JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

C. TIERSCH: *Johannes Chrysostomus in Konstantinopel (398–404). Weltsicht und Wirken eines Bischofs in der Hauptstadt des Oströmischen Reiches*. (Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum, 6.) Pp. x + 475. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002. Paper, €74. ISBN: 3-16-147369-8.

Baur's excellent biography of John Chrysostom of 1929 is still the basic life of Chrysostom, even though it suffers from the limited perspective common in ecclesiastical historiography, in that the life of Chrysostom is described with the focus on his moral teaching, his pastoral activities, and his importance in the history of the Church, and his undeserved downfall. The fact that not only his deposition and exile, but also so much else of Chrysostom's career at Constantinople was conditioned by the exigencies of secular politics was not part of Baur's analysis. Essentially he simply accepted the simplified and slanted views of his ecclesiastical sources. Since then, various scholars have related various aspects of Chrysostom's episcopate to their wider political context, but no one has done this systematically. This is what Claudia Tiersch has done. She has read all available sources, including a typescript of van Ommeslaeghe's edition and commentary of the important unpublished, near-contemporary, funeral speech of 'pseudo Martyrius'. She has read the texts carefully and thoroughly, and has interpreted their evidence in the light of the power structure at Constantinople, of which she shows herself extremely well informed. One might say that T. has done for Chrysostom what McLynn has done for Ambrose, but without the latter's extremes of revisionism. The book will surely become the standard account of Chrysostom's episcopate.

T. explains the transfer of Chrysostom from Antioch to take over the see of Constantinople as an attempt by the eastern government to avoid the disadvantages incurred as a result of the pastoral limitations of Nectarius, the previous bishop, who had been chosen not for his qualifications as a pastor, theologian, and ascetic, but for his diplomatic and administrative experience. Running through the whole book is the story of the failure of this experiment. The episcopate of Chrysostom demonstrated that for a bishop of Constantinople it was as important to be a diplomat, able to cooperate with the emperor, and to operate within the secular networks of patronage, as it was to perform his clerical rôle. Arsacius, Chrysostom's successor, was the brother of Nectarius. After him came Atticus, who was a much smaller man than Chrysostom, but he had the required diplomatic gifts and temperament, and his episcopate was successful. But Nestorius, his successor, was once more a bishop in the mould of Chrysostom, and like Chrysostom he was deposed.

In addition to a full account of the events that brought about the deposition of Chrysostom, the book contains a very interesting discussion of the 'persecution' of the Joannites after Chrysostom had been exiled. Successive measures taken to suppress the Joannite faction are related to the exigencies of the eastern government's resistance to the western claim for eastern Illyricum, put forward by Stilicho. The west's claim to have a say in the affairs of the eastern Church was seen as one aspect of its claim to have a say in the east's secular affairs.

T.'s book provides a convincing account of Chrysostom's aims as bishop and moral reformer, and of his combination of loyalty to the empire with a total refusal to compromise when he thought that the discipline of the clergy, the rights of the Church, or the duties of a bishop were at issue. One is regularly reminded of Ambrose of Milan. Indeed, one wonders whether Chrysostom, who, as T. has noticed

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(Ps.-Martyrius 116, p. 485b), spoke Latin fluently, took Ambrose as his model. Certainly, Chrysostom's views of the relationship of Church and state were not very different from those held by Ambrose, views to which the bishop of Milan was to give lasting publicity in the collection of letters which he selected for publication. But Ambrose had the gifts and experience of a Nectarius, as well as those of a charismatic preacher, and what is at least as important, the position of Ambrose in the society of Milan was very different from that of Chrysostom in that of Constantinople. Moreover, the progressive weakening of the imperial government in the west helped Ambrose's views of Church and state to become and stay influential. In the east the imperial government remained strong, and the Church was never in a position to claim independence of the state. There Chrysostom, appropriately, came to be venerated as a great preacher and moral teacher.

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JEWISH MARRIAGE

M. L. Satlow: *Jewish Marriage in Antiquity*. Pp. xxvi + 431. Princeton and Oxford; Princeton University Press, 2001. Cased, £40.00. ISBN: 0-691-00255-X.

Satlow's vast knowledge of the rabbinic sources makes this book a work of great importance for anyone interested in Jewish social history. All available material is brought to bear—papyri and inscriptions; religious texts in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek; Philo and Josephus—but the Mishnah, Tosefta, Talmuds, and Midrashim will be less familiar to many readers. They reveal a moral and practical world surprisingly similar in many ways to its Graeco-Roman surroundings. However, S. is at pains to point out how little can really be known about what actually happened. Rabbis' recommendations may be very different from what really went on, and an isolated document preserved on papyrus may be unrepresentative of the countless documents which have not been preserved.

The book is divided into three parts: Thinking about Marriage; Marrying; Staying Married. Part I looks at the ideology of marriage, its use as a metaphor, and its treatment under Jewish law. A striking difference emerges between Palestinian and Babylonian rabbis: the former had views of marriage fairly close to conventional Graeco-Roman (particularly Stoic) ones, while the latter were much more interested in its significance for the individual, and worried about the potential conflict between married life and study of Torah. Jewish thinkers, like pagans, only addressed the issue from a male perspective, and simply assumed that all women would marry.

Part II deals with how marriages were arranged, who with, and what formalities were involved. A very brief chapter on 'Shreds of Real Marriage' reconstructs some marriages from the Elephantine and Babatha archives, and is regularly referred back to elsewhere in the book (the clear introduction to the documents of Babatha and her relatives is very welcome). Women were expected to marry in their teens, but there was a difference in the recommended male age for marriage in Palestine (around 30) and Babylonia (younger), the reason being that Palestinians were expected to do their Torah study first. There was a general assumption that brides should be 'checked'

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