quoted from Tabari; although the Nemara inscription is discussed (p. 199), this much earlier piece of evidence is not cited in full. The fifth chapter is another high-point of the work, dealing with shared interests of the two powers. One of these is the area of trade and the measures agreed upon by the two sides to regulate this, largely in the interests of security, but also for economic reasons. The other series of extracts concerns the Caucasus region, the source of so many disputes. Chapter 6 analyses the religious policies of the two powers. The authors concentrate on developments within Persia, stressing the close links which grew up between the king and the Zoroastrian clergy, a situation paralleled in the Roman empire. There is also a section on the position of Christians within the Persian empire (pp. 245–50), focusing chiefly on the fifth century. The final chapter offers a brief discussion on commmunication between the two powers, such as the transfer of ideas through the resettling of captive peoples. The book concludes with a bibliography, a list of Sasanian kings, a chronological table, a somewhat eccentric glossary (only seven pages in length), and first-rate indices. The lack of any bibliography of the primary sources is striking, although the footnotes in the text provide some orientation concerning the texts cited.

This is without doubt a book from which both the general reader and the expert will derive benefit. The translations provided, all original, follow the ancient texts closely. However, there are a number of problems inherent in the work. The thematic structure has advantages, allowing for interesting discussions of (for example) the evolution of diplomatic relations or of trade between the two powers, but it also makes for a certain amount of repetition, e.g. concerning Khusro I's invasion of the Roman East in 540 (pp. 60–1, 126–8). It also results in an inevitable unevenness of treatment: while the cities taken by Khusro in 540 are twice discussed, there is no mention at any point of the significant engagements at Dara and Callinicum in the 530s. And while the range of materials chosen for the book is commendably broad, the selection of literary extracts is remarkably narrow and dominated by classical sources such as Procopius, Ammianus, and the *SHA*. While four excerpts from the much later Arab historian Tabari are given, the only Syriac sources presented are two extracts concerning the martyrdoms under Shapur II. Although frequent reference is made to A. Luther, *Die Syrische Chronik Josua Stylites* (Berlin, 1997), no citation from this vital source is offered, nor are there any extracts from John of Ephesus. Nevertheless, W. & D. have produced a very useful volume, which is accessible enough to be used by the general public (as is the editors' intention), but detailed and up-to-date enough in its scholarship as to be of use also to researchers more familiar with the field.

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## LATE ANTIQUE RULERS

F. Kolb: *Herrscherideologie in der Spätantike*. Pp. 274. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2001. Paper, €19.80. ISBN: 3-05-003432-7.

Kolb's work on the ideology of the ruler in late antiquity presents itself as a 'first survey' of the field, introducing 'some new ideas' and providing a basis and an encouragement for more detailed study (p. 10). The book thus is relatively short, and consequently the two terms of the title, 'Herrscherideologie' and 'Spätantike', have to be understood restrictively. K. is concerned exclusively with the ideology and legitimization of imperial rule, leaving aside potentially interesting comparisons with the ideological foundations of power in both the Christian and the bureaucratic élites

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of the later Roman empire. Late antiquity for K. is essentially the period from the first tetrarchy to the end of the fourth century.

The book divides into two halves of more or less equal length. The first provides the promised survey of the development of imperial ideology: the tetrarchs, Constantine and Constantine's successors. The second part of the book gives twenty-seven texts and reproductions of various objects (coins, statues, monuments, etc.), with extensive and often interesting commentary, which illustrate various elements of imperial ideology as discussed in the survey. Illustrations are of relatively small size, but of acceptable quality, texts are only given in German translation, which saves space, but forces the reader who wants to do some more detailed study to return to the respective standard editions.

In the first section on imperial ideology under the tetrarchy K. presents the tetrarchic model not as innovative in all its aspects, but as a combination of various ideological trends emerging from the third century. This in itself is seen as justifying the presentation of the tetrarchic emperor as something 'new'. K. insists on the growing importance of ceremonial, especially sacrally underpinned ceremonial, as a replacement of the dynastic and military legitimacy of the early empire. The new divine legitimacy of the emperors allows the successful negotiation of power within an ordered imperial college which replaces earlier, more 'messy' arrangements of shared rule. In his discussion of court ceremonial and imperial self-representation—practical and ideological—K. traces the visible aspects of his new, ideologically legitimized tetrarchic emperor. What might seem to be missing in this first section is a systematic attempt to explain why this new model of imperial ideology functions only theoretically. Why do real, not fictional, divine, dynastic legitimacy, and personal, not shared, military charisma reassert themselves immediately after the retirement of Diocletian?

