

Foreword

This survey of Late Antiquity is the result of more than half a century of study of the period, initially in Oxford under the guidance of Henry Mayr-Harting, Peter Brown, Sabine McCormack, John Matthews, and Michael Wallace-Hadrill. My contemporaries, among an array of fine early-medievalists, included Chris Wickham and Roger Collins. From Oxford, I moved to London, where I learnt a great deal from Jinty Nelson and Wendy Davies before taking up a job in Leeds. I subsequently had the great good fortune of being a co-ordinator of the European Science Foundation's project on the Transformation of the Roman World, which brought me into contact with many of the European scholars working on the centuries from the fourth to the eighth.

The book itself is the result of a commission from Steffen Patzold, to whom I am extremely grateful, not just for the commission, but also for the opportunity to hold a fellowship in Tübingen, in the Kolleg-Forschergruppe "Migration und Mobilität in Spätantike und Frühmittelalter", which gave me access to one of the best German research libraries. I am equally (perhaps even more) indebted to the four "Hilfskräfte", Gabriel Anhegger, Derek Benson, Nicolai Böckler, and Luis Probst. They transformed my footnotes into the citation system of the OGG volumes – which all the scholars I know who have contributed to the series will understand is a remarkably difficult task.

It would be impossible to list everyone to whom I am indebted for what they have taught me about Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages, but I cannot leave out any mention of Herwig Wolf-ram, who introduced me to the world of Austrian scholarship (not least to Walter Pohl, Helmut Reimitz, Max Diesenberger and Richard Corradini), and by extension to the broader world of German and Central European research. I offer the book to Herwig as a poor payment for an enormous intellectual debt.

