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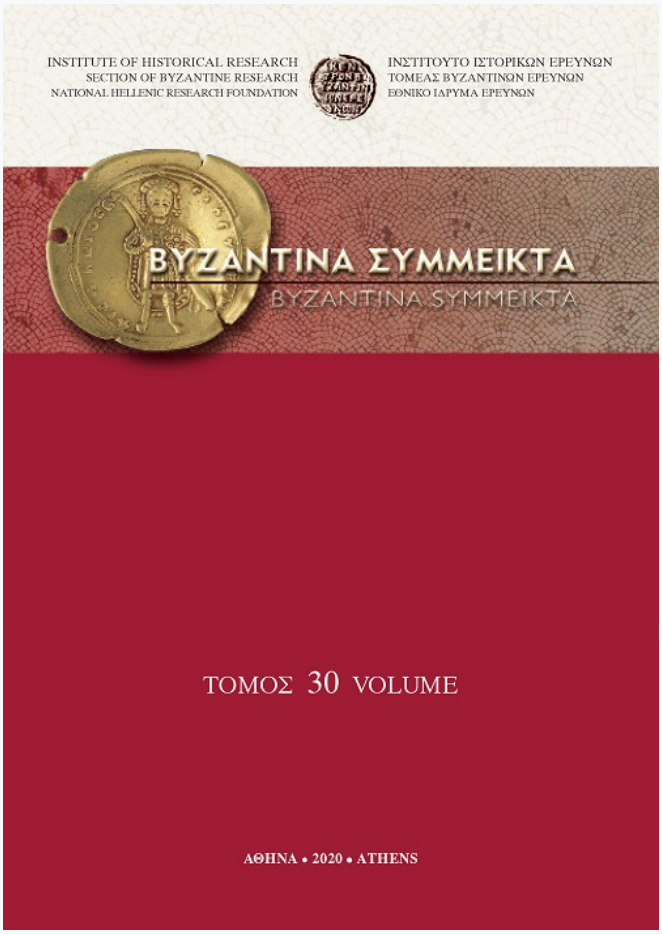

Book Review:A. RIGO – M. TRIZIO – E. DESPOTAKIS (eds.), Byzantine Hagiography: Texts, Themes and Projects (Studies in Byzantine History and Civilization, 13), Turnhout 2018

Σταυρούλα Ανδρέα ΚΩΝΣΤΑΝΤΙΝΟΥ

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A. Rigo, in collaboration with M. Trizio and E. Despotakis (eds.), *Byzantine Hagiography*: *Texts, Themes and Projects* (Studies in Byzantine History and Civilization, 13), Turnhout 2018, pp. 506. ISBN 978-2-503-57771-5

With its origin in a conference, which took place in November 2012 at St Tikhon's Orthodox University of Moscow and was organized in collaboration with the UMR 8167 Orient & Méditerranée (Paris) and the Department of Humanities of Ca' Foscari University of Venice, this volume brings together twenty-four essays in four different languages (eleven in English, eight in French, four in Italian, and one in German) on texts, themes, and projects concerning Byzantine hagiography. At the end of each essay, there is an abstract in English which does not always represent the essay's content. One has sometimes the impression that the abstracts were written before the essays, possibly when the organizers asked the conference participants to prepare a summary of their paper for the conference programme. The fact that these are conference proceedings is also marked by the oral style of some of the essays. The volume includes also a list of abbreviations, a one-page preface written by the chief editor (Rigo) and a tripartite index (list of illustrations, names of persons: ancient and medieval, and modern authors). A fourth section of the index including works, terms, and places would have been equally useful.

