

(such as survey evidence) for different areas and different periods; however it would have been interesting to show how this differentiation in source data may have been the basis for earlier hasty preconceptions which many of the articles redress. With regards to chronology and terminology, C. provides a tantalizing discussion which concentrates primarily on the issues of abandonment dates and longevity which leaves the reader asking for more. Additionally, this volume may also have been used to address issues of chronological terminology which are made even more obvious in bringing together the diverse areas. Although each of the contributors provides clear chronologies, their terminology is not consistent throughout the volume. Commendably Sanders and Dark both raise this pertinent issue and suggest some solutions worthy of further investigation.

C. points out, in his introduction, that there is no need for blanket explanations, that each region can be unique and react differently, and in accepting this, the value of the collected articles is strengthened in highlighting common trends and diversities between regions. The ultimate result of this collection of papers is a successful cohesion of a multiplicity of material presented through a range of methodologies which leaves the reader inspired by the vigour of current work and optimistic for future developments.

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REBECCA SWEETMAN

C. KOSSO, *THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF PUBLIC POLICY IN LATE ROMAN GREECE* (British Archaeological Reports International Series 1126). Oxford: Archaeopress, 2003. Pp. 94, 4 pls, 7 figs, 10 tables. ISBN 1-84171-502-6. £27.00.

Roman archaeology in Greece has been largely driven by the numerous field survey projects that have taken place in the country during the last three decades. C. Kosso's book is derived from her own involvement in these projects, and highlights both their strengths and ultimate weaknesses. K.'s central premise is that the marked increase in numbers of rural sites during the late Roman period, apparent in the results of some field surveys in Greece, can be linked with a deliberate attempt on the part of the Imperial government to increase agricultural productivity. Her work is founded on the assumption that the late Roman emperors understood how to manipulate the way that agricultural land was used and that the effects of these policies will be both manifest and quantifiable in the archaeological record.

Following a rather uncritical and broad synthesis of the literary sources and legislation relating to late Roman land use (ch. 2), K. assembles a variety of survey data to demonstrate that there was an expansion of rural settlement in late Roman Greece. This is well-trodden ground, but K. inadvertently succeeds in demonstrating that her data are ultimately unsuited to her task. As many scholars (notably S. Alcock) have pointed out, the lack of chronological definition in the survey data (where the meaning of 'late Roman' can vary from between A.D. 250–650 in the Nemea Valley Project and A.D. 400–600 in the Argolid Exploration Project) means that comparison between surveys is hazardous at best. K. acknowledges this difficulty but fails to address it, in that her comparative graphs and tables utilize the chronological divisions of the original survey projects, thus rendering them of questionable value. Equally dating is usually reliant on the presence of African and Eastern Mediterranean Red Slip wares, with the result that the chronologies of major sites are usually based on a handful of sherds, while many others cannot be dated beyond a generic 'late Roman period'. This is a shaky foundation for building economic models.

Despite these problems, the evidence for an increase in site numbers in some areas during the later Roman period appears incontrovertible and K. uses the remainder of the book to suggest how this might be the result of deliberate centralized policy making. The rationale is based on Halstead's model of 'traditional' and 'alternative' modes of agricultural practice, in which the latter leads to more intensive use of the landscape and more widely dispersed settlement. The point that the Greek landscape may have seen more intensive exploitation during the late Roman period is certainly a valid one that deserves exploring. However, the link with a rationalist economic policy pursued by a benign and sophisticated Imperial government, through whose efforts 'individuals were able and willing to adopt an intensive agricultural strategy' (67) is not convincingly demonstrated here. Equally, while K. utilizes textual evidence from throughout the Empire, she is unable to explain why the pattern identified in Achaia is not represented more uniformly elsewhere, if indeed it represents a deliberate Imperial policy. Throughout the book K.'s argument is weakened by her failure to take account of recent work on Late Antiquity and

on field survey (for example the publications of the *Populus* project). Crucially she does not explore the potential impact of the Church and the military on patterns of land exploitation.

