

Christians had, as Bowersock emphasizes, a novel language and theology of martyrdom. Many Christians in the second and third centuries were eager for death, not contemptuous of it, as the suicidal Roman heroes and philosophical senators, and even, if Josephus's stoicizing interpretation is correct, the Jewish rebels and passive resisters, had been.

One wonders also whether Bowersock's reading of the martyr acts is not credulous. How seriously should we take the set pieces in which the martyr declaims his or her final paradoxes while the crowd is reduced to rapt silence? Even if some of the early acts are based on official records, are hard kernels of fact really so easily extractable from these stories whose debt to the novel Bowersock has done so much to illuminate? Could they not be more plausibly read as artifacts of fourth-century Christian piety than as records of real second- and third-century events? And how are we to reconcile the apparent fact that martyrdom was mainly an eastern phenomenon with Bowersock's argument that its ideological underpinnings were mainly aristocratic Roman?

All that said, the pleasures of the book are considerable. Not least of these is the crisp writing; indeed, it was hard to resist reading *Martyrdom and Rome* in a single sitting. It is also obvious that Bowersock's argument is intended mainly as provocation, and as such it is successful. Historians of Christianity are challenged to rethink their theologically motivated and usually fruitless search for origins and concentrate instead on context. But the challenge to Roman historians is more serious, or at least likely to yield greater profit. For all the excesses and implausibilities of Bowersock's account, it will make it very difficult to think about the high imperial city without acknowledging the role of the burgeoning Christian movement in shaping it, and vice versa. The urban heroes of Christian self-denial must now take their place beside the sophists as typical products of the Roman Empire.

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Porphyrii Philosophi Fragmenta, ed. Andrew Smith (fragmenta Arabica David Wasserstein interpretante). Teubner, Stuttgart/Leipzig, 1993, liii + 653 pp.

This mighty enterprise is a somewhat unusual addition, perhaps, to the Teubner series. While the series includes many collections of poetical fragments, there are not many collections of prose fragments, philosophical or otherwise (Hartmut Erbse's *Theosophorum Graecorum Fragmenta* being one exception). This is also an unusually massive volume, reminding us what a large corpus of works the Neoplatonic philosopher Porphyry left behind him. Porphyry in a way resembles Theophrastus (whose fragments are also currently being dealt with elsewhere), in that he exists in the shadow of a greater mind (in his case Plotinus), from whom doctrinally it is hard to distinguish him (and, of course, from whom — like Theophrastus from Aristotle — he had no great desire to be distinguished). In fact, however, Porphyry's contribution to the development of later Platonism is very considerable, if only because of his prodigious productivity (resulting in commentaries on most of the works of Plato and Aristotle, as well as treatises on most of the main topics of philosophy),¹ and the great learning with which he adorned them. It

¹ Nor should one forget his many contributions to Homeric scholarship, and treatises on rhetoric and grammar, astronomy and harmonics.

seems very probable that later Platonists, from Iamblichus on, looked no further than the pages of Porphyry when wishing to check on the opinions of earlier authorities, Platonist or otherwise.

His fragments, therefore, eminently deserved collection, and there is no better man to do this than the present editor (ably assisted in the editing of the Arabic fragments by David Wasserstein, formerly of Dublin, now of Tel Aviv). Large as this volume is, it could have been larger, if Smith had not decided to omit a number of important works the fragments of which have been adequately published already, notably the *Letter to Anebo*, the *Commentary on Plato's Timaeus*, and the *Quaestiones Homericae* (all edited by A.R. Sodano), and the *Contra Christianos* (edited, some time ago, by A. von Harnack). This may be accounted a pity, but contemplating the size of the volume as it is, one quite sees Smith's point (cf. Intro. p. viii).

What, then, do we have? After a lengthy preface, setting out the principles on which the edition is put together, and providing a full list of the authors and editions drawn upon, the fragments and testimonia² are set out as follows. First, testimonia as to Porphyry's life and works. Then fragments of his commentaries on Aristotle, of which the most considerable are those on the *Categories* (29 fr.), from Simplicius, and the *De Interpretatione* (35 fr.), from Boethius and Ammonius. Then those on his Platonic commentaries, minus, as has been mentioned, the *Timaeus Commentary*, but including a long passage (Fr. 169) from Boethius' *Liber de divisione*, which Boethius himself admits to be translated from Porphyry. Only from the *Republic Commentary*, otherwise (7 fr.), is there much of significance, including one passage (Fr. 182) that can be claimed from a comparison between Proclus (otherwise our only source) and Macrobius. In the background, of course, there remains the problem of the Anonymous Parmenides Commentary from the Turin palimpsest, which I am now inclined to accept as Porphyrian, but that has been adequately edited, in any case, by Hadot. There are also, in my view, a number of passages which could be reclaimed from Proclus' *Parmenides Commentary*,³ where Proclus is declining to identify his sources by name, but I recognise that they are not secure enough to find a place in a definitive collection of this sort. When presenting commentary fragments, it would be ideal, for ease of reference, to be able to give the actual lemma being commented upon, but I fully recognise that the book is big enough already.

