

article, the question of the authors' opinion or intention is seen from a new viewpoint.

In his paper, "Plutarch and the Roman Politics", C.B.R. Pelling discusses Plutarch's conception of society, which is discernible especially in the "Gracchi", the "Marius" and the "Caesar". According to Pelling, Plutarch views Roman society in the light of the Greek dichotomy between *boule* and *demos*. Pelling claims that Plutarch's view of the political conflicts of the late republic as a contradiction between these two elements is the author's personal opinion, and not directly taken from earlier sources.

T.E.J. Wiedemann concludes the book with an analysis of Ammianus Marcellinus' descriptions of marginal places and peoples in terms of anthropological and literary conventions, and introduces the concepts of normal and abnormal, central and marginal. Through these dichotomies, Wiedemann tries to approach the *topoi* which were already known by Herodotus. On the other hand, we should remember that Herodotus himself was dependent upon oral traditions which were, however, in many cases no more reliable than the accounts of Ammianus. In any case, that does not make them uninteresting from the viewpoint of the historian.

"Past Perspectives" contains many important studies. The essential problems of classical historiography are discussed from a critical viewpoint. The excellent epilogue, in particular, helps readers to discover many new problems and fresh aspects which often throw new light upon conventional interpretations and standard views.

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*Serta historica antiqua*. Pubblicazioni dell'istituto di storia antica e scienze ausiliarie dell'Università degli studi di Genova, XV. Giorgio Bretschneider, Roma 1986. VII, 276 p. ITL 250.000.

The 15th volume in the Pubblicazioni of the Institute of Ancient History in the University of Genoa contains a series of articles from different fields: Gianfranco Gaggero, Considerazioni sulla legenda di Sesostri nella tradizione greco-romana; Giorgio Camassa, Una possibile traccia della presenza euboica nella Penisola salentina durante l'età arcaica; Rossella Pera, Tipi dionisiaci in Sicilia e Magna Grecia; Luigi Piccirilli, La prima moglie di Milziade; Carla Ferretto, Milziade e Egesipile. Un matrimonio di interesse; Mariella Galletti, Furono i *Persiani* di Eschilo un dramma filotemistocleo?; Luigi Santi-Amantini, La terminologia degli accordi di pace nella tradizione letteraria greca sino alla conclusione delle guerre persiane; Ugo Fantasia, Samo e Anaia; Maria Gabriella Angeli

Bertinelli, I Semiti e Roma: appunti da una lettura di fonti semitiche; Giovanni Mennella, Tra Libarna e Veleia. Nuove conoscenze epigrafiche sulla topografia e l'amministrazione del territorio; Adelina Arnaldi, Termini e dati monetari nelle biografie da Adriano a Caracalla nell'*Historia Augusta*; Eleonora Salomone Gaggero, La viabilità a Genova nel tardo impero: CIL V 8082; Mariagrazia Bianchini, Disparità di culto e matrimonio: orientamenti del pensiero cristiano e della legislazione imperiale nel IV sec. d.C.; Lia Raffaella Cresci, Lineamenti strutturali e ideologici della figura di Belisario nei *Bella* procopiani.

For a student of late ancient marriage law, Mariagrazia Bianchini's article offers a good treatment of restrictions placed on intermarriage between Jews and Christians. She compares them with the teachings of the Church Fathers, who usually condemned marriages not only with Jews, but also with pagans and heretics. She concludes that the legal intervention of the emperors was motivated less by theology than by a political antisemitism, which certainly received support from many bishops.

Bianchini also notes, quite correctly in my view, that before the fourth century the bishops' insistence that Christians should marry only inside their own small community was so dominant that even unions across social classes had to be tolerated if the believers were to marry at all. But this "liberal" view was apparently later rejected, when more and more noble families joined the faith. One would have wished to learn more about her views on this development, which is not particularly well-documented in our sources. Evidently Bianchini does not see the Christian doctrine as an independent, solid block that rolls through the ages influencing everything it hits, but rather as an ideology which, though based on an exceptionally authoritative book, is constantly subject to interpretation and adaptation in changing social conditions. This is an attractive attitude, if not very common.

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*A.B. Bosworth: Conquest and empire. The reign of Alexander the Great.* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1988. XIII, 330 p. GBP 9.95 (paperback).

Few stories are fascinating enough to be told as often as this. After reading, say, Arrian, Diodor and Curtius as well as Wilcken, Tarn, and Schachermeyr, it must be confessed that a new version is opened with a certain suspicion. But on the other hand, it is a fascinating story. There are also many ways to tell it. After the somewhat unscholarly enjoyment one is bound to have when reading Tarn and Wheeler, this more sober