

## Reviews

*Housesteads Roman Fort — The Grandest Station. Excavation and Survey at Housesteads, 1954–95*, by Charles Daniels, John Gillam, James Crow and Others. Volume 1. *Structural Report and Discussion*. Volume 2. *The Material Assemblages*. Edited by Alan Rushworth. 21 × 30 cm. xxx + 614 pp, 5 colour pls and figs, 304 b&w pls and figs, 61 tables. Swindon: English Heritage, 2010. ISBN 978-1-84802-026-9. Price: £100.00 pb (two volume set).

*Finds from the Frontier. Material Culture in the 4th–5th Centuries*. (CBA Research Report 162). Edited by Rob Collins & Lindsay Allason-Jones. 21 × 30 cm. xvi + 161 pp, 8 colour pls, 68 b&w pls and figs, 8 tables. York: Council for British Archaeology, 2010. ISBN 978-1-902771-81-6. Price: £35.00 pb.

These two publications explore parts of the famous Hadrian's Wall: one the fort of Housesteads and the other reassessing late finds from sites on and near the Wall. For Housesteads, Rushworth successfully brings together various long-awaited excavation reports: the 1974–81 excavations in the fort's NE corner interior and ramparts, the RCHME survey, excavations in the environs and the 1954 study of the *principia*. Volume 1 contains the structural analysis and the second the material assemblages. Rushworth must be commended on this substantial and painstaking task: records for some of the excavations were incomplete and interpretations thus arduous. The main focus is on the excavation of structures XIII, XIV (barracks) and XV, whose phasing begins with Hadrian and carries into the 4th and possibly 5th centuries AD. The *principia* and the gateways are covered in ch 8; ch 9 is devoted to the development of the defences; and ch 10 covers work on the vallum, *vicus*, baths and the *mithraeum*. Vol 2 offers detailed and well-illustrated catalogues of artefacts from the many excavations, including stonework, coins, pottery, botanical evidence, small finds; interestingly, metalworking debris indicates on-site manufacturing of military equipment. The defences and structures were modified from the late 3rd century onwards as a result of changing imperial and military systems. The structural adaptations in the north-west corner reflect these circumstances: Buildings XIII and XIV were rebuilt as single-standing chalets with modifications throughout the 4th century; Building XV was transformed into a large storage facility, and eventually had a bath built into it; the storage area could have been constructed in response to the transformation of the *annona* to the collection of taxes in kind. Although the ramparts were reinforced and towers added to the walls during the fort's later stages, Rushworth notes that these additions cannot simply be argued to be a result of the growing power of the natives and the diminishing size of the army. The evidence from Housesteads suggests a slow abandonment, possibly extending into the 5th century, with the soldiers becoming integrated with local farmers. Housesteads subsequently remained a recognised focal point, evinced by the continued use of the military roads and the placement of a cist burial and apsidal building (a church?) within the fort, dating perhaps to the 8th century AD.

In *Finds from the Frontier* a set of useful, if occasionally rather short, papers on the archaeology of later occupation of the frontier zone of Hadrian's Wall seeks to challenge the assumption that the 4th and 5th centuries were materially poor and a time of decline; they also show how much more can be read in these restricted, but often neglected finds. Thus Cool's opening paper gives a clearly considered discussion regarding how 4th-century assemblages have been studied; she demonstrates that they are different to those found in earlier military occupations and suggests the frontier ceased to be a separate entity of soldiers; she also argues the zone became more dispersed, with soldiers

intermixing with local societies — a theme noted by others. The remaining topics are varied: the structural changes made to earlier military buildings are discussed by Wilmott; in his paper on epigraphy, Hassel notes that the inscriptions for the later period might be smaller in number than previously expected, since *civitas* inscriptions, originally thought to be late Roman, might actually be Severan. Bidwell and Croom consider the growing prevalence of pottery from E Yorkshire and Price concludes that there is a noticeable decline in the use of glassware by people below the status of army officers and government officials. Despite the limited evidence, Coulston argues that soldiers were still being supplied with military equipment in the 4th century, although Collis shows that brooch use in the frontier is distinct from other frontiers and regions of Britain. Personal appearance is examined by Allason-Jones through hairstyles, jewellery and clothing; Brickstock discusses the donative and *annona* payment systems; Stallibrass considers the problems of identifying food remains; and Roman finds beyond the frontier are surveyed by Hunter. O'Brian's and Roberts' papers conclude the volume by considering sub-Roman and early medieval Northumbria's development through the artefacts and the division of the landscape respectively.

Combined, the two volumes show how much more can be learnt both of the Roman, late and sub-Roman phases of use of sites at, and areas around, Hadrian's Wall.

PATRICIA BAKER (*University of Kent*)

*Hispania and the Roman Mediterranean, AD 100–700. Ceramics and Trade.* By Paul Reynolds. 17 × 24 cm. xi + 372 pp, 32 b&w figs, 33 tables. London: Duckworth, 2010. ISBN 978-0-7156-3862-0. Price: £50.00 hb.

This book is not just a description of trade in ceramics produced in Spain, but covers the Mediterranean and outlying regions, including the Atlantic periphery and Black Sea; it details evolving economic trends from Roman to early Byzantine times. Although primarily concerned with containers (amphorae) shipping oil, wine and garum, observations on the supply of African red slip ware (ARS) and Spanish fine wares are reviewed. The mechanisms, both commercial and state-organised (supplying the army and the city of Rome), are described. The bibliography, site index and discussion of relevant themes in comprehensive notes are exemplary; tables are invaluable and most figures are helpful, although some were designed for a larger format and sit awkwardly on the page.

Singular trends are of particular interest. Spain, especially Baetica, attained a virtual monopoly of the trade in wine, fish sauce and oil in the northern provinces and their armies during the 1st century AD. The decline in the export of Spanish products by the 2nd century seems to have resulted from a change in imperial policy, culminating in the Severan period, when Africa became the main provider of garum and oil for the army (*annona*). Wine exports from Spain also declined appreciably during the 2nd century, this probably for commercial reasons as Gallic producers exploited their proximity to the substantial markets in north-western Europe. The direction of trade has its surprises: the late 4th century represents a peak in supply of Baetican amphorae to Beirut and the Levant, replacing an earlier pattern of eastern Mediterranean markets drawing largely on its own hinterlands; meanwhile, the appearance of African fine wares in eastern Roman cities can be explained if the pottery piggy-backed upon the regular shipment of a bulk commodity, presumably grain. The volume contains some significant conclusions. Reynolds argues that radical changes in supply and the movement of goods occurred much earlier than generally assumed: rather than a Diocletianic introduction, the 'early Byzantine economy', signalled by reduced long distance trade and increased regional trade, was underway by the mid-3rd century. During the Vandal occupation of N Africa, while exports of ARS and Tunisian amphorae to Spain and especially Ostrogothic Italy might be expected, African products still reached the Eastern Empire, probably again accompanying substantial grain imports. Moreover, African oil and wine amphorae reached the Danubian frontier c 500, surely representing the provision of

the *annona* rather than commercial enterprise — this despite less than friendly political relations between the Vandal kingdom and Constantinople.

The above does not do justice to Reynolds' detailed analyses, involving radical and unexpected fluctuations in exports from Spain and from Africa, often distorted by the demands of the imperial authorities in Rome. It is this fascinating interplay between state-directed and strictly commercial forces which form a principal thread in the complex relations between different regions within the Empire. What is also remarkable is how these different patterns reflect and modify our preconceptions about inter-state relations, founded upon historical sources — a valuable example of how archaeology can rewrite history. For anyone concerned with the historical implications of the economic forces operating in the Roman Empire — but who is not an expert in amphorae — there is much of value here. But this is a strong resource for the specialist too and Reynolds is to be congratulated for an incisive and major contribution.

ANDREW POULTER (*University of Nottingham*)

*Ravenna in Late Antiquity*. By Deborah Maukopf Deliyannis. 19 × 26 cm. xix + 444 pp, 15 colour pls, 104 b&w pls and figs, 7 tables. Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009. ISBN 978-0-521-83672-2. Price: £65.00 hb.

This is a most useful book. Late-antique and early Byzantine Ravenna has been the subject of (perhaps too) many volumes of mid-20th-century art history, owing to its splendid marble and brick churches and their extensive figurative decorative mosaics. More recently there have been very good analyses of the social and political history (Tom Brown) and new archaeology (Andrea Augenti, Enrico Cirelli). Deliyannis' book integrates new work with old art history and even older ecclesiastical history to tell the story of a city and its people firmly situated in their spaces. She brings a historian's analysis to the built environment, and this approach is very suited to Ravenna where patronage and ruler-representation appear integral parts of early medieval statecraft.

Deliyannis' previous and very important works (2004; 2006) on Agnellus' *Liber Pontificalis Ravennatis*, a 9th-century history of the archbishops of Ravenna written with scintillating detail, especially about building works, and bristling with gossip and vitriol, has very much informed this volume. In her description and analysis of Ravenna and its politics, Agnellus indeed holds prime authority. This is a distinctly top-down view of a city, where archbishops, emperors and kings build churches and governmental administrations. If you are wondering where people lived, what they ate, or where the poor were buried, you need to look to another book. That said, one of the most interesting parts of this book is the very brief chapter 7 on the period 600–850, thus after all the main churches had been built and from which none of the new churches have survived, and when the movers and shakers of the previous centuries were absent or far less potent. In their absence Deliyannis casts Agnellus and Charlemagne, but really the smaller figures, namely *iudices*, some Byzantine officials, geographers and poets seem the most significant, at least locally. Late Roman, Ostrogothic and Byzantine palaces and other secular building works are treated, but the churches are naturally the main focus. Major churches are each described and analysed in distinct subsections, and these discussions will be very useful for teaching undergraduates both of history and art history. Deliyannis' descriptions of construction techniques and decorations are clearly and expertly written — p 129 on the complicated building geometry of the Mausoleum of Theodoric is a good example. She makes accessible much research published in English, German and Italian, presenting different scholars' hypotheses, though sometimes shying away from advancing her own opinion (on p 52, she notes differing opinions on whether the city walls were built at one moment or another, without supporting one view). Discussion is coupled with crisp illustrations and plans are reproduced at rational scales (eg. 1:100, 1:500). Such attention to detail makes it a terrible shame that the key map (fig 1) is literally a Googlemap© marked up with stars and numbers.

In sum, this book is a model for the study of high politics as urban history and is valuable for its accessibility, clarity and attention to historiography and references for further study, which will be useful for historians, archaeologists, art historians and students alike. And in paperback it would form an excellent specialist's travel guide-book.

CAROLINE GOODSON (*Birkbeck College, London*)

*Cities in Transition: Urbanism in Byzantium between Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages (AD 500–900)*. (British Archaeological Reports International Series S2030). By Luca Zavagno. 21 × 30 cm. v + 206 pp, 65 b&w pls and figs. Oxford: Archaeopress, 2009. ISBN 978-1-4073-0607-0. Price: £40.00 pb.

This book derives from a University of Birmingham (2007) PhD supervised by Chris Wickham. Zavagno's aim is ambitious: to challenge conventional notions about the decline of Byzantine cities and the function of the new type of city, the 'kastron', in the 7th and 8th centuries AD. The assumption that in the turmoil of the invasions of this period many cities disappeared, others were reduced to insignificant settlements and most were transformed into *kastra* on fortified hilltops, losing their urban character, is now being modified by archaeological research at Amorion. Zavagno broadens the discussion to other cities, namely Athens (ch 2), Gortyn in Crete (ch 3), Ephesos (ch 4) and Amastris on the Black Sea (ch 5).

In the introductory chapter, after presenting his definitions and perceptions of the Byzantine city, Zavagno argues against the scholarly assumptions of urban decline (with emphasis on the views of C Foss and J W H G Liebeschuetz) and endorses the views of M Whittow, W Brandes, Wickham on urban continuity and regional particularities, and of J Haldon on the role of the state in the urban survival. He proposes his own definition of urban change: taking into consideration the size of the population and the cultural, religious and administrative functions of each city, he emphasises the economic function as the very essence of the city and the key to understanding urban development ('a multifunctional approach to the urban problem': p 17). One weakness to flag is that Zavagno fails to give an idea of the complexity of Byzantine urbanism in his period: apart from occasional statements (as p 169) we hear little of the diverse fates of these centres, whether failed, dramatically shrunk, relocated or else, as with Thessaloniki, surviving in the same location without radical changes.

The emphasis on the economy is the great virtue of this book. Zavagno is not seeking to understand how the economy of the Dark Ages functioned, but rather to identify evidence of production and demand as a factor of urban survival. How the troubles of the 7th and 8th centuries affected the economy and the degree of economic shrinkage are only sketched. Zavagno repeatedly refers to the role of the elites in the urban economy as the main boost to demand and economic exchange. In terms of methodology, a major question still remains regarding how much of Dark-Age urban economic life can be traced by archaeology and how accurate this image can be.

Zavagno begins his analysis for each one of the four cities with the question 'Why Athens? Why Gortyn? ...' (a system used by J Magness, *The Archaeology of the Early Islamic Settlement in Palestine*, 2003). Each city is treated on its own merit. After surveying archaeological evidence, Zavagno explores numismatic and sigillographic data, and any documentary information. However, the reader is sometimes confronted with hypotheses and interpretations produced by unclear evidence (eg p 148, n 269). The term 'decline' being rejected, settlement continuity is presented in a severely reduced format and vitality: 'the deconstruction of the classic *forma urbis* ... was followed not by a decline but by a reconstructing process along different multifunctional lines': 171). Each city is examined in a framework involving their territory, landscape, regional interconnections, urban planning, and political, ecclesiastical and military functions. Demonumentalisation and privatisation of late-antique public space are not seen as signs of decline, but 'more a sign of demographic and economic change than of deterioration' (91). The proliferation of

workshops suggests economic vitality. However, Zavagno gives no sense of the relationship of the revised urban topography to the human landscape — does the reduction of the width of the streets suggest reduced traffic, the abandonment of public buildings a lack of urban economic vitality, the archaeologically unidentified elite houses a sign of severely diminished elite economic strength?

In his conclusions (ch 6), comparisons with Pella, Naples and Amorion strengthen Zavagno's views on the new form of the early medieval Byzantine city. The existence of the fortified 'lower city' is used to deconstruct the 'notion' of the 'city-kastron' — but without taking into consideration the consistent use of the term in the literary sources. Zavagno's attempt to redefine the function of the 'city-kastron' is a valuable contribution to the scholarly debate about Byzantine cities.

HELEN SARADI (*University of Peloponnese*)

*'Intelligible Beauty'. Recent Research on Byzantine Jewellery.* (The British Museum Research Publication 178). Edited by Chris Entwistle & Noël Adams. ix + 236 pp, 458 colour and b&w pls and figs, 6 tables. London: The British Museum Press, 2010. ISBN 978-0-86159-178-7 (ISSN 1474-3640). Price: £45.00 pb.

*Art and Text in Byzantine Culture.* Edited by Liz James. 18 × 26 cm. xxiv + 230 pp, 8 colour pls, 48 b&w pls. Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010. ISBN 978-0-521-16876-2. Price: £22.99 pb.

*Intelligible Beauty* comprises the proceedings of a British Museum conference of May 2008. Its 21 specialist contributions cover late Antiquity and the full Byzantine period, if with a research emphasis on the 6th–8th centuries. Geographical coverage is of the Mediterranean, Transalpine, Balkan and Soviet areas, with the easternmost zones (eastern Europe, Greece and southern Russia) a particular focus for 8th- to 10th-century materials. The main thread across the volume is the prominent rule of Byzantine jewellery, manufactured in hierarchically organised workshops (see paper by Stolz) and exported and emulated across the Mediterranean and northwards, into Merovingian areas, and reaching Avars, Slavs, and Hungars, Great Moravia and the principality of Kiev. The individual research papers here help show different if contemporary regional take-ups, determined on the one hand by the political and commercial relationships with the Byzantine Empire, and on the other hand, in at least some cases, by the mobility of individuals, namely traders, artisans and exiles of Byzantine origin.

Regarding the 5th to 7th centuries, it seems clear that, among the western and S Mediterranean powers after Rome in Spain, Italy and North Africa, the survival of much of the Roman culture and population and of the older urban network, saw the output and circulation of late Roman types and sometimes original Byzantine prototypes (Ager, Christie, Eger) beside production of new forms in some still Byzantine Italian territories (notably Sicily) — these latter, however, of Byzantine inspiration and taste (Baldini Lippolis). In western transalpine areas, at least on the basis of studies on amethyst beads, imported manufactures predominated, while currently secure evidence for local imitations remains problematic (Drauschke). Adams, meanwhile, hypothesises that two shoulder clasps from Sutton Hoo were the garnish of armour of c AD 600, perhaps of Italic-Byzantine manufacture.

The picture for eastern Europe is complex, chiefly because of the variety of population and power groups occupying these varied territories and with changeable contacts (both military and commercial) with Byzantium between the 6th and 13th centuries. In the earlier centuries high-value artefacts (such as belt sets) probably arrived directly from Constantinople as diplomatic presents (Daims, referring to the Avars). In addition to these status goods, however, we can trace both products of (presumably itinerant) Byzantine craftsmen as well as local imitations (Simonewski), whose quality could sometimes be notable (Balint). In subsequent centuries this picture saw no substantial change: the importing and imitation of Byzantine goods were not interrupted but were perhaps

even strengthened and various contributors (Bálint, Szimoniewski, Bollòck, Albani) propose more-or-less clearly the existence of a real Byzantine material *koinè*. The basis of this 'Byzantine Commonwealth' was the Eastern Empire's foreign policy, which enabled goods, including jewellery, to be exported in sizeable proportions (not easily quantifiable, of course) into territories neighbouring or near to the Empire. Such imports in turn could stimulate in these territories productions of the highest quality, as particularly evident in the principality of Kiev (Pekarska). The volume is completed by some more technique-oriented essays: late-antique production in opus interrasile (Toth) or specific types of artefacts such as finger-rings, bracelets and temple-pendants (Spier, Yeroulanu, Ristovska, Bosselmann-Ruickbie, McLeod).

Each paper features up-to-date bibliographies and a good selection of images. *Intelligible Beauty* clearly will form a key reference work for anyone studying early to late medieval jewellery.

Completely different is James' edited volume, composed of nine well-illustrated essays, dedicated to relationships between artistic representations and words in Byzantine art in the East. A particularly delicate theme if one considers how Byzantine art was always highly sensitive to the meaning of images whose use (or, for some, abuse) led to the well-known iconoclastic movement in the 8th century. The art-historical contributions here are useful even for archaeologists seeking to comprehend art and culture in the Byzantine world. For example, Elsner analyses how the language used by Procopius in his *De Aedificiis* is intimately linked to glorifying the emperor. In other contributions, the connections between text and images are explored in the context of manuscripts (Brubaker, Barber), mosaics and frescoes (Nelson, Maguire), icons and glass goblets (Pentcheva), and stonework (Papalexandrou, James). Each essay is stimulating, encouraging readers to think more of the meanings embedded in the art presented.

ELISA POSSENTI (*University of Trento*)

*Collections mérovingiennes de Napoléon III provenant de la région de Compiègne*. By Françoise Vallet. 21 × 27 cm. 492 pp, 99 b&w pls, 197 b&w figs, maps, tables and drawings, plus CD-Rom. Paris: Comité des Travaux Historiques et Scientifiques. Coédition Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 2008. ISBN 978-2-7118-5046-4 (RMN); ISBN 978-2-7335-0613-2 (CTHS). Price: €82.00 pb.

