

while Petts (to my mind more convincingly) uses textual, epigraphic and material evidence to make the case for strong ecclesiastical and secular connections between the South-West and northern Gaul, arguing that the long-distance links of the South-West have been over-emphasised. Knight and Evans focus on Wales and the importance of the rebellion of Magnus Maximus in A.D. 383, noting the intriguing appearance of Magnus Maximus in medieval Welsh legends and genealogies in the form of Macsen Wledig, although Evans concludes (*contra* White) that any continuities between late Roman and medieval Wales are later constructions and that elements of *romanitas* in medieval Wales were reintroduced in the ninth century and later.

Scotland and the North are discussed in papers by Birley and Hunter who both highlight the fluid situation of the fifth century, although Hunter argues that for north-east Scotland the key period was actually the third century. He further suggests that sites such as Traprain Law indicate that warlords were able to take advantage of the complex situation in the wider world to which they were connected. The remarkable long sequence at Vindolanda also continued into the fifth/sixth century, where an individual called Brigomaglos is attested, suggested by Birley to be a warlord based at the site (a situation possibly paralleling that at Birdoswald). This idea of fragmentation and different local responses to a changing situation comes through very strongly in many of the papers. As Collins and Breeze note in their paper on the late military situation, there were three or four separate armies in Britain who followed very different trajectories.

This picture of a myriad different ‘ends’ and ‘continuities’ parallels that which has emerged for other areas of the Roman Empire in recent years and in Britain the data generated through research, the PAS and developer-funded excavation have created a much more detailed picture than was the case even a decade ago. This important volume richly illustrates the quality of the data and the possibilities that arise from a more nuanced and combined treatment of material and textual evidence within the broader context of the Empire. However, as Millett notes in his concluding remarks, the ongoing problems of chronology continue to hinder further understanding of this key period of Britain’s history.

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Late Roman Silver: The Traprain Treasure in Context. Edited by F. Hunter and K. Painter. Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, Edinburgh, 2013. Pp. xlv + 446, colour illus. Price: £50.00. ISBN 978 1 908332 02 8.

This volume represents the proceedings of a conference co-organised in 2009 by the Society of Antiquities of Scotland and National Museums Scotland, marking the ninetieth anniversary of the discovery of the Traprain treasure. Uncovered in 1919, this remarkable hoard comprises over 250 pieces of Late Roman silverware, deliberately bent, crushed or cut into pieces (*‘Hacksilber’*) and buried sometime in the fifth century A.D. on the hillfort of Traprain Law in East Lothian. The objective of the 27 articles which make up this volume is to answer the myriad questions that finds like the Traprain treasure raise. In particular, why were these objects destroyed, when and where did this process take place, and to what end? On a more fundamental level, they also address what these deposits can tell us about political and social experiences in the notoriously elusive fifth century in Britain and the Late Roman world more broadly. Together, the contents represent a wealth of research drawn from a wide range of disciplines and take an extremely broad view of material evidence ranging from the late third millennium B.C. (Kroll) to the Viking Age (Williams; Youngs). It is refreshing to see archaeological, literary, numismatic and scientific research brought together in a single volume, combining detailed analyses with broader theoretical narratives, to create an impressively comprehensive overview.

The primary success of the volume is in dispensing with the interpretation of *Hacksilber* as merely the division of loot by ‘barbarians’ and, in doing so, opening out the deep complexities inherent in the use, status and power implications of this material. One theme referred to by several authors (Painter; Hunter in Minnitt and Ponting; Kaufmann-Heinimann; Hobbs) is the purposeful division of metal goods into weights of known standards, indicating that its fragmentation was a carefully considered act. Hobbs’ contribution on individual finds of potential *Hacksilber* from Britain (see also Dyhrfeld-Johnsen in relation to Danish finds) marks a fascinating future direction for study. If fragments of *Hacksilber* were, in

some instances, exchanged and circulated as coin-substitutes, these individual finds represent a logical next step for investigation.

