

tions, such as the Greeks' Apollo-Helios or the Egyptians' Besas-Osiris; by 'contact' between different peoples, such as Hermes-Thoth. Thirdly, we witness an assimilation process between polytheistic and monotheistic systems. Any divinity is ultimately assimilated to the Judaeo-Christian god, in the secret name Iao-Sabaoth-Adonais and its megatheistic nature.

Fundamental ideas are treated in this book, which in my opinion opens new horizons in the study of ancient magic: the essential connection between the individual and the divine, parallel to mystery trends such as the Chaldean Oracles, Dionysian Orphism or Neoplatonist theurgy, and the transcendent plurality of the 'one-ness' that the cosmos is, which also the *Corpus Hermeticum*, the *Nag Hammadi Library* and Neoplatonist philosophy transmit. They reflect the importance of these texts, found by chance as waste material, as direct testimonies of the mystical procedures of the time, connecting the smallest part, the individual, to the totality.

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LITWA (M.D.) *Refutation of All Heresies: Translated with an Introduction and Notes* (Writings from the Graeco-Roman World 40). Atlanta: SBL Press, 2016. Pp. lix + 824. \$99.95. 9780884140856.  
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Which early Christian heresy was based on the teachings of the Presocratic philosopher Heraclitus? Why did Simon Magus claim that his companion was a reincarnation of Helen of Troy? How did ancient magicians trick sheep into cutting off their own heads? Answers to all these questions, as well as many others, appear in the *Refutation of All Heresies*, an anonymous Greek text in ten books, probably written sometime in the third decade of the third century and traditionally attributed to a certain 'Hippolytus'. Its author, who claimed episcopal authority at Rome, set out to refute a great range of different Christian individuals and groups which he regarded as heretical, running all the way down to Callistus, the recently deceased bishop of the Imperial capital. His methodology was not only to construct genealogies, demonstrating the development of these erroneous beliefs, but also to accuse his opponents of plagiarism by revealing how they

had copied ideas and practices from pagan ritual, philosophy and magic. For this reason, he began his work with an account of these topics across the first four books, of which books 2 and 3 are sadly lost, before starting his refutation of heresies in book 5.

Litwa's new version of this expansive handbook seeks to make it much more accessible to a wider audience, providing both a Greek text and also a facing English translation, the first to be published in almost a century. There is also a fulsome introduction outlining the text's thesis, methodology and audience, as well as its similarity to earlier Christian literature on this subject, although Litwa's main focus is on the thorny issue of authorship. In an extensive review of earlier scholarship, together with the limited available evidence, he argues persuasively against attributing the text to any third-century figure called Hippolytus or to any of the other named individuals who have been suggested over the years, instead concluding that it should remain anonymous. The introduction also discusses the textual problems with the single manuscript (P) of books 4–10 and the shortcomings of the critical editions by Paul Wendland (Leipzig 1916) and Miroslav Marcovich (Berlin 1986). Litwa judges the latter to be far too interventionist and driven by a '*libido emendationis*' (ix), making it necessary to produce his own version with its own methodology: 'What is required is a new text, one that retains Marcovich's helpful and plausible emendations while discarding those that are speculative, decorative, and unnecessary. I have attempted to provide such an edition here. In text-critical decisions, there is a general and simple rule followed throughout: where the text of P makes adequate grammatical and logical sense, it stands' (xxxii). This practical approach results in a good text which improves on Marcovich's edition, although it is a shame that there is no *apparatus criticus* included. Litwa does employ angle brackets to indicate words that have been added to the text, as well as using footnotes to discuss where he has accepted significant emendations suggested by other scholars, including Marcovich. Nonetheless, it would have been useful at least to include an appendix listing variations between the texts of Wendland, Marcovich and Litwa, even if this might have been rather extensive. As it is, this volume can undoubtedly be said to make a significant contribution to our understanding of the work, but cannot quite claim a status as the new standard edition.

The new translation is, however, likely to be the reason why most readers are drawn to this book, particularly if they are students. While it is always possible to find points of disagreement in a work of this length, Litwa has produced a very clear piece of English prose overall, bringing out the sense of the Greek text fluently without departing too far from the original sentence structure. He also provides extensive notes, focusing particularly on identifying quotations, allusions and parallel passages in other ancient texts, as well as supplying a number of references to relevant scholarship on individual concepts and terms. There are also explanations of a number of the text's diverse topics including figures from Greek myth, Pythagorean numerology and astronomical distances, although at times there could have been a bit more help in interpreting the meaning of difficult and obscure passages, such as the account of the anatomy of the brain at 4.51.10–13, especially for those unfamiliar with some of the concepts involved. Nonetheless, this impressive piece of scholarship is certainly successful in making an easily accessible and up-to-date version of this fascinating text available to a wide readership. There has recently been an upsurge of interest in heresiology itself as a form of literature, rather than merely a medium for the transmission of (often highly dubious) information about heretical sects. As Litwa states in his preface, it is hoped that this new edition and translation will help to advance this trend and make this treatise more of an object of study in its own right.

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**BYZANTINE  
 AND MODERN GREEK STUDIES**

KALDELLIS (A.) **Byzantine Readings of Ancient Historians: Texts in Translation, with Introductions and Notes.** London and New York: Routledge, 2015. Pp. vi + 188. \$120. 9780415732321.

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In this book Kaldellis provides translations, along with introductions and notes, of a broad variety of ninth- to 15th-century Byzantine texts (scholia, commentaries, poems, epigrams, essays) that engage with Greek historians. The seven chapters demonstrate an impressive array of ways in which Byzantine intellectuals read, used, engaged in a dialogue with and reacted and responded to ancient historiography.

In chapter 1 Kaldellis discusses the manifold levels of meaning of references to Xenophon and his work in a poem dedicated to the emperor Leon VI. The complex composition of the poem and use of Xenophon 'called on the reader to go beyond the text, recombining its terms so as to grasp a nuanced contemporary message' (32). Chapter 2 looks at classical allusions in the poem following the preface of the *Excerpta Historica* of Konstantinos VII Porphyrogenetos – a monumental collection of passages from around 30 historians divided in 53 thematically arranged volumes and an invaluable resource for ancient and late antique historians now lost. Chapter 3 focuses on the scholia on the manuscript of Zosimos' *New History*, an anti-Christian work that was preserved in order to be refuted, because Zosimos' arguments for paganism were so weak and could help the Byzantines defend Christianity. Tzetzes' scholia on Thucydides (chapter 4) – including calling his style obscure and 'wooden' – stand out because it was quite unusual to attack Thucydides, when he was widely considered as a model of Attic style in Byzantium.

The particular interests and tastes of the Byzantines decided what would survive of Diodoros' *Bibliothēke* (chapter 5). Kaldellis' selection of scholia shows that different aspects of Diodoros' work appealed to different readers. One scholiast in particular, who is very likely the historian Niketas Choniates, saw resonances between Diodoros' narrative and his contemporary world, and used Diodoros' work to comment on contemporary reality, to show the decline of Byzantium in his own times and to sharpen his often ironic take on events – a practice also seen in Choniates' use of classical