

seguenze. Un'altra restrizione deplorabile è l'omissione della parte iconografica e ornamentale dei monumenti e dell'informazione circa la loro provenienza. In questo caso, però, l'autore non può essere criticato lui solo in quanto si muove sulla scia dei suoi predecessori.

Lo scopo principale del libro è quello di individuare il significato spirituale delle iscrizioni funerarie. Per un tale fine, però, non può bastare sempre la sola presentazione del materiale. Le idee e i concetti espressi nei testi non vengono infatti ambientati in nessun contesto storico o ideologico più ampio. Neppure il contesto letterario è preso in considerazione. L'autore osserva giustamente "altro è un trattato patristico su un tema di vita spirituale, altro la fede e la devozione vissute dal popolo cristiano" (p. 8). Tuttavia sembra essergli totalmente sfuggito il fatto che una grande parte degli epitaffi sono in forma poetica e, come ha sottolineato Kajanto nel suo articolo sopra citato, è spesso la poesia cristiana contemporanea o anteriore la chiave che ci dà accesso alla forma e al contenuto dei *carmina epigraphica*. Inoltre, nel corso dello studio non vengono menzionati i numerosi virgilianismi dei carmi — importanti a livello formale, ma anche contenutistico (per i virgilianismi cfr., da ultimo, Solin in *Enciclopedia Virgiliana II*, Roma 1985).

Riguardo agli influssi pagani sembra un po' riduttiva l'affermazione dell'autore: "il sentimento cristiano viene spesso nascosto dalle immagini letterarie" (p. 9). Queste immagini comunque avevano già in molti casi lo specifico valore cristiano sviluppatosi nell'ambito della poesia cristiana che attingeva dalle tradizioni poetiche precedenti. In altre parole, queste immagini nel loro contesto storico possono essere già cristianizzate e quindi ci comunicano aspetti della fede cristiana.

Considerando le premesse metodologiche e le limitazioni dello studio, il lettore potrà senz'altro utilizzare con profitto questo libro, diligentemente compilato e lucidamente scritto. Il valore precipuo dell'opera rimane, però, nella raccolta e nella organizzazione tematica del materiale.

*Jaakko Aronen*

*Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae septimo saeculo antiquiores. Colligere coepit Ioannes Baptista De Rossi, complevit et edidit Antonius Ferrua S.I. Nova Series, Vol. VIII: Coemeteria Viarum Nomentanae et Salariae. In civitate Vaticana, Pont. Institutum Archaeologiae Christianae, Roma 1983. VIII, 494 p. Lit. 150.000.*

*Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae septimo saeculo antiquiores. Colligere coepit Ioannes Baptista De Rossi, compleverunt et ediderunt Antonius Ferrua et Danilus Mazzoleni. Nova Series, Vol. IX: Viae Salariae coemeteria reliqua. In civitate Vaticana, Pont. Institutum Archaeologiae Christianae, Roma 1985. VIII, 413 p. Lit. 250.000.*

The gigantic work of editing the Christian inscriptions of ancient Rome is nearing completion. After the publishing of Volumes VIII and IX, only two further volumes are planned. When Antonio Ferrua, after the death of Angelo Silvagni in 1955, became the sole editor, 6496 inscriptions had been published. Today their number runs to 26311. Although

part of Volume III was edited by Silvagni, and 24828—26311 in Volume IX by Danilo Mazzoleni, Ferrua's successor, the work done by one single man is impressive. Pressure of age has now forced Ferrua to retire, but there can be little doubt that in the future ICVR will be known as mainly his achievement.

Volumes VIII and IX comprise the material from the cemeteries along the via Nomentana and via Salaria, the most important of which are the cemeteries of St Agnes and Priscilla. A great number of the inscriptions have, it is true, been published earlier, but all the extant stones have been reexamined, and the number of new finds is considerable.

The inscriptions are edited in accordance with the methods established in the first volumes of the series in the 1920s and 1930s, which of course do not agree with the practice observed in recent epigraphical publications. One of the most regrettable things is the lack of photographs. In Volumes I—V photographs of extant stones were given in appendices, but afterwards the practice was discontinued, apparently to cut down expenses. This makes it difficult to check doubtful or disputable readings. The inscriptions are usually given in majuscules. Transcriptions are rare, but brief comments on important points are supplied.

Still more regrettable is the fact that indices have been reduced to the barest minimum. There are a list of dated inscriptions, an index of names, *initia carminum*, and a concordance for ICVR I<sup>1</sup> (De Rossi and Gatti). Thus scholars have to wade through all the mass of inscriptions to gather material for a special study. For instance, the all-important symbols should have been registered. Again, Christian inscriptions furnish valuable material for the study of Vulgar or Late Latin. Hence an index *Grammatica quaedam* would have been welcome. Anyone investigating, e.g., epitaphic formulae would have greatly profited from an *Index verborum* or at any rate from *Notabilia varia*, etc. It is a pity that the first editor, Silvagni, did not follow the example of CIL in regard to the indices.

