

Lee L. Brice, Daniëlle Slootjes, eds., *Aspects of Ancient Institutions and Geography. Studies in Honor of Richard J. A. Talbert*. Leiden and Boston : Brill, 2015 (Impact of Empire, 19). Pp. xvi-354. ISBN 978-90-04-28371-8. Hardback. \$175.

Throughout his academic career, spanning more than four decades, Professor Richard Talbert has studied the ancient world from various viewpoints and has analysed numerous aspects of the Greek and Roman world. The online database of the *Année philologique* attributes more than thirty articles and books to him, but even this is not yet complete, for another dozen works still need to be added (an up-to-date bibliography is kindly provided by Brice and Slootjes on pages 12–25). Colleagues, fellows, pupils, and friends from North American and West European universities have chosen to pay tribute to Professor Talbert for his achievements. They have offered this volume which is divided into three parts : part one is a foreword and a list of publications with references to major reviews and online access, part two includes nine papers on Roman institutions, and part three comprises eight articles on ancient geography.

It is not easy to give a full account or to undertake a complete review of a *Festschrift* that focuses on many subjects and deals with different issues. For example, in the first part, four papers of Philip A. Stadter, Jonathan Scott Perry, Leanne Bablitz, and Sarah E. Bond are devoted to senatorial careers in Plutarch, senatorial absenteeism and its legal remedy, senatorial justice from Tacitus' *Annals*, and to senators' places of meeting in Republican to late antique Rome. These papers all refer back to what is arguably the most influential of all Professor Talbert's books, *The Senate of Imperial Rome*, first published at Princeton in 1984 and reprinted a quarter of a century later in an unaltered form. The next four articles open the heavy bronze doors of the *curia* and shed light on other forms of political and public life, such as rebellions and mutinies within late Republican and Augustan armies (Lee L. Brice), gladiatorial games and training in Italy and abroad (Garrett G. Fagan), honorific statues and their spread in every province especially *Syria Palaestina* (Werner Eck), and Dio Chrysostom's views on municipal life in the light of his reassessed orations (Christopher J. Fuhrmann).

Although Daniëlle Slootjes' article belongs to the first part, it represents a neat transition into the next as it marks a shift from institutional to cartographic history. It draws attention upon the political and territorial changes the Roman Empire underwent in late third and early fourth century. During this period of large-scale reforms, Emperor Diocletian subdivided former provinces into smaller ones, and then Emperor Constantine submitted these reduced districts to new larger territorial jurisdictions, the so-called dioceses and prefectures. The question is whether provincial, diocesan, and prefectural boundaries coincided with one another. The investigation focuses on diocesan borders and tries to clarify geographical and administrative delimitations with no conclusive results as historical evidence is scant. The earliest pertinent law was enacted only in 330 and it certifies the existence of the diocese of *Asiana* (i.e. western half of Asia Minor more or less), but other official documents such as Church councils proceedings cannot be discarded. At the end of the council of *Nicaea*, summoned by Emperor Constantine in 325 and convened in his own palace, members of the chancery

collected signatures of all the attending clerics, mostly bishops, to the dogmatic definition. This official list, which has survived in many versions, most of them published in 1898, enumerates clerics conforming to civic and provincial divisions. As any bureaucratic document the attendance list of *Nicaea* is relevant for drawing a jurisdictional map of Asia Minor. Not only does the list contain explicit references to cities and provinces, but the latter are also listed in agreement with diocesan delimitations. As for the pilgrim itineraries quoted by the author, it is a moot point to what extent any of these can be used as a reliable source in the study of late Roman administrative geography.

Long-term relations between history and geography in Antiquity are pursued in the third part of the book and are discussed in various ways. Cheryl L. Golden and Brian Turner, for example, attempt to form an estimate of Greek and Roman geographic knowledge from two historical sources: one scholar studies four passages of Thucydides' *Peloponnesian War* regarding Greece, Sicily, Thrace, and Macedonia, and the other discusses two geographic digressions in Velleius Paterculus' *Histories* on Roman provinces and colonies. Both emphasise the fact that ethnography and cartography are inherently linked, that they are used as literary devices, and that they are related to the geographical culture which Thucydides, Velleius Paterculus and their respective audience had in common. Wars, conquests, and colonisations have attracted keen attention from ancient historians and exerted influence on the development of Greek and Roman cartography. Fred S. Naiden gives a specific example of this political and intellectual expansion by studying Alexander the Great's Anatolian campaign in 334–333 BC. The author explains and justifies the Alexander's winding route from Abydos to central Asia Minor and then to the Cilician Gates. Every twist and turn the Macedonian army has taken on its journey would have led to a more accurate knowledge of the all major roads and regions. According to this optimistic one-way interpretation, conquest and progress seem to be simultaneous and synonymous. To a greater or lesser extent, the same analysis appears in Mary T. Boatwright's article. She provides an insight into the city of Rome in connection with its territorial expansion. Allegedly some of Rome's monuments could have summarised or embodied the whole Empire because they were situated close to Agrippa's map displayed inside the *Porticus Vipsania*. By reviewing seven public buildings which were erected in the immediate vicinity of the *Porticus Vipsania*, the author suggests a rapport between their geographical decorations and the Agrippa's nearby map. Though the result is not completely convincing, it opens new methodological perspectives on the interpretation of Roman topography.

The next four articles cover a wide range of topics. In a lively and high spirited style, Jerzy Linderski presents a new interpretation of a ghost toponym in Ciceronian correspondence. On 2 June 54 BC, Cicero sent a letter to his brother (*Q. Fr.*, II, 14) from *Blandenone* that Linderski emends to *ab Laude ad nonum*. If the *lectio* is correct, the letter would have been dictated *en route* from *Laus Pompeia* to *Ad Nonum*, two places located on the outskirts of Milan. For his part, George W. Houston casts new light on sundials use and meaning within Greek and Roman cities and houses, and Michael Maas investigates

ancient thinking of environment from classical to late antique times. After them, John F. Donahue establishes a correlation between the popularity of some healing springs in central Italy and regular imperial visits. By the way, the author bewails the lack of ancient eye witness testimony on daily life in thermal places, but the Greek inscriptions from the baths of *Gadara* in Roman Arabia disclose evidence of social diversity in those who frequented them. Dedicating one half of this volume to ancient geography is a nice and appropriate way of paying homage to the outstanding *Barrington Atlas of the Greek and Roman World* edited by Professor Talbert in 2000 and his recent study on the *Tabula Peutingeriana*.

SYLVAIN DESTEPHEN  
UNIVERSITY OF PARIS OUEST NANTERRE