



A CULTURAL HISTORY OF BATHING IN LATE ANTIQUITY AND EARLY BYZANTIUM

Michal Zytka



A Cultural History of Bathing in Late Antiquity and Early Byzantium

This book discusses social, religious and medical attitudes towards bathing in Late Antiquity. It examines the place of bathing in late Roman and early Byzantine society as seen in the literary, historical and documentary sources from the late antique period.

The author argues that bathing became one of the most important elements in defining what it meant to be a Roman; indeed, the social and cultural value of bathing in the context of late Roman society more than justified the efforts and expense put into preserving bathing establishments and the associated culture.

The book contributes a unique perspective to understanding the changes and transformations undergone by the bathing culture of the day, and illustrates the important role played by this culture in contributing to the transitional character of the late antique period. In his examination of the attitudes of medical professionals and laymen alike, and the focus on its recuperative utility, Zytka provides an innovative and detailed approach to bathing.

Michał Zytka, having obtained his MA at Łódź University, Poland, continued his research career at Cardiff University where he completed his doctoral thesis. Following a period of freelance editorial and translation work, he is now also pursuing a career in the Civil Service. He is a co-translator and the English language editor of *Cereals of antiquity and early Byzantine times: wheat and barley in medical sources (second to seventh century AD)*, published in the Byzantine Lodziensia series, Łódź 2014, and of the forthcoming *The Bulgarian state in 927–969: the epoch of Tsar Peter I*.



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

A Cultural History of Bathing in Late Antiquity and Early Byzantium

Michal Zytka

First published 2019
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN
and by Routledge
52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

© 2019 Michal Zytka

The right of Michal Zytka to be identified as author of this work has been asserted by him in accordance with sections 77 and 78 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

Trademark notice: Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

A catalog record has been requested for this book

ISBN: 978-0-8153-5409-3 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-1-351-13411-8 (ebk)

Typeset in Times New Roman
by Servis Filmsetting Ltd, Stockport, Cheshire

To my parents



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

Contents

<i>List of figures</i>	viii
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	x
<i>Abbreviations</i>	xi
 Introduction	 1
1 Baths and Roman society	18
2 Baths, bathing and religion	73
3 Bathing in medicine	117
4 Final conclusions	180
 <i>Appendix</i>	 185
<i>Bibliography</i>	187
<i>Index</i>	198

List of figures

Map 1	Map of the Roman Empire during the early 6 th century. The indicated locations contain points of interest most relevant to this study.	3
Fig. 1.1	Kôm al-Dikka baths, Alexandria. Reproduced by kind permission of Inge Nielsen, author of <i>Thermae et balnea. The architecture and cultural history of Roman public baths</i> , and Aarhus University Press.	47
Fig. 1.2	Bath “C”, Antioch on the Orontes. Reproduced by kind permission of Inge Nielsen, author of <i>Thermae et balnea. The architecture and cultural history of Roman public baths</i> , and Aarhus University Press.	48
Fig. 1.3	Bath types and sub-types: I axial row type; II angular row type; III parallel row type; IV axial symmetrical row type; V axial half-symmetrical row type; VI double symmetrical row type. Bath-houses of these types (as well as those represented in Fig. 3), while still prevalent at the onset of the period discussed here, were gradually abandoned in favour of much simpler and compact bath-houses consisting of multiple bath-tubs. Reproduced by kind permission of Inge Nielsen, author of <i>Thermae et balnea. The architecture and cultural history of Roman public baths</i> , and Aarhus University Press.	52
Fig. 1.4	Bath types and sub-type: VII simple ring type; VIII half-axial ring type; IX imperial type. Reproduced by kind permission of Inge Nielsen, author of <i>Thermae et balnea. The architecture and cultural history of Roman public baths</i> , and Aarhus University Press.	53
Fig. 2.1	Baths of Caracalla, Rome: plan of the imperial bath-house’s main building. Reproduced by kind permission of Inge Nielsen, author of <i>Thermae et balnea. The architecture and cultural history of Roman public baths</i> , and Aarhus University Press.	97