In this publication Françoise Vallet, honorary chief curator at the Musée d'Archéologie Nationale, presents a *catalogue raisonné* of Merovingian finds from the region of Compiègne (Oise), collected by Napoleon III in the 19th century. The artefacts derive mainly from the cemeteries of Chelles, Champlieu, Jaulzy, Vieux-Mont and Gury, which were subsequently transferred in the late 19th century to what is now the Musée d'Archéologie Nationale. In the process, however, much important, related documentation appears to have been dispersed or lost. Luckily, some excavation notebooks and three albums of watercolour plates of the main objects were recovered. We are extremely fortunate, therefore, that Vallet has dedicated herself to meeting the daunting challenge of re-identifying the material and re-assembling the site and grave groups as far as possible.

The introduction presents the history both of the collection and of the region of Compiègne in late Antiquity. There follows a section on typology and dating with succinct, but informative accounts, together with a social interpretation and details of the burial rites. The dating of the finds is necessarily broad, based on regional artefact chronologies. The main part of the work deals with each cemetery in turn, considering: the site and its surroundings; the site notebook(s); a catalogue and (extensively footnoted) discussion of the gravegoods; discussion of the burial rites; and historical interpretation. The artefacts from a dozen sarcophagi at Chelles suggest the high social status of their owners, while the finds in general are held to confirm that the Compiègne region belonged to the kingdom of Soissons. There is a brief notice of the few finds from other sites or from uncertain findspots. The extensive bibliography is followed by plates of line drawings

of the artefacts, with reconstitutions of the grave assemblages wherever possible; objects missing from the assemblages are indicated schematically. There are only a few minor quibbles about capitalisation and accentuation of non-French or German titles of articles. Some of the photographs in the text, though, could have been of better quality.

The CD forms an invaluable adjunct, containing copious images of the artefacts, anthropological remains and other illustrations arranged in folders; also tables and tabulated indexes. An important addition is the folder of 60 watercolour plates showing many objects in their early post-excavation state. These illustrations will be welcome to researchers and students, although a few of them appear to be rather idealised. Another folder contains images of the notebooks and sketches for Chelles and Vieux-Mont. The name of the folder entitled simply 'Documentation' belies the extent of its contents, since it includes images of numerous parallels to the objects and a group of artefacts which appear to display Christian motifs, as well as supplementary papers, maps, plans and illustrations. Other folders include distribution maps of the main types of finds; and tables of the grave associations of particular types of object and their position on the body. The author has done an excellent job in making such a wealth of material readily available. But, in spite of all this, the price is disappointingly high for a paperback publication, which gives only slight protection to the CD.

The volume will nevertheless be invaluable both to local researchers and to students of Merovingian archaeology and history in general. It forms a welcome addition to what promises to be a series of key reference works on the Musée d'Archéologie Nationale collections.

BARRY AGER (*The British Museum*)

*Monasteri in Europa occidentale (secoli VIII–XI): topografia e strutture. Atti del convegno internazionale, Museo Archeologico di Castel San Vincenzo, 23–26 settembre 2004.* Edited by Flavia De Rubeis & Federico Marazzi. 17 × 24 cm. 608 pp, 341 b&w pls and figs, 4 tables. Rome: Viella, 2008. ISBN 978-88-8334-290-5. Price: €70.00 pb.

*Lérins, une île sainte de l'antiquité au Moyen Âge.* (Collections d'Études Médiévales de Nice, Volume 9). Edited by Yann Codou & Michel Lauwers. 17 × 24 cm. 788 pp, 27 colour pls, 109 b&w pls, figs. Turnhout: Brepols/Centre Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique, 2009. ISBN 978-2-503-51834-3. Price: €54.40 pb.

It is only recently that late-antique and early medieval monastic sites have received sustained attention from archaeologists and historians, thanks in part to the extensive projects around the two sites on which these volumes focus: San Vincenzo al Volturno and Lérins. In both cases, distinctive structure and topography, as well as substantial corroborating written evidence, enable us to overcome the first obstacle to monastic archaeology — distinguishing a site as monastic at all. This is a problem noted by several of the contributors to *Monasteri in Europa occidentale*, the fruit of a conference held at San Vincenzo in 2004. The first two parts essentially present surveys and studies, arranged geographically, of identifiable monastic sites. The first deals with the physical organisation of monasteries 'in relation to Rules, periods and settlement conditions' in different regions: the Near East (Brenk); the Swiss Alps (Sennhauser); Ireland (Picard); Gaul (Sapin); Germany (Lobbedey); mainland Britain (Cramp); and Rome (Mirella, dealing specifically with monasteries attached to titular basilicas). The second part declares itself to be concerned with 'monastic complexes in their functional components, on the basis of the material evidence' (as so often, scholarly Italian does not trip off the tongue so smoothly in English), but is actually much broader: Italian monastic churches are put into their European context (Pistilli); the development of monastic life at Paderborn is uncovered (Gai); new data are presented on the crypt of the well known early medieval church of San Salvatore in Brescia (Brogiolo et al); and first results, too, given of recent archaeological investigations in and around the great Carolingian-era abbey of Nonantola (Gelichi and Librenti). San Vincenzo provides explicit comparanda which,

placed alongside the Plan of St Gallen, helps to identify public and communal spaces in monasteries (Zettler); and contributes to a demonstration that the management of water resources was no more technologically sophisticated in monasteries than it was anywhere else (Squatriti). San Vincenzo is the sole focus of an investigation of the influences and working methods of its artists and artisans (Dell'Acqua). This part ends with a first attempt at relations changes in the monastic liturgy with the archaeological evidence for monastic churches (Jacobsen). The third part provides summary updates on all aspects of the paradigmatic excavations at San Vincenzo, with work generating new interpretations of the monastery's development between its heydays in the 8th–9th and 11th centuries (Marazzi). The strategies employed for the protection of the excavated remains and for their presentation to the public are outlined (Vignone); Gobbi highlights the presence of much freshly cut building stone; Guidobaldi and Gobbi examine the marble flooring in San Vincenzo and its neighbouring chapel of Santa Restituta; Giorleo and Luongo consider the provenance of the reused Roman marble at the site; Sogliani seeks to reconstruct some of the furniture; and De Rubeis and Banterla identify the different phases of production of the inscriptions. The construction of the annular crypt at the *basilica maior* is linked to the translation to San Vincenzo of the corporeal relics of St Vincent at the end of the 8th century (Goodson); the kitchens and attendant structures, excavated over the last decade, are reconstructed (Carannante et al). Francois Bougard's conclusion neatly summarises the significance of the new work at San Vincenzo and identifies themes that resonate generally in the history and archaeology of western monasticism: production, the frontier, models, and the notion of the monastic city.

The Lérins volume reflects that monastery's far greater literary legacy. Part I looks at its origins and development in the 5th to early 7th centuries, beginning with an overview (Heijmans and Pietri); then considering the significant saintly figure of Eucherius, alongside John Cassian (Dulaey) and Salvian and Vincent of Lérins (Alciati), and in the light of his exegesis (Lenkaityté). It includes articles on texts produced at Lérins — the Rule of the Four Fathers (Weiss) and its hagiography (Gioanni) — and considers Lérins's political connections in this period — with a significant local aristocrat (Dumézil) and with Burgundy (Dubreucq). Part II begins with a survey of monastic islands across the Middle Ages (Dessi and Lauwers) and includes studies of specific examples: Patmos (Dessi and Malamut), islands off the coast of Ireland (Picard) and the Atlantic coast of France (Treffort), and the Cistercians at Lérins at the end of the 12th century (Caby). Part III looks at problems of memory at Lérins: in 11th- and 12th-century abbatial lists and chartularies (Butaud), in evidence for 12th-century memories of the island's early medieval past (Lauwers), in pontifical privileges (Méhu), in an influential high-medieval forgery (Ripart), and via the cult of St Honoratus (Butaud, Caby). Archaeologists will perhaps find most interesting a study of the reuse of late-antique spolia at Lérins and in other Provençal devotional buildings (Codou). There is a useful summary chapter (Guyon) and an interesting conclusion on the phenomenon of the monastic island (Iogna-Prat).

MARIOS COSTAMBEYS (*University of Liverpool*)

*The Archaeology of the East Anglian Conversion.* (Anglo-Saxon Studies 15). By Richard Hoggett. 18 × 25 cm. xiv + 207 pp, 48 b&w pls and figs. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2010. ISBN 978-1-84383-595-0 (ISSN 1475-2468). Price: £50.00 hb.

Archaeologists have tended to fight shy of religion in the absence of corroborative written sources, either choosing to focus on other aspects of society or adopting generalising approaches to belief and ideology. Richard Hoggett, though, takes the bull by the horns: the conversion of the English in the 7th century is securely attested and archaeology should engage with this.

Taking as its starting point the cognitive archaeology pioneered by Colin Renfrew, and a three-phase model of religious conversion developed from the work of Birkeli, Foote and Insoll, this book reviews the 7th-century archaeology of East Anglia for clues to the



nature, speed and impacts of the conversion of the East Angles. Successive chapters set out problematics and theoretical approaches, historical sources for the East Anglian Kingdom and its conversion, the evidence of 7th-century settlements, material culture, burials and landscapes, and sets a research agenda for future fieldwork. The conclusion is that conversion here was rapid, deep and widespread, with clearly recognisable and long-lasting impacts in the first half of the 7th century on settlement, landscape and burial practice.

This is a bold and striking model, albeit in some ways very conventional, but one which appears less compelling in its details when some strands of the argument are examined more closely. Changes in burial practice and material culture, for example, were more complex than is recognised here. There was no simple switch from a Migration-period custom of furnished burial to a 'Final Phase' in the earlier 7th century that may be attributed to Christianity, but rather a more complex sequence of changes which involved an abandonment of many material culture types and a fall in the incidence of furnished burial from the middle or third quarter of the 6th century. Cremation, too, may well have been largely abandoned before the end of the 6th century, surviving into the 7th as a minority elite practice. Turning to settlement and landscape, one has to be clear that Ipswich Wares, probably manufactured from AD 700/720, cannot provide a fine chronology for the 8th and 9th centuries, and that finding them near a medieval church need not imply a 7th-century ecclesiastical foundation. The reuse of Roman enclosures as missionary stations, while not inherently improbable, cannot be demonstrated in East Anglia from the current archaeological evidence. It is difficult to characterise the 7th- to 9th-century activity at Caister-by-Yarmouth and Burgh Castle, for example, beyond the obvious statement that burial took place there, and the dating evidence, while not inconsistent with the proposal, falls a long way short of demonstrating that these represent Christian lay communities established in the 630s. To move from this to set up an opposition between models of top-down conversion and mass evangelisation rather misses the point: conversion *may* have been widespread and rapid, but it is difficult to conceive of this happening in the face of active opposition from ruling elites. In short, the archaeology is complex and its chronology is often problematic. One can with good reasons identify a bundle of linked social, economic, ideological and political factors that underlie the changes apparent in the later 6th and 7th centuries; a more nuanced and conditional reading of the evidence and its limitations is needed to tease out the forensics of conversion from those of other dynamics.

It would be wrong, however, to be over-critical. This is never less than a useful and provocative survey which is imaginative in its building and use of models. It sets out an intelligent research agenda which, if implemented, would test its main conclusions and contribute substantially to our understanding of the 7th to 9th centuries in eastern England.

CHRISTOPHER SCULL (*Cardiff University*)

*Churches in Early Medieval Ireland. Architecture, Ritual and Memory.* By Tomás Ó Carragáin. 25 × 29 cm. xvi + 392 pp, 300 colour and b&w pls and figs. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2010. ISBN 978-0-300-15444-3. Price: £40.00 hb.

Elegant scholarship at its best, we owe the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art and other funders an enormous thanks for making this glorious book, lavishly illustrated and presented to the highest standards, available so cheaply. A weighty volume in all senses (2.3 kg), its 11 chapters take a chronological and thematic approach to the surviving pre-Romanesque (pre-1100), primarily stone churches of Ireland. With courtesy and due credit to other scholars, Ó Carragáin melds his prodigious knowledge of multiple sources of evidence from across Europe with an intimate reading of the form of surviving Irish buildings. The outcome is a series of well-developed arguments, illustrated by case studies, which should demolish any residual negative impressions of why the Irish

perpetuated such a very simple and uniform architecture for 700 years, architecture that belies the evolving religious thought (including liturgical practice) and political complexities behind it.

Until AD 1200, the majority of Irish churches were timber, but around 140 mortared pre-Romanesque buildings survive, and 40 drystone examples mainly from Kerry (rare, but what most readily springs to mind when visualising early Irish churches; ch 2). While there is little archaeological evidence for the timber churches, the carpentry of watermills, documentary sources and later stone skeuomorphs illustrate their likely form and sophistication, the Zurich area providing the best parallels. Unicameral with an emphasis on an impressive western façade (doorway, finial and antae), Ó Carragáin argues for the influence of Romano-British models and posits that they, and their stone successors, should be read in the light of scriptural descriptions and exegesis, with particular reference to the Jerusalem Temple (ch 1). Only around AD 900 does the trend begin at important sites to transform into mortared stone churches, at about the same time that freestanding round towers appeared — the Irish response to the new continental fashion for belfries (chs 4–7). Meantime, between 650 and 850, the first significant phase of the cult of relics led to architectural innovation, diminutive mortared buildings that Ó Carragáin terms shrine-chapels, repositories for relics of the founding saint (ch 3). Removed from the main liturgical space (being sited where the saint was buried), these illustrate emerging centrifugal expansion at important sites rather than the tendency elsewhere to incorporate multiple functions within a single building (ch 3) — one aspect of uniquely Irish ideas about what constituted a sacred city (ch 7). Ó Carragáin sees a renewed fashion for enshrining relics behind the development c 1100 of idiosyncratic double-vaulted churches, which also included domestic quarters for recluses (ch 9).

Ó Carragáin uses social memory to explain the conservative architecture: the form spread during the age of the saints when the idea developed that the churches were the associative relics of the saint, hence the perpetuation of their form (ch 5). A recurrent theme is how the main driver for investment in stone buildings and more complex ecclesiastical landscapes coincided with the need of their royal patrons to advance their political agendas (eg ch 8 for the contrasting strategies for power in Hiberno-Norse Dublin and its hinterland, and nearby Glendalough).

Everyone interested in the early Church in Europe should read this book: it is a model study, embracing all the key debates about the Irish Church, and a classic example of how one part of early Europe chose to respond to both local and pan-European drivers for change in a highly distinctive way that suited its own ends. Ó Carragáin's ability to situate Irish developments within a European context is just one of this book's many strengths.

SALLY M FOSTER (*University of Glasgow*)

*Landscape Archaeology of Anglo-Saxon England*. (Publications of the Manchester Centre for Anglo-Saxon Studies 9). Edited by Nicholas J Higham & Martin J Ryan. 16 × 24 cm. xii + 231 pp, 43 b&w pls and figs, 4 tables. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2010. ISBN 978-1-84383-582-0 (ISSN 1478-6710). Price: £60.00 hb.

This volume, based on the proceedings of a conference held at the Manchester Centre for Anglo-Saxon Studies in 2007, represents the latest in a raft of recent publications reflecting the current academic vigour of medieval landscape archaeology. Although perhaps only four of the 12 contributors to this volume would call themselves full 'landscape archaeologists' (an art historian and experimental archaeologist also appear in the line-up), the adoption of this nomenclature as a title says much about the breadth of landscape archaeology as a discipline.

The range of sources and methodological approaches adopted here is suitably diverse: modern reconstructions of Anglo-Saxon timber structures to adduce contemporary systems of woodland management (Grocock); tracing Anglo-Saxon occupation/activity

through rapid coastal assessment surveys in East Anglia (Murphy) and test-pitting in currently occupied village cores in eastern England (Lewis); the interrogation of rural vignettes in late-Saxon manuscripts (Karkov, Hill); and the application of environmental archaeology and climate studies to model landscape change (Banham). The volume also includes some genuinely ground-breaking approaches to interpretation, most notably Brookes' application of behavioural ecology to offer new insights into the 'multiple estate model' as applied to territorial development in the kingdom of Kent. Other scholars use the volume as a sounding board: Rippon mounts a strident critique of the Midland-centric model shaping perceptions of the origins of the English countryside, whereas Williamson, prime adherent of the view that the natural environment lies behind the origins of regional variation, attempts to persuade us that this determinant explains the spatial patterning of Anglo-Saxon culture across the landscape, with reference to the *socmen* of Domesday Book, Scandinavian immigrants in the Danelaw and the Angles, Saxons and Jutes of the *Adventus Saxonum*.

One clear strand across the volume is the emphasis on the 'Long Eighth Century' as a pivotal epoch in creating the medieval countryside, as forcefully emphasised by Rippon who demonstrates the widespread and regionally contingent impacts of rural intensification in middle Anglo-Saxon England. The startlingly consistent range of 7th- to 9th-century radiocarbon dates obtained from fish weirs recently recorded on the coast in East Anglia, cited in Murphy's paper, underlines how integral the exploitation of coastal wetlands and other specialised environmental niches was to this period of economic expansion. On the other hand, discord is the order of the day when it comes to ideas of causation in the Anglo-Saxon countryside. Countering views centred on the physical environment, Banham and Hogget both single out cultural factors — a change in dietary preference from barley to bread wheat (triggering the introduction of heavy plough and open field agriculture), and the Christian conversion (triggering changes in the spatial relationship between cemeteries and settlements). Personally, I heard an audible groan from the archaeological evidence as it was contorted to fit the straitjacket of these mono-causal explanations.

Higham's introduction states that historical and place-name contributions in the original 2007 programme will form a forthcoming companion volume. Practical editorial considerations aside, this must be considered an opportunity missed. Integration would have lent the final product greater structural coherence and sparked interdisciplinary perspectives/dialogues critical to more nuanced readings of the early medieval landscape. The muted reference to recent research on perception and meaning of the Anglo-Saxon landscape, especially in relation to funerary practices and animal-human relationships informed by zooarchaeological studies, amongst other notable silences, gives the mistaken impression that economic history continues to dominate research agendas in Anglo-Saxon landscape archaeology. Thus, while there is much to stimulate and interest in the pages of these proceedings for which the editors are to be warmly congratulated, a more definitive text is awaited to capture the true scope and vitality of archaeological approaches to the Anglo-Saxon landscape.

GABOR THOMAS (*University of Reading*)

*Trees in Anglo-Saxon England. Literature, Lore and Landscape.* (Anglo-Saxon Studies 13). By Della Hooke. 18 × 25 cm. x + 310 pp, 27 b&w pls and figs, 3 tables. Woodbridge & Rochester NY: The Boydell Press, 2010. ISBN 978-1-84383-565-3 (ISSN 1475-2468). Price: £50.00 hb.

In Della Hooke's Anglo-Saxon England thickets of charters and place names, planks of archaeological and landscape history evidence and spreading branches of literary references take us to individual trees, groves, woods, landscape and taskscapes and thus to society, community and individual people. Trees were treated with such respect that they appear to have been endowed with personality, so descriptive adjectives attached to them indicate how Anglo-Saxon people might have regarded each other: withered, bent-down, solitary, fair, beauteous and crooked.

