All authors associate the tri-apsidal layout with pilgrimage, acknowledging that in the absence in many cases of particular church furniture that can be attributed to a specific ceremony, it is impossible to be more specific. There must have been the cult of saints and the stationary liturgy. In quite a number of tri-apsidal churches there are good indications of the cult of saints in the lateral apses. However, in Antiochene and Apamene, prior to the occurrence of the tri-apsidal *chevet*, the cult of saints was held in one of the lateral chambers flanking the apse. Hence, a tri-apsidal layout was not a pre-requisite for attracting pilgrims in that it added foci for the cult of saints. An underground crypt was another arrangement.

A tri-apsidal *chevet* with its wall frescos and mosaics was a far more impressive manifestation of the grandeur of the Christian Church than a mono-apsidal one, thus enhancing a sense of devotion among believers.

Altogether, we have here a useful *Dossier* for the study of the early Christian churches of the Eastern Mediterranean.

HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM JOSEPH PATRICH

Das Christentum im frühen Europa. Diskurse – Tendenzen – Entscheidungen. Edited by Uta Heil. (Millennium-Studien, 75.) Pp. x + 508 incl. 2 colour ills and 2 tables. Berlin–Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2019. €119.95. 978 3 11 064272 8

JEH (72) 2021; doi:10.1017/S0022046921000282

This very rewarding collection seeks to draw attention to the development of Christianity in the Latin West during the fifth to seventh centuries ('Europe' in the title seems to have been used in a restricted sense). The avowed aim is to avoid older views of a 'germanisation' of the Church and of a decline in theological level. As in many areas of late antiquity and the early Middle Ages we are better at seeing the limits of the old master narratives than at substituting new ones for them, and this collection is no exception. Even so, the volume shows very well how this period is an important chain in the transmission and reconfiguration of theological ideas and Christian practice from antiquity to the Middle Ages. The chapters, covering a wide array of subfields, are all of a high level and most offer new perspectives on long-standing issues. In the first chapter W. Pohl challenges the notion that 'universal Christianity' was incompatible with ethnic diversity. In fact, Christian texts helped to shape ethnic kingship. In the Bible Roman usage to indicate foreign kings as kings of a people was adopted (Jesus as 'king of Jews'). The idea of a covenant between God and (Jewish) nation could be transferred to other nations. F. Schulz shows how the notions *oriens* and *occidens* were strategically employed by Augustine and Innocent I. In a lucid synthesis, C. Cardelle de Hartmann underscores how the Latin Fathers continued to defend traditional linguistic norms, allowing for some exceptions (including biblical language). C. Weidmann warns against understanding pseudepigraphy in the context of patristic sermons as meaning 'intentional forgery'. M. Vessey continues his exploration of Latin Christian literature, now by focusing on Sidonius Apollinaris. He argues that the codex form influenced Sidonius' self-presentation as a bishop in his letter collection. Further it may also have triggered the late antique habit of books being corrected by other individuals than the author,

