

# Reviews

## I. ARCHAEOLOGY AND ART

A. CARANDINI (ED., with P. CARAFA), *THE ATLAS OF ANCIENT ROME: BIOGRAPHY AND PORTRAITS OF THE CITY*. 2 vols: 1. *TEXTS AND IMAGES*; 2. *TABLES AND INDEXES*. Translated by A. C. Halavais. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2017. Pp. xiv + 640 + 463, illus. ISBN 9780691163475. £166.95.

It is a testament to the importance of this book (and to the efforts of Princeton University Press) that *The Atlas of Ancient Rome* (hereafter AAR) has already been widely reviewed in academic journals and literary magazines and on specialist websites. Add to these discussions the reviews of the first, Italian-language edition *Atlante di Roma antica* (2012), and the significant amount of attention the project has attracted becomes clear (J. Packer, *JRA* 26 (2013), 553–61; T. P. Wiseman, *JRS* 103 (2013), 233–68). Through text, maps, photographs and reconstructions, the AAR promises to show a detailed survey of the ancient city of Rome from the earliest evidence of habitation to Late Antiquity. It is the product of contributions from over thirty researchers (45), under the directorship of Andrea Carandini with the assistance of Paolo Carafa. Intended to be of interest and use both to scholarly and wider audiences, the work is impressive in its ambition and scope.

The AAR comprises two large volumes. The first volume (at 640 pages and with 216 figures) opens with the origins, aims and methodologies of the work, in an enlightening and sometimes polemical introduction (A. Carandini, P. Carafa, Mattia Crespi and Ulisse Fabiani). This is followed by seven concise chapters on the ‘The Natural Landscape’ (G. Urzu and M. Parotto), ‘The Historical Landscape’ (A. Carandini and M. C. Capanna), ‘Infrastructure’ (D. Bruno, D. Filippi, G. Cifani, P. Carafa, M. C. Capanna and M. Turci), ‘The Necropoleis’ (D. Manacorda), ‘Goods in Rome’ (C. Panella), ‘The End of the Ancient City’ (R. Santangeli Valenzani), and ‘The Romans’ Ruins’ (M. Papini), as well as two appendices on ‘The Building Techniques’ (S. Bossi) and ‘The Orders of Architecture’ (P. Pensabene and E. Gallochio). These are important subjects for understanding Rome, although why specifically these seven are included and not others — demography, administration? — is unclear; by way of comparison, see the subjects covered in P. Erdkamp (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Ancient Rome* (2013) and C. Holleran and A. Claridge (eds), *A Companion to the City of Rome* (2018).

The next and largest section of the volume is the core of the work, and forms a region by region discussion of the development of the city (the fourteen Augustan regions are the basis of the division). The study does not progress numerically, but begins with Region VIII on the grounds that it was the ‘sacred and political heart of the city’, followed by Region X ‘as the residential heart’ (142). While this might complicate initial forays into the text, the decision is understandable — comparatively, the remains of Region I (the Porta Capena) do not present the most visually compelling opening to a book that places great emphasis on images. That said, this ordering does not make much allowance for the likelihood that many readers will be unfamiliar with what areas of the city are covered by the Alta Semita (Region VI) or the Piscina Publica (Region XII). Dividing the study by its Augustan administrative regions also makes less sense for discussions of the pre-imperial city and, as pointed out by C. Machado (*CR* 67 (2018), 2–3), this approach means that the buildings of some areas which are often thought of as a single topographical entity are split over two or more sections (for the archaeological site of the Roman Forum it is necessary to consult the entries on Regions VIII and IV).

Each region opens with a discussion of its urban development from antiquity to the present day, as well as an explanation of its limits and divisions. The history and buildings of the region are then charted from the ‘pre- and proto-urban age’ through to the sixth century C.E. The volume concludes with a brief discussion of the history and development of St Peter’s basilica. The text of each section is accompanied by a range of images that includes statuary, frescos, coins, antiquarian drawings and maps, nineteenth-century photographs of standing remains and 3D reconstructions of buildings.

