award the laurel to Clement's adversary Epiphanes, whose case for free love is grounded on the premiss that, were it not for the Fall, no human would have thought of taking another as his chattel. G. again deserves our thanks for rescuing this innovative thinker from eighteen centuries of invective; but does not Clement too demand recognition as the one Christian of the three who writes for humans in their fallen, wedded state?

Christ Church, Oxford M. J. EDWARDS
doi:10.1093/clrevj/bni163

WOMEN AND CULT PRACTICES

L. Larsson Lovén, A. Strömberg (edd.): *Gender, Cult, and Culture in the Ancient World from Mycenae to Byzantium. Proceedings of the Second Nordic Symposium on Gender and Women's History in Antiquity, Helsinki 20–22 October 2000*. (Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology and Literature Pocket-book 166.) Pp. 168, ill, pls. Sävedalen: Paul Åströms Förlag, 2003. Cased, US$29.80. ISBN: 91-7018-127-X .

This small book with a big title and subject range publishes ten papers (all in English) of the twenty or so given at an interdisciplinary symposium which looked at gender structures in ancient world, focusing particularly on cult practices and on women and Christianity.

The first of the book's four chronological sections is on 'Evidence on Women's Work in the Late Bronze Age' and consists solely of single essay by Marie-Louise Nosch on 'The Women at Work in the Linear B Tablets', concluding that their status was menial and dependent compared with that of women involved in cult, and that crucial social differences in Mycenean society seem based on privilege rather than gender. The second section, on 'Gender and Pre-Christian Iconography', contains three essays on rather disparate topics. Agneta Strömberg explains how Athenian women, 'private in life', were made 'public in death' not because of any gender equality but because their images on funerary monuments commemorated their rôle within the *oikos* and thereby the rôle of the *oikos* within the *polis*. Marjatta Nielsen discusses images of couples fighting that appear on toilet objects destined for brides and on funerary monuments over a wide span of time and place. She concludes that although this apparently 'tactless' subject can be explained by many different factors, it is a reminder for women 'to develop their bodies and tame their characters' and for men of the ideal of parity between spouses. Lena Larsson Lovén reviews the various ways in which social status was represented in funerary art from Roman Gaul, showing in particular how work-related imagery stressed the different ideals for men (as producers of income) and women (as housewives comfortably supported by their husbands). The third section of the book contains two 'Views on Women in Roman Literature', of which the first, by Minna Skafte Jensen, is a feminist reading of Terence's *Hecyra*, revealing its men as ignorant and prejudiced, and women (including a mother-in-law and prostitute) as more sympathetic and supportive. Katariina Mustakallio shows how the literary topos of women mourning in public is used more frequently in Roman narratives to do with early and Republican times, where it was connected with ideas to do with the protection of the community, than in the empire (and that this related

The Classical Review vol. 55 no. 1 © The Classical Association 2005; all rights reserved

https://doi.org/10.1093/clrevj/bni164 Published online by Cambridge University Press

also to the change to hired mourners in actual funerary practice). The last section, on 'Women in Early Christianity and Byzantium', begins with an analysis of the significance of ascetic fasting to early Christian women, which Helène Whittaker sees in psychological, social, and religious terms. Agneta Ahlqvist surveys the memorial functions of catacomb painting in Syracuse, while Julia Burman looks at the construction of femininity in the account of the death of St Macrina. Finally Jeanette Lindblom reviews some aspects of women and religion during the fourth to seventh centuries, noting some major changes, for example, in female models of sanctity (from 'sexless' ascetics to married women and nuns) and a diminishing rôle for women in congregations.

Given its wide span of subjects and its background as conference proceedings, the book is likely to prove more attractive for its individual contributions than as a whole. That is understandable but a pity, as some interesting themes, particularly to do with women and death, surface across the papers and it would have been useful perhaps to have had some brief editorial comment drawing these together. Inevitably the papers vary in style and approach: some tend towards reviews of current scholarship, while others are more innovative. The book is compactly produced and well illustrated for its size.

The Open University JANET HUSKINSON
doi:10.1093/clrevj/bni164

CHRISTIAN FAMILIES

D. L. Balch, C. Osiek (edd.): *Early Christian Families in Context. An Interdisciplinary Dialogue*. Pp. xx + 412, ills, colour pls. Grand Rapids, MI and Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003. Paper, US$28, £19.99. ISBN: 0-8028-3986-X.

Although both women and the family in the Roman empire have been popular research topics for three decades now, the study of the Mediterranean family has been curiously divided by the invisible boundaries between different scholarly traditions. Ancient historians, with a background in the classics and/or social history, especially from English-speaking countries, have focused on Italian and other western evidence in the first two centuries of the empire. Biblical scholars, on the other hand, have studied the same period, but mainly through the New Testament and other eastern sources. Common to both these traditions is that their focus has not extended much beyond the second century. The family in the ensuing centuries has, until recently, been left for continental legal historians and patristic scholars, who have always moved more freely between pagan and Christian sources. Unfortunately, their work, too, has remained isolated from the Anglo-Saxon family studies.

This collection of essays by seventeen authors aims to bridge the gap between theologians and ancient historians. It is the product of an interdisciplinary conference held at the Texas Christian University in December 2000, bringing together scholars of ancient Judaism, early Christianity, and the Roman family of the early empire. The topics of individual papers range from houses to women, slaves, and children. The basic assumption behind the book is that the early Christian family was not radically different from the contemporary Greco-Roman family. Or rather, the early Christian or Jewish family was no more different than the other regional and social variants of the

The Classical Review vol. 55 no. 1 © The Classical Association 2005; all rights reserved

https://doi.org/10.1093/clrevj/bni164 Published online by Cambridge University Press