

---

**Francia. Forschungen zur westeuropäischen Geschichte**

Herausgegeben vom Deutschen Historischen Institut Paris

(Institut historique allemand)

Band 22/1 (1995)

DOI:

10.11588/fr.1995.1.59243

---

Rechtshinweis

Bitte beachten Sie, dass das Digitalisat urheberrechtlich geschützt ist. Erlaubt ist aber das Lesen, das Ausdrucken des Textes, das Herunterladen, das Speichern der Daten auf einem eigenen Datenträger soweit die vorgenannten Handlungen ausschließlich zu privaten und nicht-kommerziellen Zwecken erfolgen. Eine darüber hinausgehende unerlaubte Verwendung, Reproduktion oder Weitergabe einzelner Inhalte oder Bilder können sowohl zivil- als auch strafrechtlich verfolgt werden.

also be useful if the principle of indexing the entries-introduced here as a ›brillante nouveauté‹ – could be extended to regular issues, and made more comprehensive. And perhaps thought should now be given to moving the ›Chronique‹, and its flourishing offspring, the ›Chronique de céramologie de la Gaule‹ to a more central and apposite journal, such as *Gallia*? Finally, given the rapid expansion of modern technology, editors of bibliographical reviews need to think seriously about continuing with the traditional format. I guess that these two volumes were fairly expensive to publish, and suggest that it would have been a great advance for Gallic studies – and an even more striking tribute to Duval's contribution to them – if this money had been spent on scanning the data to computer-disk or CD-ROM, where they could have been accessed in innumerable ways, without the need for formal indices.

John F. DRINKWATER, Nottingham

Barry CUNLIFFE, *La Gaule et ses voisins: le grand commerce dans l'Antiquité*. Traduction par Florence VIDAL, Paris (Picard) 1993, 253 p. (Antiquité Synthèses, 4).

Prospective purchasers of this book should realize that it is simply an unrevised version of Cunliffe's *Greeks, Romans & Barbarians. Spheres of Interaction* (1988). As such, it suffers from many of the usual faults of translations, for example odd spelling-mistakes and awkwardnesses in handling colloquialisms, and a bibliography dominated by publications in the original language. It is also less centred on Gaul than its French title might suggest, being rather a study of the Romanization of north-west Europe.

On its own terms, however, the book contains much to praise. C. provides a clear, exceptionally well-illustrated and lively description of the extension of Greco-Roman economic, cultural and political power to Gaul, Britain and Germany, in the period from the foundation of Marseille to the ending of the Marcomannic Wars (i.e. c. 600 B.C.-A.D. 200). In this edition, C.'s elegant summaries of the results of a wide range of modern research, both archaeological and historical, should be especially useful to those readers who do not enjoy easy access to the relevant English and German scholarship. Moreover, C. intends his synthesis to do more than merely provide a ›story‹. From the start he makes it clear that he feels able to explain the phenomenon of Roman advance in the west by reference to a specific socio-economic model: the ›core-periphery‹ relationship.

According to this model, in a preindustrial society the inhabitants of an economically developed ›core‹ must eventually exploit those of their less developed ›periphery‹ in order to acquire raw materials, which they pay for with their surplus agricultural and industrial produce. In turn, once they have acquired a taste for this produce, those dwelling at the periphery will begin to draw on the resources of the lands and peoples beyond their own borders in order to guarantee continued satisfaction of the demands of the core. In the periphery, the process leads to the growth of pronounced hierarchical societies (›chiefdoms‹) as local aristocrats emerge as middlemen; beyond, we see the rise of more turbulent, ›warrior‹ societies, that supply these middlemen with their inanimate and animate (in particular, slaves) stock in trade. Through constant contact with the materially superior culture, the periphery tends to fuse with the core, and the process is relocated further afield. The system is dynamic, but unstable: it may be destroyed by excessive political or military interference by the core in the affairs of the periphery, or by the excessive demands or success of the periphery bringing down upon it the vengeance or the greed of the peoples of beyond. Its success or failure will affect all its constituent communities. C.'s sustained exegesis of the ›standard‹ account of the Roman conquest of the west according to these ideas is certainly original, and makes for very provocative reading.

