



Clash of altars, clash of cults: the foundation of Christianity in apocryphal and liturgical texts

Els Rose



Édition électronique

URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/cem/11844>
DOI : 10.4000/cem.11844
ISSN : 1954-3093

Éditeur

Centre d'études médiévales Saint-Germain d'Auxerre

Référence électronique

Els Rose, « Clash of altars, clash of cults: the foundation of Christianity in apocryphal and liturgical texts », *Bulletin du centre d'études médiévales d'Auxerre | BUCEMA* [En ligne], Hors-série n° 4 | 2011, mis en ligne le 17 juin 2011, consulté le 01 mai 2019. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/cem/11844> ; DOI : 10.4000/cem.11844

Ce document a été généré automatiquement le 1 mai 2019.



Les contenus du *Bulletin du centre d'études médiévales d'Auxerre (BUCEMA)* sont mis à disposition selon les termes de la Licence Creative Commons Attribution - Pas d'Utilisation Commerciale - Partage dans les Mêmes Conditions 4.0 International.

*Clash of altars, clash of cults: the foundation of Christianity in apocryphal and liturgical texts*¹

Els Rose

Introduction

- ¹ In the *Life of Martin*, the prototype of medieval hagiography, Sulpicius Severus depicts his hero as the missionary of the empire's most northern regions. Martin is said to wander about Gaul with a hammer and a flaming torch, destroying pagan altars, statues and entire temples in order to replace them with churches and monasteries. We occasionally catch a glimpse of pre-Christian and Christian cult places in the Gallic realm through these stories.² The altars and statues in the local temples, presented as very ancient, much frequented and exceedingly rich cult places, were smashed and pulverized by the ascetic bishop. The role of the people in these stories of conversion is also an interesting feature. The *rustici* are often presented as fierce opponents, threatening Martin's life and defending their sacred places (temples, trees, images and altars) with all their might. But although Sulpicius entertains the reader with some masterly examples of the competition between pagans and Christians – the latter often helped by divine intervention – Martin's famous biographer at the same time hastens to emphasize the cooperation into which the saint persuades his antagonists by his preaching.³ Thus the rustic landscape gradually fills with churches and monasteries, turning the pagan area into a Christian domain.⁴
- ² In this article, I do not intend to focus on the material altar in its various manifestations, but rather on the representation of altars and other forms of cult places, both pre-Christian and Christian, in narrative and liturgical traditions of the Latin Church. I began this contribution with examples from the *Life of Martin*, since this *Vita* is obviously the

starting point of medieval hagiography. In Sulpicius' writings, Martin is depicted as the apostle of Gaul, the only bishop of the province who was truly a follower of the apostles.⁵ In the following, I want to concentrate on the apostles themselves, as founders of the Christian religion. Filled with the holy Spirit, the apostles left Jerusalem after Pentecost and spread throughout the entire world in order to preach the Gospel and to found churches. A large collection of narrative and liturgical texts reflects this missionary work, often presenting it as a real clash of cults. Before the new religion could be established in the mission area of the individual apostles, the ground had to be cleared of local cult places, temples, statues and altars in honour of the existing godheads. With the aid of a number of examples, we will explore the relation between narrative sources, most notably the apocryphal Acts of the apostles, and liturgical sources. While focusing on the clash between altars and cults as depicted in these sources, I will try to shed more light on the way apocryphal sources were received into the liturgy of the medieval period.

