

Narrating Martyrdom. Rewriting Late-Antique Virgin Martyrs in Byzantium, translated with an introduction and notes by ANNE P. ALWIS (Translated Texts for Byzantinists 9). Liverpool: Liverpool University Press 2020. 224 pp. – ISBN: 978-1-789-62155-6 (£85.00)

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The ninth volume of the Liverpool series “Translated Texts for Byzantinists” presents a hagiographical study by ANNE P. ALWIS concerning the translation of three martyrdoms about women saints whose lives were dated to the early Christian ages. The translation is accompanied by an introduction and a commentary as well. It goes without saying how important and how much welcomed works of this kind are, since they add to our knowledge about such an interesting and intriguing field, as Byzantine hagiography is. The three saints discussed by ALWIS are Saint Ia of Persia (BHG 762), Saint Horaiozele of Constantinople (BHG 2180) and Saint Tatiana of Rome (BHG 1699b), whose *Passiones* were reconsidered and rewritten by the *monk* and *presbyter* Makarios, Constantine Akropolites (both in 13th–14th c.), and an anonymous scholar of the 9th c., respectively. All three texts are delivered by the same manuscript (which contains a collection of nineteen *Vitae / Passiones*), codex Florentinus BNC Conv. Soppr. B.I.1214 (Olivieri 50), dated to the 14th c.

The study is organized in four chapters: first comes the “Introduction” (pp. 1–30) which presents the objective of the study and the methods ALWIS uses in trying to define the scope of rewriting hagiographical texts, followed by the chapter named “The Authors” (pp. 31–43) which describes the profile of the two known writers (the third is unidentifiable) and gives information about the manuscript tradition of the three *Passiones*. The third chapter deals with the “Adaptation” (pp. 45–114) and analyzes each revision philologically and narratively, comparing it also to its original text (“simulacrum”), and finally the last chapter “Translations and Notes” (pp. 115–185) provides the translation of the three adaptations, together with the commentary. A bibliography (pp. 187–208) and an index (pp. 209–210) conclude the book.

As an overview, the translation is really useful and gives the opportunity to a wide reading audience to get acquaintance with a special genre of Byzantine literature. It stands out for its accuracy and clarity, its fluency and the

rich vocabulary used, which attests for a deep understanding of the original text. Some misapprehensions though will be next discussed. However, the introduction, the analysis of the adaptations and the commentary do not really reach the standards of the translation; the introduction in many cases disorients the reader, providing information that ALWIS presents as a step beyond in research, but in fact it consists of common places in hagiography. On the other hand, ALWIS' interpretation of the text, even though promising to escape from traditional norms and follow a modern approach, ends up sometimes in far-fetched statements, while at the same time a number of comments show some exaggeration in analysis which may result to false conclusions; even though the bibliography cited is extensive, yet it seems not fully exploited, turning some of them into a meaningless verbosity.

ALWIS contradicts herself, when she promises to present as new, information already attested by the bibliography, or offer new perspectives based on misunderstood secondary sources. Her persistence to reject "traditional" theories in favor of a "modern" aspect (which in most cases is not supported by any research but based only on personal assumptions) unveils an effort to treat saint's *Vitae* and *Passiones* simply as stories. Hagiography though is not just storytelling but a field strictly joined to theology and cult, so her efforts to find analogies with Greta Thunberg (p. 6) or Shakespeare and pop songs (p. 62) are merely unfortunate.

With the very first phrase of the introduction, ALWIS informs the reader that "This book reconceives the praxis of rewriting Byzantine hagiography between the eighth and fourteenth centuries as a skilful initiative in communication and creative freedom, and as a form of authorship" (p. 1). My question is, how can a researcher promise to end up to safe conclusions for such a long and heterogeneous period of 600 years, judging just from three examples of revisions (two of them in fact coming from the same Palaiologan era) and without risking to present dangerous generalizations, given that the targets and trends of hagiography are not the same throughout the whole Byzantine era.

