

*Hagiography in Anglo-Saxon England. Adopting and adapting saints' Lives into Old English prose (c. 950–1150)*. Edited by Loredana Lazzari, Patrizia Lendinara and Claudia Di Sciacca (Texts et Études du Moyen Âge, 73.) Pp. xviii + 596 incl. 13 plates. Barcelona–Madrid: Fédération Internationale des Instituts d'Études Médiévales, 2014. €65 (paper). 978 2 503 55199 9

*JEH* (67) 2016; doi:10.1017/S0022046915002997

An article in this substantial book makes reference to the dictum that hagiography is 'occasional' literature, never purely historical and rarely entirely fictional, but directed towards meeting the needs of individuals and communities, and showing the preoccupations of writers and the changing ideas of their societies. This collection covers an astonishing range of themes, saints, sources and places, but nevertheless reaches a consensus as to the interest and utility of hagiography in tracing the development of thought in times of change.

It is rather difficult to summarise the contents, though the editorial introduction attempts to do this, with some success. Thereafter, the articles are arranged in four sections, which deal with Ælfric's *Lives of saints*; the influence of the ideas of the Desert Fathers and the manuscripts of the *Verba Seniorum*; texts and contexts of Anglo-Saxon hagiography including the Blickling and Vercelli homilies; and adaptations and developments relating to Anglo-Saxon saints in post-Conquest England. There are indices of manuscripts, medieval authors and works, and saints.

The fourteen essays vary in length, but each adds something of significance to scholarship. Joyce Hill discusses the peculiarities and contours of the *sanctorale* in Anglo-Saxon England; Loredana Lazzari focuses on the theme of kingship and how this is worked out in Ælfric's *Lives* of Oswald and Edmund; Susan Irvine investigates the *hengen*, a device of torture, its configuration and use; and Rolf Bremmer revisits the anthropological concept of cultures being determined by notions of 'shame' or 'honour'. In this first section, focusing mainly on Ælfric, there is wide consideration of the calendar, hagiographical themes, literary semantics and socio-cultural analytics. This breadth typifies the book.

The next section has two essays investigating the influence of eastern monasticism in England, and this provides Claudia Di Sciacca with opportunity to give a different slant on the established typologies of 'pastor' and 'solitary' in saints' *Lives*. Winfried Rudolf's examination of the *Verba seniorum* neatly contextualises these apophthegms and narratives and then proceeds to detailed treatment of the selection in a Worcester Cathedral Library manuscript.

The third and longest section of the book deals with themes and saints in anonymous verse and prose: Concetta Giliberto discusses Guthlac and the 'descent into hell' motif; Giuseppe De Bonis analyses the narratives of the birth of John the Baptist; Claudio Cataldi examines the sources for the legends of St Andrew; Maria Caterina De Bonis assembles the evidence to elucidate an incomplete picture of St Benedict; Catherine Cubitt traces the developments of Æthelred II's reign and religiosity and shows how this affected hagiography and devotion to the saints; and Patrizia Lendinara effectively makes obsolete her own title, 'Forgotten missionaries', through a comprehensive examination of the sources and commemorations relating to St Augustine of Canterbury and his companions.

The final section of the book has an essay by Rosalind Love dealing with the hagiographical works relating to Anglo-Saxon saints produced at Thorney Abbey by Goscelin and Folcard; and Roberta Bassi traces the development of the character of St Oswald in post-Conquest histories and narratives from saint to martyr to romance hero.

The difficulty of summarising these essays lies not in any lack of focus in the work, but in the breadth of topics covered and the range of insights that the essays present. Each one has interesting and perceptive observations, and brings new evidence and analysis to bear on established typologies. Naturally, the style and content vary from article to article: I enjoyed the new approaches to familiar texts in Bassi, Cataldi, Lazzari, Giliberto and Bremmer; the calendrical (Hill), linguistic (Irvine), historical (Cubitt) and local (Love) analysis was sharp and perceptive; the focus on particular saints in Di Sciacca, De Bonis and De Bonis was informative and full of insight. Minor weaknesses include a smattering of spelling and other typographical errors; inaccurate and incomplete translation of Old English particularly in Lazzari's essay; and the lacuna in Bremmer's essay where he fails to mention Ælfric's source for the *Life* of St Edmund so that one is left asking whether Abbo did or did not share the Anglo-Saxon cultural view of shame and honour. A particular strength of the collection is the detailed attention to manuscripts, and several of the essays here will be essential for future study in their fields: Maria Caterina De Bonis reviews early and glossed manuscripts of the *Regula Sancti Benedicti* and the *Versus Simplicii*; Lendinara's outstanding essay on sources and manuscripts relating to St Augustine and Gregory the Great should probably be released as a separate publication; Rudolf's article would make an excellent introduction to a full edition of the Worcester *Verba seniorum*; and Love promises that her article is part of an introduction to a new edition of Folcard.

For all the variety of text and treatment in this collection, it nevertheless has a coherence that many colloquia lack. It sheds new light on Anglo-Saxon hagiography in the crucial centuries of change from 950 to 1150, showing how important hagiography was in these years and how it shaped perceptions and reflected shifting ideas not only of saintliness, but also of the past and present, kings and heroes, theology and monasticism. If it does not tell us much about how ordinary people understood saints and hagiography, it does tell us a great deal about how the Church and hagiographers adopted and adapted saints' *Lives* – not only into Old English prose, but into their projects and libraries.

UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM

PAUL CAVILL

*Mille fois à Compostelle. Pèlerins du moyen âge.* By Adeline Rucquoi. (Collection Realia.) Pp. 450. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2014. €25.50 (paper). 978 2 251

33841 5

*JEH* (67) 2016; doi:10.1017/S0022046915003139

Relentlessly as well as pleasantly informative, in this substantial volume Adeline Rucquoi casts her net wide, and it is a fine net, heavily weighted. In four chapters, each of about a hundred pages, while the reader witnesses with something like awe the process of evacuating an almost bottomless card index, the author mounts