

El libro se cierra con las notas ordenadas por secciones (pp. 189-194), una bibliografía (pp. 195-209) estructurada por materias, precedida por dos apartados dedicados respectivamente a bibliografía de bibliografías y a generalidades y una serie de seis anejos que incluyen material documental complementario a la obra : 1. alfabeto siríaco y su transliteración (pp. 209-210); 2. lista de patriarcas (pp. 211-214); 3. calendario de las festividades y santoral en uso en la actualidad (pp. 215-217); 4. Plano de una iglesia asiria (pp. 218-219); 5. glosario (pp. 220-223); 6. créditos fotográficos (p. 224) y las ilustraciones y mapas (pp. 229-239).

La labor realizada por el Prof. Herman Teule en la obra presente, llevada a cabo en el marco editorial de la colección «Fils d'Abraham», que cuenta ya con 29 volúmenes aparecidos, es ciertamente impecable. La claridad expositiva, unida al rigor argumentativo, hacen de este libro una herramienta necesaria para cuantos estén interesados en el mundo del cristianismo oriental en general y el de la iglesia asiria caldea en particular.

El valor de la publicación viene avalado, además, por el profundo conocimiento en la materia adquirido por el Prof. Teule a lo largo de varios años de estudio y de trabajo en este campo, así como por el contacto directo que éste ha mantenido con las comunidades asirio-caldeas, lo que hace de él el especialista adecuado para acometer esta necesaria labor de síntesis y puesta al día de los contenidos que ofrece la obra presente. Éstas son las razones que nos llevan a recomendar, muy vivamente, la lectura de este ansiado libro que acaba de ver la luz y del que nos congratulamos.

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TOEPEL, Alexander, *Die Adam- und Seth-Legenden im Syrischen «Buch der Schatzhöhle»*. Eine quellenkritische Untersuchung, «CSCO» 618 – «CSCO, Subsidia» 119 (Louvain: Peeters, 2006), 259 pp. ISBN: 978-90-429-1739-2.

The Syriac work, known as the 'Cave of Treasures' has been one of the most influential texts of popular Syriac literature for Eastern Christianity in Early Middle Ages and beyond. In spite of its popularity, it has received relatively little scholarly attention. A most recent critical edition of the Syriac Mss along with a French translation was published in 1987 by A. Su-Min Ri. The same author has also published in 2000 a massive but not always very helpful commentary, which remained the only detailed scholarly analysis of the text. Alexander Toepel's study

seeks to fill a gap in the study of this monumental text, offering a compact and thorough study of some of the most important and interesting stories of the *Cave of Treasures*. The book is based on the author's doctoral dissertation which was submitted in 2005 in the School of Cultures and Languages of the Christian Orient at the University of Tübingen.

The *Cave of Treasures* is mainly a historical overview, which begins with the creation of the world and concludes with the Pentecost. The work follows the biblical chronology and offers a Christian perspective of history against the background of chiliastic hopes. This millenarian outlook has probably, according to Toepel, contributed to the popularity of the work, in particular, among Christians living under Islamic rule. It was originally written in Syriac but circulated also in Arabic, Ethiopic, Georgian, Coptic and perhaps also in Greek.

The work is divided in 54 chapters. Half of them are dedicated to the time from Adam to Yonton, the legendary son of Noah. The rest 17 chapters deal with the life history of Jesus. The importance of the first chapters of Genesis for the narrative justifies the choice of the author to focus on the corresponding chapters of the *Cave of Treasures*. More precisely, the book is divided in the following chapters: the creation [of the world] (ch.1); the creation of Adam (ch. 2); the fall of the angels (ch. 3,1-7); Adam in paradise (ch. 3,8-4,1); the Tree of Life and Christ's cross (ch. 4,2f.); the expulsion from paradise (ch. 4.4-5.17); Cain and Abel (ch. 5,18-32); Seth (ch. 6f.). In an introductory chapter, Toepel, offers additionally a comprehensive presentation of the entire manuscript and textual tradition and of the *Forschungsgeschichte*.

Although the precise dating of the work remains, according to Toepel, an unsolved problem, he suggests that the writing in its present form originated in the late sixth or early seventh century. As *terminus ante quem* serves the Syriac apocalyptic work, known as the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*, which apparently knew and made use of the *Cave of Treasures*. The place of origin can be established more easily. The work was evidently written in Persia of the Sassanid era. The theological congeniality to dyophysitism and the occasional citation of dyophysite authors, such as Theodore of Mopsuestia and Diodorus of Tarsus as well as the confrontation with Zoroastrian traditions are conclusive elements for the provenance of the work.