ALWIS also notices that the three writers "opted to rewrite the martyrdom of a female virgin saint who suffered and died centuries earlier" and she also traces that the aforementioned authors "tailored their compositions to influence their audiences and to foster their individual interests". The book also deals with "the agency of the hagiographer, the instrumental use of the authorial *persona* and its impact on an audience, and hagiography

as a layered discourse” and ALWIS’ scope is to show that the three revisers expressed their own personal trouble when “manipulating” the women saints’ voices in order to express in a hidden way their own political and/or social issues, and also pointing to another historical period than the early Byzantine (p. 1). This of course is not rare in Byzantine hagiography and particularly for the Palaiologan period, in which Constantine Akropolites and Makarios are counted. ALWIS does not offer new knowledge when promising to show that the revisers used the historical background to refer to their recent history or to a disappointing and dark present (iconoclasm, fall of Constantinople 1204, Church crisis and the oncoming Turkish invasion). This is in fact a reinvention, and of course she is aware of this valued technique of the hagiographers (pp. 23–24). The reasons which implied revisions differed from time to time, according to special circumstances: if the theological purification from intrusions of heretical elements that alter the dogmatic accuracy and historicity of the hagiological texts was the dominant ideology in the first centuries of Byzantium, the relationship between their style and content raised the question during 9th–10th c. whether the “high” content of the subject needed or not any rhetorical embellishment; in the Palaiologan era, on the other hand, hagiography experienced a new flourishing with preference to the saints of the iconoclast period. It would have been more interesting and honest if the above programmatic statements just promised to show how each text is composed according to a rule or diverges from it.

Moreover, the study promises to offer an “innovative analysis” which is supposed to “deconstruct the monolithic portrayal of literature in the eastern medieval world” and describe how the byzantine authors communicated with their audience through a symbolic text with hidden allusions / implications, distanced from the traditional approach focused mostly on language, rhetoric, vocabulary, syntax, etc. (pp. 3–4 and 27–28). Yet she dedicates pp. 62–70, 82–88 and 107–110 to “The Contribution of Grammatical and Stylistic Revision” to each of the three texts. I doubt if the recent and rich bibliography cited by ALWIS (but not fully studied by her), especially on p. 28, fn. 133, does not take into account the grammar, the syntax or the vocabulary in order to analyze any such text and trace similarities and differences between the original and its revision. Furthermore, I do not really see what the point of “underestimating” any linguistic or philological study is, when it is through this means too that she comes to conclusions about dating (at least the revision of St. Tatiana, pp. 42–43), or about the degree of elaboration that Makarios displayed to “manoeuvre his

audience towards his mindset” (p. 48 and p. 70 where Makarios is judged as “evidently (...) an intelligent and highly skilled author, whose use of language carries a great deal of agency”).

Her criteria to choose to work on the aforementioned women saints seem to focus mostly on the fact that they were all virgin martyrs and included in the same manuscript, which is not really a sufficient reason (p. 5) – what about the other sixteen women saints of the collection? If she really wanted to work exclusively on this codex, then her approach should have been entirely different, and she should have taken into consideration the total number of the *Vitae/Passiones* included in it. Besides, she herself admits that the three adaptations share more differences than similarities. She considers “most fascinating of all” the fact that the three Byzantine authors chose to write about a female martyr (pp. 5–6), but her explanations for the reason that implied such a work are not supported by any bibliographical reference and mostly express personal ideas and aspects, which I do not think were those of the Byzantine hagiographers. Her modern point of view does not seem to take in account the first and main target of all Byzantine hagiographers when writing (or rewriting) *Vitae* and *Passiones* of saints, martyrs and ascetics, men and women, which was to depict for their reading public or audience a vivid model of Christian life that will invite everyone to imitate. Makarios, Akropolites and the anonymous scholar were not the only ones to write about a female saint; there exist a respectable overall number of *Vitae* and *Passiones* of women saints in Byzantine hagiography, and the bibliography ALWIS provides renders enough evidence for this. Makarios indeed declares that he wrote his speech (λόγος), ὡς ἀρχέτυπὸν τινα πίνακα τοῖς μεθ’ ὕστερον παραδοῦναι (3.10–11; see also p. 117 of the translation), but she does not seem to exploit this information, as she spends not any comment on it. The three authors were just following the rules and the fact that they chose to bring forward a woman saint instead of man, either has to do with their personal pious preferences or, most probably, with the certain occasion (commemoration on a feast day, inauguration of a church on the saint’s name, worship of relics, creation of a new holy icon) that implied the composition of such a text. In any case, the “female voice” in hagiography cannot be outlined just by focusing on three cases.

