

making a difference between "tombstones with inscriptions" and "epitaphs" (p. 186). In a few cases, the use of English is somewhat misleading, e.g. "pretend" is used in the sense of "suggest".

But these are minor points. Prof. Tengström is to be congratulated for having produced a fine study, which will be of considerable use to other scholars dealing with similar Neo-Latin texts.

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*La soteriologia dei culti orientali nell'Impero Romano.* Atti del Colloquio Internazionale su La soteriologia dei culti orientali nell'Impero Romano, Roma 24—28 Settembre 1979. Pubblicati a cura di U. Bianchi e M. J. Vermaseren. Études préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'empire romain, tome 92. E. J. Brill, Leiden 1982. XXV, 1025 p. Hfl. 450.—.

The present volume gives an illustrative glimpse of what is happening at present in historico-religious studies in the field of oriental cults in the Roman Empire. The generalizations and erroneous points of emphasis of the *religionsgeschichtliche Schule* and other previous scholars (e.g. F. Cumont) have largely been recognized, and, still retaining, of course, many of the results of the preliminary work, new questions are asked and problems are approached from fresh angles. This does not, however, mean that many final conclusions have been reached, and the somewhat varying quality of the articles clearly demonstrates that further clarifying in method and in terminology is needed. Indeed, the terminological problems are frequently dealt with in the discussion parts which follow every singular contribution and in the general discussion of the final session as well as in the Epilegomena of Prof. Bianchi. It seems to me that the seminar did not succeed in its attempt to establish an overall specific terminology to be used in the research of the 'mystery cults'. Thus the urgent necessity of defining concepts such as 'mystic', 'mysteric', 'mysteriosophic', 'soteriology' intersubjectively, and of coming to terms for their uniform use among the scholars still remains.

The publication contains forty-seven articles, the writers of which are usually well-renowned scholars, to mention besides the editors U. Bianchi and M. J. Vermaseren, for example the names of F. Coarelli, I. P. Culianu, M. Guarducci, E. Paratore, G. Sanders, F. Sfamini Gasparro, M. Simon, H. Solin and R. Turcan. The subjects of the papers range from presentations of new archaeological and epigraphical material through phenomenological studies and analyses of the literary sources to the cults of the Ancient East and to considerations of soteriology in Judaism, Christianity, and Gnosticism.

The articles surely contribute in many ways to a better understanding of the structures of the oriental cults attested in the Roman Empire, and the book is, by virtue of its extensive notes and large indices, also likely to be used by students and scholars alike as a sort of reference book or guide to these beliefs and rites, and their perspectives to the other world.

*Jaakko Aronen*