«The Martyrdom of Conon» as the source on the persecution of Decius

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The article analyses the content of the ''Martyrdom of Conon'' (BHG, 361) within the background of Decius' anti-Christian persecution. Since there is no consensus on the causes of the religious policy of the Emperor, the question, to what extent Christians were persecuted, remains open. The author refers to an authoritative hagiographic monument of Asia Minor, ''The martyrdom of Conon'' , analyzes data on time of martyrdom and congenial hagiographic tradition, such as evidences on the death of Papias, Diodorus, and Claudian, as well as ''The Martyrdom of Nestor of Magydos». Some parallels with the ''The Martyrdom of Pionius'' are interpreted not as textual, but as historical, that mirrored procedures of sacrifice being prescribed by the edict of Decius. Special attention is drawn to the Jewish origin of Conon that created special meanings in the text. Lapsi of Asia Minor, to whom wasn't possible to rejoin Christian community, often converted to Judaism. It's the condition that caused anti-Jewish controversy in the ''The Martyrdom of Pionius''. On the other hand, all this caused actuality of such hero as Conon who courageously professed Christ and died as a martyr, providing a model of Christian apology in anti-Jewish polemics.

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