
To a considerable extent the fourth volume of RPP, which offers the translation of the pertinent lemmata from the fourth edition of the famous encyclopedia Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 1998-2007, 8 vols + Index vol.), may be characterized as being a ‘patristic’ volume. To be sure, this is partly due to the rules of the alphabet (the Greek ΕΥ—specifically exerting its influence upon both the names and the concepts related to Early Christianity!), but also to the deliberate choice made by the onetime editors and, perhaps, the specialist authors. As a result one finds in this volume extensive treatment of the subject ‘Early Church’ itself (230-238), in a model of an article written by its Subject Area Editor Christoph Markschies, but also extensive treatment of ‘patristic’ topics, themes and, not least, the names of persons falling within the (English language) range from Dev- to Ezr-. Thus, the first (rather) long lemmata are on ‘Docetism’ and ‘Donatism’ (excellently treated by Winrich Löhr and Bernhard Kriegaum respectively), and somewhere in the middle between these lemmata the English speaking reader may make some (and perhaps even her or his first) acquaintance with Dogmengeschichte, a special field of historical theology famous in German speaking countries in particular and here rightly (but still inadequately) indicated as ‘History of Dogma’ (the entry is written by the—meantime—late Gerhard May). Fine and rather elaborate treatment is also awarded to subjects like ‘Ebionites’, ‘Gospel of the Ebionites’, ‘Edessa’, ‘Egeria’, ‘Gospel of the Egyptians’, ‘Council of Elvira’, ‘Enhypostasis’, ‘Ephesus’ and the ‘Councils of Ephesus’, and to persons like ‘Ephrem the Syrian’ and ‘Epiphanius’. After that one soon arrives at a whole range of lemmata beginning with Eu. First comes the extensive lemma ‘Eucharist/Communion’, its patristic part being excellently discussed, once again, by Markschies in the subparagraph II: ‘Church History: 1. Early Church’ (621-625), an introducing overview moreover that, in its original form ‘Abendmahl’, this subparagraph offering during several years could serve as an essential part of my students’ readers on ‘Eucharist in Early Christianity’. Nearly immediately after this major entry and its
ensuing minor lemmata (‘Eucharistic Benediction’ etc.) the whole series of names and subjects beginning with eu- continues in a ‘patristic’ way: Eucherius, Eudocia, Eudoxius, Eugenia, Eugenius, Eugippius, etc. Of particular value in this series is the fine discussion of ‘Eusebius of Caesarea’ (Jörg Ulrich), followed by no less than five other ‘Eusebii’ and, for instance, the brief descriptions of ‘Eutyches’ and the ‘Eutychian Controversy’ so important to understand part of the background of the christological formulae of Chalcedon (both entries, like several related ones, by the specialist Hanns Christoff Brennecke). Other major ‘patristic’ contributions may be found in entries like ‘Excavations’ (subparagraph IV, entitled ‘Realm of the Early Church’ and written by Guntram Koch, gives a bird’s-eye view of the material discovered since World War II\textsuperscript{1} in Rome and Italy, Western Provinces, Eastern Provinces, and the Balkans respectively) and in ‘Exegesis’ (§ V, 1, authored by Wolfgang Bienert, is on the Early Church), whereas amongst the patristic authors the 5th c. Eznik von Kolb closes this impressive Volume IV.

Some additional remarks may be added. First some more or less critical remarks. It is difficult to understand why an important and, to so many readers, highly interesting document like the \textit{Didache} did receive such brief discussion (only little more than one column, though by the eminent specialist Willy Rordorf) and the same goes, for instance, for the \textit{Didascalia} (four sentences plus two bibliographical references). Conversely, English speaking readers may ‘consume’ more than 2.5 columns on a certain Annette von Droste-Hülshoff (from the long-winded exposition I could not derive any noteworthy religious significance, or it might be her ‘warning to world-improvers?’) and, for instance, entries like ‘Evangelische Michaelsbruderschaft’ and ‘Evangelische Sozialakademie Friedewald’. In my opinion, it would have been better to delete these and a number of related lemmata (‘Droste-Fischering’; ‘Dürrenmatt’; ‘Evangelisch-kirchlicher Hilfsverein’).

On the one hand one misses substantial ‘patristic’ discussion in entries which definitely would have deserved so and, moreover, in which cases readers might be expected to look for such specific discussion. Perhaps most conspicuous in this respect are the entries ‘Evil’ and ‘Exorcism’. But

\textsuperscript{1} For the period to the end of World War II first reference is made to Friedrich Wilhelm Deichmann’s entry ‘Ausgrabungen’ in \textit{RGG} I, 762-764.