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Adam J. Davis, *The Holy Bureaucrat: Eudes Rigaud and Religious Reform in Thirteenth-Century Normandy*. Ithaca, N.Y. and London: Cornell University Press, 2006. xiii + 268 pp. Map, figures, appendix, notes, bibliography, and index. \$45.00 US (cl). ISBN 978-0-8014-4474-6.

Review by Bruce L. Venarde, University of Pittsburgh.

Eudes Rigaud was a fanatical note taker. Consecrated as archbishop of Rouen by Pope Innocent IV in early 1248, Eudes began later that same year to keep a detailed account of his daily activities. Across the next twenty-one years, the volume grew to nearly 800 pages, much of it recording the prelate's visitations of secular and regular churches across his great Norman province. The *Register*, as it is known, was first edited a century and a half ago. It was the subject of a long study by Pierre Andrieu-Guitrancourt in 1938, and large portions of it appeared in English translation in 1964. Yet a rounded view of Eudes and his career requires reading more than the *Register*. Drawing additionally on edited and archival materials ranging from Eudes's public *quaestiones disputatae* to private charters recording property transactions on behalf of his archdiocese, Adam J. Davis's excellent study provides an even-handed and suggestive account of Eudes Rigaud and his environment. Here at last is a three-dimensional portrait of Eudes Rigaud as Franciscan, theologian, and ecclesiastical administrator.

Biographical data on Eudes's early life are entirely lacking. Davis finds it likely that the future archbishop came from a family of the lower nobility centered in the Ile-de-France. What is certain is that Eudes consecrated his sister Marie as abbess of the Paraclete in 1249, that his brother Adam was a member of Eudes's archiepiscopal revenue from 1252 to 1269, and that two nephews were canons of the Rouen cathedral, their prebends conferred personally by Uncle Eudes. Another brother was lord at Courquetaine, southeast of Paris, where Davis speculates Eudes may have grown up.

In any case, Eudes himself first appears in the historical record in the 1230s as a student at the University of Paris and a Franciscan. He excelled in philosophy and theology and around 1240 began the thirteenth-century equivalent of graduate school to continue his theological studies. Here Eudes was a pioneer, being one of the first Franciscan students to lecture on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, right at the time the *Sentences* emerged as a standard university textbook. In 1245, Eudes became head of the Franciscan school in the university, an ascent so rapid that he never finished his formal theological training. Among those who studied under him was Bonaventure, with whom his last association came decades later as both men served on a commission to prepare for the Second Council of Lyon, held in 1273.

In chapter one, "The Formation of a Reformer at the Franciscan *Studium* in Paris," Davis emphasizes Eudes's identity as a Franciscan and his writings on theology, since both anticipated the way he conducted his subsequent ecclesiastical career. The university master was "ambidextrous" (p. 14), writing and speaking on both biblical-moral and speculative theology. The sermons Eudes preached during his time in Paris highlight the practical aspect of the scholastic enterprise, arguing that knowledge must lead to virtuous action. This followed the Franciscan idea that the *studium* was a forum for spiritual and pastoral as well as academic training. Again and again, Eudes stressed the uses and ends of theological training; Davis argues persuasively that he was most heavily influenced by the ideas of Peter the Chanter and his circle, who worked in Paris a generation or two earlier. His university sermons focused on practical moral lessons and addressed contemporary themes, with particular

emphasis on the vices of lust, avarice, and pride. As Davis puts it, already as a university master “Eudes displayed a particular interest in the nexus between ideas and actions, preaching and practice” (p. 24), right down to a discussion in one *quaestio* about the implications of psalm singing practice.

Most of the rest of the book, six chapters in all, focuses on Eudes’ career as archbishop. Throughout, Davis reminds us of his subject’s background as a mendicant and former university master, different from most bishops and archbishops in mid-thirteenth-century France. In particular, his pragmatic theology already evident in Paris and his Franciscan commitment to pastoral care shaped his approach to the job of ecclesiastical administrator. In these central chapters, heavily based as they are on the famous *Register*, Davis continually reminds us of the importance of that Parisian and Franciscan perspective. For instance, Eudes traveled, like other powerful people, with an entourage. This *familia*, generally about twenty men, included a dense concentration of other university-trained churchmen with whom “Eudes may have felt especially comfortable working...” (p. 36). He also kept several Franciscans close by him, believing (as Davis thinks) it was the best means to maintain close ties to the order and to preserve Franciscan values amidst episcopal duties and burdens. Service in the *familia* also, Davis argues, was a school for ecclesiastical administration: Eudes never ceased acting as *magister*. In the 1260s, perhaps a full two decades after leaving Paris for Rouen, Eudes gave a sermon to Paris graduates that stressed resistance to fleshly pleasures and worldly riches: the chastity and voluntary poverty that were at the center of Franciscan teaching.

