

Boekbesprekingen — Comptes rendus

Der Traktat Heinrichs von Friemar über die Unterscheidung der Geister.
Lateinisch-mittelhochdeutsche Textausgabe mit Untersuchungen,
bearb. von R. WARNOCK und A. ZUMKELLER, OSA (Cassiciacum,
32). Würzburg, Augustinus-Verlag, 1977, VIII-279 S.

De nouveau le père Zumkeller a fait imprimer un écrit spirituel de H. de Friemar (voir notre compte rendu dans *Augustiniana* 27 (1977), 313-315). Il s'agit cette fois-ci du traité très répandu concernant le discernement des esprits. A la fin du moyen âge, riche en mystique, vraie ou fausse, on était souvent fort impressionné par les phénomènes d'un caractère visionnaire. Pour bien juger ces phénomènes et discerner les esprits on avait grand besoin de normes. A ce besoin répondait l'ouvrage de H. de Friemar qui le premier traita ce sujet d'une façon originelle et indépendante. La quantité de manuscrits qui ont conservé ce texte, extrêmement répandu, soulignent l'actualité du sujet et l'importance du traité. 150 Mss ont conservé les textes latins. L'importance est peut-être plus marquée encore par le grand nombre de traductions diverses et indépendantes (une en néerlandais) et par nombreuses élaborations de l'ouvrage faites à la fin du moyen âge, conservées souvent aussi en quantité. Lorsque le père Zumkeller entamait l'édition critique du texte de l'ouvrage, M. Warnock était en train de préparer l'édition de la traduction en moyen-haut-allemande du traité du discernement des esprits. Les deux savants se décidaient à publier ensemble en un volume les deux textes critiques pourvu des introductions et recherches respectives dont chacun garde sa responsabilité. Cette édition soignée où la traduction se trouve en face du texte latin nous donne le résultat de cette coopération. Outre les deux textes critiques les introductions, notices et tables habituelles, le volume contient un glossaire allemand-latin qui rendra grand service aux philologues et historiens de la spiritualité.

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The Life of St. Norbert by John Capgrave O.E.S.A. (1393-1464) ed. by Cyril L. SMETANA OSA (Studies and Texts, 40). Toronto, Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1977, ix-179 pp.

Habent sua fata libelli. Terentianus Maurus' phrase, which detached from its first part *Pro captu lectoris*, passed into a proverb, is perfectly

applicable to John Capgrave's *Life of St. Norbert*, the last of his extant English works, which had not yet been printed, but found his editor now in Cyril Smetana of the same Order.

When Capgrave in August 1440 wrote at the end of his poem: « Go litil book to hem that will the rede » (l. 4096), presenting it to John Wygenhale, the Premonstratensian abbot of West Dereham, in the diocese of Norwich, Norfolk, he could not have had the slightest idea what would become of his work. After the dissolution of the monasteries by King Henry VIII, the MS came into several hands until it was sold at Sotheby's sale (London, 6 Febr. 1861) for £ 150 to Sir Thomas Phillipps. It was in his collection till 1923. In 1892 F. J. Furnivall asked for permission to publish the *Norbert*, but his request was refused. When the Henry E. Huntington Library purchased it, W. Clawson of University College, Toronto, obtained the permission in 1924 to publish the book for the Early English Text Society. He made the transcript, but was not able to publish the *Norbert*. Finally Fr. Cyril Smetana made it his task, and after several years of patient work he succeeded to have printed the work, which we now have at hand.

Besides the aforesaid annotations, Fr. Smetana discusses in the Introduction (p. 1-17) the question whether the *Norbert* is an autograph or not. He inclines to state that Capgrave is the scribe as well as the author. Furthermore he gives a concise biography and a list of all the extant MSS and the editions of them.

As to the life of St. Norbert, Fr. Smetana points out that Capgrave made an English translation in verse of the second of the known biographies of the Saint, the so-called *Vita B*, as incorporated in the ASS 21 (Junii 1), 797-800, with additions of his own, because of which it is no slavish translation. The language is in the way as it was spoken in fifteenth century's Norfolk. The *Life of St. Norbert* consists of 4109 lines, divided in stanzas of 7 lines each, with the rhyming scheme ABABBCC (p. 21-155), to which the editor adds a double series of notes, the first regarding the MS itself, the second clarifying notes to persons, places, etc.

A selected glossary (p. 157-169), a bibliography (p. 171-174), in which we badly miss the excellent study of Jane C. Fredeman, John Capgrave's first English composition, « The Life of St. Norbert » in *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 57 (1975), 280-309, a list of Scriptural Citations, and a well-balanced Index (p. 177-179) conclude the edition of Capgrave's first English, but till now last published manuscript. Scholars, interested in Capgrave's work, mediaeval church-history, and middle-English verse will be delighted to have this work now available, and grateful to Fr. Smetana for his valuable achievement.

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