

texts, which explicitly excluded Augustine's writings on the controversy. The 'avant-propos' ends with a list of all known manuscripts that contain one or more of the edited texts, a list which is also inserted separately on a leaflet at the front of the volume. In the main body of the volume, each of the two sets of texts receives an elaborate introduction. All the relevant manuscripts are described thoroughly with mention of approximate date, origin and provenance, physical characteristics and further information on the content and quality of the text. Hombert also hints at attested but no longer extant manuscripts, earlier editions of the texts and the indirect tradition. Subsequently the manuscript tradition is delved into in greater detail, resulting in an impressive stemma which is printed in its entirety on folded pages at the back of the volume. Then follows the actual edition, preceded by a *conspicuum siglorum* and accompanied by three apparatuses, providing scriptural quotations, sources and variant readings. A few critical remarks on the text follow each individual edition. Four sections are inserted after the editions: a bibliography, an appendix listing all changes made with regard to the Maurist edition – a part which adds significantly to the positioning of the volume within the critical tradition of Augustine's anti-Arian Works –, an index of all scriptural passages quoted and an index of all authors and works referred to.

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Andrea Bizzozero, *Il mistero pasquale di Gesù Cristo e l'esistenza credente nei Sermones di Agostino* [Patrologia – Beiträge zum Studium der Kirchenväter 23]. Peter Lang, Frankfurt am Main/Berlin/Bern/Bruxelles/New York/Oxford/Wien 2010, 520 pp. ISBN: 978-3-631-59522-0.

The present elaborate monograph is the publication of the author's doctoral dissertation (obtained at the Theology faculty of Lugano). This book is situated within the recent rise of scientific interest in Augustine's sermons. More specifically the author studies the centrality of the Easter mystery in Augustine's ca. 580 preserved *sermones ad populum*. This centrality is both descriptive-speculative-Christological – the Easter event is the *crux* of the theology developed in the *sermones* (systematic theology) –, and normative-anthropological-moral since it is according to Augustine's preaching the basis and even the task of Christian life (pastoral theology). This centrality of the Paschal mystery is double because of the specific genre of

Augustine's sermons: they are at the same time theological reflections and pastoral exhortations, in which Augustine at the same time looks for the truth and proclaims and applies it.

The introduction offers a concise *status quaestionis* of Augustine's *sermones ad populum* and his reflections on Easter. The first chapter sketches the characteristics of Augustine's preaching in general: his interpretation and praxis of the pastoral office as proclamation of the divine word (with reference to *De doctrina Christiana* IV).

The book is divided into three parts. The first part deals with Augustine's thematisation of Christ's passion, death and descent into hell. Bizzozero shows how Augustine preaches on human mortality and death: the difference between the first and second death, the second death as punishment for sin and grace as God's response to this mortality (ch. 2). Subsequently, different aspects of Augustine's preaching on Christ's death are discussed: Christ's death on the cross as his free choice (ch. 3), Oldtestamentical prefigurations of Christ's passion (typology and allegory, ch. 4), Augustine's *theologia crucis* (ch. 5), his understanding of Christ's cross as a sacrifice and ransom price for the salvation of mankind's sin (related to the Eucharistic sacrifice) (ch. 6), the redemptive power of Christ's death (ch. 7), Christ as the *fons vitae* that kills death (*mors mortis*) (ch. 8), Christ as the physician and his cross as the medicine of humility for our sinful disease (ch. 9), the Christological and soteriological dimensions of Christ's descent into hell (ch. 10).

The second part studies how the topics of Christ's resurrection, ascension and Pentecost feature in Augustine's *sermones ad populum*. Christ's resurrection is related both to his divine (ch. 11) and his human/physical nature (ch. 12), and has soteriological implications (ch. 13). Augustine deals with both aspects of Christ's resurrection (Christ as the resurrected Lord and his bodily resurrection), by giving Biblical testimonies (ch. 11: disciples of Emmaus, good thief, Mary Magdalena; ch. 12: the apostles, Thomas in particular), and by fighting against heterodox tenets which deny them (ch. 11: Photinians, Arians; ch. 12: Docetists, Manicheans, Apollinarists, pagan philosophers). Christ's resurrection is the promise, *causa* and *exemplum* of human resurrection and justification of sinners (ch. 13). Subsequently the liturgical feasts and eschatological-paschal events of Ascension (ch. 14) and Pentecost (ch. 15) are dealt with. The feast of Pentecost, celebrating that the H. Spirit guarantees ecclesial unity, furnished Augustine a special occasion to tackle the schismatic Donatists, and to elaborate on pneumatological images (the Spirit as *digitus Dei* and *uinum nouus*). This part closes with an overview of Augustine's exegesis of the 'Easter number' forty and fifty (ch. 16).

The third part relates the *sermones*' Easter Christology – investigated in the first two parts of the monograph – with the life of every believer. Augustine understands the life of every Christian as standing in a fundamental relation with the Easter mystery: the last judgement (ch. 17), the stage in between death and resurrection (ch. 18), the resurrection of mankind (with a special attention for Augustine's martyrology, ch. 19). Moreover, the Easter mystery is the source (ch. 20) and fundamental goal of the life of all the faithful (ch. 21). Christ is the source for happiness and hope, for the real, genuine and lasting heavenly life, which is according to Augustine well illustrated by the exemplary lives of Felicitas and Perpetua (ch. 20). The life of Christians is directed at participation in the divine life (ch. 21). Christian life is both a battle against sin and a hopeful pilgrimage and wakening – helped by Christ – (ch. 22), in which *caritas* is the core, a new love that urges Christians to give alms and to look for and to give forgiveness (ch. 23). The book is complemented with an extensive bibliography (pp. 437-476), and indices on biblical books, bibliographic sources and subjects (pp. 477-510).

Bizzozero's focus on the Easter mystery in Augustine's *sermones* helps to understand the continuity in his thinking and preaching. In this context, a valuable asset for the continuation for this project would be to introduce some chronological data in this study. Admittedly, it is very difficult to date Augustine's *sermones*. Many of these dates (and sometimes even the possibility to date them) are much debated. However not questioned is the observation that for certain clearly datable *sermones* the content stands in direct relation with the particular moment in Augustine's life they were preached, especially when he was involved in a controversy (mainly the Donatist and Pelagian controversies). As such the chronology of the *sermones* is not without importance for the topic under discussion in this monograph, e.g. at the core of the Pelagian controversy, and in *sermones* preached at that time, is the relation between the unique and absolute grace of Christ's cross and resurrection (Christology) and the human effort and liberty to lead an ethical life (ethics, anthropology, pastoral theology).

This monograph illustrates the inner coherence within the diversity of Augustine's *sermones*, and shows that for Augustine doctrine and praxis always go hand in hand. The book demonstrates a thorough knowledge of the – Easter – content of the *sermones* and the scientific literature devoted to it.

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