In this well-written and thoughtfully constructed book it is rapidly established that early medieval England (like later prehistoric and Roman England) was not a wild and heavily forested place, but largely an open, managed land where woodland was unenclosed and grazed and thus mainly in the form of park-like wood pasture where some trees stood apart and grew massively ancient. Hooke works at estate, county and regional scales, condensing information and understanding gained from systematically translating and analysing all known Anglo-Saxon charters and knowing the meanings of early place names. She shows a still recognisable world of types of wood and species of tree in distribution maps that are tantalising in their inevitable partiality and stimulating in the ways they make a landscape archaeologist see how they can contribute through more detailed work at the local level. We see how subtly people knew and nurtured their inherited world through the uses made of timber, wood, leaves, bark and fruits. While woodland in 'forests' was increasingly enjoyed for hunting, most uses were more mundane, with tracks and wagonways taking livestock to woodland pastures, house and ship-building timber to town and coast, wood as fuel to salterns, charcoal to various works. Each tree was closely exploited: strong but flexible ash wheels and weapons, alder vessels and charcoal, elder whistles, holly fodder and fuel for the smith's hot fire, and spindle for spindles. Lime absorbed a person's disease, while alder, willow, ash and thorn all provided cures. Oak, of course, was the great tree for building timber.

Hooke treads carefully through the mass of secondary literature on the meanings of trees, helping the reader understand where there is secure early medieval evidence supporting assertions. She notes that some well-known representations and celebrations — the green man, maypole and wassailing — appear to be later medieval. Bounteous and long-lived, but like people falling and breaking, trees (and groves) certainly had pre-Christian and probably prehistoric symbolic significance. Linking earth (and underworld) with sky (and heavens), the tree represented the whole world and was respected as guardian, sacred and central to beliefs that had humans as one with nature. They were therefore problematic for a new belief system, Christianity, that placed humans above nature. Saints and edicts attempted to expunge tree worship: sacred trees were rooted up or (like ancient yews in western churchyards) accommodated in Christian centres and rendered 'subordinate to new ways of invoking the supernatural'.

Hooke also looks to the future, likening early medieval beliefs and needs and the consequent careful curation of trees and woods to modern secular ways of couching such thinking and action. With Anglo-Saxon eyes we recognise how the ecosystem services of trees and woods (providing timber and fibre, amenity and pleasure, and regulating carbon levels) support the sustainability of humanity and increasingly acknowledge that we as stewards may have recently been failing ourselves as well as those remarkable organisms and places.

PETER HERRING (*English Heritage*)

*Revealing King Arthur: Swords, Stones and Digging for Camelot.* By Christopher Gidlow. 17 × 24 cm. 256 pp, 9 b&w maps. Stroud: The History Press, 2010. ISBN 978-0-7524-5507-5. Price: £20.00 hb.

Gidlow's *Revealing King Arthur* aims to examine the archaeological evidence for the existence of a 'real' King Arthur, following his *Reign of Arthur*, which focused on the textual evidence. Along the way, he traces previous attempts to link archaeology to the legendary figure and examines the presentation of Arthurian sites. His investigation can be broadly broken up into three sections: chapters 1–10 look at Arthurian themes, such as the Round Table, Camelot and Excalibur, alongside analyses of relevant historical texts, terminology and the contextualisation of sub-Roman Britain's socio-political state in which such iconography may or may not have existed; chs 11–16 examine the so-called 'Battle List' of King Arthur in the *Historia Brittonum*, suggesting locations for these battles. Gidlow argues that, by pinpointing Arthur's Battle Sites to 'real' locations at specific times, we can

gain a historically accurate and real Arthur. Chapter 17 considers current approaches to Arthur, and how sites such as Tintagel and Cadbury might be best presented to emphasise their (real) Arthur connection.

The text is peppered with typographical errors, and, although there appears to be an attempt to break up arguments into categories, the writing is inconsistent; very few references are given for the statements he makes. The maps (not referenced in-text) add little, and in fact there are no archaeological figures whatsoever — odd, given the text supposedly explores the archaeological evidence!

Gidlow's aim of assessing the archaeology falls wide of the mark: discussion emphasises the texts (though he is not very critical of them) and he uses archaeological evidence only if it helps support written evidence. Thus: 'I use Gildas as the touchstone for any theory of the period. If an interpretation of archaeological remains is tenable with the evidence in Gildas, then it is worth considering. If it flies in the face of Gildas's contemporary testimony then I would argue it needs serious rethinking' (p 32).

While Gidlow remarks on the 'pro-Arthurian' stance of some archaeologists in the 1960s, he sees no obvious political motive behind this; he perhaps resents the more critical archaeology of the latter 20th century, since this marked an end to the 'search' for Arthur in traditional antiquarian fashion. Today, a 'historical Arthur' is frequently placed alongside pseudo-archaeological concepts such as extra-terrestrial influences and hyperdiffusionism, as the author duly points out (p 192), but in making his case Gidlow comes dangerously close to pseudo-archaeological rhetoric, with implications that archaeologists are engaged in conspiracies to 'cover-up' any supposed traces of Arthur discovered (14).

The author makes a legitimate and refreshing argument in stating that stories attributed to certain sites are just as important as interpretations archaeologists form from the data (p 194), but there is a difference between 'presenting a story' and 'presenting a story as truth'. Archaeologists have the potential to engage with the public through popular stories, but are responsible for presenting the most accurate interpretation based on the available evidence. Further, Gidlow's comments about popular views of Arthur are unusual (116) and unfounded — he has attempted no primary research into these, yet makes sweeping statements about the reactions of 'lay' readers (189).

This book might have been a promising reassessment of arguments and a reintroduction of archaeology to the subject of King Arthur; as it stands, a valuable synthesis and critical analysis of the archaeology of Arthur has yet to be published, and this book aptly demonstrates that Arthurian debates still centre on issues of historicity.

TINA PAPHITIS (*University College London*)

*Alfred's Wars. Sources and Interpretations of Anglo-Saxon Warfare in the Viking Age.* (Warfare in History). By Ryan Lavelle. 18 × 25 cm. xx + 378 pp, 39 b&w pls and figs, 11 tables. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2010. ISBN 978-1-84383-569-1 (ISSN 1358-779X). Price: £60.00 hb.

This latest volume in the Warfare in History series is a remarkably inclusive, detailed and wide-ranging account of the state of current scholarship on the subject of later Anglo-Saxon warfare. As Lavelle admits (p 10), the title is to some degree misleading: the book addresses the development of Anglo-Saxon military organisation and practice from the 9th to the 11th century, with occasional sorties into earlier periods. The book is broken down thematically rather than chronologically, with chapters covering peacemaking, battlefields, fortification, strategy, equipment and organisation on land and sea, the relationship between protagonists, and a review of themes and general approaches to warfare. Importantly, Lavelle recognises the importance of theoretical developments outside the field (particularly in anthropology), something which has been generally lacking beyond the canon of Guy Halsall's work, and draws attention to the importance of symbolic action, ritualised behaviour and the critical role of cultural and religious context in determining

the 'instrumental' aims of warfare in any given period. The spectre of 'military probability' as a guide to interpretation is thankfully exorcised early on.

Like others in the same series, the book incorporates lengthy excerpts from the work of other major scholars. This is something of a double-edged sword, as, aside from convenience, these gobbits add nothing for researchers already well versed in the subject, and weigh the text down in places. Thus the lengthiest chapter ('Organization and Equipment: Land') is also the heaviest going, not least due to the historiographical baggage that the discussion of military obligation carries with it. Nevertheless, Lavelle handles these cameos well and not uncritically. Indeed, in many respects their inclusion highlights the forward-thinking interpretation that distinguishes this volume.

Throughout, Lavelle introduces arguments and ideas that have the potential for development in new directions. So in chapter 2 ('Friends and Foes') striking evidence for the endemic nature of cross-border raiding comes from comparison of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* with the *Annales Cambriae*, an exercise which demonstrates that the former source is by no means a comprehensive record of Anglo-Saxon aggression and reinforces the importance of taking a holistic approach to source material. Elsewhere, the impact of social and cultural expectation on the practice and conceptualisation of warfare is kept in focus — rituals of kingship, symbolic landscapes, head-taking, Viking terror, sacred visions and the religious dimension of violence (amongst other things) serve to highlight the importance of placing later Anglo-Saxon warfare in the context of those expectations and the traditions of the immediately preceding centuries.

One final caveat for this journal's readers is that Lavelle's book is not primarily concerned with matters archaeological. For example, discussions of status and display could have been dramatically developed by considering the material culture of war-gear, and the chapter on fortifications (ch 6) mentions the archaeology of civil defence only in passing. That said, this is an indispensable overview of historical approaches to late Anglo-Saxon warfare, and is a work made all the more useful to the archaeologist for its focus on the rigorous handling of documentary evidence.

TOM WILLIAMS (*Institute of Archaeology, UCL*)

*The Men of the North: The Britons of Southern Scotland.* By Tim Clarkson. 16 × 24 cm. 230 pp, 33 b&w pls and figs. Edinburgh: John Donald. 2010. ISBN 978-1-90656-618-0. Price: £20.00 pb.

*The Age of the Picts.* By W A Cummins. 17 × 25 cm. 192 pp, 55 b&w pls and figs. Stroud: The History Press, 2009. ISBN 978-0-7524-4959-3. Price: £16.99 pb.

*The Picts.* By Jill Harden. 19 × 27cm. 81 pp, numerous (unnumbered) colour pls and figs. Edinburgh: Historic Scotland, 2010. ISBN 978-1-84917-034-5. Price: £4.95 pb.

*The Cult of Saint Constantine.* By John Reuben Davies. 15 × 21 cm. 19 pp, 8 colour and b&w pls. Glasgow: Friends of Govan Old, 2010. ISBN 978-0-9545321-8-5. Price: £4.00 pb.

This array of books about north Britain with overlapping interests gives useful depth to the literature on people and events after the 4th century. This period has long excited historians, but the pace of research has quickened in recent years. Clarkson's book, the most substantial of those considered here, is not archaeology so much as political history. It is the latest foray into a scholastic minefield of poems and genealogies, many of which purport to focus on lands between the central belt of Scotland and Hadrian's Wall. Clarkson offers a narrative extending from the late Roman period into the 11th century and provides a more readable alternative to Smyth's *Warlords and Holy Men* (1984). Ten chapters and an introduction cover origins, some texts, and sections on early kingdoms of the central belt and lowlands, early Christianity, figures such as Urien, battles, Northumbria and the emergence of the kingdom of Strathclyde. As might be expected, the strange kingdom of Rheged figures prominently. Here we have some re-interpretations whereby the author strips away some of the fog and accumulated fantasy surrounding the location

of Urien's kingdom as well as his death at the battle of Lindisfarne, and his supposed granddaughter Rieinmelth. If not exactly new ideas, they are now made more accessible to the non-specialist. However, while they lead the reader to understand that the author has misgivings about Rheged, in other places (eg p 148) the kingdom is presented as if it were a historical reality. Rheged may indeed have been a real kingdom, but, let us be clear, in the texts it is little more than a literary device, a backdrop for the exploits of a great king. Clarkson dismisses Dunragit from consideration as a key place in Rheged, but omits the idea that, while Round Doonan is hardly the royal site suggested by Radford, the place sits at the landward entry to the Rhinns, an area of unusual richness for 6th- and 7th-century kings, and on the road to Penrionyd (the former *Reigionium*) on the shores of Loch Ryan. Elsewhere Liddel Strength and the Roman fort at Netherby are held as contenders for the battle of Arfderydd in 573. Despite speculation about the motives for this battle, the key point, and one missed by most commentators, is topography: careful consideration quickly shows that he who controls the area around Netherby also controls access to Carlisle and the lands to the south. There is no need to invoke religion or magic except, perhaps, as secondary motives. As for the link between Rheged and Carlisle, Chadwick and others assumed that Carlisle must have been significant within the context of Rheged because they interpreted Taliesin's phrase, '*tra merin vege!*', to mean the Solway Firth within which vast region Carlisle had indeed been important. They gave at least as much emphasis to this aspect as to Hywel's alleged visit, although almost all their arguments were founded on wishful thinking. There is no link and nothing in the texts to locate Rheged.

Two books on the Picts further reflect the dynamism of N British studies. Although very different in length and scope, both update the reader on this curious polity. Unlike Rheged which has no archaeological correlates, Pictland does have the symbol stones and place names as unifying elements which are well covered by both authors. Harden's work, written in a clear accessible style, is aimed at a general audience, and is superbly illustrated. Cummins (originally published in 1995) is more detailed, covering chronology, the question of northern and southern 'nations', origins and ending with its absorption into the greater kingdom of Alba. Cummins' text is wide ranging but, insofar as the archaeology is concerned, not always convincing. His discussion on Trusty's Hill in the far southwest is interesting, but the question of why a symbol stone with a Z-rod and double disk should be so far away from the Pictish heartland remains unexplained. Its location at the entrance to this rather small and otherwise undistinguished hill fort is certainly a powerful proclamation of status.

Different in scale and subject is Davies's useful contribution to the literature on saints and cults in his lecture on the cult of Saint Constantine at Govan. Clarkson also has a section on Govan, but he avoids the question of this being a cult-centre — surely an important point in any consideration of Strathclyde. Davies' essay is a good, reader-friendly account with a specific focus, but it is a pity that he says little about the role of the cult in the emergence of Govan as a royal centre. Curiously, the only illustration of St Constantine's sarcophagus is on the cover!

MIKE MCCARTHY (*University of Bradford*)

*L'Irlanda e gli Irlandesi nell'alto medioevo.* (Atti della LVII Settimana internazionale di studio sull'alto medioevo, Spoleto 16–21 Aprile, 2009). 18 × 25 cm. xiv + 770 pp, 83 b&w pls and 29 figs. Spoleto: CISAM, 2010. ISBN 978-88-7988-234-7. Price: €120.00 hb.

Early medieval Ireland has tended to be viewed through two distorting lenses. On the one hand we have that which projects the image of the island as a land of saints and scholars, of chalices and round towers. The persistence of this image is perhaps understandable in a country in which the Catholicism remained central to everyday life and national identity, and might be explained by the fact that the Church rooted itself in the romanticism and splendour of its early medieval founders. Continuity with the early Christian past was at the heart of Ireland and Irishness. The other lens also creates an

image of continuity, projecting backwards from the early Middle Ages into the mists of the Iron Age (or earlier). This image owes much to Kenneth Jackson's *The Oldest Irish Tradition* (Cambridge, 1982) which argued that Irish saga-literature provides 'a window on the Iron Age'. In a country untroubled by Roman conquest or Migration-period invasion, tradition persisted to be captured by early medieval chroniclers and was central to a quintessential Irish identity.

The essays in this volume challenge these images, and one of the clear messages is that while the Church *did* play an important part in the making of early medieval Ireland, it did so in ways not considered by earlier scholars. In a key paper, Wendy Davies uses recent archaeological evidence to chart transformations in the infrastructure of Irish society. In particular, she highlights changes in productive capacity and notes that, from the later 7th century onwards, we have evidence for 'enhanced economic differentiation' (p 128). She locates the stimulus for this change in 'the activities of ecclesiastical communities' (p 131; cf Kelly's discussion of the spread of monastic farming and the association between the Church and spread of farming innovations — pp 100, 109), and regards the introduction and spread of the watermill from the late 6th century as central to the generation of surplus (129). Some mills were directly associated with churches, and the 'industrial scale' processing they facilitated undoubtedly generated the wealth which supported the monasteries and the production of the chalices and crosses we have studied for so long (see Ó Carragáin's paper for the way these crosses in turn served to construct the communities which created them).

In another seminal paper, Donnchadh Ó Corráin argues that not only did the Church transform the economic structures of early medieval Ireland, it also, through a process which we might call 'ethnogenetic engineering', created the very concept of an Irish people. Beginning from the premise that the population of pre-Christian Ireland was ethnically diverse (262–63), Ó Corráin argues that, from the 7th century, 'whatever origins, origin narratives, and identities the diverse populations of Ireland possessed were replaced by an overarching myth of origins created by the learned Christian clergy' (266). The Church, recognising that 'origins' lie at the root of identity but are also open to 'creative interpretation', 'made the Irish descend from Japeth son of Noah' (pp 267, 270), provided them with a 'history to match that of . . . the great peoples of antiquity' (267) and created 'a single people of God' (284). In this new national myth, past pagan deities were not forgotten but were 'humanised . . . as [the] remote ancestors and culture heroes' of the saga-literature (267–8). This, Ó Corráin argues, is 'Irish ethnogenesis — the creation by early medieval clerical scholars of an identity that shaped the Irish consciousness throughout the Middle Ages' (284).

The Ireland that emerges from this volume is an unfamiliar world — a place of change and dynamism, invention and creativity. Significantly, as Davies' paper illustrates, much of the evidence for this new world is being generated by archaeologists and if I have a criticism of the volume it is that other contributors remain transfixed by the Word. Kelly's paper on Irish agriculture is surprisingly text-focused, while, in his discussion of the 'creative interpretation' of origins, Ó Corráin might also have drawn on archaeological evidence for the appropriation of the prehistoric past. However, strengths significantly outweigh weaknesses, and the former derive at least in part from the fact that the contributors treat the subject (Ireland in the early Middle Ages) as worthy of study its own right — not as the end-point of the Age of Heroes or as the origins of Catholic Ireland.

JOHN MORELAND (*University of Sheffield*)

*The Viking Age: Ireland and the West. Proceedings of the Fifteenth Viking Congress, Cork, 18–27 August 2005.* Edited by John Sheehan & Donnchadh Ó Corráin. 16 × 24 cm. xxviii + 509 pp, 22 colour pls, 147 b&w pls, figs and tables. Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2010. ISBN 978-1-84682-101-1. Price: £45.00 hb.

The Viking Congress is an interdisciplinary conference, participation in which is by invitation from its national committees in participating countries. Since 1950 it has taken



place every four years, alternating in location between Britain/Ireland and Scandinavia (including Iceland and the Faroes, but not Finland). Despite having what some see as a rather inflexible format, it has undeniably been responsible for a sustained record of serious academic contributions; it has kept with the times, attracting many senior and active people in this field, while also encouraging and welcoming younger scholars, especially in recent years. Its published proceedings are usually aimed to appear before or ideally at the following Congress; sometimes, as in this case, it takes a little longer.

This is a handsome and rather traditional-looking volume. After the expected (if perhaps slightly pompous) preliminaries of a Congress proceedings (list of members and invitees, conference diary), there are no less than 50 papers, covering historical sources and debates, place names, hoards and silver, weapons, other artefacts and material culture, burials, buildings, urbanism, technology, literature, runes and mythology. There is no editorial introduction, and no attempt to group the papers by theme or area: they are presented in alphabetical order by authors' surnames, leading to a random distribution of topics. Hence papers which invite direct comparison, on runes, for example, are located well apart in the sequence. There is a purist logic to this approach, as it leaves readers to make their own connections amidst the content, untainted by thematic packaging or spoon-feeding.

