

the previous chapters. The question of the image of Arsinoë and its long-lived importance to the Ptolemaic monarchy is complex, and again non-specialist readers would benefit from a fuller discussion of the issues and more complete footnotes. Fulińska's recent treatment of the iconography of the Ptolemaic queens on coinage can be added to C.'s bibliography (*Studies in Ancient Art and Civilization* 14 [2010]) along with Albersmeier's study of the portrait statues of the Ptolemaic queens (*Untersuchungen zu den Frauenstatuen des ptolemäischen Ägypten* [2002]). Finally, a more substantial conclusion would have been a valuable asset.

Despite these concerns, this is a valuable book. Arsinoë has long merited an accessible monographic treatment in English, and this balanced study is a good starting point for anyone interested in the Hellenistic royal families, the Macedonian and Ptolemaic courts, or women in antiquity in general. It is an important addition to a much-needed series.

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ISIS

BRICAULT (L.) (trans.) *Les Cultes isiaques dans le monde gréco-romain*. (La Roue à Livres 66.) Pp. 575, ills, maps. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2013. Paper, €35. ISBN: 978-2-251-33969-6.

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B. continues his contribution to the study of Egyptian religion in this new work. Differing from previous studies, the book examines the main topics concerning the cult of Isis, accessible by those without an extensive background in Isis studies. Similar in some respects to B.'s previously published *Bibliotheca Isiaca I* (2008), much of the work is devoted to the study of material culture, relying extensively on examples from his *Recueil des inscriptions concernant les cultes isiaques* (RICIS), published in 2005.

The title does not indicate the study's true range, which is not only devoted to the worship of Isis but incorporates other deities included within her pantheon, such as Osiris. The book proceeds along broad thematic lines: Part 1 offers a cursory overview of Isis' divine pantheon; Part 2 the cult's diffusion; Part 3 issues of the cult's reception and integration; Part 4 cult places; Part 5 cultic participants; Part 6 rites and practices of the cult; and Part 7 the many terms and iconography associated with the cult. Each section consists of multiple subsections including a page-long introduction into the topic followed by select examples drawn from literary, epigraphic and archaeological sources and concluding bibliographical suggestions.

In the introduction, B. outlines a selective historiography of previous Isis research, which is especially helpful in illustrating how such studies have guided past interpretations of the cult and provides the foundation for the topics addressed in his book. Part 1 begins with a brief examination of the main components of Isis' divine pantheon. B. evaluates the literary and iconographic image of Isis as well as the origins of Serapis (pp. 31–41). The primary deities associated with Isis including Harpocrate, Anubis, Apis, Boubastis and Osiris are examined in combination with limited literary, epigraphic and archaeological examples. While not overly extensive, the examples given provide a general account of the cult and a starting point for any future study.

The long second part examines the cult's diffusion, a topic with a considerable amount of surviving material evidence. Proceeding beyond the diffusion of Isis, B. also considers

the underlying reasons for the establishment of the god Serapis (p. 86). Useful is B.'s general outline of the trends in scholarship considering the Isiac cult's diffusion within the wider Mediterranean and Roman Empire (p. 132). Following the book's purpose as an introductory study of the cult, B. briefly evaluates how this diffusion can be studied through small finds such as statues, jewellery, coins and lamps. These not only indicate the extent of the cult's diffusion but also how local populations received the cult.

In the third part, B. examines the cult's reception and integration as a method of studying the cult's development over time. This includes consideration of the introduction of foreign deities, highlighting the flexible nature of religion (pp. 181–2). The examples provided indicate that gods such as Serapis had to coexist at different levels with other deities depending on location, time and cultural background. The amount of surviving epigraphic and numismatic evidence makes the potential for this study extensive.

Part 4 examines religious places of worship where B. rightly indicates the difficulty of tracing the development of particular Graeco-Roman sanctuaries based on the minimal surviving archaeological evidence. Using select locations and temples, like the Iseum of Pompeii, B. illustrates how the cult's function can be studied in conjunction with the surrounding political, economic and religious fabric of the city (p. 215). Especially useful is the examination of the liturgical practices of the cult, a study largely absent in past scholarship. Finally, B. considers the decorations, ornaments and votive offerings that would have adorned the architectural structure (pp. 233–4). Descriptions and select examples of the common iconographic symbols associated with temples of Isis are a welcome addition, while the commentary on votive offerings fills a gap in many previous studies.

