

dimension of exotics, and meanings shifting with distance, context and time.

The study highlights the many levels inherent in the construction of individual identities. For example, amber, ivory, and objects bearing depictions of Africans circulated within the sphere of international elite culture; jet appears to have functioned on a provincial level; some (but not all) fibulae were strictly localised. The overlapping meanings and distributions bear witness to the complexities of participation in the wider community of the Roman Empire and, indeed, beyond (e.g. bucket pendants, gold-in-glass beads). The delightful examination of ivory fan handles gives us a glimpse of fashionable accessories, a reminder that the etiquette surrounding the actual use of such items also forms part of the international construct of provincial life. In similar vein, the real or perceived exotic nature of materials as well as the significance of colour and texture is discussed: particularly intriguing is the British preference for black jet and shale, while the Rhineland favoured red-golden amber. The symbolism of left/right imagery is explored in Chapter 6 through a type of hairpin in the form of a hand holding a ball, but is equally relevant to, for instance, the differential survival of statue body parts or the position of gifts of jewellery in burials. It is worth noting the curious contrast between the right hand of the pins and the tendency to favour the left foot for shoes deposited in watery contexts. Organic materials are not included amongst the case studies, except for wooden writing tablets. As the find locations of these objects says more about conditions of preservation than actual occurrence, the loss of organic materials undoubtedly has a significant negative effect on spatial distributions. Inkwells can also be made of cattle-horn, as they were in the Middle Ages.

From a Continental perspective, we can only be envious of the contribution of the Portable Antiquities Reporting Scheme operating in Britain. A direct result is the greater awareness of the extent of distinct regional and local artefact types (e.g. brooches, perforated spoons), which gives remarkable insight into the consumption patterns of the ordinary population of Roman Britain. This is a source that Eckardt exploits intelligently and to great advantage.

The movement of people is a recurring theme and although it is, perhaps, still too early to accept the far-reaching conclusions drawn from isotope analysis (is it really probable that such a high proportion of all the bones analysed always seem

to come from immigrants? Where are the locals?), the integration of this research into the discussion of the artefacts is welcome and will, eventually, refine the methodology. (I am reminded of the heady early days of radiocarbon dating here, with similar claims and criticisms.) Eckardt correctly draws attention to the very unassuming nature of crucial ethnic markers (e.g. bucket pendants), a reason perhaps why such evidence remains so elusive. The need for detailed knowledge of the finds in their international context is particularly evident in this regard. Less successful is Chapter 3, focusing on Africans in Roman Britain. Especially for the unsuspecting non-specialist reader, it might have been better to clarify at the start—instead of at the close—that here, ‘African’ refers to coastal Mediterranean North Africa, as the choice of illustrations and the terminology consistently leaves the impression that Sub-Saharan people are involved. This confusion is reinforced by the incorporation into this chapter of exotic artefacts that do indeed depict figures that the Romans would describe as “Ethiopians”. In fact, the artefacts under discussion, as well as the epigraphy, centre on regions also settled by Roman veterans and colonists (e.g. Tunisia and Morocco), as the maps make clear.

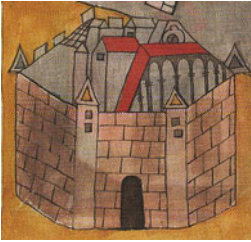
A particular strength of the study is the familiarity of the author with Continental research, which enables her to explore interprovincial variation successfully. The extensive bibliography (40 pages no less) is a valuable resource, while the numerous distribution maps clarify the text, providing useful overviews. Unaccountably, the colour plates are few and poorly chosen.

One of the most fascinating aspects of the Roman period is the extent of subtle regional variation within the recognisably international cultural unity of Empire and the role of quite modest possessions in shaping individual experience. This well-written yet nuanced and critical study makes an important contribution to this debate and to the integration of small finds into the wider narrative.

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HENDRIK W. DEY. *The afterlife of the Roman city: architecture and ceremony in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*. 2015. xiv+291 pages, 8 colour

and 48 b&w illustrations. New York: Cambridge University Press; 9781-1-107-06918-3 hardback \$99.



The debate regarding the nature of the transformation of the Roman world continues, and that regarding the fate of cities during what is often now called the ‘Long Late Antiquity’ is particularly lively. To portray this debate as ‘continuists’ *vs* ‘catastrophists’ is not always too gross a caricature, but Hendrik Dey claims, in his book, to be able to circumvent this rather limiting dichotomy (“once and for all, if possible”, p. 251). This might be a rather optimistic hope, but without doubt Dey has produced an interesting contribution to the field, which will be consulted by a good number of students and specialists.

Dey looks at urbanism across the full geographical extent of the former Roman world, from the western successor states to the Umayyad Levant, focusing on the monumental topography of the city. In this way, a remarkable continuity is demonstrated, albeit at times with rather speculative ‘proofs’. In the first substantive chapter, Dey sets out what he sees as the characteristic feature of the late Roman city: the colonnaded or porticoed street, which functioned as the key location for political ceremony. Chapter 2 looks more closely at what Dey calls the ‘ceremonial armature’ of the city, demonstrated most clearly in Tetrarchic capitals, which display a striking uniformity, albeit at times on a miniature scale, as at Diocletian’s Split. The next chapter shows how urban ceremonies and their distinctive architectural settings were adopted and adapted for use by ecclesiastical as well as political office holders during the fourth century. Dey argues that the interests of secular and Christian authorities merged, with both ‘sides’ working together and making use of these monumental backdrops, in both East and West, as, for instance, at Rome, Milan and Constantinople. Chapter 4 ranges most widely, looking at post-Roman cities from Visigothic Spain to the Umayyad Levant. Evidence for the continued maintenance of monumental armatures is presented, extending into the Byzantine ‘Dark Ages’ (seventh to ninth centuries). In his analysis, Dey pushes the transformation of the classical city later than has traditionally been posited, arguing, for instance, for a new chronology for Sauvaget’s (1934) iconic account