The temporal and geographic spread of the volume under review are broad: the essays range from early to late Byzantium and from Eastern Mediterranean to the Balkans. The authors are both established and younger scholars based mainly in Russia, Italy, France, and Greece. The volume is interdisciplinary, including contributions on palaeography and codicology, text criticism, literary criticism, social history and cult, history of hagiographic scholarship, and history of art, yet there is some disciplinary imbalance. There are three essays discussing palaeographical and codicological issues (Bucca, Binggeli, Frantsouzoff), four

contributions focusing on text criticism (D'Aiuto, Luzzi, Ivanov, Talbot), seven essays concentrating on literary matters (Penskaya, Mantova, Detoraki, Berger, Afinogenov, Lukhovitskiy, Rigo and Scarpa), seven essays related to social history and cult (Métivier, Kashtanov, Korolev, and Vinogradov, Déroche, Nikolaou, Koutrakou, Kountoura-Galaki, Marjanovič-Dušanič), two contributions on the history of scholarship (Flusin, Lequeux), and only one art historical essay (Babuin). Despite the disparate character of the topics, the volume is held together by the overarching theme of Byzantine hagiography. It is a pity, however, that a volume of such richness and length (about 500 pages) has no numbering of titles and no arrangement of contents, facts that render it user-unfriendly. That some of the essays have not been subjected to thorough editing constitutes a further problem. At a price tag of □100, some buyers might be disappointed.

In the brief preface, Antonio Rigo remarks that the volume 'introduces the current developments of hagiographical studies and on-going projects on the subject'. This statement cannot be taken at face value for two essential reasons. First, the collection takes only partially into consideration the current developments in hagiographical studies. For example, recent studies taking a holistic approach to medieval hagiography, both Eastern and Western, such as the monumental work of Robert Bartlett, *Why Can the Dead Do Such Great Things? Saints and Worshippers from the Martyrs to the Reformation* (2013) are conspicuous by their absence. Existing developments in the cult of saints epitomized by the now completed ground-breaking and high-impact European Research Council (ERC) Project: 'The Cult of Saints: A. Research Project on the Cult of Saints from Its Origins to circa AD 700, across the Entire Christian World' (http://cultofsaints.history.ox.ac.uk) are also absent. Furthermore, none of the later (literary) approaches to hagiography seem to have informed any of the essays included in the volume. I am referring, for instance, to studies on hagiographical characterization undertaken within the framework of another innovative, and also completed, ERC project: 'Novel Saints: Ancient Novelistic Heroism in the Hagiography of Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages', which is now part of the Ghent Centre for the Study of Ancient Fiction and Hagiography (www.novelsaints.ugent.be). Other examples include approaches from the perspe-

ctives of the body[1], emotions[2], senses[3], and the natural world[4] from which a number of the volume's essays could have benefited.

The second reason concerns the three hagiographical projects featuring in the volume. Two of them, which are presented as 'on-going' during the Moscow conference (2012), were in 2018, the volume's year of publication, no longer active. The project 'Symbolic Behavior in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Period', partially presented in the essay by Kashtanov et al., ('The Chronology of the Hagiographic Tradition of St Clement of Rome', pp. 201-220), was completed in 2018, while Alice-Mary Talbot's co-authored book project on the edition and English translation of the *Life of Basil the Younger* was completed in 2014. Large parts of her essay in this volume ('Some Observations on the Life of St Basil the Younger', pp. 313-324) are repeated verbatim in the introductory part of her co-authored book[5]. As for the presentation of the third project, Donatella Bucca's database of hymnographic codices ('Codices hymnographici Byzantini antiquiores: descrizione del database', pp. 37-54), which began in 2008, it would have been much more informative and useful if the essay had been brought up to date.

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1. E.g. P. Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* (New York, 1988); D. Krueger, The Unbounded Body in the Age of Liturgical Reproduction, *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 17.2 (2009), 267-79; P. Cox Miller, *The Corporeal Imagination: Signifying the Holy in Late Ancient Christianity* (Philadelphia, 2009); R. Williams, Troubled Breasts: The Holy Body in Hagiography, in *Portraits of Spiritual Authority: Religious Power in Early Christianity, Byzantium and the Christian Orient*, ed. J. W. Drijvers – J. W. Watt (Brill, 1999), 63-78.