The previous time the Viking Congress had met in Ireland was in Dublin in 1973, so a return was long overdue. Not only Viking Studies but Ireland itself has changed almost out of recognition in the intervening decades, and perhaps the most significant aspect of the wealth of papers in this collection is the range of new discoveries, analyses and interpretations of Viking-Age material from across Ireland. Many other papers, albeit dealing with other geographical areas, dwell on the question of Hiberno-Norse involvement and influence. University College Cork provided a very appropriate venue in 2005: not only enhancing recognition of its History and Archaeology departments' Viking and medieval scholarship, but allowing a refreshing focus on the south of the country. This region has produced the most significant cluster of recent Viking-Age discoveries, notably in Cork itself and at Waterford (both covered here in a synthetic paper by one of their leading excavators, Maurice Hurley, with a paper on textiles from Cork by Elizabeth Wincott-Heckett). Near Waterford lies the *longphort* site at Woodstown: newly discovered as part of a road scheme on the bank of the River Suir 8 km west of Waterford city, its future was subject to considerable uncertainty in 2005 (still not fully resolved). It was premature for the ongoing excavations to find a place in this volume, but the discovery of the 460 m-long defended riverside enclave, packed with Viking material, led to considerable attention being given to the theme of *longphuirt* at the Congress, and indeed since.

Dublin, so predominant in all discourses on Viking-Age Ireland, recurs frequently throughout this volume, but is not allowed to eclipse the rest of Viking Ireland. The *longphort* founded in 841 at Dublin, long an 'unknown' in Irish Archaeology, has come tantalisingly closer to archaeological identification, thanks to excavations at Temple Bar and around the southern edge of the former pool on the minor River Poddle. These are covered here by Linzi Simpson. Further analyses of older finds, and from excavations in the 1970s and 1980s, come from Stephen Harrison, Patrick Wallace and Barra O'Donnabhain. A recent discovery of a richly furnished female burial at Finglas, north of Dublin, is presented by Maeve Sikora (the burial's elaborately decorated oval brooch decorates the volume cover). Oddly, the radiocarbon date from this burial, reported at the Congress, is not included in the published paper. From beyond the Greater Dublin area, updates on recent research on hoards and silver are provided by John Sheehan and Kristin Bornholdt-Collins, on runes by Michael Barnes and Jan Ragnar Hagland, on weapons and warfare by Andrew Halpin, on the far Atlantic West by Eamonn Kelly; there is also a new study of Glendalough by Tomás Ó Carragáin. Accompanying these are a series of historical discussions concerning the history of Viking involvement in Ireland: on the Viking wars by Howard B Clarke, on conversion by Lesley Abrams, and on the Annals

by Emer Purcell. Colmán Etchingham offers a further contribution to the never-ending controversy about the identity of the shadowy Viking Kingdom of *Laithlinn*, and the roles of the 'Dark' and 'Fair' foreigners in 9th-century Ireland.

The other papers give a broad context to Viking-Age Ireland and beyond, ranging from studies of Iceland, the Faroes, England, the Northern Isles of Scotland, and Scandinavia as far east as Gotland. Urbanism is a recurring theme and is assisted by a useful précis of recent research at Hedeby. Berit J Sellevold's paper on skeletal studies of the Westness burials, Orkney, sheds new light on this important but as yet incompletely published cemetery. Papers on ethnicity, gender, warrior ideals and courtly love in the sagas all add to the rich stimuli of ideas spread throughout the volume. Many contributions here are summaries of work intended to appear in longer and more detailed form elsewhere, but their presence is nonetheless welcome. The editors deserve great credit for bringing together such a collection, truly a benchmark statement for the state of Viking studies in the early years of the 21st century.

DAVID GRIFFITHS (*University of Oxford*)

*Means of Exchange: Dealing with Silver in the Viking Age.* (Kaupang Excavation Project Publication Series, vol 2; Norske Oldfunn XXIII). Edited by Dagfinn Skre. 22 × 30 cm. 378 pp, 248 colour and b&w pls and figs, 54 tables. Aarhus: Aarhus University Press/University of Oslo, 2008. ISBN 978-87-7934-308-5. Price: £34.00 hb.

In this second volume on the recent excavations at the early Norwegian trading town of Kaupang, Dagfinn Skre brings together the evidence related to economic transactions, namely the impressive assemblages of coins, hacksilver and weights, from both modern and earlier campaigns of fieldwork. While the discussion of these finds forms a core of the book, the ramifications of the Kaupang evidence for broader interpretations of the Viking-Age silver economy, trade and urbanisation in SW Scandinavia are also given substantial treatment. Indeed, a fundamental undertone here is the critique of archaeological approaches to economy and exchange which have been dominated by the work of the substantivist school of economic anthropology for decades, and Skre's dissatisfaction sets the tone early on starting his introduction with a section entitled 'Re-thinking the substantivist approach' (pp 9–10). Following this, Lars Pilø and Skre summarise the various surveys of the settlement and region, with emphasis on Skre's fieldwork from 1998–2003 (ch 2). The presentation of material from Kaupang begins with Mark Blackburn's discussion of the coin finds (ch 3), followed by Gert Rispling, Blackburn and Kenneth Jonsson's catalogue of the early medieval coins from archaeological work at Kaupang from 1959–2002 and nearby Huseby (ch 4). Assessments of the non-coined hacksilver pieces and ingots by Birgitta Hårdh (ch 5) and the weights and balances by Unn Pedersen (ch 6) follow. Excepting the coin catalogue, each chapter adopts a highly comparative approach, exploring Kaupang in relation to other Scandinavian sites, and, where possible, hoards and burial assemblages. The chronology for all of these groups corresponds well, and Blackburn's innovative approaches are especially interesting in attempting to assign loss dates to the numerous dirhams recovered. The hacksilver is important, indicating its adoption at an earlier date than would have been assumed from hoard evidence alone. The role of silver (non-minted as well as coined) as a function of exchange come through strongly, both hacksilver and weights produced to weight standards, and the origins of the former illustrating contacts across Scandinavia. Pedersen also considers the role of weights in metal-casting and their non-economic function as seen through their decoration or adornment with other materials or objects, and sees some of this rooted in Norse mythology and the symbolic roles of the 'animal helper' (pp 176–7).

Part II, 'Silver, Trade and Towns', uses the Kaupang evidence as a springboard for broader thematic and theoretical discussions of the nature of exchange, trade and the silver economy. Central are two lengthy, but highly thought-provoking chapters (chs 7 and 8) from Christoph Kilger. In the first ('Kaupang from Afar'), he addresses the

use of dirhams in 9th- and 10th-century exchange networks across northern and eastern Europe, illustrating the importance of studying single finds alongside hoards, and providing an extremely useful discussion of the evolution of their use and acceptance on a regional scale over a vast area. The second ('Wholeness and Holiness') examines silver as a medium of exchange, bringing notions of value and how value was assigned, firmly within the insular Viking-Age Scandinavian world. In the final two chapters Skre develops his ideas of a 'post-substantivist' approach to ancient economies in which the importance of individual agency is advocated over an overt control of trade by a small number of elites. Much of this trade could be undertaken outside of the tight social bonds witnessed outside of the port towns, although it appears likely that conventions regarding the relative values of different commodities were maintained. Skre in no way advocates a return to purely mercantile interpretations of early economies but his critique of substantivist and neo-evolutionist approaches is timely and perceptive.

In sum, this is a far-reaching volume, both for its excellent presentation and discussion of finds from what is undoubtedly one of the most important field projects on Viking-Age Scandinavia in recent years, and for what it brings to our understanding of and approaches to early medieval economic activity in northern Europe. Highly recommended.

JOHN NAYLOR (*Ashmolean Museum*)

*The Huxley Viking Hoard: Scandinavian Settlement in the North-West*. Edited by James Graham-Campbell & Robert Philpott. 21 × 30 cm. x + 94 pp, 68 colour and b&w pls and figs. Liverpool: National Museums Liverpool, 2009. ISBN 978-1-902700-40-3. Price: £7.99 pb.

In November 2004, a metal-detectorist uncovered an early Viking-Age silver hoard near Huxley (Cheshire). Comprising 21 silver arm rings and a silver ingot, alongside fragments of lead from its wrapping or container, the hoard was declared treasure and its potential for the study of the early Viking Age in NW England was immediately clear.

This short volume stems from a conference held in Liverpool and its aims are twofold: to publish the hoard itself and to adequately place it within its regional context. The volume is divided into three sections. The first provides a very useful overview of recent research and gives excellent background to the region. Fiona Edmonds (ch 1) focuses upon the place-name and personal name evidence, outlining that nature of Scandinavian settlement, suggesting that links with Dublin and Ireland remained strong throughout the period. David Griffiths (ch 2) usefully complements this through his examination of the scant archaeological evidence, emphasising that any Viking settlers had to establish themselves within a populated, long-lived landscape. He covers the burial evidence before turning his attention to trade and settlement illustrating the importance of the Irish Sea; Rachel Newman provides a short addendum on the excavations at Cumwhitton following the find of an early Viking cemetery. Richard Bailey (ch 3) briefly assesses the sculptural evidence, highlighting how the arrival of Scandinavian settlers coincided with a major change in the way sculpture was utilised by different groups, breaking the previous monastic monopoly. Mark Redknap (ch 4) explores early Viking-Age N Wales in the final and most substantive chapter in this section. He discusses the circulation of silver, both as coin and bullion, summarising Viking-Age hoarding in Wales, before placing these in a broader economic context through the lens of the excavations at Llanbedrgoch, and its place as an important regional centre whose wealth was most likely related to the E-W trade routes.

Part Two focuses on the hoard itself. Barry Ager and James Graham-Campbell (ch 5) describe its discovery and contents, interpreting the hoard as purely bullion in nature given that none of the arm-rings were in a state that they could have been worn; Dan Garner then adds a short personal note on the hoard's discovery. Graham-Campbell and John Sheehan (ch 6) fully catalogue the silver finds, including full-size images of each

piece (line drawings are included in the following chapter). Sheehan (ch 7) places the arm-rings in the context of finds in Britain and Ireland and traces their development from 9th-century Denmark to the Hiberno-Norse types such as found at Huxley, which he considers as potentially the work of a single workshop. His discussion of weight standards is extremely interesting. Part Three is a fine overview of hoards and hoarding in the Northern Danelaw by Gareth Williams in which he covers their typology and distribution, discussing their role in understanding economic and political development.

As to be expected in a volume on such a defined topic, there is some repetition between chapters, but in general this is kept to a minimum and the book succeeds in its aims as well as drawing as much broader information from the hoard as possible. It is, perhaps, a shame there was no real consideration of hoarding and landscape, with all of the geographical discussion very much a bird's-eye view, but this is only a minor omission. The volume is generously illustrated throughout and the images of the hoard itself are excellent. At this price the book represents great value for money.

JOHN NAYLOR (*Ashmolean Museum*)

*Excavations at Old Scatness, Shetland, Volume 1: The Pictish Village and Viking Settlement.* By S J Dockrill, J M Bond, V E Turner, L D Brown, D J Bashford, J E Cussans & R A Nicholson. 21 × 30 cm. xli + 399 pp, 170 colour plates and 102 b&w figs, 88 tables, 3 app. Lerwick: Shetland Heritage Publications, 2010. ISBN 978-0-9557642-5-7. Price: £45.00 hb.

This is the first of three volumes to be published from the major excavations at Old Scatness in Southern Shetland. It provides a stimulating and readable summary of the interdisciplinary project, certainly the largest and most complex in Scotland, headed by Steve Dockrill and Julie Bond from the University of Bradford, and undertaken between 1995 and 2006. The publication of this first volume covering the Pictish and Norse periods (AD 400–1400) in 2010 is an achievement which cannot be under-estimated. The combination of specialists from many fields — animal, fish and bird bone, human bone, seeds, artefacts, metallurgy, as well as in soils and charcoal materials — has provided a unique insight into the period which spans the crucial Pictish-Viking interface.

To help assess the impact on our knowledge of the Picts in Shetland, Val Turner, the Regional Archaeologist from Shetland, summarises the evidence available prior to the new excavations, showing that it is incorrect to see Shetland as peripheral to the area of main Pictish presence. The Pictish-period structural evidence from Old Scatness is of considerable importance, since not only is it often well preserved, but its modern recovery means an insight not previously available. Dockrill and Bond suggest that the site represented a high-status Pictish farming estate, as did Jarlshof some short distance to its south. At Old Scatness, of particular interest are Structures 25 (the earliest) and 7 which show signs of remodelling, and Structure 5, a beautifully preserved cellular structure of the type recognised elsewhere. The roundhouse Structure 11, modified in Phase 2 in wheelhouse form, is dominated by a large central hearth; Structure 6, a late Iron-Age (Pictish) wheelhouse, was inserted into the earlier Structure 25. The complexity of structures and rebuilding phases makes the over-arching discussions crucial, and overall these are well explained. The challenge of interpreting the roofing construction has been addressed through modern reconstruction adjacent to the site, and this is a welcome interpretative strand for the many visitors.

Regarding the Viking and Norse settlement, it is apparent that there was a reorganisation of the Pictish structures, especially in the NE zone. One observes a clear cultural change in the mid-9th century, although scant evidence for the immediately preceding period does not count out an earlier arrival of the Vikings at the site. The deliberate infilling of some of the cellular structures, the interior remodelling of others, and the possible reoccupation within Structure 11 are all significant new elements in the vexed discussion of the nature of the interface between the Picts and Vikings. This

post-Pictish presence can be documented elsewhere as artifact scatters across the site and a fragmentary longhouse (Structure 4). Throughout this interpretation are elements of the complementary evidence derived from the rich artefactual and ecofactual data, which are more fully considered in individual chapters elsewhere in the volume. Noteworthy is chapter 7 which provides an integrated discussion, including the extensive dating programme.

The layout and production of this volume are excellent, with full colour photographs throughout. The line drawings are of high standard and reconstruction drawings (several by Alan Braby, as well as computer-generated models) are welcome additions; Shetland Amenity Trust must be commended for their generous financial support. We look forward to the remaining two volumes: the evidence up to and including the later middle Iron Age (vol 2) and the post-medieval period (vol 3).

COLLEEN BATEY (*University of Glasgow*)

*Dorestad in an International Framework. New Research on Centres of Trade and Coinage in Carolingian Times. Proceedings of the First 'Dorestad Congress' held at the National Museum of Antiquities Leiden, The Netherlands, June 24–27, 2009.* Edited by Annemarieke Willemsen & Hanneke Kik. 22 × 28 cm. 214 pp, 64 colour pls and figs, 163 b&w pls, figs and tables. Turnhout: Brepols, 2010. ISBN 978-2-503-53401-5. Price: €70.00 pb.

In 1880, the great Swedish archaeologist Hjalmer Stolpe, visiting Wijk bij Duurstede in the Netherlands, complained that a great monument of medieval Europe was being vandalised: the vast cultural deposits of the site, already identified as the famous Carolingian town Dorestad, were rapidly being shovelled away as a fertiliser. As Stolpe foresaw, Dorestad may one day be considered a great, lost opportunity of medieval archaeology. Seemingly too vast for proper appreciation, its dozens of hectares of deposits, often in an excellent state of preservation, have been subject since the 19th century to unmitigated attacks and underfinanced excavations, culminating in the vast rescue operations undertaken in the 1970s in the Hoogstraat waterfront area, which produced an extraordinary overview, but at the expense of detail. These and other dramas from research history are recounted by Annemarieke Willemsen in the opening contribution to these proceedings from the first Dorestad Congress, held in 2009. For many years research on Dorestad has been wedged by the very volume of data produced in the 1970s. Recently things have moved fast, with publication in 2009 of the last Hoogstraat excavations monograph, followed by a first major exhibition and by the conference considered here.

The book opens with three papers surveying new and old fieldwork in Dorestad. The waterfront excavations of the 1970s left a puzzlingly featureless image of the town — a view from its parking lot, so to speak. Willemsen's introduction draws attention to a long history of barely published investigations, which reveal other nuances of the site. Van Doesburg gives a first comprehensive account of excavations in the 1990s in De Geer, a large earthwork adjacent to and contemporary with the town. The site is identified as an aristocratic villa, possibly also serving as a defended shelter in times of unrest. This adds new dimensions to the urban landscape and challenges an oft-held assumption that Carolingian-period emporia lacked any form of defences or elite residence. Dijkstra and Williams report on large-scale excavations in 2007–08 in Dorestad's central part, where, by introducing wet-sieving, substantial evidence (previously lacking) of specialised crafts has emerged; workshop activity, including glass-working and copper-alloy casting, can now safely be added to the activities practised here.

The rest of the volume comprises 14 studies on various find materials (in particular coins and glass), and comparative perspectives from other sites and regions. A few papers have a preliminary character, others summarise work published elsewhere. In some cases interesting new observations arise, notably in Coupland's and William's discussions on coinage; Kalmring's critical re-evaluation of harbour structures; Skre's contextual analyses of houses in Kaupang, Norway; and Gelichi's report on very recent fieldwork in

Comacchio, Italy, the latter producing what is arguably the best case yet for a Mediterranean counterpart of the North Sea emporia.

This collection can claim neither comprehensive nor balanced coverage, yet is certainly among the most interesting recent publications on early medieval urbanism. Dorestad emerges as a more complex and multifaceted and, indeed, more urban site, than previous research suggested. The publication has been carried out with admirable swiftness, and mostly in high quality (apart from occasionally difficult non-native English). While much more is to come — as indicated in the concluding announcement of a four-year research-programme — this book forms a convenient new starting point for international research to engage more fully with this important site.

SØREN M SINDBÆK (*University of York*)

*Città e porti dall'Antichità al Medioevo.* (Studi Superiori 499 – Archeologia). By Andrea Augenti. 15 × 22 cm. 179 pp, 65 b&w figs, 1 table. Rome: Carocci editore, 2010. ISBN 978-88-430-5278-3. Price: €18.80 pb.

This is a useful book by the current excavator of Classe (the port of Ravenna), summarising and discussing a mass of archaeological work on port-sites between the late-Roman period and the 9th century. Its great strengths are its wide geographical and chronological coverage (from Carthage to Kaupang), its clear syntheses of the available evidence, and its up-to-date research and bibliography. Augenti knows the Mediterranean well, but he pays much more than lip-service to the archaeology of the North, devoting many pages to it and reading widely on the subject. His book taught me many things I did not know, and refreshed my knowledge (painlessly and efficiently) of many others that I only half-remembered.

The book opens with the history of archaeological research on port-sites, then moves to reviewing recent research: chapter 2 outlines, site-by-site, recent work on late-antique ports in the Mediterranean — at Carthage, Caesarea, Ostia and Portus, Classe, and Marseille, each discussed in two to four pages and with at least one decent plan. Chapter 3 moves northwards and later in time, to discuss the principal 7th- to 9th-century emporia of the Channel, North Sea and western Baltic (essentially from Hamwic to Birka). Augenti first presents these ports, very much in the way he deals with the Mediterranean, but then goes on to compare them across specific themes, like their chronology, size, population and layout. The next two chapters stay among the northern emporia, discussing their role, above all within the economy, whether local, regional or international, and their eventual disappearance. The final chapter summarises the current state of research on port-towns, and outlines new directions — some already underway and others highly desirable (for instance, more work on the agricultural territories of some emporia). He includes here a summary of the exciting data currently emerging for two early medieval 'emporium' in the northern Adriatic, Comacchio and Venice, both long known through written evidence, but only now giving up their archaeological secrets (and looking remarkably like sites such as Dorestad and Hedeby).

