

which I have engaged briefly); the *ludi saeculares*; the *Magna Mater* and the *taurobolium*; and the non-Christian origin of Christmas. They vary a little in the great detail of ancient material and parallel neglect of recent scholarship — which is frequently dismissed even when it does feature — but none go beyond erratic and cursory mention of the maturing approaches of the last *saeculum*. This means the book is of very limited use to readers: s/he is advised to plunder the book for ancient references but urged to go elsewhere for a framework for understanding Roman religion and time.

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M. BLÖMER and E. WINTER (EDS), *IUPPITER DOLICHENUS. VOM LOKALKULT ZUR REICHSRELIGION* (Orientalische Religionen in der Antike 8). Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 2012. Pp. 306, illus. ISBN 9783161517976. €99.00.

This edited volume presents a collection of nine contributions which have their origin in papers given at a workshop in Münster in 2010 that focused on the cult of Jupiter Dolichenus. The volume is edited by the excavators of Doliche (modern Dülük Baba Tepesi), M. Blömer and E. Winter. In their introduction, Blömer and Winter set out the history of research on ‘oriental’ cults — and the problems concerning the label ‘oriental cult’ — in general and that of Jupiter Dolichenus in particular, as well as giving the reader an introduction to the archaeology of Doliche. Most importantly, they underline the necessity of looking at the evidence from several angles taking into consideration both local, regional, inter-regional and imperial viewpoints and developments.

C. Witschel’s contribution ‘“Orientalische Kulte” im römischen Reich – neue Perspektiven der altentumswissenschaftlichen Forschung’ gives a wonderful overview of the history of research as well as offering new perspectives from the point of view of an ancient historian. Particularly in his discussions of religious flows and networks, Witschel suggests new ways of viewing the material. Thinking about networks (at the forefront of recent research) may now have reached its useful limit, but it has provided opportunities for modelling and viewing the evidence for a variety of places and situations in ways not possible earlier. Religious flows remain a fascinating lens through which to study the dynamic of cult developments, and Witschel’s handling of the topic displays the best of the Heidelberg school. The contribution by M. Blömer, ‘Iuppiter Dolichenus zwischen lokalem Kult und reichsweiter Verehrung’, provides a detailed insight into the archaeology and history of the sanctuary of Jupiter Dolichenus at Dülük Baba Tepesi. Against the background of a vast assemblage of material, Blömer offers a series of interpretations of the nature and function of the cult, which does not point to one conclusion, but shows the extreme diversity of the cult — even in one location. His contribution forces us again to face the fact that the variety of local religious life, (to repeat the title of an earlier edited volume by T. Kaizer) in the Roman provinces was more diverse than is often thought.

The next three contributions focus on networks, interaction and the rôle of individuals in the cult. Firstly A. Collar’s article, ‘Commagene, communication and the cult of Jupiter Dolichenus’, focuses on an aspect from her doctoral thesis (published in *Asia Minor Studien* 64): the network perspective. She shows how reconstructing the social networks of individuals may increase our insight into cult dynamics and in what ways these dynamics were — perhaps not unsurprisingly — related to important events in the Roman Empire, in this case the Trajanic wars. Secondly, R. Haensch’s contribution, ‘Die Angehörigen des römischen Heeres und der Kult des Iuppiter Dolichenus’, examines how family members of the Roman army staff were involved in the cult of Jupiter Dolichenus at various points and places in time. He shows that there was no single strategy followed by the cult and its members, but that worship and knowledge was also spread and supported by ‘religiously interested individuals’ from the upper strata of society. This is a crucial reminder of the rôle of the individual in the dynamics of local cult practices. D. Kreikenbom writes about the rôle of women in his contribution, ‘Weihende Frauen im Kult des Iuppiter Dolichenus’. The evidence, which amounts to around thirty inscriptions shows that women were usually dedicators together with men (primarily husbands). The remarkable embossed sheet-silver votives from Mauer a. d. Url also deserve mention here, since they attest to dedications offered by

women alone. The evidence in general gives an impression of a cult which had a much more diverse group of worshippers than is normally thought.