ALWIS claims that the revised works about the three women saints should be treated as something new and different and separated from their models (p. 10), and of course not inferior to them (p. 11). Everyone would agree that although a revision is indisputably a new creation, it owes at the same

time its existence to the original text and it is directly dependent on it. Besides, if authenticity and verity were of major importance for the Quinisext Oecumenical Council (692), this demanded, first of all, that the rewriting of the *Vitae* should be accomplished with respect to their content, and not distancing from the original. This indisputable fact testifies for the importance of the role of the hagiographer and shows the art of writing as the “vehicle” and the hagiographer as the means of spreading the saints to his audience. Of course, the hagiographer is fully aware of his responsibility.

The chapter entitled “Manuscript Context and Audience” (pp. 11–20) needs to be totally revised. Her insistence on trying to identify the features of the audience of each text does not seem to lead to a specific point. It is uncontested the fact that hagiographical texts are pieces of literature, addressed to a real (and not hypothetical, as ALWIS claims on p. 9) audience, either as original texts or as their revised (in a more elaborated way) *metaphraseis*. What differs is the quality and the educational level of the audience each time, the historical frame, the reason for the composition of (or reworking on) such a text, the target the author wants to achieve which is implied always by the circumstances, and maybe the literary trends of the writer’s time, as well. ALWIS does not seem to take in account that, even though the hagiographers wrote their texts for a certain reason and addressed them to a certain audience taking into account its particularities, that does not mean that their works could not be used again in similar occasions in the future; she discusses that idea, however, later on (pp. 20–21). So, the audience is mostly miscellaneous, and can even be totally different from the original one. The Florentine manuscript enforces this idea, since it appears (even to a non-Byzantinist) to be a handy collection to be used not unlikely in a convent.

ALWIS though characterizes the codex as a “curious compendium”, points out that it is a “relatively unusual” “gender-specific” compilation probably addressed to a private audience, which “contains a curious mix of the famous, the infamous, and those previously consigned to the shadows” (pp. 15–16). She also comes to the result that the compiler “wanted texts that were uncommon” (p. 16) and calls the manuscript “intriguing” for its selection of both famous and “far from mainstream” female saints (p. 18). She then tries to examine the century in which the saints lived, their social status and the features of each one, trying to investigate any possible binding element (pp. 18–19), and finally coming to the conclusion that the three texts “are found in an unusual codex” (p. 20). A careful look at A. OLIVIERI’S

description of the Florentine manuscript (which she judges as brief, though it appears to be enlightening enough) puts everything in its right order: the codex is a *Menologium*, starting from St. Paraskeve of Epivatai whose feast day is in October 14, going on to St. Euphrosyne the Younger in November 8, Theophano the Empress in December 16, and continuing thus throughout the year until August 20, one of the feast days of St. Photeini the Samariteis (the only exception to this calendar sequence of saints being the last speech by John Chrysostom dedicated to the *Martyrium* of St. Drosis; the latter, is venerated probably at July 28, but as it is the last text of the codex, one can make various assumptions. See, A. OLIVIERI, *Indicis codicum graecorum Magliabechianorum supplementum*. SIFC 5 [1897] pp. 413–415).

According to H. DELEHAYE (*Vita sanctae Olympiadis et narratio Sergiae de eiusdem translatione*. AB 15 [1896] pp. 406–409), who has also provided a description of the codex, it consists of a collection for use probably to a convent, and this may be proved by the *formulae* εὐλόγησον πάτερ (7 times) and εὐλόγησον μήτηρ (1 time), which both appear in the manuscript. ALWIS is aware of this last important detail (p. 17), but does not seem to utilize it, since in the previous page contradicts herself claiming that the codex “may have had a non-liturgical use” (p. 16).

