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***The Wandering Heretics of Languedoc.* By Caterina Bruschi.**

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In this well-written but oddly conceived study Caterina Bruschi attempts to provide a new account of Catharism in southern France and northern Italy. From the onset, a few things seem amiss. The book title is misleading, for she concentrates almost exclusively on the Cathars and addresses Waldensians (and other heretical groups) only in passing. A clarification to this effect in the book's subtitle would have been desirable. Bruschi claims in the introduction that previous studies of heresy (by which she means Italian studies of Catharism) share two major shortcomings: they have tended to portray medieval dissenters as individuals and neglected dissenting groups' organizational structures and internal dynamics, and they have depicted heretics, in her words, as "silent and ignorant actors" (7). These claims must surely surprise readers of such well-received accounts as Malcolm Lambert's *The Cathars* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1998) and Malcolm Barber's *The Cathars: Dualist Heretics in Languedoc in the High Middle Ages* (Harlow, U.K.: Longman, 2000) in Britain, Walter Wakefield and Austin Evan's *Heresies of the High Middle Ages* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969) in the United States, Jean Duvernoy's multiple studies in France, and Gerhard Rottenwöhler's multivolume *Der Katharismus* (Bad Honnef : Bock & Herchen, 1982) in Germany. Alas, the latter linguistic realm of scholarship remains unconsidered, for not a single work in German graces the list of secondary studies in the bibliography, reflective of the author's admission that she does not know the language well enough to explore German scholarship (9).

Even with such serious limitations the book does have redeeming qualities, however. They lie in Bruschi's nuanced exegesis of her main source, volumes 21–26 of the Collection Doat in the Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris, in the context of wandering heretics—in this regard, the title of the book seems aptly chosen. After a prolegomena that addresses methodological issues concerning inquisitions and the textual records they produced in chapter 1, the book turns to the issue of mobility among heretics. In chapter 2, the author develops a typology of movements in which she distinguishes in two categories "macro" from "micro" movements (pertaining to the length of distance travelled), and "positive" from "negative" ones (pertaining to the issue whether travel was undertaken voluntarily and deliberately or forced upon individuals and groups). Among positive movements Bruschi thematizes the spread of Cathar doctrine in Europe as well as the movements of Cathars from southern France to northern Italy and vice versa, and within

southern France the network of houses and hospices that anchored the itineraries of Cathar perfects and their guides and messengers. Bruschi's depictions of Cathar life are novel in depicting Catharism as a religion characterized by itinerant ministry, whereas her account of the Cathars' response to persecution as one of secretive and perilous movement of the perfects fits well within existing scholarly accounts. Bruschi returns to the theme of itinerancy in chapter 3, where she distinguishes between four types: "apostolic" itinerancy of many lay heterodox movements of the twelfth century, "missionary" itinerancy of the Waldensians, itinerancy as "escape" forced upon heterodox movements (and thus a type of "negative" movement), and then "sacramental itinerancy" of the Cathars. The final chapter complements this depiction by addressing perceptions of risk and fear in the depositions.

The novelty of the book lies in the characterization of Catharism in Languedoc as a "living, travelling church" (194) and its detailed analysis of the role of messengers as connecting groups of believers with Cathar perfects, allowing the perfects to discharge their hierocratic and sacerdotal duties and also helping guide and safeguard them. Yet Bruschi does not reflect on accounts that testify to the residency of the Cathar holy men and women before the 1240s, indicative of the fact that she did not consult a source that dwells on the stability of Cathar communities much more extensively than most of the testimonies by and about Cathars in the Collection Doat: the inquisitorial records of the inquisition of Bernard de Caux and Jean de Saint-Pierre in the diocese of Toulouse in 1245–1246, contained in MS 609 of the Bibliothèque municipale, Toulouse. First extensively discussed by Jean Guiraud, these records indicate that "houses of heretics" existed that were the organizational centers of Catharism, forming a dense network in many regions of Languedoc. As I have shown elsewhere, the two main characteristics of these houses or homes were their openness and dual purpose of religious and craft instruction ("Sociological Explanations of Cathar Success and Tenacity in Languedoc: A New Perspective Focusing on the 'Houses of Heretics,'" *Heresis: Revue semestrielle d'histoire des dissidences médiévales* 38 (2003): 31–49). Particularly interesting were those homes that were workshops, where Cathar perfects in a dual role as spiritual and vocational teachers instructed their *discipuli* in both trade and religion. Bruschi's account, in contrast, overemphasizes the itinerancy of early Catharism and pays too little attention to the sociological embeddedness of Cathar religion.

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