

the shortcomings in its publication, this collection is certainly worthy of serious attention and will repay those persevering readers who take the trouble to explore it in detail.

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S. MCGILL, C. SOGNO and E. WATTS (EDS), *FROM THE TETRARCHS TO THE THEODOSIANS: LATER ROMAN HISTORY AND CULTURE, 284–450 CE* (Yale Classical Studies 34). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. Pp. ix + 321. ISBN 9780521898218. £55.00.

The essays collected in this volume reflect on and develop subjects in the history of Late Antiquity which have preoccupied their honorand, John Matthews, over a distinguished and wide-ranging career. Although they tackle topics in the period from Diocletian to Theodosius II (as promised by the book's very title), two of their authors, Potter and Garnsey, range much more widely back in time. They demonstrate that, whatever the temporal limits one sets to Late Antiquity, to understand fully the continuities and transformations of this period requires one to take a relatively long chronological view. All the contributors appear to have taken seriously the editorial ambition (6) that this volume should reveal different transformations from those often explored by exponents of a 'transformation' view of the late classical world.

The first section of the book addresses subjects in political life, social life and law. Potter's opening chapter explores the background to and reasons for the dissolution of the Roman Empire. He identifies three phases of imperial self-definition, beginning in the fourth century B.C. with an ethical principle of *fides*, moving to a legal definition of *imperium*, and ending with an administrative definition in the post-Severan period. According to P., this administrative self-interest was ultimately responsible for the collapse of the western empire. P. sometimes asserts rather than demonstrates, but overall his ambitiously grand narrative moves successfully between the 'micro' and 'macro'. Garnsey also ranges from Republic to Late Empire in an exploration of the continuing but evolving importance of patronage in Roman society, and cleanly dispatches old and new orthodoxies along the way. Rather than accepting the eclipse of patronage in Late Antiquity by other practices such as the sale of office, he argues that it continued to flourish up to Justinian. He also shows ingeniously how Late Antiquity might showcase a 'norm' of patronage against the earlier distortions of the late Republic and early Principate. Sogno segues into a related sub-topic of patronage: matchmaking. She compares examples from Pliny's letters with those of Symmachus and Augustine to demonstrate how, despite differences in these correspondents' ideals, focus and purpose, matchmaking continued to be an important part of patronage. The last two chapters of this section take a legal turn. Harries explores two aspects of Constantine's testamentary legislation to show convincingly how, in this field at least, he was a traditional legislator tackling specific problems in conformity with precedent, despite the distorting effects of rhetoric and of the testimony of critics and supporters eager, for different reasons, to assert that he was in fact an arch innovator. Connolly homes in on an encounter documented in the Theodosian Code between Constantine and a group of disgruntled veterans. She identifies elements of continuity in the fact and shape of the exchange, but aspects of change in its ceremonial context.

The second part of this volume develops ongoing scholarly conversations on biographical writing and builds successfully on the work of another edited volume, now over a decade old, T. Hägg and P. Rousseau (eds), *Greek Biography and Panegyric in Late Antiquity* (2000), in bringing together the analysis of very different kinds of texts. Watts shows how, as the understanding of what constituted philosophy in Christian Late Antiquity widened, so biographies of a range of Christian figures came to adapt the narrative structures and rhetorical techniques of philosophical biography to similarly persuasive ends. Osgood focuses on Paulinus' verse autobiography and its debts to Augustine and Ausonius; although Paulinus' attitude to his formal education is apparently dismissive, he nonetheless pays homage to the classics in the very form and texture of his verse. McGill examines Phocas' use of Donatus in his hexameter *Life of Virgil* and identifies some significant departures from Donatus, particularly in the fabrication of new wonders and prodigies for Virgil. M. shows that these were derived from creative readings of Donatus and Virgil's fourth Eclogue, and from associative memories of stories told about Plato, and makes acute remarks about their likely

audience and reception. Finally, Elm assesses with aplomb the performative and metaphorical character of Gregory of Nazianzus' influential invective against Julian which came to eclipse Ammianus' near panegyric of the emperor. She shows how Gregory's portrayal of Julian's reign as a transient theatrical performance, and his conceit that this invective was, as it were, transcribed on a pillar in the agora, were part of an overarching pedagogic strategy to demonstrate how men should comport themselves.

In Part Three, four authors consider different aspects of the period immediately after Theodosius I's return to Constantinople after the disastrous Gothic campaign. Heather explores Themistius' oratorical reinvention of Theodosius, from emperor destined to win against the Goths, to bringer of civil peace to the eastern empire, and sets this against Theodosius' beleaguered attempts at 'regime-building'. He relates the Gothic settlement to the Roman failure to address systemic problems, to Alaric's revolt, and eventually to the unravelling of the western empire. This is, like Potter's chapter, an ambitious and broad-brush piece of analysis. McLynn uses Gregory of Nazianzus' muted characterization of the policies of the living emperor to lead into an assessment of Theodosius' judicious and responsive interventions in church and state in the eastern empire. M. makes numerous telling links between his work and that of his fellow contributors, making this one of the best-connected essays in the volume. Croke addresses Theodosius' transformation of Constantinople into an imperial and Christian capital, based on ceremonial and monumental aspects of the city. Vessey ends the section and volume with a bravura meditation on the range and ambition of Jerome's chronicle, set against Ammianus' classicizing historiography.

It is clear that there has been some productive, if rarely combative, exchange between the authors of these essays, as indicated by explicit cross-references between chapters. This, along with the contributors' common, if differently nuanced, characterization of Late Antiquity as a period of continuity with a long Roman past, rather than a post-classical period of rupture and difference, contributes to an overall impression of coherence and internal integration which is rare in such edited volumes.

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J. LIEBESCHUETZ, *AMBROSE AND JOHN CHRYSOSTOM: CLERICS BETWEEN DESERT AND EMPIRE*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. Pp. xii + 303. ISBN 978019-9596645. £60.00.

This book compares the careers of Ambrose and John Chrysostom with a focus on their asceticism and readiness to critique secular authorities. The book's structure is unusual: the first two chapters survey the classical roots and Christian development of asceticism and freedom of speech (*parrhesia*). The second part focuses on Ambrose and the third on Chrysostom. Liebeschuetz aims to understand Chrysostom's asceticism against the background of Syrian and Mesopotamian practices. L. notes that this third theme resulted in the book becoming 'somewhat unbalanced'(4), with more pages on Chrysostom and asceticism, and less on Ambrose and freedom of speech.

In their outspokenness and asceticism, both men reflected their times. In the late fourth century, the imperial court was 'for the first time overwhelmingly Christian' (1). As a result, imperial authorities recognized episcopal power, but the extent of this power had not yet been settled — perhaps the lack of precedents explains why these two important bishops stood up to imperial power. L. does not draw a causal relationship between asceticism and outspokenness, but in both respects Ambrose and Chrysostom distinguished themselves as men who 'practised what they preached'(2).

The first chapter provides an overview of asceticism in antiquity. The topics covered here range from Essenes to Vestal Virgins, from Socrates to Gnostics. L. argues persuasively that intellectuals' views of asceticism did not necessarily differ from those of ordinary people (19). Ch. 2 examines freedom of speech in antiquity. The Roman value of outspokenness originated in the Republic, and continued during the Principate among philosophers, whom emperors sometimes persecuted, sometimes tolerated. Ambrose and John Chrysostom drew on these traditions as well as a Christian critique of authority that developed during the persecutions (47–8). Two factors were unique to freedom of speech in a Christian empire: a bishop might feel compelled to rebuke the