

## BOOK REVIEWS

Martin Heimgartner, ed. and tr., *Die Briefe 1 und 2 des ostsyrischen Patriarchen Timotheos I.*, CSCO 702–703 / Syr. 271–272 (Leuven: Peeters, 2022). Pp. xxxiv + 105 and lviii + 109; €89 and €89.

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In recent years, Martin Heimgartner has become well known for his editions and translations of the letters by Timothy I, patriarch of the Church of the East from 780 to 823 CE. Starting with Timothy's famous disputation with Caliph al-Mahdī (CSCO 631–632, 2011), Heimgartner has published many of Timothy's letters (nos. 42–58 in CSCO 644–645; nos. 30–39 in CSCO 661–662; nos. 40–41 in CSCO 673–674; and nos. 3–29 in CSCO 700–701). The two volumes under review here are his latest publication in this series, completing Heimgartner's project of editing and translating all 59 extant letters by Timothy.

Letters 1 and 2 belong to the patriarch's more extensive writings and are, in fact, both theological treatises. Letter 1 deals with the question whether Chalcedonian and West Syriac Christians have to be rebaptized when they wish to convert to the Church of the East. It is followed by a *cento* composed by an anonymous writer, that is, a compilation of key statements on the issue taken from Timothy's letters. Letter 2 is a treatise on the soul in which Timothy answers questions posed by Bōktīshō', the caliph's official physician.

In the introduction to the text volume, Heimgartner surveys the manuscript evidence (pp. vii–xxviii) and observes that the oldest manuscript, Baghdad Chaldean Monastery 509 dating from the end of the twelfth century, constitutes the direct or indirect *Vorlage* of all other manuscript copies of Timothy's

works. Unlike his editions of Timothy's disputation with al-Mahdī and letters 42–58, which Heimgartner could base on images of the Baghdad manuscript, he was not able to obtain images for the remaining letters due to the political circumstances in Iraq.<sup>1</sup> Thus, like Heimgartner's editions of letters 3–41, the present edition is based on later copies of this manuscript (see pp. xii–xv). In reconstructing the text, Heimgartner was able to draw upon his extensive experience of working with the Baghdad manuscript and its copies in previous editions. The introduction concludes with remarks on the editorial principles (pp. xxviii–xxx). It is followed by a bibliography of the literature cited (pp. xxxi–xxxiv). The main part of the first volume is, of course, the edition of the Syriac text (letter 1 on pp. 3–37, *cento* on pp. 39–45, letter 2 on pp. 47–103). Variant readings in the manuscripts and conjectures are recorded in the apparatus.

The second volume contains a German translation of the two letters and the *cento* and is annotated with comments on the translation, specifics of the Syriac text, and the historical background to some passages. It is preceded by an introduction (pp. ix–l) and a bibliography (pp. li–lvii). The introduction summarizes the two letters and the *cento* (pp. ix–xiii), comments on the reception of the second letter among later Syriac authors, surveys the history of modern research on both letters (pp. xiv–xv), and discusses the dating (p. xvi). The largest part of the introduction deals with the composition of the entire corpus of Timothy's 59 letters in the manuscripts (pp.

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<sup>1</sup> In April of 2018, A. Melloni was able to access the manuscript in Alqosh for his edition of the synodical decisions of the Church of the East. See A. Melloni and E. A. Ishac, eds., *The General Councils of the Eastern Christian Churches*, *Conciliorum Oecumenicorum Generaliumque Decreta*, vol. V/1–2 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2023), v–xvi (in both volumes), where Melloni describes the substantial difficulties and restrictions; and one cannot blame Heimgartner, who was aware of Melloni's access, for not being able to access the manuscript.

xvi–xlvi). This interesting section particularly benefits from Heimgartner's long research experience on Timothy. The introduction concludes with some remarks on the translation of specific terms (pp. xlv–l). The translation is supplemented by a list of corrigenda to Heimgartner's earlier editions, an index of the biblical references, and an index of authors mentioned or cited in letters 1 and 2. The volume concludes with an index of names mentioned in all of Timothy's letters (pp. 99–108), which is a very useful addition to all the volumes edited by Heimgartner.

Timothy is certainly not an author easy to read: his style is often challenging and dense, and the content of his letters is sophisticated, often requiring profound knowledge of theology and philosophy. However, Martin Heimgartner has already shown in his previous volumes – and does so again here – that he can capably meet these challenges. Heimgartner has succeeded in once again producing a text and translation of high quality. These volumes conclude the series of his editions and translations of Timothy's letters, with which Heimgartner has done great service to the scholarly community.