hoped that many of the older discussions of the Palmyrene regime may now be put to rest, and that we can move on from the excellent starting point that H. offers.

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## CAPPADOCIA

R. VAN DAM: *Kingdom of Snow. Roman Rule and Greek Culture in Cappadocia*. Pp. ix + 290, map. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002. Cased, $49.95/£35. ISBN: 0-8122-3681-5.

Van Dam refers in his acknowledgements to 'this trilogy of books', of which *Kingdom of Snow* appears to be one. No information about them appears under his name in the bibliography. On p. 4 we learn that the three volumes are *Families and Friends*, about the family relationships and friendships of the Cappadocian Fathers; *Becoming Christian*, about the impact of Christianity on Cappadocian society; 'and this one about Roman rule and Greek culture'. So the companion volumes must be forthcoming—and I await their appearance with interest.

*Kingdom of Snow* is in turn divided into three subsections, each with its own introduction: 'Badlands' (pp. 13–69), 'Empire and Province' (77–156), and 'Culture Wars' (159–204). The distinction between the content of the first two subsections is not clear; the third, however, reveals itself as a definite study of the idea of 'culture' in a threeway comparison between Emperor Julian, Basil of Caesarea, and Gregory Nazianzen.

V.D. attempts to broker between a Church-based study of the Fathers and a secular academic treatment of Cappadocian history. He states his intentions on p. 4:

> These investigations attempt to combine close reading of the texts with a sense of the larger historical and cultural rhythms of the region. They also hope to demonstrate the advantageous intersection of ecclesiastical texts with social and political history. Patristics scholars need to demonstrate a greater awareness of the realities of Greek and Roman society, and social and cultural historians need to acquire a deeper familiarity with the potentialities of theological and ecclesiastical texts.

In general, V.D. adopts a moderately secularist reading of the Fathers and of their Christianity, slipping occasionally into a reductionist and dismissive tone.

*Kingdom of Snow* proceeds thematically rather than chronologically. Thus the narrative wanders backwards and forwards over the centuries and within the fourth century, as it visits and revisits a variety of social, geographical, political, and historical interests. Perhaps it is inevitable that such an anecdotal manner slips into what one might call 'pluperfect history'. It is a disconcerting, if not unamusing, feature of the book that the narrative frequently 'restaggers' itself into prior historical strata. Single paragraphs can be studded with the auxiliary 'had', e.g. pp. 66–7 [square brackets and bold emphases are mine]: 'Digenes **had** abruptly interrupted his conversation with the emperor [post-ninth century A.D.] to strangle a menacing lion. Gregory of Nyssa's friend **had** kept tame fish at his rural villa as a reminder of his local domination [fourth century A.D.]. Digenes now impressed an emperor by killing a lion . . . Long ago, when a huntsman **had** once saved the Persian king from a lion, he **had** received all Cappadocia as his reward [fifth century B.C.]'. It is not easy to see how this late legend of Digenes Akrites fits into any historical argument. Instead, we seem to have a literary meditation woven around the theme of 'highlander'. Similarly, the

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whole narrative is marked by redundancies and a lack of consistency, as if it were a series of independent essays not quite properly put together.

A few points of issue. If Julian served as a reader in the liturgy (p. 98), this was one of the minor orders and he was most certainly baptized. So the addition '. . . and may have been baptized' is a slip. In respect of this, it seems a little precious to speak of Julian's being tainted with the 'accusation' of religious apostasy (p. 159).

It is curious that while V.D. calls Demophilus, Valens' creature, 'the Arian bishop' (p. 144) and speaks of 'Arian and Arianizing doctrines' (p. 150), he studiously refrains from applying such definitive terms to Valens or Modestus, and treats the Fathers' theology as strictly a matter of 'doctrinal preferences'.

On pp. 181–6 V.D. shows no awareness of the important Christian and ascetic influences in Basil's own family that were antecedent to his classical education. Perhaps his book *Families and Friends* may remedy this lack.

The lasting benefit of this book for me is in a closer acquaintance with the emperor Valens, the prefect Modestus, and the vicar Demosthenes, and in a better grasp of their varied jurisdictions and that of provincial governors; I have gained a better sense of Basil's and Gregory Nazianzen's political and civic context; and I understand more clearly why Cappadocia became something of a staging post between Constantinople and Antioch in the mid-fourth century and ceased to be so afterward. Thus *Kingdom of Snow* is like a photographic negative, with all the background figures and events in the history of the Cappadocian Fathers brought into the foreground, with the Fathers themselves made to recede somewhat into their milieu.

The University of Pennsylvania Press has produced a handsomely sewn hardback, although with some loose threading at the bottom of the spine in my copy. The font size seems a little small. The book is well proof-read. I noticed a very few confusions over spelling.

The narrative covers about 200 pages (pp. 1–204), with several blank pages and interleaves between sections. Endnotes (pp. 207–49) are chosen over footnotes. Much care has gone into their content and arrangement. Noteworthy points in the narrative are saved for one endnote at the end of each paragraph. Relevant pages of the narrative are indicated in the endnotes header. The thorough referencing in the endnotes is surely the most praiseworthy feature of the work.

The bibliography is divided into 'Editions and Translations' (pp. 252–60) and a select 'Bibliography' of studies (pp. 262–80), followed by the Index (pp. 281–90).

Since the book frequently deals with the nexus between history and geography, it might have been helped by several maps including details such as Roman roads, the Eastern frontier, military camps, and metropolitan sees. As it is, the single map duplicated in the end-papers is welcome but very general.

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## IBERIAN SANCTUARIES

A. Nünnerich Asmus: *Heiligtümer und Romanisierung auf der iberischen Halbinsel. Überlegungen zu Religion und kultureller Identität*. Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 1999. DM 128. ISBN: 3-8053-2593-2.

Religion and cultural identity have become increasingly important issues in the study of ancient societies in recent years. This is particularly true of the Roman empire, where the rich data from provinces like Italy, Gaul, Achaea, and Britain have been

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