In the chapter entitled “The authors”, ALWIS, after introducing the two eponymous writers, she then gives an abstract of each revision, mentions the manuscripts that deliver each text and their editions (pp. 31–43), as well as provides information about the texts’ placing into a historical context. This part of the study is rather enlightening, though a remark here is unavoidable: when dealing with manuscripts, the scholar is supposed to refer to the library catalogues that include their descriptions, rather than just citing the “Pinakes” data basis. Major examples here remain the three dossiers of Ia (pp. 35–36), Horaiozele (p. 39) and Tatiana (p. 41), where an important number of manuscripts are discussed, with no reference to any manuscript catalogue. Also, my suggestion is that the three different plots of the revisions (pp. 34–35, 38–39 and 40–41) would rather be inserted to the next chapter (“Adaptation”), since thus a repetition of some kind is inevitable.

Certain remarks for the chapter “Adaptation”:

- pp. 49–52: I think it is absolutely normal for a monk of the early Palaiologan era like Makarios, who is most probably addressed to an audience that almost fully ignores the early Christian history and even more the Per-

sian, to try to sketch Ia's historical background, using information easily acknowledged by even unlettered people. This is why he refers from the first paragraph to the Roman Empire that came after Alexander the Great and to the end of the Macedonian sovereignty, and places Ia's martyrdom 5500 years after the Creation of the world and 600 years after Alexander, giving thus to his recite a chronographical nuance. It is in the second paragraph that Makarios focuses on the time of Diocletianus and Shapur (who reigned at the same period the Roman and the Persian Empires, respectively) when a great persecution against Christians had started, to present for the first time Ia. When ALWIS claims that "However, concerning Ia, Shapur, martyrdom, or even Persia, there is nothing but a resounding silence" (p. 49), she is just hasty; Makarios smoothly introduces his protagonist to his audience, placing her into a historical context: Τοῖν δυοῖν τοίνυν βασιλείων παρανόμως τε καὶ ἀθέως τῆς ἀρχῆς, Ῥωμαίων τε καὶ Περσῶν ἐπειλημμένοι, βαρὺς διωγμὸς κατὰ τῶν εὐσεβούντων ἀνὰ πᾶσαν ἐκινεῖτο τὴν οἰκουμένην. Τότε τοίνυν καὶ ἡ καλλιπάρθενος καὶ θαυμαστὴ μάρτυς Ἰα – δεῖ γάρ με πρὸς αὐτὴν ἐλθεῖν, δι' ἧνπερ καὶ τὸν παρόντα λόγον ἐνεστησάμην – ἱστόρηται τοῖς πρὸς ἡμῶν (...) (2.2-5).

- Makarios does not "laud" "David, the biblical king" and "Alexander the Great" (p. 49); he just refers to one of David's Psalms when describing Octavianus' domination (καὶ ῥάβδον σιδηρᾶν ἄνωθεν ὁ θεῖος προεῖπε Δαβίδ (1.15); cf. Psalm 2.9.1: ποιμανεῖς αὐτοὺς ἐν ῥάβδῳ σιδηρᾷ) and uses the name of Alexander to date Ia's life and martyrdom: ἀπὸ δε γε Ἀλεξάνδρου ἔτους ἀρχῆς ἑξακοσιοστοῦ ἔτους συμπεραινομένου (1.16).

