TEXT PARALLELS BETWEEN THE VITA HYPATII OF CALLINICUS AND THE PSEUDO-MACARIANA

BY

G. J. M. BARTELINK

There exist some remarkable, hitherto unnoticed parallels between the Vita Hypatii\(^1\) (a monastic biography, written probably about 450 by the monk Callinicus and describing in a simple, popular style the life of the first abbot of the monastery of Rufinianae, near Chalcedon on the Bosphorus), and the writings of Pseudo-Macarius\(^2\), which latter form a subject of discussion at present, particularly their relationship to the works of Gregory of Nyssa.

The correspondences between the Vita Hypatii and the writings of Pseudo-Macarius\(^3\) are not to be found in the properly biographical parts


\(^3\) In the edition of Dörries-Klostermann-Kroeger are found two references to the Vita Hypatii, but these are not direct parallels, but more general correspondences: p. 112, note 110 (on the burning of the devil, together with references to the Passio Bartholomaei, the Apophthegmata Patrum and the Vita Antonii of Athanasius) and p. 296, note 2, where the different meanings of the expression μονήρης βιος are discussed.
of the *Vita*, but in the lengthy addresses of Hypatius to the monks, which the author inserted in the work to stress its edifying character. These are the very parts which those who have studied biography as a literary genre have considered to be alien elements in biography. It is easy to understand that the parallels with the homilies of Pseudo-Macarius appear exactly in the homiletic parts of the *Vita Hypatii*. The points of contact are to be found primarily in those parts where the paraenetic element plays a role.

I must first of all acknowledge the caution with which one must employ the method of working with text parallels, and the limits of this method in establishing relations between texts, or in determining a source. The point has well been made that, in a text with a technical and specialised character, borrowing (in a direct or indirect way) is probable, but that in expressions of a more general character the influence of common language is extraordinarily great. As we have to do with the monastic world here, we have to consider the possibility of coined expressions, unknown to us because they belong to oral tradition, and because monastic literature has only partially come down to us.

A quite literal correspondence is found between Ps.-Macarius, *Hom.* 27,4 and *Vita Hypatii* 131,20. Ps.-Macarius, *Hom.* 27,4: "And so, to be a real Christian is not a common thing" (çıkعطاء αούν το τυχόν Χριστιανισμός). *Vita Hypatii* 131, 20: "Children, being a real Christian is not a common matter" (Στεφάνια, αουκ ἔστι το τυχόν Χριστιανισμός). It is possible that this formula, nearly a slogan form, ultimately goes back to Plato, *De Republica* 352 d: "Our argument is not about a common matter (περὶ τοῦ ἐπιτυχόντος) but about the question in what way man has to live."  

As well in the *Vita Hypatii* as in the Homily of Pseudo-Macarius, the sentence just cited introduces a new passage. The context, however, is somewhat different. In the *Vita Hypatii* there follow some admonitions that the monks ought to strive for eternal life. To be a real Christian is something which is worth exertion. In Pseudo-Macarius the idea that

---

4 See Mertel, o.l., p. 40: "Halb Erbauungsbuch und halb Vita und dadurch keins von beiden."


6 οὗ γάρ περὶ τοῦ ἐπιτυχόντος ὁ λόγος, ἀλλὰ περὶ τοῦ ὄντινα τρόπον χρῆ ζήν. The turn οὗ το τυχόν is to be found in some other passages in the *Pseudo-Macariana*: *Hom.* 53, 9 ἀμαρτιάν οὗ τὴν τυχοῦσαν (Marriott, p. 32); *Hom.* 53,13 οὗ γάρ οἱ τυχόντες (Marriott, p. 35).