

Caillan Davenport/Meaghan McEvoy (eds.): *The Roman Imperial Court in the Principate and Late Antiquity*. Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press 2023. XVI, 405 p., 12 ill. £ 105.00/\$ 135.00. ISBN: 978-0-19-286523-6.

On Wednesday 15 August 1945, the Japanese emperor Hirohito made a speech which was recorded for radio broadcast. He announced that his government had accepted the surrender of its military to the Allied forces (as set out by the Potsdam conference stipulations), signaling the end of Japan's participation in the Second World War. Hirohito's speech was the first time that the vast majority of his subjects had ever heard an emperor speak. Yet the speech was composed in the highly refined Kyoto dialect, which had become the language of the court, meaning that most Japanese subjects probably struggled to grasp what their emperor was saying. This is just one of many examples pointing out the similarities and differences between Eurasian monarchical courts in the conclusion of this new volume on "The Roman Imperial Court" by Caillan Davenport and Meaghan McEvoy. Especially in the fifth century Imperial West, the Roman court shared significant characteristics with that of the later Imperial Japanese court. Prime among these was a *de facto* diarchic form of rule with the emperor taking up a ceremonial and religious role, while many matters of secular government had been handed over to the highest-ranking statesman. Yet for all the things that set the Roman Imperial court apart from the rest of society, language was not part of that (unlike many subsequent monarchical societies).

This volume examines the evolution of the Roman Court from the Early Empire to the Later Empire. Its genesis can be traced back to a series of conference panels at the Celtic Classics Conference at University College Dublin in 2016. While the title seems to indicate coverage of the first six to seven centuries of Imperial Roman Rule, the current chapters cover more circumscribed approaches. As will be explained later, only a few chapters cover the entire width of the period under consideration. Even then most effectively stop with the reign of Justinian, hence giving a rather conservative twist on the current meaning of 'Late Antiquity'. Besides the first chapter, none of the other fourteen deal exclusively with the Principate. Hence the balance of coverage tilts heavily in favour of the Late Roman Empire. Nevertheless, this should not turn skeptical readers to flight just yet, because the entire endeavour remains a *tour de force*.

Both the introduction (“Introduction: Connecting Courts”, pp. 1–38) and final comparative chapter by the editors form what is currently the best and most up-to-date survey on Roman ‘aulic’ studies. While *Kaisergeschichte* has always held an important position in Roman scholarship, studies on the court are markedly sparser. Landmark studies on Roman Emperorship, such as Fergus Millar’s “The Emperor in the Roman World”¹ did not necessarily examine the court as an institution. Even after Norbert Elias and Jeroen Duindam’s foundational studies on the court as an anthropological and sociological phenomenon, the current *status quaestionis* in Roman history still remains limited to a handful of titles.² Thus the arrival of this volume is both timely and vindicated.

The first chapter by Christoph Michels adds great nuance to the image of Antoninus Pius as of the quintessential restrained emperor (“Great King or *Civilis Princeps*? Monarchical Ideals and Daily Interaction in the Reign of Antoninus Pius”, pp. 41–55). Michels uses the privileged testimony of Fronto to test just how far his accessibility reached. On the one hand, Fronto had far better insight than most of our sources reporting on individual emperors, given that he was the tutor of Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus. Yet on the other hand he was never part of the *concilium principis*. Furthermore, in some of his correspondence to the emperor he even invoked titles such as *dominus imperator* (already attested in Trajanic inscriptions) and *Megas Basileus*, seemingly at odds with the concept of a *civilis princeps*. More significantly, Fronto had incurred Pius’ displeasure by accepting the inheritance of one of his friends who had fallen foul of the Praetorian Prefect Gavinius Maximus. Later, Fronto even thought it prudent to apologise to Pius for being absent on his Imperial birthday due to illness. While Pius was known to have dispensed with such formalities in most cases, Fronto’s obsequious address and Pius’ terse response indicate that there were still limits to what the ideal of the *primus inter pares* meant in practice.

