



# Old English Prose: Passio and Vita

By Michael Pieck

GRIN Verlag Mai 2010, 2010. Taschenbuch. Book Condition: Neu. 210x148x2 mm. This item is printed on demand - Print on Demand Neuware - Seminar paper from the year 2009 in the subject English Language and Literature Studies - Literature, grade: 1,3, University of Cologne (Englisches Seminar), course: Hauptseminar Old English Prose, language: English, abstract: Lives of saints were a very popular genre in Christian Europe throughout the entire Middle Ages, and their popularity did not cease until the Reformation in the 16th century. Since Late Antiquity two basic concepts of saints' lives had evolved, the passio ('passion') and the vita ('life'). 'The passio was the literary form appropriate for a saint who had been martyred for his/her faith, whereas the vita properly pertained to a confessor (that is, a saint whose impeccable service to God constituted a metaphorical, not real, martyrdom).' (Lapidge 1991: 252) Saints' lives circulated widely in Anglo-Saxon England, most of which were composed in Latin. At the end of the 10th century the monk and author Ælfric of Eynsham translated a collection of forty lives of saints into the Old English vernacular. Together with his Catholic Homilies, they represent the heyday of Old English prose in the...



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