the latter. The originality of Theopompus lies not so much in the nature of his moral views, of course, but the way he expresses them. It is right to speak of the ‘formulaic expressions that describe the Theopompan moral man’ (p. 142). A comparative analysis of the moral formulae of rhetoric, particularly Demosthenes, would be illuminating.

Chapter 5 focusses on the treatment of Philip and Demosthenes. The basic puzzle about how Theopompus did treat his main character comes to the fore again. Did he praise him in the introduction then abuse him in the rest of the work as Polybius implied? What was the balance and the relation between the introduction and the rest? There have been tentative answers to these questions from the beginning (p. 22 that the introduction was ironic, p. 25 that the abuse was designed to win him credibility in what was at heart an encomium). The answers remain tentative in this chapter, which suggests avenues still open for investigation. Could a movement from praise to blame indicate that Philip was subject to that same process of moral corruption that can be seen in the biographies of his son Alexander?

Shrimpton faces up to the difficulties in his subject and produces very accessible discussions of all important aspects. His volume is well written and well published. There are two Appendices, one on the authorship of the ‘Hellenica Oxyrhynchia’ (not Theopompus!), the other the translated Testimonia and Fragments of Theopompus, as well as Notes, Bibliography and several useful Indices. It is a book which will certainly stimulate me to further investigation. It will also be a very welcome addition to my bibliographies for senior students of historical and historiographical courses.

V.J.G.

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Professor Markus's thesis is that, during the fifth and sixth centuries, 'Western Europe was being drained of the "secular"'; implying that, prior roughly to 400, secularity enjoyed greater scope — secularity defined as 'that sector of life which is not considered to be of direct religious significance' (p. 15). The very terminology creates problems. Nor is it clear, by the end of the book, that drainage is the right image: much depends on arguing that churchmen invaded and claimed, so to speak, sectors of life previously regarded as neutral.

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There are other limitations. Professor Markus admits at an early stage that he has focussed on the West; and in practice he has more to say about Gaul than anywhere else: Italy is treated only in the last chapter. Such an approach to the fifth and sixth centuries has become increasingly unacceptable. The author asserts (as early as p. xiii), 'this possibility of isolating a “Western” Christianity in such a way is itself one feature of the end of an epoch'; but that takes for granted precisely what calls for demonstration. Finally, even within those dangerous limitations, an overwhelming proportion of the book deals with Augustine, happily taken as both exemplar and catalyst in relation to the changes discussed.

Having struck at once a negative note, one must assure readers that the book is marked by the sensitivity, the learning, the stimulating and courageous reflection that has always been characteristic of Professor Markus’s work. Excellent analyses abound. Augustine’s views on sexuality receives a properly balanced judgement (p. 560), which it is useful to compare with that of Elaine Pagels, in Adam, Eve, and the Serpent (a book not mentioned here). The chapter ‘Holy Places and Holy People’ (p. 139ff) contains a masterly summary of points touched upon in works as diverse as Robin Lane Fox, Pagans and Christians, E.D. Hunt, Holy Land Pilgrimage, and Peter Brown, The Cult of the Saints. The passages on Pelagius are provoking. I do not think we should see him and Augustine as arguing against or in favour of ‘mediocrity’ (p. 45ff), in their debate over what made an ‘authentic’ Christian. Pelagius wished to establish a firm base, seated in the human will, from which to launch outwards a secure campaign for the transformation of individual lives and of Christian society. Yet that comes closer to what the author eventually accepts (p. 55, 65): an attempt (shared with Augustine) to resolve tensions between the scope of the Gospel challenge and the resources required to meet it.

Two major surveys within the book are even more valuable: those of asceticism and of conversion. In regard to the first, Professor Markus takes tactful issue with Peter Brown, wishing to make ascetics less eccentric: ‘to understand the special place and the function of holy men in the Christian community, we have to see them as representative persons acting for the community rather than as individuals with privileged access to a reality they had to mediate to their fellows’ (p. 23). The distinction, however, is not as easy to make as it sounds. To start with, not all ascetics were happy to ‘represent’ their fellow Christians in such a way; and the problem is, how do you know a representative when you see one? The issue is connected with another, about which Professor Markus remains undecided: should we see the ascetic movement as a reaction to the complacency and privilege of the Constantinian order? (Compare p. 38 with p. 70.) In how many cases, even in an earlier phase of ascetic development, are we dealing with ‘institutionalised alienation’ (p. 214)? If such alienation was rare (as I think), then its suggested
disappearance (central to the argument of the book) becomes less significant. It would be, in any case, a mistake to suppose that unease in the face of the comforts of toleration could take only an ascetic form. The Church had long possessed, in its interpretation of cult and authority, moral and institutional strategies designed to promote serious dedication; and those continued to operate in traditional ways after Constantine’s conversion, just as they had done before. Establishing a clear relationship between ascetic practice and church life more generally is essential, if one is to identify accurately the ‘sacred’ elements that serious Christians supposedly promoted at the expense of the ‘secular’ or neutral.