When the whole ICVR is completed, probably not in the too distant future, a new volume containing exhaustive indices should be composed. With the modern technique of data processing this cannot be a too formidable task. But the *index nominum* should also be revised, not least because of the recent advances in Latin and Greek onomastics. This concerns Volumes I—II more than the ones edited by Ferrua.

The new editor, Danilo Mazzoleni, has edited the material from the cemetery of Priscilla. One can notice some differences from Ferrua's practice. Thus he gives more facsimile reproductions of the extant stones, though not consistently. But facsimiles are no substitute for good modern photographs. In facsimile drawings, one can never reach the same degree of exactness.

In the new volumes there are of course points of disagreement and mistakes, which it is the duty of the reviewer to record. Because space does not allow an exhaustive treatment, I shall only give a choice of cases. 24044: *Eumero* cannot be an acclamation because it is set in the dative; cp. *Eumoerus*, Solin, *Namenbuch* 796: two cases from Rome. 24125: *qui pro quae* cannot be a stonecutter's mistake but a wellknown feature of Late Latin. 24474: because *Melitia* at the end of the epitaph is a signum, it is more likely a vocative than a mistake for a dative. 24694: *Gregori* is clearly the signum of the deceased woman in the vocative and not the fragment of a man's name. 24984: the transcription differs from the facsimile drawing of the stone in line four. 25045: mistakes in the transcription. Though the editor (Mazzoleni) has

taken the transcription from Rodrigues Almeida, he should have checked the text himself. The stone is extant. 25102: the last word, according to the facsimile T is visible, hence not *feci(t)*. 25116: the nominative of ELPII is possibly not *Elpis*. 25130: the last line is missing in the transcription. 25318: in *depositio Leoni*, the nominative of the name is certainly *Leonius*, not *Leo*. 25323: same remark as in 25045 above. 25339: line 5, LXXV, not LXX. 25423: *Purpurius* is of course not “*altera forma Porfyrii*” but a good Latin name. It is recorded in my Latin Cognomina 230, several cases. 25449: line two, the stone does not show a gap between ILLA and XVIII. Hence the supplement [*a*](*nnis*) is unwarranted.

The language of the edition is Latin. Unfortunately, the standard of Latin as living language has recently been falling everywhere. In my opinion, it is not unclassical constructions or words that are to be regretted. Even in humanist Latin, strict Ciceronianism has always been an exception. But passages which are hard to understand are a serious defect. Especially in the comments of Mazzoleni, there are some obscure passages or infelicitous expressions, e.g. 25347: “*Exsuperius est solum signum coemeterii inscriptionibus notum*”.

But enough of marginal notes. ICVR is and will remain an indispensable source for all epigraphists and philologists and historians, in practice for everybody interested in classical and especially Christian antiquity.

*Iiro Kajanto*

*Françoise Prévot: Les inscriptions chrétiennes. Recherches archéologiques franco-tunisiennes à Mactar V. Collection de l'École française de Rome 34. Roma 1984. XII, 261 p. Fr. 390.*

Ce volume, publié sous le patronage de l'Institut national d'archéologie africaine et d'art de Tunis, s'inscrit dans une série de publications franco-tunisiennes concernant l'archéologie et l'épigraphie chrétienne de Mactar. L'ouvrage de Fr. Prévot constitue une nouvelle et importante contribution à l'étude de l'épigraphie locale et apporte aussi, bien entendu, une aide précieuse à l'élaboration d'une synthèse dans le domaine de l'épigraphie chrétienne d'Afrique qui, comme on le sait, a été déjà l'objet de nombreuses missions et recherches françaises au XX<sup>e</sup> siècle, et surtout au cours des 30 dernières années.

Après une introduction qui retrace l'évolution historique du site de Mactar et qui nous présente une rétrospective des fouilles anciennes et modernes tout en exposant la méthode suivie, les 221 inscriptions (dont 116 inédites) sont classées dans un catalogue par groupes, selon l'ordre topographique (Basiliques I—IV et Thermes). Un grand problème, caractéristique pour le matériel de Mactar, est posé par les textes dont la provenance est indéterminée. C'est la difficulté majeure, car elle touche la plupart des épitaphes et rend ainsi la datation relative plus incertaine. On peut cependant penser que la majorité proviennent de nécropoles (le nombre d'épitaphes découvertes dans les basiliques est seulement de 56). Chaque inscription est accompagnée d'un lemme très complet et d'une lecture soignée. Le format du volume autorise une impression sur deux colonnes, et permet la publication de planches photographiques dont la qualité est remarquable.

La deuxième partie de l'ouvrage est consacrée à l'étude externe et interne des