As Toepel stresses, the Cave of Treasure belongs to the genre of 're-written' Bible and the intention of the author has been most probably to replace older non-

Christian works of the same genre, such as *Jubilees* or the *Antiquities* by Flavius Josephus.

Each chapter of the book begins with a careful new translation of the relevant passage into German, followed by a detailed analysis and commentary of the various motifs incorporated in the narratives. The analysis is based on an outstanding and very profound research, which covers more or less the entire religious historical spectrum of the Christian East in Late Antiquity and Christianity. The amount of material collected and taken into account for the study of the *Cave of treasures* is impressive and starts from early Jewish, rabbinic and patristic sources and reaches to Samaritan, Mandaean, Gnostic, Manichean, Zoroastrian, Islamic, astrological, art historical and other traditions, some of which are genuinely little known, such as the Yesidian mythology, for example. It is characteristic for the author's diligent and minute examination of sources how, for instance, a passage from Marco Polo's travel accounts comes to assistance for the illumination of an obscure biblical exegetical remark, common to the Antiochean School of exegesis. The exhaustive collection of source material makes this book a useful reference point for any further study of relevant religious traditions and motifs. Moreover, the author applies in his very careful analysis of the text excellent philological skills, discussing and occasionally translating sources in all the languages of the Christian Orient, including Hebrew and Latin. Considering the amount of material discussed in each chapter a summarizing conclusion at the end of each chapter would have been useful.

One of the major merits of this study is, however, the clarification of numerous questionable and even false assumptions regarding the origin and nature of the work, to which was attributed a Jewish, or Jewish-Christian and even Gnostic (Sethian) provenance. A. Toepel demonstrates that the *Cave of Treasures* is an unambiguously Christian work, which uses mainly traditions from Syriac, Greek or Latin Church Fathers, or apocryphal Syriac literature, while its use of non-Christian motifs, mostly Jewish, is more often than not, mediated through a Christian transmission.

A. Toepel considers the *Cave of Treasures* a consistent work composed by a single author. Theological statements in the *Cave of Treasures* betray the dyophysite affiliation of the author, exegetical approaches, however, reveal a distance to the Antiochean School of exegesis. On this basis, A. Toepel brings forth the intriguing hypothesis that the author was an adherent of the reform exegetical

movement of Henana of Adiabene. A. Toepel must admit, though, at the conclusion of his book that a definite answer to questions of dating and authorship can be only given after a study of the entire text of the *Cave of Treasures*. This concession remains the only weak point of this otherwise excellent and profound study of a truly fascinating albeit complex work of Syriac literature.

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VASHALOMIDZE, Sophia G., *Die Stellung der Frau im alten Georgien. Georgische Geschlechterverhältnisse insbesondere während der Sasanidenzeit*, «Orientalia Biblica et Christiana» 16 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2007), 324 pp. ISBN: 978-3-447-05459-1.

Este libro es el resultado de una Tesis Doctoral leída en 2004 en la Martin-Luther Universidad de Halle-Wittenberg. El tema principal, como reza el título, es el estudio del rol de la mujer en la antigua Georgia –la Iberia caucásica–, el país situado en la costa oriental del Mar Negro. La autora se centra en el periodo del imperio sasánida (a la sazón acérrimo enemigo de Roma), que floreció entre 224 y 265, y que dejó honda huella en la región.

El siglo III se caracteriza, en todo el mundo antiguo, por sus profundos cambios estructurales. En esta parte de Oriente, el cristianismo se afianzó muy pronto como religión mayoritaria y estatal –de hecho igual que en la próxima región de Armenia– en conflicto con la religión persa. El cristianismo influyó, parece obvio, en la transformación del papel de las mujeres, aunque no siempre resulta fácil establecer los patrones de la mujer georgiana de los primeros siglos de la Era en aspectos sociales o religiosos. Este estudio viene a reparar la carencia de investigaciones sobre la Georgia antigua. Y lo hace con una apuesta clara, desde el principio: analizar con rigor metodológico las fuentes antiguas, principalmente las hagiográficas en georgiano, como veremos.

Ya desde las primeras páginas la autora entra en faena analizando algunos textos primitivos, como *El Martirio de Santa Susana* (*Das Martyrium der heiligen Šušānik - Camebay cmidin sa Šušānikisi*) (pp. 3-7), *La conversión de K'art'lis* (pp. 7-16), y *Crónicas* georgianas posteriores, como el poema heroico (*Liebesepos*) persa titulado *Vks u R~mkn* (en georgiano, *Visramiani*) del siglo XI (pp. 21-29).

El citado martirio o *passio* de Susana es un relato del último cuarto del siglo V, debido al sacerdote Jacobo C'urvateli. La santa fue martirizada por no separarse de su marido, el príncipe Varsk'en, que había abrazado poco tiempo antes el