

Andrea Tilatti, *Odorico da Pordenone. Vita e «miracula»*. (Centro Studi Antoniani, 41). I-35123 Padova (Piazza del Santo 11), Centro Studi Antoniani, 2004. 24 cm., 187 p., 14 fig. f.t. (€ 28) ISBN 88-85155-62-6

With humility and intellectual honesty Dr Tilatti sums up the meticulous investigation that has gone into the making of this monograph: "If in this small book I have found, thought and said something new on the figure of Friar Odorico da Pordenone, his death, sanctity, 'his' miracles, it is because I went into the archives or the library, revisited the documents, verified the citations, undertook some futile journeys, had luck... and a little of intuition" (p. 5). Though the entire work has already appeared in *Il Santo* 44 (2004) 313-474 and was brought out as a separate edition by the Association "S. Marco" of Pordenone, its inclusion into the prestigious series of the Centro Studi Antoniani will give it yet further diffusion and authoritativeness. The fact that the author began researching into the historical identity of Blessed Odorico and his sanctity way back in 1992 is clearly indicative of the enormous pains taken to accord class to the fruit of his research. Granted that one cannot today pronounce the last word on a medieval personage like Odorico da Pordenone (1280/5-1331), the present volume does cast new light on the figure and life of the protagonist. The investigation carried out with punctilious attention to detail has enabled the author to reassess some of the traditional positions in medieval historiography. His indication of the research position on questions like the authorship of *Elogio storico* (9) and *Chronica XXIV generalium ordinis Minorum* (11) enables students to update themselves on some significant sources.

That the Minorite Odorico da Pordenone, widely reputed for his travel narrative *Itinerarium*, has in fact been invested as a blessed of the Church, gives a significance that is more than academic to the miracles attributed to him. Four years after Odorico's death, that is in 1335, his name entered into the *Catalogus sanctorum*, with two events highlighted – his stay among pagans and his power to perform miracles during life as well after death (10). These aspects find their place also in the subsequent Minorite sanctorals. There was, however, the felt need to flesh out these aspects in order to give a verisimilar identity to someone who was already on the pedestal of sanctity. The *Chronica XXIV generalium Ordinis Minorum* (1369-1373) is the first known source to have mentioned other details characterising Odorico's life. Apart from the hagiographical trappings like the life of an ideal Minorite, he is accorded the credit for the conversion and baptism of 20,000 pagans. The revisit of the sources has indeed yielded results especially as regards the protagonist's age and nationality. The hypotheses advanced (17-28) will indeed serve as pointers for further research. The key to the explanation of "the contents of the holy life" of Odorico lies in the fact that these are traceable to the narratives composed after his death on 14 January 1331. The section "The miracles and the tomb: between January and February 1331" (30-43) makes out a strong case for tracing the origin of the miracles ascribed to Odorico. A plausible explanation of the emergence of the two versions of the collection of miracles is: "If the first version had been compiled with the probable objective of enriching an informative dossier for the pope, the second had to ensure the juridical dignity and the weight of proof of the

procedure of local ‘canonisation’” (75). The 3 known texts of the *Miracula* are: a part of Codex 343 of the “Biblioteca del Sacro Convento di Assisi (A), an inclusion in a MS of “Archivio di Stato di Padova, Corporazioni Soppresse – Monasteri padovani, Sant’Antonio, b. 226, n. I (P), and an insertion in a miscellany of “Biblioteca Comunale Guarneriana di San Daniele del Friuli, ms. 212 (S). The critical edition of the text (93-161) and the bibliography (163-172) will be prized by medieval historians and particularly by students of hagiography.

*Benedict Vadakkekara*

Elzear Horn, *Iconographiae Monumentorum Terrae Sanctae (1724-1744)*. Latin text with English version by Eugene Hoade. Preface and notes by Bellarmino Bagatti. (Studium Biblicum Franciscanum. Collectio Maior, 15). Israel-91140 Jerusalem (P.O.B. 14064), Franciscan Printing Press, 2004. 14,5 cm., 464 p. (US\$ 10) ISBN 965-516-060-2

This is the reprint of the second edition (Jerusalem 1962) of the 18<sup>th</sup> century work of Elzear Horn (c. 1691-1744), the first edition of which had as its editor the reputed Palestinologist Jerome Golubovich (Romae 1902). See *CF* 34 (1964) 219. Bagatti’s second edition had a novelty, as “it was deemed opportune to produce an English version in order to make it available for those unversed in Latin tongue” (p. 1). Even after a full century, the work has lost none of its actuality especially because of its rich documentation.

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Carmelo Durante da Sessano del Molise, *Guglielmo Massaia OFM Cap., Vicario Apostolico dei Galla, Cardinale di Santa Romana Chiesa. Saggio storico-critico secondo documenti inediti*. Roma 1946. Ristampa: [I-10131 Torino (Monte dei Cappuccini, Via Maresciallo G. Giardino 35), Vice-Postulazione del Servo di Dio], 2004. 24 cm., 271 p., 15 ill.

Il libro intitolato *Guglielmo Massaja* è la tesi del cappuccino Carmelo Durante da Sessano del Molise, sostenuta nel 1946 nella Facoltà di Missionologia presso l’Università Pontificia Gregoriana. La tesi fu elaborata dai documenti inediti come saggio storico-critico e poi pubblicata a Sessano del Molise dalle Edizioni *Serena Senectus*. Il presente volume è quindi una ristampa quasi completa (è tralasciato il *Trattato primo* della Parte prima) della stessa tesi pubblicata nel 1946. Nella presentazione Antonino Rosso parla di questa edizione sviluppata in due parti: “Esame dell’autografo de *I miei trentacinque anni di missione* e di altre fonti” e “Saggio biografico [sul cardinale Guglielmo Massaja] (p. 5) e spiega come essa sia stata utilizzata successivamente come fonte per altre pubblicazioni (cf. 5s).