The commentaries, however, are only a portion of Porphyry's total oeuvre. These are followed, in turn, by his works on the history of philosophy, metaphysics, ethics, myth, Homeric studies, rhetoric and grammar, science, and miscellaneous subjects.

Among the major works represented are the *Philosophos Historia*, or *History of Philosophy* (31 fr.), of which the extant *Life of Pythagoras* is, of course, a portion of Book I;⁴ his psychological treatises *On the Soul*, to (or against?) *Boethius*⁵ (8 fr., preserved by

² The two categories are not separated, for good reason — it would have produced chaos — but are distinguished by the suffix F or T after the number of the passage.

³ See my article, 'Porphyry and Iamblichus in Proclus' *Commentary on the Parmenides*' in *Gonimos: Neoplatonic and Byzantine Studies presented to L.G. Westerink*, edd. J. Duffy and J. Peradotto, Buffalo, 1988, 21-48.

⁴ In Book I also, Porphyry seems, interestingly, to project much of the doctrine of Anaxagoras back onto Anaximander; in Book III he adopts, to a surprising extent, the hostile gossip about Socrates purveyed by Aristoxenus; in Book IV, his account of Plato's doctrine, drawing on both the *Parmenides* and the Second Letter, makes

Eusebius) and *On the Faculties of the Soul* (5 considerable extracts, in Stobaeus' *Anthology*);⁶ the treatises *On What is in our Power* and *On the Injunction "Know Thyself"*, the latter dedicated to his dissident pupil, Iamblichus (again, extended extracts in Stobaeus), and numerous fragments from his *On the Return of the Soul* (from Augustine, mainly from the *City of God*) and *On Philosophy from Oracles* (mainly from Eusebius' *Praeparatio Evangelica*, but some from Augustine),⁷ and *On Statues* (again, mainly from Eusebius). It is amusing, indeed, to observe how often Christian authors have to turn for information, despite their extreme distrust and dislike of him, to their arch-enemy Porphyry.

Among the Homeric studies, the essay *On the Cave of the Nymphs* and *Homeric Questions* are published elsewhere (though Smith presents 18 further fragments here). Otherwise, the main text represented here is that *On the Styx* (8 extracts in Stobaeus), in which he gives the Styx the same allegorical treatment as he did the Cave of the Nymphs. There are also three extracts of an unnamed treatise that are of considerable interest.

On the subject of literary plagiarism, there are some interesting extracts in Eusebius from his *Philologos Akroasis* (Fr. 408-10), recording the conversation at a feast on Plato's birthday in Athens hosted by Longinus. Finally, apart from fragments of identified works, there is a large number of passages, seventy-five in all, assembled at the end of the book on a wide variety of philosophical subjects, which also contain much of interest. The volume is completed by useful indices *locorum, fontium et nominum*.

Further comment on particular passages would make this review far too long. Suffice it to say that Andrew Smith has put us all in his debt, not only for assembling this vast collection, but for annotating it so superbly. It should form the basis for a new appreciation of Porphyry's contribution to philosophy, such as he himself may provide us with before long.

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it clear that he does not retreat, as he is sometimes alleged to do, from Plotinus' strong distinction between the One and Intellect (I would, by the way, read προαιώνως for προαιώνιος, with Hadot, in fr. 223, p. 246, 7).

⁵ It is not at all clear whether this is directed against the views of either the Peripatetic or the Stoic Boethus (both Peripatetic and Stoic doctrines are attacked in it), or simply dedicated to some contemporary Boethus.

⁶ An interesting account in Fr. 252 of Numenius' and Longinus' views on the συγκαταθητική δύναμις of the soul; and a useful survey of the various divisions of the soul in Fr. 253.

⁷ Smith, following Hadot and Dörrie, rejects the attempt of J.J. O'Meara, in *Porphyry's Philosophy from Oracles in Augustine* (Paris, 1959), to identify these two works.