Professor Markus characteristically concludes his excellent survey, ‘Be Ye Perfect’ (p. 630), with a narrower examination of Augustine’s views. He rightly identifies a need acknowledged at the time, for a new history and a new definition of civitas. In close conjunction with the themes of the City of God, Augustine’s monastery became, therefore, a new society, ‘a community in which mutual service replaced “social necessity”’ (p. 82). It offered, however, a promise of heavenly fulfilment, rather than a model for society at large; it was still marked by the imperfections attaching to any human intercourse. To that extent, therefore, it quickly failed to meet the ‘sacralising’ expectations of the fifth-century West. The contrast is with Cassian, who, in spite of apparent deference to the segregated values of the Egyptian desert (as he presented them), developed a view of organized asceticism that made its resources more readily available to the pastoral purposes of the wider Church. (Professor Markus documents the impact of that accomodation, in southern Gaul at least, more fully than I did some fifteen years ago.) It will be clear how important a part such a sub-plot has been made to play in the thesis of the book more generally: it was precisely that shift among ascetics, from alienation to representation, that supposedly made possible a colonisation of the secular world by more radical partisans of the sacred.

The other major contribution of the book is the discussion of ‘conversion’. The author takes welcome issue with Ramsay MacMullen; particularly his Christianizing the Roman Empire. MacMullen simply demands too much — conversion must be ‘either disturbing or incomplete’ (p. 7) — whereas Professor Markus wants substantial areas of life in the converted empire (at least at first) to be neutral, ‘secular’, beyond the range of religious anxiety. Unfortunately, he creates problems of his own, not only in distinguishing what is sacred from what is secular, but by keeping ‘religion’ in some way separate from ‘culture’. One result is to underestimate how early and how thorough was the Christian attempt to distinguish its own ‘culture’ from that of pagans. However, he is right to emphasize the urgency with which Christians distinguished between ‘comfortable’ and ‘authentic’ religion (p. 36) — even if we are not entirely happy with his accompanying suggestion that
ascetics were the most prominent in pushing for the distinction. There may be some future, also, in his espousal of Le Goff's distinction between 'culture folklorique' and 'culture ecclésiastique' (p. 11). The point of those contrasts is that, taken together, they highlight the chief task facing churchmen throughout that period: the task of reaching a wider audience. After all, conversion depended most upon the success of such communication.

The very strengths of the book have already begun to reveal its major flaws. It bears repeating that geographical limitation is a serious shortcoming. As I say, Italy and Africa receive direct attention only in the last chapter. Gaul is restricted largely to the area of Lérinian influence, and little is said of the new forces brought to bear by Frankish settlement. The Italian sections, truncated as they are, say nothing of Ostrogothic developments in the ascetic sphere, or of Benedict! Gregory the Great occupies a wholly sacral world, in spite of being 'God's consul', heavily involved in the administration of estates, and tirelessly devoted to diplomatic relations with Frankish and Lombard dignitaries, and with the Eastern court. Not surprisingly, therefore, Professor Markus is content to suppose that 'Christian discourse shrank to [the] scriptural' (p. 226), overlooking the heavy emphasis on classical and civic ideals, both in the Regula Benedicti and in the Cura pastoralis.

All of which leads us to the biggest difficulty: deciding exactly what was 'drained' from western society, and by whom. Everything depends on the initial definition of the 'secular', since it represents, for the author, that which was subsequently absorbed or discarded. He echoes H.-I. Marrou, referring to 'the loss of a set of institutions and of a culture which had . . . kept its "autonomy"' (p. 16); but the impression actually received is that the Church was at first content to declare many sectors of life beyond its religious concern, and then, by the author's own admission, failed to capture them later within its more special orbit.