The data derived from field survey projects have immeasurably advanced our knowledge of Roman Greece. However, the strengths of field survey lie in its power to demonstrate long-term landscape change, while its weaknesses are shown when it is used in isolation to approach more chronologically defined problems. The questions addressed by this book need to be asked, but at present the data available do not allow us to answer them. Nonetheless, books on Roman Greece are so few and far between that any addition to their number should be cautiously welcomed, albeit with some reservations in this case.

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W. BOWDEN

S. DE MARIA (ED.), *NUOVE RICERCHE E SCAVI NELL'AREA DELLA VILLA DI TEODERICO A GALEATA (Atti della Giornata di Studi, Ravenna, 26 Marzo 2002)* (Studi e Scavi, nuova serie, 7). Bologna: Ante Quem, 2004. Pp. 187, 124 figs. ISBN 88-7849-001-6. €21.00.

This well-presented volume comprises twelve contributions from a day conference devoted to the results of a new phase of excavation (1998–2002) at the site of the ‘villa di Teoderico’ at Galeata in Emilia Romagna. The late antique royal rural residence was first examined in 1942 by a German team, from whose partial investigations the architect Friedrich Krischen drew up some elegant reconstructions of the Gothic ‘palace’ — these images early on viewed as ideologically motivated given the time of their conception (see 162–6 for the drawings; for the 1942 campaign, comprising a rapid one-month wall-chase, see Gamerini, 67–84, contrasting its fair, if scattered documentation with the seemingly non-existent records of the Italian 1968 trenching here). Early and later medieval sources had indicated a palace of King Theoderic (A.D. 489–526) near Galeata, and these first excavations keenly sought to confirm the presence of this Germanic royal seat. This they duly achieved, recognizing also ‘Ostrogothic pottery’. (They also traced earlier structures, of republican to early imperial date, viewed as a ‘villa’, but the recent campaigns reinterpret these as functional and ornamental units — a furnace and a water feature — belonging to a sizeable residence in the vicinity: Lepore, 85–97, and Zaccaria, 99–116.)

Since the 1960s doubt has been cast on the reliability of the German interpretations, and the current, ongoing project by the Comune, Bologna University, and the Emilia Romagna Soprintendenza, armed with a much fuller comprehension of late antique material cultures, aims to test the chronology and to clarify properly the extent and format of the Galeata complex(es). The project links also to a planned archaeological park, to include this villa, medieval Galeata, Pianetto, the former Roman township of *Mevaniola*, and the early medieval abbey of S. Ellero (Bolzani, 49–58; Orselli, 59–66. The project is chiefly excavation-oriented but includes georadar studies — outlined in Bracci, 169–75). Excavation since 1998 has indeed revealed a late antique site (mid-fifth to mid-sixth century A.D.), of substantial extent — if, however, one of limited stratigraphic depth, damaged through robbing but particularly through ploughing (trenches detailed in Villicich, 121–34, and summarized by De Maria, 21–48).

The work has so far focused on the elaborately-planned bath complex, which aligns this ‘Gothic villa-palace’ more with fourth-century elite retreats than with a contemporary rural seat such as Monte Barro overlooking Lake Como (see G. P. Brogiolo and L. Castelletti, *Archeologia a Monte Barro. Il grande edificio e le torri* (1991)), although the lack of surviving quality furnishings (marble veneer or paving, mosaic — only minute fragments have so far been recovered) is striking (but could be explained by the extensive damage to the site, with most floor levels lost, De Maria, 39–40).

The ceramics of the present campaign (discussed by Mazzeo Saracino, 135–56) support an early imperial precursor, but as yet there is a very limited repertoire of late antique materials (but this does include some of the wavy-line decorated coarse ware identified by the German team as ‘Ostrogothic’, and also includes fragments of sixth-century glass chalices). The modern excavations are thus at an early stage, but already they highlight the potential for detailing a fairly unique, and potentially royal site in its landscape context.

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