

The account of Agnes, for example, conflates the sometimes opposing views of Ambrose of Milan, Prudentius, and the anonymous homily and *Passio* of Agnes, while the differences across a similarly diverse dossier for Laurence receive telegraphic acknowledgement in the footnotes but not consideration in the text. Given G.'s sensitivity to issues of representation, a consideration of the genealogies and disagreements in the hagiographical 'conversation' about each saint would be very welcome indeed.

With ch. 5, we are back in Africa, for a lively consideration of the arrival of the relics of Saint Stephen at different sites in the decade after their discovery in Palestine during the Synod of Diospolis in A.D. 415. We have now come full circle: the early Christian themes of martyrdom and the miraculous are brought together through the narrative alchemy of relic cult, with the holy dead functioning posthumously as miracle-workers through the perceived *virtutes* of their earthly remains. Ch. 6, finally, argues that the dynamics which G. has illustrated with regard to the representation of the martyr's authority in textual sources can be found at work in visual sources such as sculpture and painting, although the 'visual poetics' of late Roman narrative should not be taken to imply that every poem is evidence for a lost work of art.

G. has intentionally framed a series of questions in *Making Martyrs* instead of proposing firm answers, but given the very difficult nature of the evidence, whether in the case of problematic pre-Constantinian texts (many of which claim, often implausibly, to be eyewitness accounts and/or derived from pro-consular *acta*) or the elusive post-Constantinian texts (many of which, such as the anonymous *Passion of Agnes*, could have been written at any point between the death of Theodosius and that of Justinian), this is to be expected. What is abundantly clear, however, is that the martyr was a slippery beast, who could never entirely be controlled by the impresario who spoke on his or her behalf.

At the same time, not even the martyr could control how his or her death would be understood. Here G. might have done well to consider Lucian of Samosata's astonishing parody, *The Death of Peregrinus*, a classic of martyrdom studies thanks to Lucian's firm grasp of the 'career path' of the early Christian martyr, albeit from a deeply unsympathetic point of view. (Lucian was one of the few pre-Constantinian pagan writers even to notice the phenomenon of Christian martyrdom; this said, Lucian was catholic in his dislikes, offering a similarly nasty send-up of the pagan holy-man Alexander of Abonoteichos.) As with the two versions of Marculus, the parody of Peregrinus may well have competed with a now-lost narrative commemorating him as a saint. Lucian's Peregrinus is a ne'er-do-well who, during the run-up to the Olympic games of A.D. 165, discovers the willingness of Christians to wait hand and foot on their holy men and decides to try his hand, offering as his proof of sanctity the claim that he will jump to his death on a blazing pyre at the games themselves. Sadly for Peregrinus, the Christians are all too willing to be gulled by a charlatan of his ilk, but they have the last laugh when Peregrinus paints himself into a rhetorical corner and is compelled to take the jump as advertised, instead of quietly making away with their money. Lucian's sharp sense for the currents of power between speaker and audience, and the role of representation and Greenblattian 'self-fashioning' is very much in line with G.'s approach, although Lucian clearly sees the audience as an equal match for the speaker where the dynamics of power are concerned. But he would have agreed with G.'s assessment: 'The *spectacle* of the martyr *acta*, its performance in reading and sermonic exposition . . . could, on a variety of levels, move, evoke, and fail to take effect all at the same time' (53).

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L. ELLIS and F. L. KIDNER (EDS), *TRAVEL, COMMUNICATION AND GEOGRAPHY IN LATE ANTIQUITY: SACRED AND PROFANE*. Aldershot/Burlington: Ashgate, 2004. Pp. xix + 164; illus. ISBN 0-7546-3535-X. £42.50.

