

can be said that Constantine created 'a strictly monocratic regime' (p. 54), when in fact he divided the empire between his sons. It was Ambrose, rather than Ausonius, who gave an oration at the funeral of Theodosius at Milan (p. 61). D. asserts that the fate of the empire was 'resolved in a face-to-face confrontation between Honorius and Alaric' (p. 64). Another example is the Keay 26 *spatheia*, which D. claims should be dated to between the ninth and the twelfth century (p. 77). It is an odd suggestion that 'in 554 Justinian declared war in Italy with the Pragmatic sanction' (p. 190). Finally, iconoclasm was not proclaimed in 711 (p. 213).

Apart from the English translation, these are minor faults that do not detract from the overall quality of the book. Throughout the work, D. competently weaves together general historic narrative, urban developments and discussion of individual monuments. Together with the excellent illustrations, the volume forms an intriguing image of the ancient city, and the book should be a proud addition to the library of all with an interest in the 'capital of the Adriatic'.

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WARFARE IN LATE ANTIQUITY

SARANTIS (A.), CHRISTIE (N.) (edd.) *War and Warfare in Late Antiquity. Current Perspectives*. In two volumes. (Late Antique Archaeology 8.1 & 8.2.) Pp. xxvi + viii + 1084, figs, ills, maps. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2013. Cased, €254, US\$329. ISBN: 978-90-04-25281-3 (vol. 1); 978-90-04-25282-0 (vol. 2); 978-90-04-25257-8 (set).

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The theme of warfare in Late Antiquity has become a major focus of academic interest in recent years, although detailed and fully referenced books on the subject have not matched this rise in popularity. These two volumes go some way towards providing a very useful textbook, covering a wide range of topics from the late Roman, but also the early Byzantine, period. Contributions are mostly, but not exclusively, based upon papers presented at a conference held in Oxford in 2007 in which both historians and archaeologists participated. All texts are accompanied by copious up-to-date references allowing for further investigation.

The first volume contains a series of bibliographical essays introducing the most recent publications on key aspects of warfare; notably on military equipment, the conduct of warfare, the late Roman army and strategy, and fortifications in the west, Africa and in the East. Although exceptionally well-referenced, these studies in themselves provide a range of interesting and valuable contributions, including excellent papers by S., 'Waging War in Late Antiquity' and 'Tactics', as well as a stimulating review of the 'Organisation and Life in the Late Roman Military' by C. Whately. The last two papers on fortifications in the western provinces (by S. and C.) are rather short on discussion but include invaluable bibliographical information and guidance in a field which has become crammed with a vast quantity of data, in part due to the regular series of international conferences on forts of the Roman empire (The Limes Congresses).

The second volume includes a number of important papers, although they sit somewhat awkwardly under themes which can include only one or two contributions. J. Haldon provides a fascinating insight into early Byzantine warfare on the Eastern frontier, although a comparison with the fifth-century situation in the Balkans is not convincing and perhaps unwise. Under the heading 'Fortifications and Siege Warfare' there are two very different essays. J. Crow provides an excellent insight into urban fortifications and linear barriers such as the Long Walls of Constantinople, and M. Whitby follows with a fascinating description of sieges and counter-sieges. The following section, 'Weaponry and Equipment', provides a more cohesive group. J. Coulston's exceptional and nuanced description of the material evidence and J. Conyard's description of experiments in the use and capability of weapons provide well-balanced and constructive accounts of the subject. Much less satisfactory is M. Kazanski's paper which divides weaponry into subsets of equipment attributed to Germans (Goths), Sarmatians/Alans and Slavs. This traditional attempt to associate particular items with 'ethnic identities' is unhelpful and has no basis in the archaeological evidence. As Coulston rightly observes, the Roman army adopted military equipment from different peoples; types and styles of equipment reflect local availability, utility and fashion. The same applies to assemblages found beyond the Danube. A trilobite arrowhead is not 'a piece of Slavic and cavalry equipment of nomadic steppe origin (5th to 8th century AD)'. It was equally used by the Roman army in the fourth and fifth centuries A.D. Attempts to ascribe ethnicity to different forms of late Roman arms and equipment are not only improbable but introduce assumptions which have no basis in archaeological fact.