1 F. Millar: *The Emperor in the Roman World (31 BC–AD 337)*. London 1977.

2 N. Elias: *Die höfische Gesellschaft*. Frankfurt am Main 1969; J. Duindam: *Vienna and Versailles. The Courts of Europe’s Dynastic Rivals, 1550–1780*. Cambridge/New York 2003 (New Studies in European History); A. Winterling: *Aula Caesaris. Studien zur Institutionalisierung des römischen Kaiserhofes in der Zeit von Augustus bis Commodus (31 v. Chr.–192 n. Chr.)*. München 1999; A. J. S. Spawforth: *The Court and Court Society in Ancient Monarchies*. Cambridge/New York 2007; B. Kelly/A. Hug (eds.): *The Roman Emperor and His Court, c. 30 BC–c. AD 300*. 2 vols. Cambridge 2022.

In one of the best chapters of the volume, Christian Rollinger examines the role of the Imperial Guard from Augustus to Phocas (“Changing the Guard: Guard Units and Roman State Ceremonial from the First to the Fourth Century”, pp. 56–74). Historically, guard units have always been part of any monarchical court because they provide both security and enhance the court’s splendour. The Praetorians, later *Scholae Palatinae*, and affiliated guard units such as the *Corporis Germani Custodes* and *Equites Singulares Augusti* were much more than mere bodyguards. They originally represented Italy’s reserve army, that later could also be assembled as a campaign force. In a pinch, they even acted as disaster management (e.g. firefighting or riot policing). Invoking Millar’s *dictum* that wherever emperors went so did armed soldiers, Rollinger goes on to examine what that meant for state ceremonial across the centuries. From the accession of Augustus to the permanent establishment of the court in Constantinople, Imperial guards were always involved in the public façade of the court. Rollinger especially focuses on their participation in ‘diplomatic ceremony’, such as Imperial funerals, accessions, or parades. New Julio-Claudian emperors were always accompanied by their guard at their accession, while even in the fourth century Julian made a point of reserving the right to appoint his own guards when reaching the nadir of his conflict with Constantius II. Yet noticeable shifts are also apparent, such as Trajan still insisting his guards don civilian dress when participating in his *adventus*, whilst Septimius Severus had them enter Rome in battle attire a century later. By the time of Phocas’ coronation in 602, the Imperial Guard’s military role had effectively become an integral part of state ceremony and thus an enhancement of the Eastern Emperor’s charismatic authority.

Verena Jaeschke and Caillan Davenport examine the spatial dimension of one of the most novel phases of Late Roman court history in the next chapter (“Cities, Palaces, and the Tetrarchic Imperial Courts”, pp. 75–104). With Diocletian’s acclamation of Maximian in 285, *Mehrkaisertum* became institutionalized for the next two centuries of Roman rule. An even more noteworthy aspect of this is that throughout the long fourth century – from the accession of Diocletian to the death of Theodosius I – the Roman Court became mobile. For all ends and purposes, there was no true Roman capital in this era. The capital was simply wherever the court happened to reside. Jaeschke and Davenport examine the material foundations of this phenomenon during its Tetrarchic history until Constantine I’s sole rule as Augustus. Cities such as Aquileia, Milan and Trier in the West, or Antioch

and Nicomedia in the East emerged as Imperial residences. Some of these had already functioned as provincial capitals, because of their strategic locations. Now, however, their infrastructure was expanded to serve as proper hubs for the court. These building phases did not happen overnight, as exemplified by Nicomedia's circus which was only concluded in 304 (just before Diocletian was about to retire). The most famous aspect of these palaces were their monumental halls, as is still visible today in Trier. The chapter also considers the exceptional position of Maxentius, as the only emperor ruling from Rome in the fourth century, yet also succumbing to Tetrarchic fashion by embarking on his own building program. Finally, while Constantine may have founded his own city, this was initially never meant as a new capital for the East, with mobile rule remaining the norm for Eastern emperors until Theodosius I.

