

debates) believes that he wrote both the extant *Elenchus* and a lost *Syntagma*, we might also expect her to advance some theory to explain this duplication of labour.

Whatever we make of these riddles, we must be grateful to Pourkier for a clear and accurate edition of the Greek text of the *Panarion*, prefaced by a list of readings that differ from those of the standard edition of Holl, sedulously annotated with parallels from Justin, Irenaeus and Clement, and faced on the right-hand side by a French translation which is perhaps less ‘maladroit’ (p. 29) than the original at its worst but equally capable of the colour and spontaneity which Pourkier reckons among its occasional charms.

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Narrating martyrdom. Rewriting late-antique virgin martyrs in Byzantium. By Anne P. Alwis (trans. and intro.). (Translated Texts for Byzantinists, 9.) Pp. xiv + 210. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2022 (first publ. 2020). £29.99 (paper). 978 1 80207 748 3

JEH (75) 2024; doi:10.1017/S0022046924001039

In a world in which originality is prized, simulacra are rarely given the spotlight. But as Alwis’s engaging book demonstrates, rewritings encode historical, social and psychological information that has hitherto been largely overlooked. Three martyrdom accounts, all involving female virgin martyrs, are selected for examination, each a revision (either as a *passio* or as metaphrasis) of an earlier version. This synoptic vantage point allows Alwis to infer a good deal about the psychology and agency of three Byzantine authors, whose texts may be shown to reflect the concerns of their day. The monk Makarios (late thirteenth/fourteenth century) rewrote the martyrdom of St Ia of Persia; Constantine Akropolites (d.c. 1324) the martyrdom of St Horaiozele of Constantinople; and an anonymous wordsmith (ninth century) that of St Tatiana of Rome. Alwis follows up her analysis with the first translation into English of the three texts, shedding light on this long-forgotten material.

The author joins a relatively new but wholly salutary wave of scholarship, examining Byzantine texts for their rhetorical, cultural and social interest. Byzantine hagiography in particular, whose hyperbolic and formulaic construction is traditionally borne impatiently and only in order to access a historical or philological kernel it obscures, can in fact be read as a sophisticated and nuanced communicative act. While on one level this is obvious, Alwis makes the case for the examination of the narratology of hagiographies, specifically focusing on the implied *persona* of the narrator. Probing the distinction between author and narrator, commonplace in other disciplines, Alwis reckons to be relatively unusual in Byzantine studies. Her approach poses the question: how does each author convince the audience of the narrator’s trustworthiness, sincerity and knowledgeability, while also holding their attention?

An extended introduction begins by establishing the main currents in Byzantine scholarship in relation to which the author situates her project. The philosopher Gilles Deleuze is employed to justify that the simulacrum (or rewritten text)

possesses validity as a creative act independent of its archetype, and revisers can be properly referred to as ‘authors’ in their own right. The fourteenth-century Florentine codex in which our three accounts occur is singular for gathering the *vitae* and *passiones* of exclusively female saints, nineteen in total. Why did male authors choose to tell the stories of female martyrs? The basis of Alwis’s answer is that a female protagonist was particularly useful to influence (or ‘lobby’) their audience about specific interests, because of women’s power as chastisers and intercessors, and the shock value inherent to an articulate and fearless woman. Although the manuscript itself gives little away about its intended readership (though a liturgical context is probable), examining how each author has rewritten his text gives clues as to the social action he intended to perform. Byzantine authors operated in political spaces. Even the genre of hagiography allowed space for political commentary, social advancement, ideology, pedagogy, as well as devotional material (*inter alia*). Alwis’s book aims to broaden our appreciation of the diverse methods by which Byzantines crafted their texts, and how they manipulated martyrdom accounts to further diverse ends.

Next, Alwis turns to the texts themselves. What is known of the authors is summarised (considerably more for the well-documented Akropolites than for the anonymous author) and each text’s plot summarised. Important for a book based on adaptation is Alwis’s clear assessment of the manuscript tradition (or ‘dossier’) behind each martyrdom account, also tackling thorny questions of dating.

