

noch den diesen zugrunde liegenden griechischen Wortlaut stets einwandfrei rekonstruiert: Les Sentences de Sextus (NH XII,1), in: Bibliothèque Copte de Nag Hammadi, Section „Textes“ 11 (Quebec 1983) 1–94, besonders S.24, Anm.80. Die Editoren haben gegenüber Chadwick insgesamt 23 überwiegend geringfügige Textänderungen vorgenommen. Sie verfolgen die Tendenz, nach Möglichkeit den von beiden griechischen Handschriften gemeinsam oder sonst den von einer deutlichen Mehrheit von Zeugen gebotenen Text zu übernehmen. Varianten mit offenkundigem biblischem Anklang werden durch sekundäre Anpassung erklärt und deshalb verworfen (Nr. 13, 354, 361). Welchen Beitrag liefert die koptische Übersetzung? An vier Stellen bietet sie zusammen mit anderen Zeugen die von den Herausgebern gegen Chadwick bevorzugte Lesart (Nr. 322, 347, 354, 361). Hinter dem koptischen Text von Spruch 322 vermutet Poirier (S. 61) allerdings einen anderen griechischen Wortlaut, als Edwards und Wild annehmen. Zu Spruch 358 bestätigt die koptische Übersetzung eine von Chadwick angeführte Konjektur von H. Lloyd-Jones. Die von den beiden Herausgebern vorgeschlagene Fassung von Spruch 394 besitzt nach Poirier S. 81 keinen Anhalt im koptischen Text; dieser scheint vielmehr mit dem von Chadwick nach dem Vaticanus und einer syrischen Übersetzung gebotenen Text übereinzustimmen.

Die textkritischen Entscheidungen der Herausgeber sind wenigstens teilweise erwägenswert, doch läßt sich kaum je ein endgültiges Urteil fällen. Der kritische Apparat ist des öfteren durchsichtiger als derjenige Chadwicks, weil die positiven Lesarten verbucht sind. Dagegen war es ungeschickt, die sporadischen Hinweise auf Parallelen und spätere Zitierungen einzelner Sentenzen in den Variantenapparat zu packen. Alles in allem kann die zweisprachige Edition als Lesetext eine nützliche Funktion erfüllen.

Mainz

Gerhard May

Alison Goddard Elliott, *Roads to Paradise: reading the Lives of the early Saints*, University Press of New England 1987. pp. XVI + 244 and 7 illustrations in the text. ISBN 0-87451-389-8.

The triumph of Christianity by the middle of the fourth century A. D., was also the triumph of the early Christian saints and martyrs. Some of the great sermons preached by Augustine in the west and Basil of Caesarea in the east were devoted to the lives of the saints of the heroic age of Christianity before the conversion of Constantine. We learn from Severus of Antioch c. 518 that Basil's orations in honour of the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste and of St. Pamphilus were recited to Christian congregations in Antioch, Berytus and Caesarea in Palestine. In the west, the headstrong St. Eulalia was honoured in Barcelona and Merida, while deeds of the martyrs provided the motifs of mediaeval epics, even such as the *Chanson de Roland*. Veneration of the saints in verse and song provides one of the points of continuity between the world of late antiquity and the European Middle Ages.

Following the lead of Hippolyte Delehaye, *Les Passions des Martyrs et les genres littéraires* (Bruxelles, 1921) the tendency of scholars has been to study the *Acta Martyrum* and Lives of Saints as historical documents, to search for the kernel of actuality behind the legend, and to trace the development of stories of saints and martyrs through various stages from historical narrative, to epic recital, and finally to the fanciful and legendary. There is much to be said for this approach. The story of George of Cappadocia for instance, seems to indicate how a comparatively short and concise narrative, such as contained in the pages found by the reviewer on the floor of the cathedral at Q'asr Ibrim in Egyptian Nubia, can develop into the elaborate tales replete with miraculous events that filled the *Life* of the saint in the Byzantine empire in later centuries.

