

The attribution of Silchester's shaping to specific powerful actors known from historical sources – ten men and one woman (Boudica) – who bolster authority claims through Roman-style public building, is probably the most controversial element of the book. This is the Calleva animated in reconstructions by Lapper (e.g. fig. 6.8) and Urmiston (e.g. fig. 5.3), foregrounding urban monuments amid a cityscape of terracotta roofs. But the workaday town evoked in other reconstructions by Matthews, especially the patched and thatched houses of Insula IX and environs (e.g. fig. 7.10), receives equal attention. The scrutiny of house forms is complemented by extensive characterisation of their material fabric. Investigation of artefact and environmental assemblages, complemented by biomolecular analysis, illuminates the lives of Callevans and elicits their inequalities. The road-hub location gave Silchester's townsfolk access to more diverse food resources than most Romano-Britons, exemplified in the botanical assemblage from Insula IX, but animal bone assemblages from the same insula, compared to those from the forum-basilica, reveal quite variable access to animal protein. Examination of faunal remains also informs understanding of urban household rituals at Calleva, especially the likely sacrifices represented by 'structured deposits' of animals and whole objects. One lacuna remains the cemeteries. Their topography is plausibly established by Creighton and Fry, but without data from human skeletal materials it is hard, for example, to compare the movements of commodities Fulford maps with those of people. For the lifecourses of ordinary Callevans, women and men, we remain dependent (for the time being) on evidence by analogy from cemetery excavations in other Romano-British cities. Rather than a quibble however, a review better ends by emphasising how much of urban life in Britannia is illuminated by the 50 years of research elegantly distilled here.

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 doi: 10.1017/S0068113X23000090

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Conquering the Ocean. By Richard Hingley. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2022. Pp. ix + 312, illus. Price £22.99. ISBN 9780190937416.

This highly readable account of the Roman conquest and occupation of Britain seeks to synthesise recent work on classical literary references to the island with the much larger body of archaeological and epigraphic research on Roman Britain. Dedicated *in memoriam* Anthony Birley, it is underpinned by Birley's *The Roman Government of Britain* (2005) and Roger Tomlin's *Britannia Romana* (2017), while also owing much of its approach to John Creighton's work on the province. Drawing extensively on material evidence enables it to bridge somewhat the disciplinary gap between studies of Iron Age and Roman Britain, particularly for southern England but also the North and Scotland. Hingley's focus is on Rome's generals and emperors to 'return attention to the military acts and political decisions that led to the conquest itself' (p. viii), as such updating traditional perspectives on Rome's invasion and occupation. The volume, however, covers the entirety of Roman activity in the province, also including brief chapters on the post-Roman period and later reception of Roman Britain.

Hingley argues that successive Roman leaders saw the conquest of Britain as a religious as well as a military objective. Campaigning on an island set within the sacred waters of Ocean was elevated to a 'magical' act that emperors could use to increase their personal power through 'self-deification' (p. 4). More discussion of these arguments could have been included, as could the political implications for emperors faced with either maintaining the boundaries of the Empire established by Augustus, which stopped at the Rhine and the Danube, or choosing to campaign across the Ocean. Nevertheless, it is an interesting variation on the now standard explanation of conquest and occupation being driven by Roman aggression. Taking a chronological approach allows Hingley to convey effectively the intertwining of Iron Age elite strategies and Roman military leaderships, particularly for southern Britain and Gaul where attempts can be made to match individuals named in Roman literary sources with coin inscriptions and, occasionally, with inscriptions on stone.

The book is aimed at a general reader seeking a straightforward history of personages and events. Trading relationships receive little consideration, as do the traders and camp followers accompanying the army, although a section is included on Vindolanda, and there is discussion, for example, of Barates and Regina at South Shields. Taking a broad historical scope means the rich complexities of the primary evidence and

the histories shaping its interpretation cannot be fully discussed, as Hingley acknowledges. However, although the quantity of evidence overall supports the broad thrust of the narrative, individual cases do not always incontrovertibly support claims made. Ambiguities are not always made clear and important contradictory evidence is also sometimes omitted. For example, the evidence from Maiden Castle does not prove that it was attacked by Vespasian (p. 82) – a traditional explanation first expounded by Mortimer Wheeler – but can, as Miles Russell has argued, suggest the site had been largely abandoned as military, political and economic centre before the first century C.E. and was then re-used (or taken over) by the Durotriges as a cemetery. Although osteological evidence suggests those inhumed were victims of violent conflicts, specific episodes varied greatly in date and the weaponry used may not be Roman. Redfern's osteological re-analysis of adult females buried at Maiden Castle shows they received perimortem weapon injuries, the pattern of their injuries differed to those of the adult males, and this cemetery's evidence may also be atypical for Dorset. It cannot prove whether or not Durotrigian 'women fought in armed contexts alongside men' (p. 83), although they certainly were present and among the victims.

Difficulties of inscriptional evidence are likewise underplayed. For example, Tomlin suggests in *RIB* that a part-preserved epitaph (*RIB* 3364) might be a cenotaph. He connects this with Pliny's tale of a haunting laid to rest by a proper funeral to illustrate Roman motivations for providing epitaphs. Hingley extends this plausible conjecture to portray soldierly comrades who could not recover the body and, being afraid of their fallen friend's ghost, then put up an inscription (p. 199). What survives of the text, however, states that the soldier's son and other heirs, conceivably freedmen and women, were responsible for the monument. The problems of fragmentary *RIB* 1051 are similarly undiscussed (p. 213).

There are some minor irritations – Diodorus Siculus' Library of History and Statius' *Silvae* are referred to but not listed under ancient authors' works in the bibliography. Inscription numbers are not always given in endnotes. These are minor flaws in what is overall a reasonably priced, engaging and useful volume for a general reader wanting to know what most probably happened.

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 doi: 10.1017/S0068113X23000156

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The Roman Baths at Wallsend. By N. Hodgson. Arbeia Society Roman Archaeological Studies 2. Arbeia Society and Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums, South Shields, 2020. Pp. x+91, illus. Price £18. ISBN 9781527257696.

Wallsend is the most thoroughly excavated and, more importantly, most completely published auxiliary fort on the line of Hadrian's Wall. Over the last few decades several major volumes have appeared (by Hodgson, in 2003; by Rushworth and Croom, publishing the 1975–81 excavations by Charles Daniels, in 2016; and by Bidwell, in 2018), and this book is a worthy addition to this corpus. The discovery, or rather, rediscovery of the fort bath-house in 2014, and the subsequent excavation of the site as a community archaeology project under the banner of 'WallQuest', is a riveting archaeological detective story. WallQuest was established in order to undertake community-based archaeological research on the easternmost 30 miles of Hadrian's Wall and was funded through a patchwork of grants.

The bath-house was first observed in 1814 during the building of a coal staitth, and the site was subsequently lost to view. Hodgson carefully navigates the conflicting antiquarian accounts, which had resulted in a 'general awareness' of the approximate position of the site. The demolition of the Ship Inn in 2013 prompted the WallQuest volunteers to do cartographic research, which confirmed that the site of the demolished pub was a strong candidate for that of the bath-house. Trial trenching through 4 m depth of industrial debris on the site resulted in the discovery of the lost Roman facility in 2014, exactly two centuries after it had first been seen and recorded.

The bulk of the volume is the detailed excavation report, which is prefaced by an introduction to Roman baths, with glossary, and a summary of other fort bath-houses on Hadrian's Wall. These, as has long been recognised, conform to a standard original Hadrianic plan, though the ways in which this was later amended varies from site to site. Although only a relatively small area of the building