

G. Aragione / E. Norelli (eds.), *Des évêques, des écoles et les hérétiques. Actes du colloque international sur la "Réfutation de toutes les hérésies," Genève, 13-14 juin 2008*. Lausanne, Éditions du Zèbre, 2011. Pp. 344. ISBN 9782940351-13-8. €38.

- [1] Early theologians would never have described themselves as heretics – that term is only ever applied by opponents – just as in modern times no one will preface their own intolerant views or narrow-minded attitudes with “Speaking as a bigot...” or “I, as a prude, say...”! Multiple and varied Christian teachings, some labelled heretical, flourished in Christendom’s early centuries; these exercised many church leaders. Between Irenaeus’ *Against Heresies* and the *Panarion* of Epiphanius of Salamis comes the *Refutation of All Heresies* by Hippolytus of Rome. That work aims to show how many ‘Christian’ heresies arose from earlier philosophical systems, before going on to state what the true doctrine really is, expressed in terms of the Greek Apologists. Its author is said to be Hippolytus of Rome, elected as a rival Bishop of Rome in the early 3rd century and a rigorous and vigorous opponent of the teachings of the Roman church of his day. Legends about Hippolytus’ life and death abounded; he has been attributed, not least by Eusebius and Jerome, with many writings, some surviving. Such is the type of definition we have come to expect from standard reference works on Patristics and Early Christianity.
- [2] Much in that paragraph is, however, debated, not least Hippolytus’ authorship of the *Refutation*. The sources behind the *Refutation*, its influences and its unity are also areas of academic controversy. The improbable life-story of Hippolytus is increasingly disputed and few writings allegedly written by him are firm attributions.
- [3] These and other matters concerning the *Refutation* and its theology have exercised a small number of scholars for some years. Then in 2008 the University of Geneva organised a conference on these topics, at which diverging views were aired. Papers from that colloquium form the bulk of this welcome book, which brings what many may previously have assessed as *recherché* research into a wider public arena. The volume will be of value to those interested in the culture of and debates within early Christianity up to the 3rd century and how its alleged heresies were coped with by the (proto-)orthodox.
- [4] Among contemporary scholars writing on this period and whose research and writings are regularly cited in the literature are Allen Brent, Enrico Norelli and Marlio Simonetti. It is therefore gratifying to find them and their authoritative writing in the present collection. Other distinguished scholars at the Geneva conference and who contribute a chapter apiece here are Winrich Löhr, Bernard Pouderon, Gabriella Aragione, Abraham Bos, Angela Longo, Clemens Scholten, Guillaume Duccœur, Guilia Sfameni Gasparro and Emanuele Castelli. As their contributions all concern early Christian teaching and Patristics rather than textual criticism, it is inappropriate in this journal on text-criticism to engage fully with their topics. Suffice it to note that their themes deal with the question of authorship (especially Simonetti and Scholten), the theology of the *Refutation* and the philosophies criticised in it.
- [5] As well as his own essay, Norelli, one of the editors of this volume, provides a useful introduction to the conference and these papers.
- [6] Including the introduction the essays are in French (5), German (1), English (4) and Italian (3). One suspects that a multilingual collection like this is unlikely to

attract many sales. There is a full “Bibliographie sur l’Elenchos et la question de l’auteur,” covering 1940 to 2010 (two years after the colloquium). The collection has been well edited. As is characteristic of books published by le Zèbre, this one has comprehensive indexes, for which we thank Gabriella Aragione; these include a helpful index of the literature attributed to Hippolytus. There is no index of modern scholars.

J. Keith Elliott
The University of Leeds

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