- ALWIS suggests that in paragraph 52, when Makarios illustrates the transfer of Ia's relics from Persia to Constantinople, that "he then seemingly digresses with a succinct history of Byzantium from Alexios III to Andronikos II, castigating the former and eulogizing the latter" (p. 49). It is not a short history of Byzantium what is explained on paragraph 52, but the narration of the fate of Ia's relics, after the Latin occupation of Constantinople and the destruction of the holy temple in her honor (τὸ ἱερόν τέμενος τῆς μάρτυρος Ἰας διαφθαρέν, ἐπὶ τῇ τῶν Μαγγάνων μονῇ τὸ θεῖον ταύτης λείψανον μετετέθη – 52.33–34). Andronikos II Palaiologos is reasonably praised since he is the Emperor by the time (52.37–39), but the evidence ALWIS provides in order to introduce that "Ia herself potentially symbolises Andronikos" (p. 50) and finally to trace a kind of propaganda by Makarios in order to bestow the Emperor's legitimacy to the throne is not enough to convince the reader; she only refers to an unpublished yet article of hers (pp. 50–52, fns. 16, 18 and 26) and compares Ia to Alexander, David and

Moses, the ideal models of kingship from 1240 (following D. ANGELOV, *Imperial Ideology and Political Thought in Byzantium, 1204–1330*. Cambridge 2007, pp. 79 and 83–91).

- As for the date of Acropolites' speech about St. Horaiozele and the reference to the enemy coming from the East ("Hagarenes") which might work as a chronological indication, together with the request for the Church unity (paragraph 10), the data from the text is not sufficient in order to consider as the best date the period between 1300 and 1305, just because another speech by the same author is also set approximately in the same period (i.e. the speech for St. John the Merciful, pp. 73–75). A similar narration by a contemporary author of Acropolites' milieu, Theodore Mouzalon, in honor of St. Niketas the Young, one of the first victims of the Turks whose martyrdom possibly took place between the years 1282–1284 in Nyssa already under Turkish (Persian in the text) occupation, shows a respective ending. The author pleads for the intervention of the saint for the restoration of peace and unity in religious issues and the interception of the Turkish threat: Ἄλλ' ἐποπτεύοις καὶ ἡμᾶς ἄνωθεν, ἀθλητά, τῇ παρρησίᾳ καὶ πρεσβείᾳ τῇ εἰς Θεόν, τὴν τε ἐκκλησίαν αὐτοῦ τὸν τῆς ἀληθείας λόγον ὀρθοτομοῦσαν ἐπὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ στηρίζων θεμελίῳ τῆς πίστεως καὶ αὐξῶν ταῖς τῆς ὁμονοίας καὶ ὁμοψυχίας ἀγαθαῖς ἐπιδόσεσι, τὴν τε φιλόχριστον βασιλείαν κρατῦντων καὶ πολεμίους ὑποτάσσων αὐτῇ, ἔθνη τε ἀτίθασα καταρράσων τὰ μὴ προσκυνοῦντα τὸν ποιήσαντα Κύριον. Καὶ στήσαις τὴν περσικὴν καταγίδα καὶ κεφαλὰς ἀνόμων δυναστῶν διακόψαις, τὴν μαρτυρικὴν ἐπανατείνας κατ' αὐτῶν δεξιάν, καλῶς κραταιωθεῖσαν ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ τῶν δυνάμεων. Τάχα γὰρ διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ἀπαρχὴ θυσίας εὐπροσδέκτου γέγονας τῷ Θεῷ καὶ ἐπ' αὐτῶν τῶν ὄρων τῶν περσικῶν τὸν μαρτυρικὸν ὑπέμεινας θάνατον, ἵν' ὡσπερ σεαυτῷ καὶ χριστιανοῖς ἐπαμύνων, ὧν καὶ πείρα τὴν ταλαιπωρίαν ἐγνώκεις, ὄλην τρέψαις καὶ κατὰ τῶν ἀθέων τὴν ἄμυναν. This text is dated between 1290 and 1294 and probably related to the expedition of Andronikos II to Asia Minor during the ages 1290–1293. (D. SAMARA, *Θεόδωρος Μουζάλων. Ἡ ζωὴ καὶ τὸ συγγραφικὸ ἔργο ἐνὸς λογίου τοῦ 13ου αἰῶνα [Βυζαντινά Κείμενα καὶ Μελέτες 64]*. Θεσσαλονίκη 2018, pp. 73, 118–119 and 155.641–156.651.)