This is not a particularly original book, but it is all the more useful for that. A mass of disparate data is assembled, clearly presented and discussed, rather than selected and beaten into shape to suit some new grand theory — for Augenti the emporia emerged, earlier in Francia and England than in Scandinavia, for the essentially conventional reason that economic complexity slowly picked up speed, spreading northwards and eastwards as it did so. Perhaps his most novel conclusion is to stress why many emporia never developed into 'full' and durable towns — because they failed to take root as religious and political centres. From the perspective of Italy, the emporia were indeed remarkably 'pure' economic centres, and fragile because of this.

The obvious fault with this book — a chronological disjunction between the chapter on the 4th- to 7th-century Mediterranean, and the chapters on the 7th- to 9th-century northern seas — is due primarily to the current state of research, not to the author's

interests. Over a hundred years of excavation have shed more and more light on the origins of the emporia of the early medieval North, but remarkably little on Roman ports of the same area, like Boulogne and Dover. By contrast, it is primarily for the Roman and late-Roman periods that we now have good evidence in the Mediterranean. Comacchio and Venice are beginning to change this imbalance; let us hope that other sites soon join them.

BRYAN WARD-PERKINS (*Trinity College, Oxford*)

*Archaeology and the Sea in Scandinavia and Britain: A Personal Account* (Maritime Culture of the North 3). By Ole Crumlin-Pedersen. 22 × 28 cm. 184 pp, 293 colour and b&w pls and figs. Roskilde: The Viking Ship Museum, 2009. ISBN 978-87-85180-05-6. Price: £45.00 hb.

*Archaeology and the Sea* is the published version of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland Rhinds lectures for 2008. Six lectures were given and, except for a brief foreword, six lavishly illustrated chapters following the original sequence of lectures are published here. For those familiar with the work of Crumlin-Pedersen and his colleagues and collaborators there is little here that will surprise, although much to cherish. For those unfamiliar with the subject, however, this is a masterclass in all that is good and useful in 'Scandinavian ship archaeology'. Not for nothing is Crumlin-Pedersen's near-contemporary Sean McGrail alleged to have vowed to become 'the British Crumlin-Pedersen' at the start of his own distinguished career. It is to our collective loss that a sequence of British governments has singularly failed to invest in maritime archaeology to the same extent as the Danes have done to such success at the Viking Ship Museum in Roskilde. Despite much hard work and some notable achievements like the *Mary Rose*, Britain has little to compare with the catalogue of successes — both personal and institutional — outlined in this book. *Archaeology and the Sea* is thus an extremely welcome overview of the subject. It should prove especially useful for introductory university courses, and priced at only £45 for a glossy, high-colour hardback is a very good deal for personal buyers.

Chapter 1 ('Studying the Archaeology of Maritime Cultures') outlines the broad theory and potential of 'maritime culture studies' as a distinct specialism of archaeology. The starting point is Crumlin-Pedersen's pivotal role in the excavation and analysis of the Skuldelev 'Viking' ships, leading to the key place of the Viking Ship Museum (original built to display these vessels) in wider archaeological, including experimental archaeological, studies. Chapter 2 then delves into the detail of wood technology as informed by archaeology, with a review of the best-known vessel discoveries from late prehistory to AD 800, from Hjortspring to Sutton Hoo. Chapter 3 ('Anglo-Saxon and Viking Longships') continues this chronological review, outlining major medieval shipbuilding traditions. Chapter 4 moves outside of the chronological sequence of the previous chapters to consider the broader social-cultural context of technological studies: the entire 'Viking' world is briefly considered here, with particular reference to the Skuldelev vessels 1 and 3 and the Hedeby vessel 3; details of the cog shipbuilding tradition are also discussed. Specialists are likely to question, however, Crumlin-Pedersen's continued insistence (p 122) for the existence of the 'hulk' tradition, for which no verifiable archaeological remains have ever been found — many now refute that such a distinctive tradition ever existed. Chapter 5 outlines the theoretical model of the 'maritime cultural landscape', an analytical term familiar to specialists but largely unknown in wider circles, including possibly to many readers of *Medieval Archaeology*. Crumlin-Pedersen uses the Roskilde Fjord area as a most useful case study of this broad conceptual model for understanding marine-zone cultures. Finally, ch 6 ('The Ship as Symbol') sums up Crumlin-Pedersen's separately edited work of the same name of 1995, comprising a very useful review of the art, iconography and material culture of the maritime north — a rich and dense stew of words and images good for the stomach and soul alike, and a fitting conclusion to the book.

JOSEPH FLATMAN (*Institute of Archaeology, UCL*)

*Trente ans d'archéologie médiévale en France. Un bilan pour un avenir. (IX<sup>e</sup> congrès international de la Société d'archéologie médiévale (Vincennes, 16–18 juin 2006)).* Edited by Jean Chapelot. 22 × 28 cm. 441 pp, 267 colour and b&w pls, figs and tables. Caen: CRAHM, 2010. ISBN 978-2-902685-72-1. Price: €50.00 pb.

European medieval archaeology, now firmly established, is currently very self-reflective. Following on from the Society of Medieval Archaeology's 50th anniversary and its major publication *Reflections: 50 Years of Medieval Archaeology, 1957–2007* — which duly extended its coverage beyond Britain to countries like Spain and Italy and to Eastern Europe — here Chapelot oversees a major overview for France, resulting from an international conference of 2006. French medieval archaeology has been prominent since the 1970s — major excavations include the castle of Rougiers and the Carolingian village of Villier-le-Sec — and some academic institutions have pushed hard to develop the field, notably the Centre Nationale d'Archéologie Urbain at Tours (led by Henry Galinié) and the Centre de Recherches Archéologiques et Historiques Médiévales (CRAHM), based in Caen, the latter the impetus behind this significant publication.

Being a volume with multiple contributions and contributors, necessarily here I merely sketch out here the main underlying elements and the impressions provoked. Certainly French medieval archaeology emerges as very active and well equipped, both in terms of historical and methodological issues. Strikingly, bioarchaeological data appear from the outset, the initial section of the volume being devoted to archaeobotanical and faunal data; this fully exploits an established approach in French studies (the map on p 60 shows 252 sites at which archaeobotanical analyses have been carried out from 1965–2006!) and helps stimulate fuller archaeological debates. No wonder that one of the most recent French handbooks on the period and discipline has been written by an eminent scholar of this particular field: Joelle Bourneuf, *Archéologie Médiévale. Le second Moyen Age (XIIe–XVIe siècle)* (Paris, 2008).

Particularly strong traditions are detectable in contributions exploring the fates and transformations of Roman villas and towns after Rome; the archaeology of castles, palaces and churches; and, more generally, of standing buildings (Guyonnet's paper is devoted to the castle of Carcassonne, famously restored in the past by Viollet-Le-Duc). Cities are scrutinised by Galinié (in general), with Strasbourg and Saint-Denis as particular case studies (papers by Hengfeld et al and Rodrigues respectively). For the rural landscape Peytreman furnishes the big picture and the evolution of scholarship, while Gentili analyses the late-antique to early medieval transition (providing amazing new data about Villiers-le-Sec) as does Schneider (considering fortresses and strategic hamlets); meanwhile, Conte, Fau and Hautefeuille take into account the evolution of the medieval landscape in the southern part of the nation. There are also useful themes like archaeo-metallurgy, ship archaeology, ports and river environments. In sum, this book gives a full taste of a fruitful and stimulating mix between tradition and innovation, and old and new avenues of research, the former being interpreted with a whole set of renewed tools and historical questions.

The introductory chapter by Poisson and Gentili, and Chapelot's conclusions, interestingly coming from different directions, offer much food for thought. The dramatic growth of archaeology after the 'archéologie préventive' was launched in the latter 20th century is very clear: construction of new rail lines for the TGV and other major public works (like the A5 highway) opened up a new era, in which INRAP rightly plays a major role, together with CNRS and the universities. But, as Chapelot points out, how is it possible to avoid the drift towards a massive, if very useful, archaeology, increasingly conceived as a merely technical job, too often detached from a (necessary) knowledge of the historical context and data? In other words, how will it be possible to keep equipping archaeological research with 'historical depth'? Will we be more and more reliant on chance finds and on developer-led projects and less and less on research-driven work? This question concerns the future of the concept of archaeology itself, given the overall — far



from brilliant — academic scene and the cuts that are putting universities in a desperate state across Europe. For now, this volume shows how much has and can be achieved, but future achievements and developments are clearly under serious threat.

ANDREA AUGENTI (*University of Bologna*)

*Por una arqueología agraria. Perspectivas de investigación sobre espacios de cultivo en las sociedades medievales hispánicas.* (British Archaeological Report International Series 2062). Edited by Helena Kirchner. 21 × 30 cm. iv + 202 pp, 107 colour and b&w pls, figs and tables. Oxford: Archaeopress, 2010. ISBN 978-1-4073-0553-0. Price: £65.00 pb.

The development of Spanish medieval archaeology is relatively recent and, although it has been growing in quantity and quality, it still remains mainly focused on urban centres, cemeteries, and buildings related to official power, such as castles and churches. In 1988, Miquel Barceló coordinated the edition of the book *Arqueologia Medieval. En las afueras del medievalismo* (*Medieval Archaeology. On the outskirts of medievalism*), which argued in favour of the archaeological study of rural workspaces, as that was where the social processes of surplus appropriation took place. Even though this work has not exerted a significant influence over major historiography, nonetheless it did help establish a small workgroup in its field. Twenty years later, the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona organised a colloquium to gather together all researchers exploring medieval rural spaces in Spain, with the intention of identifying points of convergence and of coordinating future trends; the volume reviewed here is one of the main outputs.

The contributors can be divided by theme and geographical area into two groups, as also evident in the structure of the publication: first are four papers by archaeologists who, following the principles of Rural History, have mainly excavated early medieval villages in the north of the Iberian Peninsula and studied related field systems through Landscape Archaeology techniques. The following eight papers form a more heterogeneous group of historians and archaeologists from eastern and southern Spain, where the Muslim impact on the landscape was more lasting, as also implied in deeper transformations of later feudal society here. Notable in this context are studies of the settlement networks and early Andalusian hydraulic systems through the specific methodology of ‘Hydraulic Archaeology’, as well as analyses of the new agrarian spaces transformed and created during and after colonisation subsequent to the Christian Conquest, with new and modified hydraulic systems, field systems and hillside-terracing, as well as reclamation of dried lake areas.

While the two groupings use multiple techniques and methods, yet derive from different historiographical traditions, nonetheless all researchers agree on the significance of including agrarian spaces under the concepts of ‘settlement’ and ‘archaeological site’, recognising that it is not possible to separate out home from work place. In this sense, and without reviewing here each contribution and collaboration in detail, the last paper is doubtless the most relevant of the book, given the purposes of the colloquium — namely, a collective text deriving from the roundtable that concluded the meeting. All the experiences accumulated so far are reflected in this paper, which calls for future actions that unify criteria and concepts based on three factors: the identification of agrarian field systems and their relationship with peasant settlements; the dating and evolution of those spaces; and the study of their varied management forms, which depend on the society responsible for their formation and maintenance. Ultimately, this book is a reference work that should form the first step towards creating a new historiographical school on peasant agrarian spaces that could coordinate work by current researchers and indicate the paths to be followed in the next decade.

FERRAN ESQUILACHE (*Universitat de València*)

*Medieval Rural Settlement in Marginal Landscapes. Ruralia VII. 8<sup>th</sup>–14<sup>th</sup> September 2007, Cardiff, Wales, U.K.* Edited by Jan Klápštěr & Petr Sommer. 21 × 30 cm. vi + 446 pp, 270 b&w pls and figs, 16 tables. Turnhout: Brepols, 2009. ISBN 978-2-503-527746-8. Price: €75.00 pb.

An old-fashioned, week-long excursion conference is an excellent way of fostering international dialogues and exchanges of views; as this reviewer can attest, the Cardiff *Ruralia* was no exception to this rule. Despite its concentration on a particular theme, the heterogeneity of the conference volume is probably inevitable. This one contains 32 papers, including three in French and five in German. Geographically, the volume mostly covers Europe north of (and including) the Alps. Many of the papers are rather brief, useful summaries of recent work or work in progress; a couple of papers from Scandinavia are not even about the Middle Ages! The main theoretical insight which emerges (though it is not a new one) is that a region whose productivity is low in terms of rental values or tonnes of grain per hectare may be very important for other resources, or *qualitatively* vital, in a social or cultural sense, as Gardiner and Svensson point out in their introduction to the volume. Øye notes that in Norway in the early Middle Ages it was the marginal areas, despite their lower productivity per unit area, which produced the surplus which provided the basis for the exercise of power and increasing social stratification. There is apparently an ongoing debate, which goes to the heart of Norwegian historical identity, about whether ‘marginal’ farmers, and those who produced highly valued stone and iron, were exercising traditional rights in a broadly egalitarian context, or whether they serviced a relatively oppressive hierarchical society.

This reviewer was struck by the force and cogency of Stephen Moorhouse’s paper. Moorhouse, who has carried out dozens of ground surveys in the Yorkshire Pennine Dales, and introduces some of his main findings here, argues that the HER/HLC approach is hopelessly inadequate and misleading when compared with an informed landscape history which is text-aided, works with medieval administrative units, and has a holistic understanding of farming and rural industries. Using morphology as a basis for understanding the medieval landscape does not work (and medieval horse-farms get ‘identified’ as Romano-British settlement sites). Conventionally trained archaeologists tend to approaches appropriate to the study of prehistoric and Roman landscapes; to address heritage and conservation issues properly, we need to acknowledge the primacy of the landscape history approach. His use of a ‘marginal’ area to make his point makes Moorhouse’s argument more, not less, persuasive, in my view.

Among the substantive papers, I was impressed by Bert Groenewoudt’s account of the ‘exhausted landscapes’ of the eastern Netherlands, and the complementary paper by Jan van Doesburg, which concerns two Dutch regions whose histories involved recurrent struggles against drifting sand. Like Moorhouse’s, the Dutch approach is holistic, if within a materialist perspective. These sand-and-bog lands were subjected to over-grazing, a little cultivation (on the raised bogs), sod-cutting and the sale of peat for fuel, charcoal-burning, iron-mining and clay-digging; fences were regularly erected to combat sand-drift, and linear earthwork boundaries against predatory neighbours. The archaeology of pits and ditches dated to the Middle Ages has contributed post-built ‘barns’ which stand comparison with some recorded in the last two hundred years, rectangular enclosures, which were probably sheep-folds, and ring-ditches, which may have enclosed haystacks; shades of the stack-garths (‘staggarths’) which were so prominent in Moorhouse’s medieval Wensleydale. Originally, argues Groenewoudt, the landscape of the eastern Netherlands was anything but marginal; it was over-exploited, and *became* marginal in the Middle Ages and later. The coastal sand-dunes discussed by van Doesburg are wonderful locations for picking up plough-marks and hoof-prints; here the intermittent struggle for an agrarian foothold was lost in the later Middle Ages.

This volume also provides Christine Rendu and her French co-workers with a well-deserved opportunity to publicise a long-term interdisciplinary project in the Pyrenees

(see Rendu's excellent book, *La Montagne d'Enveig*). Here a team of archaeologists, palaeobotanists and anthracologists (charcoal experts, as Anglophones would call them) have combined to tell the story of mountain and hill pastures over *la longue durée*; it is fascinating, not least for the complexity and nuances of the text-aided parts of the story. Here is another project which is holistic in approach and spirit; there are not enough of them.

This reviewer could not help noticing that medieval roads, as usual, were of somewhat peripheral interest compared with agrarian matters; but Claudia Theune's account of medieval Brandenburg attaches considerable importance to bridges and roads, and Kenzler, writing about the Ore Mountains (Erzegebirge) which span the borders of Germany and the Czech Republic, places a series of long-distance roads at the head of his sequence.

Despite the fact that this volume addresses 'marginality' with varying degrees of insight and commitment, and some of its content is itself rather marginal, it contains a range of good, informative papers, which space precludes my mentioning here.

ANDREW FLEMING (*University of Wales Trinity St David*)

*Archaeology and History in Roman, Medieval and Post-Medieval Greece. Studies on Method and Meaning in Honor of Timothy E. Gregory.* Edited by William R Caraher, Linda Jones Hall & R Scott Moore. 17 × 24 cm. xx + 351 pp, 77 b&w pls and figs, 9 tables. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008. ISBN 978-0-7546-6442-0. Price: £60.00 hb.

Tim Gregory, in a productive and continuing career largely dedicated to the Byzantine archaeology of Greece and Cyprus, has definitely helped to make Byzantine archaeology a career option for a new cohort of researchers in the USA. They and other colleagues express their appreciation of his achievements in papers reflecting both Gregory's broader concerns and some of the strengths of the growing American input to Byzantine archaeology in general. This review is organised, with aspects of both in mind, around (i) reflections on the interpretation of multi-period field surveys; (ii) the integration of anthropological fieldwork with archaeological surveys, reflecting the roots of many North American Departments of Archaeology; (iii) the long-term commitment of serious resources to a major urban excavation — that of Corinth — and to studies of its hinterland; (iv) the Byzantine construction or reconstruction of 'sacred landscapes'; and (v) exploration of some of the challenges of the confrontation of texts and archaeology.

- (i) Scott Moore's and Pettegrew's papers both advocate the 'siteless survey' approach to the rich Mediterranean ceramic landscape. As critiques of typical outputs and of typical inferences drawn from such outputs (eg 'troughs' and 'surges' of settlement, therefore of populations), both, on the basis of the *East Korinthia Archaeological Project*, make the case for great caution about a late antique demographic peak, while, interestingly, extracting and refining the idea of a still economically 'busy' countryside.
- (ii) Ever since British and American intensive interdisciplinary survey hit Greece in the 1970s, an anthropological and ethnological dimension has illuminated traditional agricultural strategies and social structures and their interconnections, of which Kardulias' paper on the ethnographic, ethnoarchaeological, and experimental study of early agriculture is a good example. Kourelis meanwhile illustrates an 'archaeology of the recent past', which includes social-scientific survey, as well as some seemingly less academic, more creative activity.
- (iii) The paradigmatic sites of Corinth and its ports are well represented. Rife (author of a major study of Byzantine burials around one port) seeks here to interpret an epigrammatic inscription recording the erection of a fortified beacon by a Middle Byzantine emperor Leo. Although the provenance is only 'Peloponnesus', an association with Acrocorinth is reasonable, and the comparative contexts of such a fortified beacon are efficiently reviewed; however, linking the reference to a particular medieval tower on Acrocorinth and to Leo VI (886–912) is problematic,

especially as the surviving medieval tower's ground plan could well be Frankish-Crusader and alternative emperors could be Leo IV (775–80) who was very active in organising the subdivisions of new provinces and their defences in the southern Balkans, and Leo V (813–20) who had to contend with Arab piracy. Whereas Rife eagerly merges an ambiguous archaeology with narrative history, Rothaus emphasises the difficulties of making such links, even between the archaeology of a significant port such as Kenchreai and one of those earthquakes and tsunamis which the geologists now link together in a 'Great Early Byzantine Paroxysm'.

