



A.'s reluctance to commit to a more definitive definition of magic from the outset, which perhaps would have been possible had this study not spanned such a wide expanse of Graeco-Roman history, predisposes some of the arguments to being more far-reaching than the boundaries of magic proper would arguably allow. That being said, considering the chronological scope of the work, A. expertly deploys and critically analyses a variety of genres of ancient sources to navigate effectively the perceived ambiguity of both scent and ancient magic over time and to provide a unique and engaging sensory perspective on the topic. The epilogue provides a succinct but satisfying conclusion by drawing together the main threads of the argument to address the central thesis. The suggestions for further research focusing on the sensory elements of ancient magic are thought-provoking and sound, as they call for a better acknowledgement and critical understanding of sensory perception across diverse cultural contexts. Finally, the bibliography is extensive and well presented. In conclusion, A.'s volume achieves its stated objectives and will be of particular interest to researchers in the fields of ancient magic and sensory studies alike.

The Open University

TONY POTTER
tony.potter@open.ac.uk

THE GODDESS ISIS

BRICAULT (L.) *Isis Pelagia: Images, Names and Cults of a Goddess of the Seas*. Translated by Gil H. Renberg. (Religions in the Graeco-Roman World 190.) Pp. xviii + 384, b/w & colour ills, map. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2020 (originally published as *Isis, dame des flots*, 2006). Cased, €149, US\$179. ISBN: 978-90-04-41389-4.

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B., with his numerous and successive publications, has been stirring the waters of the study of Egyptian religions for two decades now, creating concentric waves that reach the shores of scholarship and making more people into isiacologists (*isiacologues*). In this sea of publications B. has pitched the volume under review. This is a completely reworked version in English of a book that initially appeared in French, *Isis, dame des flots* (2006). The translation of the enhanced version is due to Renberg, a seasoned scholar of ancient religions. When the original version was published in 2006, only a few of B.'s important documentary collections had come to light, notably *Atlas de la diffusion des cultes isiaques* (2001) and *Recueil des inscriptions concernant les cultes isiaques* (2005); his *Sylloge nummorum religionis isiacae et sarapiacae* would only come out in 2008. Apart from multiplying his publications in the last 20 years, B. has been involved directly or indirectly in major projects concerning Isiac studies: in some of the volumes of the *Roman Provincial Coinage* series, four volumes of the series *Bibliotheca Isiaca* and the *Supplements* thereto, a number of proceedings of international colloquia on Isiac studies and, finally, a *Thesaurus iconographicus cultuum isiacorum*. With this work B. has, if not created, certainly reshaped an entire field of study.

The book reviewed here, with 177 figures and 20 tables with typologies of coin types and a handy map, is an example of the renewal that B.'s work has brought about in the field. The

67-page bibliography is extremely useful for navigating the ocean of publications of Isiac studies. B. explores an issue anew that he and others have studied in the past: the links connecting Isis to the maritime world (p. 6). Even if this relationship has not always been well problematised, the question has been one of the themes of Isiac studies for a long time since this maritime aspect of Isis has produced an impressive quantity of evidence and material, notably the lively description of a maritime festival in honour of Isis by Apuleius in Book 11 of his *Metamorphoses*.

In a substantial yet succinct introduction, B. offers an account of the topic's historiography, notably discussing questions of sources and discrepancies of perspectives between Hellenists and Egyptologists. B. points out the three pillars upon which the perception of Isis as the goddess of the seas is based: alleged Egyptian origins, iconography and festivals (p. 9). He steadily begins setting the stage for deconstructing these scholarly clichés. His main thesis is that this aspect of the maritime Isis should not be taken for granted.

In the first chapter B. talks about the origins of maritime Isis, opting for a roughly chronological approach. These origins have been sought in Egypt – in vain. Still, if the concept of Isis-of-the-seas does not have its origins in Egypt, B. continues, it is not because stereotypically 'the Egyptians hated the sea' but because the scarce iconographical details found in Egypt, which might have reflected a relationship between Isis and the sea, are too weak to support this hypothesis (p. 16). It seems, however, that some significant connections of Isis with the aquatic elements may have Phoenician origins, as this can be detected in the version of the Osirian myth provided by Plutarch. In Hellenistic times, the maritime character of the goddess develops further through the cultic connection of Isis with Arsinoe II, the Ptolemaic queen identified with Isis (pp. 10–42).