Fig. 2.2	Lawrence Alma-Tadema, <i>The baths of Caracalla</i> , 1899. The artist's depiction adroitly captures the grandeur and opulence of an imperial bath-house. Public domain (Wikimedia Commons).	98
Fig. 2.3	Baths of Diocletian, Rome, the main building. Reproduced by kind permission of Inge Nielsen, author of <i>Thermae et balnea. The architecture and cultural history of Roman public baths</i> , and Aarhus University Press.	100
Fig. 2.4	Lawrence Alma-Tadema, <i>A favourite custom</i> , 1909. The artist's masterful rendition of marble surfaces found another expression here in a depiction of an upscale bath-house. Public domain (Wikimedia Commons).	101

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my gratitude to all those who helped me on the journey which led to the publication of this volume. First and foremost, I would like to sincerely thank Prof. Josef Lössl and Dr Shaun Tougher for their guidance and unwavering support on my academic path, which allowed me to complete my research. I am grateful to Dr Nicholas Baker-Brian and Dr Laurence Totelin for their advice and insights; I made as much use of these as I could. I would like to extend my thanks to Prof. Inge Nielsen, for her gracious permission to use some of the illustrations from her work, and to Karina Bell Ottosen, for facilitating contact with Prof. Nielsen. My thanks also go to Kamila Cieplińska and Andy Holland, for their assistance on the early drafts of the manuscript; and to Michael Greenwood, for his professional involvement in the publishing of this book. I am also thankful for all the comments, advice and discussions with scholars and colleagues – too numerous to mention individually – who over the years contributed their collective wisdom to this volume. Finally, a most heartfelt thank-you for the support and understanding of my parents, Elżbieta and Lucjan, for whom my departure from Poland to pursue the PhD on which this book is based resulted in prolonged periods of separation from their son.

Abbreviations

ANF – A. Roberts, J. Donaldson, A. Cleveland Coxe (eds.), *The Ante-Nicene fathers*, Edinburgh 1885

CIC – *Corpus Iuris Civilis*, S. P. Scott (ed. and transl.), *The civil law*, Cincinnati 1932

CMG – *Corpus Medicorum Graecorum*

LCL – Loeb Classical Library

MPG – J. P. Migne (ed.), *Patrologia Graeca*, Paris 1857–1866

NPNF – P. Schaff, H. Wace (eds.), *A select library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene fathers of the Christian Church*, Edinburgh 1886–1900

NRSV – W. A. Meeks, J. M. Bassler (eds.), *The HarperCollins study Bible. New revised standard version*, New York 1989



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

Introduction

The goal of this book is the examination of the cultural, religious and therapeutic functions of Roman baths during Late Antiquity, as they are presented in a wide range of primary literary sources, as well as examining how these subjects have been addressed in current research. My aim was, primarily, the analysis of previously un-researched aspects of bathing during this period (such as medicinal uses of bathing) and to address the issues that have been discussed in the past but have not been resolved conclusively (such as the matter of nudity and mixed-sex bathing). In particular, I set out to examine the changes that occurred in the bathing culture during this time and devoted special attention to how the perceptions of bathing were presented in the contemporary sources. This was achieved through the investigation of passages from a wide range of texts mentioning baths and bathing and subsequently drawing conclusions based on the analysis of the primary sources. As the primary focus of the present book is on the cultural history, perceptions of those who lived during Late Antiquity and their self-image, the archaeological evidence was given relatively little attention – a decision made easier by the relative abundance of works examining physical remains of Roman bath-houses.

In particular, I wanted to identify and examine the possible roles and functions of bath-houses for the Romans. I examined the descriptions of bathing and bathers and attempted to determine the reasons for which bath-houses enjoyed such high popularity in Roman society in Late Antiquity. By doing this, I strove to further expand the understanding of one of the most important elements of the social life in the Roman Empire. Furthermore, I intended to determine the extent to which the Romans of that time themselves (or more specifically, the educated elite who produced the literary sources I used) appreciated – or not – the significance of bathing for their society and its place in everyday life. In the first chapter in particular, I made an attempt to determine the extent to which bath-houses served as cultural institutions and places of social interaction, and whether the importance of bath-houses as places where such activities took place changed during this period.