There follows an interesting series of offerings under the heading 'Literary Sources and Topography'. The topics are specific but nevertheless provide useful information on 'understanding campaigns in Procopius and Agathias' (I. Colvin) and Procopius and the sieges of Dara and Rome as described by Procopius with a convincing use of the landscape to explain the tactics employed (C. Lillington-Martin). The section ends with S. Becher on Ammianus Marcellinus and his description of the handover of Nisibis to the Persian King Shapur II in A.D. 363.

The next sections are grouped somewhat incongruously under regional studies. However, each provides a valuable case study on aspects of military affairs and sites. Under the 'West' there is H. Elton's very good essay on imperial campaigns from Diocletian to Honorius. M. Kulikowski presents a view on the fifth-century invasions as a whole, arguing that the importance of Barbarian 'invasions' has been somewhat exaggerated, following a modern trend in interpretation; that of 'change' and assimilation playing a more important role than destruction and a barbarian take-over of Roman territory (after, for example, W. Goffart). While, to an extent, this view is supported by literary sources for southern Gaul in the fifth century, it is not generally applicable: destruction and a catastrophic end to Roman organisation and power, coupled with the violent collapse of the Roman economic system (certainly the occupation of villas) is clear in the archaeological record in the Balkans at the end of the fourth century and then again about the middle of the fifth century, following the arrival of the Huns. Generalisations are not the way forward; each region must be studied as individual case studies, cautiously bringing into play both the archaeological and historical evidence, treating each approach with caution. What we cannot presume is as important as advancing an over-reaching conclusion.

For the Balkans, there are three contributions. J. Wilkes gives a full bibliographical account of the region with a perceptive insight into the character of change from a centralised military system to one fragmented and uncoordinated with the appearance of hill-top defences in the fifth and sixth centuries. S.'s overview of battles and diplomacy in the late fifth to mid sixth centuries takes the narrative on into the early Byzantine period and

F. Curta provides a wealth of detail about sites of the sixth to seventh centuries A.D., although the dating of material culture to the seventh century is rather optimistic and there is a common tendency not to appreciate the tenuous nature of ‘conclusions’ published in archaeological reports.

For the ‘East’ J Howard-Johnston’s article on Armenia in Late Antiquity is a good introduction to the eastern frontier in the late Roman period, worth comparing with the paper on the region presented in the first volume (Haldon). As one of the most fully explored fortresses in the East, C. Whately’s description of El-Lejjun justifies its inclusion. Finally, the volume concludes with a much-neglected topic, ‘Civil War’, with C. on warfare within the empire and M. Kouroumali on the Justinianic conquest of Italy.

There is inevitably a variety of contributions, ranging from site-specific studies to wide general themes – but that is to be expected in any publication which springs from a conference. One particular difficulty emerges clearly from the debate: the worrying misuse of archaeology by ancient historians, bending the ‘evidence’ to build arguments which too readily take up the tentative explanations of archaeologists, without appreciating, and perhaps not understanding, the soft foundations upon which theories are based. But then, though here in high relief, this is a feature of the subject, familiar in much of the literature.

Despite their drawbacks, the intention of these volumes, as the editors affirm, is to bring together evidence and bibliographies along with thematic debates. In this they have succeeded brilliantly. The papers present an abundance of evidence and debate which will remain for many years on the bookshelves of scholars interested in the late Roman period and especially military affairs. The editors are to be congratulated for the result of what must have been an onerous task but one which has provided a key resource for all students of Late Antiquity.

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OLD AGE

KRÖTZL (C.), MUSTAKALLIO (K.) (ed.) *On Old Age. Approaching Death in Antiquity and the Middle Ages*. (The History of Daily Life 2.) Pp. xx + 346, figs, ills, map. Turnhout: Brepols, 2011. Cased, €80. ISBN: 978-2-503-53216-5.

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The objective of these collected papers from a 2005 conference is to examine ageing, old age and death from a comparative perspective; like others in the same series, the volume’s purpose is to span the disciplinary boundaries between study of the Graeco-Roman world and of the Middle Ages. For readers of this journal its principal interest will lie in the seven papers on the Graeco-Roman world. The other nine consider Europe between the ninth and the sixteenth centuries, mostly after 1200. For the ancient world the sources exploited are literary and epigraphic; for later periods they diversify to include historical, medical and literary works as well as legal and ecclesiastical documents, in two cases complemented by visual material. While the three thematic headings by which the book is organised evoke its general preoccupations – ‘Coping with Old Age and Death: Views and Values’, ‘Social Meaning of Old Age and Death’, ‘Coping with Death: Remembrance and Oblivion’ – they are less useful in elucidating connections between papers. Only a