The second volume (*Tables and Indexes*) is comprised almost entirely of full-page maps of Rome and plans of buildings, that are intended to be used in conjunction with the text of Volume I. Tables I–XVIII accompany the seven introductory chapters and two appendices; tables 1–258 accompany the discussion of the fourteen regions and the appendix on St Peter's; tables 259–68 show 'monuments that cannot be identified or cannot be placed', including a selection of residences or *tabernae* depicted on fragments of the Severan Forma Urbis and possible monuments or statues shown on coins. Tables 269–84 then return to particular buildings of the different regions, but as double-page spreads. This is a confusing decision; for example, it is unclear why table 274, which shows a plan of the Colosseum, was not included in the section on Region III next to other images of the Colosseum on tables 113 and 114; consequently, readers need to look in multiple places for the same building. The final 'additional tables' — numbered 'a.t.' 1–37 — show a plan of the city as a whole, depicting the ancient ruins with the modern street plan superimposed.

There is a wealth of information in each of the tables, arguably too much. Images of coins, reliefs and statues relevant to particular buildings are often placed alongside plans of the structures. While this introduces readers to the different types of evidence available for interpreting the appearance of certain monuments, the small size of some images negates their usefulness. The maps of different areas of the city are also quite difficult to take in at first glance, due to the large number of densely packed references covering them and the intense system of colour coding. While the introduction to the AAR explains how the present work goes beyond Rodolfo Lanciani's *Forma Urbis Romae* of 1901 (18–27), the aesthetically pleasing simplicity of its predecessor's plan is missed. That said, the AAR is not aimed solely at a scholarly audience, and on showing the volume to a friend outside the field, their enthusiastic response was to browse with interest the wide variety of images on each page. As noted in other reviews, the approach of the AAR would seem particularly suited to a digital resource, where layers can be added and removed, hyperlinks to related text embedded in the map, and new discoveries incorporated as they arise (B. Frischer, *Antiquity* 91 (2017), 1662). A digital version — *The Virtual Atlas of Ancient Rome* — does already exist, and stated plans to make it accessible online would be very welcome (29–30).

The AAR is a significant achievement which brings together a vast amount of information. It is an important resource for those working on Roman topography or interested in the history of the city. The work presents a particular view of the development of ancient Rome (particularly problematic is the acceptance of Rome's foundation and kingship narrative), and it is not made clear how controversial the interpretations of some monuments are (for example, the house of Augustus); for discussion of these and other examples, see J. Packer, *JRA* 26 (2013), 553–61; T. P. Wiseman, *JRS* 103 (2013), 233–68; B. Frischer, *Antiquity* 91 (2017), 1659–62; C. Machado, *CR* 67 (2018), 1–4. The AAR does not supersede the various topographical dictionaries, the *Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae* or the *Forma Urbis Romae*, but is to be used alongside them.

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A. GRANDAZZI, *URBS. HISTOIRE DE LA VILLE DE ROME, DES ORIGINES À LA MORT D'AUGUSTE*. Paris: Perrin, 2017. Pp. 768, illus. ISBN 9782262028800. €30.00.

Since the 1980s, research on the monumental centre of ancient Rome has experienced an increase comparable in intensity of heuristic potential to the research done at the end of the nineteenth and in the early twentieth century, which brought to light the main features of the ancient city. As a consequence, our idea of Rome has completely changed: recent work both questions the moment when Rome can be defined as a city, and restores data that allow us to get a proper idea of the historical development of the city (and not only in the Augustan or imperial periods). Nevertheless, works systemising this new data in a framework of synthesis have previously been lacking, a gap now filled by the *Atlas of Ancient Rome* (ed. A. Carandini, English edn, 2017), which can be situated in the line of topographical studies, and this volume, which is based on a framework of historical studies.