
Heikki Solin


Die groß angelegte Darstellung der Geschichte der Stadt Köln hätte kaum einen besseren Aufbau erhalten können. Unter den 13 geplanten Bänden nimmt der erste, der dem römischen Köln gewidmet ist, eine besondere Stellung ein, denn für ihn gelten ganz andere Voraussetzungen als für die übrigen Bände. Und man hätte keinen kompetenteren Bearbeiter des römerzeitlichen Köln finden können als Werner Eck, der nicht nur als ein Kölner Bürger die Geschichte seiner Stadt ausführlich kennt, sondern auch über die außergewöhnliche Gabe verfügt, das disparate Quellenmaterial, das wir besitzen, zum Sprechen zu bringen. Und es sei sofort gesagt, dass ein glänzendes Buch zustande gekommen ist, dessen besondere Börde der Blick auf die Eingliederung des römischen Köln, der Colonia Claudia Ara Agrippinensium, in die Reichsgeschichte bildet. Leider ist die Quellenlage nicht besonders günstig, aber Eck hat aus der lückenhaften Dokumentation all das herausgeholt, was möglich ist. Wir bekommen ein anschauliches Bild von Köln als Provinzhauptstadt, deren Statthaltern und ihrem Personal, vom Dekurionenrat und ihren Apparitoren, von den Augustalen, von der numerischen (Köln zählte etwa 150000 Einwohner), ethnischen und sprachlichen Zusammensetzung der Bevölkerung der Stadt. Alles in allem, ein äußerst anregendes Buch nicht nur für Kölner, die für die ältere Geschichte ihrer Stadt schwärmen, sondern für alle, die sich mit der Geschichte sowohl der Provinz Germania inferior als auch des ganzen römischen Reiches beschäftigen.

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The volume under review here surveys the lives and writings of a selection of Roman historians of the fourth and fifth centuries AD. Included are Latin writers as well as Greek, pagans as well as Christians. Considering the fact that most monographic overviews of Roman historiography accord very little attention to writers later than Ammianus Marcellinus, often cutting off in the late fourth century with the so-called division of the Roman Empire, Rohrbacher's book undoubtedly constitutes an important addition to the standard literature in the field. Hopefully it will also contribute towards shaping a new awareness of Roman history and culture beyond AD 395, a purely conventional terminus of modern scholarship frequently assigned far too much weight.

It should be made clear at the very outset of this review that R. has produced a carefully researched and very accessible work of scholarship although, in my opinion, he takes an overly restricted approach to his subject. In "treating only what seems still to be the core of the late antiquity" (p. 1), he has made a large number of very regrettable exclusions. It is quite true, as the author himself points out (ibid.), that the very concept of *Late Antiquity* is not always a very precise one with regard to its extension both chronologically and geographically, but at least in the Anglo-Saxon world, it has come to denote a reasonably well-defined period in a specific area. Since the publication of Peter Brown's seminal and highly influential study *The World of Late Antiquity: From Marcus Aurelius to Muhammad* (London 1971; cf. G. W. Bowersock et al. [eds.], *Late Antiquity. A Guide to the Post-Classical World*, Cambridge, Mass. – London 1999, ix) the late antique period is usually considered a distinct era in the Mediterranean World, extending from about AD 200/250 to at least the seventh century in the Late Roman (or Byzantine) Empire and in the western areas formerly constituting Roman provinces. As for the book under review here, a consequence of its narrow chronological scope is that many important and interesting historians nowadays generally associated with Late Antiquity – most notably Cassiodorus, Marcellinus Comes and Procopius – are left out of consideration. Whereas the author's disregard of the year AD 395 is commendable, he still assigns too much weight to the year AD 476 as the end of the Roman Empire. Whatever its political implications, which are still a matter for debate, the year does not by any means represent a significant cultural break in important areas in the West, including Italy.

It should also be pointed out that, also in dealing with the fourth and fifth centuries, i.e., the core of his period, the author makes several curious omissions. First, however, let us turn to the organization of the book. In addition to a substantial introduction (pp. 1–13), duly contextualizing the historiography of the period dealt with, the book consists of nineteen chapters. The first twelve focus on individual historians, each of whom is assigned to one of the following categories (see p. 11 ff.): a) classicizing historians, b) authors of *breviaria*, c) ecclesiastical historians and d) apologetic historians; no true historical biographers or writers of chronicles are included. Dealt with in separate chapters (1–12, pp. 14–149) are Ammianus Marcellinus (category a), Aurelius Victor (b), Eutropius (b), Festus (b), Eunapius (a), Olympiodorus (a), Priscus (a), Rufinus (c), Socrates (c), Sozomen (c), Theodoret (c) and Orosius (d). As several of these authors are little known to anyone outside the specialist community, whereas many well-known exponents of late antique historiography are
Les textes sont présentés dans leur rédaction originale, mais cela ne rend pas difficile leur lecture. À part l'index des sources antiques gréco-latines, un index analytique des sujets aurait aussi été le bienvenu. Souhaitons au savant éminent encore une fructueuse période de créativité au service de la recherche scientifique. Une nouvelle contribution, au moins, non encore insérée dans ce volume, nous est connue, la version écrite de son exposé lors d'un colloque pour honorer le centenaire de la naissance du grand historien finlandais Gunnar Mickwitz, tenu à Villa Lante, siège de l'Institut finlandais de Rome en 2005, et dont les Actes paraîtront prochainement.

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This book consists of 22 articles meant to illuminate various aspects of the complex and often confusing subject of law, legal proceedings and justice in ancient Greek societies. As is commonly known, our western legal systems owe much to Roman law, which, on many levels, was an organised unity with logical rules, and which is therefore easier for us to understand and accept. Things are different when we deal with the Greek world. The average student, at an early stage of Greek studies, comes up against legal matters and law courts, usually either through Aristophanes' comedies or speeches of Lyssias and Demosthenes which are still included in Greek curricula in most universities. Texts like Plato's "Laws", papyrological and epigraphical documents are left for the most dedicated students at an advanced level.

Perhaps because of this, the understanding of Greek legal phenomena is sometimes rather difficult, even to those otherwise familiar with Greek societies. My personal experience while teaching, e.g., speeches of Demosthenes and Lyssias has often been a feeling of confusion and outrage at the level of "injustice" and irrationality in the cases dealt within the speeches. This has, of course, also much to do with our sometimes anachronistic way of looking at antiquity. In papyrology, with which I am more familiar, one quickly finds out that the legal matters in Ptolemaic Egypt or in Petra in late antiquity have very little in common with phenomena found in classical Athens. Thus, a study explaining the background of Greek legal and putting the subject in its wider context is more than welcome.

The volume has been divided into five thematically connected parts, which cover almost all the aspects of the subject in a reasonably logical order. The first part, "Law in Greece", can be seen as a theoretical and historical background for the following chapters. Parts two and three concentrate on Athens. Part four presents the relatively sparse material on law outside Athens, including the Gortyn laws, and the last articles of the book discuss aspects of law within literary works.

In the opening chapter, entitled "the Unity of Greek law", M. Gagarin touches upon problems concerning the very concept of "Greek law": G. points out how the term itself has been seen as controversial, and how most Anglo-American scholars have avoided it for a long time (only two books have been published with the term "Greek law" in the title since 1950.) This is, of course, not the case with the term "Roman law". G. gives an interesting