

The second paper, by Anne-Françoise Jaccotet, deals with Christ's baptism in the context of Bacchic rituals; then Luc Renaud looks at the symbolism of water and its dispensers from Moses to Mithras.

In the remaining four papers there is increasing art-historical and archaeological interest. Jean-Michel Speiser discusses representations of the baptism of Christ in the palaeochristian period, concentrating on the depiction of Christ as a youthful adolescent and the significance of water descending from above. Fabrizio Bisconti pursues the origin of baptismal iconography by comparing images in different parts of the catacombs which show the development of a 'precise iconographic scheme' in the first half of the 3rd century. He notes the Eucharistic overtones of Christ's baptism, the similarity of the repertoire to that of funerary art, and the fundamental role played by catechetical thought in early Christian art. Marina Castelfranchi's subject is the baptisteries of 5th- and 6th-century date in Constantinople. Her map shows that these are mainly located between the Constantinian forum and the Theodosian walls. Independent structures, they stand close to the atrium or the narthex of the principal churches, but do not seem to reflect pastoral organisation. One of the illustrations to this paper shows the font in the museum at Iznik (Nicea), drum-shaped and apparently intended to be floor-mounted, which has a remarkable resemblance to Romanesque examples in Western Europe. Finally, Ivan Foletti looks at the place of the foot-washing ritual in the baptismal liturgy as represented in the mosaics of the Orthodox Baptistry in Ravenna; in the absence of any comparable evidence for the ritual in Rome, he concludes that Ravenna was influenced by Milan and the writings of St Ambrose. This slim volume ends as it began with one of the key documents of the baptismal liturgy.

DAVID PARSONS (*Brixworth Archaeological Trust*)

*Early and Middle Saxon Rural Settlement in the London Region.* (Museum of London Archaeology Service Monograph 41). By Robert Cowie & Lyn Blackmore. 22 × 30 cm. xvii + 239 pp, 150 b&w pls and figs, 74 tables. London: Museum of London Archaeology Service, 2008. ISBN 978-1-901992-77-9. Price: £14.95 hb.

This book presents and synthesises the results of excavations and surveys undertaken at 30 sites in the Greater London area at which early and middle Anglo-Saxon remains have been revealed. These sites were all investigated between 1945 and 2005 and comprise 26 occupation sites and six Thames-side fishtraps. The presented evidence includes material excavated by amateur groups and professional units alike, and the circumstances of discovery range from post-WWII redevelopment to 21st-century developer-funded excavations.

The introductory chapter summarises the history of the represented projects and establishes the conventions employed the volume. Chapters 2 and 3 present the data from the early and middle Anglo-Saxon periods respectively, each chapter being structured geographically: ch 2 describes 20 early Saxon occupation sites, while ch 3 concerns seven middle Anglo-Saxon settlements. Chapter 4 takes a more thematic approach and explores the evidence for the early and middle Anglo-Saxon exploitation of the River Thames in the form of six timber fish-traps. The core of this book is ch 5, which delivers a lengthy synthesis of the excavated data and discusses them within the context of a number of wider debates. Specific subjects covered include the Roman-Saxon transition, the nature of early and middle Anglo-Saxon settlement patterns, settlement morphology, material culture, trade and exchange, and the impact of the Vikings. A series of complementary specialist appendices comprise ch 6: place-names, scientific dating, plant remains, and various classes of artefacts. Most usefully, this chapter also presents an early and middle Anglo-Saxon pottery type series for the Greater London area. There is an extensive bibliography and comprehensive index.

Visually this volume is very attractive and the production quality very high. Large quantities of excavation data, which often present difficulties when publishing reports such as this, are conveyed very accessibly via tables and graphs. In general both text and illustrations are clearly laid out, although if this book has a fault it is that occasionally the numerous sub-headings break up the flow of the text too much.

While the volume's contents will be of particular interest and relevance to those living and working in the Greater London area, the material and discussions presented here make a significant contribution to wider debates regarding the changing nature of the rural landscape during the early and middle Anglo-Saxon periods. Moreover, in drawing together much of the related evidence excavated in the Greater London area over a 60-year period — a significant achievement in its own right — the authors provide an exemplary model for those looking to synthesise and publish vast quantities of disparate excavation data. Consequently, this volume is of considerable interest to us all and, fortunately, its modest cover price makes it easily affordable.

RICHARD HOGGETT (*NAU Archaeology, Norwich*)

*Excavations at Pevensey Castle 1936 to 1964.* (British Archaeological Reports British Series 503). By Malcolm Lyne. 21 × 30 cm. vi + 163 pp, 53 b&w pls and figs, 72 tables. Oxford: Archaeopress, 2009. ISBN 978-1-4073-06929-2. Price: £36.00 pb.

Pevensey Castle in Sussex was one of the late-Roman fortresses built along the coasts of southern and eastern Britain and which saw the construction of William's first castle in England in 1066. The site has seen a long but intermittent history of mostly small-scale excavation, starting in the 19th century and ending in 1993–95, and this report draws together the results of previously unpublished campaigns in 1936–39 and 1964. There is important information pertaining to the late-Roman fortress, and more limited material relating to the Norman and later castle, but it is the scattered evidence from the intervening period that is the most intriguing. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle entry for 491 (actually c 470) records that 'In this year Aelle and Cissa besieged Andredesceaster and slew all the inhabitants: there was not even one Briton left there'. Small amounts of 5th-century pottery and metalwork certainly attest to occupation within the old fortress (although the *Schalenum* type pottery need not, as the author suggests, 'indicate that a Germanic element may already have been present among the inhabitants of *Anderitum* before its sack in 470 or thereabouts'). There is little 6th- or 7th-century material, but a range of features and artefacts suggest renewed activity around the 8th century. Extensive occupation debris suggests that the town recorded in Domesday may well have lain within the Roman defences, before being moved to its present location outside the E gate following establishment of the Norman castle. Malcolm Lyne is to be congratulated on bringing these old excavations through to publication.

STEPHEN RIPPON (*University of Exeter*)

*A Synthesis of Antiquarian Observation and Archaeological Excavation at Dorchester-on-Thames, Oxfordshire.* (British Archaeological Reports British Series 491). By Wendy A Morrison. 21 × 30 cm. 71 pp, 31 b&w pls and figs, 1 table. Oxford: Archaeopress, 2009. ISBN 978-1-4073-0518-9. Price: £26.00 pb.

This slim volume — the result of a recent MA thesis — aims to fill the void of synthesis and debate on the archaeology of Dorchester-on-Thames by combining antiquarian observations with the results of earlier 20th-century and more recent developer-funded excavations. The archaeological discoveries of Dorchester are dealt with chronologically, with an emphasis on the Iron Age, Roman, and Anglo-Saxon periods;