role in the cult of Mater Magna. He concludes that, although religion was important to all these groups, 'it was neither the reason why professional *collegia* were formed, nor did it define their identity' (p. 302). Rather, *collegia* served to integrate individuals into larger social groups, both the local city and the overarching imperial order: 'with the likely exception of ethnically specific deities among foreign resident groups, religion was about integration and protection, not about identity or separation' (p. 303). In the final contribution G. Woolf provides an effective summing up, which complements Wilson's opening paper; his broad and deep knowledge of Roman imperial religion and society allows him to map out major patterns. In contrast to the significant economic developments that took place in the last two centuries BCE and the first two centuries CE, the role of religion in relation to the economy remained fairly static. The most significant change was structural: control of religious institutions gradually shifted away from autonomous priestly orders to a Roman style socio-economic civic elite.

Like many volumes of collected papers, this book is more of a sampler than a coordinated study (as Wilson explicitly notes, p. 16), but in the present case that is exactly what is needed. The variety not only in topic but also in approach and data sets provides readers with a vivid sense of the possibilities. It thus admirably meets its stated goal of 'opening up further lines of enquiry both into the economic aspects of Roman religious practice, and into the religious component of the economy as a whole' (p. 16).

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BUILDINGS AND EUERGETISM

DES BOSCS (F.) (ed.) *Évergétisme et Architectures dans le monde romain (IIe s. av. J.-C.–Ve s. ap. J.-C.)*. (Archaia 5.) Pp. 252, b/w & colour figs, b/w & colour ills, b/w & colour maps. Pau: Presses Universitaires de Pau et des Pays de l'Adour, 2022. Paper, €30. ISBN: 978-2-35311-111-4.
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The visual design of the cover page introduces the subject: the photograph shows part of the entrance to the theatre of the North African town Leptis Magna with a centrally placed bilingual inscription. The Latin and Neo-Punic text informs readers that Annobal Rufus, son of Himilcho Tapapius and an embellisher of his hometown, lover of (civic) harmony, magistrate and priest in his city, donated this ensemble in 1/2 CE (IRT 321; https://irt.kcl.ac.uk/irt2009/IRT321.html). The cover reveals that inscriptions concerning building activities in the cities of the Roman Empire are at the centre of the book under review. However, four studies are not (mainly) based on epigraphy. The first is about republican Rome by A. Daguet-Gagey. Her study draws primarily on Livy with his information on the building activities of the *aediles* for which public funds were used. The other three concern the Iberian peninsula. One is a contribution on the re-foundation (*neapolis*) and urban development of late republican and early imperial Gades in Spain based on archaeology and literary sources, mainly Strabo (3.5.3). Des Boscs discusses the harbour facilities and the decorative marble elements of the theatre of new Gades, connecting it to the engagement of the Cornelii Balbi family. In the third non-epigraphy-based contribution

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C. Blázquez Cerrato examines the local coinage on which larger and smaller monuments are depicted (7% of the provincial coinage from the Augustan and 18% from the Tiberian period, fig. 3). Because the magistrate, a member of the elite, was responsible for the coins, the iconographic choices might reflect the elite's pride in the individual urban development financed by members of this group. In this contribution, as in many others, the excellent illustrations on high-quality paper add to the pleasure of reading. A fourth paper by M. Ronin and L. Borau considers archaeological attestations of water supply and management. It provides individual examples and two maps of distribution (figs 1; 3).

Marble trade and the methodological problems related to its study have been the focus of some comprehensive publications in the last decade: for example, A.M. Hirt, *Imperial Mines and Quarries in the Roman World* (2010) and B. Russell, *The Economics of the Roman Stone Trade* (2013). O. Rodríguez Gutiérrez presents an overview (with graphs, figs 1–5) of all building activity in Spain exclusively based on the (epigraphic) study of E. Melchor Gil, 'La construcción pubblica en Hispania romana. Iniciativa imperial, pública y privada', *MHA* 13/14 (1992/93), 129–70. In more detail, he investigates the use of local stone and marble from the region, which was the dominant building material in Spain and Portugal. The author shows that in individual cases the material obviously created effects of value and lavishness (use of colour, quality and character of the stone/marble), but in many other cases more data on the usage and the mix of building materials is needed. E. Roux also examines the use of marble in a provincial context. She focuses on the large bathhouse with its *porticus* and the *forum* of Vaison-La-Romaine in France, a city and context she has worked on for years.

