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## Eva ANAGNOSTOU-LAOUTIDES / Ken PARRY (eds.)

### *Eastern Christianity and Late Antique Philosophy*

Brill (Texts and Studies in Eastern Christianity Col., vol. 18), Leiden, Boston 2020, xvi + 342 pp.

The new edited volume by Eva Anagnostou-Laoutides and Ken Parry is based on contributions from the conference «Eastern Christianity and Late Antique Philosophy» held at Macquarie University in Sydney on April 6-7, 2017. Many of its contributions map the development amongst Christians of a speculative vocabulary of their own, much of it borrowed from non-Christian Greek philosophers, but some of them uniquely developed to suit the needs of precision in Christian theology, especially around the subject of *physis*. The remainder are dedicated to many adjacent subjects.

The book is divided into five sections, «Identity and Terminology», «Greek Christian Thought», «Proclus the Neoplatonist», «Pagans and Christians in Byzantium» and «Syriac and Arabic Christian thought». The volume starts in an amazing way with Ken Parry's «Eastern Christianity and Late Ancient Philosophy: A Conspectus», which provides an extensive mapping of the field and points to areas that deserve future exploration

such as the intellectual silence revolving around the reception of classical learning in Slavonic tongues in late antiquity. Johannes Zachhuber's «Philosophy and Theology in Late Antiquity» argues for seeing Patristic theology as akin to a philosophical school, a model whose limits he recognizes but which he proposes to avoid a deadlock of either seeing Christians as merely imitating philosophers or as entirely disconnected from them. His contribution sets the stage for others that point to other continuations of philosophy within Christian thought: Michael Champion on the Platonic and Stoic use of the virtues to liken oneself to God in Dorotheus of Gaza, Dirk Krausmüller on the development of vocabulary around *hypostasis* and *enhypostaton* by Leontius of Byzantium and other sixth century heirs of Cappadocian theology, Bronwen Neil's tracking of ancient discussions on dreams and responsibility in Maximus the Confessor, Nestor Kavvadas on the use of logical jargon by Syrian Christian elites and Elvira Wakelnig on the reception of arguments

against the possibility of philosophy and definitions in Arabic. Champion's text on the virtues in Dorotheus finds a nice complement in Dirk Baltzly's discussion of the role of civic virtues in Proclus' own project of god-likeness and Graeme Miles' presentation of Proclus' reading of the divided line in Plato's *Republic*. (Vassilis' Adrahtas attempt to compare John Damascene and Proclus, however, is difficult to follow as it depends on jargon the author has developed in other works.) Meaghan McEvoy pieces together «the dramatic rise and fall of Pamprepilus», a Pagan intellectual that reached unexpected heights in a Christian empire, a good example of what patronage can (and cannot) achieve.

There are three true highlights of the volume: Eva Anagnostou-Laoutides' «Drunk on New Wine», which excitingly shows that reception of Platonic meta-

phors of wine as a symbol for intellectual enlightenment in Christian authors is more than a mere surface phenomenon but indicates serious intellectual engagement; Matthew R. Crawford's discussion of Cyril of Alexandria's *Contra Iulianum*, including a foretaste of a forthcoming translation of the twenty volume work, and Han Baltussen's «Eunapius' *Lives of Philosophers and Sophists*: Was He Constructing 'Pagan Saints' in the Age of Christianity?», which makes a number of excellent points about the genre of Eunapius' work and the dangers of «Christianizing.»

All in all, this is not a volume made to be read as a single coherent unit. However, scholars from diverse fields will find articles worth reading and discussing.

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## Doru COSTACHE

### *Humankind and the Cosmos: Early Christian Representations*

Brill, Leiden / Boston 2021, 436 pp.

Doru Costache se propone describir la visión del cosmos que tenían los primeros cristianos. Pone las ideas cristianas en diálogo con teorías científicas modernas, como el principio antrópico del universo o la física cuántica, pues considera que la cosmología cristiana antigua es polifacética y alcanza intuiciones que se pueden comparar con las grandes intuiciones de la física contemporánea: por ejemplo, paragona la aceptación de una intervención misteriosa de Dios en el progreso del cosmos con el concepto de materia oscura o de energía oscura (p. 256). Estructura la descripción en una línea cronológica. Parte de las

ideas cosmológicas de la *Epístola a Diogneto* (capítulo primero). Pasa por los autores —especialmente pertenecientes al siglo II y III— que comparan el orden del cosmos con la armonía musical, como Ignacio de Antioquía o Atanasio de Alejandría (capítulo segundo). Presta atención al desarrollo de la comprensión de la llamada contemplación natural en los siglos II y III, cuando Clemente de Alejandría y Orígenes, inspirándose en el currículum humanístico del helenismo, acuñan este concepto (capítulo tercero), y en el siglo IV, en el que Atanasio de Alejandría y Evagrio Póntico siguen empleando la idea de contemplación natu-