

Reviews

Akkerman, Nadine, and Birgit **Houben**, eds, *The Politics of Female Households: Ladies-in-Waiting across Early Modern Europe* (Rulers & Elites, 4), Leiden, Brill, 2014; cloth; pp. xx, 421; 6 colour, 3 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. €149.00, US\$193.00; ISBN 9789004236066.

The Politics of Female Households sheds new light on the careers and political functions of ladies-in-waiting. This hitherto overlooked contingent in the early modern court acted collectively to support and consolidate the political and religious power of their female ruler. This timely collection of essays presents a cohesive narrative of female political participation which reflects the emergent twenty-first century intersection between an increasingly nuanced court historiography (that recognizes the multiple centres of power and networks in operation), and a more considered and less sexualized women's history. In doing so the edited collection recognizes that women shared the interests of their male kin and acted upon those ambitions via their specific cultural agency (as patrons, advocates, go-betweens, informants, and as models of various modes of virtue). The book's major themes are identified as etiquette, education, marriage, representational functions, changes of regime, and limitations to power. These themes are variously explored across the book's five parts, which focus on the different contexts and household structures of Tudor England, the Habsburgs, France, the Stuart Courts, and the Swedish Court. The book's contributors work with visual and written sources (predominantly letters, ordinances, household records, and literary commentaries) in several languages. They produce an engaging perspective on elite women's political lives in the interconnected European courts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The contributors redress and challenge the undue credence accorded to satire, mythology, and misogynistic stereotypes as a result of the longstanding invisibility ladies-in-waiting have received in academia.

The question of the political role of ladies-in-waiting is shown to be particularly pertinent in the context of early modern queenship. In the relatively frequent cases when a woman occupied the highest position in government, the women in her service had the more intimate access to the monarchical ear than her titled male courtiers. Women's exclusion from offices that could directly influence policy only increased their value as wielders of 'soft-power', as intermediaries, or as more readily deniable co-conspirators. Nevertheless, the authors warn, the terminology of 'formal' and 'informal' power too frequently obscures the status associated with being formally appointed to one of the hierarchically demarcated positions within the female household. These roles could include such duties as keeping the household's accounts up to date, overseeing the queen's wardrobe, hosting and performing at banquets, educating the royal children, accompanying

the queen in her daily duties, delivering messages for, and superintending access to, the queen. If their mistress were to marry a foreign monarch, they might, initially, travel with her. They were usually paid a salary as well as food and board, and often received gifts of clothing and were rewarded for their loyalty with assistance in securing an advantageous marriage or significant court posts for their kin.

The essays present a fascinating cross-section of the varied careers of ladies-in-waiting. Notable individuals discussed include: Jane Dormer (who, after serving in Queen Mary I's court, became Duchess of Feria and supported expatriate English Catholics), Margarita of Cardona and her daughter Ana (ambitious maids and informants in the court of Empress Maria of Austria), Marie de Montmorency and Maria Zapata (referred to as '*les petites infantes*' while serving the Governess-General Isabella Clara Eugenia), Magdalena Ruiz (a longstanding Habsburg court favourite with dwarfism), Marie-Catherine de la Rochefoucauld (*dame d'honneur* and friend to Anne of Austria) and Lucy Harington-Russel (who obtained the post of First Lady of the Bedchamber to Queen Anna of Denmark, in part through her activities as a patron, commissioning, directing, and performing in Samuel Daniel's *Vision of the Twelve Goddesses*). The essays unpack the cultural influence that these elite women exerted by representing their mistress and guiding their community in the adoption of the latest—potentially foreign—manners and ideas.

This is an important work for the emergent field of gendered court politics. It is logically structured and beautifully produced, with colour images of artworks appearing within a page of their having been discussed. It would be of interest for scholars and students of early modern court culture or gender studies, or to specialists seeking fresh insights concerning the biographies of particular queens from the early modern period, or of regents or ladies who exerted power within the specified courtly households.