- (iv) The complex origins of sites and objects of Christian worship form an important theme linking three contributions and a significant challenge now being addressed by some of the multi-period Greek regional surveys. A rich (but inadequately excavated or published) archaeology of early Byzantine churches on Lesbos may reflect divisions within the early Church there, according to Kaldellis, although new elite strategies should not be ruled out. Caraher identifies in regional Greek saints' lives a re-sacralisation of landscapes after the early medieval Dark Ages, which may have been part of local struggles with the imperial administration. Richer post-medieval sources clearly demonstrate the potency of religious objects, particularly icons, in the long-term identity of Greek communities (Paspalas).
- (v) The challenge of integrating archaeology and history connects many papers though the contributor who addresses it as a theme in its own right, Athanassopoulos, nevertheless reveals a blindspot shared with many Greek survey reports, namely that '[medieval] rural settlement and land use' are poorly covered in extant written sources (p 24). But if historians indeed offer a 'framework' (p 25) for the archaeology of settlements it is precisely because there is a wealth of documentation for the Greek space (Byzantine and western-controlled) of the 10th–15th centuries.

This does not exhaust the Festschrift's themes. Throughout, the emphasis is upon projects in progress, and its main strength is probably in the half dozen papers dealing with Byzantine Corinth, the *Korinthia*, and the wider Byzantine to late-medieval Peloponnese, the focus of Gregory's research and the basis of a distinct American contribution to Byzantine archaeology which has been stimulating studies of cultural and economic change in Byzantium since the 1930s.

ARCHIE DUNN (*University of Birmingham*)

*The Sea and the Marsh. The Medieval Cinque Port of New Romney.* (Pre-Construct Archaeology Monograph 10). By Gillian Draper & Frank Meddens. 21 × 30 cm. x + 143 pp, 64 colour and b&w pls and figs, 8 tables. London: Pre-Construct Archaeology, 2009. ISBN 978-0-9542938-9-5. Price: £16.95 pb.

*Rye. A History of a Sussex Cinque Port to 1660.* By Gillian Draper, with contributions by David Martin, Barbara Martin & Alan Tyler. 18 × 26 cm. xviii + 270 pp, 5 colour pls, 43 b&w pls and figs. Chichester: Phillimore and Co, 2009. ISBN 978-1-86077-607-6. Price: £25.00 hb.

*Rye Rebuilt. Regeneration and Decline within a Sussex Port Town, 1350–1660.* By David & Barbara Martin, with Jane Clubb & Gillian Draper. 21 × 30 cm. viii + 306 pp, 378 colour and b&w pls, figs and tables. Burgess Hill: domtom publishing/The Romney Marsh Research Trust, 2009. ISBN 978-1-906070-11-3. Price: £26.00 pb.

Archaeologists and historians have often bemoaned the lack of attention afforded to medieval small towns, which have persistently been portrayed as the less glamorous cousins of 'proper' towns and cities. Together, these new volumes go a long way to rectifying this gap in knowledge with regard to a particular type of small urban settlement that represents an essential aspect of the urban personality of medieval Britain — the coastal towns of Kent and Sussex that formed the confederation of Cinque Ports.

The first, and slimmest, of these three volumes deals with the once burgeoning port of New Romney, now stranded some two miles inland by coastal change. *The Sea and the Marsh* surveys the plentiful evidence for medieval buildings and the material culture of seafaring and fishing provided by archaeological excavations, within the context of a wider narrative concerning New Romney's development and rather dramatic decline. A radical new interpretation sees the Anglo-Saxon settlement here not as a planned town (following Beresford's model of the 1960s), but originating from a beach market. The prominent unit of burgage plots in the town plan is instead seen as an initiative of the 12th or 13th century. The Southlands School site, on the medieval foreshore and excavated in 2002, is pivotal to the narrative. Evidence for particularly violent storms in the 13th century is apparent in the archaeological record in the form of a huge cut which ripped away the end of a beachfront building, although it was the silting of the harbour that was the ultimate source of the New Romney's decline. The metalwork assemblage from Southlands is rich and intriguing; among the aspects of everyday life that vividly stand out from this are fishing (in the form of lead weights and hooks) and the building and breaking of boats (iron rivets or 'rovenails'), while unusual evidence of lead shot and a gunpowder measure cap tells us about the security hazards of maritime travel and trade. The volume is also strong on the town's medieval built heritage, including the guildhall (now lost), hospitals and churches, while the spatial patterning of industrial and other commercial zones is dealt with convincingly and in detail.

Gillian Draper's historically based account on Rye is one of a pair of complementary volumes arising from an interdisciplinary project focused on Rye and its hinterland and funded by the Romney Marsh Research Trust. Lying some 15 km west of New Romney, the hill-top town of Rye has in common a land-locked position isolated from the present coastline. Draper's scholarly and immensely authoritative volume will undoubtedly become the definitive account of Rye's rather idiosyncratic story for years to come, detailing its origins in around c 1000 through to a dramatic phase of Tudor-period prosperity and an eventual slump in the 17th century when the harbour silted up and the trade focus shifted westwards.

*Rye Rebuilt*, meanwhile, is focused primarily on Rye's built environment, with especial emphasis on the remarkable corpus of surviving domestic and commercial buildings. Following a scene-setting historical introduction and topographical survey, individual chapters in Part 1 address Rye's defences (including the unusual and still undated Ypres Tower); its churches and religious buildings; demography; and patterns of medieval and post-medieval housing. Throughout, the volume benefits from particularly clear and informative illustrations, many of them the result of original survey work, which is testimony to the incredible industry of the research team. An extensive gazetteer detailing 111 houses forms Part 2. The town's short, sharp burst of building in the 16th century means that the data presented here provide a fascinating testing ground for those interested in changes to vernacular architecture and domestic space at the medieval/post-medieval transition (noticeably, the authors firmly see the houses in Rye built after c 1540 as a 'natural progression' from later medieval and 'transitional' examples).

Taken together, the theme of rivalry and competing interests between ports, and of interlinked fortunes, immediately leaps out; another is the notion of resilience and adaptability rather than inherently vulnerable and unstable settlements existing at the mercy of nature and the cruel sea. At Rye, the sheer versatility of the place's economy is a hallmark of its urban biography, re-inventing itself several times, including as a point of departure for pilgrims, a fishing town, a local market centre, timber-trading port and ship-building centre. At New Romney, we see resilience in the form of local initiatives to keep the harbour open and accessible, but also in the seeking out of alternative livelihoods, with townspeople increasingly looking inland, towards the economic potential of the marsh, for their economic futures. Alongside D & B Martin's *New Winchelsea, Sussex: A Medieval Port Town* (2004), these three volumes raise the profile of coastal towns as elements of Britain's medieval urban heritage, highlighting their distinctive topographies, economies

and urban stories. These are immensely welcome and pioneering works that underline the rich but under-exploited potential of small towns for interdisciplinary study.

OLIVER CREIGHTON (*University of Exeter*)

*Sandwich. The 'completest medieval town in England'. A Study of the Town and Port from its Origins to 1600.* By Helen Clarke, Sarah Pearson, Mavis Mate & Keith Parfit. 22 × 30 cm. xviii + 326 pp, 226 colour & b&w pls and figs, 14 tables. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2010. ISBN 978-1-84217-400-5. Price: £35.00 hb.

This attractive book is the culmination of a five-year project, where 'buildings, archaeology and documents are equal partners', but, as the authors acknowledge, the final synthesis required extensive rewriting to achieve 'a seamless whole'. The 17 chapters with coloured aerial photographs, architectural details and numerous maps start to people the townscape and its largely timber-framed buildings, to reveal something of the lifestyles and mentalities of the inhabitants. Three foci — the trading centre, Christ Church priory and the royal military base — form the core of Sandwich between AD 1000 and 1600. Insights into this lively port with trading networks up the North Sea into the Baltic and south along the English coast to the western coast of France (Gascony) and the Mediterranean are gleaned largely from the documentary record. Sandwich's sheltered anchorage, so important for trade and then for the mustering of soldiers and mariners, was finally defeated by a changing coastline in the early modern period.

The publication has five parts: Introduction; Origins; 1200–1360; 1360–1560; 1560–1600. The aims and methodology of this 'tour de force', which brought so many people together, are carefully set out. Historical databases dedicated to the project were invaluable to highlight relationships between individual people, places and structures. Some of the frustrations are aired, eg only two buildings gave important tree-ring dating and only limited evidence was extracted from the archaeological resource (Appendix 1: 1929–2007, 81 interventions). Many hypotheses are formulated, some long-held assumptions dispelled (particularly in relation to the earlier, as yet unlocated middle Anglo-Saxon settlement), and others argued more thoroughly if needing archaeological verification. The new hypothesis is that the first urban settlement lay near the stone-built church of St Clements, the patron saint of mariners. In the 11th century the priory was probably responsible for the diversion of the Delf to provide an adequate water supply.

The town's 12th-century development is inferred from detailed architectural surveys of the churches; such surveys would help illuminate Norman boroughs in other towns. St Clements' boasted the finest Romanesque tower in Kent and performed as a landmark for shipping; embedded in the chancel walls earthenware acoustic pots suggest that the church supported a choir during the later Middle Ages. The priory built a herring house in the town: Domesday Book records the provision of 40,000 herrings every year to the priory by the townsmen; these townsmen had the assurance to negotiate with royal officials to their advantage (they first supplied ship service to Edward the Confessor). New fairs were granted in 13th century.

Urban building in England faltered c 1360–1400 and Sandwich was no exception, but it maintains more medieval dwellings than any other town of its size, even if the dwellings are sometimes difficult to interpret, with residential, commercial and storage buildings being found together. Indeed, while freight was stored in warehouses to await ships' return, some of these may have been in 'domestic buildings'. Future archaeology might identify detached kitchens at the back of the plots of some properties and refuse pits may guide on related occupations. It is clear that the harbour remained important to the Crown to provision armies — 1500 horses embarked on a single occasion during Hundred Years War, episodes such as this will have engaged the ingenuity of the local populace. By the late 16th century Sandwich was boosted by immigrants from the Flemish and Walloon communities.

One of the project aims was to set the results into the national framework of similar English towns, and the volume duly considers the role and privileges of the Cinque Ports (a loose confederation of five ports on the SE coast from 1161) and their interaction with E coast ports. Sandwich's place within the group is prominent (in the early 14th century it concentrated on luxury goods — wine in particular, with Gascon merchants living here, while New Winchelsea dealt in everyday commodities like timber and bark. Its status within E Kent with royal Dover, ecclesiastical Canterbury and its contact with mercantile London (the haven became a transshipment point from foreign merchantmen to smaller craft) is also explored.

This volume will ensure that Sandwich becomes an excellent venue for student fieldtrips for years to come with one of the most complete defensive circuits, stunning vernacular architecture (featuring some of the earliest timber-framed structures in Britain), plus seascapes and hinterland to understand the early history. The 'completest medieval town in England' certainly reflected both national trends and regional patterns of the smaller medieval town.

MAUREEN MELLOR (*Oxford University Department for Continuing Education*)

*A History of the Early Medieval Siege, c. 450–1200.* By Peter Purton. 17 × 24 cm. xxviii + 505 pp, 32 b&w pls, 14 maps. Woodbridge & Rochester NY: The Boydell Press, 2009. ISBN 978-1-84383-448-9.

*A History of the Late Medieval Siege, 1200–1500.* By Peter Purton. 17 × 24 cm. xxvii + 488 pp, 32 b&w pls, 15 maps. Woodbridge & Rochester NY: The Boydell Press, 2010. ISBN 978-1-84383-449-6. Price: £100.00 (2 vol set) hb.

Siege warfare and weaponry have attracted a number of books in recent years, particularly the slim publications from Osprey, but in Peter Purton's two-volume magisterial work we have a history and analysis of the subject which is unlikely to be bettered for decades to come, for it contains a vast amount of information from disparate sources. It is, however, more than an account of military history and siege warfare, for Purton also covers, albeit briefly, developments in fortress design and innovations in military technology, such as the introduction and early development of gunpowder ordnance.

The first volume covers the immediate post-Roman period through to the early 13th century, not 1200 as the title suggests; those wanting accounts of the great siege of Dover in 1216 and that of Bedford in 1224 will find them here, not in the second volume. The book ends with detailed analysis of the development of medieval technology, with such weaponry as mangonels and trebuchets. Each chapter is broken down into numerous sections, which does impede the general flow at times, but given such an enormous subject, it is hard to see how the author could have done otherwise. In chapter 6, for example, on 'Franks, Saracens: the early Crusades', there are sections on the First Crusade, siege warfare under a new generation, fortifications of the Crusades and Armenians, the Muslim counterattack and Christian offensive in the western Mediterranean, the Almohad revolution, India, and ending with some conclusions. Three centuries are covered in the second volume, with the Hundred Years War dominating much of this period. Purton pays particular attention to the increasing sophistication of torsion-powered weapons, before the arrival of cannon, springalds becoming a frequent item in castle inventories, and also on the tops of walls and towers, such as the machines built by Reginald the Engineer for the newly extended great tower at Chepstow in 1298–99 (not mentioned by Purton). These giant crossbows began to be replaced by cannon, certainly from around 1400.

The books are well illustrated, the photographs mainly taken by the author himself (pl 11 in vol 1 is surely Gisors), and the numerous maps are invaluable. The bibliographies are substantial: over 70 pages in volume I and 60 in II (if with some duplication of references). The primary source sections provide an excellent compilation for those wishing to explore the contemporary evidence in more depth (readers can consult the website of *De Re Militari*, the Society for Medieval Military History, where many full translations are available).

The secondary sources in both volumes include reference to the writings of Professor R A Brown, although the citation is under Brown (correctly) in one, and Allen Brown in the other; this error has become a frequent occurrence in bibliographies in several recent castle-related publications. Both Purton volumes have time-lines, glossaries and indexes, although the latter are not as thorough as one would like (Edward III is mentioned on more than one page, for example, and there are errors with page numbers), but I think most authors would have been daunted with being faced with indexing such books over, no doubt, a short period.

Not only does the author deserve the thanks of medieval historians for bringing this major work to a publishable state, but also Boydell Press merits praise for taking the project on — probably the only history publisher in this day and age bold enough to have done so.

JOHN R KENYON (*National Museum of Wales*)

*Castelli e borghi murati della Contea di Molise (secoli X–XIV)*. (Quaderni di Archeologia Medievale X). By Gabriella di Rocco. 21 × 28 cm. 256 pp, 14 colour pls, 145 b&w pls and figs, 1 table. Florence: All'Insegna del Giglio, 2009. ISBN 978-88-7814-449-1 (ISSN 0952-3332). Price: €30.00 pb.

*Il castello di Illasi. Storia e archeologia*. (Archeologica 151). Edited by Fabio Saggioro & Gian Maria Varanini. 17 × 24 cm. xiv + 212 pp, 71 b&w pls, 40 b&w figs. Rome: Giorgio Bretschneider Editore, 2009. ISBN 978-88-7689-237-0 (ISSN 0391-9293). Price: €90.00 pb.

Unlike in Britain, castle excavations and projects linking castles with landscapes are much more common and 'sexy' in Italy, aided by the proliferation of extant examples, most blessed with good documentary data, sometimes extending back into the 10th century, when the first documented move to castles (*incastellamento*) occurs. However, while various other projects (many reported in the Italian equivalent to this journal, *Archeologia Medievale*) have recently been geared to exploring the first phases of upland nucleation, whether military, refuge or village-oriented, between the 7th and 9th centuries AD, these two publications centre on sites which span the height of castle building and elaboration, namely the 11th to 14th centuries: Illasi forms a single case study near Verona in the north; di Rocco covers parts of Molise province in central eastern Italy. For each there are historical discussions, architectural analyses as well as archaeological inputs.

The contea di Molise was a vast Norman territory in central Italy with its focus at Boiano; documentation is good as a result and includes the *Catalogus Baronum* (compiled from 1150–68) naming sites, owners, topographic settings, lands, churches, manpower dues, etc (historical overview: ch 2). Thus a survey of the castles and walled villages of the zone is a logical accompaniment and at the heart of di Rocco's publication is a gazetteer (ch 3, pp 39–180) of 93 sites, some explored previously as part of the project tied to the San Vincenzo al Volturno monastery, and others known from surveys of Iron-Age Samnite hillforts (eg Monte Vairano). Entries are necessarily compact, but include documentary summary, place names, site setting, format, with images of plan and any elevations; a limited number of end colour pls are provided, plus some rather unsatisfactory location maps. Chapter 4 does offer useful, but rather abbreviated comments on relationships of sites to Roman and medieval roads and droeways. Equally compact are the end chapters on site typologies (pp 193–6) and historical sequences (pp 201–19); both merit much fuller treatment and a clearer exploration of how far archaeology supports the texts.

The second, much pricier volume is unusual in style for an excavation publication, being more 'normal' book size and old fashioned in having separate blocks of b&w plates (each, peculiarly, running from Tav I, II, etc) and lacking any colour images, despite a photogenic site. Illasi was the centre of a project between 2003–8; usefully, it was supported by previous field surveys in the region which enable the medieval site to be put



into a wider settlement context (although this is not achieved in this volume except in terms of documentary analysis). The first references to the castle are of the 970s, and to its church from 1004; the castle's peak was in the latter 13th century (after documented destruction in 1235) and sporadic military action saw progressive decay into the later 15th (history: pp 3–78). The extant architecture, dominated by the keep-tower and a palace, belongs predominantly to this peak and is tidily analysed in terms of form, materials, mason marks, style (pp 79–113, observing 'pretensions' in the palace). The excavations lay within the castle confines and did not explore the immediate landscape to confirm the documented *borgo* or attendant village units (see pp 42–5); trenches traced a pre-13th-century circuit wall; working levels including scaffolding lines for the main building phase; store and house units; and a surprising depth of deposits — up to 3 m in various zones (related finds: pp 149–92, including varied arrowheads). No major story is told here, and while the results are useful, the archaeological input somehow feels slight.

NEIL CHRISTIE (*University of Leicester*)

*Norwich Castle: Excavations and Historical Survey 1987–98. Part I: Anglo-Saxon to c.1345; Part II: c.1345 to Modern.* (East Anglian Archaeology 132). By Elizabeth Shepherd Popescu. 22 × 30 cm. lvi + 1130 pp, plus CD-Rom (Parts III and IV), 824 colour and b&w pls and figs, 298 tables. Dereham: NAU Archaeology/Historic Environment, Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service, 2009. ISBN 978-0-905594-48-4. Price: £75.00 hb.

These volumes represent a gargantuan enterprise in every sense. Detailing the results of the Castle Mall excavations in the centre of Norwich — one of the largest urban archaeological projects of recent years conducted anywhere in northern Europe — it is a stunning achievement to see work on such a scale brought to such a high level of publication. The bulk of the excavations took place in 1987–91 in advance of construction of a new shopping centre (Castle Mall) near the great Norman donjon, supplemented by further work on nearby Golden Ball Street in 1998. Together, these works took in a vast area of the 'Castle Fee' (a substantial, legally defined enclave around the royal fortress), including parts of the extensive zone taken up by its multiple baileys, the barbican, and part of the fringes of the adjoining medieval settlement. The result is a superbly detailed yet accessible report, representing perhaps the first fully contextualised archaeological study of a medieval castle in a truly urban setting.