2. E.g. V. Burrus, *Saving Shame: Martyrs, Saints, and Other Abject Subjects* (Philadelphia, 2008) and the work of the team on the project 'Emotions through Time: From Antiquity to Byzantium' (https://emotions.shca.ed.ac.uk), including M. Hinterberger, *Phthonos: Mißgunst, Neid und Eifersucht in der byzantinischen Literatur* (Wiesbaden 2013), 334-70.

3. E.g. J.-P. Albert, *Odeurs de Sainteté: la mythologie chrétienne des aromates* (Paris, 1996); B. Caseau, Christian Bodies: The Senses and Early Byzantine Christianity, in *Desire and Denial in Byzantium*, ed. L. James (Aldershot, 1999), 101–09; S. A. Harvey, *Scenting Salvation: Ancient Christianity and the Olfactory Imagination* (Berkeley, CA 2006).

4. I am referring to ecocritical approaches, such as T. J. Burbery, Ecocriticism and Christian Literary Scholarship, *Christianity and Literature* 61.2 (2012), 189-214.

5. Cf., for example, pp. 316-17 and 320-24 (essay) with pp. 1 and 16-19 (edition's introduction).

The first essay by Bernard Flusin ('L'hagiographie byzantine et la recherche: tendances actuelles', pp. 1-18) aims at mapping out the history of Byzantine hagiographical scholarship. Flusin makes a distinction between two opposing approaches: the religious and the secular, favouring the first. The religious approach, which is the older one, reaching back to the seventeenth century, is exemplified through the Bollandists' work that reads hagiographical sources critically, yet within the perspective of the Christian Church, seeking to trace the origins and developments of saintly cults. The second and later approach came about in the 1970s and 1980s through the work of Peter Brown and Evelyne Patlagean who adopted sociohistorical and anthropological methods in their studies of hagiographical works. As another instant of secularization, Flusin sees also the literary approaches to hagiography starting from the 1990s through the work of Lennard Rydén and Alexander Kažhdan. Even though he considers the secularization of hagiographical research an unavoidable development, Flusin finds it problematic. On the one hand, historians treat hagiography as a source of social history, rendering it thus a secondary discipline and neglecting the literariness of hagiographical texts. On the other hand, literary approaches to hagiography, goes on Flusin, view it as a literary rather than as a religious product.

Of course, at their extremes, all approaches, the religious one included, can lead to catastrophic results. However, it is unjust to take such a critical stance on the historical and literary approaches because at times they might be one-sided. As, for example, the work of Patricia Cox Miller, Christian Høgel, and Derek Krueger has shown[6], the best 'secular' approaches to hagiographical texts have both a literary and historical perspective. Furthermore, Bartlett's said book, which paradigmatically uses all three methods discussed by Flusin (Bollandist, historical, and literary), reaches important conclusions that could not have been otherwise achieved. A case in point is Bartlett's finding that hagiographers' chief concern was not to stress either their saintly protagonists' individual characters or the actual historical context in which they existed, but rather to evaluate them in relation to a pre-existing and traditional model of holiness and to point out what they had in common with the key figures of Christian sanctity[7]. Despite any possible quibbles

6. C. Miller, *The Corporeal Imagination* (cited n. 1); C. Høgel, *Symeon Metaphrastes: Rewriting and Canonization* (Copenhagen, 2002); D. Krueger, *Writing and Holiness: The Practice of Authorship in the Early Christian East* (Philadelphia, 2004).

7. R. Bartlett, *Why Can the Dead Do Such Great Things? Saints and Worshippers from the Martyrs to the Reformation* (Princeton, NJ 2013), 504-608.

with Flusin's treatment of the 'secular' approaches to hagiographical texts, his contribution gives a very well-written overview of the scholarship on Byzantine hagiography from its beginnings to the present, while at the same time it takes the place of the volume's missing introduction.

