

Kromholtz returns to the question of Aquinas's teaching on eternal reward and punishment in the commentary on Job.

This is a workmanlike and insightful collection of essays, in which breathes something of the spirit of the schoolroom for which Aquinas wrote his practical aid for the *fratres communes* in their study of the book of Job, and in which he can be seen developing his own thinking. There is a bibliography and an index, always useful in a collection of essays.

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East Anglian church porches and their medieval context. By Helen E. Lunnon. Pp. xvi + 299 incl. 75 figs and 2 maps. Woodbridge–Rochester, NY: Boydell Press, 2020. £60. 978 1 78327 526 7

JEH (72) 2021; doi:10.1017/S0022046920002894

The title might suggest at best a work of local history, or recall that agreeable inter-war series of Batsford Books with titles like *The English abbey*; yet this is a significant and substantial study with wide implications for English medieval religion, and it takes 100 pages to arrive in East Anglia. In Latin, the English church porch is a *porticus*, a word which in Anglo-Saxon churches described not the porch that we know, but a space set aside for burial, like the circular funerary chapels attached to Old St Peter's, Rome. It usually also contained an altar, and virtually never did it have its own external door through which the church could be entered. Only gradually did external doorways become customary in the *porticus*, and the full transition to a structure primarily intended as an entrance to a church building was not complete till the thirteenth century. Before that, the fully-fledged 'modern' porch, such as majestic surviving Romanesque examples at Malmesbury Abbey (Wilts.) and Southwell Minster (Notts.), was very much the exception. As Lunnon explains, the two meanings of *porticus* unselfconsciously survived side by side throughout the Anglo-Norman period. Both of them reflected multiple meditations on the use of *porticus* in the Vulgate to denote distinctive parts of King Solomon's Temple and of his royal house in Jerusalem, particularly as described in I Kings vi–vii and Ezekiel xl, plus additional resonances in the New Testament describing Second Temple settings for healing miracles. Lunnon discusses how various aspects of existing porches and ceremonial gateways (in particular at Norwich Cathedral and Bury St Edmunds) draw on Solomonic themes. The biblical material is rich, not to say contradictory. One aspect of the Temple Porch in I Kings vi–vii/2 and Chronicles iii was that it was also a tower; East Anglia has a generous tally of porch-towers. The oldest is probably Haughley (Suffolk), probably inspired by a crusader's gift of a True Cross relic to Haughley in the 1260s intended to kick-start a Jerusalem-related cult, for which this south tower formed a triumphal entrance. Lunnon does not discuss this example, but she is acute in laying out a dynamic chronology of the fully-fledged parish church porch. The first growth was in the aftermath of the major devotional changes triggered by Lateran IV (1215), but the pioneering East Anglian porches are interestingly distinctive: generally timber additions to stone churches, with stylistic features appropriate to this different mode of construction. That suggests that they were not intended to be read in the same way as the main building: they were precisely liminal areas to

introduce fully sacred space. It is significant that there is no evidence of consecration crosses on porch fabric. The ambiguity was never entirely lost, but change came in the late fourteenth century, after which the porch was commonly richly decorated with devotional imagery, and apparently more integrated with the church beyond it. Iconographic themes were diverse: wodewoses and other savage creatures contributed to the defence of the (invariably) open outer arch, while Marian imagery habitually led the worshipper forward into church, often in an explicit and logical sequence from Annunciation to Coronation. What was all this elaboration and expenditure for? Lunnon identifies a great number of ceremonial uses. Burial made a surprising come-back from Anglo-Saxon days, though not without problems. Normally a porch could only accommodate one burial, or close relatives at most; multiple burials were not practical in such a restricted space. Yet some parishes might have considered it an unfair advantage for one individual to hog the attention and potential prayers of everyone entering the church. The prospective corpse would contrariwise appreciate the difficulty in providing an adjacent chantry altar for such a grave; altars hardly ever feature in English parish church porches. The growing phenomenon of rooms over porches might relate to this; such a chamber might provide a setting for prayers from a chantry priest or from schoolchildren conning their letters. Porches are perhaps most commonly associated with medieval wedding customs, duly discussed by Lunnon, but it is worth speculating as to whether there is more to say. The Sarum rite, created in the thirteenth century for a self-consciously trend-setting cathedral boasting a massive north porch, sited Salisbury's liturgical action before the nuptial mass 'ante ostium ecclesiae', but elsewhere multiple practicalities, not least bad weather whipping through open porches, and pressure from couples to celebrate properly within the fold of the church with all their friends and relatives, might have affected the reality. Whatever Sarum set out to dictate, by the end of the Middle Ages, the likelihood is that comfort and piety marched hand in hand: after minimum preliminaries, the couple moved through the church door to process up the aisle and marry in front of the images of the Apostles and saints on the rood screen, trumping any sculptured Coronation of the Virgin crowning a porch vault. When Thomas Cranmer created a relatively conservative construction of a marriage service in 1549, he specified that it should take place in 'the body of the church' – that is, the nave – before the couple proceeded through the rood screen into the quire for communion; nothing left in the porch. Was this so new? Otherwise, incidental delights of the book include the possibility that the west porch of Snettisham parish church (Norfolk) inspired Peter Parler's south transept porch at Prague Cathedral, *via* the patronage of Edward II's redoubtable widow Queen Isabella. There is much to ponder in this study, though as is not unprecedented in a product of the University of East Anglia, it has a tendency to confuse East Anglia with the county of Norfolk.

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