

Paul-Hubert Poirier, Agathe Roman, Thomas Schmidt, Eric Crégheur, and José H. Declerck, eds., *Contra Manichaeos Libri IV: Graece et Syriace; cum excerptis e Sacris Parallelis Iohanni Damasceno attributis Titus Bostrensis*, Corpus Christianorum Series Graeca, 82 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013). Pp. clv + 427; €350.00.

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Titus of Basra, or Bostra, was active during the reigns of Julian and Valens (361–378), but the information available about him is rather scanty. Titus’ masterpiece, a treatise *Against the Manichaeans* in four books, probably stems from 363 CE and is the only work by Titus preserved in its integrity. He wrote also “some other volumes” (Jerome, *Vir. ill.* 102: *fortes adversum Manichaeos libros et nonnulla volumina alia*), but only some fragments of his exegetical works survive, especially on Luke. These show that he adhered to the Antiochene style of exegesis, which does not surprise in a follower of Diodore of Tarsus, the head of the so-called Antiochene school. Titus indeed knew and used Diodore’s exegetical works. His commentaries on Scripture reveal that his secular learning was as high as his knowledge of Scripture (Jerome, *Letter* 70 [84]). Even though much is lost of his works, these earned him such a high reputation that Sozomen mentions him, alongside Cyril of Jerusalem and a few others, among the most important writers (*HE* 3.14).

Book 4 and a part of Book 3 of this treatise *Against the Manichaeans* are extant only in a Syriac translation,<sup>1</sup> which explains why this volume of the Corpus Christianorum, albeit belonging to the Greek series, is largely filled with—typographically clear and beautiful—Syriac script. The Greek, where extant (namely in Books 1–2 and in part of Book 3, comprising about two thirds of the work), is printed on the right pages, with Syriac facing on the left. The Syriac is more prolix than the Greek. Both the Syriac and the Greek editions feature a critical apparatus and an *apparatus fontium* at the bottom of each page. This volume thus offers the available Greek text in a critical edition by Agathe Roman and Thomas Schmidt, the Syriac translation of the entire work in a critical edition by

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Paul-Hubert Poirier, “Une première étude du *Contra Manichaeos* de Titus de Bostra,” *Laval* 61 (2005), 355–362; Nils A. Pedersen, “Titus of Bostra in Syriac Literature,” *Laval* 62 (2006), 359–367.

Paul-Hubert Poirier and Éric Crégheur, and the Greek excerpts preserved in the *Sacra parallela*, ascribed to John of Damascus, critically edited by José Declerck. The present edition represents a significant advancement vis-à-vis the previous edition by Paul de Lagarde, *Titi Bostreni Contra Manichaeos libri quattuor syriace* (Berlin, 1859).

The Greek edition prints 'Titus' direct quotations of Manichaean sources in spaced characters, so as to make them conspicuous. In the Syriac version—which identifies more Manichaean quotations than the Greek—there is no typographic highlighting of the Manichaean citations, but these are easy to spot since they are regularly introduced by the quotation particle ܐܠܐ. An index also lists all the occurrences of this quotation marker. This highlighting of the Manichaean quotations, both in Greek and in Syriac, as well as a planned complete inventory of the Manichaean materials in 'Titus' work,<sup>2</sup> will likely prove very valuable for scholars, especially those working on Manichaeism. I expect that a systematic comparison between the Manichaean quotations in 'Titus' and those, slightly later, in Augustine may yield interesting results.<sup>3</sup>

The general structure of the work is helpfully outlined on pp. LXXXIX–XCVIII of the introductory essay (pp. XI–CVII), written principally by Poirier, the main editor. In the first two books, Titus refutes Manichaean tenets such as the two first principles, equal and opposed to each other, and addresses subjects including matter, the origin of evil, human free will, divine providence, and the different conditions of rational creatures in the

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<sup>2</sup> This will be compiled by Poirier and Timothy Pettipiece and will appear in the series *Instrumenta Patristica et Mediaevalia* (Turnhout: Brepols). For a preliminary study of Titus' Manichaean quotations, see Paul-Hubert Poirier, "L'identification des citations et matériaux manichéens dans le *Contra Manichaeos* de Titus de Bostra," *Comptes-rendus des séances de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres* 153.4 (2009), 1657–1688.