The second essay, Xavier Lequeux's 'La *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca*: origine –développements– mise à jour' (pp. 19-35), as its title indicates, discusses the origins, development, current state, and future of the *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca* (BHG). He remarks that the registering of all reductions of a hagiographical work, a system adopted and perfected by François Halkin, has now exhausted its possibilities, and it's about time to move to a new system in which the text itself and not the vagaries of transmission should be centre stage. Another important issue raised by Lequeux concerns the criteria that determine which texts are hagiographic and can thus be included in the BHG. Many texts, such as Eusebios' *Life of Constantine*, the *Testament* of Gregory of Nazianzos, beneficial tales, and the *Apophthegmata Patrum* have become part of the BHG without being strictly hagiographic, since their production has not been related to the establishment, promotion, or celebration of a saint's cult. There is, therefore, a need to establish more solid criteria for the inclusion of a text in the new BHG. Lequeux's suggestion is an important one, as it can lead to a better understanding of hagiographical genres, while at the same time it liberates a considerable number of texts from the label of 'hagiography', exposing them to new interpretive possibilities.

Marina Detoraki's 'Récits édifiants et hagiographie: à propos du *Pré spirituel*' (pp. 167-178) raises the same issue as Lequeux. Detoraki asks to what extent could John Moschos' *Λειμωνάριον* be described as hagiographical according to the Bollandist understanding of the term. She observes that the same question could be asked of a number of saints' Lives whose production did not aim at the promotion of a certain saintly cult. She concludes that Byzantines themselves seem to have treated both saints' Lives and beneficial tales as texts having the same purpose: to offer religious edification to Byzantine audiences.

Francesco D'Aiuto ('Il "Menologio Imperiale" un secolo dopo l'editio princeps (1911–1912) di Vasilij V. Latysev (con il testo della *Passio s. Barbarae* BHG e Nov. Auct. BHG 216b)', pp. 55-114) shows that the so-called 'Imperial *Menologion*' of Michael IV (1034–1041) needs a much more thorough study so that we can understand how it came into being – its sources, its stylistic tendencies, and its relationship with the *Synaxarion*. The essay includes as an appendix the first edition, an Italian translation, and a commentary of St Barbara's Passion that is

part of the Imperial *Menologion*. In the next essay ('Un canone "giambico" per Basilio di Cesarea e la circoncisione del signore e il suo raffinato acrostico tetrastico fra critica filologico-letteraria e teologia', pp. 115-139), Andrea Luzzi examines the manuscript tradition of the anonymous 'iambic' canon composed for the feast day of St Basil the Great and brings to the fore its aesthetic values.

The essay by Daria Penskaya ('Hagiography and Fairytale: Paradise and the Land of the Blessed in Byzantium', pp. 141-155) uses Vladimir Propp's theory of the folktale to detect the folkloric elements of a group of hagiographical texts dating from the fourth to the eleventh century in which the protagonist visits paradise. The author's question posed towards the end of the essay: 'why does Christian hagiography borrow such an archaic form, worked out by folklore?' (p. 154) is not sufficiently dealt with. Furthermore, this reader is not quite convinced by the author's conclusion that 'the main intention of the Paradise texts is either to demonstrate and authorize a certain type of sanctity [...] or to illustrate one of the New Testament virtues' (p. 155). This essay would have greatly profited from other studies employing Propp's theory to understand the literary workings of hagiography[8].

After examining the ways in which the environment is presented in two saints' Lives whose protagonists are great travellers, Yulia Mantova ('Space Representation in the Life of St Gregentios and the Life of St Nikon the *Metanoite*', pp. 157-165) comes to the conclusion that 'all "clichés" and stereotypes notwithstanding space representation in these two brilliant texts about itinerant saints are fairly different' (p. 164). With this conclusion, the author aims at refuting the 'commonly accepted [idea] that every saint's life is recounted as a collage of stereotypes and rhetorical topoi' (p. 157). There is, however, no reference in the essay about where this 'commonly accepted' idea is expressed. It is true that in the last century and until the 1980s some scholars, such as Cyril Mango, viewed 'a great many Lives' as 'nothing but a string of clichés'[9]. Yet, since the 1990s when literary approaches