Part 5 examines the actors of the cult in part to determine why people chose to worship Isis rather than other deities such as Dionysus. Because of the wide range of people that participated in the Egyptian cult, understanding the cult's theology becomes increasingly difficult. B.'s consideration of priests, magistrates and devotees adds a new dimension to Isiac studies. While it is nearly impossible to determine which communities attended certain sanctuaries, taking a comparative approach to other sanctuaries with surviving epigraphic lists of participants can offer some conclusions (p. 287). At the end of Part 5, B. turns his attention to the cult's celebrants who varied with both time and place as well as illustrating how much more research is needed regarding the theological practices of the cult of Isis in individual locations, a study infused with difficulties.

Part 6 examines the rites and religious practices of the cult. B. touches upon all the major features from daily worship practices to banquets and processions. A welcome addition to this section is the discussion about pilgrimages and oracular visions and their place within the cult as well as what motivated followers to partake in these aspects (pp. 403–27). B. additionally considers the overall economic practices of a temple, an issue long ignored by scholarship since literary sources are often silent on the subject (p. 446). Despite limited literary evidence, there are still methods that can be applied to gain a greater understanding of this issue.

The final section examines the polymorphic and multifunctional roles of the cult. Consideration of the different terminology and imagery associated with the cult's deities indicates the degree to which it changed over time. B. illustrates through numerous examples the difficulty in accurately understanding iconography with adjoining inscriptions (p. 473). The section concludes with consideration of other influences on the cult's theology as it spread outside Egypt. B.'s epilogue neatly wraps up the many aspects addressed by looking at the general decline of the cult against Christianity on account of psychological, historical, political and economic factors.

The book's large scope allows only a few issues within each topic to be addressed but not brought to conclusion, which is in keeping with the intent of the book to be used as an

introduction to the cult of Isis. B. delivers a unique catalogue of literary references supplemented by epigraphic, archaeological and numismatic examples that typify each passage along with providing individual analysis. The appendices included are an improvement on his previous publications, providing easy access to inscriptions, papyrus texts, deities, geographical locations and persons. One notable drawback is the inclusion of a select rather than comprehensive bibliography.

B. reviews the topics with great clarity as well as addressing other suggestions for scholarship. This will make the work ideal for undergraduates and graduate students wanting to familiarise themselves with the various issues of the cult of Isis present within a literary and archaeological context. The artful combination of history, archaeology, epigraphy and literature with in-depth analysis of each example makes B.'s newest work a necessary addition to the study of Isis.

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POST-CLASSICAL *POLIS* EPIGRAPHY

MARTZAVOU (P.), PAPA ZARKADAS (N.) (edd.) *Epigraphical Approaches to the Post-Classical Polis. Fourth Century BC to Second Century AD*. Pp. xx + 370, ill., maps. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. Cased, £90, US\$160. ISBN: 978-0-19-965214-3.
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As the editors of this volume observe, few scholars still believe that the Greek city died at the battle of Chaeronea. Detailed studies of the large volume of texts inscribed by a very wide range of cities in the Hellenistic and Roman Imperial periods have unequivocally shown that this was a period of great vitality in the political life of these communities. The aim, therefore, of this collection of sixteen papers, most of which were originally presented at the weekly Epigraphic Workshop held in Oxford, is to answer the question of 'what now?', by providing examples of the epigraphic approaches being practised.

A central part of the answer to this question which the volume offers is more of the same – more of what the editors call 'hard' or 'high quality' epigraphy, above all the careful autopsy of stones and the diligent preparation of texts, best exemplified by the *editio princeps*, the first edition of a new inscription. In this volume there are two model examples of this genre – the chapter by A. Schachter and F. Marchand publishing six inscriptions discovered in the Thespias survey and P.'s chapter presenting the first edition of five unpublished texts identified in the storerooms of the museum on Siphnos. None of the new texts is very long, but they are more than just a token affirmation of the importance of the continual discovery of inscriptions for the renewal of ancient history. In particular, the new texts from Thespias include a document from the fourth century B.C. commemorating the collectors of a local two per cent tax (the *pentekoste*) as well as a (deliberately destroyed?) bilingual dedication by the Emperor Domitian; from Siphnos, in addition to small fragments of a decree of the Naxians and a Siphnian decree honouring their *strategoī*, the new haul includes two fragments of the inscribed base of a public honorific statue for a woman, Astiē ('townswoman'). One of the most intriguing new texts to be presented, however, is not, strictly speaking, new at all. G. Malouchou presents two Athenian texts first published in the nineteenth century but accidentally overlooked when the relevant volumes of *Inscriptiones Graecae* were compiled. The text in question is a *horos* inscription,