With Audrey Becker's "The Court in Constantinople Facing the Death of the Emperor" (pp. 105–118) we move even more firmly into the later period. She considers Imperial succession crises in the Roman East, beginning with one of the canonical insights into the *arcanum imperii*, namely that there was never a constitutional mechanism to determine Imperial succession. Even though the dynastic principle had already triumphed under Augustus, there were plenty of occasions when no heir was immediately at hand to succeed the reigning emperor should he die (as Augustus himself knew all too well). Becker considers how the court handled the succession of Constantine I (337), Zeno (491), Anastasius I (518) and Justinian (565). While the latter three form a cohesive range of case-studies, the inclusion of Constantine I yet omission of Jovian, Valens, Theodosius II and Marcian are curious given the criteria set out. Still, Becker shows how key groups such as the bureaucratic *consistoriani* (headed by the Praetorian Prefect, *Magister Officiorum* and quaestor), the military (headed by the *magistri militum*) and the Imperial household (with eunuch chamberlains playing a key role), Imperial women and even the patriarch could act as a 'conclave'.³ The later fifth and sixth century cases clearly show that these factions could smoothly proclaim a candidate of their own (as they did with Anastasius) if they managed to collaborate swiftly from the onset. If not, chaos could prevail as it did during the election of Justin I.

3 This is a personal flourish and not terminology used by Becker.

Benjamin Kelly asks whether the Roman court was “an Emotional Community” (pp. 121–141). Again, Norbert Elias is a towering figure of influence, whose “Prozeß der Zivilisation”⁴ considered the question of emotional restraint from a *longue durée* perspective. But how did people at the Roman court think about emotions and how did they express them? Kelly mainly considers this question from two distinct periods: the Antonine age and that of the fourth century soldier-emperors. Analysing contemporary literary sources with connections to the court, he establishes that the court community of the second century shared similar emotional norms. If the first century had been characterised by restraint and an absence of outwardly positive emotions, there was a marked shift to a courtly language of love in the second century. There was even a performative element to this, with exchanges of kisses and embraces becoming normalised. This was largely made possible thanks to homogenous overlap between the court community and the wider aristocratic milieu milling around it. By the fourth century, however, there was a far stronger emotional palette available for emperors and their entourage to tap into. This is most famously represented in the performative fits of rage by emperors like Gallus or Valentinian I. This was just as much a translation of the new composition of the mobile court, with senatorial aristocrats becoming a minority and military *homines novi* serving in the emperors’ immediate presence, allowing for more expressive diversity.⁵

Jill Harries’ “Jurists as Courtiers from Augustus to Justinian” (pp. 142–155) is again one of the few chapters which considers the entire span of Roman Imperial history from Augustus to Justinian. Harries deftly shows the evolution of a profession which was vital to emperors’ good governance. Yet century after century, the role of jurists steadily evolved in tandem with that of Imperial government. In the Augustan age, individual lawyers operated on an ad hoc basis and could choose the extent to which they involved

4 N. Elias: *Über den Prozeß der Zivilisation. Soziogenetische und psychogenetische Untersuchungen*. Basel 1939.

5 Oddly enough, given the topic under consideration, this chapter does not engage with V. Bileta: *The venatio in the Emperor’s Presence? The consistorium and the Military Men of the Late Roman Empire in the West*. In: K. C. Choda/M. Sterk de Leeuw/F. Schulz (eds.): *Gaining and Losing Imperial Favour in Late Antiquity. Representation and Reality*. Leiden/Boston 2019 (Impact of Empire 36), pp. 73–101, which is included in the volume’s single unified bibliography (pp. 359–400) nevertheless.

themselves with the emperor's business.⁶ But they were not part of the emperors' entourage and most of their everyday activities took place elsewhere. By the time of Hadrian, however, Imperial workloads had evolved to such a point that jurists were required on a daily basis to deal with the minutiae of petition and response. Another century later, this meant a profound change in the influence legal experts could attain as witnessed in the careers of Papinian and Ulpian. Both men were amongst the most formidable of all Roman lawyers, yet their positions as Praetorian Prefects meant they also had to dabble in the 'dark arts of government' which ultimately led to their demise. By the time of the Late Roman Empire, jurists had become full-fledged courtiers to the extent that the last-named legal expert in Justinian's Digest traces back to the Constantinian Age. Yet as Harries' remarks, the legislative output of that emperor's reign is a "testament to the fact that even at the court of an extreme theocrat, the rule(s) of law could still prevail" (p. 153).