ELIZABETH REID, *The University of Western Australia*

Arlinghaus, Franz-Josef, ed., *Forms of Individuality and Literacy in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods* (Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy, 31), Turnhout, Brepols, 2015; hardback; pp. viii, 317; 2 b/w, 13 colour illustrations; R.R.P. €90.00; ISBN 9782503552200.

This collection began as a conference on the utility of Niklas Luhmann's systems theory for understanding premodern individuality, but the essays provide stimulating interdisciplinary discussions about individuality and premodern (mainly German-speaking) Europe independently of this framework. Three essays together offer a useful introduction to Luhmann's principles. Franz-Josef Arlinghaus applies the distinction he made between socially inclusive individuality—distinctive to medieval and early modern societies—and 'modern' individuality—grounded in its distance from society—to autobiography. Accordingly, premodern autobiography is characterized by a drive to be 'better' within the parameters of one's social affiliation (exemplified by the works of

Thietmar of Merseburg and Augsburg merchant Lucas Rem), as opposed to an emphasis on ‘difference’ in modern autobiography. David Gary Shaw rejects Luhmann’s separation of ‘the social and the psychic’, arguing that, for a historian, the integration of these spheres through the concept of self is preferable (p. 125). Shaw is more positive about Luhmann’s thinking around the individual and social structure, and pushes Luhmann’s transition to the modern period back to the fifteenth century through considering ‘self-expression’ in sumptuary law, Thomas Hoccleve, and the almost unyieldingly ‘impersonal’ prose of William Worcester, all of which demonstrate ‘the pressure coming from individual people to place themselves into the social world in ways that seem unpredictable sometimes, but always personal’ (p. 147). When Gregor Rohmann argues that medieval inclusion identity was staged largely at the level of semantics, as shifting social structures did not offer a stable basis for identity, he inverts one of Luhmann’s key oppositions. Changing medieval kinship structures and the transcendental focus of Christianity are central to this reconfiguration, which Rohmann explores through the recollections of Hieronymus Koehler and the relationship of the ‘I’ to authority over a household in the writing-self of sixteenth-century house books: ‘there is no “autobiographical pact” in house books, but the reciprocity of collective remembrance’ (p. 227).

In the ‘ego documents’ produced by Princess Elisabeth Charlotte, sister-in-law to Louis XIV, Marieke Böth finds that gender, nationality, and status are interwoven with health, virtue, and physical location in the maintenance of her self-identity. Brigitte Bedos-Rezak engages with the relationship of theory to historical context before turning to ‘long twelfth-century’ expressions of individuality, culminating in a consideration of the ‘non-human’ expression of individuality in the form of seals.

Eva Kormann examines women’s self-representation (with reference to lower-class masculine textual self-representation) *c.* 1800, when ‘the genre of “autobiography” demands an autonomous self conception, but the contemporary gender order knows of no autonomous model for women’ (p. 118), generically reflected in the frequent choice of letter format to write about their lives (a communicative medium, rather than the solipsistic genres used by men).

Through the autobiography of Konrad Pellikan, Gabrielle Jancke critiques the spatial conceptualization of autobiography as ‘interior’ (private) for relegating other social, ‘public’ aspects of the individual self to a secondary exteriority. The more neutral ‘person’ is preferred to ‘individuality’ for opening up ‘a complex field of entangled relations, actions, and flows of resources, i.e. considering them people busily involved in performative processes of “doing person” in relational and participative ways’ (p. 174).

Matthias Meyer deals explicitly with narratology’s treatment of the individual (in which he finds little use for Luhmann’s work). Of the three fifteenth-century texts he considers, the most truly ‘autobiographical’ is the non-narrative, predominantly account-keeping marginal notes of physician Johannes Tichtel—

‘an inventory of the self of a real-life individual’ (p. 195)—, whereas the narrative characteristics of the others produce individuality as an organizing principle of the text itself.