8. E.g. G. Guidorizzi, Motivi fiabeschi nell'agiografia bizantina, in *Studi bizantini e neogreci: atti del IV Congresso Naz. di Studi Bizantini, Lecce, 21–23 aprile 1980, Calimera, 24 aprile 1980*, ed. P. L. Leone (Galatina, 1983), 457-67; B. A. Beatie, Saint Katharine of Alexandria: The Development of a Medieval German Hagiographic Narrative, *Speculum* 52.4 (1977), 785-800; A. Goddard – C. Segal, *Roads to Paradise: Reading the Lives of the Early Saints* (Hanover, 1987). More recent studies, such as that of Eva von Contzen (*The Scottish Legendary: Towards a Poetics of Hagiographic Narration* (Manchester 2016), 96), have demonstrated the shortcomings of the employment of Propp's theory for the study of hagiography.

9. C. Mango, *Byzantium: The Empire of the New Rome* (London, 1980), 248.

to Byzantine hagiography started taking place, as also Flusin illustrates in the volume's first essay, this understanding has changed. It was in the 1990s that Rydén and Kažhdan brilliantly proved the wrongness of Mango's statement. Mantova's piece appears to ignore both Flusin's scholarship overview in the same volume and the latest literary studies on hagiographical texts which have further revealed the polymorphous character of (Byzantine) hagiography[10].

The next essay written by Sophie Métivier ('Peut-on parler d'une hagiographie aristocratique à Byzance (VIIIe–XIe siècle)?', pp. 179-199) examines the few aristocratic saints of the middle Byzantine period (8th–10th c.) and convincingly shows how aristocracy strengthened its power through its involvement in the making of saints. Sergey Ivanov's essay ('The Life of Patriarch John the Faster as a Historical Source', pp. 221-231) includes the first edition of the Byzantine Life of Patriarch John the Faster, which is preserved in the M* version of the *Synaxarium*. The Greek text is accompanied by an English translation and a commentary.

In his 'Les deux vies de Théodose le cénobiarque' (pp. 233-243), Vincent Déroche examines Theodore of Petra's and Cyril of Scythopolis' corresponding treatments of the Palestinian monastic leader Theodosios in relation to another influential contemporary leader, Sabas. Through a close parallel reading of the two texts, Déroche shows convincingly that Theodore presents Theodosios as the chief defender of Chalcedon in Palestine, and in so doing he downplays the role of Sabas. Cyril, on the other hand, is at pains to show that Theodosios and his monastic community are not as significant as Sabas and his own lavriote communities. Déroche comes to the conclusion that the two examined hagiographical texts on Theodosios constitute instances of an existing rivalry between the monastic communities of Theodosios and Sabas, bringing thus to the fore an important aspect of sixth-century Palestinian monasticism.

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10. To the studies that have already been mentioned, one could also add the following, but this list is by no means exhaustive: P. Odorico and P. Agapitos (eds.), *Les Vies des saints à Byzance: genre littéraire ou biographie historique?* (Paris, 2004); S. Efthymiadis (ed.), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography. II: Genres and Contexts* (Aldershot, 2014); S. Fitzgerald Johnson, *The Life and Miracles of Thekla: A Literary Study* (Cambridge, MA, 2006); C. L. Lubinsky, *Removing Masculine Layers to Reveal a Holy Womanhood: The Female Transvestite Monks of Late Antique Eastern Christianity* (Turnhout, 2013); J. Perkins, *The Suffering Self: Pain and Narrative Representation in the Early Christian Era* (London, 1995).