Accepting the view that Late Antiquity was a period of change and transformation (an issue that will be discussed in a later part of the introduction), I set out to identify, examine, analyse and summarily discuss the factors

2 *Introduction*

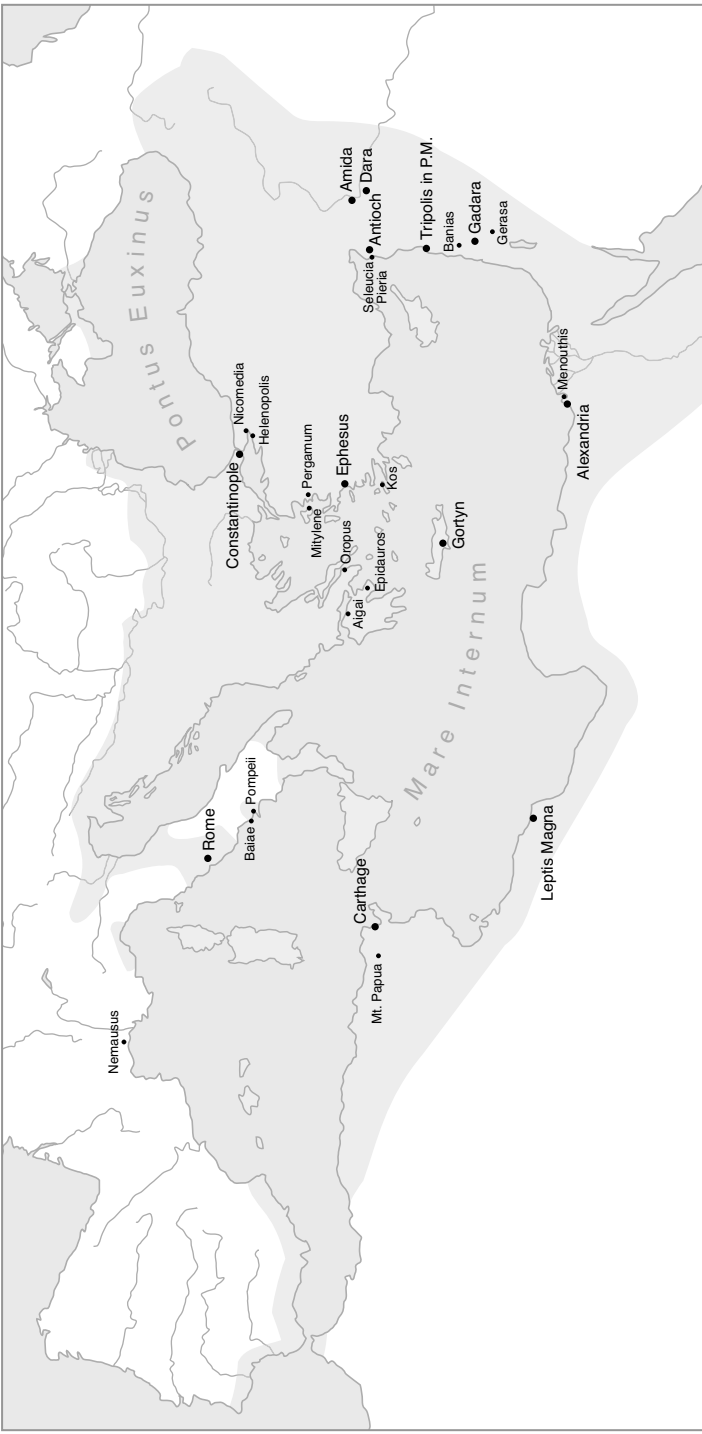
that contributed to the changes in the infrastructure necessary to support bathing – such as water supply systems and the bath-houses themselves – during this time period. Subsequently, I focused on determining the influence these might have had on everyday bathing customs and the popular perception of bathing.

This is followed in the second chapter by an attempt to establish whether it is possible to talk about the significance of Christianity in the developments concerning, and transformation of, bathing in Late Antiquity. The degree of continuity and change in bathing practices and social norms is examined there from the perspective of how – if at all – the ascendant religion made its mark on them, and whether the potential changes might have been the result of factors other than the new religion. In particular, I explored the attitudes of representatives of the Church towards baths and bathing, focusing on such aspects as the perceptions of, and attitudes towards, the human body and sexuality, wealth and luxury, social life and the influence, if any, of bathing culture and customs on the language and activities of the Church in general.