The concern of the final four contributions is the material remains of and from the sanctuaries of the Jupiter Dolichenus cult across the Roman Empire. H. Schwarzer's 'Die Heiligtümer des Iuppiter Dolichenus' catalogues all known sanctuaries dedicated to Jupiter Dolichenus. This is the first time these sanctuaries have been analysed comparatively. B. Fowlkes-Childs' 'The cult of Jupiter Dolichenus in the city of Rome: Syrian connections and local contexts' usefully follows Schwarzer in comparing the evidence from Rome in seeking explanations for the cult's development and origins. Andrew Birley and Anthony Birley treat the newly found Dolichenus sanctuary in Vindolanda in their contribution, 'A new Dolichenum, inside the third-century fort at Vindolanda'. It is a comprehensive overview and analysis of the material from the sanctuary, and provides important insights into the cult in this part of the Roman Empire. W. Jobst's article, 'Der Kult des Iuppiter Dolichenus und der Iuno Regina im mittleren Donau- und Ostalpenraum', concludes the volume with an overview of the evidence from the Danube and surrounding region, with a particular focus also on the iconography of the god in these regions.

The volume is a substantial and focused contribution to research on the cult of Jupiter Dolichenus. Moreover it also opens up general questions which need more consideration in discussions of the development, interaction and spread of local cults from the Roman provinces to larger areas. Together the contributions give a comprehensive overview of current work in this area, a reminder that research on local religions in the Roman provinces is far from an exhausted theme, but remains one of the most complex fields within the study of the religious life in the Roman provinces.

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L. I. LEVINE, *VISUAL JUDAISM IN LATE ANTIQUITY: HISTORICAL CONTEXTS OF JEWISH ART*. New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 2012. Pp. x + 582, 128 illus. ISBN 9780300100891. £50.00.

Ernest Renan, the most influential — if not the most reliable — nineteenth-century historian of Judaism, summarizing the historical achievements of the Jews, declared trenchantly: 'Rien dans l'art.' The twentieth century has radically changed the purchase of such a remark, not because of figures such as Chagal, but because of some of the most startling discoveries of modern archaeology. The synagogue at Dura Europos with its amazing murals, which shocked the scholarly and religious world when revealed in the 1930s, is the most celebrated of dozens of recently excavated synagogues, many decorated with lavish mosaics, inscriptions and even wall-paintings, from the third to the seventh centuries in the eastern Empire. The first attempt to collect and synthesize this burgeoning material was Goodenough's *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period* (1953–68), which presented a wealth of material in a grand theoretical framework, which proposed a pervasive Jewish mysticism, set in opposition to the dominant rabbinical authority. This agenda has been almost wholly rejected by scholars, but his work brought to the fore the sheer richness of the material record for this period, and the need to relate it to its social context. The nineteenth century, with the usual hangover into twentieth-century scholarship, knew three things for sure: that Jewish society severely declined after the failed rebellions of the second century; that this decline was marked by a submissive response to the newly dominant Christian rule; that Jewish commitment to aniconic representation was a sign of the link between Torah, rabbinical regulation and social practice. Archaeological evidence has destroyed each of these grounding claims of Jewish history. There was a marked increase in Jewish settlements in Palestine and in their prosperity in Late Antiquity. Many of the buildings are visually stunning in their grandeur: the fourth-century synagogue in Sardis was 80 metres long and 20 metres wide — a massive structure for any town in the Empire. The inscriptions, mostly in Greek, demonstrate lively interaction between Jewish and other communities. The material record shows the extraordinary 'resilience, creativity as well as [the] remarkable self-confidence' of the Jewish community, as Levine convincingly articulates (466). Most strikingly, it is clear that the synagogues indicate not just scant influence of rabbinical authority, but also, and repeatedly, blatant transgression of rabbinical principles. Who would have thought that a synagogue could