

FERNANDO NAVARRO ANTOLÍN, *Las nupcias de Filología y Mercurio. Vol. I. Libros I-II: Las bodas místicas*, Madrid: CSIC, 2016, 484 pp., ISBN 978-84-00-10087-2.

This volume of the fine series Alma Mater, from the *Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas*, is a fine contribution to the study of Martianus Capella, which has been flourishing in recent times. The present volume covers the first two books of Martianus' *De nuptiis*, those which precede the exposition of the liberal arts (Books I-IX), with a rich Introduction and the edition and commentary. Volume II will deal with the Trivium, and Volume III with the Quadrivium.

The Introduction addresses Martianus' life and work, the structure of *De nuptiis*, with special attention rightly paid to allegory and to the philosophical and religious sources of the first two books. Another section is devoted to the sources of the encyclopedic expositions, and another to the remarkable *Wirkungsgeschichte* of Martianus' oeuvre. The last section is philological: it describes the manuscripts of *De nuptiis*, the codices of Martianus preserved in Spain, the editions, partial editions, and translations, with praises for mine, which honour me: "Ilaria Ramelli realizó una atinada traducción al italiano del *De nuptiis* completo, acompañada de un sólido y exhaustivo comentario" (cviii). My edition, with essays, commentary, and translations of the Mediaeval commentators on Martianus is also mentioned with appreciation (cix-cx). At the end of the Introduction, before the *Conspectus siglorum*, a full bibliography is supplied, of editions, translations, commentaries, and essays, in which I was glad to find some of my scholarship. I would have added perhaps some other essays in which Martianus features prominently.¹

Martianus is dated between the end of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth century as a contemporary of anti-Christian Macrobius and Rutilius Namatianus. Anti-Christian are also the first two books of Martianus' masterpiece (xviii). A.'s description of Martianus' intellectual stance, as a "pagan" Neoplatonist with Neopythagorean and some Stoic tracts (xx-xxi), who anchors the system of the liberal arts to Neoplatonism (xxiv/xxv), is correct. On p. xxxviii, A. refers to Danuta Shanzer's important work on

¹ My "The Debate on Apokatastasis in "Pagan" and Christian Platonists (Martianus, Macrobius, Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, and Augustine)," *ICS* 33-34, 2008-2009, 201-34; "Macrobius: Astrological Descents, Ascents, and Restorations," *MHNH* 14, 2014, 197-214; "Late Antiquity and the Transmission of Educational Ideals and Methods: The Western Empire," in *A Companion to Ancient Education*, ed. M. Bloomer, Oxford 2015, 267-78.

Martianus' fascination with divination (to which, for divination in Plato and Neoplatonism, one could add a substantial monograph by Peter Struck²), which is a further pointer to Martianus' paganism. A. explicitly receives my works on the influence of Apuleius on Martianus (xxix; xxxix) and those by Claudia Villa and Giovanni Reale on Botticelli's *Primavera* as a representation of Martianus' masterpiece. Following Guillaumin, A. notes (xxvi) that *De nuptiis* can be seen as an allegorical representation of the lifting up of human reason through knowledge, and that the return of the soul to its heavenly homeland is an important Neoplatonic theme, as I thoroughly emphasized elsewhere.³ This is also why medicine and architecture are excluded from Martianus' work, since they deal with matter and do not contribute to the elevation of the soul.

Each page of the edition is faced by a Spanish translation; at the bottom of the edition there is the critical apparatus, and at the bottom of the translation there are notes of commentary. These too are rich in philosophical and religious elucidations, e.g. 557, 560 ad many others. On p. cxiii A. mentions the editors, translators, and commentators on Martianus towards whom he acknowledges a debt in the preparation of his notes, among whom Danuta Shanzer and Ilaria Ramelli. I am honoured that my work could be of help. In n. 98 the origin of the etymologically-based interpretation of Apollo as bringer of calamities is drawn back to Macrobius *Sat.* 1.17.9; the parallel is correct, although the notion goes back to Stoic etymology, evident in Annaeus Cornutus (*Comp.* 32) and Heraclitus, and further to ancient Stoicism.⁴ Likewise for n. 143 the allegory of Juno and Jupiter contiguous to each other should be explained through the ancient Stoic allegoresis of Juno as air and Jupiter as aether, which Cornutus puts forward in *Comp.* 3 from ancient Stoicism.⁵ In n. 185, the reference to "clavar un clavo" at Volsinii could be clarified as the action of *pangere clavum*, hence the notion of *pax deorum*, which was so central in Roman political and religious thought. The notion of *pax deorum* is the gist of the relation between religion and politics in the Roman universal empire. Libanius, *Or.* 30.33, expressed very well the idea that the Roman Empire was based on *pax deorum*, when he stressed that the stability of the empire depended on the religious sacrifices performed in Rome. This is further confirmed by a