In the third chapter my goal was to establish the degree to which bathing and washing were incorporated into the medical practice of the day, basing my inquiry primarily on the medical compendium of Paul of Aegina, passages found in the work of Alexander of Tralles and references to older medical authorities, but also on the perception of the medical profession in the texts of authors without a medical background. My secondary goals here included determining the degree of continuity and possible differences in the use of water and bathing in the medical profession during the Late Antiquity compared to the earlier period, and ascertaining the importance of bath-houses and bathing in general to the medical profession during this time.

Chronological and geographical boundaries

The geographic focus of the dissertation is primarily on the areas that originally constituted the Eastern Roman Empire, and what subsequently came to be called the Byzantine Empire. This commonly used term denoting the Eastern part of the state established by the Romans is problematic in itself; not invented until well after the collapse of the entity it describes, its starting date cannot be unequivocally given in any but an arbitrary manner. Events to which one could point as symbolic dates of the beginning of the Byzantine Empire may include the reforms of Diocletian (284–305) and the beginning of tetrarchy; the consecration of Constantinople in May 330; the division of the Roman state after the death of Theodosius I (402–450) between his sons, Arcadius (395–408) and Honorius (393–423), in 395; the fall of the old Rome and the collapse of the Empire in the West in 476; perhaps even the reforms undertaken during the reign of Heraclius (610–641), changing the administrative arrangement of the Empire and recognising Greek as the official language within the Empire. Within this book I wished to avoid the implications of using geographic terms; it should be assumed that any



Map 1 Map of the Roman Empire during the early 6th century. The indicated locations contain points of interest most relevant to this study.

4 Introduction

names and descriptions, unless it is indicated otherwise, are used for the sake of convenience. For the purpose of this work, I used the term 'Eastern Roman Empire' to refer to the part of the Roman state that was governed from Constantinople (and post 476 to its entirety), and used the terms 'the East' and 'the West' as a shorthand for the Eastern and Western parts of the Roman Empire; in the case of the latter, particularly when the period after 476 is discussed, 'the West' refers to the geographic area rather than a political entity.

Since this work deals with subjects, sources and events that belong almost exclusively (albeit with notable exceptions) to the period post 300 AD, in most cases the date is given alone, without indicating whether it belongs prior or post 1 AD; in such cases, it should be assumed the date is referring to the globally recognised Common Era. Where appropriate or necessary, the AD or BC abbreviation has been added. Given the controversy surrounding the use of both AD and CE styles of dating, it should be noted here that the choice of the style of dating is based purely on traditional and long-established scholarly practice and should not be treated as an expression of the author's political or religious sentiments. For rulers, the provided dates are of their reign; for all others, the dates of their birth and death, if known.

The period examined stretches from the end of the 3rd century AD, or beginnings of the Dominate, to the first half of the 7th century. An appropriate symbolic date here would be 626, the year of the Avar raid on Constantinople, which (among perhaps more significant consequences which are less relevant from the perspective of this book) resulted in the cutting of the aqueduct completed by Valens (364–375), one of the key elements of Constantinople's water supply; the damage was repaired only in 758. The Arabic expansion and considerable territorial losses of the Roman state in the East that followed soon after constitute another terminus for my investigation, although, when appropriate for providing additional context or establishing basic facts, both earlier and later events will be mentioned. In regards to literature, the dates of composition of Paul of Aegina's (ca. 625 – ca. 690) medical compendium and of the anonymous, 7th-century *Miracles of St. Artemios* can also be treated as symbolic cut-off points of antiquity. These works, still drawing heavily from the earlier heritage, are at the same time displaying qualities that make them belong equally well to the mediaeval period. For the purpose of this work, I am going to refer to the whole of the transitory period, stretching from the late 3rd to early 7th centuries, as 'Late Antiquity' and treat it as a separate chronological entity, with multiple characteristics differentiating it from both the ancient and mediaeval eras. The name itself is problematic; it implies a continuation of the older trends, while at the same time potentially indicating inferiority of the new developments occurring during this period. In the following work I have striven for a balanced approach. In general, Late Antiquity can be briefly characterised as a period during which the processes and phenomena described below became more prominent.