I would also like to stress on some misapprehensions or misinterpretations that have to do with the translation and the accompanying comments:

- First of all, the references to the variants of the apparatus criticus of each original text remain underutilized by the reader, unless the latter has direct access to the Greek text. Otherwise, it is not easy to follow the variants

discussed without the original text to compare it with, let alone when these are mentioned mostly translated.

- What is the need of providing almost similar translations? I will just give an example of many: on p. 158 the main text translates (ll. 5–6): “Her glance was directed devoutly towards the heavens, where God dwells” and on the same p. 158, fn. 15 delivers: “Her glance was directed heavenwards, and she gazed wishfully at God, who dwells there” (where also the indication “lit.” and the citation from the original text).
- p. 115, fn. 5: The Byzantines placed the Creation of the world in the year 5508 (and not 5509, as it is stated by ALWIS; the year 5509 is used only for the months from September to December).
- p. 142, fn. 109: The *formula* λιμὴν σιωπῆς appears several times in literature before the Palaiologan era. It is pointless to refer just to contemporary with the text authors, since it is obvious that they repeat earlier works (i.e. Gregory of Nyssa, Euthymius Zigabenus, *Vita Bartolomei*, Theodorus Hyskakenus, Manuel Gabalas).
- p. 147: I am not sure if the translation: “The apostle was guided to the woman who was fixed on her path” responds to the text’s ἐποδηγήθη πρὸς τὴν ἀπλανῶς φέρουσαν (2: 33), since the subject of the verb ἐποδηγήθη seems to be “Horiaozele” and not “the apostle”.
- On p. 148 (fn. 21), ALWIS refers to the monastery of the Archangel Michael to which Horiaozele maintained her dwelling, noticing that Acropolites changes the term εὐκτήριον, used in the Synaxarion to describe a cenobiotic place of living dated to the early Christian years, to the word μονή (which in fact explains what εὐκτήριον / εὐκτήριος οἶκος is). However, ALWIS identifies this εὐκτήριον (or μονή) to the Monastery of the Archangel Michael on Mount Auxentios, though no evidence exists for this identification and not enough data given by the text may lead us to such a suggestion (see also TIB 13, 780). The reference to a convent founded by Apostle Andrew and named after the Archangel Michael (ὁ θεῖος οὗτος ἀπόστολος (i.e. Apostle Andrew) μονῆ φέρων καθίδρυσε – Μιχαὴλ τοῦ τῶν ἄνω δυνάμεων στρατηγούντος ἐπόνυμος ἢ μονή, 3:56–58), during the reign of Decius, to my opinion, does not permit relevance to the aforementioned monastery on Mount Auxentios, re-established in the 13th century by Alexios Palaiologos, grandfather of Michael VIII (and not Michael VIII himself, as ALWIS states in fn. 21). I would like to point out though a curious reference to a monastery of Saint Horiaozele, not attested anywhere else but in the Typikon of the Pantokrator Monastery in Constantinople: ἡ μονὴ τῶν Γαλακρηγῶν καὶ ἡ κατ’ ἐπίδοσιν περιελθοῦσα αὐτῇ μονῇ τῆς

ἀγίας Ὁραιοζήλης μετὰ πάντων τῶν διαφερόντων αὐταῖς σωματικῶν τε καὶ ἀσωμάτων δικαίων (...) (P. GAUTIER, *Le typikon du Christ Sauveur Pantocrator*. REByz 32 (1974), ll. 1565–1567).

