

The book covers a much more limited area than its size suggests; yet I believe it will turn out to be useful within its limits. Unfortunately it has no indexes.

H. Thesleff

Marcel Simon: Le Christianisme et son contexte religieux. Scripta varia I—II. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 23. J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), Tübingen 1981. XX, 370 S. & CI, 371—852 S. DEM 245.

The present two volumes by the esteemed Strasbourg Professor Marcel Simon include 47 essays published between the years 1933 and 1979 in different journals. Most of the articles are concerned with the early Christian period, with particular regard to historical but also archaeological and methodological problems. Special emphasis is laid on the study of the contacts between various religious trends active in the first four centuries A.D. The relations of Christianity to Judaism as well as Paganism are illuminated from many angles of approach. It is a great pleasure for all interested in the history of early Christianity to have these important contributions collected in two handy volumes.

Mika Kajava

La tradizione dell'enkrateia. Motivazioni ontologiche e protologiche Atti del Colloquio Internazionale Milano, 20—23 aprile 1982, pubblicati a cura di Ugo Bianchi. Edizioni dell'Ateneo, Roma 1985. XXXI, 800 p. ITL 100.000.

The papers collected in this impressive volume are mainly concerned with 'enkratism' in Jewish, early Christian and Gnostic traditions. The term is here understood as implying certain kinds of ascetism, in particular sexual abstinence, with eschatological and metaphysical bearings. The theme no doubt is an important one, and many of the contributions are very learned and illuminating. The participants in this meeting were mostly Italian and French theologians and orientalists. Some readers will badly miss the approaches of the anthropologist, or the mythologist, or the feminist, or the psychologist. The ordinary classical scholar is surprised to find that *enkrateia* in Pythagoreanism, Cynicism, and Stoicism has received very little attention in the volume, and only the last paper (by D.M. Cosi) concentrates on any aspects of Neoplatonism without, however, taking account of the 'enkratist' background of the unio mystica doctrine. Plotinus' name is not mentioned even once on these 800 pages.

H. Thesleff

Paolo Martino: Arbitrator. Biblioteca di ricerche linguistiche e filologiche, 17. Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche e Dipartimento di Studi glottoantropologici dell'Università di Roma "La Sapienza", Roma 1986. 128 p.

The vulgate etymology of *arbiter* segments *ar-biter* and presents the figure denoted by this word as ‘one who comes along (somehow < **ad*+*baetere*) to one’s assistance’. This solution has placed this important word within an Italic, and in the last analysis, an Indo-European frame of reference. Given the fact that when you reconstruct a word, you also reconstruct a piece of culture with it, such a preconceived frame may, in the worst case, lead to more or less phantasmagorical ideas on the organization of the proto-culture; witness E. Benveniste’s (*Le vocabulaire des institutions indoeuropéennes* II, 1969) attempt to give *arbiter* a niche in the pantheon of Indo-European institutional figures. The received etymology has also affected the historical and juridical theorizing on the Italic origins of *arbiter*.

Paolo Martino’s monograph (a revised version of his «tesi di Perfezionamento in Glottologia», Roma 1979) is a great Fortschritt in the explication of this important and somewhat enigmatic figure of Roman law. That Martino’s study decisively furthers our understanding of the rôle of *arbiter* is evident from a comparison with the rather meagre information on the *status quaestionis* offered in the *Bibliographie zur lateinischen Wortforschung* (ed. by O. Hiltbrunner) II, 1984, s.v. *arbiter*, *arbitralis*, *arbitrarius*, *arbitrium*, and *arbitror* (pp. 288—294). Having stated good formal and semantic reasons for abandoning the traditional view of *arbiter* as a figure in the Italic *ius civilis*, Martino proceeds to investigate the hypothesis that the function of an *arbiter* originally consisted in serving as a lay arbitrator in international commerce. This opens a new frame, in which the possibility of *arbiter* being a loan word comes out very naturally. The author hypothesizes that the name *arbiter* was introduced and established in use around the 7th c. B.C. in the Etruscan and Italic emporia, which were frequented by various foreigners, not least by Phoenician merchants. As the author says, it is easy to imagine that due to differences in national customs and legal norms conflicts were bound to arise in commercial affairs. It is for the purpose of mediating in such situations of conflict that a disinterested *vir bonus* was needed. Such a public guarantor was the Phoenician *ʿrb*. It is this word which, according to Martino’s very plausible hypothesis, underlies Latin *arbiter* (i.e., *arb-i-ter*). The author shows the importance of the root *ʿrb* in ancient Semitic languages and its spread over the Mediterranean area. The proposed etymology connects *arbiter* with Latin *arrabo*, *arra*, and Greek ἀρραβών (< *ʿrbn* ‘guarantee’). A good many cruces are etymologized in addition: *arillator* is connected with *arra*; Etruscan *aril* is discussed in this connection; the obscure gloss *ariblator* receives a sensible explication; and *rabula*, which represents the outsider’s perceptual experience of forensic proceedings (cf. also *rabo*), finds an explanation that cuts out the popular etymology “*rabula quasi rabiosus*” (Paul. Fest.).

Every point of argumentation is backed by rich information tapped from archaeological, historical, linguistic and philological sources. All in all, an admirable piece of work and an example of good etymological methodology.

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