The section on imperial ideology under Constantine starts with the observation that although Constantine uses the dynastic principle as his main source of legitimacy, ideological components of the tetrarchy, like the concepts of *similitudo* and *concordia*, continue to be used. K. also shows that despite the growing importance of Christianity under Constantine, the use of divine concepts to legitimize imperial rule remains relatively unchanged from the tetrarchy. From the *similitudo* between emperor and Sol/Apollo, Constantine moves easily to the *similitudo* between emperor and Christ. With his burial among the relics of the twelve apostles, Constantine presents himself both as a thirteenth apostle and as a successor of Christ. Ideological concepts and forms which relate emperor and god can serve both in a pagan and a Christian context. K. also insists on the importance of the development of Constantinople, where for the first time an imperial capital is planned around the emperor and his court at the centre. The most important conclusion the second section draws is indeed the observation that Constantine continues to use all the traditional elements which legitimize imperial power, both material and ideological, and that a Christian interpretation of some of these by contemporaries is merely one possibility.

The last section on Constantine's successors traces the continuing importance of the dynastic principle, but also shows the importance of a 'correct' proclamation by the imperial army. K. only briefly touches on later developments where the senate and the people of Constantinople replace the army as the main elements of a 'correct' proclamation. The concept of *concordia* is not abandoned, but imperial representations increasingly develop elements (different types of diadems, for example) which express a clear and openly declared hierarchy between co-emperors. Imperial costumes and insignia are discussed in great detail, following among other things the

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emergence of Christian elements. K. shows that despite a development towards the 'imperator Christianissimus', emperors after Constantine retain elements of divinity in their ideology and court ceremonial. Traditional and Christian imperial ideology are to some extent compatible: Theodosius' epithet 'divus', for example, can be interpreted by Christians as merely implying an exalted position of the emperor. K. insists, however (against, for example, N. McLynn), that some bishops like Ambrose do take exception to the sacral elements of late Roman imperial ideology and actively attempt to change them.

Overall, K.'s study gives an interesting and detailed descriptive account of the development of late Roman imperial ideology, but—due to its survey character—provides relatively little analytical discussion of the political, social, or economic motivations of continuity and change in the image of the emperor.

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## A COMPACT CONSTANTINE

A. MARCONE: *Costantino il Grande*. (Biblioteca Essenziale Laterza 30.) Pp. viii + 142. Rome and Bari: Editori Laterza, 2000. Paper, €8.26. ISBN: 88-420-5966-8.

Arnaldo Marcone deserves considerable praise. To write a readable, concise, and sensible biography of the emperor Constantine in comfortably under 30,000 words is itself a signal achievement. It deserves both praise and admiration. And like M.'s account, his Constantine is clear-thinking, reasonable, and straightforward.

M. steers a careful and nicely judged historiographical course. There is an ever-present risk that a 'no nonsense' Constantine will veer towards either the knowingly cynical politician of Hal Drake (*Constantine and the Bishops: The Politics of Intolerance* [Baltimore, 2000]) or the slightly bewildered but basically well intentioned monarch of A. H. M. Jones (*Constantine and the Conversion of Europe* [London, 1972]). M. skilfully avoids both these Constantines. His is more charmingly pragmatic. An emperor who moves steadily and assuredly towards the re-unification of the Roman Empire, towards Christianity, and through the major events of his reign (the Donatist dispute, the war against Licinius, the Council of Nicaea, the foundation of Constantinople). Here is a hard-working military man always on the look out for the workable compromise, but one also capable of genuine religious sentiment.

M.'s Constantine also shies away from extremes. Hostile accounts are to be handled with care. The claim of the late fifth-century historian and pagan sympathizer Zosimus (2.29.3) that Constantine converted to Christianity in an attempt to clear his conscience after ordering the death of his son Crispus and wife Fausta (who were alleged to be lovers) is dismissed as 'un'invenzione maligna' (p. 88). Nor is Constantine to be seen as an emperor peculiarly susceptible to divine visions: either of Apollo or of Christ. Such accounts are to be put firmly in their literary and ideological contexts. 'Tanto le visioni quanto i segni celesti sono peraltro del tutto compatibili con lo spirito del tempo, che richiedeva un imperatore protetto e ispirato dall'alto' (p. 42). The ecstatic, Damascene vision of a cross in the sky (as brilliantly narrated in Eusebius' *Life of Constantine* 1.28–32) is replaced by a more decorous and—perhaps to modern readers—more attractive expression of belief. 'Costantino aveva una sua sensibilità religiosa che si nutriva di presagi e di emozioni' (p. 42).

And this is undoubtedly and attractively reasonable. But for all M.'s muting of the

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