

the monks speak through the evidence to tell their stories, what they felt and how they coped. The strictness of the life was offset in many ways, by the use of the adjoining fields and forests to walk in when the monks needed relief from ascetic pressures. She captures well a sense of the microcosm of the life and what it was like to inhabit this 'total institution' (to use Goffman's term). This sense emerges in the way she draws out, in chapters 4–5, the degree to which 'the sound of silence' was a distinct accomplishment in the medieval monastery, which, contrary to expectations was a noisy place with animals trespassing in the cloister and with servants and craftsmen milling about the place. In addition, there were tenants to be seen, petitioners to be appeased, and a never-ending stream of pilgrims and visitors. The monastery was like a mini-city with many comings and goings. Not surprisingly, the choir area was kept apart, not for reasons of power, but for the protection of the sanity of the monks where they could pray apart. With all these pressures, as Kerr indicates, occasional visits to the local taverns were understandable to escape the pressure.

Kerr is especially interesting on the way the family ties of the monks were well recognised by the monasteries. Thus, she notes that in the early fifteenth century, 'the cellarer of Westminster Abbey set aside about 200 gallons of ale each year for the use of the monks' parents and sisters when they visited' (p. 67). Recruitment to the monasteries seemed to have been an oddly haphazard affair. Some monks, initially, came as oblates, others had been knights who were just passing visitors who decided to stay on, but 'the majority were recruited through the ministry of the brethren, whether by their exhortation, prayer or example' (p.13). Even then, wearing the religious habit was an important sign of vocation, one that signified the promise of Eternal Salvation, a link bizarrely broken after Vatican II, a severance rendering ascetic vocations almost pointless.

The trouble with the study is that it is so interesting and so well sectioned that many will dip into the parts and miss the holistic properties of the daily life so well portrayed. Three things do stand out as being of exceptional interest. The first relates to the regulation of the body in the monastery, its discipline, but also the attention given to its maintenance in terms of blood-letting, cleanliness, the use of the infirmary, and the diet of the monks. The second relates to the surveillance procedures employed to ensure virtue where the monks were highly alert to the dangers of the flesh, disputes, abuses, and vices, especially anger which could de-stabilise the community. The third area relates to the way the monks linked reading to the pursuit of holiness, so that knowledge 'should be used as a mirror, that soul might see a reflection of its own image' (p. 181).

The study ends with a one page epilogue that well illustrates the attractions of monastic life, the security of life offered, the communal demands that realised solidarity and friendship, and the sense of belonging together in a common quest for salvation, all rendering this an institution all too human, but proximate to the Divine, in ways that generated wonder in the medieval world and a 'magic' even in the present day.

KIERAN FLANAGAN

ERZBISCHOF LEON VON OHRID (1037–1056): LEBEN UND WERK (MIT DEN TEXTEN SEINER BISHER UNEDIERTEN ASKETISCHEN SCHRIFT UND SEINER DREI BRIEFE AN DEN PAPST) by Elmar Büttner, *Historisches Seminar, Johannes-Gutenberg Universität Mainz, Bamberg, 2007, ISBN 978-3-00-021971-9*

It is well known, to those interested in the history of Catholic-Orthodox relations, that one of the key factors leading up to the famous excommunication of patriarch

Michael Keroularios by Cardinal Humbert in 1054 was Leo of Ohrid's letter to John of Trani, which John was requested to transmit to the pope and other bishops of the 'Franks'. This letter condemned the Roman church in no uncertain terms for its 'Judaizing', un-Christian use of 'azymes' (unleavened bread) in the Eucharist. The letter was translated by Humbert, its contents causing great scandal, and received a point-by-point rebuttal from Humbert in a piece known as the *Dialogue of a Roman and Constantinopolitan*, where the words of the 'Constantinopolitan' are simply the words of Leo's letter. Humbert's translation implicated Michael Keroularios himself as a co-author. The accuracy of this attribution to Keroularios has been much disputed: Keroularios himself denied any involvement, but while he may not have had a part in the composition of the letter, his condemnation of the use of 'azymes' is elsewhere quite clear. Leo's letter and its rebuttal became part of the standard 'dossier' on 1054, giving Leo of Ohrid lasting notoriety and fame.

There are, however, many things both about 1054 and about Leo himself which are far from well known. With regard to the events of 1054, the documentation available is considerable, of an unusual density and authenticity for the 11th century; but despite its claims to attention, on a wide range of levels, it has not enjoyed enough popularity to merit modern editions or translations, and awareness of the details has correspondingly fallen away. Elmar Büttner's work on Leo of Ohrid therefore stands out as much-needed contribution to an area which cries out for renewed attention. With regard to Leo himself, moreover, Büttner's work makes available for the first time the range of his extant writings, with comprehensive critical apparatus, at the same time providing extensive background information to Leo and to his context.