Apocrypha and the liturgy

- 3 Most of what we know about the lives, acts and deaths of the apostles is related not in the canonical Bible, but in extra-canonical, or apocryphal sources. The relation between apocryphal texts on apostles and the liturgical practice of the Church, both in East and West, has always been an ambivalent one. Documents of late antiquity and the early medieval period testify to a distinct aversion to the *apocryphae scripturae*, writings that are ascribed to the apostles but are considered to contain many false doctrines and should therefore be kept away from the faithful. Use of these apocryphal writings in any practice of (liturgical) reading, be it in private or in church, should be avoided at all costs.⁶ The association of the apocryphal *Acts of the apostles* with heterodox movements such as the Manichaeans, or the Priscillianists in Spain as in a letter of Pope Leo I (AD 445), is an additional if not the main argument for a firm dismissal of these writings from any kind of orthodox usage. Some sources, like the letter of Pope Innocent I (AD 405) mention apocryphal writings by name. More specifically the well-known *Decretum Gelasianum* (late fifth/early sixth century) contains a list of apocryphal texts as part of its list of recommended and forbidden texts (*Decretum de libris recipiendis et non recipiendis*).⁷
- 4 The distinct disapproval of apocrypha did not erase these extra-canonical traditions. On the contrary, they found their way into the traditions of art, legend and liturgy in the Western world. Latin translations of individual Acts of the apostles were presumably circulating as early as the sixth century at the latest. In many cases, these Latin translations and rewritings are the oldest and sometimes the only versions through which the ancient Acts have been preserved.⁸
- 5 When studying the liturgy of the apostles in Latin sources up to the beginning of the thirteenth century, it is clear that prayers, chants and hymns are influenced to a great extent by non-biblical traditions. The search for sources time and again brings us to a collection of *Virtutes apostolorum*, compiled in the late sixth or early seventh century, most presumably in Gaul, and generally indicated as the Collection of Pseudo-Abdias. Abdias is described in the account on the apostles Simon and Jude as a disciple of the apostles themselves who was appointed bishop of Babylon in the first century. Consequently, the collection, which was said to have originally been in Hebrew, was attributed to him. Despite this rather vague assignment Pseudo-Abdias remains the

common author's name linked to the most widely known set of texts on the apostles in medieval traditions.

- 6 In the following, the close connection between apocrypha and liturgy will be illustrated with the case of two apostles: Philip and Bartholomew. In the traditions of these two apostles the clash of altars and cults plays an important role.

The missionary work of the apostles in apocryphal and liturgical sources

Bartholomew

The *Passio Bartholomaei*

- 7 The apostle Bartholomew is the protagonist in a rich array of apocryphal traditions. Although there are no traces of ancient *Acta Bartholomaei*, there are, however, different traditions on the life and death of the apostle, transmitted in various languages.
- 8 In the Latin world, the *Passio Bartholomaei* is the most important source.⁹ This work has been transmitted both in Greek and Latin. Opinions differ on the question which tradition is the oldest, the Latin *Passio Bartholomaei* or the Greek.¹⁰ However this may be, the Greek version as it has come down to us, is far younger than the Latin, and has been handed down in manuscripts not older than the thirteenth century.¹¹ The Latin version, on the other hand, has been transmitted in the early medieval collection of Pseudo-Abdias where it is entitled *De rebus per Indiam a beato Bartholomaeo gestis*.¹²
- 9 Although various apocryphal traditions situate Bartholomew in different geographical areas (Armenia, Asia Minor, India) the *Passio Bartholomaei* mentions India as the apostle's mission field.¹³ Upon his arrival Bartholomew immediately enters into combat with the local godhead Astaroth. The cult of this god takes shape in the veneration of an image or statue (*idolum*) of the god, placed in Astaroth's temple. The idol is presented as the dwelling place of the godhead, who claims to heal the sick as a response to the people's sacrifice. Thus the godhead's temple is not only a place for sacrifice and veneration, but also a healing spot: the sick stand around the godhead's image.¹⁴ In the *Passio* Astaroth's "healing practice" is presented as a delusion: it is the godhead itself that makes the people ill in order to bind them to his cult and power.
- 10 This truth about Astaroth is later made public by Bartholomew, who forces the godhead to confess its incapacity to genuinely heal the people. Once the apostle has revealed the godhead's true nature to the people, they are all too willing to destroy with their own hands, the old cult place and replace it with a church (*templum Christi*). The godhead itself, again compelled by the apostle, steps out of its statue and starts to smash 'all kinds of idols, not only the big ones, but all the small figures that were placed in the temple for decoration, so that every single image was destroyed'.¹⁵ The *Passio Bartholomaei* is of particular interest since it mentions the installation of priests and a bishop after the dispelling of the hostile godhead. In this case the king becomes bishop.

Liturgical texts

- 11 The liturgical cult of Bartholomew in the medieval West developed from the eighth century onwards. An important impetus was given by the translation of the apostle's

relics from Asia Minor to the island Lipari to the North of Sicily in AD 580. From there, the cult spread with the relics through other regions of the Latin church. Liturgical sources in use in South Italy, Benevent, Spain, Gaul and England testify to this development.

- 12 The tradition of Bartholomew's occurrence in the temple of Astaroth was widely received in liturgical texts of the (early) medieval Latin tradition. To illustrate this, I will present some material for the liturgy of mass and office.