One of the key factors was the gradual decline of the local government resulting from increasing centralisation and the decreasing political influence and prestige of the local elites that began with the reforms of Diocletian (the *curiales* were burdened with additional financial responsibilities which became increasingly difficult to bear during the 4th century, to the point where the previously prestigious role started to be actively evaded),¹ combined with an increased role of the spiritual leaders of the communities in their everyday existence from the 4th century onwards.

Shrinking of cities became notable, as many of them became partially, or even completely, depopulated – as a result of economic and social changes or hostile military activity (in particular from the 5th century onwards). Another cause of this was an increased need for defensibility; often only a part of the city would end up being protected by the hastily erected walls, and much of its existing infrastructure would be either disassembled (for building materials), reused in a different capacity or altogether abandoned. Finally, partial ruralisation became a feature of many of the cities as their population decreased.

The increasing influence of Christianity and the changes it brought in the spheres of not only religion, but also politics, is another notable development of the time. Accompanied by the burgeoning role of bishops, who occasionally became real leaders of their cities, and the increased and visible presence of clergymen and devotees of the ascendant faith, Christianity gradually came to dominate the spheres of culture (literature, art, architecture) and social life. The classical style in literature and art gradually became abandoned and replaced by new forms – often strongly inspired by the old ones, but nonetheless adapted to the new circumstances and, not infrequently, needs of the new religion. Piety and charity became, at least apparently, the leading values, while the older ones, such as civic pride and the associated euergetism, declined – at least in so far as the civic institutions were concerned. Donations to the Church and charitable works inspired by Christian faith, on the other hand, became more and more common.

From the 4th century onwards migrations, as well as invasions of various tribes, became a new major factor in the Empire's existence. Military reforms of Diocletian and his successors resulted in reorganisation of the army and considerable increase in the number of soldiers (along with the associated taxation necessary to support them). At the same time, the number of foreign soldiers in the ranks of the Roman army, particularly in the West, swelled, and by the time of the eventual collapse of the Roman state in that part of the Mediterranean, the Roman armies there consisted predominantly of federate soldiers of barbarian origin, making the Roman military depend no longer on citizen soldiers but on federate forces. Meanwhile, the situation in the East was characterised by frequent border conflicts with Persia, with occasional major offensives that weakened both states and eventually opened both powers to the conquests by the newly established Arab Caliphate in the 7th century.

General remarks

I have decided not to concentrate much attention on the West, as that part of the Empire has been examined in more detail, as has rightly been pointed out by L. Lavan in his bibliographic essay “Social space in late antiquity”² – along with a complaint about the lack of a new synthesis on bathing. This gap was to a considerable extent filled by the work of F. Yegül, who discussed certain aspects of bathing that had not been previously explored, devoted some attention to the Roman East and extended his analysis much further into Late Antiquity than previous works.³ His book, to a certain extent, addresses issues analysed in this dissertation (such as the transformation of bathing during Late Antiquity), and its publication resulted in some reconsiderations pertaining to the content and focus of this book. Yegül’s work opens with a detailed look into bathing activities and presentation of elements that added to create the bathing experience. Subsequently, he analyses the moral issues that appeared in the context of bathing: the use of luxury, nudity, gluttony and equality. He then focused on the origins of Roman bathing, infrastructure and architecture of baths, examined bath-houses in different areas of the Empire and proceeded to look into transformation of bathing during Late Antiquity and beyond. An older, but by no means obsolete, work on bathing during the (primarily) early imperial period was written by the late G. G. Fagan;⁴ he made extensive use of Martial’s poetry in order to analyse the realities of bathing in early imperial Rome, analysed the increase in popularity of bathing in Roman society from the time of the late Republic onward, pointing out, among other causes, the fact that bath-houses offered a freely accessible, luxurious environment for socialising; he also noted the much more communal than nowadays character of city life in Roman antiquity. He also examined the trends of patronage related to bath-houses, exclusively private until the early imperial period. Fagan also noted the importance of bathing in medicine, drawing attention to texts authored by both medical and non-medical authors (during the early imperial period), and briefly examining the state of medicine of the day in the context of baths.⁵ Some of the social and cultural aspects of bathing were also previously discussed in A. Berger’s *Das Bad in der Byzantinischen Zeit*, an excellent dissertation examining the general place of bathing in the Eastern Roman Empire and discussing the sources mentioning the subject.⁶ A now somewhat out-of-date article by J. DeLaine succinctly summarised the key reasons for which Roman baths played such an important role in society – as well as the reasons why, at the time of the article’s publication, studies concerning bathing were relatively scarce.⁷