Above all, Eudes was an extraordinarily energetic prelate. He convened at least nine provincial councils during his time as archbishop—10 percent of all such gatherings held in France during the entire thirteenth century! He served in the Norman Exchequer, held a seat in the Parlement of Paris, and was an intimate of King Louis IX. In the years covered by the *Register*, 1248–1269, he traveled, mostly by horse, some 54,000 miles, an astonishing average of 11–14 miles per day. Devastating floods in the 1250s made little difference to the extent of his touring around the province of Rouen; the major impediment to mobility was the archbishop’s rheumatism. He spent only a little over half his nights on properties belonging to the archiepiscopal estate.

Much of this time away from home was taken up with visitations of monasteries and parishes, reviewing the spiritual life and financial situation of the regular and secular church in the archdiocese of Rouen. This is the aspect of Eudes’s career that has been most studied and the two longest chapters in the book are devoted to it. Here Davis is a wise guide. For instance, he refrains from easy generalizations about the state of Norman monasticism based on what is, after all, a record that is focused on problems and deficiencies in the 150 houses to which the archbishop made a total of over 1,000 visits. As Davis remarks, the *Register* is most of all “a remarkable source on the great variety in forms of monastic life (including the quasi-monastic life of regular canons) in thirteenth-century Normandy” (p. 66). Although he sometimes provides statistics, he warns against using them to gauge either the success of Eudes’s oversight or the state of clerical life, since, for example, the archbishop’s concerns appear to have evolved across time and institutions would have experienced ups and downs across two decades (pp. 84–85). Asking if in fact the archbishop thought monastic life was improving in the last years he kept the *Register*, Davis finds that it is hard to say, since a list of problems often followed a general remark about satisfactory conditions and the phrase *in bono statu* might have been a new secretary’s favorite formula—or, I might add, perhaps monks, nuns, and canons got better at concealing troubles after the first few visits from the indefatigable prelate. But it is also surely true that by carrying the ever-expanding record of his stewardship wherever he went, Eudes was quite aware that “[t]he *Register* itself served as a powerful disciplinary tool” (p. 85). In the records of visitations, the pastoral aspect of Eudes’s Franciscanism comes to the fore, as he corrected the wayward, reconciled quarrels in communities, and paid special attention to the needs of the sick and the poor, in not just monastic infirmaries but also hospitals and leprosaria. These chapters on visitation are rich in vivid detail and feature careful juxtaposition of Davis’s findings with recent scholarship on a variety of matters from monastic exemption to the literacy level of the parish clergy.

Less known until now are Eudes's other activities, covered in chapters on jurisdiction, justice, and finance. Here Davis presents a friar-bishop much engaged, like St. Francis, in the world he rejected. The rights of archbishops in their suffragans' dioceses were hardly settled in the thirteenth century, and Eudes spent much time insisting on his rights of supervision in six dioceses. Could the archbishop visit institutions anywhere in his province without permission or cooperation from the local bishop? Could a Norman archdeacon outside the diocese of Rouen make a judicial appeal directly to the archbishop, bypassing the local bishop? In 1252, all six suffragans, frustrated by Eudes's assertion of what they saw as the breaking of custom and the assertion of unprecedented rights, complained to the pope. A four-year struggle followed, at the end of which some limits on archiepiscopal authority were laid out (pp. 55-62). Eudes, Davis finds, was testing the limits of his legal authority in light of his pastoral responsibility. The same was true for the archbishop's administration of justice in his own courts, where Eudes again challenged Norman custom—itsself not consistent in either theory or practice—and resisted the encroachment of (less merciful) secular courts in many matters.