Eucharistic liturgy

Liber mozarabicus sacramentorum

- 13 One of the oldest existent manuscripts transmitting a mass ordo for the *natale* of Bartholomew is the Spanish *Liber mozarabicus sacramentorum*, a book for the liturgy of the mass as it was celebrated in many parts of the North of Spain prior to the reformations of the eleventh century. The manuscript, dating to the ninth century, comprises material that could be as old as the seventh century.¹⁶ Characteristic of the Spanish liturgy is the elaborate style that pays, in the case of saints, ample attention to biographical digression. The mass in honour of Bartholomew is true to this tradition: nine long prayers reflect on the apostle's fortunes during his missionary work. Bartholomew's encounter with the local god Astaroth and the destruction of the temple dedicated in the latter's honour is dealt with in various prayers, but most conspicuously in the *inlatio*, the Spanish variant of what we would call the *preface* in the Roman anaphora. The apostles are presented in this prayer as founders of the church and leaders of the Catholic faith:

*(LMS 843) Isti igitur in uictoriis suis precipue in laudibus sunt habendi, et ut aecclesiae fundatores et catholice fidei ducores cuncti apostoli celebrandi.*¹⁷

They therefore should be held in great praise because of their triumphs, and all apostles should be celebrated as founders of the church and teachers of the catholic faith.

- 14 This general feature of the apostles culminated in most cases in their martyrdom as the fulfillment of their imitation of Christ. In the case of Bartholomew, not only his preaching and martyrdom are focused on, but, most importantly, his encounter with the local godheads and 'demonic' powers in his mission area. The apostle Bartholomew threw out demons 'on the authority of Christ' and following the latter's example:

(LMS 843) Exemplis sequens dominum Iesum Christum, imperio suo demonia ei->cit.

Following the example of his Lord Jesus Christ, he threw out the demonic on his authority.

- 15 With the power of his apostolic word he smashed the old cult places, the images and idols, thus making room for the new religion:

(LMS 843) Verbo simulacra confringit, et sicut templum Astaroth a demonibus reddidit liberum, illudque tibi consecrauit per spiritum sanctum...

With his word he broke down the idols, and just as he has liberated the temple of Astaroth from demons, and has consecrated it to you through the holy Spirit...

- 16 The ingredients for the composition of this prayer are for the greater part found in the Latin *Passio Bartholomaei*. In some instances, such as the final example (*simulacra confringit* = *Passio* 6 (16): *idolum hoc et confringite*),¹⁸ the text of the *Passio* is even followed verbatim.
- 17 However, it is important to note that the liturgical text fits the narrative of the apocryphal source into its own proper context. In this case, a connection is made between the subversion of the local religion and its outer appearances in the form of idols and adornment on the one hand, and the access to the rituals and holy places of Christian worship on the other. This connection appears in various prayers of the Spanish mass. The first instance, found in the opening prayer (LMS 840), refers to Bartholomew in general as the holy apostle through whose merits the accessibility of the altar in the Christian act of worship is enlarged:
- (LMS 840) *quia digne nullus altario tuo adesse poterit, nisi aut gratia tua munitus, aut tui apostoli meritis circumuallatus extiterit.*
...for justly no one could approach your altar, unless he is armed with your grace or surrounded by the merits of your apostle.
- 18 The same notion of the intervention of Bartholomew's virtue in order to make the faithful worthy of participation in the ritual of the Christian altar occurs in the prayer *post pridie* (LMS 845), following the institution narrative:
- (LMS 845) *et qui altaris tui officiis nos indignos pro certo fatemur, meritis sancti apostoli tui Bartholomei iustificari in perpetuum mereamur.*
...and we who are said to be certainly unworthy of the office of your altar, are deemed worthy to be justified in eternity by the merits of your holy apostle Bartholomew.
- 19 The relation between Bartholomew's appearance as liberator from pre-Christian cults and founder of the Christian cult on the one hand, and the worthiness of the faithful to stand in the (liturgical) ministry is made most clear in the *inlatio* (LMS 843):
- (LMS 843) *et sicut templum Astaroth a demonibus reddidit liberum, illudque tibi consecrauit per spiritum sanctum, ita nos a piaculis soluat, et coram te in ministerio tuo dignos efficiat.*
... and just as he has liberated the temple of Astaroth from demons, and has consecrated it to you through the holy Spirit, may he deliberate us from sin and make us worthy before you in the ministry to you.
- 20 It is not made explicitly clear whether the worthiness of all the faithful who gather around the altar is the meaning, namely both clergy and lay people.