Christof Rolker examines names as practices of representation that contribute to individual and social identity. He considers bishops, high civic officeholders, and women, all of whom demonstrate shifting relationships with their family names, and finds evidence of ‘role-playing normally associated with “modern individuality”’ (p. 256), arguing ultimately for a more nuanced understanding of family rather than a rejection of its significance.

Heike Schlie’s exploration of religious time as a structuring principle of individuality in the ‘Testimony’ of Matthäus Schwarz rejects the prevalent opposition in the collection between premodern and modern individuality; ‘a much more urgent requirement than analysis of differences between concepts of individuality [being] a study of its continuities’ (p. 26).

Sabine Schmolinsky focuses on the offering of one’s own name in a dialogue situation where the relational nature of individualization is foregrounded.

While the collection contains many strong contributions, more explicit engagement with the concept and historical realities of ‘literacy’—given its presence in the title—would have been further enriching, as would an acknowledgement of some significant omissions: religion, exclusively Christian, lacked nuance, and ethnicity was barely considered. The lack of index is also frustrating. Readers interested in the related concepts of the premodern individual, selfhood, and their expression in written and other representational media in Europe will nevertheless find these essays worthwhile.

MELISSA RAINE, *University of Melbourne*

Atherton, Mark, *The Making of England: A New History of the Anglo-Saxon World* (Library of Medieval Studies, 2), London, I. B. Tauris, 2017; cloth; pp. xii, 340; 43 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £69.00; ISBN 9781784530051.

Mark Atherton gives a reign by reign account of Anglo-Saxon politics and literature from Alfred (r. 871–899) to Edgar (r. 959–975). His overarching theme is the unity of the English kingdom forged by Alfred and the six Wessex kings who succeeded him. Under Edgar, ‘England became a united kingdom for the first time [...] with a standard written language, and a rich literature, with a tightly controlled administration [...] and a network of towns’ (p. 3).

This is a book for the general reader, but more particularly for students of the history and/or literature of Anglo-Saxon England. Atherton, who is a lecturer in English at an Oxford college, probably has more to offer students of literature. As to history students, they appear to be already well provided with studies of the unification of England under Alfred and his tenth-century successors. But what Atherton chiefly aims to provide them with is awareness of the ‘inner thoughts and feelings’ and the ‘ideals and aspirations’ that can be found in a variety of literary

sources, particularly hagiography. ‘These insights’, he affirms, ‘should also be included in a history of the Anglo-Saxon world’ (p. 3).

English students can gain a more informed overview of literacy and the production of literature in the covered period by consulting the various companions and encyclopedias specifically written for them from the 1990s onward. Latin and vernacular literature between Alfred’s educational revival and the Benedictine reform in Edgar’s reign has, however, only relatively recently received close attention. Atherton’s book therefore makes a useful contribution by offering a continuous narrative of literary history in the period between these two cultural high points. Its most attractive feature is the wide range of both Latin and vernacular literature Atherton discusses, finding significance and interest in texts that might have been thought too esoteric to set before non-specialists, such as the Fonthill Letter and Lantfred’s *Vita* of St Swithin. Atherton’s readable style is well suited to his target audiences. The chronological lists at the beginning of each chapter, giving dates of the events mentioned, are an excellent idea. A genealogical table would have been helpful too, particularly for following the dynastic infighting.

One of the weaknesses of Atherton’s book, however, is his cursory presentation of the educational reforms that form the beginning and end of his regnal history. Of course, Alfred’s preface to *Cura Pastoralis* has been extensively discussed, but Atherton’s intended readers must at least be either told or reminded that Alfred’s aim was to teach vernacular literacy to all *sio gioguð* (‘young persons’) of the freeborn classes and, after that, to teach Latin to those with an aptitude for religious orders. According to Asser’s *Life of Alfred*, the king’s youngest son acquired both vernacular and Latin literacy at a monastic school, presumably Winchester, along with almost all of the children of the nobility, and many who were not noble. And his youngest daughter, together with Edward, his eldest son and heir, were, at the time Asser wrote, being taught at court in the vernacular by male and female teachers.