of the transformation of the colonnaded street into the *suj* in the Levant. Finally, the Postscript illustrates continuity in the showpieces of the Carolingian Empire, stating that we can see Aachen as “simply the last in an unbroken sequence of ‘capitals’” (p. 241). A fascinating range of cities are thus covered in this study, from ‘mini’ Recopolis in Visigothic Spain, through late Roman Lincoln (a perhaps unlikely location for colonnaded streets), ‘Dark Age’ Corinth, Lombard Pavia and Umayyad Anjar.

As even this abbreviated account demonstrates, this is an ambitious and wide-ranging study. Dey has integrated a large number of cities into his study, showing an admirable range and fluency over a large geographical area and long chronological span. His account integrates literary sources alongside the archaeological record in elegant fashion. The text is well written and very nicely illustrated, including a number of plans, many drawn by the author himself. Overall, the argument for the continuity of a distinctively Late Roman monumentality is convincing. Dey’s contention that the colonnaded street is an important but consistently underrated aspect of late antique urbanism, in the West as well as the East, should be noted. The book also generally wears its theoretical pretensions lightly; for example, the use of Geertz’s (1980) account of Bali, the ‘theatre state’, works nicely, as Dey argues—in this case, of the Visigothic kingdom—that “the semiotics of power continued to be encoded in the contours of urban architecture” (p. 139).

Not every reader will be convinced by everything in this book. Dey admits that he has been selective in his choice of cities, picking those that fit his argument (p. 17). Moreover, his claim that his examples represent the “tip of the iceberg” (p. 245) can only really be speculative, although we can accept his sensible point that continuity is bound to be harder to demonstrate than disruption.

Ultimately, this is a picture of political topography that tends to assume that the grand designs of the leaders who commissioned and/or used these monuments were basically successful. It is a picture of consensus rather than conflict (as in Chapter 3, looking at the symbiosis between ecclesiastical and political leaders). Therefore, this reviewer is not so convinced that this take on the city really represents, as Dey claims, an approach that recognises “urban history is human history” (p. 251) as an alternative to ‘processualist’ accounts. Rather, it could be argued that what Dey has really written is a book very much

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in the tradition of classical archaeology, focusing on the city as a collection of successful elite monuments.

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- SAMANTHA PAUL & JOHN HUNT. *Evolution of a community: the colonization of a clay inland landscape*. 2015. xii+245 pages, 67 colour and b&w illustrations, and 39 tables. Oxford: Archaeopress; 978-1-78491-086-0 paperback £45.



This volume brings together the results of seven excavations around the modern village of Longstanton, north-west of Cambridge, undertaken between 1995 and 2011. Over this 16-year period, a desk-based assessment, seven excavations (preceded by six evaluations) and three geophysical surveys were carried out. They revealed continuous agricultural activity

across a gravel ridge at the interface between clay uplands and low-lying, floodable meadow from the late Neolithic to the seventeenth century. Together, they offer the rare opportunity to explore the origins and development across the *longue durée* of a landscape that is—unlike those around the deserted medieval settlements of (say) Caldecote (Hertfordshire), Goltho (Lincolnshire) or Wharram Percy (Yorkshire)—still vibrantly occupied.

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There are five substantive sections: an Introduction; Part 1 (Chapters 2–5, in 52 pages), covering the prehistoric and Roman periods; Part 2 (Chapter 6–12, in 104 pages), reporting on evidence for the Anglo-Saxon and medieval centuries; a chapter on ‘Conclusions’; and ten technical appendices. The figures showing the results for each period are particularly to be commended. Each is based on an underlying plan in which all excavated features are shown in light grey, on which are superimposed those associated with each (colour-coded) period. Comparison of the landscapes of the Neolithic or Bronze Age with those of, for instance, the Roman or medieval periods is thus straightforward.

The archaeological excavations make two serious and important contributions to national scholarship and debates concerning the origins and development of the Anglo-Saxon and medieval landscape. Those contributions are, first, the degree to which the introduction of medieval ‘Midland’ open fields (in which all aspects of arable layout, distributions of holdings and sequences of cropping, including a fallow period, were collectively managed as a unified system) ignored or perpetuated earlier field layouts; and, second, the firm identification of the period that saw the emergence of such field systems.

The Longstanton excavations are unusual in offering the opportunity to trace the history of agriculture continuously across at least four millennia. In doing this, they make a significant contribution to questions about the degree to which the alignment of agricultural boundaries of one period perpetuated or ignored earlier ones, a debate that is especially intense in relation to the introduction of ‘Midland’ open fields. No evidence of continuity was found in field survey across the whole of Northamptonshire, where open fields were concluded to have been laid out on completely new alignments; yet other results from across England have indicated that continuity of layout into medieval open fields was more common than not. The excavations at Longstanton conclusively demonstrate that almost all field boundaries there, whether Roman, Anglo-Saxon, medieval or seventeenth century, generally followed a framework of alignments that had its origin in the later Bronze Age, perhaps even in the late Neolithic. The underlying ‘grain’ of the land can thus be said to have persisted across at least 4000 years.

The second major contribution of the Longstanton excavations concerns the origins of ‘Midland’ open-field systems, for which definitive archaeological