The volume is divided into five sections: Britain in the fifth century; silver in the Late Roman, and then post-Roman worlds; and two sections on *Hacksilber*. There is considerable overlap between papers, which gives the volume the virtue of seeming closer to a unified monograph than a series of individual articles. It is perhaps because of this that the structure and arrangement of the papers appears a little confused, particularly concerning chronological developments. Notably, Williams' discussion of Viking 'Hack-silver' precedes discussion of the more immediately post-Roman deposits. Nonetheless, such inconsistencies are a minor drawback and do not detract from the overall success of the volume, particularly in highlighting just how much these archaeological discoveries can tell us about political relationships and power structures between the Empire and bordering territories. To this end, Painter's and Guggisberg's work is of immense value. Painter underlines the impact of imperial control of silver (and gold) production and the consequences of this in times of crisis, when the wealth of private households could be recalled to support the state, particularly in the form of military payments. The argument for official involvement in the distribution of precious metals is advanced by Guggisberg, who illuminates the nuanced social meanings projected onto goods made of different metals by both Romans and 'barbarians'.

The contents of the Traprain hoard receive relatively light attention, being the main focus of only two chapters (Kaufmann-Heinimann and Martin; Guest's assessment of the siliquae from the Traprain treasure is actually more focused on the Hoxne hoard, and justifiably so given that the former only includes four examples). Readers hoping for more information about the hoard itself will be pleased to learn that a volume dedicated to a reassessment of the Traprain treasure is in preparation. Coinciding as it does with two major research projects on hoards (at the University of Oxford and the British Museum/University of Leicester) and a detailed re-analysis of the Mildenhall treasure currently underway, this contribution to our understanding of precious metal deposits has come at an opportune time. The inclusion of summaries of several other silver hoards (notably Patching; Magura Hill; Coleraine; West Bagborough; and multiple Danish examples) positions it as an indispensable repository for both comparative data and theoretical perspectives, which will no doubt inform these larger projects. It is an asset to have such a diverse array of information in one place and one hopes that, by emphasising the importance of these finds to broader inquiries into the turbulent Late Roman period, it will inspire greater scrutiny of both known *Hacksilber* deposits and future discoveries.

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Römische Flussfunde aus dem Rhein zwischen Mannheim und Bingen: Fundumstände, Flusslaufrekonstruktion und Interpretation. By I. Kappesser. Dr. Rudolf Habelt GMBH, Bonn, 2012. Pp. 408, illus (colour). Price: €90.00. ISBN 978 3774937 15 4.

River finds, from metal vessels to ancient weapons, have long held a special place in the public imagination and in archaeological research. Both in Britain and on the Continent, there appears to be a striking contrast in the ways in which prehistoric (essentially ritual) and Roman (accidental loss) finds have been viewed. Rather than focusing on individual sites, this Mainz PhD examines Roman-period finds from a 100-km stretch of the river Rhine between Mannheim and Bingen. Ch. 2 offers a detailed summary of the hydrology of the river and the geomorphology of the surrounding area, followed by a careful discussion of the many early modern interventions that affected the Rhine. These did not just alter the river's course but also involved major projects such as the removal of the remains of the Roman bridge at Mainz in the late nineteenth century. As a consequence of the intensive engineering work, most antiquarian finds are from the main river channel itself, while most of the more recently discovered material comes from gravel extraction pits, from where it often disappears into private and poorly documented collections.

A careful survey of the study region and of ancient sources on the Rhine (ch. 3) establishes that ferries and bridges rather than fords represented the main ways of crossing the river in antiquity and describes the relevant sites in detail. Kappesser recorded nearly 900 finds from museums, private collections and published sources, and these are analysed not just in terms of their spatial distribution along this stretch of the Rhine, but also in terms of the types of objects represented and their chronology (ch. 4). This careful