Missale Beneventanum of Canosa

- 21 During an invasion of the island Lipari by moslms in the year 838, Bartholomew's relics were brought to safety and transferred to Benevento,¹⁹ which became a separate archbishopric in 969.²⁰ In the tenth and eleventh century, the Beneventan church used an early form of the plenary missal, i.e. a book in which prayers, readings and chants are collected.²¹ Only one complete manuscript, from the late eleventh century, has been preserved: the so-called *Missale Beneventanum of Canosa*.²² The book contains two mass ordo's for Bartholomew, one without further specification (presumably for his *natale*) and one in commemoration of the translation of his relics. In the former mass the *oratio secreta* or *super oblata* (said after the *offertorium*) is of special importance.

Deus, qui exorante apostolo tuo Bartholomeo demoni precepisti suum funditus diruere simulacrum, peccatorum imagines a nostris mentibus quaesumus expelle propitius, ut eius precibus emundati regni tui ianuam gaudenter introire mereamur.

God, who on the prayer of your apostle Bartholomew has commanded the demon to destroy its own image by the roots, mercifully expel, we beseech you, the images of sins from our hearts, so that we may be deemed worthy to enter with joy through the door of your kingdom, purified through his prayers.

- 22 In this prayer Bartholomew's encounter with the local cult place is at the centre of attention. The liturgical text however gives the apocryphal story a new meaning. In the Beneventan text, the concrete idols from the apocryphal *Passio Bartholomaei*, smashed by the apostle to give way to the new religion, are reinterpreted in an allegorical or spiritual way. The images of local gods, that were dashed to pieces upon Bartholomew's prayer, are compared to the images of sins in the hearts of the faithful. The text prays that Bartholomew may expell these imaginary demons just as he knocked over the idols. This connection between concrete idols and their power in the narrative of the apostle's passion and the imaginary demons in the reality of the hearts of the faithful recurs in other prayers in commemoration of Bartholomew as well as of various other apostles.²³

Liturgy of the hours

The Antiphonary of Ivrea

- 23 Apocryphal traditions on the apostles are not only incorporated in texts for the eucharistic liturgy. A similar influence of these once rejected traditions can be found in material for the liturgy of hours just as well, though it was received there in different ways.
- 24 The liturgy of hours or 'office liturgy' (*officium divinum*) for the *natale* of the apostle Bartholomew offers a clear example. The oldest collection of office texts in honour of this apostle is found in the eleventh century Antiphonary of Ivrea, in use in the cathedral church of this city in the Northwest of Italy. Space does not allow us to render the texts of the office in its entirety here – unfortunately, since it would make clear how the singing of the chants throughout the day as it were tells the full story of Bartholomew's missionary work and passion. Suffice it to present here some of the texts as examples of the narrow bonds that can occur between apocryphal and liturgical texts.
- 25 In the night offices for instance, two of the three responsories of the second nocturn, that are sung in response to the lessons, refer to the replacement of the images of the old gods by the symbols of the Christian cult: a sign of the cross, a church building.²⁴

RESP. Praecepto apostoli, destructis a daemone simulacris, regi dixit beatus Bartholomaeus: Ego jussi daemonibus quassare idola, ut gentes verum credant Deum qui regnat in coelis.²⁵

V. Propterea profanas imagines comminui, et ipsum daemonem ire in desertum praecepi.²⁶

RESPONSARY After the demons had destroyed their own images by order of the apostle blessed Bartholomew said to the king: 'I have ordered the demons to break their idols to pieces so that the gentiles would believe the true God who reigns in heaven.

VERSE Therefore I have broken the profane images, and I have commanded the demon himself to go away into the desert.

RESP. *Obsecrante sancto apostolo, statim apparuit angelus, splendens sicut sol, sculpens digito suo in saxis signum sanctae crucis, quod christicolae suis frontibus infigerent.*

V. *Circumvolans igitur per quatuor angulos templi subito scripsit mirabiliter.*²⁷

RESPONSARY At the request of the apostle an angel appeared immediately, radiant as the sun, and he sculpted with his finger the sign of the holy cross in the stones, so that the Christians would imprint it on their foreheads.

VERSE Flying around the four corners of the temple he suddenly wrote miraculously...

