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Review of

AMIR-MOEZZI – MOHAMMAD ALI – JEAN DANIEL DUBOIS – CHRIS-  
TELLE JULLIEN – FLORENCE JULLIEN (éds.), *Pensée grecque et  
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Reviews

AMIR-MOEZZI – MOHAMMAD ALI – JEAN DANIEL DUBOIS – CHRISTELLE JULLIEN – FLORENCE JULLIEN (éds.), *Pensée grecque et sagesse d'Orient. Hommage à Michel Tardieu* = Histoire et prosopographie. Bibliothèque de l'École des Hautes Études, Sciences Religieuses 142. Turnhout: Brepols, 2009. Pp. 756. Price: € 75.–. ISBN: 978-2-503-52995-0.

The volume contains a collection of forty-seven contributions of pupils, friends and colleagues dedicated to Michel Tardieu (b. 1938) on the occasion of his retirement from the chair of “Histoire des syncrétismes de la fin de l'Antiquité” occupied from 1990 to 2008 at the prestigious Collège de France. Formerly “Directeur d'études” on “Gnose et manichéisme” at the “Section des Sciences Religieuses de l'École Pratique des Hautes Études” from 1976 to 1990, in the course of his career Tardieu has carried on the extraordinary attempt of combining a profound interest for the late antique Mediterranean, Near and Middle Eastern cultures with the cultivation of a variety of linguistic domains – Greek, Syriac, Coptic, Arabic, several Iranian languages, up to Chinese – also taking into consideration, whenever possible, the respective production in oral texts. He has extensively dealt with the history of religions and thought, from the late fortune of Platonism to Gnosticism, with particular focus on the Nag Hammadi texts, Manichaeism, and Zoroastrianism, in their continuous interaction with classical culture and paganism, Christianity, and magic.

Ethiopia never counted among the major interests of Tardieu's. Yet three contributions of his at least should be mentioned here: “L'énigme du *quatrième empire*”, in: Piotr O. Scholz (ed. cum collaboratione Richard Pankhurst et Witold Witakowski), *Orbis Aethiopicus. Studia in honorem Stanislaus Chojnacki natali septuagesimo quinto dicata, septuagesimo septimo oblata*, 2 vols. = Bibliotheca nubica 3, I, Albstadt: Karl Schuler Publishing, 1992, pp. 259–64, on the interpretation of the four “kingdoms of the world”, including Aksum, in the Coptic Manichaean *Kephalaion* LXXVII; and two notes on the medieval legend of Prester John: “Le Prêtre Jean et l'Orientalisme”, *Annuaire du Collège de France* 103 (2002–2003), pp. 586–87; and “La religion du Prêtre Jean”, *ibid.* 104 (2003–2004), pp. 639–43.

Within the wide spectrum and the rich variety of subjects touched upon in the volume – faithfully reflecting Tardieu's interests and therefore ranging from the religious history of the Mediterranean and Near Eastern Antiquity, to the history of philosophy and magic, Gnosticism and Manichaeism, Islam, Iranian and Central Asian civilizations, on which it is impossible to detail here – one slot is also occupied by a contribution precisely devoted to Ethiopian Studies, i.e. Robert Beylot's “Un témoin éthiopien inédit du Gradus 5 de Jean Climaque, Colledgeville EMMML 1939, Folio 102°–113°”, pp. 91–107: and to Beylot one has to be really grateful for hav-

ing let Ethiopian Studies appear in such a wonderful panorama of contributions on religions and thought of Late Antiquity and Near East, where Ethiopia too deserves some place indeed.

Beylot has provided the most welcome text edition with annotated translation of the already catalogued, yet almost unnoticed, fifth section – “On the people who are in penance” – of the well known ascetic work *Klímax* (or *Scala* ‘Ladder’, in 30 ‘steps’, i.e. sections, but *darsan* ‘homily’ in the Gəʿəz version) by the seventh-century monk John Climacus, or John “of the Ladder” (from the name of his main work), abbot of the Sinaite monastery of Raithu, on the shores of the Red Sea. Transmitted by ms. EMMML no. 1939, 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> cent., fols. 102<sup>ra</sup>–113<sup>vb</sup>, the text (the fifth section alone is transmitted) is one of the very scanty traces of John Climacus’s writings in the Ethiopic literature. The piece is all the more important for two reasons: 1) Beylot supposes that the Gəʿəz version is based upon a Greek *Vorlage*, and the text is one more to be numbered in the little, yet continuously increasing number of Gəʿəz versions directly depending upon a Greek *Vorlage*; 2) the Sinaite origin of the Greek original text (in turn translated in several languages of the Christian Orient, particularly Syriac and Arabic, cp. p. 91, nn. 1–2) points to possible direct links and literary relationship between Ethiopia and Sinai even in later Aksumite times, i.e. seventh century.

The edition of the text consists in a careful transcription of the *codex unicus*. Having the possibility to check the edition on the microfilm of the manuscript, I noticed only the following errors: p. 101, l. 5 from the bottom: corr. ይትሐደስ into: ይትሐደስ (reading of the ms. and expected form); pp. 101, l. 1 from the bottom–102, l. 1: ስኒሆሙ (correct reading, but ስኒሆሙ in the ms.); p. 102, l. 20: corr. ንስአሰከ into: ንስአሰከ (reading of the ms. and expected form); *ibid.* l. 22: corr. ዕለት in ዕለት (reading of the ms. and expected form); p. 103, l. 20: corr. ክመ into: ክመ (reading of the ms., probably due to erroneous copying of an archaic ክመ, but the expected reading is ክመ); p. 105, l. 7 from the bottom: corr. ግብረት into: ግብረት (reading of the ms. and expected form); p. 106, l. 20 from the bottom: corr. ኢትፈወስ (reading of the ms. but erroneous form) into: ኢትፈወስ (expected form); p. 107, l. 6: corr. ዘያስተርኢ into: ዘያስተርኢ ፣ ወዘኢያስተርኢ (reading of the ms. also presupposed by the translation, omitted by the editor *per homoeoteleuton*). In several cases the frequently occurring word ንስሐ is clearly written ንስሐ in the manuscript (e.g., p. 103, l. 14 from the bottom; p. 104, l. 3; p. 105, ll. 14, 30, and 1 from the bottom; p. 106, l. 10 from the bottom; p. 107, l. 5, and l. 5 from the bottom): yet, the editor – to the contrary of what he has done in other cases – has always normalized it into ንስሐ.

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