The sheer wealth of source material relating to certain times, themes and places in Late Antiquity and the relative scarcity of texts dealing with the others make a truly comprehensive approach to baths and bathing in the period, especially within the framework of a single monograph, an impossibility. Much of the available material, however, the vast majority of which

deals with the subject of this book only in passing, has not yet been fully utilised, and it was my intention to, at least partially, address this gap in the scholarly work. The question of bathing in medical works of Late Antiquity has not been previously addressed beyond general remarks, and the exploration of this subject forms a significant part of the third chapter of the present book. Considerably more information can also be, I believe, extracted from religious writings, such as those of the Church Fathers and, to a lesser extent, the lives of saints. Finally, some of the incidental remarks pertaining to ablutionary activities from sources otherwise not concerned with bathing at any length were examined with the thought of enhancing the image emerging from the more focused accounts discussing baths or bathing. Ultimately, the following work is intended to provide not only an overview of the wide range of functions that the baths had in Late Antiquity, along with the remarks on the transformation of the baths and bathing culture, but also an analysis of their place in the popular consciousness of the time, as well as a synthesis of uses that bathing and washing had in the medical science of Late Antiquity.

The relative abundance of sources related to Antioch including, among others, orations of Libanius, John Chrysostom's homilies and, concerning also the later period, the *Chronicle* of John Malalas, is sufficient to make that particular city the subject of a more in-depth examination; I am going to look at it from this perspective throughout the first chapter. It is worth noting that other authors have also recognised the importance of Antioch in analysing the social and city life in Late Antiquity.⁸ There are also, of course, numerous remarks on the bathing facilities in Constantinople and, to a lesser extent, in Alexandria. Taken together, references to baths in these three cities constitute, with ease, the majority of the available literary sources on bathing facilities located in specific places of the Eastern Roman Empire. This is hardly surprising if one considers that nearly all of the prominent authors of Late Antiquity whose works survive to this date either lived, or at least spent considerable time, in one (or more) of these major cities. The incidental remarks on baths in other locations of the Empire usually stress their extraordinary character and fame, describing them as either places of miraculous or near-miraculous healing (attributed, most commonly, to natural springs, supernatural forces at work or both) or as unusually beautiful and superbly adorned.

As the technology involved in the running of bath-houses and matters such as the layout of baths are not the main subject of this book, I am going to incorporate only the relevant material related to this area of study. I decided to provide a general overview of these matters (as much as it is necessary to give a general idea of the practical issues that may have had an impact on the everyday use of baths) in the opening of chapter one. For this purpose, I used primary sources such as the works of Vitruvius⁹ (ca. 80BC – 25BC) and Frontinus¹⁰ (ca. AD 40–103), due to a general lack of relevant technical manuals on the subject from later centuries dealing with water supply to the baths, and selected secondary literature. An excellent work on the subject of

baths and their workings was written by I. Nielsen,¹¹ whose attention was focused on technical solutions used in bathing establishments and the water supply of bath-houses, analysing archaeological material as her main source. Considerable attention to the subject was more recently devoted also by F. Yegül.¹²

Chapter 1

The first chapter focuses on analysing the cultural and social importance of bath-houses and bathing within late Roman society, and the changes relating to these areas that occurred during Late Antiquity.

