REVIEWS OF BOOKS

REVIEW ARTICLE

Greek religion

Thesaurus Cultus et Rituum Antiquorum (ThesCRA). 5 vols + abbreviations and indices. Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2004-6. £675. 9780892367870. (I: **Processions, Sacrifices, Libation, Fumigations, Dedications**. Pp. xix + 612, illus. + CD-ROM. £125. 9780892367887. II: **Purification, Initiation, Heroization and Apotheosis, Banquet, Dance, Music, Cult Images**. Pp. xxi + 646, illus. £125. 9780892367894. III: **Divination, Prayer, Veneration, Hikesia, Asylia, Oath, Malediction, Profanation, Magic Rituals**. Pp. xviii + 434, illus. £125. 9780892367900. IV: **Cult Places, Representations of Cult Places**. Pp. xiv + 485, illus. £125. 9780892367917. V: **Personnel of Cult, Cult Instruments**. Pp. xix + 502. £125. 9780892367924. **Abbreviations and Indices**. Pp. xvi + 167. £50. 9780892367931.)

BRICAULT (L.) **Recueil des inscriptions concernant les cultes isiaques (RICIS)**. (Mémoires de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres 31). Paris: Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres/de Boccard, 2005. 3 vols. Pp. xxx + 842 + cxliii (135 plates). 190. 9782877541565.

PRENT (M.) **Cretan Sanctuaries and Cults. Continuity and Change from the Late Minoan IIIc to the Archaic Period**. (Religions in the Graeco-Roman World 154). Leiden: Brill, 2005. Pp. xviii + 737, illus. 169. 9789004142367.

SAVO (M.B.) **Culti, Sacerdozi e Feste delle Cicladi dall'età arcaica all'età romana** I: **Io, Nasso, Sifno, Serifo, Citno, Siro**. (Ricerche di Filologia, Letteratura e Storia 2). Rome: Edizioni Tored, 2004. Pp. xxvi + 544, illus. 50. 9788888617046.

MYLONOPOULOS (J.) **Peloponnêsos oikêtêrion Poseidônos = Heiligtümer und Kulte des Poseidon auf der Peloponnes**. (*Kernos* Suppl. 13). Liège: Centre International d'Étude de la Religion Grecque Antique, 2003. Pp. 492, illus. 50. ISSN: 07763824.

LALONDE (G.) **Horos Dios. An Athenian Shrine and Cult**. (Monumenta Graeca et Romana 11). Leiden: Brill, 2006. Pp. xv +143, illus. 109. 9789004147416.

SOURVINOU-INWOOD (C.) **Hylas, the Nymphs, Dionysos and Others. Myth, Ritual, Ethnicity**. Stockholm: Svenska Institutet i Athen/Paul Åströms, 2005. Pp. 421. Sw.kr.600. 9789179160517.

GOFF (B.) **Citizen Bacchae. Women's Ritual Practice in Ancient Greece**. Berkeley: U. of California P., 2004. Pp. xiii + 400. £38.95. 9780520239982.

COLE (S.G.) **Landscapes, Gender, and Ritual Space**. Berkeley: U. of California P., 2004. Pp. xviii + 292. £29.95. 9780520235441.

HÄGG (R.) and ALROTH (B.) *Eds*. **Greek Sacrificial Ritual, Olympian and Chthonian**. (Acta Instituti Atheniensis Regni Sueciae, 8º XVIII = Proceedings of the Sixth International Seminar on Ancient Greek Cult, Göteborg University, 25-7 April 1997). Stockholm: Svenska Institutet i Athen/Paul Åströms, 2005. Pp. 230, illus. Sw.kr.400. 9789179160494.

GEORGOUDI (S.), KOCH PIETTRE (R.) and SCHMIDT (F.) *Eds*. **La cuisine et l'autel. Les sacrifices en question dans les sociétés de la Méditerranée ancienne**. (Bibliothèque de l'École des Hautes Études, sciences religieuses 124). Turnhout: Brepols, 2005. Pp. xvii + 460, illus. 75. 9782503517391.

