

account deviate from known versions of the Valentinian system; Mahé's commentary is a good starting point for further study.

Funk and Mahé's edition also provides a superior text of the liturgical fragments (anointing, baptism and eucharist) that succeed *A Valentinian exposition* in the codex. Mahé argues confidently for the Valentinian character of these texts. Personally, I see no compelling indication that these texts are Valentinian, though in view of the context of their transmission as well as their contents this remains a quite likely assumption.

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Die Nag-Hammadi-Schriften in der Literatur- und Theologiegeschichte des frühen Christentums. Edited by Jens Schröter and Konrad Schwarz (with Clarissa Paul). (Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum, 106.) Pp. x + 319 incl. 1 table. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017. €89 (paper). 978 3 16 155365 3; 1436 3003.

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This volume is based on papers delivered at a conference in October 2015 at the Theological Faculty of the Humboldt University of Berlin, which commemorated the seventieth anniversary of the discovery of thirteen Coptic codices near Nag Hammadi. Each essay impressively demonstrates how particular texts from the Nag Hammadi codices contribute to our understanding of early Christian literature and theology. Many of the essays accomplish this goal by analysing genre classifications and interpreting the texts in relation to other Jewish, early Christian and Gnostic literature.

Jens Schröter, 'Einleitung' (pp. 1–13), provides a thorough overview of the variegated texts and genres in the Nag Hammadi codices, which problematises a direct alignment with the New Testament genres of Gospel, Epistle, Acts and Apocalypse. Christoph Marksches, 'Offene Fragen zur historischen und literaturgeschichtlichen Einordnung der Nag-Hammadi-Schriften' (pp. 15–35), raises questions about the delimitation of 'early Christianity', the placement of the Nag Hammadi codices within this timeframe, the original language and dates of particular texts and the problematic categorisation of genre. John D. Turner, 'The reception and transformation of philosophical literary genres in the Nag Hammadi writings' (pp. 37–66), shows that the *Apocryphon of John*, *Zostrianos*, *Allogenes*, and *Marsanes* were dependent on Platonic dialogues, which were transformed into apocalyptic otherworldly journeys, or appropriated to characterise knowledge of a transcendent reality.

The following three essays discuss apocalypses. Gregor Wurst, 'Apokalypsen in den Nag-Hammadi-Codices' (pp. 69–78), identifies the *Apocalypse of Paul*, *Apocalypse of Adam* and *Apocalypse of Peter* as apocalypses, not because of their titles, but rather their similar content – a heavenly being reveals a transcendental message to a human recipient. Jaan Lahe, 'Die Apokalypse des Adam als ein Werk am Rande der Theologie- und Literaturgeschichte des frühen Christentums' (pp. 79–96), concludes that the *Apocalypse of Adam* is a Gnostic, non-Christian, work with an Old Testament and Jewish background, but its thematic parallels with Christian apocalypses reveals its importance for understanding

early Christian literature and theology. Dylan M. Burns, 'Is the *Apocalypse of Paul* a Valentinian apocalypse? Pseudepigraphy and group definition in NHC V, 2' (pp. 97–112), questions that the Valentinians composed pseudepigraphic apocalypses, since these groups were primarily situated around living authorities who governed the correct interpretation of Scripture.

Three essays are focused on mythological tractates. Nicola Denzey Lewis, 'Mythological treatises in the Nag Hammadi codices' (pp. 115–132), examines the creation myths in the *Apocryphon of John*, *Hypostasis of the Archons* and *On the origin of the world*, critiques the category of 'mythological treatise' (since it is not a true literary genre) and concludes that the myths in these documents should be understood as a scientific rationalisation of the cosmos based on interpretations of Genesis. Ursula Ulrike Kaiser, "'Und sie wurde unter ihren Händen ein Baum" (HA, NHC II,4 p. 89,26f.): die Hypostase der Archonten und die antike Mythologie' (pp. 133–40), draws parallels between the myth in the *Hypostasis of the Archons* and Genesis i–vi, Apollo and Daphne, Pan and Syrinx, and Typhon. Karen L. King, 'The *Apocryphon of John*: genre and Christian re-making of the world' (pp. 141–60), examines the attribution practices, generic complexity and truth-effects of the *Apocryphon of John* and Revelation: John is a prophet who receives direct revelation that is inscribed in a book; both mix multiple genres (vision, dialogue, narrative); and both base the authority of their texts on divine revelation.

