

the texts into an Early Phase (up to Basil's death), Middle Phase (AD 378–387), and Late Phase (AD 387–394) and gives references to secondary scholarship. The arguments given do not establish as tidy a chronology as Cadenhead suggests: for example, the thematic similarity between works does not entail their chronological proximity, and reference to Ariens does not entail a date just prior to the Council of Constantinople. Many works that he fixes in one of his periods should be viewed as simply undatable. But suppose we grant the chronology, at least in certain secure cases, such as *On Virginity* (Early Phase), *Life of Macrina* (likely Middle Phase), and *Homilies on the Song of Songs* (Late Phase). To get the idea of intellectual development, we need changing ideas across these works. Even so, the mere presence of such differences does not require us to conclude that there is *development*—certainly not in the strong sense entailed by Cadenhead's organic metaphor of maturation. Numerous differences between Gregory's texts are explicable simply by referring to their respective rhetorical and topical aims; alternatively, one might say that he, in fact, changed his mind on some issue without conceding that he *should have*. Is Gregory's late theory of gender, as present in the *Homilies on the Song of Songs*, a result of development? The simpler explanation would say that the gendered figure of the Bride in that biblical text, rather than intellectual development, leads Gregory to see a feminizing transformation there and not elsewhere.

Theological retrievals of patristic texts always run the risk of sanitizing messy bodies of literature. Cadenhead's learned study largely avoids that pitfall. While it might not convince as a historical reconstruction, it gives theologically minded readers of Gregory a sense of his complex and dynamic writings on gender and desire, and it earnestly attempts to evaluate them without over-determination from ancient philosophy or the theoretical frameworks of Jung, Foucault, or Butler.

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doi:10.1017/S000964072100086X

***Caught in Translation: Studies on Versions of Late-Antique Christian Literature.*** Edited by Madalina Toca and Dan Batovici. Texts and Studies in Eastern Christianity 17. Leiden: Brill, 2020. viii + 330 pp. €169.00; \$203.00 hardcover.

The seventeenth volume of the Brill's series Texts and Studies in Eastern Christianity fits well into its program—to “cover the Eastern Orthodox, Oriental Orthodox and Eastern Catholic traditions from the early through the contemporary period” (ii). Entitled *Caught in Translation: Studies on Versions of Late Antique Christian Literature* and edited by Madalina Toca and Dan Batovici (both KU Leuven), the publication aims to showcase “various aspects of the transmission of translated patristic works (broadly conceived) in Late Antiquity and beyond” and to set in dialogue “contributions that deal with translations into Latin, Syriac, Armenian, Georgian, Coptic, Old Nubian, Old Slavonic, Sogdian, Arabic and Ethiopic” (2). The publication originates from a workshop held during the European Association for the Study of Religion Annual Conference (Leuven, 2017). Editors realize an essentially

“propaedeutical and exploratory” character of their endeavor and hope that joined efforts of contributors help “to identify and to address in a collaborative environment the range of problems and approaches involved in dealing with the reception of Christian literature across various languages” (2).

The volume consists of ten articles by European-based scholars exploring the questions related to cross-lingual transformations, receptions, and multistage adaptations of texts and corpora representing various early Christian traditions. The research papers are supplemented by two source publications—newly discovered “A Fourth Ethiopic Witness of the *Shepherd of Hermas*” by Ted M. Erho (a complete transcription of the manuscript) and the Arabic translation of Ps.-Dionysian *On the Divine Names* 4.18–35 by the late tenth- and early eleventh-century Melkite translator Ibrāhīm ibn Yuḥannā al-Anṭāki by Samuel Noble (a critical edition and an English translation). The contributions are preceded by a rather brief introduction that states the purpose of publication, provides a paragraph-long summary of each article (a great reference tool, especially for readers interested in quick updates on the new developments in their fields), and outlines some common observations on the study of patristic translations. The manuscript index as well as the indexes of modern authors, of ancient sources, and of people, subjects, and places help one navigate the diverse collection.