The chronological dividing line between the volumes is 1345, when royal jurisdiction over the Castle Fee ended and the castle baileys were released to the city. The first volume covers antecedent Anglo-Saxon activity and the complex multi-phase evolution of the Norman castle; the second focuses on the castle's decline, the gradual encroachment of the settlement and the development of the zone into the post-medieval and modern periods. Such are the scale and scope of the project that there is something for everyone, more or less: for example, early medievalists will appreciate the new angles on church and cemetery organisation; urban archaeologists will benefit from the revised modelling of Norwich's middle Anglo-Saxon origins; and those interested in medieval material culture and pottery will marvel at one of the largest assemblages of its type (notably the finds catalogue shows remarkably little of high-status households, and has the hallmarks of an urban assemblage). Inevitably, it is the immense and enduring impact of the castle on urban form that stands out, in particular the evidence of an entire townscape fossilised dramatically beneath the Norman castle. At its height, the complex arrangement of baileys constituted a type of urban landscape in its own right, with internal gradations of function and status and different levels of access between units that transformed over the centuries. A key interrelationship between fortress and urban form was the growth of an associated French borough, although, interestingly, the Jewish community that grew up after the Norman Conquest apparently remained dispersed. The various phases are brought to life through vivid reconstruction art reproduced in full colour, and the honest accompanying commentary uses these sources to highlight gaps in knowledge as well as indicating what

we do know. After all, despite the huge advances made by this study, the Castle Mall and Golden Ball Street projects together only explored around 20% of the 9.3 hectare Castle Fee. Another feature of the volume is the excellent comparative dimension developed through the text, showing what is different and distinctive about the site against the national picture of castle-building and development.

Added value is provided by the accompanying CD Rom which presents Parts III ('A Zooarchaeological Study') and IV ('People and Property in the Documentary Record'), which are also available as separately published volumes in hard copy. The enormous animal bone assemblage, by some measure the largest recovered from Norwich, informs us further about the socially graded usage of space within the castle and evolving cultures of urban refuse disposal, as well as animal husbandry (including particularly important innovations of the 15th to 17th centuries), while the odd exotic (a 17th-century parrot!) catches the eye. The documentary account traces the ownership and development of properties within the Castle Fee, and develops another interesting research angle by mapping the presence of Norwich's 'Strangers', principally Dutch and Walloons who inhabited the area from the 16th century.

An outstanding achievement, these volumes remind us that castles represent some of the best preserved islands of stratigraphy in our historic towns and cities and show clearly their potential to act as windows on every conceivable aspect of medieval life. Indeed, it is intended as the highest accolade to say that, despite their titles, these volumes are not really castle excavation reports at all; rather, they amount to an immensely rich, detailed and vivid biography of life in medieval England's second city.

OLIVER CREIGHTON (*University of Exeter*)

*The Impact of the Edwardian Castles in Wales. The Proceedings of a Conference held at Bangor University, 7–9 September 2007.* Edited by Diane M Williams & John R Kenyon. 22 × 29 cm. xi + 227 pp, 37 colour pls and figs, 125 b&w pls and figs. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2010. ISBN 978-1-84217-380-0. Price: £35.00 hb.

It was Arnold Taylor who laid the foundations for our understanding of the Edwardian castles in N Wales, including the iconic sites of Beaumaris, Caernarfon and Harlech that now form part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Through numerous articles, guidebooks and, most notably, his contributions to *The History of the King's Works*, Taylor's masterful analysis of the buildings and their associated documentation first tackled how the mighty Edwardian fortresses were planned and constructed. The great achievement of this excellent new volume is in showcasing how new interdisciplinary scholarship adds to and in some cases transforms our understanding of sites as supposedly well understood as these. Although based around a conference held in 2007 to mark the seventh centenary of the death of Edward I, the volume is much more than a study of royal castle building. Instead, the achievements, architecture and impact of the Edwardian castles are contextualised by an exceptional range of contributors from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds. We are treated, for instance, to accounts of Welsh society and castles before and after the Edwardian Conquest; analyses of the wider geographical and cultural settings of these monuments; overviews of how the castles were perceived in literature and folklore; and considerations of their dynamic and debated roles within the modern heritage industry.

The volume contains 21 contributions, ranging from presentations of fresh archaeological and architectural data, through to historiographical reflections on past scholarship, as well as an engaging 'research agenda' for Edwardian castles. Given the rich pickings on offer, it is invidious to single out particular highlights, although Jeremy Ashbee's sophisticated treatment of royal accommodation, stressing the compartmentalisation of apartments, stands out among the architecturally focused papers, as does John Goodall's superb analysis of the understudied group of baronial castles associated with the Welsh Conquest. Keith Lilley breaks new ground in assessing the 'townscapes' associated

with the castles, exploiting data from an important mapping project to argue that the Edwardian new towns have less in common with the 'bastides' of SW France than usually imagined. Elsewhere, findings from existing publications are re-presented to good effect, most notably Nicola Coldstream's critique of the notion that Master James of St George was the guiding mastermind behind the castles, and Abigail Wheatley's treatment of the imperial and Arthurian mythology associated with the sites. Other highlights include Rick Turner on the career of Richard the Engineer (an underestimated Edwardian project manager and master carpenter), Peter Brears on food supply and preparation, Graham Lott on stone supplies, and Dylan Foster Evans on a fascinating insight into Welsh poetic responses to Edward's potent castles.

Handsomely produced, the volume is visually striking, packed with crisp and clear figures, including handy plans and aerial views of the eight key sites. For a volume based around thematically focused papers, the excellent index is also indispensable. This first-rate volume comprises far, far more than the term 'conference proceedings' might suggest, and should have broad appeal well beyond the realms of castellology.

OLIVER CREIGHTON (*University of Exeter*)

*European Cities and Towns, 400–2000*. By Peter Clark. 16 × 24 cm. xiii + 412 pp, 6 b&w figs, 8 tables. Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2009. ISBN 978-0-19-956273-2 (978-0-19-870054-8 pb). Price: £50.00 hb; £19.99 pb.

At a time when the outpouring of literature on towns seems to be increasing exponentially, it is good to have a work such as this in which some of the key themes are set out and addressed. Peter Clark is one of our leading urban historians and here he sketches out some of those he has identified for Europe. He does this by way of a book divided into three blocks of time: AD 400–1500, 1500–1800 and 1800–2000; each part is then subdivided into chapters with a series of common themes — urban trends, the economy, social life, culture and landscape and governance. Because Clark's canvas is so extensive in time and space, individual chapters are sketches, summaries and necessarily laden with lots of generalisations. There is little detail. For example, there is no section on, say, Scandinavian or Spanish urbanisation, and no chapters on city walls, street plans or guildhalls. There are few tables and very few illustrations, but the book is none the worse for all that. Indeed, it reminded this reviewer of some of the big, sweeping histories of the 20th century by scholars such as G M Trevelyan or H A L Fisher which stimulated precisely because they gave the big picture.

Of course, works of synthesis about the past ultimately represent the sum of the particular, and one can be confident that behind Clark's text there lies a depth of scholarship rooted in detail. Every now and then we all need to step back and look at the wider perspective, and this applies as much to the world of historians and academics, many of whom have fairly narrowly defined interests, as it does to commercial urban archaeology if it is not to be a mechanical technical exercise. So, here the reader will find a masterly overview of European urbanisation identifying important themes and trends uncluttered with footnotes or Harvardised references, but supported with good select bibliographies.

Within the scope of a short review it is impossible to do justice to this book. I will highlight just one or two points. One that strikes me concerns the *processes* of urbanisation and the impulses that lay behind them, especially in the early stages. While some towns such as the *bastides* in France were deliberate creations, many towns before the 12th and 13th centuries evolved or grew more slowly, a bit like Topsy. Although not always explicitly stated, one can discern some of the complex threads behind this, and then see how the waves of population expansion and contraction, politico-economic shifts, and cultural dynamics affected towns into the Renaissance and post-medieval Europe. Prominent here is the economy, hardly surprising because people had to eat, drink and clothe themselves, but less widely acknowledged by historians, and sometimes archaeologists, is the role of urban location. Towns may be larger and more complex than villages but that

does not mean that the physical properties of their situation were unimportant. As with all settlements, physical geography, climate, natural resources, and the setting, in addition to economics, power structures and social dynamics, influenced growth and development. At times, especially in early phases, the physical setting must have been critical and it would be good to see that more widely acknowledged. In the same vein we might question the extent to which frontier locations impacted on urban development compared, for example, with towns situated in the heartland of a state.

These are really niggles, because this is an important book and it should be read and inwardly digested by archaeologists as well as historians. It is a thoroughly good read and comes at a paperback price that is affordable.

MIKE MCCARTHY (*University of Bradford*)

*Cartografie senza carte. Lo spazio urbano descritto dal Medioevo al Rinascimento.* (Di fronte e attraverso 853 – Storia). By Lucia Nuti. 17 × 24 cm. 176 pp. Milan: Jaca Book, 2010. ISBN 978-88-16-40853-1. Price: €22.00 pb.

*City and Cosmos. The Medieval World in Urban Form.* By Keith D Lilley. 17 × 24 cm. 256 pp., 19 colour pls, 46 b&w pls and figs. London: Reaktion Books, 2009. ISBN 978-1-86189-441-0. Price: £25.00, \$49.00 hb.

Literary descriptions, iconographies and maps are prime sources for the study of late-antique and medieval cities. They help us to reconstruct the appearance of cities through the mention or records of the design of streets, monuments or walls. If the social and political context of their authors is taken into account, they can also reveal important aspects of the mentality and culture of those who created cities. The main subject of the books reviewed here analyses how medieval cities were described, represented or interpreted by their contemporaries.

Lucia Nuti analyses different types of written descriptions of cities in Italy between late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages, a period when graphic representations were almost entirely absent. She studies the origins of these kinds of descriptions, the different contexts they served and their relationship to the real form of the cities they describe. The book is organised into three chapters that address different kinds of descriptions from late Antiquity to the 16th century: pilgrimage itineraries and catalogues of pagan monuments; legislative texts and *laudationes urbis* from the Communal period; and technical writings of the Renaissance. Chapter 1, 'La città dei viaggiatori: lo spazio urbano percorso', centres on late-antique descriptions of Rome, which were designed for pilgrims visiting martyrs' shrines and churches, but which also noted extant pagan monuments. These descriptions, widely diffused in Europe during the early Middle Ages, were inspired by Roman and late-antique itineraries and catalogues of monuments. The *Itinerary of Einsiedeln* is the most representative writing of this kind and key for reconstructing the characteristics of the street grid and the monuments (again including some classical porticoes, theatres, baths) to orientate users through Rome. Later itineraries, such as the early 12th-century *Ordo Romanus* of Benedict canonical, show how perceptions of the Roman ruins changed and how the papal administration used the symbolism of the Roman past to their benefit. The same Benedict perhaps penned *The Mirabilia Urbis Romae* (1140–43), a catalogue of classical monuments that includes palaces (a word used to describe an important building) and city walls. The great success of this kind of writing is evident in successive descriptions of how the city was evolving and reorganising its image up to the 16th century.

'La città in costruzione: lo spazio della linea retta' (ch 2) studies legislative and celebratory writings from the 12th–13th centuries, a period when many central and northern Italian cities reworked not only their political structure but also their urban identity thanks to new wall circuits and important civic buildings. Oddly Nuti omits here the magisterial paper by J K Hyde ('Medieval descriptions of cities', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library Manchester*, 48.2 (1966), 308–40). This chapter also considers the Testament of Pope Nicolò V, in which Giannozzo Manetti describes the 15th-century transformation of the Vatican city, and the major replanning of Rome under Sixtus IV.

Renaissance specialist writings for architects are core to chapter 3, 'La città dei teorici: lo spazio nella geometria della visione'. In a period when scientific and artistic culture dominated Italy, the architect assumed a fundamental role in the construction of new urban forms and their theoretical definition, drawing much on Vitruvius. From the beginning of the 18th century onwards, graphic representations became the main instrument of spatial communication.

Lilley, well known for his discussions on urban planning, here offers a cultural approach to the study of the urban form. His main objective is to understand how urban landscapes in Christian Europe were symbolically represented, constructed and experienced in the Middle Ages, particularly between the 9th and the 15th centuries, using textual evidence (theological, descriptions and historical texts) and medieval depictions. Richly illustrated, the book is organised in three parts: the first, 'City-Cosmos Imagined', shows how the urban form was used by contemporaries to understand their cities as a symbolic microcosm of the wider Christian Cosmos, with the concept of the celestial city, Jerusalem, influencing the conception and meaning of medieval cities and, more generally, the idea and representation of the whole Christian world. Lilley also examines the symbolic meaning of geometrical forms applied to some cities, particularly the square, the circle and their combinations.

'City-Cosmos Built' underlines how the material layout of some cities was connected with cosmological conceptions: using symbolic geometries when founding a new town approached the supreme act of cosmogony — the foundation of the world. Lilley describes the role of each protagonist (the political elite, surveyors and architects) in this process. These processes of urban design and planning visualised in material form the symbolic geometries of the ordered cosmos. In this sense Lilley builds upon discussions by historians like David Friedman and Enrico Guidoni who have explored the geometrical designs of 13th- and 14th-century new towns around Florence; Lilley differs in his explanation of these urban forms, offering a re-reading of medieval urban landscapes and their designs. The last part, 'City-Cosmos Lived', probes how these cities were experienced by contemporaries, as in how these symbolic forms were embodied by being traced out in performances of Christian urban processions — a fundamental activity in popular life from Late Antiquity onwards.

Well written, this book enriches previous approaches to townscapes taken by geographers by trying to make sense of the medieval city through the eyes of contemporaries. However, it must be remembered that Lilley's evidence reflects only a partial idea — mainly the ecclesiastical one — of the medieval population in a period when new civic and intellectual forces and thus also new and different urban images were emerging.

ALEXANDRA CHAVARRIA ARNAU (*University of Padua*)

*On Holy Ground. Liturgy, Architecture and Urbanism in the Cathedral and Streets of Medieval Florence.* (The Florence Duomo Project 1). By Franklin Toker. 23 × 29 cm. iv + 324 pp, 54 b&w pls and figs. London & Turnhout: Harvey Miller Publishers/Brepols, 2009. ISBN 978-1-905375-51-6. Price: €110.00 hb.

In 1969–74, excavations under the W end of Santa Maria del Fiore, the famous Duomo of Florence, revealed the remains of the earlier, late-Roman cathedral, Santa Reparata, which was gradually demolished between 1294 and 1440 to make way for the present building. These excavations were directed by the Canadian scholar Franklin Toker, who is now publishing the definitive reports on this work. The present volume is the first of four that have been advertised, and is in a sense a prolegomenon to the archaeological work — considering the evidence for S Reparata from textual and iconographical sources. Volume II (projected to appear in April 2011) will contain a full description of the excavated evidence; Volume III will reconstruct what the cathedral and baptistery were like in late Antiquity and the earlier Middle Ages; and Volume IV will place Florence's first cathedral in its widest historical and architectural context.

Almost half the present volume consists of the full publication, in their original Latin (without a translation), of two key manuscripts: the *Ritus in ecclesia servandi* of c 1180–90 and the *Mores et consuetudines canonice florentine* of c 1230. Both works are ‘ordinals’ — listings, by date and festival through the liturgical year, of the services, processions, chants, prayers, etc carried out by the canons within their cathedral, and in the city more widely. These texts have been used by scholars interested in the liturgy; but they are also useful for envisaging the interior of S Reparata, in particular the location and use of its various altars. In the present volume, Toker fully exploits both texts, and all other available written and pictorial evidence, in order to reconstruct the layout of the church and also of its various annexes (such as the canonry, the baptistery, the canons’ cemetery, etc). The *Ritus* and *Mores* are important for their precision on clothes, chants and ritual, and they shed much light on the spectacular and complex liturgy played out in the medieval church. Publishing them as part of the archaeological project represents a laudable attempt to integrate texts and physical remains, and to populate dead archaeological spaces with flesh-and-blood people doing real things. Yet what they tell us about the physical shape of S Reparata is limited, beyond featuring at least ten altars and a crypt. Valuable is Toker’s chapter on the processions through Florence led by the canons at different times during the liturgical year: these reflected both the city’s older topography of Florence (before its expansion beyond its Roman walls) and that of a city growing exponentially from the 12th century.

The projected four-volume publication is a serious enterprise that deserves praise, but it is a little over-blown. In his ‘Series Preface’, Toker even compares his ‘tetralogy’ to Lawrence Durrell’s *Alexandria Quartet* (p 6), and a little later describes S Reparata as ‘the *Titanic* of medieval churches’ (p 9). In truth, while S Reparata was an important building in its local context, it was, and is, nothing like as interesting and influential a church as many of those still standing, or excavated, in Rome, Milan and Aquileia. However, to complain that S Reparata is being over-sold, and somewhat over-published, is churlish, when so many excavations in Italy (including some of my own) remain unpublished in all but the most summary form.

BRYAN WARD-PERKINS (*Trinity College, Oxford*)

*Westminster Abbey Chapter House: The History, Art and Architecture of ‘A Chapter House beyond Compare’*. Edited by Warwick Rodwell & Richard Mortimer. 22 × 30 cm. xv + 302 pp, 259 colour and b&w pls and figs, 2 fold-out plans. London: The Society of Antiquaries of London, 2010. ISBN 978-0-85431-295-5. Price: £49.95 hb.

*The Lantern Tower of Westminster Abbey 1060–2010. Reconstructing its History and Architecture*. By Warwick Rodwell. 22 × 28 cm. vi + 106 pp, 111 colour and b&w pls and figs. Oxford and Oakville: Oxbow Books, 2010. ISBN 978-1-84217-979-6. Price: £15.00 pb.

A considerable debt is owed to Warwick Rodwell as Consultant Archaeologist to Westminster Abbey for both these publications, which, without question, constitute indispensable additions to the literature on the abbey. Rodwell organised the symposium on the Westminster Chapter House held at the Society of Antiquaries in July 2008, stimulated by a conference organised by Sarah Brown at York in 1999, which had highlighted the neglect of the chapter house as a building type, even though its functions lay at the heart of monastic life. The publication of the proceedings of the symposium provides an opportunity to highlight the themes that dominated the papers and to recognise the value of a fully multi-disciplinary monograph, covering all aspects of the building and its decoration, its historical context and the fascinating vicissitudes of its subsequent history up to its drastic restoration by Scott, which is fully elucidated for the first time in an important paper by Steven Brindle.

Rodwell opens the book with a very helpful discussion of the morphology and construction history of the chapter-house complex, including a full account of the archaeological investigation of the crypt and its possible functions. The documentary and

antiquarian graphic evidence is assembled and carefully sifted to recover as much as can be ascertained of the medieval structure, and Tatton-Brown shows how much useful comparative evidence can be found in the closest copy of the Westminster chapter house, at Salisbury. The architectural elements are analysed with characteristic thoroughness and authority by Wilson, who argues for a pivotal role in the history of English medieval architecture for the remarkable design of the chapter house. Rodwell follows this with a much-needed discussion of the typology and functions of two-storeyed chapter houses and treasuries, which are such a feature of English cathedrals in the 13th century.

The dominant theme throughout this collection of papers is the crucial personal role of Henry III in the design and decoration of the building, the context for which was set out by Binski (*Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets*, 1995) and more recently by Wilson (*JBAA* 161, 2008). Here, Carpenter argues that the chapter house was always intended to serve as a form of audience chamber where the king could deliver an address on important occasions, and this close royal connection is reinforced in other papers, such as the very full analysis of the exceptional tiled floor by Keen. The royal interest is also evident in the use of parts of the monastic buildings as a depository for the royal wardrobe, whose history is explored by Ashbee, and Hallam Smith provides a fascinating account of the subsequent use of the building as the Public Record Office until 1859.