The texts edited in this volume bring together Leo's well-known 'First letter on the azymes' with two further letters, on the same subject but approaching the question from different angles. There has previously been very little awareness of these further letters (the 19th-century edition of them is highly inaccessible), which shed considerable light on Leo's thought and the connections between his ideas and those of his contemporaries. In addition, moreover, Büttner provides an edition of a previously unedited work of Leo, namely his fifty 'Ascetic Chapters' or 'Kephalaia'. This latter piece follows a pattern of composition familiar from Byzantine theological texts (another of the protagonists of 1054, Niketas Stethatos, also wrote 'Kephalaia'), but is somewhat unusual for the period in that its impact is not confined to a monastic audience but clearly envisages the laity as well. Büttner provides comprehensive manuscript information, editions and commentary for all four works, together with translations into German.

Büttner's work, however, is more than just an edition and translation. His introductory material deals in detail with Leo's life and context, bringing together the available information, offering level-headed commentary on key questions such as his relationship with Michael Keroularios and other figures and developments related to the excommunications of 1054, and providing very useful information regarding the full range of relevant texts and dates. On occasion, Büttner is able, on the basis of his investigations, to shed new light on the dynamics at play in these years. For example, much energy has, over the years, gone into discussing why Leo chose to address his first letter via John of Trani: that is, via the southern Italian territories disputed ecclesiastically between Rome and Constantinople, and at that time being dramatically politically reshaped by the Norman incursions, threatening the continued existence of any Byzantine political power in the region. That manuscript evidence in fact points also to Dominic Marango, patriarch of Grado/Venice, as a second – or perhaps even primary – conduit to the west, casts a different light on the question of Leo's method of proceeding and motivation, rendering much standard secondary comment on the subject inadequate if not inaccurate as a result.

But the interest value of Büttner's work on Leo is not confined to the events of 1054. The eleventh century is a fascinating period in Byzantine theological and ecclesiastical developments. It is probably best known for its association with Symeon the New Theologian; but Symeon represents but one trend, and a rather idiosyncratic one at that, in a very complex world, which produced many significant personalities and has left behind copious and varied written sources. Although many of the major protagonists are well known – figures such as Keroularios himself, Peter of Antioch, Niketas Stethatos (Symeon's disciple and biographer), Theophylact of Ohrid, John of Antioch – the extent and scope of their writings is often not appreciated, and often the range of approaches represented in their writings, and the tensions between them, is not appreciated. Moreover, they are the cream on the top of a great body of lesser-known material, at times more mundane but, when studied in depth, capable of presenting a much more interesting picture of the richness of the period. Much of this material is only gradually becoming more well known and widely available, through projects such as the translations of Byzantine monastic foundation documents, published online by Dumbarton Oaks, the Belfast Evergetis project, and current work in Germany on Nikon of the Holy Mountain, the key source for 11th century Palestine and surrounding areas, to name but a few. Publication of Leo's 'Kephalaiia' therefore is an important contribution to building up understanding of the rich complexity of this period.

Unfortunately, as yet Büttner's work is not widely available. The current publication, which I acquired through personal submission to Dr Büttner's supervisor, Professor Günter Prinzing, is not on general release, although can be acquired. It is much to be hoped that it will receive the attention it deserves and see a further edition, more widely available.

JUDITH RYDER

ANSELM by Sandra Visser and Thomas Williams, *Great Medieval Thinkers Series*, Oxford University Press, 2009, pp. xii + 303, £19.99 pbk

In this volume on *Anselm* for the *Great Medieval Thinkers* series, Sandra Visser and Thomas Williams set out to provide 'a fresh reassessment of Anselm's thought as presented in his own writings' (p. v). It is intended primarily as exposition rather than evaluation, although understandably it is full of evaluation. My immediate reaction to a work such as this is, why not just read what Anselm wrote? After all, much of the bad exegesis to which Visser and Williams refer is based on a failure to read the texts adequately (if at all!). However, it does seem legitimate, given the controversial nature of the history of Anselmian interpretation, to provide an aide to understanding the texts. There seems little doubt that students reading Anselm (in particular, *De Grammatico*) need some assistance in getting their bearings, so this book is to be welcomed as an attempt to provide such assistance. By its nature and length, it can only skim over much of Anselm's thought, but in its fourteen chapters it provides many useful discussions and pointers.

The work is divided into three parts, 'The Framework of Anselm's Thought' (three chapters), 'God' (six chapters), and 'The Economy of Redemption' (five chapters). It takes a thematic approach. So, for example, discussion of *Cur Deus Homo* occurs in chapters 1, 10, 12 and 13, and of the *Monologion* in chapters 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 12. This approach allows the authors to show how integrated Anselm's thought is, how ideas from different works mutually support Anselm's 'program' (p. 254). However, the risk is that one cannot see the trees for the wood – Anselm's works were all written in a particular context with a particular aim as issues arose, and to that extent it might be doubted that Anselm had a