

*Remo Gelsomino: Ferentinum nel sistema viario romano (primo secolo a.C. - quarto secolo d.C.)* Università degli Studi di Siena, Facoltà di Magistero, Dipartimento di teoria e documentazione delle tradizioni culturali, sezione scienze dell'Antichità. Collana di studi e testi 2. Herder, Roma 1986 (ma 1987). 93 p. ITL 28.000.

Si tratta di un diligente opuscolo di carattere compilatorio, e non lontano dal tipo di studi locali. Come da aspettarsi, si parla molto dell'*Itinerarium Antonini* e della *Tabula Peutingeriana*, e l'autore lo fa molto diffusamente. Poi egli mette i miliari CIL X 6887-6889 in rapporto con *Ferentinum Novum*: Traiano avrebbe costruito una strada da *Ferentinum* a *Ferentinum Novum*. Ma questa considerazione cade a causa della sbagliata concezione su *Ferentinum Novum*. La strada (o le strade) di cui si ha notizia nei miliari, semplicemente serviva per il territorio di *Ferentinum*; dove andasse non si sa.

Il volumetto non è privo di vari difetti caratteristici di questo tipo di studi. Ma su di essi non ci fermiamo. L'autore si mostra un genuino e fervente amatore della città ernica. Gli dobbiamo essere grati per la fatica di aver messo insieme un'interessante documentazione. — Manca nella bibliografia l'importante libro di W. Eck, *Die staatliche Organisation Italiens in der hohen Kaiserzeit*, München 1979 (spec. p. 83 sgg.). E nessun cenno al più recente contributo su Ferentino: *RPAA* 53-54 (1980-1982) 91-143.

*Heikki Solin*

*T.S. Brown: Gentlemen and Officers. Imperial Administration and Aristocratic Power in Byzantine Italy A.D. 554-800.* The British School at Rome, London 1984. XVI, 282 p. GBP 20.50.

I confess to be no specialist on the Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages, but as a student of Roman Italy I read this book with great interest and profit. It is indeed an excellent book, which can be recommended to anyone who wishes to have a look at the changes that took place in Italy from Antiquity to the Middle Ages. The author invites us to not exaggerate the "Byzantine" character of Italian society, for Byzantine Italy remained, at least north of Calabria, largely unhellenized. The major social and political changes were conducted in a framework inherited from the late Empire. In Byzantine Italy the movement away from Antiquity was more the result of internal development than of external influence. "Distinctive and dynamic social forms could evolve within a uniquely Roman society" (p. xii). Overall, Brown has

written an invaluable book, important both for ancient and mediaeval historians.

As I do not feel competent to give a thorough critical account of this book, I shall instead restrict myself to some minor remarks. On p. 44 the author gives some references to the movements of bishoprics from an old *civitas* to a newly fortified *castrum*. But in the list of the transfers that from *Tres Tabernae* to Velletri must be removed, for Velletri was an ancient centre in the area (a bishopric is attested from A.D. 465) while *Tres Tabernae* was of little importance and was only a temporary centre. In addition, to the admirable prosopographical index some further items from Capua could be added: Rugo vol. IV 104 (but perhaps from the 9th century, as Gray also thinks); and an unpublished inscription from Capua of a *Reparatus v.c.*, which, however, probably dates to the 540's (the date of another unpublished inscription from Capua in which an *Urbicus* is mentioned is also uncertain. – In the list of abbreviations on p. xiv *II* is missing (see also p. 256 under *Clarissima*); it would be preferable to choose a clearer abbreviation, e.g. *Inscr. It.* – p. 275: in CIL X 4502 one should read *Catelles* as gen. (I have seen the inscription) from *Catella*. – *P. Ital.* vol. II appeared perhaps too late to be considered.

Heikki Solin

*Erik Wistrand: Felicitas imperatoria. Studia Graeca et Latina Gothoburgensia XLVIII. Göteborg 1987. 114 p. SEK 100.*

In recent years the idea of *felicitas* has attracted much attention. It has been interpreted as a magical quality inherent in man or as a blessing given by the gods. The latter explanation has become prevalent especially since H. Erkell's penetrating study in 1952. But a number of problems remain. Professor emeritus E. Wistrand has now produced a monograph on the most important variety of *felicitas*, the *felicitas* of the supreme commander and later of the Emperor.

Wistrand's treatise is a historical analysis of the development of the idea. *Felicitas* was originally connected with *auspicia*, which at first were the privilege of the patricians. The gods conferred blessing on the general who had made sure of their favour by taking the auspices. This is the meaning of the old claim of the victories of a general won *auspicio imperio ductu felicitate*. But in Livy a change of view is observable. Instead of the *auspicia* and *felicitas* granted by the gods, success is ascribed to the general's competence and ability. The supernatural gives way to rationally explicable causes, a clear sign of the increasing secularisation of Roman thought. The famous antithesis of *virtus* and *fortuna*, in which the Romans almost invariably gave precedence