

The social networks established between officers are discussed in chapter 5. The author proves that these relationships were at least of the same importance as the official hierarchy for the functioning of the army, especially in the Italian wars, in which the control of the central command was weaker. The impact on warfare was either positive (when generals benefitted from advice given by their social network) or negative (some defeats were caused by animosities between generals). The families of the officers are the subject of chapter 6. Based on a few examples of officers and their families, the author concludes that the preferment of a military career occurred only in exceptional cases based on nepotism. Another problem was the care of the officers and soldiers for their wives and children, which led to disruptions in military activity, and even to desertion, because of private considerations.

Chapter 7 discusses the relationships between officers and soldiers, which is more difficult because simple soldiers were rarely documented by the narrative sources (Procopius or Agathias). These sources indicate two very different worlds, one of officers and one of soldiers, and their interactions are particularly visible when the latter were commended for bravery or punished for misconduct. The most extreme actions were mutinies inspired by lack of payment. The public perception of the army (chapter 8) is presented in three parts: by the army itself (evidenced by the attitude of the soldiers who deserted or rebelled), by the civilians (affected by abusive behavior of the soldiers and by the involvement of the army in the repression of urban mutinies), and by the elite, whose opinion is reflected in the works of Procopius and Agathias, who criticized the actions of the army or of particular officers and were especially concerned about the efficiency of military expenses. An interesting conclusion is that the mutinies of 587 and 602 were motivated by the wish of the soldiers to continue military service unchanged (in 587, they continued the war against Persia under the command of the general Germanus, elected by the soldiers). The book ends with a summary of the problems discussed in the previous chapters and a description of the long career of Buzes, son of Vitalianus, which illustrates the broad range of relationships in the sixth-century army.

It is regrettable that Parnell ignored several relevant publications, including Giorgio Ravegnani's *Soldati e guerre a Bisanzio* (2009) and the basic works on the reign of Justinian by Otto Mazal (*Justinian I. und seine Zeit* [2001]) and Mischa Meier (*Das andere Zeitalter Justinians* [2003]). The author used few studies by French, German, or Italian historians. In addition, the information provided by some sixth-century Egyptian papyri that contain data about relationships between officers and soldiers in frontier garrisons would have augmented the database. However, Parnell has produced an innovative inquiry on the Byzantine army, adding a new kind of approach to the large bibliography on the subject, interesting for both Byzantine studies and general military history.

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BEN PARSONS, *Punishment and Medieval Education*. Woodbridge, UK: D. S. Brewer, 2018.
Pp. vii, 252; 11 black-and-white figures. \$99. ISBN: 978-1-8438-4515-7.
doi:10.1086/708042

Ben Parsons develops a lucid and subtle argument on the role corporal punishment played in classroom settings, focusing on western Europe between the twelfth and sixteenth centuries. Drawing on a wide selection of sources, each handled with insight and patience, he demonstrates that the rod was both idealized, and often applied, as a highly calibrated pedagogical tool. In doing so Parsons exposes the paradox of submission as “the wellspring of agency, treating subjugation to the rod as a route into autonomy, even power” (205).

The book begins by hanging a classical and early medieval backcloth to later developments, characterized by division and instability. Thinkers from Plato to Quintilian to Pseudo-Plutarch

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developed pedagogical theories and practices around corporal punishment, cognizant of its mental impact and stressing its unique suitability to children's upbringing, yet never without a marked ambivalence about its implementation, which could bestialize the pupil and counteract his (!) progress. The material-mental nexus in part disintegrates and in part assumes a spiritual dimension with the Christianization of the later Roman Empire. The writings of Augustine, Libanius, Benedict, and others, alongside chronicles, secular law codes, and the decrees of early church councils, collectively attest a greater number of values that corporal punishment was seen to promote. Other sources, however, highlight the added value placed on beating as an aspect of physical training, itself an independent goal of education. There is also growing recognition, especially among monastic authors, of the need to counteract developments inherent to the pubescent oblate's body. More broadly, Parsons identifies in this era the origins of systematic thinking about corporal punishment in the classroom, an anxiety about regularization and standardization that continued to occupy authors, as the "teacher-pupil relationship became much like the clerical version of the aristocratic house or bloodline" (37).

Ambivalence continued to typify approaches to corporal punishment in subsequent centuries. Chapter 2 expertly teases out a grammar of coercion, stressing that, to contemporaries, "punishment needs to be both calculable and meaningful in order to possess any value" (61). Texts such as the Pseudo-Boethian *De disciplina scholarium* (c.1230) tapped into developmental psychology, pediatrics, as well as humoral medicine to understand student dispositions and learn how to develop an effective, rather than merely just, response to their deviant behavior. These scholarly fields likewise informed discussions as well as complaints about the abuse of classroom punishment, including by fellow teachers, parents, and students themselves. Indeed, in contrast to later depictions of medieval instructors gone berserk with impunity, Parsons demonstrates that the punishing teacher's behavior and emotional state were constantly scrutinized. Restraint in this context was a consciously cultivated ideal, he avers, since medieval pedagogy "is not only drawing on corporal discipline; it is remaking it in its own image" (77).

