Mediterranean exchange declined sharply in the mid-fifth century, large-scale slave-ownership simply withered away. For the East, where it is harder to show economic simplification in the fifth and sixth centuries, H. tentatively suggests — true to his 'rational-choice' model — that population growth among the free peasantry may have rendered slave production 'less attractive, less necessary' (506). But this 'demand-side' explanation of the end of Roman slavery only works (if at all) for large-scale estate-based agricultural slavery. What induced the millions of fourth-century 'middling' slave-owners, in city, town and village, to give up the weavers, nurses and pig-keepers on whom their social status depended? A supply-side crisis must surely be part of the answer; but where does that leave the thesis of a self-reproducing Late Roman slave population?

This is the most important book on Roman slavery to appear in many years. No social or economic historian of the Roman world or early medieval Europe can afford to ignore it.

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J. HAHN (ED.), *SPÄTANTIKER STAAT UND RELIGIÖSER KONFLIKT: IMPERIALE UND LOKALE VERWALTUNG UND DIE GEWALT GEGEN HEILIGTÜMER* (Millennium-Studien 34). Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 2011. Pp. 227, illus. ISBN 9783110240870. €79.95.

Published in 2011 but originating in a conference held in Münster in 2005, this volume illustrates the ever increasing interest in religious violence in Late Antiquity. It focuses on a classic subject, the destruction of temples, which, as the introduction argues, symbolizes the violent side of the transition from a pagan to a Christian world in Late Antiquity. One can take issue with this starting point (see L. Lavan's introduction to L. Lavan and M. Mulryan (eds), *The Archaeology of Late Antique Paganism* (2011)), but the volume approaches the topic from an original angle: how did the Roman state respond to the destruction of temples, and more broadly, to religious violence? For such a research question much hinges on what one understands by 'state'. In particular, Anglo-Saxon scholars such as J. Harries, C. Kelly, F. Millar, and J. Matthews have underlined the complexity of the functioning of the later Roman state. Even if emperors did have some general ideas and intentions, government often happened through response to specific situations. Moreover, the 'state' was composed of different, often competing, actors such as the emperor(s), palatine officials, governors, and generals — to name but a few.

This complexity is well brought out by E. Meyer-Zwiffelhoffer and J. Hahn. Meyer-Zwiffelhoffer offers what may well become the definitive treatment of the rôle of the governor in religious conflicts. Because of their precarious position within the state structure (often embattled in their province but envious to rise in the ranks), they were generally hesitant to execute imperial laws that might cause unrest. Hahn cautions against using the Theodosian Code as evidence for imperial policy, as it creates an idealized, *post-factum* image of imperial actions. At the same time, laws were needed as bishops who wanted to proceed against temples needed legal justification. Not everyone in the volume, however, takes this methodological perspective on board. G. Bonamente's useful catalogue of fourth-century policy on the confiscation of temple land by the state seems predicated on a reading of the Codex Hahn counsels against. In line with much recent scholarship, violence is especially attributed to the actions of Christian bishops, thus generating the image of a passive state that responds to new social groups. This is most strongly put by U. Gotter, who draws a contrast between the 'imperial tradition' that rejected violence as a solution for conflict and the later Empire that condoned acts of violence from Christians. He then relates this contrast to the opposition between an inclusive paganism and an exclusive Christianity. The contrast seems overdrawn (see, e.g., the events in Alexandria under Claudius and Caligula) and neglects the fact that the ancient Church also principally rejected violence outside the context of warfare (illustrated by Libanius' jibe that Christians should not become governors because they do not want to execute anybody (*Or.* 30.20)). It may simply be the consequence of the scope of the volume that the complexity on the side of the Church is underestimated: violence against the 'other' is not as natural as it may seem. Moreover, the essay of Bonamente provides evidence that emperors and high officials could condone acts of violence and even initiate them, thus suggesting that their attitude was not always so passive. An argument in this direction was provided by N. McLynn, 'Christian controversy and violence in the fourth century', *Kodai: Journal of Ancient History* 3

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(1992), 15–44 (= item II in *Christian Politics and Religious Culture in Late Antiquity* (2009)), which is not referred to by any author in this volume.