THE study of Greek religion has been enjoying something of a boom in recent years, with books aimed at a general readership reflecting a widening interest in the subject, not least as a topic for university courses.[1] The works under consideration here are at the more specialized end of the spectrum, but some would be accessible to undergraduates, and some raise issues of broader historical interest. Although they differ widely in scope, they share in an emphasis on religious practice rather than thought. This is partly a product of subject-matter – half of our titles are based on archaeological/epigraphical material – but it is consonant with a welcome trend away from text-based generalizations concerning 'the Greek gods' towards historical approaches more firmly anchored in specifics of place and time.[2]

Of all the works in question, the one likely to have the greatest impact is the five-volume *Thesaurus Cultus et Rituum Antiquorum* (*ThesCRA*). Conceived as a successor to the *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae*, and co-ordinated by the same international team, the aim of the project is 'to present scholars with a comprehensive account of all substantial aspects of Greek, Roman and Etruscan religion' (xi), from *c*. 1000 BC to AD 400. The subject-matter does not offer nearly so obvious a principle of organization as *LIMC*'s A-Z of mythological characters, but the thematic arrangement adopted is logical enough: vols I-III explore 'dynamic' aspects of cult practice (ritual activities), while vols IV-V tackle 'static' elements (the places, people and instruments involved); further volumes are planned to cover religious behaviour associated with everyday life (including marriage and death). The major chapter-headings are detailed above, as they appear on the title-page of each volume, but the fact that all are in English is misleading – contributors use whichever they prefer

[1] E.g. S. Price, *Religions of the Ancient Greeks* (Cambridge 1999); J. Mikalson, *Ancient Greek Religion* (Oxford 2004, reviewed elsewhere in this volume); J. Pedley, *Sanctuaries and the Sacred in the Ancient World* (Cambridge 2005, reviewed elsewhere in this volume); and D. Ogden (ed.), *Blackwell Companion to Greek Religion* (Oxford 2007).

[2] See also A. Purvis, *Singular Dedications* (London and New York 2003), reviewed in *JHS* 126 (2006).

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of English, German, French or Italian. Each chapter, and each sub-section thereof, has an introductory essay and general bibliography, before a catalogue of evidence including literary, epigraphical and papyrological sources, *realia* and iconographical material. Each entry includes the text (quoted in translation), or description of the object/image, and specific bibliography; there is a generous allowance of line-drawings within the text and photographic plates at the end of each volume, while systematic cross-referencing with *LIMC* points the reader to many more illustrations. As a devotee of *LIMC*, I was predisposed to welcome *ThesCRA*, but on closer inspection I am not sure that it will prove quite as universally useful as its predecessor. There is an inevitable problem with the attempt to systematize such a wide range of material, *viz*. that this arrangement may not be at all convenient for some enquiries. What happens if I want to research the cult of an individual deity, or check what we know of an individual festival? In vol. I the chapters on 'Processions' and 'Sacrifices' have subsections according to recipient, but in the remaining chapters and volumes material is presented according to *types* of ritual and other elements (e.g. 'priest', 'temenos') rather than by specific cult. The index of museums, collections and sites goes some way towards addressing this problem, enabling the reader, e.g., to locate all material connected with Epidaurus or the Athenian Asklepieion, but the absence of an index of recipients of cult is puzzling. Readers should also note the unobtrusive but significant caveat in the introduction to each volume that 'varying levels of selectivity have been applied in assembling these testimonia' (xii) – while the coverage of some sections is more or less comprehensive, it is probably safest to assume selectivity throughout. Finally, I am curious about the decision to quote ancient texts in translation – readers are clearly expected to be conversant with all four modern languages employed, and the scholarly audience implied would surely find the original Greek or Latin more useful. These doubts aside, however, the extraordinary quantity of source material and bibliography presented makes this an important contribution to the study of Greek religion; every university library should have a copy.

Also intended as a research tool, though limited to the cult of a single deity, is Bricault's *Recueil des inscriptions concernant les cultes isiaques* (*RICIS*). This follows on from an *Atlas de la diffusion des cultes isiaques* published by the Académie (Mémoires 23, 2001), and is effectively a new edition of Ladislav Vidman's *Sylloge Inscriptionum Religionis Isiacae et Sarapiacae* (Paris 1969), with twice as many texts; a further volume is promised which will cover numismatic material. The collection aims to offer fairly comprehensive coverage of Greek and Latin epigraphic texts found outside Egypt relating to the cult of Isis and associated deities (e.g. Sarapis, Anubis, Osiris): in total 1,771 inscriptions are catalogued, of which 491 are illustrated in the handsome volume of plates. The two volumes of text are arranged geographically under seven headings: mainland Greece, Greek islands, Asia Minor, Near East, Italy, Europe, Africa. Each entry includes a basic description of the stone, date, museum details and bibliography, along with a full text of the inscription and a translation. The catalogue format does not allow for more than very brief and highly selective commentary, although extensive detailed indices facilitate the location of related material. I would have appreciated explanation of the more striking iconographical features to be found decorating some of the *stelai* – especially the disembodied ears and footprints – but this would presumably have been beyond the work's scope.