Katerina Nikolaou's essay ['The Depiction of Byzantine Woman in Hagiographical Texts (Eight–Eleventh Centuries)', pp. 247-263] reproduces to a great extent her findings that were published fifteen years ago in her book in Greek (*The Woman in the Middle Byzantine Period: Social Models and Everyday Life in the Hagiographical Texts*) which examines the social realities of the middle-Byzantine woman by using hagiography as a source of social history. Since 2005, however, a considerable number of studies on Byzantine (holy) women and the family have been published that provide further understanding of woman's place in Byzantine society, while at the same time they make clear that one should be cautious when treating hagiography as a mine of sociohistorical information. Sadly, Nikolaou does not take into account the relevant studies that have been published after her own book, which could have enriched her own approach.

In the next essay ('Le reception de l'hagiographie palestinienne à Byzance après les conquêtes arabes', pp. 265-284), André Binggeli undertakes a detailed study of the tenth-century manuscript *Paris. Coislin.* 303 that has a unique collection of Palestinian hagiography composed in Greek mostly after the Islamic conquests. He investigates the transmission of the manuscript from Jerusalem to Constantinople, and he brings to the fore Byzantines' lack of interest in post-conquest Palestinian hagiography. The following essay by Serge A. Frantsouzoff ['La réception et le développement de l'hagiographie byzantine dans le milieu arabe orthodoxe (d'après un receuil hagiographique arabe de la Bibliotheque de l'Academie Roumaine)', pp. 285-298] offers a detailed description of another manuscript, the *Orientale* 365 that is preserved in the Library of the Academia Romana in Bucharest. Frantsouzoff argues that this manuscript was an Arab Orthodox collection of hagiographic tales copied in Jerusalem in the eighteenth century (in 1786). He explores the collection's affinities with the Byzantine hagiographical tradition while he simultaneously shows its influences from the Koran.

Albrecht Berger ('Serienproduktion oder Autorenwettbewerb? Einige Bemergungen zu byzantinischen hagiographischen Texten des zehnten Jahrhunderts', pp. 299-311) focuses on tenth-century Constantinopolitan practices of hagiographical writing. He discusses the serial reproduction of older texts within the framework of Symeon Metaphrastes' rewriting workshop and the production of new Lives, such as those of Andrew the Holy Fool, Basil the Younger, Gregentios, and Niphon of Konstantiane. For the texts of the latter group, Berger notes that they 'contain many parallels and cross-references, despite their very different plots and fictitious datings [they] should be regarded as products of a writing contest,

possibly in the Constantinopolitan monastery of Maximina' (p. 311). The idea to co-examine the hagiographical practices of tenth-century Constantinople is not a new one. About twenty years ago (in 2000), Paul Magdalino published a brilliant and well-known article in which such an approach is undertaken[11]. What is quite surprising, however, is that, while Berger seems to be aware of Magdalino's article, he does not acknowledge it.

It is unlikely whether Berger's thesis that the examined tenth-century texts are 'products of a writing contest' within the walls of the monastery of Maximina will prevail against Magdalino's more careful explanation that the parallels between these texts reflect contemporary debates 'about the afterlife and cover a variety of questions concerning the quest for personal sanctification. Should monks remain in one place? Should they live as solitaries or in communities? Do holy men belong in the city? Is it possible to meet a living saint, and how is he to be recognized? What is the role and the qualifications of a spiritual father?' (p. 100). Yet, apart from participating in such monastic debates, the hagiographers that were active at a time when it was believed that the world was reaching its end, as Magdalino concludes, 'wrote to bring the clergy, the monastic establishment and the lay magnates who exercised religious patronage, an apostolic message of salvation more urgent and more far-reaching than the debate over the relative merits of communal and solitary asceticism' (p. 112).

