

Vandalenreich: Aufstieg und Untergang (Stuttgart, 1966), no monograph has been dedicated to the Vandals and their North African kingdom.

The fourteen papers collected in the volume under review here will, for the time being, fill this gap. Originating in a series of sessions held at the International Medieval Congress in Leeds in July 2000, *Vandals, Romans and Berbers* offers some well-balanced and up-to-date surveys on many issues related to the history of North Africa under Vandal rule. The papers are grouped thematically into three sections, each focusing on a different aspect of Vandal history. The first part, entitled 'African Identities', is dedicated to socio-political issues, and includes four papers. Walter Pohl and Andreas Schwarz examine, respectively, the formation of Vandal (and Alan) identity and the patterns of Vandal settlement in North Africa, while Andy Blackhurst and Alan Rushworth discuss some aspects of the formation of the Berber state.

The second part of the book discusses cultural and intellectual issues, and the six papers grouped under the title 'Written Culture' deal with various texts from late fifth- and early sixth-century North Africa. Gregory Hayes examines the work of Fulgentius the 'Mythographer' as a distinctive product of the unique intellectual concerns that characterised late antique and early medieval North Africa. The *Anthologia Latina*, which was assembled in Vandal North Africa, probably during the reign of Hilderic, is the topic of Judith George's paper. But, alas, George is much more interested in the poetry of Venantius Fortunatus, and as a result her discussion of the *Anthologia Latina* leaves much to be desired. In a thought-provoking and convincing paper, Andy Merrills argues that Dracontius' *carmen* to a certain *dominus ignotus* was, in fact, written in honour of King Huneric, and not for a foreign ruler. Roland Steinacher provides an introduction to, and an edition of, the so-called *Laterculus regnum Vandalorum et Alanorum*, that is, an African continuation of the Chronicle of Prosper. Jacqueline Godfrey discusses several administrative ostraka found in Carthage and Jonathan Conant offers a fresh look at the famous Albertini Tablets as evidence for literacy among well-off peasants.

The final part of the book, 'The African Church in Context', is dedicated to religious culture and history. Brent Shaw surveys the evidence for the extremist image of the *circumcelliones*; W.H.C. Frend traces the development of local martyrs' cults and describes how these cults were transformed as a result of the Donatist crisis and the subsequent Vandal and Byzantine occupations. Danuta Shanzer offers an engaging analysis of Victor of Vita's *Historia persecutionis* and finally, in a lucid paper, Mark Handley demonstrates the central role and outstanding perseverance of the African Church.

In such a short review it is impossible to do justice to all the insights and challenging ideas presented in many of the papers in this volume. *Vandals, Romans and Berbers* is an extremely important collection of studies on a rather neglected range of topics, and will shortly become indispensable reading for anyone interested in the history of late antique and early medieval North Africa.

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Christian Delacampagne, *Die Geschichte des Rassismus*, Düsseldorf and Zürich, Artemis & Winkler Verlag, 2005, 318 pp. ISBN 3-538-07206-X, translated from the French edition: *Une histoire du racisme. Des origines à nos jours* (Paris : Le livre de poche, France-culture, 2000)

Few sensible people would deny that racism is one of the most destructive social pathologies in recent history and that it has remained a dangerous force in human relations. It is therefore the subject of a vast literature, but most of this has been written by social scientists who focus on its workings in modern society. There is less agreement on its origins and history, even though any attempt at understanding the essence of this specific form of group-hatred should analyze its de-

velopment and transformation over time. A scholar who has probably done more than anyone else to clarify these problems was Léon Poliakov whose numerous publications include his monumental *History of Anti-Semitism* in four volumes (English translation: Philadelphia 2003) and *Le mythe Aryen: essai sur les sources du racisme et des nationalismes* (1971) translated as *The Aryan Myth: A History of Racist and Nationalist Ideas in Europe* (1974). One of Poliakov's collaborators was Christian Delacampagne who produced various works in the same field¹ as well as the book under review.