Kevin Feeney's chapter ("Court Construction and Regime Change in the Mid-Fourth Century", pp. 156–171) is the briefest in terms of chronological scope, only examining the composition of the key members of Julian and Jovian's courts (361–364). Yet the ample documentation at hand, allows him to examine to what extent fourth-century emperors had scope to shape governmental philosophy in an age of expanded bureaucracy. Emperors were happy enough to let the dynamics of social mobility run their own course in the lower echelons of government. But what about their own *consistorium*? Regional factionalism has long been recognised in some of the Pannonian appointees of Valentinian I or the Spanish ones of Theodosius I. But Feeney goes on to show how Constantine I's reforms presented a watershed in the longer run of Roman history, allowing emperors to shape their personal political agendas. This is apparent in the case of Julian who, despite still being part of the same dynasty, delighted in repealing his predecessors' religious legislation, and making sure that most members of Constantius II's *consistorium* were removed (both violently and non-violently). It is very revealing that the three top members of the old guard who were retained all abandoned Christianity, which sent a clear message to those with governmental ambitions. Jovian, in contrast, pursued a programme of conciliation by re-

6 It is to the editors' credit that their contributors were allowed complete autonomy in their approach, as evidenced by Harries stating that she does not believe Augustus even had a court (p. 145).

taining Gallic loyalists of Julian in his consistory, recalling some of Constantius II's appointees, and choosing his own Illyrian officials. Similarly, no member of the previous regime was persecuted. If Julian had wanted to change elite behaviour, then Jovian – elected in the midst of a general omishambles – sought to maintain elite approval. These cases show that fourth-century emperors had far more scope to shape their courts than emperors would have been able to in the Principate.

Meaghan McEvoy examines what she calls “Sharing the Imperial Lime-light: The Age of the Magister Militum” (pp. 172–202). She starts with an intellectually honest self-correction to the idea that fifth-century *magistri militum* (especially in the West) acted as “powers behind the throne” (p. 173). Instead, she demonstrates that their influence was rather on full display and should be seen in terms of “power-sharing” (p. 195). The period she examines follows the age of the mobile soldier emperor, and was just as much a product of the transformation of the Imperial Office into a more capital-bound ceremonial role which was complete by 395.⁷ By looking at a wide category of instances that are indicative of this power-on-display (participations in accession ceremonials of emperors or their *adventus*, consular celebrations, gifts of statues, marriages, birthday celebrations, ...) she shows that at least in the first half of the fifth century West, the ascendancy at the Imperial court of *generalissimos* such as Stilicho, Constantius and Aëtius was widely understood and part of governmental consensus. According to McEvoy this dynamic ended in 471/472 with the downfall of Aspar in the East and the death of Ricimer in the West. McEvoy's observations are entirely fair, but could have been more forcefully argued from a broader consideration of their fourth-century counterparts (who were far more routinely dismissed, or even executed, than the author indicates).⁸

7 A process on which McEvoy wrote the seminal *Child Emperor Rule in the Late Roman West, AD 367–455*. Oxford 2013 (Oxford Classical Monographs).