A substantial body of work on Anglo-Saxon women’s literacy has been published since Christine Fell’s pioneering study appeared in 1984. It is therefore startling to find Atherton stating that, in Edward’s reign, ‘the written vernacular continued to be fostered by the ruling elite, who had certainly benefited from the great drive to teach their sons—and perhaps also their daughters—to read in Old English’ (p. 122).

Likewise, in his discussion of Edgar’s founding of monasteries, Atherton makes no mention of nunneries. Yet Wilton already had a monastic school whose pupils included secular women *before c.* 960, and it became a notable centre of learning after being re-founded, with Edgar’s support, by his estranged second wife Wulfthryth. Atherton’s discussion of the OE Benedictine Rule makes no mention of Athelwold having translated it for female religious. Nor does Atherton mention that the surviving account of ‘Edgar’s Establishment of the Monasteries’ is addressed to abbesses. Discussing *Regularis Concordia*, he refers to its insight

into the lives of ‘the monks who produced all this art and literature’ (p. 265), without mentioning that it is a record of an agreement reached by monks and nuns, or that there is a fragmentary translation of it adapted for female readership. Atherton does mention, fleetingly, that the *Regularis Concordia* requires prayers for the king and queen as an aspect of its emphasis on unity of monastic practice in a unified kingdom. He does not name the queen in question, Edgar’s third wife Ælfthryth. Nor does she figure in Atherton’s culminating account of Edgar’s coronation at Bath (973), even though she is the first Anglo-Saxon queen known to have been crowned and anointed, and therefore seminal to the development of the queen as a symbol of national unity.

STEPHANIE HOLLIS, *The University of Auckland*

Barret, Sébastien, Dominique Stutzmann, and Georg Vogeler, eds, *Ruling the Script in the Middle Ages: Formal Aspects of Written Communication (Books, Charters, and Inscriptions)* (Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy, 35), Turnhout, Brepols, 2016; hardback; pp. viii, 545; 18 colour, 100 b/w illustrations, 36 tables; R.R.P. €125.00; ISBN 9782503567433.

At the International Medieval Congresses held in Leeds between 2010 and 2014 a total of eighteen sessions involving over fifty scholars explored, according to the present book’s back cover blurb, the ‘textuality and materiality’ of a variety of medieval texts, focusing particularly on the different kinds of ‘rules’ which were evolved to facilitate written communications within specialized categories. Among their primary stated goals were the integration of current developments in palaeography, diplomatics, and codicology, and the bridging of the gap between the ‘auxiliary sciences of history’ (back cover) and the field of communication studies. From the material presented at those sessions twenty papers were chosen to comprise this volume. The chronological range of subjects is wide: they cover a thousand years, from the fifth to the fifteenth century. Linguistically there is a concentration on the West, most of the manuscripts under discussion being in Latin, but with some French, Italian and German material, as well as one paper on letter shapes in Syriac and another on micrography in Ashkenazi Hebrew documents. Three of the papers are written in French, the remainder in English. The overall intent is to provide ‘new insights into how different kinds of rules were designed, established and followed in the shaping of medieval documents, as a means of enabling complex and subtle communicational phenomena’ (back cover).

How far is this achieved? An introduction of some twenty pages by the three editors provides a reasonably succinct summary and contextualization of each of the papers. In it they express the hope that their collection might help to fill the ‘blind spot’ left by the fields of ‘literacy’, ‘auxiliary sciences’, and the ‘civilization of writing’, and become part of a ‘new inflection in cultural studies’ (p. 14). They declare themselves ‘proud to open the borders between disciplines’ (p. 24). Their aim seems a reasonable one, though the diversity of the material calls into question the extent of their success in achieving it.

