Girgenti (G.) and Muscolino (G.) (ed., trans.) *Porfirio La Filosofia Rivelata dagli oracoli con tutti frammenti di Magia, Stregoneria, Teosofia, e Teurgia*. (Testi greci e latini a fronte). Bompiani il Pensiero Occidentale. Pp. v-ccix+732. Milano, 2011. €30. ISBN: 978-88-452-6924-0.

This important study is valuable for two reasons:

1. It includes four detailed and lengthy discussions of the philosophy of religion and mysticism at the onset of late antiquity between the 3rd-4th century CE;
2. it comprises a new scholarly edition of those testimonies and fragments from the works of Porphyry (233-305 CE) that concern the philosophy of the divine (*theosophia*), mysticism and religious practice (*theurgia*).

Giuseppe Girgenti introduces the work with three extensive, introductory monographs on Porphyry's role in spreading the word of Plotinus and Plato as a kind of religion. In response to earlier scholars (Bidez, Dodds and others), he suggests that we regard Porphyry as serious religious exegete of earlier pagan literature (pp. xi-xii).

- A. The first monograph (pp. ix-lxix) opens with a study of the philosopher's role as an interpretative hierophant of Plotinus' thought to which Christians and pagans were attracted, though he later saw his role in spreading the philosophical message of Athens in place of Jerusalem (pp. xii-xviii). This is shown by the fragments edited in the second half of this work (pp. xx-xxii)—many of which are not included in A. Smith's standard edition (*Porphyrius Fragmenta*, Leipzig 1993)—as well as by the longer works of Porphyry (xxii-xxx). The fragments edited in the second half of this publication are now briefly analysed for their historical place among Porphyry's many writings: *On the Return of the Soul*, *Philosophy Revealed through Oracles*, *On Statues* and images of the gods, *Names of the gods* and other lost compositions ascribed to Porphyry (*Metaphysical Allegory* and *Symbolic Theology*), *The Letter to Anebo* and Iamblichus' response, and *On Philosophy Revealed through Oracles of Theosophy* (pp. xxx-lxix).
- B. The second monograph examines: 1) the relationship between faith and reason from Plato to Porphyry (pp. lxxi-lxxix); 2) the systematization of Platonic myth and dogma in Middle Platonism begun already in the Old Academy (pp. lxxix-lxxxv); 3) Middle Platonic attempts to demythologize ethical dogma (pp. lxxxv-xc); 4) rational mysticism in Plotinus' works (pp. xc-xciii); 5) alongside the role of the Delphic oracle concerning his immortal destiny

(pp. xciii-xcvi); 6) to this Porphyry contrasts the nature of Christ (pp. xcvi-xcix); 7) nonetheless, his philosophical position seems to vacillate between Plotinus' ideal of teleology and salvation and the role of the oracles, theurgy and return of the soul (pp. xcix-cv); 8-9) this monograph closes by examining how Proclus and Damascius regarded these views of Porphyry and Iamblichus (pp. cv-cviii).

- C. Girgenti's third monograph examines the controversy between Platonism and Christianity as rival sets of rival beliefs plagiarizing and imitating each other's arguments on questions of divine revelation (pp. cix-cxv).

The introductory section concludes with an essay by the editor, Giuseppe Muscolino, concerning: 1) Porphyry on magic and ritual (pp. cxxix-cxliii); 2) sorcery, evocation of demons and sacrifice in his writings (pp. cxliii-cliv); 3) his role in ancient theosophy (pp. cliv-clxiii) and theurgy (pp. clxiii-clxxiii) and the place of ecstatic ritual in Neoplatonic writings in general (clxxiv-clxxxviii). The author concludes with a refutation of those critics (notably C. van Liefferinge) who see Iamblichus as responsible for the introduction of theurgy into Neoplatonism (pp. clxxxix-ccvi) with a rebuttal of these claims and a reinstatement of Porphyry's multi-functional role in theosophy and theurgy (pp. ccvi-ccxi).

This is followed by a brief chronological list of events during Porphyry's lifetime (ccxiii-ccxv).

No less impressive than these extensive monographs is the principle task of this publication: a new annotated edition of those fragments of Porphyry's works in which he expounds his thought on religion, the mystical and theurgy (pp. 51-479). The fragments from Greek and Latin sources are produced in the original accompanied by a full *apparatus criticus* and facing Italian translation. Those from Arabic and Syriac sources are reproduced in an English or Italian translation. Happily the editor has retained the numeration of each fragment as it was numbered in earlier standard editions thus facilitating references to other editions of the fragments (cf. pp. xx, ccxvii-ccxix). Following the fragments themselves there is a separate section of notes and discussions concerning the historical and philosophical background of the sources (pp. 483-677).

The edition opens with a section of testimonies that give an account of Porphyry's life and the works (pp. 1-47). There first follow the fragments of his works:

1. *On the Return of the Soul* (pp. 51-83);
2. *On Philosophy Revealed through Oracles* (pp. 87-167).

The latter is supplemented by two important appendices with material unused or little used in Smith's edition:

3. Appendix I: *On Philosophy Revealed through Theosophy* (pp. 168-187) based mainly on P.F. Beatrice's new reconstruction of *Anonymi Monophysitae Theosophia* (Leiden, 2001);
4. Appendix II: Gustave Wolff's old redaction of the fragments of *On Philosophy Revealed through Oracles* (pp. 189-278)—since only a selection of Wolff's fragments are include in Smith's edition, this makes Muscolino's collection more comprehensive.
5. *On Statues (de Statuis)* (pp. 279-315);
6. Other works known by name but lost (pp. 318-325);
7. *Letter to Anebo* (pp. 327-377) with an *appendix* of testimonies and sources (pp. 378-401);
8. Testimonies and sources of uncertain ascription (pp. 404-479).

The work closes with an index of Greek terms, bibliography and general index (pp. 681-732).

There is little doubt that this edition will prove indispensable for any reader with a serious interest not only in Porphyry and Neoplatonism, but also in the general area of religion, magic and cult. Over the last decade there has been a growing interest in Late Antiquity in general and particular in the transformation of pagan philosophical and mystical thought to Christianity. Porphyry stands at the cross-roads of this transformation both as a controversial critic of Christianity, who offered an alternative mode of belief, but also as an innovative and independent thinker at the centre of Neoplatonic thought. The present publication makes available much new material for the serious scholar—and also opens this area to a larger philosophical audience who are more at ease in Italian, than in Greek and Latin scholarship as such.

I may add that the Greek fonts of this edition are a pleasure to read, having been set clear and large.

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