The article contributions deal with: Latin and Oriental translations of the Ps.-Dionysian *Epistola de morte apostolorum* by Caroline Macé and Michael Muthreich; the Armenian *Corpus Chrysostomicum* by Emilio Bonfiglio; the Armenian translations of Jacob of Serugh by Andy Hilken; an anonymous text from Sogdian Ms. E27 identified as excerpts from Isaac of Nineveh’s *Gnostic Chapters* by Adrian Pirtea; the Syriac receptions of Gregory of Nyssa’s *Homilies on the Song of Songs* by Marion Prag; newly identified Syriac witnesses of the “canonical selection” of epistles of Ignatius of Antioch by Dan Batovici; the Latin manuscripts containing collections of Isidore of Pelusium’s letters by Madalina Toca; the late medieval Slavonic collection *Šestodnevnik* (*Hexameron*), which is the translation of corresponding Greek texts authored by Basil of Caesarea and Gregory of Nyssa, by Lara Sels; Nag Hammadi reception of the Enoch textual tradition and its relationship with the Greek translation of the *First Book of Enoch* by Francesco Berno; and the Greek to Old Nubian translation of Ps.-Chrysostom’s *In venerabilem crucem sermo* by Vincent W. J. van Gerven Oei and Alexandros Tsakos.

The volume is truly multidisciplinary. The case studies painstakingly trace transformations of texts and paratextual features across several linguistic and confessional boundaries and pay meticulous attention to the materiality of translations. The words “Late Antique” in the title of the volume should not mislead those interested in later medieval periods, since the upper chronological limit is generously set (the thirteenth century in the case of certain Armenian translations; the fourteenth century for the Slavonic *Šestodnevnik*).

One cannot but welcome the appearance of another much-needed contribution advancing the field of translation studies in Christian late antiquity, especially the one having such a pronounced emphasis on Oriental traditions. Every translation—patristic works and beyond—is by necessity and by definition an interpretation. Every ancient and medieval translation includes exegetical choices as for what to translate, how to translate, how to manuscript-package a translation, how to consume, further transmit, and interact with a newly translated text, and how to contextualize it within the existing body of literature. The term “versions” used in the title, in the blurb, and widely throughout the book is a methodological clue and should not be

taken lightly as a simple reference to the multiple translations in existence. The term is ultimately indicative of the fact that, in studying ancient Christian literature, one does not study *the* text and *its* translations but synchronic and diachronic *versions*, whose quintessential fluidity is the *conditio sine qua non*; and that the cumulative dynamic textual legacy of early Christian traditions is much more rhizomatic and heteroglossic than one may have assumed.

While the reader eventually acquires a general understanding of this fluidity and the pertaining methodological issues by going through the publication article by article, the volume would have greatly benefitted from having either a more extended introduction or a concluding synthetic essay that would go beyond the level of empirical observations and would genuinely bridge various fields of early Christian studies, on the one hand, and theories and approaches that have been appearing in the field of translation studies in recent years, on the other hand (for example, Karen Emmerich's *Literary Translation and the Making of Originals* [Bloomsbury Academic, 2017]). The final two-page section in the introduction meant to outline some common themes in the study of patristic translations does not fully unlock the potential of the volume, and a more explicit fusion of case study mosaic remains a *desideratum*. Of course, the sheer variety of topics, approaches, and problems covered in the volume may be intimidating for anyone attempting to pen a proposed piece, but, after all, the purpose was to set in dialogue unfortunately isolated fields due to the high degree of language specialization. I assume such a real-life dialogue indeed took place during the workshop leading to the publication, but for the readers of the book it remains behind the scenes.

Otherwise, the volume offers a valuable collection of articles representing the cutting-edge scholarship in the area, introduces several previously unknown sources and manuscripts, and is a much-needed "step for a corpus-based versional project over the following years" (2).

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doi:10.1017/S0009640721000871

***The Song of Songs: A Biography.* By Ilana Pardes. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2019. 296 pp. \$24.95 hardcover.**

To many modern readers, the Song of Songs is an enigma. It is a work of unabashed eroticism, with no explicit references to God or the Israelite cult, and yet it is counted among the books of the Hebrew Bible. However, the Song was not always seen as enigmatic. Jews and Christians in the ancient and medieval worlds were enthralled with this text, treating it as pressingly relevant to religious life. Ilana Pardes's history of the Song, published as part of the Lives of Great Religious Books series, offers readers a new way of making sense of the text of the Song and its many afterlives. It is a whirlwind tour from ancient Palestine to modern America, which traces out the many branches of the Song's influence. Pardes introduces us to Amoraic and Tannaitic Rabbis, medieval poets and kabbalists, cloistered monks, Enlightenment scholars, and American writers. Covering such a diversity of sources is a signal achievement. And she brings her