It is beyond the scope of a short review, or indeed the competence of one single reviewer, to critique thoroughly each and every one of the constituent parts of such a far-ranging collection. It must suffice to say that the various essays together constitute a garden of delights for the amateur of manuscripts: there is a great deal of very interesting and entertaining material here, from, for example, a statistical study of writing angles (inclination of ascenders and descenders, *angles d'attaque*, etc.) as they evolved (or perhaps *devolved!*) over time, to the cutting of goose quills in Holland, or the educational and social backgrounds of scribes in France. The papers are all of high quality in terms of both originality and referencing, many of them written with charm and grace. But the editors' valiant attempt to bind them together seems, to this reviewer, somewhat forced, and the language is frequently overinflated, as is so often the case in modern scholarly writing.

In summary, the editors make much of wrapping all the constituent papers together and filling interdisciplinary gaps in the area of written rules and formulas. Perhaps this collection succeeds up to a point, but it is not clear that such a disparate anthology of essays can be said to share a common purpose or purposes. They are good pieces seen individually, and each fills its own gaps in the sense that it makes a worthwhile and interesting contribution to its own specialized field. I recommend the book for its diversity of interest rather than its putative purpose.

DAVID DAINTREE, *Colebrook, Tasmania*

Barthe, Pascale, *French Encounters with the Ottomans, 1510–1560* (Transculturalisms, 1400–1700 series), New York, Routledge, 2016; cloth; pp. xi, 179; 21 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. US\$141.00, £110.00; ISBN 9781472420428.

The relationship between Europe and the Ottoman empire during the Renaissance has attracted increasing attention in recent decades, with scholars reassessing 'clash of civilizations' narratives and examining the complex place occupied by the Ottomans in the European imagination. Understandably, the Venetian context has been a salient point in this scholarly front-line, but more recent monographs have turned to how the Ottomans (or the 'Turks') figured in the diplomatic, cultural, economic, and literary life of early modern England, France, and Germany.

The French context is particularly valuable because Francis I's alliance with sultan Süleyman in the 1530s laid the foundations for a long-standing and complex relationship between the French and Ottomans. Yet, as Christine Isom-Verhaaren noted in her seminal work, *Allies with the Infidel: The Ottoman and French Alliance in the Sixteenth Century* (I. B. Tauris, 2011), the historiographical representation of the Franco-Ottoman alliance often drew on Habsburg sources that represented it as a 'sensational aberration'. Isom-Verhaaren challenged such historiography by examining a broader set of French and Ottoman sources. Pascale Barthe takes up this work in the current monograph by looking at a diverse set of literary sources that suggest a Franco-Ottoman rapprochement leading up to the

alliance and a shift in attitudes. Barthe focuses on the period 1510–1560, which she sees as one of ‘covert and public collaboration between the Ottomans and French’ (p. 159).

After an introductory chapter on the transition of France’s relations with the Ottomans from crusade to alliance, Barthe explores how alliance between France and a Muslim power was possibly entertained in two early sixteenth-century texts. The first is an anti-papal polemic treatise written by Jean Lemaire de Belges in 1511 and that includes an appraisal of Louis XII alongside the Safavid shah Isma’il, as well as a *vita* of the latter. For Barthe, they reflect a ‘textual rapprochement’ between the French and Safavid rulers highly suggestive of alliance (p. 35). Chapter 3 examines Jacques de Bourbon’s 1525 account of the fall of Rhodes to Süleyman. While the work sits within a long tradition of crusade narratives that contrast Christians and Muslims, Barthe argues this text also ‘opened the door for an alliance’ (p. 58). Next, Barthe turns to François Rabelais’s *Pantagruel* (1532), in which the encounter between Panurge, one of the story’s principal characters, and an Ottoman paşa, presents a blurring of Christian–Muslim identities. Bertrand de la Borderie’s *Le Discours du voyage de constantinoble* (1542) is the focus of the next chapter. La Borderie’s text reflects contemporaneous ideas of the ‘Turk’ as an ‘oriental despot’ and tyrant. Barthe contends that La Borderie was proposing imperial possibilities in the East to the French king. The final chapter looks at a remarkable *boiserie* owned by Jean Yverson, who accompanied a special mission to the Ottoman sultan. The panel comprises several blended scenes such as a muezzin calling people to prayer and a parade through Constantinople. Further, the panel’s battle scene’s blurring of Christian–Muslim identities engaged in a religious war conflates Protestants and Ottomans.