Other contributions are on the style and iconography of the often neglected sculpture (Foster and Tudor-Craig) and of the wall paintings (Binski and Howard), concluding with the full publication of the remarkable survival of the reused wooden door from the Confessor's church. It is a fine collection and the publisher should also be congratulated on the number and quality of the illustrations.

In the second book, Rodwell provides the first archaeological analysis of the crossing of the Abbey church and the first comprehensive account of the complex history of the numerous schemes for its completion. While valuable in its own right, the book must also be seen as a prelude to the ambition of the present Dean and Chapter to commission a design to complete the crossing tower. Medievalists will be understandably anxious about the outcome of this ambition.

PETER DRAPER (*Birkbeck, University of London*)

*English Houses 1300–1800: Vernacular Architecture, Social Life.* By Matthew Johnson. 17 × 24 cm. x + 240 pp, 15 colour pls, 49 b&w pls and figs. London: Longman/Pearson, 2010. ISBN 978-0-582-77218-2. Price: £19.99 pb.

Matthew Johnson has produced a well-written and insightful book on late- and post-medieval rural houses which will be welcomed by a wide range of individuals and groups with an interest in vernacular architecture. Those familiar with his work on Suffolk houses will find that this new synthetic work adopts the same basic approach and, as Johnson freely admits, the core arguments remain unchanged. However, he has here adopted a broader national and, to a limited extent, international canvas on which to explore the wider trends in English house construction and domestic life.

Johnson's Introduction states a main concern to re-emphasise that 'houses are about human beings', and the study of vernacular house plans, materials and construction methods is important because it sheds light on historical processes and changes in social life. The next two chapters set out basic regional variations across England in landscape types, building materials, construction methods and timber-framing styles. This section is necessarily brief and reduces a great deal of complex material into broad patterns, particularly in the realm of settlement, agrarian regimes and social and economic structures in the countryside, although this simplification makes it more difficult to appreciate the subtle connections between house forms and local landscape contexts; there is certainly scope for further work in this area. The following five chapters describe late-medieval houses and changes between the 16th and 18th centuries. For Johnson, the grand narrative here is the 'rise of the middling sort': the widespread appearance of

well-built hall-houses in the South and East reflects the economic prosperity and independent social relationships characterising 'wood-pasture' regions, and the form of these houses shows a newly prosperous middling rank adopting the traditional spatial arrangements of the open hall to reinforce their authority and social position. Exactly the same group continues to prosper in the early modern period and adopts significant changes to their domestic environment, reinforcing the patriarchal authority within individual households in a wider context of the breakdown of communal social and economic relationships, but played out by the development of increasingly regionalised 'vernacular' modes of building in a confident rejection of emergent 'polite' modes of architecture. There is a welcome chapter on daily life and routines within post-medieval houses, including a discussion of ritual and folkloric practices within the home. Johnson likewise is determined to modify a top-down model of 'Georgianisation' in the 18th century which sees provincial buildings as lesser, naive versions of a national, 'Palladian' ideal, seeing rather an appropriation of the Georgian style to serve an emergent national identity alongside varied local needs in both the British regions and the colonial societies of British N America.

The huge amount of work undertaken on vernacular architecture makes any national overview which flags regional differences and social complexity a daunting task, and the trick here is to blend synthesis and readability. To this reviewer, overall Johnson succeeds well, although the lack of any sizeable urban content is disappointing. But the book certainly contains many stimulating ideas, presented in an accessible and engaging manner, which, most importantly, should encourage further research, debate and critical reflection.

CHRIS KING (*University of Nottingham*)

*Criminals and Paupers: The Graveyard of St Margaret Eyebriggate in combusto, Norwich* (East Anglian Archaeology 129). By Ann Stirland. 21 × 30 cm. viii + 45 pp, 38 b&w pls and figs, 17 tables. Dereham: NAU Archaeology/Historic Environment, Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service, 2009. ISBN 978-0-905594-47-7. Price: £9.00 pb.

*Life and Death on a Norwich Backstreet AD 900–1600: Excavations in St Faith's Lane Norwich*. (East Anglian Archaeology 133). By Iain Soden. 21 × 30 cm. viii + 65 pp, 24 b&w pls and figs, 12 tables. Northampton: Northamptonshire Archaeology, 2010. ISBN 978-0-9555062-1-5. Price: £11.00 pb.

*Ethics and Burial Archaeology*. By Duncan Sayer. 14 × 22 cm. 156 pp, 9 b&w pls and figs. London: Duckworth, 2010. ISBN 978-0-7156-3893-4. Price: £12.99 pb.

*Criminals and Paupers* is a site report primarily focusing on osteological results from a medieval (late 11th/early 12th to mid-15th century) parish cemetery in Norwich. This site is unusual in that the name of the associated parish church indicates that hanged criminals were buried here. The site was originally excavated in the late 1980s, but this report only contains the osteological results and a short final chapter on the archaeological and historical context. Furthermore, only inhumations (413 complete enough for analysis) are presented as the charnel has yet to be analysed. It is worth noting the delay between skeletal analysis and publication as the field has moved forward in the intervening years. The report comprises four chapters, two on the human skeletal remains by Ann Stirland. Included are numerous figures to illustrate the findings but the inclusion of a skeletal inventory would have been useful. The location of the site on the edge of urban Norwich, given its association with the gallows is indicative of a poor parish, although there is possible evidence that this parish was caring for sick individuals including some with leprosy and paraplegia. Unlike most cemeteries of this period, there are a number of multiple burials, some of which are prone and some graves containing evidence of clothing; Stirland proposes that these predominantly young males were the hanged men despite the unsurprising lack of skeletal evidence. This site is therefore important in providing an insight into the health of an urban lower class in medieval Norwich.



*Life and Death on a Norwich Backstreet* by contrast explores a higher-status burial ground associated with a Franciscan friary. After the Dissolution the site came to be used as gardens, helping to preserve the remains. The entire site was not excavated as this was a rescue excavation prior to building work. The report is divided into six chapters: 'Introduction', 'The Excavated Evidence', 'The Human Skeletal Material', 'The Finds', 'Economic and Environmental Evidence', and 'Discussion', but again lacks a skeletal inventory as an appendix. The primary context of this site is the burial ground, but sadly this is not reflected in the division of chapters with only two full pages devoted to the human remains. This is especially disappointing given some of the unusual burial practices evidenced here for example the ash-filled mouths. The demographic profile of the site is also unusual and may reflect the importance of the friary as an educational establishment for which it had an international reputation. There are few finds from the time of the monastic site, but prior to this the evidence indicates that this area was of relatively low socio-economic status in the late Anglo-Saxon period with backyard farms in an otherwise industrial setting, comprising principally iron-working. Gravel extraction also occurred between the Norman Conquest and establishment of the friary in the 13th century.

The third review volume, *Ethics and Burial Archaeology*, is a very personal impression of the British debate surrounding the excavation, analysis and reburial of human remains. It comprises (between a short introduction and conclusion) four chapters: 'Archaeology and Exhumation', 'Archaeology, Heritage and British Burial Law', 'Human Decency, Politics and Digging the Dead', and 'Display, Repatriation and Respect for the Dead'. It does not aim to set out new policy nor to discuss ethics in the philosophical sense; rather it considers the relationship between the living and the dead and contrasts. New World and British approaches. Numerous examples of specific situations are provided to highlight the problems, but the reasons for the excavation and analysis and the data that skeletal remains can provide, as evidenced in the skeletal reports above, are not dealt with in detail. This is a shame since readers without knowledge of bioarchaeology might have found a short well-referenced section on what can be learnt from skeletal remains useful for putting the rest of the text in context. Nevertheless, this book raises many interesting questions worthy of debate.

CHARLOTTE HENDERSON (*Durham University*)

*Exchanging Material Culture. Studies on Archaeology and History Presented to Frans Verhaeghe*. Edited by Koen de Groote, Dries Tys & Marnix Pieters. 30 × 22 cm. 384 pp, 186 colour figs. Brussels: Flemish Heritage Institute, 2010. ISBN 978-90-7523-0291. Price: €50.00 hb.

Festschrifts are not to everyone's taste and can be a hit-and-miss affair, but this tribute to Frans Verhaeghe is definitely a hit. It contains a diverse range of papers linked by two key themes, a shared valuing of medieval material culture as indicative of the complexities of human behaviour and a shared warmth and high estimation of one of Europe's leading medievalists. Admiration and respect shines through in every paper and in the work of the trio of editors, all former PhD students of and long-term collaborators with Frans. Twenty-four contributors from across northern Europe offer papers across three broad themes: material culture (16 papers), settlement and landscape (eight papers) and theory (one paper); these are topped-and-tailed by an opening overview of Frans' career and a closing bibliography covering the years 1968–2009. In a modest review it is impossible to do justice to all of these contributions, all of them sound, all of them stimulating. I will mention briefly some highlights, reflecting both the arbitrariness of my own interests and those key contributions that particularly demonstrate Frans' commitment to inter-disciplinary studies.

Janssen and Nijhof's paper is a model of a focused excavation report, communicating adroitly the main results of two excavations in s'Hertogenbosch of two 15th-century pottery kilns and their waste products. Two brick-built vertical updraught kilns with

central oval supports were excavated along with a workshop building; the second kiln is probably attributable to 'Robbrecht de potter', active between 1437 and 1461. The range of typical and special products is reviewed along with the integration of the pottery workshops into the urban topography and economy. Tying in the documentary evidence on 'Robbrecht' is one of its key features. This paper shares an approach with two of the book's other stand-out articles: firstly, Bartels focuses on excavations in Deventer, with finds including a statuette of St Anne with the Virgin and Child (an 'Anna Selbdritt'), the dating of which links it with occupation of the same property by one Richard Pafraet, printer of Deventer's first books. Secondly, Roesdahl's contribution deals with the endeavour by Étienne, abbot of St. Geneviève's, Paris, to obtain the necessary resources for a new lead roof. He wrote letters in 1188 to the king of Denmark and six of his magnates appealing for funds. The rhetoric includes an appeal to Danish guilt over their Viking ancestors at having sacked Paris and St Geneviève's. The paper would readily bear expansion to include English translations of the letters, with full notes. Hupperetz and Evans respectively write about the finds from a 17th-century cess-pit in Breda and rubbish disposal in medieval towns — papers that harmoniously call for more perceptive archaeological analysis of cess-pits, middens and waste disposal (including communal latrines).

Pieters' paper deals with a triple-fish symbol found on two objects from the medieval fishing village of Walraversyde (near Ostend, Belgium). I was immediately put in mind of the tri-rabbit symbol of the medieval tin-miners of Dartmoor, Devon and found as a sculptural element in some Dartmoor churches (notably Widcombe-in-the-Moor). Elaine Block's five-volume corpus of European misericords will surely furnish other examples of other creatures (and possibly further fish). Pieters inclines towards a Trinitarian explanation, but I would go further and see it as compatible with an apotropaic explanation; indeed, the two would comfortably reinforce each other in popular Christian thought. Metal-ewers are explored by Redknap, offering a review of their social purpose and context, with suggestions for future research priorities. A quartet of papers — Annaert on the Merovingian cemetery of Broechem, Callebaut on Ottonian Ename, de Groote on the development of the small towns of Aalst and Tys on moated coastal sites — range over the 6th–16th centuries and share a fusing and balancing of archaeology and history in tracing the territorial, economic, religious and political changes of Flanders, and taken together clearly form the heart of the book.

It is a handsomely produced volume, with full colour throughout and with a very reasonable cover price. It lacks an index and a list of illustrations and is not error-free, but the occasional typo and syntax-lapse (due largely no doubt to its being translated into English) do not detract from this stimulating, coherent and linked set of papers which should delight medievalists as much as no doubt it will its honourand.

MARK A HALL (*Perth Museum and Art Gallery*)

*Materializing Memory. Archaeological Material Culture and the Semantics of the Past.* (British Archaeological Reports International Series 1977). Edited by Irene Barbiera, Alice M Choyke & Judith A Rasson. 21 × 30 cm. 131 pp, 69 b&w figs, 4 tables. Oxford: Archaeopress, 2009. ISBN 978-1-4073-0509-7. Price: £32.00 pb.

This volume is a belated product of the 'Social Change, Stability and the Use of Memory in Past Societies' session held at the EAA conference in Lyon in 2004, and many of the contributors have connections with the Central European University (CEU) in Budapest. The papers cover periods from prehistory to the present, with a core group focusing on late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages. The underlying theme is an exploration of the material culture employed 'to transmit, preserve and invent memory in juxtaposition with social stability, change and transformations' (p 17).

The contributors treat 'material culture' in its broadest sense to include not only objects (prehistoric awls and burins – Choyke; Lombard grave assemblages – Barbiera; medieval relics – Horníčková; sacred standards – Spät), but also places (Lombard

Pavia – Majocchi; medieval Prague – Horničková; a street in Los Angeles – Rasson), monuments (prehistoric tombs – Kilmurray; churches and monasteries in Pavia – Majocchi), texts (Roman funerary inscriptions – Zsidi; the creation of tradition – Fiano, Majocchi; literacy's impact on ritual and objects – Spät) and dress (Zsidi, Spät). Each contribution successfully shows that material culture was integral to the perpetuation, or creation, of tradition – at the heart of which lie memories (real or fabricated).

The volume throws up new insights of interest to medievalists. I was particularly struck by Liam Kilmurray's assertion that in the Neolithic generations were shorter: 'Genealogies are strung out in shorter succession, age sets become elders quickly, and places become ancient sooner' (pp 47–8). His argument that the truncation of generations *required* the use of monuments in the transmission of social memory may have implications for the way we study parts of the Middle Ages (though note how some argue that archaeologists have persistently under-aged human skeletons). I was also impressed by Alice Choyke's argument that the patterns of wear on animal-tooth pendants might demonstrate that they were used for a long time, perhaps passed from one generation to the next as a materialisation of memory and tradition (pp 33–5). Other themes could have been developed more fully, particularly the relationship between text and memory. While described by Spät, no one really explores the implications of Jack Goody's argument that the power of writing lies in its ability to transmit information across time and space (*The Power of the Written Tradition* (Washington, 2000), 1–25). The kind of memories disseminated and preserved in Roman inscriptions from Aquincum (Zsidi) or Lombard ones from Pavia (Majocchi) seem very different (much more personalised/individualised?) from those encoded in prehistoric tombs at Newgrange (Kilmurray) or in bone hooks from early Neolithic Hungary (Choyke). What does this say about the relationship between the mode of communication, the transmission of memory and social reproduction? What about the articulation of memories and different modes of communication?

One final point — John Chapman opens the volume by suggesting that the 2004 EAA session represented 'a new point of departure' in the study of social memory (p 8). That may have been true then, but now most papers look like mainstream accounts of the way the past is appropriated, manipulated and even fabricated in the service of the present. In that context, one might conclude with the observation that the fabrication of the past, the invention of memories, was the theme of the lecture delivered by the great Eric Hobsbawm to CEU students at the opening of the 1993–4 academic year. He concluded that 'we must resist the *formation* of national, ethnic and other myths, as they are being formed' (*On History* (London, 1997), 9). Volumes like this contribute to that resistance.

JOHN MORELAND (*University of Sheffield*)

*The Image of Europe. Visualizing Europe in Cartography and Iconography throughout the Ages.* By Michael Wintle. 20 × 25 cm. xxiv + 502 pp, 33 colour pls, 147 b&w pls and figs. Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009. ISBN 978-0-521-88634-5. Price: £65.00 hb.

Michael Wintle's new book is an impressive, richly illustrated study of the image of Europe. It makes a broad temporal sweep, from Classical conceptions of 'Europa' through to 21st-century Europeanism and the unification of Europe as a political and economic entity. To take such a vast span requires sacrifices in terms of detail, and so although medieval Europe features here — with a chapter dedicated to the 9th to 15th centuries — there are other books that might be of more benefit to students of medieval archaeology, such as Robert Bartlett's *The Making of Europe*. Wintle uses maps, paintings, sculpture and other artistic forms to argue that the idea of Europe has an enduring iconography for Europeans across the ages, thus binding together a people through a shared common heritage despite their manifest differences. For good or for ill, Europe as a geographical

territory has been variously personified in visual and graphic art and politically manipulated to serve particular ends, whether military, religious or economic. Wintle's particular persuasiveness lies in his command of numerous sources (with many well-reproduced photographs and drawings accompanying the very readable text). For medievalists, however, it is Wintle's treatment of 'medieval notions of Europe', specifically, that may have most interest, and his interpretation of medieval cartographic and textual sources. Here, though, some of the nuance is lost, particularly on his use of maps.

Perhaps because of the naming of Europe on *mappaemundi* Wintle occupies himself with this one genre of medieval cartography, associating it, as many do, with religious doctrine of the Middle Ages set 'within a dominantly theological framework' (p 177). He offers a fairly traditional and well-rehearsed argument on *mappaemundi*, repeating the now standard typology of these 'world maps', differentiating between 'tripartite', 'quadripartite', and 'transitional' forms, and so borrowing much from the Chicago *History of Cartography* volume on the Middle Ages (ed Harley and Woodward). Wintle notes Roman influences and connections between such later medieval imagery and the late-antique and early medieval descriptions of the earth, by scholars like Orosius, Isidore and Alcuin. The reading of these maps and medieval geographies relies on a somewhat aged and generalised literature, rather than more specialist recent studies, notably by Patrick Gautier Dalché, Marcia Kupfer and Andrew Merrills, and consequently Wintle overplays the religious dimensions of *mappaemundi*. This means a more complex and rather more interesting medieval 'imagining' of Europe is overlooked, and instead Wintle asserts (predictably) that 'geography was relatively unimportant' to the medieval world-map and 'the religious message was infinitely more important than the literal geographical detail' (pp 172–3). Yet just a few pages later he presents an amazing anthropomorphic cartographic image of Europe and Africa of the 1330s, drawn by 'a priest from Pavia', Opicinus de Canistris, showing not only the Mediterranean world in a recognisable geographical form but also illustrating the fusing of geographical and religious ideas in 14th-century Europe in ways not so different to well-known *mappaemundi* examples. Further less familiar types of maps of the 'medieval world' would have given Wintle's discussion of maps more originality, as indeed is the case later on with this chapter when he explores the ethnographic and ideological implications of European associations with the sons of Noah — particularly Japheth — and the cultural significance in European art of the Magi. For those medievalists interested in questions of race and identity, these latter parts of Wintle's discussion of the Middle Ages are particularly insightful.

Overall, possibly a more challenging approach could have been taken by Wintle, not splitting 'the medieval' and 'the modern' but tracing connections and continuities across space and time. For, despite all the geopolitical changes that have occurred in Europe across the centuries, there is much in these historic artistic and cartographic forms that is also enduring, a familiar anxiety over what Europe really is and how those inhabiting it see themselves and others. To this end, *The Image of Europe* provides a fascinating and impressive journey across a continent, past and present, mapping out the contours of its imagined terrains.

KEITH LILLEY (*Queen's University Belfast*)

## Short Reviews

*Houses and Society in the Later Roman Empire*. By Kim Bowes. 14 × 22 cm. 120 pp, 28 b&w pls and figs. London: Duckworth, 2010. ISBN 978-0-7156-3882-8. Price: £12.99 pb.

Elite houses of the late Roman period, with their impressive arrays of richly appointed reception rooms and apsed halls, are generally seen as the palaces of local potentates, the architecture reflecting the increasingly formal and hierarchical structure that supposedly characterised late antique society. Furthermore, these large and splendid