In the short Chapter 2 B. follows the canonisation of the new persona of Isis and detects in the aretology of Isis a hymn-like text inscribed often on stone and also found in some literary sources, the major medium via which this persona was diffused and anchored in various contexts in the Eastern and Western Mediterranean from the first century BCE. In Chapter 3 B. offers a detailed exploration of the iconography of Isis-with-a-sail and her representations in various contexts, most notably on coins, which is one of the most original points of the book. He proposes a typology of Isis-with-a-sail representations, which is constructed in such a way that the differences are equally marked as the similarities. He meticulously explores the variants of Isis-with-a-sail in various media; he problematises further the representation of Isis-with-a-sail in statuary, a topic that has been recently discussed in scholarship. These remarks about discrepancies in the typologies of Isis-with-a-sail are particularly useful.

In Chapter 4 the emphasis is put on the cultic and literary epithets of Isis in the Graeco-Roman world. In this context, votive religion is scrutinised, and other contexts of written dedications, namely pilgrimage inscriptions, are explored with an eye on the flexibility of polytheism and its practices. In Chapter 5 possible cult sites of Isis-with-a-sail and attested cult sites of Isis Euploia, Pelagia, Soteira or Pharia are examined from an interdisciplinary perspective. The type of cult sites, ritual practices, types of dedications, artefacts used in the cults of maritime Isis, inscriptions, festivals and representations of festivals are carefully explored. In Chapter 6 Sarapis as a maritime god and companion of Isis enters the scene to complement the study of Isis as a maritime divine figure. B. critically deconstructs previous scholarly purist assumptions about the Greek origin of Sarapis and re-contextualises the divinity in a Memphitic/Alexandrian context. In this context Graeco-Egyptian Ptolemaic mythology relevant to Sarapis is examined. B. summarises what is old, what is new, what is borrowed and what is fuzzy. The persona of Sarapis is interpreted in a new context of the monarchic political interests of the Ptolemies. It seems, according to B., that the association of Sarapis with the maritime world is a later phenomenon than the

association of Isis with the sea and that the cultic co-habitation of Isis and Sarapis in some cultic contexts – notably Delos – was a decisive factor for that association towards the beginning of the Late Hellenistic period.

Furthermore, the association of Sarapis with a specific type of materiality, small, engraved and movable, notably gems, apparently shaped and diffused a particularly strong and emotional type of religiosity, individual and attached to materiality. The attention to small contexts in this chapter is a particularly important contribution of the work. Chapter 7 mainly follows the gradual disappearance of maritime Isis and Sarapis from the evidence, notably numismatics. B. underlines the discrepancies in the type of evidence insightfully, but remains prudent and thrifty concerning possible interpretations. In the reception and recontextualisation of materialities relevant to Isis and Sarapis maritime, elements of folklore are examined with gusto. Isis, as a goddess of the seas, has a history, and B. develops its study significantly.

B.'s volume draws upon the recent conceptual and epistemological renewal of the study of religions in the ancient Mediterranean. Notably, the last few years have seen sustained interest in the naming of the gods, their cultic epithets and their literary denominations (see the ERC-funded project *Noms de Dieux*, directed by B.'s colleague in Toulouse, C. Bonnet). B.'s attention to the contexts of reception and appropriation of Isis and Sarapis, even quite recent ones such as the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, is a great strength of the work; one further consequence may be that the study of reception contexts can help better understand, on some occasions, something about the original context. Another distinctiveness is the inclusion of artefacts (coins, statuettes etc.) that originate, unfortunately, in the antiquities trade – a bold but controversial choice (see, e.g., p. 253 n. 85). B. has done a favour to the ever-growing global community of scholars of religious history by publishing the book in English; his acute attention to detail, accuracy, insatiable curiosity and his intellectual honesty make this work extremely fertile.

Columbia University

PARASKEVI MARTZAVOU
pm2839@columbia.edu

HOW ANCIENT GREEKS AND ROMANS REPRESENTED THEIR PAST: A NEW VOLUME ON ANCIENT MEMORY

DE MARRE (M.), BHOLA (R.K.) (edd.) *Making and Unmaking Ancient Memory*. Pp. xvi + 324, ills. London and New York: Routledge, 2022. Cased, £120, US\$160. ISBN: 978-0-367-37144-9.

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A remarkable growth of studies on memory and forgetting in the last three decades – a ‘memory boom’ – has sparked extensive research across diverse disciplines, including social studies, cognitive sciences, humanities and media studies. Cultural memory studies have offered a fruitful and fascinating framework for exploring ancient civilisations, since they have helped to uncover the processes by which societies construct, preserve and transmit their collective memories and narratives over time. The volume under review is part of this strand of studies, and it explores how the ancients represented their past. The work