109), while at Tongeren, Belgium, the manufacture of bone artefacts was linked by A. Vanderhoeven and A. Ervynck to cattle raising (in R. Hingley and S. Willis (eds), *Roman Finds: Context and Theory* (2007), 156–75). In other cases, there were close links between the use of bone products and textile working. This last is one industry whose relative invisibility belies its significance and scale (see J.P. Wild's masterly survey in *Britannia* 33 (2002), 1–32). The same goes to some extent for leather, for which the army was again an important consumer — but not, of course, such an important factor in Gaul.

Several papers display an awareness of the archaeological invisibility of certain activities, including those not requiring features such as forges or kilns that have left clear traces and whose products have not survived. Evidence from waste products, such as those produced by iron-working, is not necessarily so reliable a guide to the precise locations where processes were carried out. Alain Ferdière notes how recent excavations and scientific analysis are enhancing not only the quantity of data but also the quality of our understanding, and are shifting our perceptions of the balance between the more visible crafts and those less appreciated. There is also a realisation that more research, including scientific analysis, is required in various fields, but at least the questions are being asked. The overall impression corroborates the conclusion apparent in earlier volumes, that there were one or more designated zones for particular trades or crafts, while others were scattered more widely about the town.

Conveniently for users (and for this reviewer), there are summaries in French, English and German at the beginning of each paper — though not all the translations are as accurate as those provided by Nina Crummy.

In conclusion, this is another extremely valuable collection of evidence, of the sort that may be emerging in abundance from the ground in Britain but which, with a few exceptions, does not seem to be collected together in the same way. Although there is much new data, and some British scholars have published their researches in the Luxembourg conference reports — in which some 'bigger' questions are addressed — there has been more emphasis here on social, contextual, and theoretical aspects, or on military supply-systems. Perhaps the differences reflect not merely intellectual traditions but also commercial pressures: the ongoing loss of skilled finds specialists in Britain, in spite of the boost provided by the Portable Antiquities Scheme, is a matter that needs to be addressed urgently.

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The Fall of the Western Roman Empire: an Archaeological and Historical Perspective. By N. Christie. Bloomsbury Academic, London, 2011. Pp. xi + 306, illus. Price: £65.00 (bound); £19.99 (paper). ISBN 978 1 84966 337 3 (bound); 978 0 34075 966 0 (paper).

Joining other recent volumes on the same topic, as for example P. Heather, *The Fall of the Roman Empire: A New History* (2005) and B. Ward-Perkins, *The Fall of Rome and the End of Civilization* (2005), this new synthesis introduces readers to some of the key evidence and problems in understanding events and trajectories of continuity and change across the Late Roman West. An emphasis on 'decline' is suggested by the title, but in fact a fairly balanced picture is presented, stressing regional differences in both the pace and nature of change, and bringing out evidence of persistent Roman influence as well as much evidence for disruption, destruction, and abandonment. The main aim of the book is to incorporate archaeological evidence alongside the familiar historical narrative, shedding light on such topics as the army, frontiers and defence; capitals, major cities and towns; Christianisation of both urban and rural space; and the 'end of the West'. In particular, Christie fleshes out the picture available from the major historians of the period by detailed reference to the material evidence for structures and buildings, settlement patterns, trade and transport routes, and much more. Yet he also brings in a fair amount of detail from primary texts, and some of the main chapters, contrary to the impression given in his preamble, actually contain more evidence from texts than they do archaeological material. The frustration of the archaeology, in which definitive judgements are rarely possible, is compensated for by some illuminating extracts from a wide range of written sources including inscriptions, saint's lives, law codes, and the like. The abundance of written texts for Italy in particular facilitates a very effective marrying of archaeological and historical material, in which particular sites and historical figures or events can be convincingly linked together.

C. demonstrates a sure grasp of structural, stratigraphic and settlement evidence, yet material culture is less deftly handled. In the interpretation of coin hoards, abandonment of material wealth as a consequence of civil and military unrest is relied upon as an explanation, rather than economic factors such as the devaluation of the coinage in the third century, which probably led to much deliberate deposition and/or non-recovery of virtually worthless coins (R. Reece, *The Coinage of Roman Britain* (2002), 76–7). With regard to hoards of silver, the phenomenon of 'hacksilver' (cut-up plate) in this period is important and suggests, contrary to the impression given by C., that hoards were not necessarily buried by their original owners. The treatment of the long-debated 'Germanic' burials from a range of key sites in northern Gaul also causes slight unease. One mistake is to describe the distinctively Germanic brooches from these burials as 'trumpet' brooches rather than the 'tutulus' brooches that he actually means. There is also varied interpretation of these groups of burials in different sections. On pp. 58–9, the debate over whether the burials are Germanic 'laeti' (refugees or prisoners-of-war), 'foederati' (free mercenaries), or local landowners, is effectively summarised, pointing out the difficulties in coming to a definitive conclusion. A few pages later, however, any nuances have been lost as some of the burials that constitute this debated group (for instance those from Vermand) are used, unproblematised, as evidence for the presence of 'foederati'.

The details of transformations in urban space are very interesting, exploring such themes as the Christianisation of the cities, the special status and trajectory of the Imperial capitals in Italy, and the varied nature of the fortification, shrinkage, etc. of various cities. In general, the use here and elsewhere of case-studies examining the evidence from particular sites across a wide range of provinces provides more depth than is found in many synthesis books. I would have liked to see a greater focus on questions of social history; there is some illuminating discussion of changes in bathing habits and leisure pursuits, and this could have been profitably expanded to other areas of social living. Without this, the aim to illuminate how different 'being Roman' was in the fifth century is only partially achieved and the focus mostly seems very traditional, on cities, defence, Christian buildings, etc. I would also have liked to see, in a book which emphasises the importance of archaeological material, a much wider range of illustrations of key pieces of archaeological evidence. The illustrations are small and not very numerous.

Overall, however, this is a very well-researched and informative text that will undoubtedly be very useful to students. It has a different emphasis to, for example, the book by Heather, whose focus is on barbarian societies and their inter-relationship with Rome, and while it is less original, it is also less polemical than the similarly titled book by Ward-Perkins.

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Depicting the Gods: Metal Figurines in Roman Britain. By E. Durham. *Internet Archaeology* 31, 2012. http://intarch.ac.uk/journal/issue31/durham_index.html (open access for readers in subscribing institutions, download for individual readers). Price: £7.50.

Over the second half of the twentieth century a number of well-illustrated *catalogues raisonnées* appeared describing the Roman period figured bronzes found in many of the countries of Western Europe. It is unfortunate that no equivalent corpus of figured bronzes emerged from Britain, although in the 1970s and 80s there were some studies focused on particular figurine types or *civitates*, while Green set votive items of all forms and materials in their wider ritual context. Durham's presentation here of over 1,000 figurines from Roman Britain goes some way to fill the lacuna, but the almost total absence of objects with figurative elements means that little sense is conveyed to the reader of the wealth and contextual range of visual imagery during this period. Similarly, restricting the study to metal figurines inevitably impacts upon distribution, and the omission of figurines in other materials such as pipeclay, jet and wood points up the value of a more wide-ranging approach.

Apart from the introduction and catalogue, the article has four major sections, on production and materials, types present, spatial and social distribution, and chronology. The first is a valuable overview that includes details of surface treatments, and the last yields no real new insights. Few types are given more than minimal discussion, so that there is little sense here of the richness and subtlety of the *interpretatio romana* or an equivalent *interpretatio indigena*. The section on spatial and social distribution represents the focal point of D.'s work. Spatially the emphasis is as expected, with gaps in the more hilly and less