<sup>3</sup> Augustine as a source on Manichaeism constitutes the focus of recent research by Johannes van Oort and Jason David BeDuhn, among others. See, e.g., J. van Oort, "Augustine and the Books of the Manichaeans," in *A Companion to Augustine*, ed. Mark Vessey (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 188–199; J. BeDuhn, *Augustine's Manichaean Dilemma*, 1–2 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009–2013).

world.<sup>4</sup> Titus reasons here virtually without recourse to Scripture, but only by means of rational argument based on common notions (ancient philosophy's *κοινὰ ἔννοιαι*). The last two books, on the other hand, specifically refute Manichaean exegesis of Scripture, arguing from the Old Testament in Book 3, and from the New Testament in Book 4.

Notably, in 3.68 Titus compares Mani's aversion to the Old Testament to the attitudes of Marcion, Basilides, and Valentinus, who also posited a discord between Old and New Testaments. As Titus knew well, Origen had spent his whole life polemicizing against Marcionites and 'Gnostics,' especially Valentinians, and arguing for the harmony and unity between Old and New Testaments, which he maintained formed one and the same body, that of Christ. Origen, indeed, comes explicitly to the fore in Titus' refutation of Mani in 4.12. Here Titus remarks that Mani presented himself as an apostle, sent by Christ to improve the Gospel, but he could not have been sent by Christ, because he was too late, posterior to emperor Decius. Titus supports this claim by reference to the fact that Origen (*Ὁριγῆνης*, 4.12.20; p. 342, l. 20), who denounced and combated all the heresies of his day, never mentioned or refuted Mani. According to Photius, *Bibl.* 85, Titus attacked not the writings of Mani himself, but those of his follower Adda. I also think that a systematic, comparative study of both Titus' and Augustine's engagement with Manichaean biblical exegesis is highly desirable and promises to be fruitful.<sup>5</sup> A recent study of Manichaean biblical exegesis by Alexander Böhlig,<sup>6</sup> which could not be cited by Poirier and the others, for instance, examines the Manichaean interpretation of Gen 1:1–2 by Felix, as reported by Augustine, *C.Fel.* 1.17. This is close to the Manichaean interpretation of Gen 1:2 as reported by Titus, 4.111. This is one of the many convergences

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<sup>4</sup> On Titus's anti-Manichaean theodicy see Nils Arne Pedersen, *Demonstrative Proof in Defence of God. A Study of Titus of Bostra's Contra Manichæos* (Leiden: Brill, 2004).

<sup>5</sup> On Augustine, see Jacob Albert van den Berg, *Biblical Argument in Manichaean Missionary Practice. The Case of Adimantus and Augustine* (Leiden: Brill, 2010).

<sup>6</sup> A. Böhlig, *Die Bibel bei den Manichäern* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 37.

“between Latin Manichaeism and the Manichaeism of ‘Titus’ environment.”<sup>7</sup>

The introduction also addresses some points concerning Titus and his works and tries to explain the relatively limited diffusion of ‘Titus’ work by pointing to its poor style (analyzed on pp. LII–LXXIII) and its polemical nature, which rendered it much less attractive once Manichaeism ceased to represent a threat to Christian ‘orthodoxy’ (p. XX). The same, indeed, was the case with the 25 books *Adversus Manichaeos* of ‘Titus’ inspirer, Diodore, known from the detailed résumé provided by Photius, *Bibl.* 85—which is nevertheless enough to study fruitfully its clear derivations from Bardaisan in its anti-deterministic and anti-fatalistic arguments.<sup>8</sup>

