

**Laurence Mellerin (ed.)**

*Le Livre Scellé* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017) 332 pp. Paperback ISBN: 978-2-503-57700-5, €40,00 (= *Cahiers de Biblindex* 2; = *Cahiers de Biblia Patristica* 18).

This collection of papers on the Bible and early Christian writers presents an excellent selection of work in progress which will contribute to research in multiple fields including biblical studies, patristics, exegesis, and even linguistics.

In 2006, the Institut des Sources Chrétiennes in Lyons inherited the archives of the Centre d'Analyse et Documentation Patristique in Strasbourg, responsible for the eight volumes of *Biblia Patristica* (1965-2000). A project to put online not just the 270,000 published references but well over 100,000 further quotations and allusions from writers of the fourth and fifth centuries has borne fruit in the freely-available BIBLINDEX database. Alongside the conversion of the data to electronic form and the ongoing expansion of the corpus, a regular seminar has been established to promote research on the use of the Bible in the early Church. The present book is the second volume of papers from this seminar to be published, the first being *Le Miel des Écritures* (2015): the wider book series, preserving continuity with the original *Biblia Patristica* project, also includes monographs on particular authors or topics and is very reasonably priced.

All twelve contributions are in French. Quotations from the sources are translated, making the text accessible to non-specialists, although in some cases the original language is also provided *in extenso*. The highest standards have been observed in the editing and production, with all chapters in a uniform presentation, accurate Greek and Latin texts, and four indices to enable easy reference across the whole volume. Full of interesting and insightful scholarship, this makes for an unusually satisfying collection worthy of reading in full as well as consultation for specific details. Given the variety of material, brief summaries are offered here in order to encourage potential readers to investigate further.

Among the contributions likely to be of particular interest to New Testament scholars, Benoît Gain examines manuscripts of Basil the Great's *Moralia* to try to determine whether the author was responsible for the divisions of the biblical text and numbering of the quotations. He reminds us that the text of the New Testament quotations in this work was added by a later editor, and does not represent a fourth-century witness. Bernard Meunier's investigation of the text and divisions of the first chapter of John comes independently to the same conclusion as P.J. Williams (*JSNT* 33.4, 2011), that identifying verses 1-18 as the "Johannine Prologue" is a modern conceit with

little ancient support. Émilie Escure-Delpeuch embarks on a fascinating trail to locate the origin of the reading “bridal chamber” in Matthew 25:10, finding liturgical influence more convincing than harmonisation to another passage or even a Diatessaronic reading, despite the prevalence of the term in Syriac. Maxime Yevadian underpins her conclusion that John Cassian was Armenian by birth, writing in Latin for the benefit of his readers but more at home in Greek, by examining his biblical quotations: the Greek form appears to have priority. The textual affiliation of scriptural references is also used by Jacques Elfassi, along with the appearance of rarely-cited verses, to identify twenty new sources for passages in Isidore of Seville, the majority coming from Jerome and Gregory the Great.

Other chapters have a more theological focus, although biblical material continues to play a large part. Michel Fédou considers the themes of law and Israel in Origen’s *Commentary on Romans* (as translated by Rufinus), while Françoise Vinel illustrates how Origen and Augustine handle biblical passages which they considered doctrinally problematic. Guillaume Bady examines patristic treatment of the figure of Matthias and the other eleven disciples after the resurrection. Examples of the theme of Christ as brother in writers from the third to the eighth century are gathered by Michel Dujarier, while Marc Milhau provides a synthesis of Hilary of Poitiers’ treatment of deuterocanonical writings. Marie Pauliat undertakes a careful analysis of two sermons of Augustine in order to establish their gospel lection: although earlier editors of *Sermones* 63A and 63B had suggested some sort of composite text, Pauliat shows that in both cases, Matthew is the most plausible source. At the head of the volume, Lorenzo Perrone demonstrates how the *Homilies on the Psalms* rediscovered in Munich in 2012 correspond to what was previously known of these texts, confirming Origen as author.

The publication of these studies is a welcome opportunity for a wider audience to share in this seminar, and serves to communicate the vitality of patristic and biblical scholarship associated with BIBLINDEX and Sources Chrétiennes.

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