To determine what the baths actually were (their general functions and internal layout; the technical infrastructure; their size) and the place of the bath in a city, town or military camp, and similarities and differences in functions and roles of the baths in these locations, I analysed the more prolific ancient authors (especially those who devoted some of their attention to city infrastructure), such as Vitruvius, and secondary literature on baths in general (archaeology and architecture) and on baths at chosen locations. I also included a brief overview of the arrangements used by Romans in regards to the water supply system. As previously mentioned, I have chosen not to focus much on archaeological findings, as they have, to a considerable extent, already been analysed (by, e.g., I. Nielsen).¹³ I did, however, include some of the recent studies, in particular on the system developed for and used in Constantinople.¹⁴ The capital city enjoyed, on the one hand, a uniquely privileged position in the Empire; on the other, it was located in an area that was particularly difficult to supply with water. This makes it an interesting case to study – even if parallels with Constantinopolitan arrangements must, for the same reasons, be made with particular care. By virtue of being the main imperial residence in the East, the needs of the city and its people were given very high priority as far as imperial patronage was concerned. In an age when the threat of usurpation (and, indeed, successful usurpations) was quite common, ensuring loyalty of the city's inhabitants was a necessity for any ruler who hoped to enjoy a long reign, and providing and maintaining the capital's infrastructure were among the most straightforward measures for keeping dissatisfaction of citizenry low.

For the sake of completeness, it is necessary to devote some attention to the construction efforts, maintenance and destruction of bath-houses. By examining these activities I drew some general conclusions regarding the status of baths in Roman society, and ascertained the amount of attention the general state of baths and their maintenance received from the authors of primary sources. In turn, this permitted drawing some conclusions on the extent of their importance for the communities in which these works were taking place. In this context I also examined the evidence concerning the reliance of Roman-style bathing on political stability and, to a lesser degree, on willingness of the emperors and the most influential and wealthy

citizens to build and sponsor public baths, and the infrastructure necessary for their functioning. This is followed by an analysis of the potential symbolic meanings the presence of baths may have had for the communities which were utilising them. An exploration of the role of the bath-houses in the consciousness of Romans themselves as well as foreigners who became aware of this – typically Roman – phenomenon of communal bathing follows. What was an outsider's perception of a bath-house, their reaction to the foreign custom? In what behaviour and actions, if any, did this perception result, and what, in turn, was the Roman reaction to the outsiders' behaviour regarding the baths?

Subsequently I included an overview of the question of nudity in the bathing environment in Roman society and the possibilities it created for – perceived or real – equality among the bathers. This is closely related to the issue of whether men and women bathed together; if so, to what extent this was taking place, and what (if any) the general attitude within Roman society was towards this issue. In turn, this analysis serves as an introduction to a broader overview of baths as meeting places in general. This overview includes an in-depth look at the social functions the baths served and activities they facilitated. In particular, I examined the everyday interactions between the bathers, leisure activities that occurred in bath-houses, and some of the more specific behaviours, such as displays of wealth and social status by the elite, and the ways in which these displays were achieved.

Finally, I examined the evidence pertaining to situations not related to bathing or activities associated with it that did take place in baths. Such situations include, for example, utilising bath-houses for purposes for which they were not designed or for which baths were not well suited. I also looked into certain behaviours that were singled out as unusual, for one reason or another. These included, but are not limited to, examples of bathing outside of the standard bathing facilities and the potential implications thereof. This is followed by an overview of the potential risks of bathing and detrimental effects it might have had on bathers (this particular theme is examined in more detail in chapter three), with a brief overview of some of the more drastic events that took place in bath-houses and an examination of the reactions of the authors of the primary sources to these.

The main primary sources which I used in this chapter include the works of Ammianus Marcellinus (ca. 330 – ca. 391–400), the historians of the Church Sozomen (ca. 400 – ca. 450) and Socrates (ca. 380 – d. after 439), the history of Zosimus (fl. 490s–510s), works of Procopius (ca. 500 – ca. 554), laws, the later chronicles of John Malalas (ca. 491–578), Theophanes the Confessor (ca. 758–817) and the anonymous 7th-century *Easter Chronicle*, as well as the texts of early Church authors, especially John Chrysostom (ca. 349–407). A few of the sources dealing primarily with the West have also been examined (such as the *Letters* of Sidonius Apollinaris – ca. 430–489), as they can be useful in drawing conclusions of a more general nature. Even a brief overview of the extant sources shows that almost invariably the references to bathing