² Peter T. Struck, *Divination and Human Nature: A Cognitive History of Intuition in Classical Antiquity*, Princeton; Oxford 2016.

³ In "The Debate on Apokatastasis". Research on "pagan" philosophical notions of apokatastasis is ongoing.

⁴ See my *Anneo Cornuto, Compendio di teologia greca*, edition of the Greek text, monographic introductory essay, monographic integrative essay, translation, full commentary, bibliography, Milan 2003; *Allegoria: L'età classica*, Milan 2004; "Annaeus Cornutus and the Stoic Allegorical Tradition: Meaning, Sources, and Impact," *AITIA. Regards sur la culture hellénistique* 8 (2018); "Annaeus Cornutus," in *Oxford Handbook of Greek and Roman Mythography*, eds. R. Scott Smith and S.M. Trzaskoma, Oxford forthcoming.

⁵ Full documentation in Ramelli, *Cornuto*, commentary, n. 13-14.

somewhat earlier historical source, Cassius Dio in the Severan age, who clearly connected ancestral religious practices, that is, “pagan” traditional cults, with the political stability of the Roman Empire (52.36).

In *De nuptiis* 2.149, Philology refers to her own extensive reading of περὶ δαιμόνων, a title cited in Greek: A. in n. 468 refers to Apuleius’ *De deo Socratis*, which is a plausible reference, but there were also titles in Greek, such as Origen’s περὶ δαιμόνων. This treatise is usually ascribed to the “pagan” Origen, although it might be by the Christian Origen, also a disciple of Ammonius Saccas, in case the two Origenes were identifiable.⁶ N. 402 explains the notion of the Great Year, so important in Platonism (Porphyry, Proclus), and traces it back to Plato’s *Timaeus* 39D and *Republic*; I would add the *Politicus* as a basis for the doctrine of apokatastasis in Stoicism and Platonism.⁷ N. 475 rightly traces Martianus’ view of angels and use of *Angelus* in 2.154 to Porphyry, *ap.* Augustine 10.26. I only add that Porphyry in turn knew Christian ideas on angels from the Bible and Origen.

At the end of 2.142, after a reference to a *Syrus* who is identified with Iamblichus in n. 454 (as I did on p. 801 of my commentary), and one to a *Pharius senes* who is identified with Ammonius Saccas of Alexandria in n. 455, the teacher of both Origen and Plotinus, Martianus seems to criticize the doctrine of the resurrection. It must be noted that the reading here is corrupted: *Phasi (senis)* is a crux for the editor Willis (44); he even calls the whole section 142 *locus obscurissimus* (ibid.). A. follows a conjecture by Lenaz (as he explains on p. 142a, critical apparatus). It is even possible that the “old Alexandrian”—if this is indeed what Martianus wrote—was Origen himself, who taught the doctrine of the resurrection even more clearly than Ammonius did (this is also why the alternate identification of this old Alexandrian with Plotinus, put forward by A. in n. 455, is not too convincing, since Plotinus criticized the Christian doctrine of the resurrection instead of supporting it). In the next paragraph, other Origenian motifs appear: that of intellectual labour and moral effort (*labor*), which enables the soul’s ascent (*conscensio*), a motif that Origen emphasized everywhere;⁸ that of the mystical love (*Amor*)-marriage,

⁶ Discussion in my “Origen, Patristic Philosophy, and Christian Platonism: Re-Thinking the Christianisation of Hellenism,” *Vigiliae Christianae* 63, 2009, 217–63; “Origen the Christian Middle/Neoplatonist,” *Journal of Early Christian History* 1, 2011, 98–130; “Origen and the Platonic Tradition,” in *Plato and Christ: Platonism in Early Christian Theology*, special topics issue of *Religions*, guest editor J. Warren Smith, 2017, 8(2), 21, 1–20. doi:10.3390/rel8020021; “Origen to Evagrius,” in *Brill’s Companion to the Reception of Plato in Antiquity*, ed. Harold Tarrant et al., Leiden: Brill, 2018, 271–91. A monograph on Origen is being finalized, after a quarter of a century of research.