The next three titles have more modest remits, as befits their origins as doctoral theses. Prent's *Cretan Sanctuaries and Cults*, as its sub-title would suggest, is particularly concerned with the question of religious continuity between Minoan and Archaic Crete. P. presents a synthesis of the archaeological evidence from more than 90 sanctuaries on the island which were in use *c*. 1200-600 BC, considering the material in the light of broader socio-historical changes in the eastern Mediterranean at this period. She identifies a number of recurring types of sanctuary – ranging from domestic shrines to communal cult places, in urban, suburban, or rural locations – and for each attempts to reconstruct the cult activities which took place there and the social make-up of its regular clientèle. Although P. modestly claims that 'this work has no central thesis to defend' (11), she performs a useful service in bringing together a body of well-illustrated data against which to test the prevailing notion that Early Iron Age Crete exhibits a peculiarly high level of survival of Bronze Age traditions. Her plausible conclusion is that, while certain material elements and customs do indeed show continuity, they do so in different ways, from almost accidental survival to conscious preservation or active re-appropriation after a period of disuse, so that we should not necessarily assume continuity of meaning.

Moving north, mention of religion in connection with the Cyclades immediately calls to mind Apollo's sanctuary on Delos. It is Savo's contention, however, that Delos' exceptional position in the wider Greek world makes it unrepresentative of the rest of the archipelago's religious life. *Culti, Sacerdozi e Feste delle Cicladi* aims to redress the balance by focusing on the smaller islands, bringing together all available evidence for the cults observed on each from the eighth century BC to the Roman imperial period. This volume covers six of the archipelago's islands – Ios, Naxos, Siphnos, Seriphos, Kythnos and Syros – following the order adopted by *Inscriptiones Graecae* XII. Epigraphy, indeed, supplies S.'s principal source material, and she supplements each chapter with a useful catalogue of inscriptions, giving a translation as well as the full Greek text. Archaeological and numismatic material is less well served by the book's layout – there are maps of each island and a handful of plans and photos at the end of the volume, but they are not numbered and seem not

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to be referred to in the text. I also missed a concluding overview which might have addressed the question raised in the introduction concerning the Cyclades' supposed religious unity – perhaps this is to come in a second volume, although I searched in vain for any signal of its proposed contents. For the individual islands covered here, however, S. provides a convenient synthesis of material, outlining the geographical and historical context before treating specific deities, heroes, recipients of ruler-cult, religious personnel and festivals; in the cases of Naxos and Seriphos there is also consideration of the island's profile in myth (in connection with Ariadne and Perseus respectively).

Rather better presented is Mylonopoulos' *Heiligtümer und Kulte des Poseidon auf der Peloponnes* (entirely in German, despite the bilingual title). As M. outlines in his introduction, Poseidon has received less scholarly attention than he deserves, and this thorough, well-organized study makes a good start in remedying that deficiency. Part I is a geographically arranged catalogue of the evidence for Poseidon's cult in each region of the Peloponnese. Clarity of discussion is promoted by separate entries for each element of cult attested at any given location, plenty of maps and plans, and a convenient 'Überblick' at the end of each section. Part II analyses the form and topography of Poseidon's cult-places, while Part III discusses dynamic elements of the cult (priests, festivals, sacrifices, votives), the god's profile (attributes, sacred animals, cult epithets, spheres of influence, associations with other deities), and the political aspects of the cult. The Peloponnesian Poseidon emerges as a many-sided god, by no means restricted to roles associated with the sea or earthquakes. In addition to his major sanctuaries at Isthmia and Kalaureia, extra-urban shrines are as often to be found beside roads or pastures as near water; urban cult-sites are situated in the agora or beside the harbour, but are notably absent from the akropolis. Unusual elements of the cult include two or three priestesses amongst the more commonly attested priests, a significant number of women making dedications, and a horse-sacrifice at the Argolid Genesion. Poseidon's most common *epiklesis* is Hippios, along with other horse-related names, but topographical titles are also frequent, while a few associate him with the *genos* or with the earth. Most striking is the god's significant political role in the Peloponnese: he functions as city-guardian in half a dozen or more states, and three out of four of the region's known Amphiktyones acknowledge Poseidon as their over-lord.