Two essays address topics in liturgical texts. Hugo Lundhaug, 'Prayer in the Nag Hammadi codices' (pp. 163–183), draws comparisons with 'orthodox' prayers – silent and audible, personal and liturgical – in fourth- and fifth-century Egyptian monasticism. Antti Marjanen, 'Baptism in the *Holy Book of the Great Invisible Spirit* (NHC III, 2 and IV, 2)' (pp. 185–95), investigates the origin, rite, administrator, prerequisites, frequency of occurrence and meaning of baptism in this text, concluding that it provides both eternal salvation and initiation into a community.

The following four essays examine Gospels. Simon Gathercole, 'The Nag Hammadi Gospels' (pp. 199–218), explores the texts that are labelled Gospels (*Gospel of Thomas*, *Gospel of Philip*, *Gospel of the Egyptians* and the *Gospel of Truth*), not to decipher their cohesiveness as a genre, but rather their overall theological message that focuses on Jesus and his role in salvation. Paul-Hubert Poirier, 'From 1897 to 2015: some aspects of the research on the *Gospel according to Thomas*' (pp. 219–32), recounts the discovery and publication of the Greek fragments, the Coptic manuscript, its dating and alleged relationship with Gnosticism. Katrine Brix, 'The *Gospel of Truth*' (pp. 233–47), treats this text as a meditation that entices the reader to an imaginary eating of Jesus in order to obtain union with the divine mind. Judith Hartenstein, 'Die Weisheit Jesu Christi (SJC)' (pp. 249–64), shows that this dialogue Gospel, based on *Eugnostos*, with parallels to Matthew and *Acts of Paul and Thecla*, assembles literary elements and theological ideas to reveal the salvific message of God's actions through Jesus.

The final two essays explore theological and philosophical tractates. Einar Thomassen, 'Theological and philosophical treatises in the Nag Hammadi codices' (pp. 267–80), notes how treatises could be framed and adapted to produce revelatory letters (*Letter to Rheginus* [*Treatise on the Resurrection*]; *Eugnostos*) or a revelation dialogue (*Apocryphon of John*), although texts like

Hypostasis of the Archons and *On the origin of the world* do not appear to have been transformed in this way. Uwe-Karsten Plisch, 'Zostrianus, der philosophisch orientierte Sethianismus und das Gebet des Seth' (pp. 281–93), discusses the reception of *Zostrianos* in Plotinus and its relationship to the Prayer of Seth (P. Berol. 17207), along with Sethian prayers also documented in *Zostrianos*, *Allogenes* and the *Three steles of Seth*.

Overall, this is an excellent collection of essays by numerous preeminent scholars, which provide insightful conclusions about specific texts and topics. One primary concern throughout the volume is to question, critique and reformulate genre-based categorisations of these works. This is extremely useful; the Nag Hammadi codices cannot be forced into traditional canonical genres, but rather the definitions of particular genres must also incorporate the Nag Hammadi codices (and other apocryphal texts) in order to understand how these texts functioned as literature and influenced theological developments in early Christianity.

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Ignatius of Antioch and the Arian controversy. By Paul R. Gilliam III. (Supplements to *Vigiliae Christianae*, 140.) Pp. xii + 258 incl. 2 tables. Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2017. €120. 978 90 04 34287 3

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Ignatian studies since Ussher and Voss have been preoccupied with the issue of the authenticity of the Middle Recension. The expansion of those seven letters widely regarded as genuine, together with six, forged, others, are only in evidence post-Eusebius, whose testimony is only to the Middle Recension. We no longer regard these as distractions deflecting us from the Ignatius of history: the large number of manuscripts often containing both Middle and Long Recensions, with Syriac, Armenian and Arabic versions, are suggestive of a considerable reception history that deserves study in its own right.

Gilliam locates that history in the so-called 'Arian' debate in the fourth century: his highly original argument focuses upon the way in which (some) variant readings in the manuscript tradition of the Middle Recension clearly originate in the intention of the author of the Long Recension to modify second-century theology in the light of the controversy between the various groups at that time. The edition of Funk, *Patres apostolici*, 2 along with that of Lightfoot, sought to establish, respectively, Apollinarian or Arian (Eustachian) elements in the light of which some of the language of the Middle Recension was changed. But Gilliam is claiming more. His textual argument is that the complex textual history of variants in the manuscript tradition and versions shows that we have not established an uncontaminated text of the Middle Recension of which the Long Recension represents the contaminated version. Textual critics themselves now find such an approach to textual criticism inadequate: Elliot advocated, with Gilliam's approval, a thorough-going eclecticism, as 'the method that allows internal considerations for a reading's originality to be given priority over documentary considerations' (p. 14).