- Fn. 23 (p. 149) is dedicated to the interpretation of the word δι’ ἀμφοῖν (3:62, 63) Acropolites uses in order to refer to the struggles of the saint “with the flesh and spirit” (σαρκί τε (...) καὶ πνεύματι, 3:61–62) against the demons, which are described more vividly in ch. 4. ALWIS considers this an “emphasis” of Acropolites “that could be a way of singling out Horaziozele’s exceptionality”, referring to A.-M. TALBOT’s observation that “women were not encouraged to lead ascetic lives in the Palaiologan period” (A.-M. M. TALBOT, *A Comparison of the Monastic Experience of Byzantine Men and Women*. *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* [1985] pp. 16–18). TALBOT in the above pages really deals with the issue of the absence of women saints or hermits in the Palaiologan era, but this is beside the point, since Acropolites here does not make any reference to heremitic life, but instead he wants to present the ascetic (=austere) life every saint (or holy person) is supposed to lead with the exercise of both the body and the spirit, and makes use of a common place, known even from the time of Saint John Climax. I think it is traced here a misinterpretation of the terms *heremitism* and *ascetism*, which leads to unreasonable suppositions.
- On p. 149, fn. 25, ἑτεροδόξον should be corrected to ἑτεροδόξων.
- I would prefer the translation of τί πρὸς ἀπολογία εἰς νέωτα προβαλούμεθα; (6: 131–132) as: “what sort of apology shall we bring forth next time?”.
- On p. 152, fn. 45, ALWIS’s correction to HALKIN’s quote of Daniel is pointless, since (according to HALKIN) Dan. 3.55 cites: εὐλογητὸς εἶ, ὁ βλέπων ἀβύσσους καθήμενος ἐπὶ χερουβίμ, καὶ αἰνετὸς καὶ δεδοξασμένος εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας, which of course corresponds to the text; however, if she really wanted to give a better quote of Daniel, then she would rather choose Dan. 3.26, which coincides with the words uttered by Horaziozele (7: 163–164).
- p. 154, fn. 50: I would correct ALWIS’s correction to πάραυτα, το πάραυτά (τε).
- pp. 155–156, fn. 2 about the Emperor Alexander: it is unnecessary to provide so many details about him. His biography is not the issue.
- p. 156: the comment on fn. 3 is rather confusing, since a libation is part of a sacrifice, a ritual offering to the ancient Gods. “Alexander wasted exceedingly himself on the libations of the sacrifices for worshipping the idols” is to my opinion the meaning of this sentence.

- p. 157, fns. 9 and 11: the information given has no bibliographical references.
- p. 160, fn. 24: the reference to F. HALKIN (Trois textes grecs inédits sur les saints Hermyle et Stratonice martyrs à Singidunum (Belgrade). AB [1971] p. 24, n. 1) is pointless, since the allusion to the Eucharist as ἀνάιμακτος θυσία is such a common place in Early Christian and Byzantine texts; it would be preferable to refer, for example, to Church Fathers.
- p. 163, fn. 37: it is more likely “the four men in white” (λευχειμονοῦντας) standing in front of Tatiana to be interpreted as angels than martyrs, since just a few lines before, the appearance of an “angelic power” was that “grew the guards listless and increasingly perplexed” (ἀγγελικῆ δυνάμει, 6.13).
- p. 164, fn. 38: the adjective καρτερόψυχος is not applied to only one female (Susanna), but also to Saint Augusta (or Vassilissa), the wife of the Emperor Maxentius who believed in God thanks to Saint Catherine and died as a martyr, too. (*Passio Sanctae Aecaterinae* (BHG 31) 22.13: καρτερόψυχος βασιλῆς. In: J. VITEAU, Passions des saints Écaterine et Pierre d’ Alexandrie, Barbara et Anysia. Paris 1897.) I argue, though, that in any Byzantine writer’s mind existed any separation between “male” and “female” adjectives, in order to attribute the same – more or less – ascetic features to a saint, either man or woman. In Byzantine hagiography οὐκ ἔνι ἄρσεν καὶ θῆλυ (Gal 3.28).
- p. 170, fn. 66: I am not really in agreement with the observation that ll. 10. 21–24 (Οἱ δὲ ὄχλοι περιπλανώμενοι ... ἑαυτούς) “imply that the citizens’ false belief that Tatiana has sacrificed / will sacrifice has sanctified them as well”; there is no much evidence from the text to make such an assumption.
- p. 171, fn. 69: It should also be added that these “three Olympians” are connected with each other with strong family bonds, thus showing the personal religious preferences of the Emperor and the gods he leans upon for protection; Tatiana is like destroying the gods he mostly respects and worships.
- p. 173, fn. 81: The right-hand side traditionally is regarded as lucky; the unlucky is the left-hand one. But still, this sign may be interpreted as a “foreshadow of Alexander’s doom”, since it shows that no good luck is any longer on his side.
- p. 173, fns. 83, 84; Τατιανὴ τὸν ἐπινίκιον ὕμνον θεῶ τῶ νικοποιῶ προσφέρουσα μεγάλας φωναῖς τὴν εὐχάριστον δοξολογίαν ἀπεδίδου (12. 45–47): to my opinion, with the words ἐπινίκιον ὕμνον (triumphal hymn) and εὐχάριστον δοξολογίαν (thanksgiving glorification / doxology / laudation)

