

*Giuseppe Zecchini: Aezio: Ultima difesa dell'occidente romano. Centro ricerche e documentazione sull'antichità classica, monografie 8. "L'Erma" di Bretschneider, Roma 1983. 327 p. ITL 100.000.*

Un libro interessante, ma troppo lungo. Certo le intricate questioni connesse con la parzialmente disperata *Quellenlage* hanno indotto l'autore a trattare molto diffusamente ogni possibile aspetto. E l'ha fatto con onestà e serietà, per cui non si dovrebbe rimproverarlo troppo per la lunghezza delle sue dimostrazioni. In fin dei conti, ha prodotto una biografia, la cui simpatia verso l'argomento non arriva però all'entusiasmo. Il volume si può raccomandare a chi voglia ottenere un'immagine più completa della storia dell'epoca e della politica svolta dal 429 alla caduta di Aezio nel 454. Sono state incluse due appendici. Nella prima il Panegirico di Merobaude viene convincentemente datato all'autunno del 438, nella seconda l'autore spiega la *coniuratio Marcelliana* del 456/8 come tentativo dei senatori gallici di mantenere la loro influenza politica dopo la morte di Avito.

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*J.S. Richardson: Hispaniae. Spain and the Development of Roman Imperialism 218—82 B.C. Cambridge University Press, 1986. XI, 218 p. GBP 25.*

This book should be of considerable worth to those interested in Spain and matters relating to the Iberian peninsula. To be sure, it does not introduce any new arguments, nor does it deal with old arguments in a particularly new way. Mr. Richardson's book did, however, bring some new thoughts to mind. When reading the painstakingly careful descriptions of the exploits of the Roman conquerors in Spain, one cannot help thinking that this is like Vietnam, or Afghanistan. Take the case of Cato, for instance, an exemplary guardian of morals for generations, and active in Spain from 195 B.C. (p. 80ff.) — though it was lucky for him that in Imperial times there were no Song My trials.

It may seem ill advised to put forward such unhistoric parallels, but this is what the author does in the concluding chapter (p. 177ff.), where he states that the picture he wants to give of the Roman expansion in Spain after the victory against Hannibal can be compared to the spread of European imperialism from the 1870s on: "colonial empires were formed by 'the men on the spot' for personal motives". This is indeed a very unhappy parallel. As Mr. Richardson states at the outset (p. 1ff.), Roman imperialism is much discussed and various reasons (and apologies) are given for the expansion, and rightly so. But if there ever was a period when one can talk of countries seeking dominance because of powerful economic interests working within the state, then this period is surely the end of the 19th century. Blaming everything on the "men on the spot" is indeed a very misguided view. But in Spain, the "men on the spot" do play a great rôle, and Mr. Richardson gives this fact full emphasis. 'Hispaniae' is chronological in structure (with five Appendixes at the end, on topics like "Praetors and *provinciae* 197—95", "The sources of Appian's Iberikē" and "The Tabula Alcantarensis") and focuses on the Roman commanders, and praetors from 197 B.C. on (consulars from the 150s B.C.), in Hispania Citerior and Ulterior. This means the book is