8 Dismissals: A. H. M. Jones/J. R. Martindale/J. Morris: Dagalaifus. In: PLRE 1, 1971, p. 239; Gomoarius. In: *ibid.*, pp. 397–398; Flavius Iovinus 6. In: *ibid.*, pp. 462–463; Marcellus 3. In: *ibid.*, pp. 550–551; Nannienus. In: *ibid.*, p. 615–616; Flavius Nevitta. In: *ibid.*, pp. 626–627; Flavius Timasius. In: *ibid.*, pp. 914–915; Ursicinus 2. In: *ibid.*, pp. 985–986. Flavius Equitius 2. In: *ibid.*, p. 282, was most certainly dismissed for having aided the elevation of Valentinian II in 375, given his services were not called upon during the Gothic War despite having served in the Balkans for over a decade. Executions: Barbatio. In: *ibid.*, pp. 146–147; Flavius Theodosius 3. In: *ibid.*, pp. 902–904; Vallio. In: *ibid.*, p. 945.

Anja Busch's chapter traces the growing importance of Imperial women from the Tetrarchy to Anastasius ("Representatives and Co-Rulers: Imperial Women and the Court in Late Antiquity", pp. 203–217). While Diocletian and his colleagues systematically excluded empresses from Imperial representation, the supremacy of Constantine I in 324 proved to be a *volte-face* as seen by his mother Helena's elevation as *Augusta*. The real watershed moment came with the Theodosian dynasty, especially once it became capital-bound in Constantinople. Theodosius I had already made a point of including his wife Flacilla on coins with the same regalia as an *Augustus*. Yet the role of Imperial Women was transformed in unprecedented ways, as shown in the case of Pulcheria and her sisters who opted for holy celibacy. Busch rightly questions their level of agency, at a time when Theodosian emperors did not have male heirs available. Nothing demonstrated more acutely the apparent risks of having female siblings around the court with child-bearing potential, as that of Valentinian III's sister Honoria. Still, starting with Pulcheria, eastern empresses gained more influence to the extent that Zeno's widow Ariadne could become a stake-holder in the Imperial succession (as also explored in Becker's chapter).

Fabian Schulz' chapter on Athanasius at the court of Constans I is again a study of a very brief period but with important implications ("Beyond the Veil: Athanasius at the Court of Constans", pp. 221–239). Athanasius' own writings help shed valuable light on how the court operated during the 340s, when Constantius II and Constans found themselves at odds over religious policy. Years later, with Constans dead and Constantius II remaining as sole Augustus of the entire Empire, Athanasius had to defend himself against accusations of having sown strife between the two brothers. His record provides various minutiae of his dealings with Constans to establish – to the point of sounding like an HR report – that the two of them were never alone. His testimony is also one of our earliest sources to mention that Late Roman emperors were seated behind a veil when accepting visitors in their halls (an element intentionally employed by Athanasius to invoke authenticity in his claims of impartiality). This chapter is a healthy reminder that, despite Christianity becoming the favoured and eventually exclusive religion of Late Roman emperors, and the rising importance of bishops in society, there was no such thing as "court bishops" (p. 221) (a concept erstwhile used for individuals such as Ambrose of Milan). That said, individual bishops could develop important relations with emperors, especially if they were bishop of the see

where the court happened to reside. The rulings of Serdica (342), imploring bishops not to spend needless time away from their sees, benefitted especially the aforementioned ones.

Daniëlle Slootjes reconsiders the position of the Eastern court at the time of the ecumenical council of Ephesus (“Dynamics of Power: The Nestorian Controversy, the Council of Ephesus of 431, and the Eastern Imperial Court”, pp. 240–261). In the same vein as Schulz and Feeney’s chapters, this pertains to a very brief episode but again one with an equally rich dossier of sources. From the wider consideration of Roman Imperial history, the ability of key bishops to influence decision-making at the court without being remotely near it, had no precedent in the Principate. At the height of his conflict with Nestorius of Constantinople, Cyril of Alexandria used a wide variety of stratagems to unseat his opponent, despite the latter enjoying the emperor’s support. Slootjes demonstrates the failure of his first tactics when individually petitioning key members of the dynasty, such as Pulcheria. This move backfired, because Theodosius rightly saw it as a threat to his household. Faced with the emperor’s wrath, Cyril shifted gear and started showering lavish gifts on a wide variety of individuals at the court who could work the “politics of intimacy” (p. 257), such as the *Praepositus Sacri Cubiculi* but also women in Pulcheria’s household and even the wife of a Praetorian Prefect. In the end, Cyril managed to gather enough support against Nestorius from various quarters, that Theodosius saw no alternative to let him go out of greater concern for the stability of his family and empire.