The next four monographs are by more established scholars. Lalonde's *Horos Dios* takes as its rather unpromising point of departure a pair of inscriptions consisting of just three words in total, but this proves to be the beginning of a fascinating journey. Carved into the rock of the north-east spur of the Hill of the Nymphs in western Athens, these late Archaic inscriptions have occasioned a surprising amount of controversy, readily dispelled by L.'s technical analysis, supported by clear photographs and drawings. The next step is a systematic exploration of the many hitherto neglected rock-cuttings in the surrounding area, which L.'s careful study convincingly interprets as remnants of the shrine of Zeus implied by the boundary-marking inscriptions. The enquiry then broadens out again as L. makes a plausible case for identifying the shrine's principal deity as Zeus Meilichios, and for associating with it a number of votives found elsewhere in Athens, including the well-known fourth- or third-century relief which depicts the god as a bearded snake (*Agora* I 2201). Discussion of Zeus Meilichios' chthonic aspects would have benefited from reference to Ekroth's work on sacrificial ritual in hero-cults,[3] but in general L.'s reconstruction of activities at the shrine is compelling, and is soundly based on comparative evidence for the god's cult elsewhere in Attica (conveniently catalogued at the end of the volume). Of particular interest are the suggestion that the shrine, situated just inside the Melitides Gate beside a major road, might have functioned as a place of purification for those entering the city, and the argument for identifying the upper level of the sanctuary with the 'very conspicuous' shrine of Herakles Alexikakos attested by Aristophanic scholia (on *Frogs* 502). L. does not insist on his conclusions, but demonstrates how far towards completing the jigsaw a judicious piecing-together of the evidence can take us.

A more wide-ranging approach is taken in Sourvinou-Inwood's *Hylas, the Nymphs, Dionysos and Others*, a detailed working-out of ideas outlined in the author's M.P. Nilsson Lecture, delivered in 1997 at the Swedish Institute in Athens. It begins with an exegesis of a methodology which, while acknowledging the difficulties involved, seeks to reconstruct the 'hinterland' of ritual activity for which we have only fragmentary evidence. The subject to which this is applied here is the 'mythico-ritual nexus' of Hylas in the Milesian colony of Kios in Mysia, which combines local elements with a Panhellenic dimension in its associations with the Argonautica story and Herakles. In addition to a careful consideration of the literary and iconographical evidence for Hylas' myth, and the ritual to which it relates, it is a key part of S.-I.'s strategy to employ plentiful comparative data in order to provide parameters for the exercise of reconstruction, with wide selection aiming to limit the influence of cultural determinism on the interpretation. The extensive resulting discussion encompasses: questions of ethnicity and Greek cultural identity; the nature and function of the Nymphs; the mythico-ritual theme of lamentation over a prematurely lost youth; Dionysos' divine personalities, including the 'dying' Dionysos of the Orphic tradition, and festivals celebrating his advent; the role of colonial foundation myths in articulating relationships with the mother-city

[3] G. Ekroth, *The Sacrificial Rituals of Greek Hero-Cults* (= *Kernos* Suppl. 12) (Liège 2002); see esp. 23-59 for refutation of the traditional distinction between *bomos* and *eschara* as different kinds of altar for Olympian and chthonian sacrifices.

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and with non-Greek neighbours. The argument is dense, but what emerges is a convincing account of a festival – involving lamentation, a ritual search, sacrifice and invocation, and culminating in a divine advent – and its significance in articulating identity and renewal for the people of Kios.