The author's approach, however, is different. A mediaevalist as well as a classicist, she puts herself in the place of the readers of these Lives. She points out that mediaeval man was not distressed at their lack of historical accuracy, and further, that of he expected them to conform to a pattern which contained the real message behind the story. The purposes of hagiography were celebration of the virtues of the saint and edification of the hearers.



She applies this formula first to the *Acta Martyrum* and then to the lives of ascetics of the fourth to the sixth centuries. It is more successful with the latter. Rightly, the author speaks of the „transition from the ideal of physical martyrdom to spiritual — from martyr to monk“ (p. 44), and places its beginning before the end of the Great Persecution. She follows her monastic heroes, in particular Antony, Onufrius and Paphnutius through their respective spiritual journeys toward fulfilment and Paradise regained. We see how their values, from the choice of a tomb or the desert for their dwelling, were intended to demonstrate the rejection of the hitherto accepted values of the city. Their airless dwellings symbolised their downward journey to death and burial, and their general filth and squalor their rejection of civilisation. The desert was the place for man to recover by ascetic practices and sexual abstinence his true nature which had been obscured and even lost at the Fall.

Particularly interesting are the author's explanations why animals, especially lions, should figure so prominently in the Lives of Saints. The monks in abandoning civilisation reduced themselves voluntarily to the state of wild animals. The latter were seen therefore as friends and not as enemies as they had been to pagan provincials. The beasts responded by refusing to harm the saint. As John Moschus (c. 620) explained, the lion had no rational soul, but God wished to glorify those who glorify Him and show how beasts obeyed the first man before he disobeyed God's command. Perhaps there is here an underlying explanation for the *peaceful* hunting scenes that provide the theme of many early Christian mosaics.

The early chapters devoted to *Acta Martyrum* are less successful. Granted these *Acta* always contain „the climactic confrontation“ between the martyr and his judge, representing the powers of the Spirit and Satan respectively, the writers of the *Acta* also believed they were recording events. Little would have been gained by a survivor of the martyrdoms of Lyons in 177 writing a long epic tale with scant concern for the truth, to the Churches far away in Asia and Phrygia (probably the mother-Churches of many of the victims). These wanted to know what happened and how their friends there behaved in face of temptation and torture. The author needed more acquaintance with the Jewish and early Christian background to the historical *Acta* than she could claim to possess.

Alison Elliott wrote under the shadow of grave illness to which she finally succumbed in September 1984. Her study is not only a fine, scholarly work providing many unexpected insights and explanations regarding the style and content of the Lives of the Saints. It is also a testimony to her own ascent and endurance to the end.

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Clare Stancliffe, *St Martin and his Hagiographer. History and Miracle in Sulpicius Severus*. Oxford (Clarendon Press) 1983. XV — 396 p. Deux cartes.

Il était difficile de faire un livre neuf sur S. Martin tant la question martinienne a été débattue depuis le XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle au moins (Lenain de Tillemont) jusqu'aux XIX<sup>e</sup> et XX<sup>e</sup> siècles. Comment échapper aux positions littéraires et aux analyses historiques de J. Fontaine, auteur récent d'une monumentale édition de la *Vita Martini* en trois volumes (collection Sources Chrétiennes, 1967—69)? Comme Sulpice Sévère est moins connu et ses autres oeuvres moins étudiées, Cl. Stancliffe a cherché à écrire une oeuvre d'ensemble sur le héros et l'écrivain, qui récupère certaines positions de E. Ch. Babut, posant la question qui avait intrigué ce dernier: pourquoi un personnage aussi illustre que Martin a-t-il rencontré de son temps une telle opposition qui subsiste encore aujourd'hui chez certains de ceux qui l'étudient? Babut répondait en 1912 dans son *Saint Martin de Tours* que Martin n'était au fond qu'un personnage médiocre, peu connu, controversé par sa marginalité; il n'aurait dû sa célébrité posthume qu'au talent de son biographe: Sulpice défendait des idées personnelles et utilisait Martin comme support de ses thèses. Ce faisant, Babut s'inscrivait dans le courant positiviste qui avait animé nombre d'historiens français du début du siècle. Son livre provoqua une vive réaction