Another strand in the volume is the counsel against generalizations of the evidence, be it Eusebius (M. Wallraff), Libanius (H.-U. Wiemer), or archaeology (B. Ward-Perkins). In particular Ward-Perkins warns against the use of archaeological evidence as proof for violent destruction: it is hard to tell human from natural violence in an excavation. F. Trombley contributes a useful survey of survivals of the imperial cult until the end of the fourth century. All in all, then, the volume will provide an important starting point for future research on religious violence in Late Antiquity. If anything, it complicates our access to the sources and demonstrates that we cannot approach the subject without raising our awareness of the categories with which we analyse the events.

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K. SESSA, *THE FORMATION OF PAPAL AUTHORITY IN LATE ANTIQUE ITALY : ROMAN BISHOPS AND THE DOMESTIC SPHERE*. New York/Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012. Pp. xv + 323. ISBN 9781107001060. £60.00/US$99.00.

One might assume a book on 'the formation of papal authority' would be about the extraordinariness of Rome's ecclesiastical government, or the clever popes' Christianization of civic or imperial administration, or their creation of the cult of Peter. Thankfully, this one is not. Sessa's excellent book removes thick crusts of hoary papal teleology; her challenge is to explain the late antique bishop of Rome without the later frames of papal primacy, papal civic administration and court diplomacy. By examining not only official papal correspondence and public sermons but also anonymous episcopal chronicles and saints' lives, S. situates the early Roman bishops' claims to authority squarely within late antique anxieties and interests. These bishops were worried about barbarian kidnappers and their victims who sometimes came home, lactating mothers who might marry, slave-owners who wanted their entire household baptised, the sex-lives of clergymen, their wives and children, and escaped slaves who entered the priesthood. Their strategies for resolving these issues, S. demonstrates, were to act as prudent stewards.

S. argues that the value placed upon well-ordered households and, by extension, public leadership was widely established in antiquity and that the definition of *oikonomia* as an esteemed practice of large household management shifted in Late Antiquity towards stewardship, rather than ownership. Rome's bishops presented themselves and were presented by others as stewards and householders. The earliest use of the steward model for Rome's bishop is Hipploytus' writing on his rival Callistus, whom he painted as a failure in financial management and overseeing the chastity of Roman clerics and appropriate Christian marriages. This use of the model in a negative sense is compelling evidence for its diffusion and recognition.

The Formation of Papal Authority is organized thematically. A useful overview of late antique Italian estates and their management cautions us against old views of overly vertical social stratification and late antique authority being simply coercive force suggesting that it rather employed reciprocal interaction and persuasion by model. Chs 2, 3, and 4 analyse Roman bishops' representations in terms of long-established patterns, including late antique householding. Chs 5, 6, and 7 examine bishops in the light of domestic issues of marriage, sex, and inheritance; these are followed by a concluding chapter. The discussion of the so-called Laurentian schism (pp. 212–46) is a case study of the book's argument and S. sheds new light here. By separating out the strands of ethical, juridical, doctrinal and social or locally political influence, S. shows that the conflict was not one of high politics and theology but a much richer negotiation of authority in terms of trust, stewardship, continence and self-discipline.

S. places her work on the shelf with the social history of late antique religious institutions, among recent work by Bowes, Humfress, Lizzi Testa, Mathisen, Rapp, Sotinel, and Uhalde. Her analysis is linguistically sensitive, theoretically aware and literary-minded. She occasionally draws in material culture: inscriptions, a luxurious lamp, one or two houses and chapels, but there is a sense in which her Late Antiquity exists mostly in texts. The chapters are well organized and clear, the entire text is lucid and articulate without feeling heavy-handed; this book had origins as a PhD thesis but it

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