The volume is the result of a conference at the French Université de Pau in 2018. The introduction by the editor, a final summarising paper worth reading by S. Lefebvre and fourteen contributions address questions such as: who were the benefactors who donated or equipped buildings and what position did these individuals have in their respective cities? Was the object of the particular donation freely chosen; what sums were invested; what types of buildings were chosen? Are there particularly 'popular' buildings, components or decorations that were donated and provided with inscriptions or documented by inscriptions? Should we assume that all these people wanted to 'shape' their living environment with such a benefaction?

The various contributions explicitly address reasons for and contexts of individual decisions and investments: Lefebvre emphasises the community benefit aspect of renovations: safety (e.g. to avoid collapse), respect for past benefactors and their investments in buildings and a contribution to the attractiveness of one's city. In the rich North African town of Leptis Magna most of the renovations were financed by the city itself. The major investments in renovations and new constructions in the increasingly 'Roman' cities in the provinces of the Roman Empire were largely completed by the early second century CE, fuelled once again by a wave of colony foundations and new installations under Trajan. No wonder, then, that most of the inscriptions attesting to restorations (regardless of the mode of financing) date from the second century to late antiquity. This is the case not only in Leptis Magna but also in Spain and Portugal, discussed by S. Sánchez de la Parra-Pérez. He focuses on the formula *vetustate conlapsum*, attested twelve times. The earliest attestation is dated to the Flavian period. B. Helly and C. Hoët-van Cauwenberghe contrast new buildings and renovations in Narbonensian Vienna in the first century CE. They present an archaeological map of the city (fig. 1) with public buildings and installations and few private houses. Subsections highlight the building and re-building measures attested in epigraphy: the water supply, eight fountains, a *horologium*/clock, a temple and silver statues of the city goddess Vienna and the lavish ornamentation with gilded roof tiles connected to a temple on the hill of Pipet (p. 131). Regarding the roof tiles in particular, the authors discuss context and

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intention and provide some parallels (in Rome and elsewhere) for this attested practice, which is rare in France.

Other contributions addressing a specific motivation and questioning the choices of benefactors are concerned with cult-related buildings (E. Melchor Gil, comprehensive and thorough) or theatre-related investments (G. Larguinat-Turbatte, see below). Apart from a few contributions already characterised in more detail, three contributions discuss negotiation processes within the cities as well as the social functions of investing money in building measures and of the wording of the inscribed advertisement. The first one examines the urban elite discourses and disputes that appear in inscriptions from imperial North Africa (G. Montagné). The other two refer to Christian late antiquity. P. Chevalier gives an overview of the bishops' involvement in church building in the cities on the Adriatic coast in the fifth century as communicated in inscriptions and mosaics. In Salona and other cities the financiers were often Christian communities or groups of believers. Rather rare is the documentation of the church building activity of a bishop from Pisidian Laodicea in his funerary inscription (S. Destephen). All over the Roman world building activities of bishops were often inscribed in more or less detail in the fourth and fifth centuries (see e.g. I. Mossong, *Der Klerus des spätantiken Italiens im Spiegel epigraphischer Zeugnisse* [2022], pp. 182–6), but the funerary monument is a rather rare context for such a presentation.

Regional differences and Roman impact are mentioned rather *en passant*: in the Hellenistic period many cities in Greece and western Asia Minor had a theatre, and the growing influence of Roman fashion supported private investment in a *frons scaena* or a new design of the entrances to already existing Greek-style theatres in the imperial period (Larguinat-Turbatte). Such changes also took new forms of performances à la romaine into account, among them animal chases or gladiator fights, which, unlike in the West, often took place in theatres. New theatres were arguably built only rarely, for example in Aphrodisias, paid for by a rich *libertus* of Augustus. In this theatre-related paper (as in a few others) it remains unclear whether the examples presented are intended to give an overview of case studies or whether the study claims completeness. In the latter case the comprehensive surveys (even though they certainly have other methodological problems) with their long catalogues published by H. Jouffroy about *La construction publique en Italie et dans l'Afrique romaine* (1986) or by J.H. Humphrey on a particular type of construction such as the *Roman Circuses* (1986) might have been used in order to get an idea of time- and space-bound investments and preferences. However, since the publication of *The Economy of the Roman Empire: Quantitative Studies* by R. Duncan-Jones (1982^{2}) it is well known that the knowledge about investments and costs are seldom meaningful (not even by comparison) because we usually lack decisive data on the construction volume, the type of different materials used and other details of the construction process.