Travel in Late Antiquity, at least for some of the most striking characters encountered in the course of this book, was something to be avoided. For the distinguished Roman senator Symmachus, for instance, travel was a highly unwelcome part of public life. Long distance communication through letter writing, however, was a valued and crucial part of both public and private life in Late Antiquity. The papers gathered in this volume vary in their subject, the three linked themes of 'travel, communication and geography': there are symbolic and 'real' journeys, there are people who like to stay at home as well as those who like to get about, and the travel encountered is both 'sacred and profane'. Approaches also vary, from a focus on the material evidence for communication networks in the shape of milestones (Ray Laurence) to a study of

episcopal communication networks using concepts derived from the history of information (Claire Sotinel). The wide range of papers included is owed to the origins of the book in the fourth biennial session of the conference 'Shifting Frontiers in Late Antiquity', held in 2001. The editors have shaped the contributions into three sections and added introductory material, including an essay by John Drinkwater, in an attempt to give the book the consistency often lacking in books of conference proceedings. Different readers will come to the volume looking for different things and will find different essays to interest them. Here I shall draw out themes from several of the papers which this present reviewer found most compelling, rather than attempting a comprehensive survey. However, taken together, these observations give a sense of the variety of experience of late antique travel and communication.

Cam Grey's paper 'Letters of recommendation and the circulation of rural labourers in the late Roman West' is unique in the collection in reminding us, importantly, that it was not only the élite who travelled in Late Antiquity. Largely through an analysis of letters Grey shows that agricultural labourers were able to create and maintain relationships with landowners that 'were fluid, many-faceted and open to negotiation' (26), and that they were able to take advantage of horizontal axes of communication and alliance, as well as being enmeshed in vertical alliances themselves. As Grey reminds us 'The role of the masses in the late Roman Empire, at least, was not merely to be led, exploited and dominated by elites' (36).

The need for the élite of the later Roman Empire to travel and communicate is examined by Scott Bradbury's contribution 'Libanius' letters as evidence for travel and epistolary networks among Greek élites in the fourth century'. Bradbury argues a point that is present, either implicitly or explicitly, in many of this volume's papers, that travel and communication were more necessary for élites in the Later Empire than they had been for their predecessors. Despite Libanius' professed dislike of travel (another one!) it is clear from Bradbury's examination of his corpus that Libanius' students needed to maintain networks of communication outside their local context in order to get ahead. While Libanius famously lamented the 'flight' of the best men from their cities, this was a fact of life in Late Antiquity.

While the final tranche of papers in the volume focuses on late antique pilgrimage, Gillian Clark in 'Pilgrims and foreigners: Augustine on travelling home' shows that the concept of *peregrinatio* as 'sacred travel' in Late Antiquity needs to be reassessed, at least in the case of Augustine. For Augustine (yet another unwilling traveller) *peregrinatio* was the state of the Christian soul on earth, in Clark's formulation: 'not a purposive journey in search of holiness or to a promised land, but the opposite: it is being away from where you belong' (154). While Augustine famously sent two quarrelling clerics for a trial by oath at the shrine of St Felix in Nola, Southern Italy (Augustine, *Ep.* 78), his evaluation of the worth of pilgrimage in general must be understood as lukewarm at best.

Throughout the book's papers travel appears as a necessary evil and letters as the bedrock of élite relations and networks. A good case is made for travel and communication taking on a new importance and significance in Late Antiquity. To this extent, at least, the existence of a volume of this sort can be justified. However, reading a number of short papers does highlight the need for an Anglophone journal dedicated to Late Antiquity in which conference papers like these could be published with further elaboration. Finally, a caveat: a striking omission in this volume is that of maps; unless travel and communication are to be understood in purely symbolic or virtual senses this absence is strange indeed.

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S. REBENICH, *JEROME*. London/New York: Routledge, 2002. Pp. xi + 211. ISBN 0-415-19906-9. £16.99.

Habités of Jerome will be familiar with Stefan Rebenich's doctoral dissertation *Hieronymus und sein Kreis* (Historia Einzelschriften 72, 1992), and it is welcome to see his work distilled and given wider currency in this recent contribution to the valuable Routledge series on the early Church Fathers. An informative and compact introduction on Jerome's life and writings is followed by a dozen translated extracts, each provided with a brief scholarly introduction and some annotation 'for a non-specialist audience'; a third part includes extensive bibliography of editions and translations of Jerome's works, and seventeen pages of modern secondary literature (with items suggested as 'basic reading' usefully highlighted).