question *c.* 195. The book is a 'rhetorical history', because, as the author delights to reiterate, the literature generated by discussion of the liturgy of the pasch and its appropriate celebration stems largely from polemic and irrational considerations. Simply propaganda, the ancient literature of comment moves at the intellectual level of a modern washing-powder advertisment, albeit one decked out with convoluted calculations. Much modern secondary literature besides stands convicted of ludicrous credulity and tendentiousness. Some good scholars, far better than Gerlach, rightly get it in the neck. The book is a salutary corrective to facile notions of impartiality in historical writing as it is also a dissuasive from the study of liturgy in general, prompting the question what unconfessed agenda this sharp critic of others has. It offers, besides, much information not easily available elsewhere. Comforting is the affirmation that Eusebius did not simply make up what he wrote about the second-century controversy; sensible the observation that we simply do not know whether the Corinthian Church kept the pasch in St Paul's time. Gerlach has a little, but not much, to say about the observance of Lent and Pentecost. The book points to a curiosity I had never noticed: that so much weight is attached to Exodus xii, though the covenant was instituted in Exodus xxiv.

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Eusebius of Caesarea's Commentary on Isaiah. *Christian exegesis in the age of Constantine*. By M. J. Hollerich. (Oxford Early Christian Studies.) Pp. ix + 230. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999. £40. 0 19 826368 6

The virtually complete text of Eusebius' *Commentary on Isaiah*, previously known only from excerpts in catenae, was discovered in 1930 by A. Möhle, who reported his discovery in *ZNW* xxxiii (1934), 86–90. The first, and so far only, critical edition of this important text was eventually produced by J. Ziegler in 1975. Since then the most systematic study of the *Commentary* to be published has been Manlio Simonetti's long article 'Esegesi e ideologia nel *Commento a Isaia* di Eusebio', *Rivista di storia e letteratura religiosa* xix (1983), 3–44. Michael Hollerich's monograph is a revised version of his Chicago dissertation, which appears to have received only superficial revision since its original composition in the 1980s. (For example, although the volume edited by Harold Attridge and Gohei Hata, *Eusebius, Christianity and Judaism*, Detroit 1992, is both cited [pp. 3/4 n. 4] and listed in the bibliography, Hollerich makes no reference to several relevant essays contained in it, including his own and one by this reviewer, which uses Eusebius' commentary as evidence for 'The Constantinian settlement'.) Hollerich provides a perceptive and reliable guide to a text which is at present totally inaccessible to those who cannot read Greek fluently and extremely difficult to digest even for most who can. Although too much space is perhaps spent on introductory matters, a full and accurate account is given of Eusebius' exegetical methods and of the main theme of his *Commentary*, which is to illustrate how the pre-exilic prophet Isaiah, whom Eusebius naturally took to be the author of the whole of the book that bears his name, foretold in detail the life, death and resurrection

of Christ, the replacement of Judaism by Christianity as the true religion protected by God, and the history of the Christian Church down to its triumph and prosperity under the Constantinian empire. I am not sure, however, that Hollerich has chosen the best available English translation for Eusebius' central idea. To me at least, the translation 'godly polity' for *to theosebes politeuma*, which recurs constantly throughout the book, sounds intolerably archaic: whether or not Hollerich intended the allusion, the phrase inevitably evokes Richard Hooker's 'ecclesiatical polity' and hence smacks of the Elizabethan period. Since in Eusebius the adjective *theosebes* always implies active piety, and the phrase *to theosebes politeuma* means for him, as Hollerich correctly states, 'a concrete human association based on devotion to God' (p. 126), I think that some translation such as 'community of true believers', despite all the implicit allusions of its own which it carries, would come closer to conveying Eusebius' intended meaning to modern readers.

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Die Anfänge der Professionalisierung des Klerus und das kirchliche Amt in der Syrischen Didaskalie. By Georg Schöllgen. (Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum, Ergänzungsband 26.) Pp. viii + 227. Münster: Aschendorff, 1998. 3 402 08110 5

Studies of the *Didascalia* in the twentieth century have focused primarily upon philological and textual concerns, apart from the narrower issue of canon law and ecclesiastical absolution. In view of the general shift of methodological perspective that now seeks to measure the extent to which such documents create a new social reality whilst purporting to describe and reflect an unchanging present one, it is timely that Schöllgen, one of our most perceptive contemporary commentators on the literature of early Church order, should have produced an analysis of the highest significance.

By the time of writing *Ep.* i, Cyprian makes it clear that the holding of clerical office had become professionalised in the sense that office was not only for life, but fully supported to the extent that a cleric could be expected to free himself from all other financial interests and obligations, such as those involved in acting with power of attorney as a testamentary tutor or curator for a minor. The ideological grounds upon which such expectations are based is that the Levites of the Old Testament received a tenth part of the offerings. But that professionalisation marked a decisive development from what had existed before.

Schöllgen analyses putative previous examples and finds them lacking in the full-blown criterion of lifelong ordination which is salaried and excludes other occupations. Priesthoods in pagan cults were of restricted duration, and involved simply the right and obligation to preside at the sacrifices at certain festivals. Such priests were not engaged full-time in teaching, in caring for the souls or administering poor relief. Sometimes pagan priesthoods were for life, with an annual annuity paid, or a payment on entry into office. But such positions were nevertheless in reality honorary since holders of such priesthoods were expected to make large contributions from their own wealth. Such honorary functions