Adam M. Kemezis (ed.*), Urban Dreams and Realities in Antiquity. Remains and Representations of the Ancient City.* Leiden 2015 (Brill). xiv + 533p. ISBN 9789004277359.

This collection of papers resulting from a 2011 colloquium organized by the Department of History and Classics, University of Alberta, explores how ancient peoples on the one hand experienced city life in the physicality of the city and, on the other hand, mentally conceived of it, as evidenced in literary texts. This broad aim is addressed through 19 papers, each quite specific in its scope. Most deal with Greek and Roman cases; exceptions are two papers on Israelite Jerusalem and one on the Deccan (India). The papers, introduced in helpful fashion by the editor, Adam Kemezis, are uniformly of high quality, clearly written and furnished with extensive notes and bibliographies. The overall impact of the book is nonetheless elusive; the very specificity and diversity of the case studies make it difficult to generate broad, stimulating insights into the nature of the ancient city.

Part 1, entitled “City as Space I: Remains on the Ground,” consists of six papers. Matthew Maher examines the network of fortress-cities established by the Arkadian League after the Battle of Leuktra, against Sparta and its allies. To the well-known examples of Mantineia and Megalopolis should be added Stymphalos and Alea, further north, checks against the pro-Spartan Orchomenos and Phlious. An underground chamber in central Caere, the “Hypogaeum of Clepsina” connected with an inscription dated to ca. 273 BC, is then evaluated by Fabio Colivicchi as a focal point of ritual in this Etrusco-Roman city. Comparison is made with the *mundus* in the Roman Forum. In the third paper, LuAnn Wandsnider discusses how individuals, institutions, and entire cities give messages about their achievements through the building projects they sponsor. Although her interest is ostensibly in the Hellenistic Greek cities of Asia Minor, her remarks dwell on theoretical aspects, in particular on signaling theory. References to specific examples would have been helpful. Epigraphy is key to Tanya Henderson’s paper on Pompeii. Six Oscan graffiti, found 1797–1916, indicate where militias were to muster during the Social Wars. Taking into account their find spots, Henderson investigates what these inscriptions tell us about the organization of the city in this pre-Roman period. The fifth paper takes us to the Deccan Plateau in southern India at the beginning of the first millennium AD. Aloka Parasher-Sen, focusing on the large site of Kondapur (excavated 1940–42 and 2009–2011), discusses the nature of settlements in this region. When can they be called “cities?” The paper does not offer a clear answer, even though the author certainly has enough evidence to take such a step. A map of sites for this region unfamiliar to most readers of this book is sorely needed. With the last paper of this group we return to the Roman Empire. Steven Hijmans considers art and inscriptions that were set up in public but that could not be fully seen or read: the scenes on Trajan’s Column, reliefs in the Forum of Nerva, and the Res Gestae (Temple of Augustus, Ankara). How did the Roman viewer react? Passages from Philostratus, of the Severan period, give some clues.

Part 2, “City as Space II: Landscapes in Literature,” shifts to textual evidence. In a lengthy, well-illustrated paper, Eric Kondratieff explores how Virgil, in *Aeneid* 6–8, evokes places, monuments, and art works in Rome. Darryl Phillips also notes how Virgil spoke to his audience, in this case (in *Aeneid* 1) by linking construction activities at newly founded Carthage with the energetic building program in contemporary Augustan Rome. A similar reference to a building project in Rome but some decades later is proposed by Daniel Unruh, who sees in Seneca’s foreboding description of the palace of Atreus in his tragedy, *Thyestes*, an allusion to the Golden House of Nero. In the final paper, the urban experiences of Augustine that figure in his *Confessions*, from Thagaste (his birth place) to Carthage, Rome, Milan, and Ostia, are tracked by Owen Ewald. As Augustine moved from a secular life to a spiritual one, the settings became quieter.

Part 3, “City as Identity I: Cultures in Stone,” returns us, for the most part, to the physical remains of cities. Megan Daniels focuses on early temples in the Forum Boarium, Rome, and their syncretistic cults as symbols of the international, multi-ethnic nature of emporia in a period when religion was important as a guarantor of honesty and trust. The second paper takes us eastwards, to 2nd century BC Mesopotamia, where Parthians have conquered Seleucids. In a dense presentation, Josef Wieshöfer explores the complex relations between Greeks, especially the elite, and their new overlords. With Christer Bruun we return to Ostia and a consideration of its civic identity. Sources of information in the Roman center and west are not abundant, in contrast with cities in Asia Minor. Nonetheless, from dedicatory inscriptions of inaugurations of buildings, statues, and the like, Bruun gleans relevant evidence, notably for an interest in public ceremonies and festivals. The final paper of this section brings us to Tarraco, in Roman Spain. Raymond Capra sees its large circus as key to its civic identity as both Roman and local, for it combines Roman monumentality with a traditional Iberian love of horses and equestrian activities.

In Part 4, “City as Identity II: Communities on Paper,” the book concludes with five articles based on textual sources. The first two treat Jerusalem. For Ian Douglas Wilson, the city is not necessarily a physical reality. It can be a mental construct, perhaps the seat of a divinity or royalty as attested in the Ancient Near East as far back as Sumerian Eridu. Sixth-century BC Jerusalem is good example. Its temple destroyed, no monarch, its people deported: nonetheless the concept of a Jerusalem persisted, with Yahweh as king. In the following paper, Ehud Ben Zvi analyzes what Late Persian period authors remembered about Jerusalem – and what aspects they chose not to present. For them, Jerusalem was God’s city, a temple/city. David’s building activities were stressed; in contrast, the pre-Davidic, non-Israelite settlement and even David’s conquest of the city were glossed over. Our attention is directed next to Strabo and his concept of the Greek city as a place of memory. According to Edward Dandrow, Strabo noted that Greek cities of his day often showed signs of decline; their Greekness depended on keeping alive the memory of past greatness, of Greek institutions and values, and of their origins. The physical appearance of cities

interested him less than the conceptual image they projected. In the next paper we move to the New Testament, where Ralph Korner takes up the rhetorical implications of the terms *ekklesia* and *polis* in *Revelation*. As Wilson had noted for Jerusalem, *ekklesia* and *polis* are not actual cities, but concepts. *Ekklesia* refers to the followers of Christ. *Polis*, as posited in *Revelation*, would be a vast new Jerusalem, occupying earth and cosmos, a dwelling place for all Christ's followers. The former term would not have threatened Roman authority, because it was routinely used to describe voluntary associations, whereas the *polis*, as described in this text, could be menacing to imperial power and gods.

The fifth paper differs from the others in this collection in focusing not on ancient remains or ancient authors, but on nineteenth-century analyses. Emily Varto explores nuances in 19th century views on the evolution of the Greek and Roman city. Grote, on the Greeks, and Niebuhr, on the Romans, and later Maine, Fustel de Coulanges, and Morgan all agreed that in early times, the *genos* or *gens* was the key to social organization. Eventually, ancient societies moved from kinship to the state. This view of political change suited nineteenth-century evolutionary views of human progress. This essay in the history of ethnological thought serves as an appropriate coda to the book, reminding us that the changing understanding of the well-known Classical world merits our ongoing attention.

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