The introduction by des Boscs addresses some of these aspects, though only moderately. The term 'euergetism' refers to (very) wealthy people who not only staged their social position and recognition in society through a benefaction in public but also immortalised it in writing by means of an inscription attached to the monument or published nearby (p. 7). The social urban space is thus simultaneously appropriated by the respective family of the benefactor since the inscription(s) permanently link their name to one object or more places in the city. One may doubt if all attested investments in smaller refurbishment, altars, individual columns etc. were donations of the rich elite. Many such endowments were rather modest. Studies in recent decades on 'sub-elites' such as veterans or members of cult or funerary associations have demonstrated that the cultural habitus, which had perhaps been limited to rich elites in early times, was adopted by a broad kind of 'middle class' in many cities and regions of the Empire in the imperial period. Apart from the term

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'évergétisme', which implies a specific understanding of Roman society and (more or less exclusive) elite behaviour, there is still a methodological problem in quantifying the share of private contributions to the design and building of cities in the Roman Empire. The practice of inscribing cannot be taken for granted in the case of objects financed from the public purse in contrast to the epigraphic advertisement of privately donated buildings, parts of building decorations, repair or reconstruction works. The volume illustrates the importance of continuing the discussion of both the terminological and the methodological aspects. The proceedings of this conference add substantially to our understanding of the local differences and chronological developments of the social practice of private funding of public buildings as part of ancient 'euergetism'. The numerous illustrations of high quality and often in colour, the maps, plans and statistics are an additional benefit to the presentation of the analyses and research results.

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SULLA REDEFINES TIME

HAY (P.) *Saeculum. Defining Historical Eras in Ancient Roman Thought*. Pp. x + 262. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2023. Cased, US$55. ISBN: 978-1-4773-2739-5.
doi:10.1017/S0009840X2300210X

H.'s book is an intriguing investigation of the development of chronological periodisation from 88 BCE to 17 CE with reference to the concept of a *saeculum.* This is worth stating at the outset, because from the title alone readers may have expected rather more than this. The centrality of Lucius Cornelius Sulla, to whom H. attributes a revolutionary new usage of periodisation, is also a major focus of the book. H. sees this phenomenon embedded in the *Memoirs of Sulla* that appears as fragments in Plutarch's *Life of Sulla.* These self-styled memoirs, H. suggests, create 'Sulla, preordained by the gods to bring about a new *saeculum*, [and he] would rule over Rome and favorably transform Roman life and culture' (p. 21). This was reinforced by a reformation of the calendar and is traced to the abundant coinage minted by Sulla. Not least amongst these was a coin featuring Hercules strangling the Nemean Lion as a prototype for Sulla to become the saviour of mankind in 88 BCE, the year of an Etruscan omen introducing a new *saeculum* (pp. 26–7). This interconnection of much-scattered evidence (as H. observes, p. 27) presents Sulla as a revolutionary thinker utilising the Etruscan concept of a new *saeculum*, created by an exceptional man from civil war and chaos, and H. maintains that Sulla is the first to make such a connection as the formulator of a new temporal logic (evidenced by Plut. *Sull.* 7.3–5). H. is persuasive, but he admits that 'No ancient source actually declares Sulla unique in this regard, nor does anyone explicitly attribute their use of periodization language to an innovation by Sulla' (p. 36). Thus, H. is mapping an 'intellectual trend' surviving in a variety of fragmentary sources that points to a greater interest in temporal thinking in the first century BCE. There is a problem with all this: the Etruscans had delineated such temporal thinking at an earlier date – if we are to read Varro embedded in Censorinus (*DN* 17.5–6). Moreover, there is a level of uncertainty that Sulla really

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