

HISTORIOGRAPHY AND SPACE IN LATE ANTIQUITY

The Roman Empire traditionally presented itself as the centre of the world, a view sustained by ancient education and conveyed in imperial literature. Historiography in particular tended to be written from an empire-centred perspective. In Late Antiquity, however, that attitude was challenged by the fragmentation of the empire. This book explores how a post-imperial representation of space emerges in the historiography of that period. Minds adapted slowly, long ignoring Constantinople as the new capital and still finding counter-worlds at the edges of the world. Even in Christian literature, often thought of as introducing a new conception of space, the empire continued to influence geographies. Political changes and theological ideas, however, helped to imagine a transferral of empire away from Rome and to substitute ecclesiastical for imperial space. By the end of Late Antiquity, Rome was just one of many centres of the world.

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