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engaging books on Francis, Franciscanism, and also on medieval gender studies, that I know.

ROBERT E. LERNER, Northwestern University

VINCENT DÉROCHE, *Etudes sur Léontios de Néapolis*. (Studia Byzantina Upsaliensia, 3.) Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, for Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 1995. Paper. Pp. 316; 1 diagram. SKr 198.

Leontios of Neapolis is one of the many obscure religious personalities of the sparse, but unduly neglected, landscape of seventh-century Byzantine intellectual life. Within a hundred years of his death little was known about him. The participants of the Seventh Ecumenical Council (Nicaea 787) were able to produce a fragment from an anti-Jewish dialogue of his (*Apology against the Jews*) that supported image veneration. For purposes of authentication of the passage they also cited as much biographical information as was available. Leontios had served as bishop of the Cypriot city of Neapolis (modern Limassol) and wrote a number of eulogistic and panegyric sermons (all lost) along with the *Life of St. Symeon the Fool* (*LSF*), the *Life of St. John the Almsgiver* (*LJA*), and a *Life of St. Spyridon* (now also lost). That little is what we know even today; and if there is any fixed point with which to associate Leontios, it is the short period after the year 641 during which he wrote *LJA*.

Despite the obscurity that surrounds Leontios and his life, his surviving works have received generous attention from modern scholars. The particular appeal of Leontios's work lies firstly in the quality of the "popular" Greek language the author employed—a language that in some cases recorded the existence of or foreshadowed particular expressions of modern Greek vernacular. His work is also attractive because of the nature of one of his saintly heroes, Symeon the Fool, and his unconventional behavior. After thirty-one years of solitary life Symeon went to Emessa (modern Hama in Syria) and lived a double life: a rigorous ascetic in private but a companion of prostitutes and a violator of many social conventions in public.

Déroche has devoted a good deal of his multifaceted scholarly life to the work of Leontios; his study and critical edition of the *Apology against the Jews* was published in *Travaux et mémoires* 12 (1994), 45–104. Consequently, the book focuses on the two surviving lives written by Leontios and a number of issues that pertain to those two texts. Déroche has covered in painstaking and thorough fashion all the topics that the two lives bring to the fore. As he states in the introduction, philology was the springboard that launched his study. Gradually, guided by the nature of the subject, Déroche passed from the philological-linguistic analysis of the work of Leontios to the study of the history of ideas and of Leontios's spirituality (p. 22).

The introductory chapter deals with all existing (direct and indirect) sources on Leontios of Neapolis (pp. 15–36). Here Déroche makes the most of all the primary sources, but, unfortunately, the available information does not allow for much certainty (p. 35).

The first chapter consists of a reexamination of the manuscript tradition of *LJA* (pp. 37–95). This part of the study is a nice piece of philological work that makes a critical edition of the *LJA* easier but at the same time more pressing. Déroche's study of the manuscript tradition is much more thorough than that done by the previous editor (André-Jean Festugière): he takes fully into account the three existing versions of the life, and he is aware of the translations of the text into Syriac, Arabic, and Latin. I would have wished to see the critical edition of the entire text with all the corrections, emendations, and improvements suggested by Déroche in its *apparatus criticus*. In the "Suggested Corrections" some minor misprints have escaped the attention of the editor. Most of these errors have to do

with the accentuation of Greek words. It seems also that the software used for the Greek fonts had problems in recognizing ū, which appears as ü (pp. 209 n. 136, 268 n. 100, 285 n. 45, 288 n. 55). Chronological indications would have been useful in the stemma on page 91.

The next chapter is dedicated to the sources of Leontios's two hagiographies (pp. 96–153). Relying on critical examination of the information provided by Leontios and the church historian Evagrius, Déroche places the death of the historical Symeon the Fool in the 550s. In the following chapter Déroche convincingly traces the sources for the narrative of Leontios to a lost hagiographic account that was also utilized by Evagrius and, possibly, in an Armenian synaxary of the thirteenth century. He concludes his discussion of *LSF* by positing a Syriac antecedent to Symeon the Fool: the “active” folly of Symeon was anticipated by the “passive” simplicity of Alexios, the Man of God at Edessa in Syria. The earlier legend of Alexios and its similarities to *LSF* make the Syriac hypothesis of Déroche more than plausible.

There may not be many sources for *LSF*, but this is not the case with *LJA*. Obviously a work later than *LSF*, *LJA* is a more “learned” piece of work. Although *LJA* relies heavily on earlier accounts penned by the Patriarch Sophronios of Jerusalem and John Moschos (the author of the *Pratum spirituale*), it has also incorporated references to earlier Fathers and hagiography. Having established the sources of Leontios, Déroche touches upon the much-discussed issue of Leontios's methodology. He concludes with some historical issues raised by *LJA*: the pastoral activity of John the Almsgiver (who, as patriarch of Alexandria in pre-Islamic Egypt, became famous for his extraordinary charitable activity); the role of the archbishop of Alexandria in the administrative system of the early Byzantine Empire; and the finances of the patriarchate of Alexandria, which appear to have been in good shape if all the stories about the immense charitable donations of John are true. In fact the patriarchate of Alexandria just before the Arabic conquest was the richest among the patriarchates of early Christianity. Déroche proves this point beyond any doubt by adducing a number of official sources that confirm the picture painted by Leontios.