- 26 Unlike the prayer-texts for Mass, the chants of Bartholomew's office stay very close to the text of the *Passio*, often quoting it verbatim (as is the case in the responsary *Obsecrante*). Here a difference in liturgical genre is visible. While the prayers for the celebration of mass are often free compositions reflecting on the significance of the feast-day, the chants of the liturgy of hours function as companions to psalms and readings and in that sense highlight the main aspects of existing texts.

Philip

Acta Philippi

- 27 The case of the apostle Philip presents a slightly different picture, as well as many similarities. As in the apocryphal tradition on Bartholomew, the main part of the Latin Acts of Philip as transmitted in the Collection of Pseudo-Abdias takes place in the temple of the local godhead. Philip, sent to Asia Minor according to this Latin tradition, is found in a temple dedicated to Mars, where a statue of the god turns out to be the dwelling place of an evil dragon. The dragon kills the son of the priest and makes the people gathered in the temple ill. Philip promises to restore life and health provided that the people destroy the idol and replace it by a cross. Thus it happens: with great joy the people participate in the destruction of the statue. Subsequently the people are baptized and build 'many churches'. The ancient sanctuary is replaced by a dwelling place for the new religion, where ministers are appointed in the hierarchical form of priests, deacons and a bishop.²⁸

Liturgical texts

- 28 Ever since the dedication of a church in Rome to Philip and James (556-574),²⁹ the liturgical cult of the apostle Philip in the West is connected to the commemoration of the apostle James Minor, the 'brother of the Lord' who is traditionally regarded as the first bishop of Jerusalem. The two apostles share a feast-day on 1 May.
- 29 In contrast to the case of Bartholomew, eucharistic prayers and chants for the liturgy of hours in commemoration of Philip and James do not offer much material that goes back to apocryphal sources. The most interesting text for our present investigation is found in the genre of hymns. A collection of Mozarabic hymns transmits the text *Fulget coruscans*, where reference is made to Philip's experiences in the temple of Mars.³⁰ The hymn as a whole follows the apocryphal narrative closely, and I point here only to one or two relevant aspects, taken from stanzas 2 to 4 and 7.

2. Hic est Philippus, beatus apostolus,
Qui praedicavit Scythis evangelium,
Bis denis annis post Christi ascensionem

Receptus fuit ad Martis statuam,
 In qua stabat draco ingens pessimus.
 This is Philip, the blessed apostle,
 Who preached the Gospel to the inhabitants of Scythia,
 Twenty years after Christ's ascension
 He was admitted to a statue of Mars,
 In which an enormous most evil dragon remained.

3. Fiunt virtutes per manus apostoli:
 Duo tribuni, quos dracos prostaverat,
 Seu filius sacrificans pontificis
 Recuperabant prospera libertatis
 Et reddunt Deo gratias multimodas.
 Miracles happened through the hand of the apostle:
 Two tribunes, whom the dragon had overthrown,
 And the son of the priest, making the offering,
 They all regained the good fortune of liberty
 And gave multiple thanks to God.

4. In locum dirum, quo draco steterat,
 Benigne iussit, ut vexilla collocent,
 Virtutes magnas imperat acquirere;
 Tunc draco ipse, qui praeerat saevius,
 In Christi laudem solitudo permanet.
 In the fearful place where the dragon had been standing
 He benignly commanded the raising of a cross,
 He ordered to acquire large powers;
 Then this very dragon, who had ruled so savagely,
 Remained [in] solitude in praise of Christ.

7. Post haec beatus vocat ad se populos,
 Levitas iubet, sacerdotes fieri,
 Deorum templa nimia destruere
 Ecclesiarumque sancta erigere,
 Haereticorum de errore redire.
 After that the blessed man called the people to him,
 He assigned deacons, priests were appointed,
 They destroyed the enormous temples of the gods
 And erected holy churches;
 They returned from the error of the heretics.

- 30 The second and third stanzas present Philip as the apostle of Scythia, who performed many miracles in and around the pagan temple. In the fourth stanza it is made clear how the cult place of the old religion is replaced by an image of the cross. The statue of Mars is, in the perspective of the apostolic legend, the dwelling place of evil in the form of a savage dragon. As in the apocryphal *Acts*, the people are present as active participants in the dismissal of the old religion: according to the seventh stanza their conversion 'from the error of the heretics' consists in the destruction of the 'temple of the gods' by their own hands, and the construction of churches.
- 31 As in the liturgy of Bartholomew, the apostle's manner of dealing with ancient cult places and the creation of a place for Christian worship has its place in the liturgy in commemoration of Philip. Different from the case of Bartholomew is the limitation of this theme to a single hymn, instead of it being disseminated throughout the eucharistic liturgy and the liturgy of hours. In the material for mass and office, biblical material is used as well as general texts in honour of the apostles. Moreover, the liturgical text follows the apocryphal narrative without adding anything new. The encounter of Philip with the cult of Mars remains as it is, without any further development.