Martijn Icks’ chapter looks at images of “Splendid Isolation: Secluded Emperors and Oriental Despotism” (pp. 262–277) in the later fourth and early fifth century. The concept of the *princeps clausus*, and associated tropes of sloth, appears in famous texts such as the *Historia Augusta* or Synesius’ *De regno*. However, Icks traces back such views to their earliest conceptions amongst Graeco-Roman authors. Unsurprisingly, Herodotus’ account of the Persian court would become the foundation for the idea that monarchical seclusion and bad rule went hand in hand. Even though the Roman court from the Principate onwards always had ostentatious features, and some emperors dabbled in periods of splendid isolation (e.g. Tiberius), early emperors as a rule of thumb did not try to elevate their status through pomp. Sasanian Persia has often been cited as a font of inspiration for the new Late Roman court model, though given diplomatic ties between the two it is still uncertain how much one court borrowed from another *et vice versa*. The cer-

emonialisation of the court was a process that took centuries, and could both be enthusiastically embraced by social climbers or lamented as an eastern innovation by more conservative authors. Still, ideals of *civilitas* kept resurfacing in representations of the ideal emperor (e.g. Pacatus on Theodosius I). Hence it is a sign of the times that such debates raged at the moment capital-bound ceremonial emperorship became the new model of Imperial rule at the end of the fourth century.

The penultimate chapter by Caillan Davenport examines vivid portrayals of the court (both imagined and empirical) across the first six centuries of Roman rule (“Envisioning Audiences at the Roman Imperial Court”, pp. 278–306). Despite the dramatic transformation of the Imperial office – to say nothing of the Empire itself – over such a wide period, some things remained the same. Whether we are dealing with Christian trial accounts, the Babylonian Talmud, Roman court poets (Martial and Statius) or saints’ lives, the prevailing perception of the Roman court was that of a community, where people mattered more than the buildings they frequented. Petition and response were the vital mechanisms that brought outsiders into contact with the court, which – as the recurring trial accounts (often imaginary but not without historical significance) indicate – also remained an arena of justice with the emperor as ultimate judge. Authors who had first-hand experience of the court could insert this into their account, as Philo famously did when he was desperately playing catch-up with Caligula at his various residences.

The final chapter by the editors wraps up the volume with wider considerations on the historical evolution of the Roman Imperial Court from Augustus all the way to tenth-century Constantinople, by which time Eastern Rome had truly become a Medieval monarchy (“The Evolution of the Roman Imperial Court in Historical Context”, pp. 309–358). That said, there was no linear evolution from the Principate to Late Antiquity, but rather three distinct phases from the “court-in-capital” (p. 313) model at Rome, to collegial rule that was first characterised by its peripatetic nature during the long fourth century, to ceremonial emperorship at the start of the fifth century. The chapter highlights how these changes pertain to emperors, their courtiers, and Imperial women, compared to other court societies such as that of the Merovingians in Early Medieval Gaul, the Abbassids in High Medieval Iraq or the Bourbons at Early Modern Versailles.

