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REQUEST INFORMATION

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Journal Title: Journal of early Christian studies
Journal Vol: 7
Journal Issue: 2
Journal Year: 1999
Article Title: One right reading: a guide to Irenaeus
Article Author: Kelhoffer, James A.
Article Pages: 303-304

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Not found as cited. Nothing by Kelhoffer in contents for vols 5 or 7.
[Quoted text hidden]
traditions. That may be a better way to express his views than to speak of
"Christianization."

We may all hope that Demoen will extend his studies further into medieval
and Byzantine literature as he says he intends (203). I urge him to tell us more
about the relationship of Greek religious myth and Christian faith in the works
of The Theologian. He is prepared to take us further into such questions; we
would be happy to follow.

Frederick W. Norris, Emmanuel School of Religion, Johnson City, TN

Christoph Markschies
Zwischen den Welten wandern:
Strukturen des antiken Christentums
Europäische Geschichte
Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1997
Pp. 287. DM 18.90.

In Zwischen den Welten wandern Christoph Markschies offers a "structural
history" (Strukturgeschichte) of early Christianity, meaning one which focuses
on its development from the first to the fourth centuries in a situation where, as
his title suggests, its adherents moved back and forth between their religious
world and the earthly society to which they also belonged.

The book is composed of four main sections. The working principle of the first
("space and time") is that for a long time Christianity was nearly exclusively
confined to the Roman Empire, leading Christians to share the general notion
that the empire was the only world which mattered. Certainly the empire's
languages, geography, and factors of regionalism (one could add: plain politics)
played a role in how Christianity developed. In their view of time, pagan and
Christian did differ, not over the perception that history develops toward a
predetermined objective, but over the nature of that objective. This difference
resulted in a divergence between them over "diagnosing the times" (39). Specific
consequences of the Christian perspective on time were the growing significance
of Sunday, the dating of Easter, a developing sense of the "liturgical year," and
various approaches taken by ancient historiographers to Christianity's past. In
this context, Markschies makes a plea for dropping the term Frükhchristianismus
from current discourse (46), though he considers second-century Christianity to
have marked a significant shift from its earlier forms.

The second section ("the individual") recounts how Christians thought of the
major turning-points in their lives, from birth through conversion and baptism,
to death. The account includes the notion of conversion in pagan antiquity, rates
of conversion and births among Christians, and the differing approaches to death
by Christian and pagan. From these considerations Markschies turns to Chris-
tian practices and piety. These include the development of the New Testament
canon (but with no mention of the Muratorian Fragment), scriptural reading,
prayer, pilgrimages, relics, fasting, and practices (such as reciting incantations)
borrowed from paganism. The section concludes with several pages on Christian
daily life (Alltagsleben), which externally diverged from its pagan counterpart
mainly in small things (138), the most visible being perhaps the range of
permitted occupations and entertainments.

The third section ("lifestyles") deals mainly with marriage, family life,
slavery, the place of women, and asceticism. The principal theme here is that the
church attempted to modify behavior in these categories in the light of gospel
teaching, without seriously interrogating the quality of the social constructs
themselves. The section closes with a (surprisingly) brief account of monasticism.

In the final section ("the community") Markschies deals with worship services
(format, texts, space), penance, and acts of charity. He also looks at communal
life, community structures, communications between communities, and minis-
tries (but with no mention of "ministries of the Word").

Markschies has covered considerable ground and communicates a broad
spectrum of scholarly research, including his own. He is careful to point out
what is known, what is not, and what is open to discussion. The reader is assisted
by ten illustrations and two maps, as well as a glossary, a bibliography, and
several indices. The bibliography is wide-ranging, but could have included Maier
on the social setting of early ministries, Meeks on urban Christianity, and
Beatrice on Porphyry. On the other hand, the author's German Evangelical
origins lead him to a predilection for Harnack and Campenhausen. On a more
minor note, there are no references for the Oxyrhynchus papyri (34), nor for the
third-century Roman opponent of married "priests" (224). Also, Markschies
refers to Athanasius as the "patriarch" of Alexandria (36 and 66), while
indicating this term came into use considerably later (see 201).

As its name implies, the volumes of the "Europäische Geschichte" series aim
to display various facets of European history. Like this contribution by Markschies,
most were written especially for the series, and are offered at what in Europe is
a very reasonable price. Unfortunately, they can only appeal to readers of
German, who will find in the work reviewed here a fine introduction to the social
dimensions of early Christianity.

J. Kevin Coyle, Saint Paul University, Ottawa

Mary Ann Donovan
One Right Reading? A Guide to Irenaeus
Pp. x + 197. $18.95 (paper).

"Who is a Christian? Is there a hallmark of Christianity, a clear and recognizable
Christian identity?" With such questions Donovan begins this volume intended
"to serve as a companion to the reader of Adversus haereses . . . [that] will lead
others back to the text of Irenaeus himself" (3–4). Donovan's Guide is not a
Joyce E. Salisbury  
*Perpetua's Passion: The Death and Memory of a Young Roman Woman*  
New York: Routledge, 1997  
Pp. 228. $19.95 (paper).

Salisbury examines martyrdom as a paradigm for understanding the conflict of cultures and ideas. She accomplishes this through a close reading of the *Passio* of Perpetua and her companions. The book is structured in “ever-narrowing” concentric circles of context: “Rome,” “Carthage,” and “The Christian Commu-