Chapter 3 moves from exploring the variety of rules on physical coercion in the classroom to its equally heterogeneous pedagogical goals. While some scholars theorized about pain's ability to help students recollect information better, others went further, arguing that the rod operated as "a stimulus for a higher faculty" (136), also framed as "deliberative judgement" (137) or indeed "wisdom" (138). For others still, corporal punishment engendered a sound mind in a sound body, underscoring the benefits of physical rigor on the adolescent's anatomy, including strength, self-control, and a proper masculine form meant to ensure sexual maturity. Yet the perfection of male bodies could be abandoned in favor of perfecting the soul, a goal stressed for instance by the Franciscan Peter John Olivi. Indeed, the identification of the rod with God and as an engine of Christian morality in particular was common enough to create fear "that the consequence of its withdrawal can only be limitless degeneracy" (148). Last but not least, beating fostered "obedience but also emotional and psychological deference" (152), raising the curtain on struggles for power between parents and professional educators.

The book's final and particularly brilliant chapter recovers the rarest voices in discussions of corporal pedagogy, namely those of (former) students, in part through an ingenious use of teachers' descriptions of pupils' expected responses to chastisement, written ostensibly to preempt their most negative consequences, namely flight, self-harm, or violent retaliation. Parsons spotlights the dynamic relations between students, parents, and teachers, and the agencies exercised by each in policing the elusive boundary between discipline as a promoter and destroyer of a good upbringing. None of this suggests a delegitimization of corporal punishment per se. On the contrary, authors expressed pride and gratitude for having endured beatings as part of their social, intellectual, and spiritual pedigree. Pedagogic coercion hence

insinuated itself into every nook and cranny of medieval education, from peer monitoring to games to grammar exercise books, inculcating its legitimacy for instance through role playing, which in effect subordinated violence to authority. As Parsons puts it: “beating taught the pupil how to beat . . . in order to convert his aggression into sanctioned, contained form” (201) and ultimately molding him into an autonomous, disciplined subject.

The book is a major milestone and a welcome contribution. The high quality of its copy editing will ensure it is read with pleasure by diverse scholars, including of violence, pedagogy, and penology, as well as by intellectual, medical, religious, and social historians. If there is one qualm to raise, it is about the narrow treatment of punishment as a term, which the book mostly employs as a synonym of physical coercion, although diverse sanctions, including social and emotional deprivation, clearly emerge from the sources.

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GUY PERRY, *The Briennes: The Rise and Fall of a Champenois Dynasty in the Age of the Crusades, c. 950–1356*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018. Pp. xiv, 213; 8 black-and-white figures, 7 maps, and 6 genealogical charts. \$105. ISBN: 978-1-1071-9690-2. doi:10.1086/708043

This book is principally concerned with the process through which the area under the influence of the Latin Christian rite expanded in Europe and the surrounding regions in the period between the tenth and fourteenth centuries. In tackling this topic, Guy Perry advocates the value of examining this process of expansion through the activities of the medieval dynasties whose members propelled it. The particular family under the microscope in this volume is the house of Brienne. The homelands of the Briennes were in Champagne in northern France, but over the course of the period under scrutiny, members of the clan gained power in parts of western Europe and the Mediterranean. Building on his fine 2013 biography of one of the most renowned members of the dynasty, John of Brienne (d. 1237), Perry aims with this new study to provide a holistic appraisal of the family, by investigating the exploits of all its branches—including its lesser-known cadet lines—from its origins in the mid-tenth century down to the death of the heirless Count Walter VI in 1356.

The primary approach of the book is chronological rather than thematic. The first chapter explores the obscure origins of the family, setting out the nature of its lands in Champagne, as well as its development down to the late twelfth century. The second covers the sudden rise to prominence of the family in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, through the dramatic exploits of prominent members including John of Brienne and his elder brother Walter III, count of Brienne (d. 1205). The third chapter covers the middle years of the thirteenth century, and applies a regional approach to investigate the activities of the dynasty in the different areas in which it had by this time gained power. The fourth chapter assesses the family’s history in the last quarter of the thirteenth century and first decade of the fourteenth, asserting that in this time the rise of the house of Anjou had major implications for the Briennes. The last chapter tackles the history of the family in the first half of the fourteenth century, concluding with the death of Walter VI. In terms of source material, the book draws from two principal types of evidence. The first is a range of diplomatic material, chiefly charters that detail the activities and association of members of the family. For the earlier period covered in chapter 1, this material is fragmentary, and Perry applies close reading to eke information out of them. As the chapters advance, the volume of this material becomes progressively more fulsome. The second is a corpus of narrative sources, which build upon the information gleaned from the documentary texts. These include well-known texts such as Geoffrey of Villehardouin’s account of the Fourth Crusade, and John of Joinville’s *Life of Saint Louis*.