Most of the introduction is devoted to strictly philological matters, as becomes a volume that supplies a critical edition. The manuscript tradition is almost entirely direct: one Syriac manuscript and seven Greek manuscripts. The indirect tradition is represented by the above-mentioned *Sacra parallela*, from which the relevant passages are collected in an appendix (pp. CXXVII–CXXXVII), by the testimonies from Gobar, on whom see below, and by some Greek anthologies. Poirier’s *stemma codicum* (p. LI) traces five 16<sup>th</sup>–17<sup>th</sup>-century Greek manuscripts to a single Geneva manuscript from the 11<sup>th</sup> century. Another, independent 11<sup>th</sup>-century manuscript is Greek Athonensis Vatopedinus 236. The Syriac manuscript containing the full translation, British Library Add. 12150 (written in Edessa in 411 CE), is much more ancient than all the Greek manuscripts, being even the most ancient dated Syriac manuscript preserved, at least to our knowledge. Since this manuscript is a copy of a previous Syriac manuscript, the Syriac translation—which appears accurate—must have been prepared almost immediately after the composition of the Greek original. The Syriac version depends on the Greek sub-archetype  $\alpha$ , from which the Greek excerpts of the *Sacra parallela* were drawn. (‘Titus’

<sup>7</sup> Nils Arne Pedersen, review of Böhlig, *Die Bibel*, in *Vigiliae Christianae* 68 (2014), 572–577: 575.

<sup>8</sup> Analysis in my *Bardaisan of Edessa: A Reassessment of the Evidence and a New Interpretation*, Eastern Christian Studies 22 (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2009), 142–161. On Diodore’s treatise see also Giulio Malavasi, “Diodore of ‘Tarsus’ Treatise against the Manichaeans: A New Fragment,” *VChr* 69 (2015), 296–304.

work was also translated into Latin in the Catholic Counterreformation, but these late versions are not included in the present edition.)

An appendix on the *Sacra parallela* by Declerck complements the introduction (pp. CIX–CXXXVII). To the seven extracts already known, Declerck has added two more that he has found. The redactor of the *Sacra parallela* is likely to have been one of the very last ancient authors who could still access the whole of Titus' *Adversus Manichaeos*, as Poirier observes on p. XX. A bibliography completes the introduction (pp. CXXXIX–CLV), and indices conclude the book (pp. 415–424). The present critical edition will be usefully supplemented by a French translation, being prepared by Paul-Hubert Poirier, Agathe Roman, and Thomas Schmidt, which will appear in the twin series, *Corpus Christianorum in Translation* (Brepols).

A careful comparison between the very ancient Syriac translation and the extant Greek text, preserved in more recent manuscripts, could prove highly interesting not only from the literary, linguistic, and philological point of view, but also from the perspective of Christian theology. Given that Titus seems to have been a supporter of the doctrine of *apokatastasis*, like his inspirers Origen and Diodore,<sup>9</sup> as is attested by Gobar (Phot. *Bibl.* 232.291b) and is indicated by passages of his very treatise against the Manichaeans,<sup>10</sup> it is worth checking whether the Syriac version and the extant Greek show doctrinal differences with respect to this theory. For the Syriac translation is based on a very ancient Greek *Vorlage*, preceding the so-called condemnation of *apokatastasis* in the time of

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<sup>9</sup> That Diodore, like his disciple Theodore, supported this doctrine is demonstrated in my *The Christian Doctrine of Apokatastasis* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 521–548. See also the reviews by Anthony Meredith, *International Journal of the Platonic Tradition* 8.2 (2014), 255–257; Mark Edwards, *Journal of Theological Studies* 65 (2014), 718–724; Johannes van Oort, *Vigiliae Christianae* 64 (2014), 352–353; Steven Nemes, *Journal of Analytic Theology* 3 (2015), 226–233.

<sup>10</sup> Like Origen and Diodore, he deemed otherworldly punishments corrective and purifying, and therefore not eternal: hell consists of places of torment and education aimed at the correction of those who have sinned (1.32). This is in line with his anti-Manichaean interpretation of Genesis: the protoplasts' fall testifies to God's Providence, not to God's ignorance of what would happen.

Justinian. It would be interesting to determine whether the extant Greek has undergone any strategic changes in this respect, such as the elimination of allusions to the restoration theory.