who left their subscription in the manuscript. This effectively blurred the line between corrector and author. Y. Hen emphasises the importance of debate and dialogue in the early Middle Ages, whilst van Renswoude points to classical rhetoric as shaping early medieval invective. R. Steinacher argues that Vandal rulers followed the precedent of their Roman predecessors in their dealing with the Catholic Church, now degraded to a heresy. At the same time, changing political conditions (appeasement of Vandal Homoians and the need to maintain a relationship with the Empire) led to a zig-zag course in dealing with North-African Catholics. U. Heil and C. Scheerer provide what will be the definitive analysis of the so-called *Dicta regis Thrasamundi*, a work that refutes a Catholic statement of faith and is in turn preserved in a refutation by Fulgentius. Demonstrating the level of theological reflection in the document, they shed doubt on the authorship of Thrasamund and also question that the text originated in a debate at court, as Fulgentius pretends. B. Gleede shows that Fulgentius was reasonably well-informed about neochalcedonian theology but hardly engaged with it. For him Augustine and Rome were the torchbearers of orthodoxy. The low level of knowledge of the Council of Chalcedon in the fifth-century West is illustrated by J.-M. Kötter, drawing on three chronicles from that period. I. Wood shows how the Burgundian territory was a hotbed for theological debate, partly because of the educational level of its ruler Gundobad (d. 516). He also suggests that Catholicism was better rooted in the ruling family than usually assumed and that Homoian Arianism was not the religion of the gens, as is often presumed. H. Brennecke explores the possibility that the so-called Athanasium, a confession of faith, was drawn up in Visigothic Spain after the conversion of Reccarred in 587 – and not in Gaul as usually presumed. R. Price argues that the ecumenical councils effectively imposed the doctrines defended by Rome onto the Greek churches. G. Stemberger makes the most of the little evidence we have for Judaism in Gaul in the sixth century. The few sources we have suggest the familiar pattern of Jews and Christians living together in fairly close contact, with flash points of conflict, such as mass baptism in Clermont in 576. W. Drews seeks to contextualise the anti-judaic treatises of Visigothic Spain, highlighting their catechetic purpose. At the same time, the sacralisation of kingship in Spain led to the Jews becoming theological and political adversaries. W. Kinzig shows in a masterly way how little we know about the ways in which the faith was taught in this period and what role was played by confessions of faith. In the wake of the spread of child baptism, formulaic repetition of basic knowledge seems to have sufficed. A. Weckwerth shows how the language of liturgy was influenced by Roman sacred vocabulary and the language of praise. In the last paper, E. Rose emphasises the continued role of the laity in eucharistic celebration, arguing against the usual narrative of a 'clericalisation' of the mass in this period. Different readers will take home different things from this rich but varied set of papers. Unsurprisingly in the light of the collection's aim of counteracting earlier emphasis on rupture, continuity is central to most chapters, regarding, for example, language and rhetoric, the culture of theological debate and argument, the role of the people, and the politics of religion. Change is mostly incremental rather than abrupt, and often spurred by circumstances. Several chapters also illustrate well the increasing gap between East and West. This did not

necessarily mean that one was not informed about what the other side was doing, but rather that it was considered not relevant or important. Finally, the volume counsels well against the easy identification of the difference between Roman and barbarian with that between Nicene and Homoian faith. This is a collection that deserves a wide readership.

GHENT UNIVERSITY PETER VAN NUFFELEN

Conflict and negotiation in the Early Church. Letters from late antiquity, translated from the Greek, Latin and Syriac. Edited by Bronwen Neil and Pauline Allen. Pp. xviii + 270 incl. 1 map. Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2020. $75. 978 0 8132 3277 5

JEH (72) 2021; doi:10.1017/S0022046921000452

This handsome volume presents over forty episcopal letters, many translated into English for the first time, from the twilight years of the eastern Roman Empire. Neil and Allen are to be commended for having marshalled the material so carefully, and for their lucid introductions to each tranche of correspondence. The letters all date from between AD 500 and 700, and have been organised into three broad categories: first, those dealing with the conclusion to the Acacian schism (negotiated by Hormisdas of Rome in 519); secondly, letters detailing conflicts within the anti-Chalcedonian Churches in Syria and Egypt during the sixth century; thirdly, letters from a range of participants in the monoenergist and monothelite controversies in the seventh century. As Neil and Allen rightly note, these sources offer a valuable window onto the ways in which ecclesial disagreements were variously provoked or soothed, claims to episcopal authority were expressed or challenged, and rhetorical strategies of persuasion or threat were deployed (especially between Rome and Constantinople). The letters also allow for some sophisticated analysis of episcopal networks of communication and support (building, for instance, on Adam Schor's work in *Theodoret's people*, Berkeley–Los Angeles 2011). There are, admittedly, some significant limits to what the letters can reveal. Their episcopal authors would have conveyed some (often the most sensitive) instructions or opinions personally through the letter carrier, rather than committing them to the written record. Also, the collections in which the letters have been preserved (for instance, the *Collectio Avellana* in the case of Hormisdas's correspondence) are themselves particular selections shaped by later political and ecclesiastical agendas. None the less, there are all sorts of fascinating details to uncover here. The anti-Chalcedonian material is especially compelling, since it reveals, warts and all, how these Churches (often portrayed as a monolithic miaphysite bloc) were themselves riven by all sorts of doctrinal disagreements: the corruptibility or incorruptibility of Christ's body, whether Jesus was ignorant in some earthly matters (for Jesus asks of Lazarus, 'Where have you laid him?'), and the spectre of tritheism in delineating the hypostatic distinctions in the Godhead. Even more importantly, the Council of Chalcedon (451) casts its long and dark shadow across almost all the letters in Neil and Allen's book. It is remarkable how many parties choose to establish their orthodox credentials by narrating distinct conciliar genealogies, tracing the golden thread of pure doctrine through a particular selection of councils. Some bishops include Chalcedon in their narratives