One concern with the book relates to some claims about the Franco-Ottoman relationship, particularly the presence of Ottoman/Muslim subjects in France itself. The reassessment of Europe’s relationship with the Islamic world in the medieval and early modern periods is a laudable enterprise but one that should also attract caution. Barthe claims that as well as Ottoman ‘merchants, scholars, and emissaries regularly active in commercial, intellectual, and political negotiations in France’ there is ‘enough evidence of individuals permanently settled in the kingdom’ to suggest ‘an absorption of Muslim and in particular Ottoman subjects into early modern French society’ (p. 22). The author cites a wall in Marseille bearing Arabic inscriptions, as well as two young women kidnapped on an Ottoman vessel and later made servants of Catherine de’ Medici. Surely, this is far from ‘enough evidence’ to support a claim about Muslim absorption into early modern France (all the more since the women of the latter case were naturalized and never sent back home despite petitions from the mother via diplomatic channels).

A final, and perhaps related, point concerns how ‘Islam’ is deployed occasionally, as referring to a faith or confessional identity versus a reference to a political identity (Ottoman, Safavid, Mamluk, and so on). For example, at one time the author writes that Lemaire ‘brought Islam into an entirely Christian

debate' with reference to his anti-papal polemic (p. 40). Did he bring Islam into a Christian debate or political rulers from the Islamic world into that debate? These can be important distinctions.

Aside from these points, Barthe's work represents an important and vital addition to scholarship on Franco-Ottoman relations in the Renaissance. Most especially, it reveals a literary rapprochement that toys with the idea of alliance with a Muslim ruler prior to the alliance itself.

DARREN M. SMITH, *The University of Sydney*

Bishop, Chris, *Medievalist Comics and the American Century*, Jackson, University Press of Mississippi, 2017; hardback; pp. 224; R.R.P. US\$65.00; ISBN 9781496808509.

Chris Bishop's new book examines the literary and historic roots of American comics, and how these works of popular culture use medieval European characters to reflect modern American history. The volume features an introduction and conclusion, and seven chapters, each focusing on an individual comic title: *Prince Valiant* (1937); *The Green Arrow* (1941); *The Mighty Thor* (1962); *Conan the Barbarian* (1970); *Red Sonja* (1973); *Beowulf: Dragon Slayer* (1975); and *Northlanders* (2007).

Bishop's introduction provides an excellent overview of the history of comic books and the concept of popular medievalism as a genre, and he states that his focus is chiefly to contextualize the texts studied, rather than interpret them. *Medievalist Comics and the American Century* is successful as an elaborated reception study of a selection of comics published in America from the late 1930s until more recent times (2007). Bishop's discussion of the comics is largely descriptive rather than analytical, providing detailed publication histories. To this effect, he outlines connections between publishers (such as the looming figure of tycoon William Randolph Hearst) and the authors (such as Hal Foster) and artists (such as Howard Pyle and Newell Convers Wyeth) who would go on to influence and popularize the idea of medievalism in the United States in the twentieth century and beyond. Surprisingly, Bishop does not overly engage with medievalism, declaring that, 'while [m]edievalism will inform the discourse' of his study, 'reception history' is '[his] primary objective' (p. 6), before quite flippantly reducing the difference between medievalism and neo-medievalism to mere semantics (p. 12). A more thorough engagement with both medievalist and neo-medievalist theory would have strengthened Bishop's work, especially in his final chapter on *Northlanders*.