The present work is an ambitious survey of racism through the ages describing in four sections and sixteen chapters both the development of racist ideas and the concomitant practices of persecution. The first three chapters deal with classical antiquity: Greeks and barbarians; the Jews in the Hellenistic Age; the position of women and slaves. The second part of the book is devoted to the Middle Ages and Early Modern periods: four chapters describe the treatment of the Jews in the Middle Ages (ch. 4), the Cagots (ch.5) who represent one of the most extreme cases of enduring racism ever directed against any group, for they had no definable sense of identity among themselves, nor any physical characteristics in common. Then there is a chapter on the treatment of the native population of the Americas (ch. 6) and another on African slavery and slave trade (ch. 7). The third part of the book deals with racism from the Enlightenment to the end of World War II: ch. 8 discusses racism in the period of the Enlightenment, followed by ch. 9 on the evolution of racist ideology in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. After these two chapters tracing the development of racist ideas, the following chapter, ch. 10, briefly describes the Armenian genocide. Ch. 11, relating the rise of Nazi racism, prepares the ground for ch. 12 on the holocaust. The fourth part of the book discusses racism and anti-Semitism in France, Germany and elsewhere after 1945.

It should be noted that George M. Fredrickson published a comparable book, *Racism: A Short History* (Princeton, 2002), which is also eminently readable and covers much the same ground. The two authors clearly wrote independently of each other. A major difference, however, is that Fredrickson follows the traditional line in starting his survey with Mediaeval anti-Semitism, ignoring the evidence of Greek and Roman forms of racism (and lacking any reference to the Cagots).

The book by Delacampagne succeeds in maintaining a healthy balance between historical analysis and emotional involvement, which is not an easy thing to do with such subject matter. In the opinion of the present reviewer, his method and judgement are sound, even though there always will be differences of opinion. Thus, I tend to believe that it is useful to make more of a distinction between racism and other forms of group hatred than D. seems to do (7-9). He appears to regard the difference between ethnocentricity, xenophobia and racism mostly as one marking degrees of harmfulness. However, I share with D. his firmly stated conviction that human races do not exist in reality (11), an essential issue which, unfortunately, comes up again and again in mostly confused and confusing publications, many of them in the United States.

The book starts with Greece and Rome, a decision with which I am in full agreement. D. explains this by saying that this period of antiquity is best documented, which is definitely true. I am sure, however, that there are other reasons why early forms of racism are first encountered in Greek literature. Racism is an attempt to rationalize prejudices and base them on solid fact. It is therefore a by-product or, better, a perverse concomitant of a culture which advances systematic and analytical, often secular, thinking characteristic of ancient Greece and the Enlightenment. While it is perfectly clear that other ancient peoples, such as Egypt and China, may have cherished a high opinion of themselves, it would be surprising to find that they never made an attempt to justify their chauvinism in any systematic manner, such as we find in the work of Aristotle.

¹ In particular *L'invention du racisme. Antiquité et Moyen Age* (1971). I was unaware of this book and its title when I published my own work, *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity* (2004).

The book contains a full bibliography — in so far as I am qualified to judge. For the position of the Jews in the Hellenistic and Roman world one misses the standard work by Menachem Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism* (3 vols. Jerusalem, 1974-1984). Important for the Middle Ages is Robert Bartlett, *The Making of Europe: Conquest, Colonization and Cultural Change, 950-1350* (Princeton, 1993). Two recent works worth mentioning are Denise K. Buell, *Why this new race: ethnic reasoning in early Christianity* (New York, 2004) and David Goldenberg, *The Curse of Ham: Race and Slavery in Early Judaism, Christianity and Islam* (Princeton, 2004).

What then has this work to offer to readers of this journal? As one who has no doubts as to the classical origins of racist thinking, I recommend its lucid and uninterrupted analysis of the progression of discriminatory ideas and practices, from the fifth century BCE to our own times.

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