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Another Athanasius : four Sahidic homilies attributed to St. Athanasius of Alexandria. Introduction, editions, translations

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Stellingen

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Another Athanasius: Four Sahidic Homilies attributed to St. Athanasius of Alexandria

Introduction, Editions, Translations

van

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1. It is certain that Athanasius of Alexandria was not the author of the four homilies edited in this dissertation. The first three homilies edited in this dissertation are composite didactic homilies that recycle earlier material.
2. The second and the third homilies edited in this dissertation are strongly connected with Saint Pachomius and Pachomian monasticism, and not, as might be expected, with Saint Antony whose influential biography was written by Athanasius.
3. The most striking characteristic of the first three homilies is the part taken by storytelling. In telling their stories, the authors did not want to relate historical events, but to involve the historical figures in the narrative in order to persuade their audience of the spiritual lessons that they intended to deliver and create a sense of community based in history.
4. The fourth homily was most likely composed as a whole. It has no storytelling and mainly addresses issues related to daily life. It may be translated from a late-antique Greek original.
5. The greater part of the literary texts preserved in Coptic is of a homiletic nature. Most of these texts have reached us in manuscripts dating between the ninth and the eleventh centuries.

6. Homilies are of extraordinary importance when they are studied as persuasive texts that were efficacious means of influencing the attitudes of the audiences for whom they were written.

7. There is a need for a comprehensive study that examines the personality of Athanasius of Alexandria through the many homilies produced in Egypt in different languages and circulating under his name.

8. False attributions of homilies to famous Church Fathers were very widespread in the Christian literature of Egypt. In most cases, the false attribution was intended to lend the homily more authority. Only rarely, one can assume that such a false attribution was a mere mistake.

9. The lack of a university department that teaches Coptic in Egypt is a problem well known to everyone in the field. The basic solution for this problem is to educate a generation of well trained Egyptian Coptologists. This can never happen without the support of the prominent scholars in the field and their universities.

10. To switch from Egyptology to Coptology is not an easy decision, but certainly a correct and beneficial one.