However, even on its own terms his book is susceptible of criticism. Synthesis on such a broad scale is very difficult. In terms of material and ideas deployed, C.'s bibliography was

incomplete and already a little out of date in 1988; and important work has appeared since then, for example M. Millett's *The Romanization of Britain* (1991). And in terms of methodology, a number of reviewers of the English original drew attention to certain weaknesses in C.'s treatment of the archaeological and literary sources, in particular his choosing to favour whichever of the two suited his argument for the time being (see e.g. pp. 38 ff., 108), and his uncritical acceptance of the ›sociological‹ statements of ancient writers (e.g. pp. 198 ff.). As far as his main thesis is concerned, any single explanation of events as diverse as the collapse of the Hallstatt societies (pp. 42 ff.) and the onset of Marcus Aurelius' German wars (pp. 212 ff.) must be highly suspect; and a single explanation that lays so much emphasis on the activities of ›commerçants romains‹ and ›considérations commerciales‹ (e.g. pp. 67, 89) must simply be wrong: this is surely an anachronism, at home in the Thatcherite Britain of the 1980s, but at odds with the other imperatives – political, military, social, religious – of the leaders of society in Antiquity.

Additionally, readers of this journal are bound to be disappointed by C.'s treatment of their field. C. reaches Germany and the Germans in his last substantive chapter. He uses his core-periphery model to make some very interesting observations on early (i.e. down to the second century A.D.) German contacts with Rome, but then seems to lose interest in the topic. As a result, while conceding that contact with the Roman Empire had a profound influence on the people living just beyond (i.e. within 200 km of) the frontier, he nowhere directly addresses the crucial question as to why – quite unlike what had happened elsewhere in previous centuries – this phase of acculturation did not eventually lead to the absorption of these people within the core. The best he can do is to declare that when the Germans first met the Romans they were too primitive to be integrated into imperial society; and to suggest that from the late-second century this disability was actually increased by rising population and massive *Völkerwanderungen*, leading to unbearable pressure on the frontiers, which finally broke, ›laissant ainsi le champ libre aux hordes agitées de barbares du Nord‹ (pp. 197 ff., 216 ff.). Of these two proposals, while the first is not unlikely, the second is, in the light of modern research, surely highly questionable.

Overall, C.'s lack of engagement with changes on the northern frontiers in the later imperial period is characterized by his treatment of Marcus Aurelius' supposed plan to annex territory in the lands of the Quadi and Marcomanni, the reporting of which by Cassius Dio must, whatever the actual authenticity of the scheme, be rich in implications for the core-periphery theory. C. alludes to it on p. 212, but goes no further.

John F. DRINKWATER, Nottingham

Victor of Vita: History of the Vandal Persecution. Translated with notes and introduction by John MOORHEAD, Liverpool (Liverpool University Press) 1992, XX-110 p. (Translated Texts for Historians, 10).

Conformément à son intention, la TTH met à la disposition des historiens une œuvre importante du V<sup>e</sup> siècle. Quand on sait que les éditions de référence datent de 1879 (MGH AA 3, et non 2 comme il est imprimé à la p. 95) et de 1881 (CSEL 7), l'entreprise se justifie amplement. La pensée de Victor de Vita est désormais accessible mais à travers l'écran d'une simple traduction qui, loin d'être pas une trahison délibérée, est nécessairement une interprétation, en fonction des connaissances du traducteur à un moment donné, de l'interprétation d'événements irrémédiablement morts même si nous pouvons encore construire des faits à partir des souvenirs qui nous sont parvenus. L'historien, destinataire final de cette publication, attend donc que soient convenablement menées trois démarches: la traduction en elle-même, la définition du genre pratiqué par l'auteur, les rapports entre ce genre et ceux dont nous avons conservé des traces. Chaque point doit être traité avec la plus extrême rigueur car tous sont liés et une erreur induit des spirales vicieuses difficilement contrôlables.