

tion with the dead. This does not only mean solving problems caused by the dead or calming the dead and averting their anger: magic can also be used in rousing them up against people. All in all, this chapter offers interesting details on a subject which has recently been widely studied – details that complement the bigger picture of ancient Greek magic. The most interesting offering of the book, however, is the connection it establishes in the next two chapters between these ancient magical practices and modern Greek beliefs, via Byzantium to the modern world. In the second chapter, Agamemnon Tselikas shows that the magical text (spells, exorcisms, etc.) can be found not only in Antiquity, but in post-Byzantine manuscripts as well, and lived on despite the attempts to modify it by the Church. In the third chapter, Charles Stewart illustrates the relationship of magic and orthodoxy and the often vague boundaries between magic and religion. All in all, the articles in the third chapter provide interesting views of magical beliefs and practices in modern Greek society – or societies, as Vassiliki Chryssantopoulou focuses on the concept of the evil eye among the Greeks living in Australia. In a country with such a long history as Greece it is not surprising that customs live on, develop, disappear and reappear throughout the centuries and millennia. What is common to ancient and modern societies is that 'magical' and 'religious' practices intertwine, as the articles show.

The development of the magical practices could perhaps have been given more space, and the fourth chapter, discussing theories of magic, could have been partly covered in the introduction, partly interwoven into the previous chapters. The reader is in fact often left wishing for more, as the glimpses into the topic the book offers are highly interesting.

*Saara Kauppinen*

JUDITH M. BARRINGER: *Art, Myth, and Ritual in Classical Greece*. Cambridge University Press, New York 2008. ISBN 978-0-521-64134-0 (hb), 978-0-521-64647-5 (pb). XV, 267 pp. GBP 45, USD 85 (hb), GBP 16.99, USD 27.99 (pb).

For a reader not specialised in Classical Greece, Barringer's book gives a comprehensive introduction to the discourse of myth as it has been seen and understood within the study of Greek art. Any intention of visual interpretation must start from the consideration that the role of myths in the lives of the viewers of the different forms of visual representation cannot be stressed enough. This is why the relation between the visual displays and the physical reception of them becomes a tangible part of understanding the present, the past and the continuity of life.

Barringer shows through five thorough case studies of architectural sculpture how the depicted myths can be found in different variations that depend on the specificity both of a particular site and of the expected ritualistic behaviour. She concentrates on two myths, the Centauromachy and the Amazonomachy. The case studies cover key sites in Olympia, Athens, Delphi, and Trysa and consist mainly of temples and tombs, though Barringer transcends the single focus on religion. This means that the interpretations demand a more complex and diverse understanding of the function of visual representation and its reception.

Using visual semiotics as a method of interpretation, Barringer touches upon questions that connect the study to issues of gender, of cultural diversity and of the understanding of artistic expression as intertwined with site specificity. Her approach combines specific knowl-

edge of ancient Greece with topics relevant for current literary, philosophical and art theoretical thinking.

Barringer's book unfolds unexpected and diverse perspectives on the complex relation between religion, ritual, myth and art. The phenomenological understanding of art reception, the interpretation of fragmental dispersed narrative and the idea of immersion in a predestined mediation of mythology provide interesting and perplexing ways of finding links to contemporary questions concerning meaning production in our interaction with the multidimensional world of visual representation.

Maria Hirvi-Ijäs

STEPHANIE LYNN BUDIN: *The Myth of Sacred Prostitution in Antiquity*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge – New York 2008. ISBN 978-0-521-88090-9. XI, 366 pp. USD 107 (hb), 33.99 (pb).

It is claimed now and then that sacred prostitution existed in antiquity. However, there are not many studies on this interesting subject and this monograph by Lynn Budin is thus most welcome. It is an introduction both to the history of academic studies on "sacred prostitution" and to the ancient sources on the subject.

What this book is about becomes clear right at the beginning: "Sacred prostitution never existed in the ancient Near East or Mediterranean" (p. 1). In what follows, Budin goes through the evidence in detail in 336 pages divided into eleven chapters.

Chapter 1 is a short introduction to the history of the academic discussion of sacred prostitution and to the contents of the book. As the author states, her approach is mainly philological, because "sacred prostitution is ultimately a literary construct" (p. 4). This is obviously an important observation (which may also be valid in the case of other ideas that we have about ancient societies).

Chapter 2 focuses on the ancient Near East, normally considered the birthplace of sacred prostitution. Budin studies with care the evidence, i.e., mainly the various terms that we tend to see as evidence for sacred prostitution in Mesopotamia, Canaan and Israel. Her conclusion is clear: "There were no sacred prostitutes in the ancient Near East" (p. 47), a statement that is based on a convincing handling of the sources.

Chapter 3 proceeds to Classical times. It is an overview of the relevant evidence, and the rest of the book concentrates on the various central pieces of evidence chapter by chapter. This part begins justifiably with Herodotos (Chapter 4). Since Herodotos (*Hist.* 1,199) has, inevitably, influenced other Classical authors – and modern interpretations – in promoting the myth of prostitution, Budin rightly uses several pages to discuss Herodotos. The main passage on prostitution (see above) is quoted in full, translated and analysed line by line, followed by useful observations on Herodotos' style. There is also a discussion of cultural phenomena in Herodotos' times, including the notions of ethnicity and identity, femininity and masculinity, and conquest and rape. All these are important when reading Herodotos' accounts from the various parts of the world and naturally play a central role when discussing matters which deal with sexuality. Budin's conclusion about this passage is as follows: "...the sacred prostitution Herodotos describes in Chapter 1,199 is not real. Rather than a historical reality, it is an almost