In chapter seven, "A Franciscan Money Manager," Davis sets out to solve the paradox of the Franciscan Eudes, sworn to poverty, as a wily financier. There was resistance within the order, of course, to friars serving as bishops at all. Here Davis uses mostly unpublished material to reveal Eudes as an aggressive investor in the fiscal health of his archbishopric, buying, selling, borrowing, and spending in amounts far exceeding those of his predecessors or successors. Despite theological reservations about money and the morality of certain kinds of financial transactions, Eudes acted according to the formula of his former student Bonaventure, who argued that private property was not sinful when used to support the needy, as church revenues ought to be (p. 155). As friar, he had nothing and sought nothing; as prelate, he labored to guard and to increase the wealth of his church. It was perhaps this attitude that endeared Eudes to Louis IX, a relationship that is the focus of chapter eight. Louis probably had at least heard of the prominent Paris schoolmaster before he became archbishop, and it is likely the king had a hand in his election to the see of Rouen. Louis was especially attached to mendicants and the close friendship he developed with Eudes was well known. The two cooperated in the administration of the Norman church and, especially, in organizing the crusade on which Eudes set out with his king in July of 1270. Eudes was in the royal retinue still at Louis' death shortly afterward in Tunisia and in 1273 was one of three prelates commissioned to investigate the possible canonization of the late king.

Even a rather lengthy summary only skims the surface. For a relatively short book, this one is extremely rich; experts in any number of matters touching on the thirteenth-century church will want to consult it. Without any direct evidence of Eudes' personality, Davis crafts a credible portrayal of an intelligent, cagey, and tireless laborer on behalf of good Christian order, one whose Franciscan ideals sustained a long and busy career as ecclesiastical administrator in which somehow commitment to fundamental Christian charity never waned. Nothing like a modern biography of Eudes is possible, and Davis, with characteristic forbearance, does not try to manufacture one. But he succeeds admirably in moving past the image of "a fussy and oppressive disciplinarian" (p. 7) that a reading of the *Register* alone might create. Nor does Davis conceal the lapses in his subject's generally humane demeanor, in particular his treatment of Jews. Eudes was an extraordinary man, but very much of his time.

I have a few reservations. One concerns the use, in the subtitle and elsewhere, of the word "reform." Like its cousin "revolution," which is now used to refer to everything from political change to hair care products, the term is vague. Here, as usual in historical scholarship, it goes undefined. Eudes was concerned as a prelate, who was also a university master and a friar, with order, pastoral care, and charity. That, of course, might be one definition for "reform," or a particular species of it in the mid-thirteenth century, a time of increasing articulation of the ecclesiastical order and, with the rise of mendicants and concerns about the neediest members of society, attention to the spiritual and physical needs of all Christians. But a word that is many things to many people needs to be treated with care.

Secondly, there are occasional troubles with Latin. Regarding a Paris sermon in which Eudes excused Abraham, Moses, and Job from not entering into religion, one piece of the case is summarized as “They had not worshiped Christ” (p. 22), apparently a paraphrase of *nondum venerat Christum* in the endnote that transcribes the manuscript in which the sermon appears (p. 194, n. 71). There is an error somewhere here; most likely *Christum* should be *Christus*, the point being that the patriarchs lived when Christ had not yet come, which makes better sense as an argument. *Qui tractus et coactus ad curiam, vita et doctrina ut prius in ordine, sic excellenter in regimine fulsit, ut forma praesulum censeretur* (p. 189, n. 33) cannot mean, as on p. 7, that “Eudes’s life and learning were such that before being in holy orders, he was dragged and forced to the curia, and he shined so excellently in the administration of his church that his example as a bishop was highly esteemed.” The point, instead, is that Eudes shone as brightly in conduct and learning while he was a potentate as when, formerly, he had been in holy orders: a theme of the book. In the expression *potestatis plenitudo*, *plenitudo* is a nominative, not, as translated on p. 50, an ablative.

These blemishes matter little. Davis has provided an important study written in the sprightliest prose imaginable for what is largely administrative history. It also generously invites further investigations. Davis notes the the manuscript of the *Register* is not entirely chronological in order and suggests that its organization is worth further study. Especially in the context of other visitation records, a new genre in the thirteenth century, and work on the rise of literacy and the history of the book in medieval studies, the *Register* is an interesting document for cultural historians. A considerable portion of Eudes’s Paris writings remains unstudied and unedited; these could be exploited in a variety of ways. For example, Davis stresses the continuity between Eudes’s Parisian and archiepiscopal concerns, but one might reasonably also ask which of Eudes’s interests did *not* transfer and what that says about the university, Franciscan, and episcopal milieus in which Eudes lived. But this book, I predict, will remain the standard account of Eudes’s career for a very long time to come.

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