⁷ A specific study of apokatastasis in ancient philosophy, as mentioned, is in preparation.

⁸ See my “Apokatastasis and Epektasis in *Hom. in Cant.*: The Relation between Two Core Doctrines in Gregory and Roots in Origen,” in *Gregory of Nyssa: In Canticum Cantico-rum. Commentary and Supporting Studies*, ed. G. Maspero, M. Brugarolas, and I. Vigorelli, Leiden 2019, 312–39.

which was the focus of Origen's most influential Commentary on the Song of Songs, as well as the theme of apokatastasis, which pervades all of *De nuptiis* and was so central to Origen's thought.⁹

Martianus' interest in apokatastasis, which I pointed out in "The Debate on Apokatastasis in 'Pagan' and Christian Platonists," is further proved by his use of the neologism *apocatastaticus* (*Nupt.* 7.735), which obviously transposes Greek ἀποκαταστατικός. This reflects the increasing interest in apokatastasis by 'pagan' Platonists of the fifth century, such as Proclus, and the dramatic increase in the use of apokatastasis terminology in post-Plotinian Platonism, especially in Proclus and Damascius.¹⁰ The very topic of Martianus' *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii*, the mystical wedding between a divinity representing Logos and a human being, might have been chosen, I suspect, as a 'pagan' response to the mystical wedding of the Song of Songs, whose Christian exegesis was shaped by Origen's Commentary on the Song of Songs. Origen, whose exegesis, as mentioned, was exceedingly influential¹¹ and well known also in the West, for instance to Ambrose and Augustine, offered a Neoplatonic interpretation of a Biblical mystical marriage, whereas Martianus intended to provide a Neoplatonic interpretation of a 'pagan' mystical marriage, which was probably in competition with the Christian one. Both, indeed, were concerned with the ascent of the soul and its union with the divine: this was the gist of the whole allegory both in Origen's Commentary on the Song of Songs and in Martianus' *De nuptiis*.

There are very few typos, e.g. in Greek on p. 138b, in n. 504 to the translation: κεραῖς ἄτε for κεραῖς ἄτε, and ἄγαλμα for ἄγαλμα; in. 195, Ἡφαιστος for Ἡφαιστος. After this interesting presentation and elucidation of the first two books of *De nuptiis*, we wait for the next two volumes.

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⁹ See also my "The Debate on Apokatastasis in 'Pagan' and Christian Platonists (Martianus, Macrobius, Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, and Augustine)," *Illinois Classical Studies* 33-34, 2008-2009, 201-234; on Origen's doctrine of apokatastasis: *The Christian Doctrine of Apokatastasis: A Critical Assessment from the New Testament to Eriugena*, Leiden 2013, 137-215; further in *Origen of Alexandria's Philosophical Theology*, in preparation, Ch. 2.

¹⁰ See my "Proclus and Christian Neoplatonism: A Case Study," in *The Ways of Byzantine Philosophy*, ed. M. Knežević, Alhambra, CA, 2015, 37-70, reviewed by R. Arthur, *Journal of Theological Studies* 67, 2016, DOI: 10.1093/jts/flw146; <http://docplayer.gr/44572612-The-ways-of-byzantine-philosophy.html>; further systematic investigation in the monograph on apokatastasis in ancient and late antique philosophy.

¹¹ On Origen's Commentary on the Song of Songs and its influence, see I. Ramelli, "Apokatastasis and Epektasis"; "Origen, Evagrius, and Dionysios," in *Oxford Handbook to Dionysius the Areopagite*, ed. M. Edwards, Oxford, forthcoming.