

(pp. 475–611). Though this last section might have been intended to help orient readers in the historical narrative of the fourth book, the study in its present form is clearly directed at experts on Merovingian history. To fully appreciate the work, one should already have specific questions in mind, be it regarding the accounts of Gregory in his fourth book or the text and transmission of the *Historiæ*; in addition one should also be able to complement the highly selective bibliography. For these elect, however, Hilchenbach's investigation of the fourth book of the *Historiæ* is a very useful study with important implications for the whole text of the *Historiæ* and its transmission; it would have been even more useful if the second part had been made accessible through indices.

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The archaeology of the East Anglian conversion. By Richard Hoggett. (Anglo-Saxon Studies, 15.) Pp. xiv + 208 incl. 35 figs and 13 plates. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2010. £50. 978 1 84383 595 0; 1475 2468
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Archaeologists researching the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons sometimes appear to go about their work with a spade in one hand and Bede's *Ecclesiastical history* in the other. It would be absurd to imagine archaeologists ignoring such an influential documentary record as the *Ecclesiastical history*, but Richard Hoggett argues that the Bedan narrative – important though it is – can be a mixed blessing: Bede's explanations can easily skew archaeologists' interpretations of the material evidence, which should ideally be allowed to speak for itself. But 'shall these mute stones speak', as one archaeological luminary put it? Hoggett believes that they shall, provided that they are submitted to appropriate explanatory frameworks, like certain theoretical models of religious conversion and methods of 'cognitive archaeology', which have become commonplace in the Anglo-Saxon archaeology of the last two decades. Hoggett applies these as aides to the interpretation not of 'mute stones', but mainly mute graves from East Anglia. One of the difficulties that archaeologists typically face when they undertake interdisciplinary work of this kind, is how to bridge the gap between theory and actual evidence, without invoking their own assumptions and preconceptions. For instance, certain theories offer criteria for tapping burial evidence as a potential source for religious beliefs (for example Colin Renfrew, *Towards an archaeology of the mind*, 1982). But is it possible to interpret the gradual reduction in furnished graves or the growing tendency to bury victims of executions at some distance from settlements (often by the roadside) as indicators of the proliferation of Christianity, without first making the assumption that changes in burial practices were, in one way or another, religiously motivated? Such changes, as some have argued, could equally reflect new displays of social status and punitive strategies, induced by changing settlement patterns and the growth of kingship (which itself may or may not be related to religious change). It is to Hoggett's credit that he is more conscious than others of the limitations of theory and the ambiguous nature of the available evidence. Nevertheless, the fact that even this heightened awareness could not free his conclusions entirely from relying on assumptions such as the above, invites

questions about the adequacy of existing theoretical models and the way in which they can articulate with the material evidence. But theory aside, the book's real strength lies in its author's ability to sift effectively through a large *corpus* of archaeological finds from East Anglia dating from the Early and Middle Saxon periods, classify them, analyse them comparatively and present his readers with provocative general patterns. Thus, by examining the correlation between graves and other features of the landscape, the author argues that new burial practices significantly altered the Middle Saxon landscape, with former Roman buildings being turned into 'missionary stations', Iron-Age earthworks being reused by the Church, and the separation between cemeteries and settlements no longer strictly observed. An important observation is the division between cremation and inhumation along a Norfolk–Suffolk divide: 85 per cent of Early Saxon cremations are found in Norfolk, but inhumations are divided more-or-less evenly between the two regions. Hoggett believes that cremation was abandoned quickly in the early seventh century, a change that he attributes to conversion. This and other hypotheses combine to form a book that constitutes an important exercise in telling the story of conversion directly from the material evidence, rather than using archaeology simply to illustrate the Bedan narrative.

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The Christology of Theodore of Tarsus. The Laterculus Malalianus and the person and work of Christ. By James Siemens. (Studia Traditionis Theologiae. Explorations in Early and Medieval Theology, 6.) Pp. xvii + 211. Turnhout: Brepols, 2010. €60 (paper). 978 2 503 53385 8
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The *Laterculus Malalianus*, a historical exegesis of the life of Christ associated with the seventh-century Canterbury School of Archbishop Theodore, has received far less attention than the exegetical writings produced in the early eighth century by Bede. Although Jane Stevenson's edition of this important Latin text was published by Cambridge University Press in 1995, the *Laterculus Malalianus* has been largely overlooked since then. After a fifteen-year gap, Siemens's monograph builds upon the foundations laid by Stevenson, offering a comprehensive analysis of how the author of the *Laterculus* understood the person and work of Christ. Siemens examines the Christology of the *Laterculus Malalianus* with reference to a wide range of patristic influences, highlighting debts to the Syriac tradition (chapter iii), and Irenaeus of Lyons (chapter iv). Siemens writes clearly, but the critical apparatus would have benefitted from significant editing, especially in chapter i where many footnotes are unnecessarily long and verbose (see, for example, a footnote in three paragraphs on pp. 4–5). Siemens follows Stevenson's attribution of the *Laterculus Malalianus* to Theodore of Tarsus, who restructured the Anglo-Saxon Church during his time as archbishop of Canterbury from 668 to 690. The assumption that the *Laterculus Malalianus* was the direct work of Theodore himself runs through the book from start to finish, and whilst the examination of this issue in chapter ii shows that Siemens has thought carefully about Stevenson's