present less of a united front against behavior they deemed immoral than at first may appear to be the case.

These criticisms do not mean that W. is entirely incorrect to argue for such influence, only that the picture he draws may need further refinement. His survey in the final chapter of the rôle played by women, especially those from the eastern part of the Empire, in what moderns call the 'public sphere', suggests that this was broader than it might have been but for the Roman presence. This idea certainly merits further exploration.

To an extent various minor errors are to be expected from a scholar who dares to venture forth from the confines of his own field. There are some of these in W.'s book, though they are for the most part inconsequential and will not be noted here. I see little point in compiling a list of bibliography W. has missed. Even specialists have difficulty keeping up with this, despite the fact that the intensive study of women in antiquity is barely three decades old. Granted, the book might have benefited from pre-publication vetting by the right kind of specialist. Classicists might do better in my opinion, however, to focus less on such matters than on the contributions of a book that contains much of interest for them and whose biggest drawback perhaps is that it is sometimes generous to a fault with views that so many of them have expressed.

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GRATIAN'S RELIGIOUS POLICIES

V. MESSANA: *La politica religiosa di Graziano.* (SEIA NS 3.) Pp. 101. Rome: Giorgio Bretschneider, 1998 [1999]. Paper. ISBN: 88-7689-156-0.

Gratian is not an emperor who usually attracts attention in his own right, but more often lurks in the shadows cast by his more distinguished contemporaries, notably Theodosius I and Ambrose of Milan. The topic of his religious policy, however, is important. He was the first emperor over whom Ambrose sought to wield influence. Moreover, by his rejection of the title *pontifex maximus* and his removal of the altar of Victory from the senatorial *curia* in Rome, he signalled an important change in the attitudes of Christian emperors towards paganism. It is a virtue of M.'s short monograph that it seeks to investigate the topic from Gratian's vantage point. Yet this is a difficult task, given that most of the extant sources tend to focus on individuals other than Gratian. His attitudes and policies must be elucidated from texts written by others, often (as is particularly the case with those penned by Ambrose) with a particular polemical agenda. For all these problems, there is a general consensus among scholars that Gratian's religious policies were characterized at first by tolerance, but later manifested overt hostility towards paganism and the enemies of Nicene orthodoxy. With one important exception, this is a portrait with which M. broadly concurs.

M. begins by establishing the context within which Gratian's religious policies were formed. He identifies the court of Gratian's father Valentinian I as (unsurprisingly) influential, in that its lack of a 'dogmatically motivated ecclesiastical policy' existed

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side-by-side with generally pro-Nicene sentiments (pp. 10–15). Such attitudes persisted into the early years of Gratian's reign (pp. 37–48). For this period M. agrees with (e.g.) D. H. Williams and N. McLynn in minimizing the influence of Ambrose over the emperor (pp. 20–37). Indeed, M. argues that Ambrose's ascendancy over Gratian was never complete, even in the later years of the reign (pp. 68–78). To be sure, Ambrose was able to bully the bishops assembled for the council of Aquileia in 381, but his influence over officials at court was much less secure. It is telling, for instance, that the Spanish Priscillianists, seeking to defend themselves against charges of heresy, achieved an audience with Gratian even after they had been rebuffed by Ambrose (pp. 70–1). In general, M. sees the adoption of pro-Nicene policies by the eastern emperor Theodosius after 379 as being the most important stimulus for a change in Gratian's conduct towards the church (pp. 49–59).

M. similarly minimizes Ambrose's rôle in the development of Gratian's measures against paganism. He argues instead that the emperor developed a consistent policy that amounted to 'a sort of laicisation' of the Christian empire *vis-à-vis* those responsibilities towards traditional cults that it had inherited from pagan emperors (p. 91). For M., this was the agenda that underpinned Gratian's repudiation of the title *pontifex maximus*, his withdrawal of state funding for the cults of Rome, and his removal of the altar of Victory from the senate house (pp. 82–99). Moreover, M. suggests (against the *communis opinio* outlined above that Gratian's hardline measures against paganism and heresy emerged only later in his reign) that the rejection of the pontificate may have occurred as early as 376 (pp. 88–9). This requires him to argue that the use of the title in Ausonius' *Gratiarum actio* of 379 should not be understood in a technical sense (pp. 86–7). I imagine that I will not be the only reader who will find it difficult to agree with this argument.

M.'s study is useful, not least in that it re-emphasizes the arguments of Williams and McLynn that Ambrose's account of his dealings with emperors cannot be taken at face value. There can be no disguising the fact that what M. has written is essentially a long article (beefed up by extensive quotations from the sources in the footnotes). Nevertheless, its presentation as a monograph should have called for at least a bibliography, if not also an index. As it is, the footnotes are numbered in a single continuous sequence, and the reader gets no help other than 'cit.' for direction to works already cited. Similarly, abbreviations abound, but there is no list of them, or even an indication of which conventions have been adopted. Much perplexity and flicking back and forth ensues.

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PROCOPIAN POLEMICS

A. KALDELLIS: *Procopius of Caesarea. Tyranny, History, and Philosophy at the End of Antiquity*. Pp. x + 305. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004. Cased, US$49.95, £35. ISBN: 0-8122-3787-0.

In 1999 K. announced that 'a phase of transformative debate' in the study of Byzantine historiography had opened (*GRBS* 38: 295), to which enterprise the

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