

MALCOLM R. ERRINGTON: *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius*. Studies in the History of Greece and Rome. The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill 2006. ISBN 0-8078-3038-0. XII, 336 pp. USD 45.

As the author himself states, since the magnum opus of A. H. M. Jones appeared in 1964, late antiquity in general has experienced a boom in studies, but relatively little further attention has been directed to the functioning of the state in the same period, perhaps on the assumption that Jones had said it all. For his generation, perhaps he did. But Errington's extremely valuable book shows to what extent new evidence and a fresh approach on, say, legislative matters, can lead to new insights. It must be said at once: we are dealing with an excellent work. It presents a detailed investigation of the government and machinery of the late Roman state between the death of Julian in AD 363 and that of Theodosius I in AD 395. This is the period where the author sees the first phase of the split of the empire into East and West in AD 364, when Valentinian and Valens took over their separate spheres, an event that paved the way for the empire's irreversible division between Honorius and Arcadius on the death of Theodosius I in 395. Apart from an introduction, seven chapters are divided between three main parts. In Part I, titled 'Actors and Events', E first deals with dynastic successions, and in the next part, the frontier sectors and their diverse threats (Gaul and the Rhine, Illyricum and the Danube, the Eastern frontier, Africa). Part II, 'East and West' is dedicated not only to the imperial government, but also to the regional nature of imperial legislation. The second chapter looks at Rome and its varying importance (Valentinian I as a powerful ruler could disregard it, whereas the weaker Valentinian II listened more to senatorial views), and the next looks at Constantinople, which emerges as a proper capital city during this period. Part III, 'Religion and the State' deals with the crucial questions of the development in the relationship of church and empire, with two separate chapters, one on Valentinian and Valens, and one on Theodosius.

One central thesis in E's narration is that imperial action was guided more by practicality than by ideology – but does he go too far in this? Similarly E defines Valens' orientation with regard to church policy as pragmatic. And of Theodosius he says (p. 258) that he let himself be swayed far more by considerations of power and the future of his dynasty than by his religious beliefs. E's main emphasis is a narrative approach; he only seldom grapples with previous scholarship. One could point to some gaps in the Bibliography, but they are insignificant. To sum up, this is a most valuable treatise on a crucial period of the Late Roman Empire.

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*Res publica Veleiatium. Veleia, tra passato e futuro*. A cura di NICOLA CRINITI. Seconda edizione aggiornata. Monte Università Parma Editore, Parma 2006. ISBN 88-7847-019-8. IX, 380 pp. EUR 16.

Questo volume raccoglie alcuni testi stesi dai migliori conoscitori dell'Emilia occidentale antica. Si tratta della seconda edizione aggiornata del libro, nel frattempo giunto alla quinta edizione (MUP 2009), dedicato all'*ager Veleias*, un antico centro ligure, poi *municipium* romano. L'anima del progetto è Nicola Criniti, benemerito studioso del Veleiate (e di altri centri come Nursia) e autore, nel presente volume, di due importanti contributi, cioè "Oppidum