BYZANTINE ANTI-JUDAISM

A. KÜLZER: *Disputationes Graecae contra Iudaeos. Untersuchungen zur byzantinischen Antijüdischen Dialogliteratur und ihrem Judenbild*. Pp. 400. Stuttgart and Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1999. Cased. ISBN: 3-519-07741-8.

This detailed and informative survey of Byzantine literary texts containing anti-Judaic invective provides a useful reference tool for scholars investigating any aspect of the history of Christian–Jewish relations in the eastern Roman empire. K. begins with the earliest writings of the Christian Church, including the fragments of dialogue attributed to Aristo of Pella and Justin Martyr's *Dialogue with Trypho* in the second century, and finishes with texts written before the fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks in 1453. The first section of the book examines the origins of *Adversus Iudaeos* literature in the early Church, assesses the various scholarly interpretations of this phenomenon, and provides a brief historical overview of the position of Jews in the Byzantine empire. In the second section of the book, K. describes the anti-Judaic content which appears in a number of Byzantine literary genres, including homiletics, hymnography, secular and ecclesiastical histories, hagiography, and most importantly, the dialogues purporting to take place between Christians and Jews. In the third section, he examines these disputations in more detail, listing them individually and examining their importance in the tradition of theological polemic. The book concludes with a more thematic assessment of the historical, theological, and literary interest of these texts.

Certain questions which may never be resolved reappear throughout the individual studies which make up this volume. Perhaps the most important of these is that of 'image' versus 'reality', to borrow Judith Lieu's distinction between literary representations of Jews and their actual historical situation. K. argues that most of the invective against Jews which appears in Byzantine literary texts is inspired by the need to emphasize basic theological differences between Christianity and Judaism, focusing especially on themes such as Jesus' rôle as Messiah, the overturning of Mosaic law in the new dispensation, and the veneration of the cross and Christian icons. Following H. Schreckenberg, K. reaffirms the important distinction between the theologically and exegetically inspired 'anti-Judaism' which pervades Christian texts from the earliest period and the racially motivated 'anti-Semitism' which appears to be a largely modern construct. It is striking that a number of other recent studies have concluded that the literary treatment of Jews may not always reflect heightened tension between the Christian and Jewish communities (see especially D. Olster's *Roman Defeat, Christian Response, and the Literary Construction of the Jew* [Philadelphia, 1994] and A. Pereswetoff-Morath's provocatively titled book, *A Grin without a Cat: 'Adversus Iudaeos' Texts in the Literature of Medieval Russia, 988–1504* [Lund, 2002]).

This conclusion, of course, does not undermine the genuine historical value of many individual texts. Dialogues such as the seventh-century *Doctrina Jacobi nuper baptizati*, which has been thoroughly studied by G. Dagron and V. Déroche (*Travaux et Mémoires* 11 [1991], 17–273), attest to a growing hostility towards Jews in the Byzantine empire from the sixth century onwards. Hagiography frequently provides precious indications of local situations and events, such as the banishment of the entire Jewish community from Sparta during an outbreak of plague in the tenth century which is related in the Life of St Nikon the Metanoeite. It is also probably true, as Averil Cameron has recently argued (*BMGS* 20 [1996], 249–74), that periods of

© The Classical Association, 2003

https://doi.org/10.1093/cr/53.1.88 Published online by Cambridge University Press

military pressure and general anxiety, such as the seventh century, provoked the composition of more polemical disputations than did more prosperous times. Nevertheless, it is wide-ranging surveys such as this which reinforce the impression that anti-judaic polemic represented a fundamental and pervasive element in theological texts of all periods.

One looks in a survey of this kind for comprehensive coverage both of primary and secondary sources. In general, the former are well represented in this study: the list of disputations, which represent the author's primary focus in the third and largest section of the book, seems complete, although CPG reference numbers would help to identify these texts. A few notable gaps exist in the notes and bibliography of secondary sources, however, including especially works which have appeared in English in the last ten years. For the early Christian period Judith Lieu's excellent monograph, *Image and Reality* (Edinburgh, 1996), should be cited, along with studies such as William Horbury's *Jews and Christians in Contact and Controversy* (Edinburgh, 1998) and Miriam Taylor's *Anti-Judaism and Early Christian Identity. A Critique of the Scholarly Consensus* (Leiden, 1995). Nevertheless, K. makes full use of recent scholarship in the field of Byzantine attitudes towards the Jews. Overall, this is a useful and comprehensive introduction to the field of Byzantine *Adversus Iudaeos* literature; it is to be hoped that many more focused, interpretative studies will follow.

University of Nottingham MARY B. CUNNINGHAM

THE GREEK LANGUAGE

A. Ph. Christides (ed.): *Ἱστορία τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς Γλώσσας, ἀπὸ τὶς ἀρχὲς ἕως τὴν ὕστερη ἀρχαιότητα*. Pp. 1213. Thessaloniki: Centre for the Greek Language, Institute for Modern Greek Studies (Manoles Triantaphyllides Foundation), 2001. Cased. ISBN: 960-231-094-4.

This is an impressive collection of essays on the history of the Greek language 'from its beginnings through late antiquity', which stands out in its freshness of approach and clarity of presentation. Under the auspices of the Centre for the Greek Language, a team of seventy-five specialists, both Greeks and foreigners, has contributed here a total of 123 articles, which have been organized well in a structure that is both logical and cohesive. The editor himself wrote all of the introductions to the various sections and subsections, which only adds to the volume's usefulness and consistency. This truly interdisciplinary volume will be of interest not only to linguists and classical philologists, but also to historians, comparatists, anthropologists, and translators of any register of the Greek language. Especially laudable is the contributors' joint effort not to put Ancient Greek on a linguistic pedestal but, instead, to present multiple, varying histories of the Greek language, its developments, and its dialects.

This volume comprises nine units, each followed by an extensive bibliography. Unit 1 treats the phenomenon of language from a general perspective. The second unit focuses on Greek and shows how the evolution of Greek history and the Greek language have been interwoven from the early Indo-European roots through the Roman Imperial period. This unit includes sections on script, pre-Hellenic languages, Linear B, the introduction of the alphabet, and on historical changes that affected Archaic, Classical, and Hellenistic Greek. Greek dialects are treated in the third unit.

© The Classical Association, 2003

https://doi.org/10.1093/cr/53.1.88 Published online by Cambridge University Press