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Walter BERSCHIN, Dieter GEUENICH, Heiko STEUER (Hg.), *Mission und Christianisierung am Hoch- und Oberrhein (6.–8. Jahrhundert)*, Stuttgart (Thorbecke) 2000, 222 p. (Archäologie und Geschichte, 10).

This lavishly produced volume contains nine papers, eight of which were first delivered at the symposium ›Mission und Christianisierung am Hoch- und Oberrhein‹ (6.–8. Jahrhundert) convened in the city of Bad Säckingen in March 1997. It opens with two short papers by way of an introduction – Arnold ANGENENDT gives a general brief and anecdotal account (alas, with no footnotes or endnotes) of the Christianisation of early medieval Europe (p. 11–21), and Dieter GEUENICH surveys the history of Alemannia from the sixth to the eighth century (p. 23–34). The rest of the papers are more focused in their interest. Two papers are dedicated to the history of Säckingen itself – Alfons ZETTLER discusses the earliest history of the monastery (p. 35–51), and Felicia SCHMAEDECKE focuses on the archaeological evidence from Säckingen, but mainly from a period later than that chosen by the editors of this volume (p. 181–218). Archaeology is also the subject of two other papers, namely, Horst Wolfgang BÖHME's paper on archaeology and the Christianisation of south Germany during the earlier Merovingian period (p. 75–109), and Barbara SCHOLKMANN's paper on the topography, chronology and typology of the churches in early medieval Alemannia (p. 111–138). Helmut MAURER's illuminating paper discusses the role played by the bishops of Konstanz in the Christianisation of Alemannia (p. 139–163); Gabriele SANDERS' interesting paper focuses on the image of Clovis in the tenth-century *Vita Fridolini* (p. 53–74); and, surprisingly enough, Karl Suso FRANK's study is dedicated to Hilary of Poitiers (p. 165–180).

The problem with ›Mission und Christianisierung am Hoch- und Oberrhein‹ is neither the wide range of topics discussed in the papers (some of which had nothing to do with the Christianisation of Europe during the early Middle Ages), nor is it the fact that many of the discussions are highly derivative. The main problem, to my mind, is the complete detachment of most papers from the ongoing scholarly discussion on issues of Mission and Christianisation. For example, Horst Wolfgang BÖHME discusses the archaeological evidence for the Christianisation of south Germany during the earlier Merovingian period, but seems completely unaware of the tremendously important works published by scholars, such as Nancy Gauthier, Patrick Geary, Guy Halsall, Edward James and Bailey Young. Moreover, crucial and extremely relevant works by eminent scholars, such as Alain Dierkens, Rosamond McKitterick, Ramsay MacMullen, Robert Markus, and especially Ian Wood, are conspicuous, indeed extremely conspicuous, in their absence from the discussions and the footnotes throughout the book. At first I thought this could be caused by the language barrier (for the fingers of one hand will suffice to count all the non-German studies cited in the entire volume). However, it seems to be more fundamental than that, for the works of German scholars, such as Heinz Löwe, Jörg Jarnut, Lutz von Padberg and even Arnold Angenendt himself, are also rarely referred to by the authors of the papers collected here (apart from Helmut Maurer who indeed refers to and cites the updated German literature relevant to his paper). It is unfortunate that the editors, who are known for their high standards of scholarship, have not addressed this point. Therefore, I have to conclude that, as it stands, ›Mission und Christianisierung am Hoch- und Oberrhein‹ has little new to offer anyone interested in Mission and the Christianisation of early medieval Europe.

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