Goff's *Citizen Bacchae* is just as methodologically aware, if less transparently titled: followers of Dionysos feature relatively little in the discussion, nor is this evocative oxymoron explained until pp.215-16. The apparently straightforward subtitle *Women's Ritual Practice in Ancient Greece* also fails to do justice to the book's content, since – despite superficial resemblance in scope to Matthew Dillon's *Girls and Women in Classical Greek Religion* (London and New York 2002) – it does not turn out to be another account of our evidence for women's festivals and female religious personnel; it is, rather, an exploration of the broader issue of how women's ritual shaped, and was shaped by, their position in Greek society. G. quite properly insists on the importance of religion as an arena for women to exercise 'agency' to a greater degree than normal; the extent to which ritual gave women a 'material presence' is indeed amply demonstrated by the survey of activities in ch.1, including household rituals, the making of dedications, participation in state-run festivals, and the holding of religious offices. Equally persuasive is G.'s emphasis on the degree to which such ritual activity was circumscribed by the male establishment, and generally tended to reinforce gender stereotypes, such as women's association with the domestic sphere and their potential for wildness. More contentious, though certainly attractive, is the idea that the more public forms of women's ritual 'can be seen to construct a quasi-political identity for women and to articulate their otherwise latent citizenship' (226), as is the suggestion that ritual provided the focus for a female sub-culture. The terminology which accompanies the avowedly feminist approach sometimes renders the argument a little opaque – what exactly is 'an identity imbricated in the dynamics of desire' (100)? – but G. deploys models developed in the study of more recent societies to good effect, largely avoiding the inherent dangers of anachronism. In sum, while many will find the book provocative, the wide-reaching implications of G.'s arguments demand attention.

Issues of gender are again to the fore in Cole's *Landscape, Gender and Ritual Space*, though with a closer focus on the specific theme of physical space and its relationship to Greek ideas about women's bodies. The book is full of interesting juxtapositions and detailed analyses of an extraordinarily wide range of literary and epigraphic material, all of which makes it difficult to summarize. It begins with discussion of the landscape, as both a natural phenomenon and a human/political construct, and the role of the divine and the feminine in its conceptualization. Ch.2 surveys rituals surrounding the creation of ritual space which, with their focus on purity and pollution, are reminiscent of rituals associated with the female body. Gender is less obviously important to ch.3's notion of the *polis* as a centre within a network of regional sanctuaries, but recurs in discussion of the *prytaneion*'s hearth as symbolic centre of the city. Chs 4 and 5 argue that distinctions of gender in ritual practice reflect male anxieties concerning human and agricultural fertility, the analogy between woman and landscape being explicitly articulated in Hippocratic theories about female reproductivity. Chs 6 and 7 take Artemis as a case-study to demonstrate the interlinking of the book's themes: the physical location of her sanctuaries, and associated myths, simultaneously articulate historical rivalries between city-states, relationships between centre and periphery, and perceptions of women, while the rituals performed there by women and girls play an important role in affirming the city's security.

Finally, two conference volumes offer an overview of the variety of approaches taken recently to the subject of animal sacrifice. Hägg and Alroth's *Greek Sacrificial Ritual* focuses on the debate concerning the traditional Olympian/chthonian distinction, which continues to rage ten years on from the colloquium (held in 1997). A number of epigraphically focused papers take inspiration from the now well-known Selinous *lex sacra*, debating the formulas '*enagizein* as to a hero' and '*thuein* as to the immortals', and reviewing the idea of a 'ninth-part sacrifice'. More literary approaches discuss Olympian/chthonian sacrifice in the *Oresteia* and Herakles' role as sacrificial victim in the *Trachiniae*, while archaeological contributions to the debate are represented by studies of faunal remains, in particular at Poseidon's sanctuary at Isthmia. Thematic papers consider the absence of explicit prescriptions for correct ritual procedure, the cult of the dead at Argos, sacrifices to the sea, ruler-cult, the sacrifice of pigs and of pregnant animals. Resulting from a colloquium held in Paris in 2001, Georgoudi *et al*.'s *La cuisine et l'autel* has a broader scope, encompassing Jewish, Egyptian, Greek, Etruscan, Roman and even early Christian approaches to sacrifice. The majority of the papers are in French or English, each helpfully accompanied by an abstract in the other language. Amongst the papers on Greek topics are some interesting reassessments of familiar themes, such as the meaning of sacrifice to the participants, the idea of a meal shared between gods and men, the composition of the gods' portion, the notion of the concealment of violence, and whether 'destruction sacrifices' should rather be seen as communications to the gods through combustion. Between them these two volumes represent an index of current work on a topic central to the study of Greek religion, and reflect the sub-discipline's continuing capacity for debate: long may this healthy state continue!

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