In the subsequent chapter (“The Spirituality of *Salos* [= Holy Fool],” pp. 154–225) Déroche examines the tradition of Holy Folly within the confines of Christianity, from its (possible) Old Testament roots to the modern Russian *yurodivi*. This part constitutes a rather extensive introduction to the study of Holy Folly, which remains to be written. Déroche touches briefly upon the similar phenomenon in the Islamic world and notes with regret that he did not have access to M. D. Dols's book *Majnūn: The Madman in Medieval Islamic Society* (Oxford, 1992). The relevant chapter in that book is a great study of the same phenomenon in Islam. The brief (one-page) treatment of the topic by Déroche might have greatly benefited from it. Dols (pp. 374–75) is inclined to attribute the appearance of the Islamic Holy Fool to Christian influence, but he admits that it is difficult to trace in a precise manner the extent and form of early Christian influence on Islam on this particular issue. As for the Russian Holy Fools see now *Vizantiiskoe iurodstvo Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia* (Moscow, 1994), by S. A. Ivanov. This chapter concludes with the question of the relationship between Holy Fools and Messalianism. Despite similarities between the Holy Fools' conduct and the poorly reported practices of those heretics, it is made clear that there is no connection between the two. Occupying a socially marginal position among the Christians, Holy Fools were inspired by a host of venerable Christian monastic practices.

The following chapter (“Miracle and Sanctity,” pp. 226–69) investigates an interesting topic for which we have no adequate bibliography for Eastern Christianity. In addition to providing an incisive examination of a host of Byzantine hagiographical topoi, the first sections of this chapter review the role of the “signs of sanctity,” miracles, and divine economy in establishing the holiness of a person as bizarre as Symeon the Fool or even

John the Almsgiver, who showed no signs of asceticism or interest in the church before his elevation to the patriarchal throne. In the final section of the chapter, I found extremely interesting Déroche's realization that most of the miraculous narratives about saints show that "la souillure ou la sanctification s'opèrent souvent indépendamment de la volonté des hommes qui y participent, d'une façon presque magique. . . ." This gives us a good measure of the way people (or at least Leontios and his audience) viewed their relationship with God and the holy. In Déroche's understanding, sanctity and its signs—miracles—appear in Leontios's writings not as a result of some rationally explainable situation but as manifestations of the unpredictable will of God (this is even more clear in the manifestations of divine economy in *LJA*). Another major characteristic of Leontios's hagiographies is the closeness of the holy person with the mundane aspects of life, a closeness that becomes greater as the saint descends the ladder of the social strata and consorts with the marginal elements of society. And this closeness implies also the presence of God in places where a pietistic or puritan version of Christianity would easily deny it. Incidentally, as Déroche points out, this is one of the most appealing aspects of Leontios's hagiography, not surprisingly given how even today's audiences are attracted by narratives about diamonds in the rough.

The final chapter ("A Theology for the People") and conclusion (pp. 270–301) are devoted to the popular nature of Leontios's theology and to the distinctive (and quite rare even for the Byzantine world) connection that exists in Leontios's work between holiness/sanctity and the world. Here Déroche dwells not only upon Leontios's narratives but also upon a number of related texts from the same period, such as the *Pratum spirituale*. What has mostly attracted Déroche in these narratives is their common trait of a pious act that might redeem a lifetime in sin. Though this is no longer a theology widely accepted by Orthodox Christianity, it might give a measure of how much things have changed in Europe (and in the world) after Martin Luther's pronouncement that "faith alone" grants salvation.

Summing up, I cannot but praise the author for this excellent study of Leontios and his work. Déroche has managed to amply illuminate a very shadowy part of the early European intellectual and religious history. Starting from an exhaustive examination of precious few primary sources, Déroche has given us the big picture of a landscape that is now beginning to emerge in its more appealing aspects. If nothing else, this book shows us how philology can become a constructive *ancilla historiae* in a more elevated sense than the one we are used to.

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PIERRE DUBUIS, *Les vifs, les morts et le temps qui court: Familles valaisannes, 1400–1550*.

(Cahiers Lausannois d'Histoire Médiévale, 16.) Lausanne: Section d'histoire, Université de Lausanne, 1995. Paper. Pp. 318.

In this study of late-medieval families in the central Valais of Switzerland, Pierre Dubuis asks how the Valaisans dealt, individually and collectively, with the events that mark life's course and how in the face of uncertainty they managed to construct and follow a policy dedicated to the preservation of family and patrimony. How did individuals resolve the tension between the demands of family life and their own initiatives and desires?

Largely occasioned by personal crises, the testaments and legal agreements that form the bulk of Dubuis's sources mainly deal with rural elites and are somewhat limited by the mediation of the notary, who often recorded his clients' will in a formulaic way. Because of the nature of these sources, Dubuis's study of life and death is one of reading "between the lines" (p. 12) rather than a statistical analysis.

By the late fifteenth century the elite habit of recording family data had been adopted by