The first three chapters examine the immigration of Arthurian legends, Robin Hood, and Viking lore into the United States. Bishop presents *Prince Valiant*, DC's *Green Arrow*, and Marvel's *The Mighty Thor* as products of a rich engagement with this medievalist culture and history. He traces each work, from academic interest in the medieval, to transmission to the general public through immigrant culture, and then finally its adaptation and popularization in the comic form.

The next two chapters focus on Marvel's barbarian warriors Conan and Red Sonja. Bishop outlines how *Conan the Barbarian* was resurrected from pulp-fiction obscurity and buoyed along on the wave of interest in fantasy literature that started with J. R. R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*. Bishop frames *Red Sonja* as a response to America's feminist movement of the late 1960s and 1970s, with major comics publishers such as Marvel and DC realizing they needed strong female characters. However, a backlash against feminism led to a (problematic) revision of Sonja's backstory (p. 140), an example of the 'Women in Refrigerators' trope that continues to be used in comic storylines today.

The final two chapters focus on two titles by publisher DC. Bishop's interest in *Beowulf: Dragon Slayer* is primarily as an example of failed medievalist work compared with *Prince Valiant*, *Green Arrow*, *Thor*, *Conan*, and *Red Sonja*. It lasted a mere six issues, failed to excite the public's imagination, and has 'never taken root in the popular conscious of America' (p. 160). *Northlanders*, another failed medievalist work—Bishop terms it an 'unmedievalist' comic book (p. 164)—resulted from author Brian Wood's struggles with his publisher Vertigo. An imprint of DC, Vertigo wanted a series based on Silver Age comic character the Viking Prince, whilst Wood was more inclined to write a Japanese neo-noir gangster saga. However, in taking Tokyo gang stories and setting them in old Iceland, Bishop neglects to see *Northlanders* not as a failed *medievalist* work, but as a perfect example of a neo-medievalist text: it is set in a pseudo-medieval world, and playfully engages with, and interrogates, medieval history and culture.

Bishop's writing style is clear and concise, and the book includes endnotes, a bibliography, and index. A handful of errors in fact and grammar, however, have unfortunately been overlooked in copyediting: for example, Köln is not situated in 'southern Germany' (p. 9), but in the west. Surprisingly for a book that is about comics, *Medievalist Comics and the American Century* includes no images, even when Bishop explicitly refers to imagery. Despite this oversight, the book will be of interest to scholars of both comics and popularized medievalism, as well as those interested in the reception of popular culture.

MARINA GERZIĆ, *The University of Western Australia*

Buckley, Ann, ed., *Music, Liturgy, and the Veneration of Saints of the Medieval Irish Church in a European Context* (Ritus et Artes, 8), Turnhout, Brepols, 2017; hardback; pp. xxxiv, 359; 7 colour, 15 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. €100.00; ISBN 9782503534701.

The notion of Ireland as a land of saints has always generated its devotees. Such has been the vigour of enthusiasm for Ireland as having a multitude of saints and as pursuing its own Celtic identity, imagined as at odds with Romanizing orthodoxy, that a good deal of romantic extravagance has been invested in notions of a Celtic Church and a spirituality that is different from Rome's. This volume sets out to counter such notions, by emphasizing the European framework in which the Irish saints have been venerated. From the outset, it must be said that it provides an

authoritative synthesis on a subject that has been too little studied from a European perspective. Ireland suffered what some have called ‘cultural genocide’ in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, resulting in the near extinction within the country of manuscripts copied between the early and late medieval periods. As a consequence, our knowledge of its liturgical culture is fragmentary in the extreme, and often dependent on a few surviving manuscripts preserved outside of the country. Buckley has gathered together an impressive group of scholars who all seek to place veneration of Irish saints within a European context. A common theme is criticism of the notion of an autonomous Celtic liturgy as a romantic enthusiasm and, in its place, emphasis on the Gallican traditions from which it derives.

