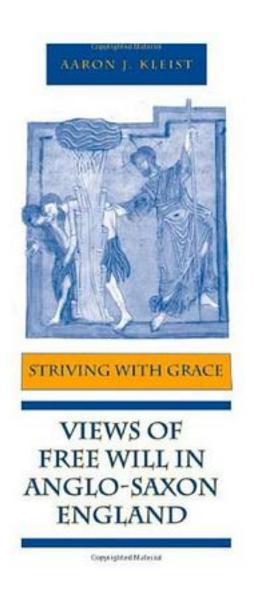
Striving with Grace



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The question of whether or not our decisions and efforts make a difference in an uncertain and uncontrollable world had enormous significance for writers in Anglo-Saxon England. Striving with Grace looks at seven authors who wrote either in Latin or Old English, and the ways in which they sought to resolve this fundamental question. For Anglo-Saxon England, as for so much of the medieval West, the problem of individual will was complicated by a widespread theistic tradition that influenced writers, thinkers, and their hypotheses. Aaron 'J Kleist examines the many factors that produced strikingly different, though often complementary, explanations of free will in early England. Having first established the perspectives of Augustine, he considers two Church Fathers who rivalled Augustine's impact on early England, Gregory the Great and the Venerable Bede, and reconstructs their influence on later English writers. He goes on to examine Alfred the Great's Old English Boethius and Lantfred of Winchester's Carmen de libero arbitrio, and the debt that both texts owe to Boethius' classic De consolatione Philosophiae. Finally, Kleist discusses Wulfstan the Homilist and Aelfric of Eynsham, two seminal writers of late Anglo-Saxon England. Striving with Grace shows that all of these authors, despite striking differences in their sources and logic, underscore humanity's need for grace even as they labour to affirm the legitimacy of human effort.

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