The fault lies, I think, in not getting the distinctions right in the first place. There was simply more going on in the Christian empire than either Professor Markus or his favoured writers care to notice. Those predominantly ascetic figures and their episcopal colleagues were, when it came to 'Christianisation', in headlong competition with, for example, the equally sacralising courts of both eastern and western empires, and the often rabidly Arian policies of barbarian settler kings. Above all, it is the Christian laity that receives short shrift in these pages. They may not have been ascetic; but they were not thereby automatically rendered secular or neutral.

Take, for example, the famous pleas of Leo to Attila, 'accompanied by representatives of the local nobility' (p. 126): precisely (for they were, indeed, ranking members of the imperial consistorium); and it is only the
narrowness of Prosper’s viewpoint that encourages us to assume that Leo was the most important member of the delegation. The only other example offered of a more widely imposed sacrality is the letter to Andromachus against the Lupercalia; and, by the author’s admission, that was ‘linked with the uneasy relationship between [the pope] and the Roman aristocracy . . . an episode in a running battle’ (p. 132). Even more important — and again admitted — there is every sign that the battle did not go the pope’s way! This ‘attack . . . on traditions of Roman urban living’ (p. 133) shows just how much ‘secularity’ was alive and well at the end of the fifth century.

All other examples are of attitudes and expectations operating within a narrow circle of writers. Cassian does provide us with a clue to events in a wider world, and hints at the competition experienced by many a churchman. What he made available to the Church, from within the resources of the ascetic movement, was the status and technique attaching to a certain type of teacher. But claiming the right to teach was always an invitation to conflict in the late Roman world. We can take it for granted that, faced with such an ‘ascetic’ pretension, rival claimants to authority — basing their position alternatively on patronage or law — would quickly make their presence felt.

Sure enough, two consequences emerge, neither of them surprising, but both requiring fuller explanation. First, the pastorally oriented churchmen, the new breed of bishops, who did pass through the ascetic milieu, actually preached to the ‘secular’ world in terms that did little to spread specifically ascetic ideals. Caesarius of Arles is the prominent example in the book. What Professor Markus has to admit is that not only is it hard to gauge Caesarius’s success, but also there is little sign that the Gallic church took much notice of such attempts to ‘sacralise’ areas of social life that remained obdurately ‘secular’, at least until the eighth century (p. 208). Second, whatever their degree of ascetic fervour, most Gallic bishops continued to come from the aristocratic elite; and the crucial question, not addressed here, is why that elite, in setting up structures for its ecclesiastical ambitions, chose to approach office by so indirect a route, through monastic communities. Of course, not all religious aristocrats did so; but it is significant (and scarcely enters Professor Markus’s passing treatment of the sixth century) that the thinning of aristocratic ranks in post-Gothic Italy, for example, was a more obvious concomitant of essential change in the complexion of Christian life than was any ascetic challenge to secularity.
REVIEWS

One ends, therefore, with the impression of considerable reflection and learning, supporting detailed sections of great value, together with stimulating asides and conjectures; but all in the service of a general argument far from balanced in its structure, and ultimately impossible to sustain.

P.R.

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Pauline Allen, again in conjunction with Cornelis Datema, has complemented their edition of the Greek text of Leontius’s sermons, which appeared in 1987 in the Corpus Christianorum series graeca. They supply a general introduction of eighteen pages, a translation of each homily, and additional comments and notes in situ. The translations are set out in such a way as to make clear the vivid and constant use of parallels and contrasts, of exclamation, repetition, and apostrophe. The whole provides another fine example of the work we have come to expect from the Byzantina Australiensia.

Leontius offers priceless evidence of the education, temper, and interest of a priest in Constantinople during the final decade of Justinian’s long, momentous, and tragic reign. As always with this sort of material, constant flashes of social colour break through the patina of stylistic habit and of loyalty to past models. The sermons, handled critically, can be made to reveal the experiences, the expectations, and the prejudices of the capital’s citizens. For the delivery of the sermon was the moment in the liturgy when the lives of contemporaries were given their place in the cosmic and symbolic event that the liturgy was designed to make present. Any student intent upon gaining a picture of daily life will very usefully set these texts alongside, say, Malalas or the lives of the saints.

There are two points of special interest. First, the sermons are remarkably dramatic in style. Here is a voice to awaken echoes in the fine structures of T.F. Mathews, The Early Churches of Constantinople. Relationship to audience is crucial for the understanding of any corpus of sermons. In the case of Leontius, ‘dialogue’ is the only word suitable. He engages in a constant conversation; and one can almost hear the people’s reply. One has to be careful, therefore, not to blame him too easily for an apparent