Concluding remarks

- 32 Space does not allow further illustration of this development with material taken from the cults of other apostles. Yet the examples presented above already give rise to some observations and questions.
- 33 In the first place it is clear that the initial hesitation towards the use of apocryphal sources in the liturgy could not prevent the incorporation of these stories into various traditions of Christian worship. Extra-canonical narratives on the lives, acts and glorious deaths of the apostles were obviously seen as useful material for worship and the instruction of the faithful.
- 34 Against the background of this general observation concerning the relation between apocrypha and the liturgy of the Latin church, the importance attached to the role of the apostles as missionaries and founders of the Christian religion is conspicuous. Although a great deal of the extant liturgical texts tend to present the individual apostles as part of a general group, namely the *doctores* and *ducatores* of the church, in various, mostly early, traditions liturgical prayers, chants and hymns are found that go more deeply into the individual character of the apostle and his life. Here the focus is on the encounter of various apostles with representatives of pre-Christian cults and cult places and their foundation of a Christian altar or church. Consequently, it is not only apocryphal texts but also liturgical texts on apostles that are useful sources of information on the Christian representation of the veneration of pre-Christian godheads and the course of events in and around their cult places.
- 35 In some liturgical traditions, as was seen in the case of the apostle Bartholomew, this theme is not only copied from the apocryphal source, but also digested into a new, often multiple meaning. The cleaning of the local altar by the apostle can be the impetus to pray for the apostle's presence in order to make the Christian altar accessible to the people, stained by sins. Also, the apostle's victory over idols and demons as representatives of the ancient cult can be transformed into a prayer for victory over the sins and temptations that threaten the world of the individual Christian.
- 36 At the same time, a clear difference can be observed between liturgical traditions of various apostles. While the case of the apostle Bartholomew shows a rich influence of apocryphal traditions on liturgical texts and a similar free dealing with the themes that are brought up by the apocryphal narrative, in the case of the apostle Philip the apocryphal narrative receives a rather modest place, whereas the use of biblical passages related to either the apostle himself or to the apostles in general is much more frequent. Moreover, when apocryphal themes are incorporated into the liturgy of Philip, the liturgical texts follow the apocryphal narrative quite closely without giving the legendary material allegorical or spiritualized meanings or interpretations.
- 37 Although I have, in the preceding words, led you far from the altar as a material object, I hope to have given an impression, however limited and preliminary, of the way altars and cult places, both pre-Christian and Christian, play a role in apocryphal and liturgical traditions on the apostles in the Latin Middle Ages.

