

like recent monographs, on the wider Greek and/or Roman worlds, also has its attractions. Even better, B. takes the long view, showing us the evolution of educational practices from the middle Republic through to the later Principate. The picture he draws, however — whether due to the limitations of the sources or his style of analysis — turns out to be less strikingly novel than one might have hoped.

Conceptually, the book relies on earlier work. The theory that what gave Roman education unity was not institutions but a common curriculum; what ps.-Plutarch and Quintilian tell us about the psycho-social development of the child; what moralizing sayings and stories tell the schoolchild about the nature of the world; how what a Roman child read equipped him for a certain place in society; what one learns from grammar and elementary rhetorical exercises; all these ideas are almost uncannily familiar to this reviewer. There is nothing wrong with using conceptual frameworks developed by others, but it encourages the reader to look for originality either in the range of evidence presented or the conclusions drawn.

B. misses some opportunities to improve on the limitations of earlier work and to take into account advances which have been made since the publication of previous monographs. He mentions that Roman education included mathematics, but does not pursue it. He does not discuss a recent argument that the curriculum included the study of geography. He does not try to do more justice than did previous writers to the education of slaves or women. He makes most use of a group of well-known texts by Cicero, Plutarch, ps.-Plutarch, Suetonius, Quintilian, and ps.-Quintilian. This creates some difficulties for his project. His focus on Roman education is his justification for omitting, for instance, papyrological sources — but his Rome seems to encompass Plutarch and the authors of the Greek progymnasmata, not to mention early comedy and the distichs of Cato, which are heavily influenced by Greek gnomologies. If Roman education is distinct from Hellenistic education in this period, as B. wants to argue, then one wonders why he relies so heavily on Greek sources. If it is not, then I am not sure where his subject is. It might have been more productive to begin with the places where Roman education appears or claims to be distinctive and reflect on their rhetorical and/or socio-cultural currency.

B. takes an optimistic view of the sources, following Bonner in assuming, for instance, that we can on the whole accept the narrative implicit in Plutarch's *Lives* of a pre-Greek Roman aristocratic education. His investigation of the school of Plotius Gallus is more adventurous, and forms the basis for an entertaining reconstruction of the difficulties encountered by early schools of rhetoric at Rome.

Much of B.'s previous work has drawn our attention to topics which had been undeservedly neglected and shed a great deal of light on Roman society. Roman education is still, in some respects, such a topic; that B. has tackled it is to be welcomed, but it is a pity that he does not develop our understanding further than he does.

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K. BOWES, *HOUSES AND SOCIETY IN THE LATER ROMAN EMPIRE*. London: Duckworth, 2010. Pp. 120, illus. ISBN 9780715638828. £12.99.

This small book provides a convenient introduction to the state of research in the field of late Roman domestic architecture. It summarizes the historiography of the study of late antique houses and offers interesting theoretical questions that can be taken up by anyone wishing to investigate this current topic further. Divided into four chapters — 1. 'Inventing the Later Roman House'; 2. 'The Archaeology of Later Roman Houses'; 3. 'Houses and History'; 4. 'New Directions' — the book is a handy introduction to a fascinating subject and follows upon the author's dissertation and previous publications, which are all similarly oriented toward the territories of Western Europe, the western Mediterranean, North Africa, and the Balkans. The book lays out the basic inventory of late Roman houses in these regions and the theoretical frameworks that have been used by scholars, both past and present, in their analyses.

The book's first chapter 'Inventing the Later Roman House' presents a condensed literature review that breaks down the historiography of the field according to past approaches and methodologies. It emphasizes that the study of the late Roman house was at first used to point to the development of medieval architectural forms. Later, the layout of spaces in domestic architecture was seen to reflect

hierarchization, privatization and ritualization in late antique society. These approaches developed from an assumption that late Roman houses are fundamentally different from their predecessors. Bowes would like to contend, however, that continuities with earlier houses are as striking as their novelties.

The second chapter on 'The Archaeology of Later Roman Houses' explains how difficult it can be to provide a careful analysis of late Roman houses when the archaeological evidence is either fragmentary or incomplete. For example, there are no artifacts or small finds to accompany plans of late Roman houses published at the beginning of the twentieth century. Although the buildings can be placed physically in space, they are missing a large part of their associated contexts. As with anyone hoping for a contextual approach to archaeological material, B. believes that careful analysis of more recently emerging archaeological evidence can serve to shift interpretive paradigms in the understanding of late Roman houses.

The third chapter on 'Houses and History' relates the disciplinary trends in social history to the study of archaeology and its impact on the study of late Roman houses. B. frequently refers to the dangers inherent in making assumptions about history and imposing them on the material culture of the era without critiquing the sources first and utilizing a contextual approach. The highly complex social systems at play in the late antique period may or may not be reflected in the architecture of domestic spaces, and the historical models suggested thus far for late antique society that have deeply influenced the study of late antique houses are out of date.

Throughout the book, the author often repeats the paradigm she seeks to unravel: that enlarged and elaborated *triclinia* have been seen to indicate ritualization in society; that large apsed audience halls have been used as evidence for civic activities unfolding in the house so that rituals formerly part of civic life are understood to be taking place increasingly within the realm of the private household; and that separation of dining and reception areas reserved for different social classes as they relate to the head of the household have been considered as a reflection of social separation and hierarchization. Calling for a more nuanced approach to the understanding of provincial élites and the relationship of urban construction and house construction, B. shows that the decline of urban forms does not necessarily influence the rise of domestic life. In fact, the two may not even be related, and in many instances there is evidence for growth and rebuilding of urban fabrics in tandem with the growth and refurbishment of both urban and rural villas. Ultimately she seeks to understand whether it is possible to find in the late Roman house the material evidence for the less pretentious élite of Roman society, and suggests that the available evidence may point to a more nuanced and less stratified set of social classes.

A brief fourth chapter on 'New Directions' restates the need to recognize the limitations of both the archaeological evidence and the assumptions made by previous scholars who see late Roman houses as an imprint of a social history garnered from the analysis of textual sources. In her exclusive focus on the late Roman house, B. missed an opportunity to explain how the study of domestic architecture in Late Antiquity relates to the study of other art historical, architectural, and archaeological evidence from the same period. For example, all aspects of Late Antiquity, not just late antique houses, have been used as evidence for a transition from the ancient to the medieval worlds. More generally, classical archaeology was founded as a discipline that took texts as the primary point of departure, using material evidence to show the validity of information found in written sources. This methodology has been generously critiqued in other areas of scholarship over the past decades and is vastly different from many new and current approaches to art historical, archaeological, and cultural studies. It would have been interesting to see how the author situates her proposed new approaches to the study of late Roman houses within other current trends in the study of Late Antiquity as well as new methodologies in archaeological and art historical inquiries specifically.

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K. VÖSSING, *DAS RÖMISCHE BANKETT IM SPIEGEL DER ALTERTUMSWISSENSCHAFTEN: INTERNATIONALES KOLLOQUIUM 5./6. OKTOBER 2005, SCHLOSS MICKELN, DÜSSELDORF*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2008. Pp. 215, 32 pls, illus. ISBN 9783515092357. €44.00.

Konrad Vössing has edited this interesting and useful collection of essays on Roman dining, with a strong emphasis on visual material and a range across the Empire, from Rome and Pompeii to