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***Historie Kościoła Jana Diakrinomenosa i Teodora Lektora*, trans. RAFAŁ KOSIŃSKI, ADRIAN SZOPA, KAMILA TWARDOWSKA, Towarzystwo Wydawnicze „Historia Iagellonica”, Kraków 2019, pp. 579**

***The Church Histories of Theodore Lector and John Diakrinomenos*, ed. RAFAŁ KOSIŃSKI, KAMILA TWARDOWSKA, trans. ANETA ZABROCKA, ADRIAN SZOPA, Peter Lang, Berlin–New York–Wien 2021 [= *Studies in Classical Literature and Culture*], pp. 692¹**

This book discusses two Church histories – extremely important for developing knowledge about the fate of the Church and the Byzantine state at the end of the 5th and the beginning of the 6th centuries. Their authors – John Diakrinomenos² and Theodore Lector³ – wrote their works in the first decades of the 6th century. Both Diakrinomenos’ and Lector’s histories have survived only in fragments. The aim of the team (consisting of scholars who are recognized within and outside the Polish scholarly circles⁴) who prepared this book was *oddanie w ręce Czytelników kompleksowego wydania Historii Kościoła Jana Diakrinomenosa i Teodora Lektora, zawierającego teksty*

oryginalne – greckie, łacińskie i starosłowiańskie – wraz z tłumaczeniem na język polski i komentarzem (Polish ed., p. 9) / *to provide the reader with a comprehensive edition of the Church Histories by John Diakrinomenos and Theodore Lector, which contains the original Greek, Latin, and Old Church Slavonic texts along with translations into English and a commentary* (English ed., p. 7). And it should be clearly emphasized that the authors have fully succeeded in achieving this goal.

The present book is a completely new edition, which differs significantly from the critical edition of Günther Ch. Hansen⁵ that has been in use since the 1970s. Its preparation was a very difficult task because both histories have been preserved in fragments, and their layout and content can be reconstructed, for instance, on the basis of passages contained in the texts of other authors. Over time, the information used by the latter in both *Church Histories* became “live” material which was subject to numerous changes or distortions; hence the need to separate the fragments of both works

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² A. CAMPLANI, *John Diakrinomenos*, [in:] *Encyclopedia of Ancient Christianity*, vol. II, ed. A. BERARDINO, trans. J.T. PAPA, E.A. KOENKE, E.E. HEWETT, Illinois 2014, p. 437.

³ Cf. L. PERRONE, *Theodore the Lector*, [in:] *Encyclopedia...*, vol. III, p. 749.

⁴ Adrian Szopa was responsible for the translation from the classical languages (in the English edition, in cooperation with Aneta Zabrocka); Kamilla Twardowska provided commentaries; Rafał Kosiński developed the concept of the whole publication and was responsible for the selection of texts and editing of individual introductions.

⁵ THEODOROS ANAGNOSTES, *Kirchengeschichte*, ed. G.C. HANSEN, Berlin 1971 (2nd ed. 1995). The authors make no claim to calling their edition critical. This is confirmed by the fact that they have dispensed with an extensive critical apparatus, limiting themselves to referring readers to the most recent critical editions or providing information on questionable passages.

undoubtedly authored by Theodore and John from those found in later texts and “contaminated” by their authors.

The book has a logical structure. The first, and undoubtedly, crucial part is *Wprowadzenie* (Polish ed., p. 13–45; *Introduction* English ed., p. 13–53). First of all, it presents the context of the Christological controversies, which centered around the decisions of the Council of Chalcedon in 451 and had a considerable influence on the views of the authors, and thus, on the content of the reconstructed *Church History*. It will familiarize the reader not only with the parties to the controversies, i.e. the church hierarchs and the Monastics, but also with the role played in it by individual Byzantine rulers. We will learn what events accompanied the contestation of the decisions of the Council of Chalcedon after 451, especially during the reigns of Emperors Zeno and Anastasius I. This information provides a broader view of the era, in which the accounts of Theodore Lector and John Diakrinomenos were written.

The second part is devoted to John Diakrinomenos and the preserved fragments of his *Church History* (Polish ed., p. 47–83; English ed., p. 55–105). It opens with an extensive introduction, which presents the current state of knowledge about the author, the time when it was written, and the state of preservation of his work. It also refers to hypotheses concerning the alleged use of the source in question by Theodore Lector. The introduction is followed by excerpts from the work of John Diakrinomenos along with translation and commentary.