A section titled ‘Adaptation’ follows. After outlining some of the (not inconsiderable) problems besetting analysis of adapted narratives, Alwis examines each of her three texts under the following headings (with minor adaptation): overview; the simulacrum (structure and ideology); narratology and rhetoric; the narrational *persona* and implied audience; and the contribution of grammatical and stylistic revision. A slightly more flexible approach to this analysis may have been warranted. There is little to say about the structure and ideology of the anonymous’ account of Tatiana’s martyrdom besides that it may have been subject to different interpretations; however, the text’s theological interest (it contains the only two mentions of the Trinity, for instance) remains relatively unexplored. The novelty of applying narrative critical methods to Byzantine studies also occasionally tells. Should it come as a surprise that Makarios’s use of language amplifies the impact of the subject matter on his audience? Speculation as to an author’s intentions is sometimes accorded more certainty than is perhaps justified, including discussion of ‘ulterior motives’ (p. 56). None the less, the section succeeds in underscoring the potential of this approach to unlocking new readings of Byzantine texts that have undergone adaptation or revision.

Alwis’s translation is rigorous yet readable, accomplishing her aim to ‘mostly preserve the stylistic features and idiosyncrasies of the Greek texts’ (p. xiv). Key editorial decisions are amply narrated in footnotes, which also direct the reader to points of interest and relevant secondary literature. The commentary also evinces thorough engagement with the often difficult manuscript traditions of these works. A minor correction to note relates to the author’s contention that the word πάνσοφος only ever describes men, with two exceptions. There is at least one other: Mary of Cassobola, addressed by Pseudo-Ignatius of Antioch (likely late fourth century) as ὁ πάνσοφε γύναι (*Ps-Ignatius to Mary* 1).

Narrating martyrdom is an engaging and in some ways provocative book. Alwis forges a meeting between twentieth-century narratology and Byzantine hagiography, *via* a Shakespearean rendering of the Taylor Swift song 'Shake it off'. Byzantinists may be stimulated to consider fresh approaches to their primary texts, revealing their true multivalence. Scholars of literature and philosophy reading this book may be pleased to find their critical methods usefully applied to unfamiliar texts. Even if the fit is occasionally not exact, Alwis's book demonstrates the hermeneutic power of interdisciplinary approaches to Byzantine Christian literature, and highlights directions for future scholarship.

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Rethinking reform in the Latin West. Tenth to early twelfth century. Edited by Steven Vanderputten. Pp. xiv + 340 incl. 10 colour and black-and-white ill. Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2023. €190. 978 90 04 54642 4

JEH (75) 2024; doi:10.1017/S0022046924001362

This collection of essays is the culmination of a research project sponsored by the Leverhulme Trust to investigate new trends in the study of the changes that took place in the Latin West from the tenth to the early twelfth century. As such, the volume is intended to be an historiographic, rather than an historical narrative of those changes. The major point, stressed by several authors, is that recent studies have shown that local politics and economic changes slowly coalesced into a major renovation of Church and secular society. As a result, the authors reject the earlier working hypothesis that a reform of Church and society was mandated and enforced by secular and ecclesiastical rulers. It would be inappropriate, therefore, to describe such changes as a 'reform', but rather as the cumulative result of local adaption to political and economic factors. Each of the authors not only offers an overview of the scholarship in their field of interest but also suggests avenues for future study. As the editor points out in the introduction, 'none of the chapters in this volume pretends to make any kind of definitive statement about where reform scholarship currently stands, and about where it should be heading. Rather, they seek to contribute to an ongoing discussion, and to inspire readers to steer that discussion in new directions, be at conceptual, methodologically, or otherwise'.

The first chapter deals with what is usually termed the Carolingian reforms. The author emphasises that the 'reform' documents which survive from this period are more admonishments to clerics of their responsibilities than a blueprint for reform. Chapter ii undertakes the central issue of monastic reform. Close examination of the documents from this period shows a wide diversity of practices, and a surprising continuity in monastic life. The author summarises: 'the high-profile experiments of the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries must be understood in light of the experience that had been accumulating for decades as a result of this (double parentheses bottom/up and top/down) impulse at monastic integration'.

The difficult and complex field of clerical reform is addressed in the third chapter, looking particularly at the development of the role of canons and of