the anonymous metaphrast refers to the triumphal hymn (one of the most ancient hymns and still in use during the Orthodox Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom): “Holy, holy, holy, Lord Sabaoth, heaven and earth are filled with Your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.” (see, R. P. J. GOAR, *Εὐχολόγιον sive rituale graecorum complectens ritus et ordines divinae liturgiae*. Venice 1730 (Graz ²1960), pp. 141–142.)

- p. 174: The word τρισάθλιος (13. 11, 24) should be translated better as “wretched”, since it is spoken in a moral sense.
- p. 175, fn. 91: τοὺς τῆς διανοίας ὀφθαλμοὺς (13.) is a common place in Byzantine literature, attested many times in various works.
- p. 177, fn. 105: I do not see the point of discussing an adjective so often used in literature; according to the TLG, the word πάνσοφος is attested about 2,000 times in various contexts. In order to come to safe conclusions, the researcher has to check all references, one by one; I doubt of course if such a work has been done here (and it is not the issue of the present study), so my estimation is that generalizations of that kind are dangerous to lead on false assumptions. For the record, I should add that the word (“before the seventh century”) is also found in tragic poetry and is attributed (throughout the centuries) to both men and women (see, for instance, Ignatius Antiochenus, Epistle 1.1.3.1: ὦ πάνσοφε γύναι, *Acoluthiae Sancti Mercurii* 1.291: Αἰκατερίνα παρθένε πάνσοφε, Romanus Melodus 35.5.4: πάνσοφε κόρη (for Virgin Mary)).
- p. 179, fn. 115: The archaeological information provided is meager enough to permit identification with any known monument. And even the text itself delivers: ἔν τινι τῶν εἰδωλικῶν σηκῶν, without further details (17. 2–3).

As for the bibliography, ALWIS does not use any abbreviations and consequently many bibliographical entries are fully repeated in the footnotes. Abbreviations would prevent this waste of space. Also, I trace a lack of hagiographical studies written in Greek which would have been very useful to her. And of course, there is no need to refer to the *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (handy enough though it may be) when there exists so rich bibliography; the examples of Manuel Holobolos and Maximos Planudes remain eloquent (p. 24, fns. 118 and 119). She could at least have referred to the *Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit*. Finally, the rudimentary index is not helpful to the reader.

A small detail of the publication: the odd headers to the pages of each martyrdom (judging, at least, from the martyrdoms of Saint Ia and Saint

Tatiana) are “Makarios” and “Anonymous”, respectively). The odd header for the martyrdom of Saint Horaiozele is “Horaiozele of Constantinople”; I think it should be “Constantine Akropolites”.

My impression is that ALWIS desires to persuade the reader to read hagiography on a different basis. She does not have the means to support this idea, except her personal aspect which many times does not express the Byzantine author’s perspective, and tries not to explain the texts using the theory as an instrument, but instead, her aspect seems to make the texts fit the theory. Moreover, an adequate documentation should not be based on a forthcoming publication that the reader may have no access to. Curiously, this happens when she desires to ensure a number of personal “intriguing” statements, not based on any other bibliography. Unlocking an old text using as a key modern theories is undoubtedly a rather challenging task, but one has to be rather careful, since he/she risks attributing to the writer characteristics he never bared and intentions he never had. ALWIS does not really meet the goals she has set, except providing an expedient translation.

Keywords

female martyrs; hagiography; translation