The third part of the book is a reconstruction of Theodore Lector’s *Church History* (Polish ed., p. 85–131; English ed., p. 107–163), for which fragments quoted *in extenso* by other authors were used. The text of the source is preceded by two introductions. The first presents the latest findings on what we know about the author himself and his work on the discussed text. In addition, it indicates the sources from which this historian might have derived his information. It also characterizes his geographical horizon and considers his goals, his attitude towards events in the ecclesiastical arena, and the subsequent reception of his work. Those

passages in which the historian referred directly to the political history of the Byzantine Empire are also listed. The second introduction provides a critical analysis of earlier findings and Hansen’s attributions for the particular passages he considered to be the authentic work of Theodore. Referring to selected manuscripts and critical editions, the editors have rejected some of the scholar’s claims, explaining which passages they believe to come from the original work of Lector.

The fourth part of the book contains excerpts from Theodore’s work, which can be found in the *Chronicon* by Victor of Tunnuna written in Latin (Polish ed., p. 133–181; English ed., p. 165–227). The fifth part features an abridgment (*Epitome*) of Theodore Lector’s *Church History* written in Greek at the beginning of the 7th century by an anonymous author (Polish ed., p. 183–319; English ed., p. 229–357). Apart from the texts and translations, both the fourth and the fifth part contain appropriate introductions, in which the authors of the works, the preserved manuscripts, the current state of research, and the conclusions from their analysis are presented, and compared them with Hansen’s edition.

The sixth part contains what the editors have called “a continuation of the Theodorean tradition”. It discusses those works in which information derived directly from Theodore’s *History* or the Greek *Epitome* was used to some extent, but which contain changes or distortions. These include *Laudatio Barnabae* by the Cypriot monk Alexander (Polish ed., p. 323–345; English ed., p. 361–391); *The Spiritual Meadow* written by John Moschos (Polish ed., p. 347–357; English ed., p. 393–405); *The Chronicle* by Theophanes the Confessor (Polish ed., p. 359–385; English ed., p. 407–449); *Chronicle* edited by George the Monk (Polish ed., p. 387–397; English ed., p. 451–463); *Synodicon Vetus* by an anonymous author from the 9th c. (Polish ed., p. 399–441; English ed., p. 465–517); scholia preserved in selected manuscripts of *The Ecclesiastical History* of Evagrius Scholasticus (Polish ed., p. 443–445; English ed., p. 519–521); fragments from the *Suda* lexicon (Polish ed., p. 447–457; English ed., p. 523–535); the treatise *On Schisms* by an

anonymous author (Polish ed., p. 459–465; English ed., p. 537–543); *Hypothesis* – an account of the Council of Chalcedon by an unknown editor (Polish ed., p. 467–499; English ed., p. 545–583); and *Letter of the Monk Callistus to Manuel, Bishop of Thessalonica* (Polish ed., p. 501–505; English ed., p. 585–593). All of the above-mentioned works are preceded by introductions, from which we learn to what extent Theodore's *Church History* was implemented in their content. The separation of the aforementioned passages from Theodore's original text was a very good measure, which will help researchers avoid traps of interpretation.

The substantive content is supplemented by an extensive bibliography, in which we find references to the critical editions of sources used in the edition and a number of studies (Polish ed., p. 515–551; English ed., p. 595–647). Additional help is provided by the concordance of texts used (Polish ed., p. 553–557; English ed., p. 649–659), as well as a personal index (Polish ed., p. 559–572; English ed., p. 661–681), and a geographical index (Polish ed., p. 573–579; English ed., p. 683–692), found at the end of the book.

This publication is a very important academic and editorial achievement. The community of Byzantinists and Church historians has received a helpful tool in the form of a clear and – from a substantive point of view – extremely well-prepared edition of *The Church Histories* by John Diakrinomenos and Theodore Lector. The authors of the present work have demonstrated not only their wide-ranging expertise and knowledge, but have also proven that they have an innovative approach to the study and publication of sources, and are not afraid to question established views and put forward their own hypotheses.

It should be clearly emphasized that the translations of the works of the titular authors into Polish and English constitute the first translations of their texts into modern languages, which is a significant achievement in itself.

Thanks to their translation and publication in English, the present edition has a chance to reach a remarkably wide audience. It may include academics researching the legacy of the Byzantine state, all those interested in the history of the Church in the East, but also doctoral students, students of various fields of study, and all enthusiasts of the late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages.

I am convinced that the publication of such an edition of *The Church Histories* of John Diakrinomenos and Theodore Lector may spark interesting discussions in the scholarly community and provide impetus to further research.

Translated by Katarzyna Szuster-Tardi

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