The editorial quality throughout is of high quality, though not impeccable. Despite the in-depth-literature review on studies pertaining to the Roman Imperial Court, it is surprising to see no mention of Felix Maier’s “Palast-revolution” about the sudden return of capital-bound rule at the end of the fourth century.⁹ A couple of errata have also sneaked in: there is no proper evidence that the *magister militum* Silvanus staged a usurpation in 355 (p. 1; p. 162, n. 50).¹⁰ Unlike Valentinian I and Gratian or Theodosius I and his sons, Justin I and Justinian I are incorrect examples of “military officers [...] derided as violent and uneducated, [coming] to the throne, but [trying] to ensure that their heirs were trained differently” (p. 22), given Justinian was Justin’s nephew and had shared the same upbringing (ibid., n. 123). Describing Domitian’s campaigns (p. 24) or Theodosius II’s troops as “German” (p. 247) is anachronistic and erroneous for ancient history.¹¹ The *Notitia Dignitatum* records three *magistri militum* positions for the West, including that of *magister equitum per Gallias*, not just two praesental commands (p. 174). The so-called battle of the Catalaunian Plains took place in 451 not 452 (p. 177). The Late Roman consulship was not an office but an honour (p. 186). The Valentinianic dynasty did not start ruling the Empire in 363 but 364 (p. 198). The usurper Leontius was not proclaimed in 483 but 484 (p. 217).¹² Valens was not an emperor who “did visit and reside in Constantinople for periods”

- 9 F. K. Maier: *Palastrevolution. Der Weg zum hauptstädtischen Kaisertum im Römischen Reich des vierten Jahrhunderts*. Paderborn 2019 (*Antike Imperien* 1).
- 10 Recent studies have rightly questioned Ammianus’ account and, especially, noticed the striking absence of coinage (the clearest evidence of any attempt to claim Imperial power). See, *inter alia*, J. F. Drinkwater: *Silvanus, Ursicinus and Ammianus: Fact or Fiction?* In: C. Deroux (ed.): *Studies in Latin Literature and Roman History* 7. Brussels 1994 (Collection Latomus 227), pp. 568–576; J. Weisweiler: *Unreliable Witness: Failings of the Narrative in Ammianus Marcellinus*. In: L. Van Hoof/P. Van Nuffelen (eds.): *Literature and Society in the Fourth Century AD. Performing Paideia, Constructing the Present, Presenting the Self*. Leiden/Boston 2015 (*Mnemosyne. Supplements* 373), pp. 103–133; M. Kulikowski: *Imperial Triumph. The Roman World from Hadrian to Constantine, AD 138–363*. London 2016.
- 11 A similar anachronistic error is copied from Maurice Platnauer’s Loeb translation of Claudian, when the panegyrist claims that in 396 “Germany swears allegiance to the absent Honorius [...]” (p. 179). The original Latin clearly states Alamannia, indicating a more precise region with a recent history of treaties and providing auxiliaries to the Gallic army.
- 12 His coronation date of 19 July 484 is surprisingly known to us through an astrological source close to Zeno (see J. R. Martindale: *Illus* 1. In: *PLRE* 2, 1980, pp. 586–590, p. 589).

(p. 312), given he ostentatiously shunned the city for its support of Procopius' usurpation, instead primarily residing close to the lower Danube in the later 360s and Antioch in the 370s. Constantine VII did not reign from 913–919 (p. 350), but rather until 959.

Some linguistic mishaps also appear: “[...] but *_we_* never officially part” (p. 76), “Pederson 1976” (p. 159, n. 23) instead of Pedersen 1976, “the transformation *_the_* emperorship” (p. 159), “new emperor elected to *_a_* chart” (p. 166), “both the East and West the 450s” (p. 199). Last but not least, it will be an unpleasant surprise for any reviewer to find their scholarship cited to back up statements that are in direct contradiction with their actual arguments (p. 200, n. 139; 201, n. 140).

As will be evident at this stage, this volume should not be seen as a companion to or a survey of the Roman Imperial Court (though both the introduction and final chapter will give readers the most accessible and up-to-date gateway). It would be trite to cite the omission of certain topics or absent coverage of distinct historical periods, which is part and parcel of any enterprise in turning conference papers into publication. The real strength of this volume lies in its cohesion, where the editors made sure to set the various chapters in dialogue with one another. Caillan Davenport and Meaghan McEvoy have given us one of the best studies available on the Late Roman court with generous insights into the Principate.

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