BOOK REVIEWS


This is a slightly revised version of a doctoral dissertation supervised by Michèle Broze and submitted in 2003 to the University of Brussels. It was originally written in French and was translated to English for this publication.

The study looks at the techniques of citation employed by Eusebius, based principally on his major two-volume opus, *Praeparatio evangelica* and *Demonstratio evangelica*. The key research question is: how does Eusebius cite the Jewish authors in this work, and what can we learn from this about his apologetic method?

Before the author begins her analysis of the citations, she offers a brief presentation of the material (see the impressive list, pp. 29–31). She comments in an introductory and summary manner on the question of the techniques of citation in classical antiquity as whole; these techniques mark out the context in terms of historiography and literary studies for the present investigation (pp. 34–47).

The author then attempts to answer the central research question by means of painstaking analyses which I will not reproduce in individual detail. The answer is multilayered. On the one hand, it can be demonstrated that Eusebius quotes his cited sources for the most part accurately (p. 220), and only rarely engages in intentional changes in this material. The study thus adds an important further voice to the veritable choir of scholarly commentators on Eusebius who consider the quotations in his texts to be relatively trustworthy, which this reviewer is somewhat pleased to note. On the other hand, it is clear and is confirmed in detail by the present study under review that Eusebius never cites the Jewish sources for their own sake. Rather, their referencing forms an important part of his total theological-apologetic program. These quotations can serve to make use of Christian-Jewish tradition and prove its superiority over pagan tradition; yet naturally they can also be utilized against the Jews themselves, in order to “prove” their “erroneous”
understanding of scripture and the figure of Jesus of Nazareth, and to confirm Eusebius’ Christian viewpoint.

In keeping with the organization of the apologetic double opus, the former proof is developed principally in the *Praeparatio evangelica*, while the latter confirmation of his views is elaborated primarily in the *Demonstratio evangelica*. However, in both cases we find that the Jewish authors are enlisted as lawyers and ‘witnesses,’ as it were, for the Christian line of argument. Even in the *Praeparatio*, it is not a matter of looking at the Jews as Jews, but rather viewing the Jews as an integral and temporarily limited component of Christian salvation history. Eusebius seeks “to exploit their [sc.: the Jewish author’s] testimonies as effectively as possible” (p. 288). In keeping with tendencies in more recent research on Eusebius (Strutwolf, Ulrich), and impressively underscored once again by this study, it is precisely the manner in which Christian, Jewish and pagan quotations are used that shows the originality of Eusebius’ theological conceptions and their independence, particularly in comparison to the efforts of predecessors (Clemens, Origenes). Though this does not mean we should ignore the fact that Eusebius’ method naturally as a whole is fully in harmony with Christian Alexandrine tradition (p. 220).

The various technical methods Eusebius employs in order to press the cited texts into conformity with his overall conception are diverse and reflect the entire spectrum of available instruments in literary production. The ordering of the respective quotations, the underscoring of their interconnections, the technique of shortening and cutting texts play an important role here, as do the addition, deletion or alteration of individual words. The “interpretation” of the text by means of an added introduction or summary plays a special role in the apologetic double opus (and by the way likewise in the *Historia ecclesiastica*). Such an interpretation can at times deviate substantially from what the text actually says. Another method Eusebius likes to use is the concealing of specific authors, or contrastively, their emphatic mention (p. 294), depending on whether or not their name is suitable for supporting the apologetic intention at the respective place.

The book is sometimes rather difficult reading, due in to the research question at its centre and the corresponding methodological organization of the study. The argumentation in the study is necessarily quite detailed. But this is the only way to arrive at