NOTES

1. I wish to thank Anne Simpson and the Netherlands Institute of Advanced Studies for correcting this article.
2. Cfr Sulpicius Severus: *Vita sancti Martini*, c. 11-15. J. Fontaine (ed.): *Vie de saint Martin* (Paris 1967-1969 = Sources Chrétiennes 133-135: vol. 133, p. 276-287).
3. 'But most of the time when the rustics protested against him, lest he destroyed their sanctuaries, he mitigated their pagan hearts through his holy preaching so that, after he had shown them the light of truth, they themselves ruined their own temples' (*Plerumque autem contra dicentibus sibi rusticis, ne eorum fana destrueret, ita praedicatione sancta gentiles animos mitigabat ut, luce eis ueritatis ostensa, ipsi sua templa subuerterent*). Sulpicius Severus: *Vita Martini*, c. 15.3. Ed. Fontaine: *Vie de saint Martin*, vol. 133, p. 286.
4. *Nam ubi fana destruxerat, statim ibi aut ecclesias aut monasteria construebat*. Sulpicius Severus: *Vita Martini*, c. 13.9. Ed. Fontaine: *Vie de saint Martin*, vol. 133, p. 282. In some instances the Christianization of a certain cult place does not pass off that smoothly. Ardent zeal of recently converted Christians leads to the installation of a false cult and the erection of a fake altar near Martin's city Tours. The tomb of what is regarded as a martyr's grave is marked by an altar, as if it were an ancient Christian cult place established by previous bishops (*nam et altare ibi a superioribus episcopis constitutum habebatur*; Sulpicius Severus: *Vita Martini*, c. 11.1. Ed. Fontaine: *Vie de saint Martin*, vol. 133, p. 276). Martin, distrustful because of contradicting testimonies by priests and other clergy, finally receives a vision of the inhabitant of the cult place: a villain, suffering pains in hell, far from the beatitude of the martyrs. The fake altar is subverted and the false cult place destroyed. From these instances it is clear that not only pre-Christian or pagan altars are wiped away from the region in order to make place for Christian cult places, but also false Christian cults can develop with fake altars. These too are discovered by the sharp eye of the ascetic bishop and missionary.
5. Cfr Sulpicius Severus: *Vita Martini*, c. 20.1: *In solo Martino apostolica auctoritas permanebat*. Ed. Fontaine: *Vie de saint Martin*, vol. 133, p. 294.
6. Cfr Innocent I: *Epistola VI.7*. Ed. H. Wurm: 'Decretales selectae ex antiquissimis Romanorum Pontificum epistulis decretalibus', in *Apollinaris* 12 (1939), p. 74-78; Leo Magnus: *Epistola 15.15*. Ed. J.P. Migne: *Patrologia Latina* 54, col. 688.
7. *Decretum Gelasianum de libris recipiendis et non recipiendis*. E. von Dobschütz (ed.): *Das Decretum Gelasianum de libris recipiendis et non recipiendis in kritischem Text herausgegeben und untersucht* (Leipzig 1912 = *Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur* 38.4), esp. p. 11-13. See also É. Junod & J.-D. Kaestli: *L'Histoire des actes apocryphes des apôtres du III^e au IX^e siècle: le cas des Actes de Jean* (Genève/Lausanne/Neuchâtel 1982 = *Cahiers de la Revue de théologie et de philosophie*, 7), p. 102-103. On date and place of origin of the document see S. Döpp & W. Geerlings: *Lexikon der antiken christlichen Literatur* (Freiburg i.B. 1998), 160. But see also McKitterick's later dating (around 700): R. McKitterick: *The Carolingians and the written word* (Cambridge 1989), p. 202-204.
8. R.A. Lipsius: *Die apokryphen Apostelgeschichten und Legenden I* (Braunschweig 1883-1889), vol. I, p. 170-171.
9. Most recent edition by M. Bonnet: *Passio sancti Bartholomaei apostoli*, in id: *Acta apostolorum apocrypha II.1* (Leipzig 1898 / repr. Hildesheim 1990), p. 128-150.
10. According to Lipsius, the work was written originally in Greek and translated into Latin. Lipsius states that the older Latin translation (transmitted in manuscripts as early as the eighth

century; see M. Bonnet: 'La Passion de S. Barthélemy, en quelle langue a-t-elle été écrite?', in *Analecta Bollandiana* 14 (1895), p. 353-366, at p. 353) is nearer to the Greek original than the relatively late Greek transmission. Lipsius tries to demonstrate this with the help of a theological analysis of both accounts; *ibid.* p. 67-70. Bonnet challenges this view by stating the opposite, viz. that the oldest translation (the original text being neither Greek nor Latin) was into Latin, from which the Greek translation depends. Bonnet: 'Passion de Barthélemy'.

11. Lipsius: *Die apokryphen Apostelgeschichten* II.2, p. 65.

12. *Abdias Babyloniae primi episcopi ab apostolis constituti, de historia certaminis apostolici libri decem*. Ed. W. Lazius (Paris 1560). Cf. Lipsius: *Die apokryphen Apostelgeschichten* II.2, p. 65. As no account of the translation of Bartholomew's relics can be found in the *Passio*, the work can be dated before 580, the year when the apostle's remains were brought to Lipari, a small island to the north of Sicily. Cfr. Lipsius: *Die apokryphen Apostelgeschichten* II.2, p. 71. Due to the *passio's* Nestorian background, Lipsius dates it between 450 and 550.