A parallel situation occurs in the case of the *Dialogue of Adamantius* and the *Historia monachorum in Aegypto*. As for the *Dialogue*, I have adduced arguments for the anteriority, and priority, of Rufinus' version over the extant Greek, which appears to be much later and features Byzantinisms.<sup>11</sup> Rufinus—active shortly after Titus—translated faithfully his Greek *Vorlage*, including the references that it contained to the doctrine of *apokatastasis*. Later, after the 'condemnation' of this doctrine, the passages that alluded to it were dropped from the Greek, and the result is the extant, late Greek text. The same seems to be the case with the *Historia monachorum*, which was composed in Greek around 395 CE and was translated into Latin by Rufinus. It recounts the story of seven monks from Rufinus' monastery in Jerusalem, who travelled to Egypt and met several ascetics.<sup>12</sup> After their return to Jerusalem, one of their circle composed this work,<sup>13</sup> and Rufinus translated it probably around 403–404.<sup>14</sup> While it commonly has been assumed that the translation differs from the extant Greek because Rufinus altered his *Vorlage* in order to describe the Egyptian monks as followers of Origen, now, based on comparisons with Sozomen and the Syriac recensions,<sup>15</sup> it is clear that Rufinus translated faithfully the original

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<sup>11</sup> In "Preexistence of Souls? The ἀρχή and τέλος of Rational Creatures in Origen and Some Origenians," in *Studia Patristica* LVI, vol. 4, ed. Markus Vinzent (Leuven: Peeters, 2013), 167–226.

<sup>12</sup> Georgia Frank, "The *Historia monachorum in Aegypto* and Ancient Travel Writing," in *Studia Patristica* 30 (1997), 191–195; William Harmless, *Desert Christians: An Introduction to the Literature of Early Monasticism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 290–298.

<sup>13</sup> Andrew Cain, "The Greek *Historia monachorum in Aegypto* and Athanasius' *Life of Antony*," *Vigiliae Christianae* 67 (2013), 349–363.

<sup>14</sup> So Adalbert De Vogüé, *Histoire littéraire du mouvement monastique dans l'antiquité*, 3, *Jérôme, Augustin et Rufin au tournant du siècle* (Paris, 1996), 317–320.

<sup>15</sup> Sozomen knows passages that are present in Rufinus but absent from the extant Greek text, which indicates that they were present in Rufinus' *Vorlage* and not invented by Rufinus. See C. P. Bammel, "Problems of the *Historia Monachorum*," *JThS* 47 (1996), 92–104. The Syriac recensions confirm the anteriority of Rufinus to the extant Greek accord-

Greek *Historia*, while the extant Greek text reveals alterations, deletions, and additions. The passages that have disappeared in the later Greek are all related to Origenism.<sup>16</sup> It would be very interesting to see whether similar strategic changes occurred in the Greek tradition of Titus' *Adversus Manichaeos* as well. In this connection, it is notable that also Titus' inspirer, Diodore, both upheld *apokatastasis* and wrote extensively against the Manichaeans. And even Augustine, shortly after Diodore, embraced *apokatastasis* precisely in his works against the Manichaeans, using Origen's monism against Manichaean dualism.<sup>17</sup> The interrelation between anti-Manichaean metaphysical arguments and the doctrine of *apokatastasis*, evident in Titus, Diodore, and Augustine, is worth exploring further.

In sum, this is an important edition, which also opens up new, and potentially very fruitful, avenues for scholarship.

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ing to Peter Tóth, "Lost in Translation. An Evagrian Term in the Different Versions of the *Historia Monachorum in Aegypto*," in *Origeniana IX*, ed. György Heidl and Robert Somos (Leuven: Peeters, 2009), 613–621.

<sup>16</sup> This is why Bammel concluded that "the Greek has undergone a clumsy and incompetent revision as a result of fear of Origenism" ("Problems", 99). See also Philippe Luisier, "Un fenomeno della Tarda Antichità: la nascita del monachesimo cristiano", *Chaos e Kosmos* 14 (2013) [[www.chaosekosmos.it](http://www.chaosekosmos.it)], esp. 4–5.

<sup>17</sup> I. L. E. Ramelli, "Origen in Augustine: A Paradoxical Reception," *Numen* 60 (2013), 280–307.