
PAPERBOUNDS

CHANGING IMAGES OF THE FAMILY. Edited by Virginia Tufte and Barbara Myerhoff. Yale, 1981. 403 pp. \$6.95 (cloth, \$25)

What have the decline of the urban café or changes in church seating arrangements to do with the current crisis of the family? More than we might think, according to historians Philippe Ariès and John Demos. Both find that the erosion of larger social institutions has burdened the Western family with so many responsibilities that it cannot help but appear to fail. Other contributors share the editors' concern with images of the family, images that both obscure and contribute to the so-called crisis. Silvia Manning's discussion of Charles Dickens's fiction shows how modern heirs to the Victorian vision of the family's "centrality, intensity, and complexity" still place too much faith in an idealized happy home. Reviewing a number of recent court cases, legal scholar Stephen Morse argues that "traditional family values" have come to conflict with "current conceptions of liberty and autonomy." No mere potpourri, this collection combines a variety of perspectives to show the modern family experiencing not so much a crisis as necessary adjustments to changing times.

THE CULT OF THE SAINTS: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity. By Peter Brown. Univ. of Chicago, 1982. 186 pp. \$5.95

Between the third and sixth centuries, Christians began to venerate their martyrs. British philosopher David Hume, writing in the 1750s, attributed the rise of the cult of the saints to popular superstition, a recrudescence of polytheism, the "vulgar" need to personalize and frag-

ment the abstract God of Christianity. Hume's condescending view shaped the perceptions of succeeding generations of historians. Brown, a historian at the University of California, offers a fresh interpretation. Looking at the upper stratum of late Roman society, he notes that burial customs in pagan times were intensely private; indeed, their privacy was an expression of patrician family pride and autonomy. Early bishops, politically shrewd, invoked martyrs' relics, sacred sites, and saints' festivals in order to relocate burial customs within a more public, Church-dominated sphere. The idea of saints as personal protectors did derive in part from pagan ideas, but from the highest reaches of paganism: the belief in the "invisible companion," the *genius* or *daimon*, who presided over one's soul. More important, the "holy presence" associated with sacred relics and sites provided centers of faith and Church administration in the darkest corners of Syria and Gaul.

VOICES OF MODERN GREECE, Translated and edited by Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherard. Princeton, 1981. 203 pp. \$5.95

Keeley and Sherard, who have been translating modern Greek poetry for over 30 years, have now assembled the best samples from their work—poems by C. P. Cavafy, Angelos Sikelianos, George Seferis, Odysseus Elytis, and Nikos Gatsos. The great patriarch among these is Cavafy (1863–1933), whose spare, ironic poems span classical and modern themes. An elegiac mood prevails in the works of all these poets, a sense of loss perhaps best summed up in a line by poet-diplomat Seferis: *Wherever I travel Greece wounds me.*