Focusing on two iconophile texts, the Lives of Stephen the Younger and Niketas of Medikion, Dmitry Afinogenov ('Integration of Hagiographic Texts into Historical Narrative: The Cases of the Lives of St. Stephen the Younger and Niketas Of Medikion', pp. 325-340), analyses their historical dimension and how this is used by later authors and particularly historians. He assumes that after the disappearance of the genre of ecclesiastical history in the seventh-century hagiography started incorporating historiographical elements to satisfy the audiences' needs for a historical background of the saints' conducts. Lev Lukhovitskiy ('Perception of Iconoclasm in Late Byzantine Hagiographical Metaphraseis', pp. 341-363) explores the perception of Iconoclasm in the metaphrastic hagiography of the Palaiologan period. He identifies six such *metaphraseis* which he discusses along with their

11. P. Magdalino, What We Heard in the Lives of the Saints We Have Seen With Our Own Eyes: The Holy Man as Literary Text in Tenth-Century Constantinople, in *The Cult of Saints in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages: Essays on the Contribution of Peter Brown*, ed. J. Howard-Johnston and P. A. Hayward (Oxford 2000), 83-114.

possible sources. He then goes on to examine the metaphrastic techniques (displacements in chronology, changes in psychological portraits, and amalgamation of personages) which both reveal the Palaiologan authors' understanding of the iconoclastic period and their political agendas.

The next two essays deal also with the hagiography of the late Byzantine period and its ideology. Nike Koutrakou ('The Hagiographers' Pen: Painting Social Unrest and Civil Strife in Late Byzantium', pp. 365-399) examines how hagiographers employed religious and political terminology to depict social conflicts with the intention of enhancing church authority against its political counterpart. Eleonora Kountoura-Galaki ('Ideological Conflicts in Veiled Language as Seen by the Palaiologan Hagiographers: The Lives of St Theodosia as a Case Study', pp. 401-418) shows how texts composed to commemorate older saints' deeds were used as vehicles of religious and political propaganda in the era of Michael VIII Palaiologos (1261–1282). A case in point is the hagiographical dossier of the iconophile St Theodosia which includes eponymous texts and an anonymous one. Kountoura-Galaki argues that the anonymous text's author was Manuel-Maximos Holobolos.

In the volume's single art historical essay, Andrea Babuin ('Il dittico di Cuenca e l'Epiro in epoca tardo-medievale', pp. 419-449) discusses the diptych of Cuenca, associated with the governor of Ioannina Thomas Preljubović and his wife Maria Palaiologina. In the context of all available information, Babuin evaluates the works' artistry and their significance for the Serbo-Greek Despots of Epirus who 'left behind a conspicuous legacy of objects and textual references' (p. 449). Smilja Marjanović-Dušanić, ('Le changement de la function des récits anachorétiques:l; hagiographie balkano-slave dans le cadre de la fin du XIIIe siècle', pp. 451-465) examines the reception of earlier monastic movements in late thirteenth-century Serbian hagiography. Concentrating on the *Life of Peter of Koriša* composed by the monk of Chilandar Theodosios, she demonstrates how earlier hagiographical patterns were used for political propaganda and how hagiography functioned as the ideological base for changes in Serbian society.

The last essay, which is written by Antonio Rigo and Marco Scarpa ('The Life of Theodosios of Tarnovo reconsidered', pp. 467-482), examines the *Life of Theodosios of Tarnovo* that has come down to us only in a Slavonic translation of the original Greek Life which has been ascribed to Patriarch Callistos I. Through a comparison between the Life and Callistos' other work the two authors confirm the Life's attribution to Callistos. They suggest that he wrote the Life between the spring of 1363 and 1364, chiefly during his stay at Mount Athos, and while the latter was

under Serbian rule. Their suggestion concerning the translator's background is that he must have been someone involved in the monastic milieu of Athos and Serres.

Even though it includes some well-researched, well-written, and interesting pieces, the volume under review, which has a promising title, fails to offer the new research avenues that could possibly bring the scholarship of Byzantine hagiography to its third phase of development. It is a pity that a considerable number of the essays included in the volume take a step backwards, instead. By totally ignoring hagiographical studies dating from the beginning of the twenty-first century onwards, these essays become part of the research conducted in the previous century. Of course, this criticism and some quibbles expressed here do not mean to suggest that the volume is not a welcome addition to the scholarship of Byzantine hagiography. It is certainly very useful for Byzantinists and other medievalists working on hagiography and other related genres.

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