13. Bartholomew summarizes the commission of the apostles in his own words: *Et sicut qui uictor extiterit tyranni mittit comites suos ut in omnibus locis ubi tyrannus possedi titulos regis sui uictoris ac triumphatoris inponant, ita hic homo Christus Iesus, qui uicit, misit nos in omnes prouincias ut expellamus ministros diaboli qui per templa in statu habitant et homines qui eos colunt de potestate eius qui uictus est auferamus*. *Passio Bartholomaei* 12. Ed. M. Bonnet: *Acta apostolorum apocrypha* II.1, p. 139.

14. *...nam omnes illi qui iacent in templo aegrotantes...* *Passio Bartholomaei* 13. Ed. Bonnet: *Acta apostolorum apocrypha* II.1, p. 140.

15. *At ille statim egrediens comminuit omnia genera idolorum, nec solum maius idolum, sed ubicumque pro ornatu templi sigilla erant posita minutauit ita ut picturam omnem delesset*. *Passio Bartholomaei* 17. Ed. Bonnet: *Acta apostolorum apocrypha* II.1, p. 143-144.

16. F. Cabrol: 'Mozarabe (la liturgie)', in *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie* 12, col. 390-491: at col. 407.

17. *Liber Mozarabicus sacramentorum* 843. The full text of the prayer is found in J. Janini (ed.): *Liber missarum de Toledo* (Toledo 1982-1983), 2 vols, vol. I, p. 296-301.

18. *Passio Bartholomaei* c. 6 (16). Ed. Bonnet: *Acta apostolorum apocrypha* II.1, p. 143.

19. M. Zender: 'Bartholomaeus', in *Lexikon des Mittelalters* I, col. 1491.

20. K. Gamber: 'Die mittelitalienisch-beneventanischen Plenarmissalien. Der Messbuchtypus des Metropolitangebiets von Rom im 9./10. Jahrhundert', in *Sacris Erudiri* 9 (1957), p. 265-285: at p. 265.

21. Gamber: 'Mittelitalienisch-beneventanische Plenarmissalien', p. 267.

22. S. Rehle (ed.): *Missale Beneventanum von Canosa* (Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery, MS W6) (Regensburg 1972 = *Textus patristici et liturgici* 9). The assumption that the missal was in use in the church of Canosa is inspired by the presence of masses for the dedication of a church in Canosa, and one for the commemoration of Sabinus, bishop of this city. *Ibidem*, p. 18.

23. I worked this out further in an article on the clash between religious images and cults in apocryphal and liturgical texts: E. Rose: 'Erant enim sine deo vero': Iconoclasm in apocryphal and liturgical apostle traditions of the Medieval West', in *Iconoclasm: Struggle for Religious Identity. Proceedings* (Brill: Leiden and Boston 2007, forthcoming).

24. R.-J. Hesbert: *Corpus antiphonarium officii* 6 vols. (Rome 1963-1979), vol. 1, p. 293-295.

25. Cfr *Passio Bartholomaei* c. 6 (16). Ed. Bonnet: *Acta apostolorum apocrypha* II.1, p. 143.

26. Cfr *Passio Bartholomaei* c. 6 (17). Ed. Bonnet: *Acta apostolorum apocrypha* II.1, p. 143.

27. *Passio Bartholomaei* c. 7 (18): *Cumque omnes respondissent amen, apparuit angelus domini splendidus sicut sol, habens alas et per quattuor angulos templi circumuolans digito suo in quadratis saxis sculpsit signum crucis et dixit: '(...) quale signum ego sculpsi in his saxis tale uos digito uestro facite in frontibus uestris...*'. Ed. Bonnet: *Acta apostolorum apocrypha* II.1, p. 145-146.

28. Lipsius regards the miracles of punishment which prevent the continuation of the temple ministry as 'ganz im gnostischen Geschmack'. Lipsius: *Apokryphe Apostelgeschichten und Legenden*

II.2, p. 16. Also according to Lipsius, the motif of the dragon hidden in the idol of Mars in the *Acta Philippi* of the collection of Pseudo-Abdias is a feature that the Latin tradition has in common with the gnostic Acts. *Ibidem*, p. 51.

29. L. Kennedy: *The saints of the Canon of the mass* (Rome 1938 = *Studi di Antichità* 14), p. 104.

30. C. Blume (ed.): *Mozarabische Hymnen des alt-spanischen Ritus* = *Analecta Hymnica* 27 (Leipzig 1897), p. 228-229.

INDEX

Mots-clés : apocryphe, hagiographie, apôtre

AUTEUR

ELS ROSE

Professeur de latin médiéval, Utrecht University - els.rose@let.uu.nl