

as a philosopher as much as a ruler. Marcus' *Meditations* are comprehensively analysed in the articles. The first two contributions by Jean-Baptiste Gourinat and Angelo Giavatto discuss the form, structure and style of Marcus' writings, followed by articles by Michael Erler and Irmgard Männlein-Robert analysing the aspects of orality in the *Meditations* and the writings as autobiography. The fifth article, by Christopher Gill, relates the writings to earlier Stoic literature. The following six papers focus on philosophical themes apparent in the text of the *Meditations*: physics, logic, ethics, social ethics and politics, the ancient art of living and the self.

The final Part VI, "Reception", discusses the figure of Marcus Aurelius from Antiquity to the present day, stressing his importance for Western culture. The first article by Julia Bruch and Katrin Herrmann discusses Marcus' reception as the 'Philosopher-King' in both Antiquity and in the Middle Ages. The second paper by Amy Richlin analyses the representation of Marcus' character in both the editions of the *Meditations* and in the letters of Marcus and Fronto, his teacher, from the viewpoint of Christianity and the 'sanctification' of Marcus' character. The last two articles analyse the reception of Marcus Aurelius' writings in both Early Modern and contemporary (19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century) philosophical thought.

In my opinion the volume achieves the purpose set for it in the beginning and presents a truly interdisciplinary synthesis of recent studies on Marcus Aurelius. The picture it creates sets Marcus in his background and paints a picture of him as an Emperor and a philosopher. He is a ruler, administrator, lawgiver, military leader and in the midst of all this a philosopher at heart. This is both the strength and weakness of the volume. The articles create a coherent picture of a man with many aspects and most papers connect their analysis well to wider contexts. The volume is, however, above all a companion to one man, Marcus Aurelius, and cannot be taken as an introduction to the Antonine age in general. But a companion to the Antonine age would, of course, be a different project altogether. Nevertheless, it could be suggested that the picture created of Marcus in this volume might be more comprehensive had certain themes prominent in contemporary research received more attention. Themes such as family, gender, emotions, corporality or age do not figure prominently apart from the few articles which discuss the intimate letters of Marcus and Fronto (in chapters 4 and 32). As it is, however, the volume presents a useful synthesis of the existing research on the figure of Marcus Aurelius and shows that he has still much to offer to the student of Ancient history.

Sanna Joska

PIERRE GROS: *Gallia Narbonensis. Eine römische Provinz in Südfrankreich*. Verlag Philipp von Zabern, Mainz am Rhein 2008. ISBN 978-3-8053-3887-5. 166 pp. EUR 29.90.

Pierre Gros has written an extensive and altogether interesting overview of the Roman province of *Gallia Narbonensis*. The book is not an academic monograph, but considering the expertise of the author and the detailed bibliography at the end of the volume, it serves as an up-to-date introduction to any person needing an introduction to the history and geography of Southern France during the Roman Empire.

The book is structured around a chronological structure with a thematic and geographical focus on the early Empire. This is a useful approach as it allows the author to focus on the structural

and cultural features of the region under Roman rule without losing focus on the changes and developments during this period.

The first chapter, "Entstehung der Provinz Gallia Narbonensis" describes the integration process from pre-Roman times to the Augustan reforms. Gros manages to describe this process in wider terms than what is generally offered in traditional accounts of Roman conquest by integrating economic and cultural factors and the agency of the local populations in this process.

The second chapter, "Organization und Struktur", describes in detail the towns in the region as well as other forms of co-habitation and infrastructure. The first section, "Formen und Ziele der Urbanisierung in julisch-claudischer Zeit" is almost forty pages long, and includes a description of the major urban developments for each town in the province. The section is difficult to use, as it is structured around descriptions of individual towns, but this structure is not visible on typographic level; moreover, illustrations do not always match up with the text. The detailed description of Narbo on pages 38 to 40, for example, is accompanied by a map and a reconstruction of Arles. A division of the section into subsections according to the towns discussed would have helped to improve the usability of the section. The rest of the chapter discusses the development of the town centres, smaller habitation centres outside the towns, and the forms of housing and living both in the town and in the countryside.

The third chapter, "Grabarchitektur, Wirtschaft, Religion und Gesellschaft", discusses four themes in further detail: funerary architecture is used to demonstrate the existence of flourishing local middle classes; the description of economy focuses on the products of agriculture, amphorae and other ceramic vessels, and is mostly a summary of evidence of various types of production; the section on religion describes the practices of *interpretatio celtica* and the presence of the later mystery cults in the region; and the section on society is mostly about the Romanization process through the assimilation of Roman culture through education.

A short summary of the developments of the 3rd century ends the book, which thus does not venture into the complex developments of Late Antiquity. Admittedly, that is a discussion which would have doubled the size of the book without further illuminating the main focus of the book, namely a study of a prosperous, peaceful province as part of the Roman Empire.

The book serves various functions well: first, for its intended function as a popular presentation of a Roman province it is perhaps a little too detailed, though of course it does provide the interested reader with ample material. For a serious scholar, it serves as an introduction to either the province itself or as an interpretation of the position of one province within the Roman Empire. For anyone already specialized in the region, the book probably has little new to offer except for possible reinterpretations of some evidence.

*Harri Kiiskinen*

*Hatra. Politics, Culture and Religion between Parthia and Rome.* Edited by LUCINDA DIRVEN. Oriens et occidentis: Studien zu antiken Kulturkontakten und ihrem Nachleben 21. Franz Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart 2013. ISBN 978-3-515-10412-8. 363 pp. EUR 61.

Hatra, a city located in the Jezirah region of present-day Iraq, was known as a city situated between