There are blemishes. The images are unclear, a line or more has dropped off the bottom of p. 29, and my copy lacked at least one page of index. Some references are imprecise, sometimes to a whole article or text, which will make it difficult for enthusiasts to pursue lines of enquiry (e.g. p. 163 n. 105). The *Life* of Theodore of Sykeon is introduced in the context of fourth-century religious violence as a counter-example of a holy man acting as a calming influence (p. 149); no chapter reference is provided, so that readers may not realize that the incident is probably about property boundaries in a Galatian village. It is also two centuries later than the material from Athanasius, Chrysostom, and Libanius, which it is being set against, and doubts might be raised about its comparability.

It would be wrong to end on a negative note. The topics which G. & H. have chosen to cover are presented in a clear and stimulating manner, and this should be a standard element on late Roman reading lists for a good time to come.

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## ROME IN THE FOURTH CENTURY A.D.

J. CURRAN: *Pagan City and Christian Capital. Rome in the Fourth Century*. Pp. xx + 389, ills. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000. Cased, £48. ISBN: 0-19-815278-7.

John Curran's book exhibits a degree of sheer sloppiness that seems surprising in an Oxford Classical Monograph. At the merely technical level, Mommsen's standard edition of the *Chronica Minora* 1 (1894) is habitually cited by the abbreviation '*MGH* I' (e.g. pp. 43–9 nn. 1, 4, 10, 30) or '*MGH* i' (e.g. pp. 125–32 nn. 53, 82, 86, 88, 98)—as if it were not the ninth volume in one of the many separately numbered sub-series that comprise the Monumenta Germaniae Historica (in this case, the *Auctores Antiquissimi*). Misunderstandings of simple Latin abound: the dating formula *his imper*(*atoribus*) = 'in their reign' is rendered 'by these emperors' (p. 44); the adverb *prius* in Damasus' epigram on Peter and Paul (*Epigrammata* 20 Ferrua) is mis-translated as 'first' instead of 'formerly'; the phrase *eundem nominatum praetorem diem functum esse* is taken to refer to 'an incumbent praetor' in an imperial constitution which discusses whether daughters as well as sons are liable for performing the *munera* of a man nominated praetor who dies before assuming office (p. 231, on *CTh* 6.4.17). Simple factual errors are equally frequent: a single table confuses both Constans with Constantius and Constantine with his son Constantinus (p. 226); Paul of Thebes, who was invented by Jerome as a predecessor of Antony, is turned into 'Saint Anthony's most famous disciple Paul' (p. 275); and the exile of Liberius is lengthened from its attested two years to three (pp. 131–5, cf. *CSEL* 35.2.3–8; on the actual dates, see 'The Capitulation of Liberius and Hilary of Poitiers', *Phoenix* 46 [1992], 256–65). Bad judgement is also on frequent display. C. accepts too much outright fiction from the *Historia Augusta*; and, although he claims with some justice to apply 'new perspectives' that have revealed a more complex fourth century than was traditionally assumed (pp. vi–viii), he often reverts to old-fashioned modes of interpretation as soon as he extends his purview beyond the walls of Rome: thus he asserts that Constantius was 'a fervent Arian' without explaining what he means by this slippery term (p. 130). He also commits a howler for which even an undergraduate would justly be pilloried. C. states that in 238 the emperors Maximus and Balbinus 'are reported by the usually reliable Dio to have

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https://doi.org/10.1093/cr/53.1.180 Published online by Cambridge University Press

divided the office of *pontifex maximus* for the first time' (p. 14). Dio, of course, ended his history of Rome with his second consulate in 229 and his return to Bithynia; what C. attributes to 'the usually reliable Dio' is in fact a footnote added by E. Cary to his Loeb translation of the passage of Dio that C. purports to cite (53.17.8).

Nevertheless, despite carelessness, inaccuracy, and an often injudicious approach to the general history of the fourth century, C. has much of real value to say about the city of Rome at that time. He rightly emphasizes the rôle of Septimius Severus in shaping the public space of the city (pp. 5–9, 24–7) and of Maxentius in providing the urban context for the subsequent activities of Constantine (pp. 50–68). His survey of the buildings constructed in Rome by Constantine and bishops of Rome in the fourth century, on which he spends two chapters, is a sensible and helpful digest of the work of others, especially Charles Piétri and Richard Krautheimer (pp. 70–157), even though he follows conventional modern opinion in assuming that Constantine commissioned the building of the Old Saint Peter's while registering at least some of the contrary evidence and noting Piétri's later dating (pp. 109–14). Perhaps the most illuminating chapters are those on religion and the Circus Maximus in the fourth century (pp. 218–59), and asceticism and the Roman aristocracy (pp. 260–320). Even here, however, C. fails to use relevant German scholarship where it would have helped him most. Most obviously, Hermann Usener's classic *Das Weihnachtsfest*[2] (Bonn, 1911), pp. 273–81, would have saved him from mis-stating the day on which Marcellina, the sister of Ambrose, took her vows as a nun (p. 229 n. 61, citing Ambrose, *De Virginibus* 3.1) and would have drawn to his attention the important fact that the entry 'natus Christus in Betleem Iudeae' under 25 December in the codex-calendar for 354 (*Chr. min.* 1.71) is the earliest clear evidence that the birth of Jesus was deliberately and artificially made to coincide with the pagan *natalis Invicti*.

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## SPANISH ÉLITES

M. Navarro Caballero, S. Demougin (edd.): *Élites hispaniques*. Pp. 297, ills. Bordeaux: Diffusion de Boccard, 2001. Cased, frs. 301.75. ISBN: 2-910023-23-0.

This volume, the product of a conference held in Bordeaux, contains fifteen papers in French and Spanish. Three main themes are covered—the origins and nature of Hispano-Roman aristocracies, the rôle of such groups as vectors of Roman cultural values, and the nature of their power. The work ends with a rich bibliography.

Despite the title, not all the Iberian peninsula is covered here. The papers focus in the main on the province of Baetica and the southern parts of Lusitania (Merida is the subject of two papers). There are also two specialized papers on the Ebro valley. There is no coverage, save in passing, of central or north-western Spain. Even papers with general titles, such as Stylow's interesting contribution on the rôle of honorific statues in aristocratic life, have a more local focus than is at first apparent. Given the nature of the peninsula, this is perhaps inevitable. It is, however, a pity that this diversity is itself not used more to explore possible differences between aristocracies in these diverse areas. Nor, though Alföldy raises the issue in his introduction to the first section, is

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