to Mithras-worship by the Church Fathers, from Justin Martyr to Jerome.

David Walsh's work offers a challenge to assumptions of this decline-through-conflict narrative, necessarily complicating the picture by drawing together what evidence we have from across the Roman world between A.D. 270 and 430. The work begins with an introduction summarising scholarly approaches and offering an outline of 'The Cult of Mithras' (1–16). The first chapter turns to the cult's development in Late Antiquity (17–41), which together with the gazetteer (101–27) makes clear that there is far more evidence for the worship of Mithras into the fifth century than many are perhaps aware. It also demonstrates a perceptible shift in the nature of our evidence. Whilst the use of certain types of monumental dedication by Mithraic worshippers — in particular epigraphic and sculptural — fell in the fourth century, W. turns our attention towards changing ritual habits that counter a correlative reading of decline (30–3, 38–9). The dedication of small-denomination coins found in Mithraic contexts is particularly notable.

The second and third chapters deal with the evidence for decline (42–55) and explanations for it (56–65). Drawing on sociological studies of community cohesion, W. observes three broad factors: wider population decline, the changing nature of frontier communities in places that formerly possessed strong Mithraic communities, and changes in ritual practice that failed to bind communities as strongly as those of the past. Finally, W. deals with the fate of 'mithraea' (Mithraic cult buildings), emphasising the regional variations in the demise of the cult and complicating narratives of a straightforward conflict with Christian communities.

W. is to be praised for assembling the evidence in what will no doubt be a useful resource for Mithraic scholars and students of late antique religion in years to come. W. also takes on the daunting task of being the first to offer an assessment of this evidence, but it is here that some