The dominant focus in this volume is on the way liturgy articulates local identity, most often studied through the offices of individual saints, but within a larger ecclesial framework. There are a few general essays, notably the introduction by Buckley and an overview of early Irish chant by the late Michel Huglo, as well as a closing overview by Liam Tracey, ‘Celtic Mists: The Search for a Celtic Rite’. Nils Holger Petersen offers a stimulating reflection on the role of liturgy preserving cultural memory by considering how Irish saints were remembered in a Norwegian context. Perhaps a surprising omission (apart from a brief mention by Buckley in her introduction) is discussion of the eighth-century *Ratio de curs<ib>us*, which documents and defends distinctions between the *cursus scottorum* and the *cursus gallicorum*, formulated just as the Roman liturgy was being imposed across many continental abbeys which proudly remembered their Irish founders. While there can be little doubt, as Huglo and others show, that the melodies preserved in Offices for Irish saints may derive from ancient Gallican chants, the question remains whether foundations claiming an Irish legacy considered themselves to preserve a distinct liturgical tradition. One theme that comes out from Buckley’s excellent paper ‘From Hymn to *Historia*’, as well as from other contributions, is the magnitude of the transformation brought about within liturgical practice in the twelfth century. Only from this date do we find a full blown liturgical Office for a saint emerging on the continental pattern. There are a large number of specialist studies in this volume about saints whose Irish origins rest on legend rather than firm documentation: Bernhard Hanngartner on St Fintan of Rheinau, Pieter Mannaerts on St Dymphna of Gheel, Patrick Brannon on St Canice at Kilkenny Cathedral, Ciaran O’Driscoll and Patricia Rumsey on St Brendan, and Senan Furlong on St Patrick. Each of these has much to offer, both from a musicological and liturgical perspective.

The title of the volume may disguise the fact that it also contains some fascinating contributions relating to Scotland and Wales. Thus, Betty Knott writes about the Office for St Kentigern in Glasgow, while Greta-Mary Hair offers important political context to understand why St Andrew rather than St Columba became patron saint of Scotland—the simple reason is that St Andrew, brother of St Peter, was perceived by the Scottish kings as a more worthy apostolic authority

to displace the claims of York over Scotland, and thus enabled Scotland to become by 1189 a special daughter of Rome. In the case of Wales, there is a similar dearth of liturgical testimony for the early period. Yet, as Sally Harper shows, there is still much to be done in exploring the memory of Welsh saints from the evidence of the later medieval period. Her comments reflect a broader theme in this volume, that rich insights are still waiting to be gleaned from liturgical documentation and artefacts (like eucharistic chrismals, used for carrying the oil of chrism, described by Neil Xavier O'Donogue), even if they are late in date. While this volume may have its principal focus on the memory of Irish saints, it has much to offer to those engaged in studying the liturgical traditions of many parts of Latin Europe as a whole.

CONSTANT J. MEWS, *Monash University*

Butterworth, Philip, and Katie Normington, eds, *Medieval Theatre Performance. Actors, Dancers, Automata and their Audiences* (Medieval Literature), Cambridge, D. S. Brewer, 2017; hardback; pp. 296; 11 b/w, 7 line illustrations; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9781843844761.

This is a vibrant and fascinating addition to the field of medieval performance. Engaging and enjoyable, the book consists of twelve essays prefaced by the editors' introduction. The latter makes clear that 'it is performance and not performance context with which [they] are concerned' (p. 1). This is both refreshing—in the scholarly canon, performance context does often overshadow the actual conditions of medieval drama—and brave: there is so much we do not know, and never can know, about the actualities of medieval performance. Claire Sponsler, whose essay opens the volume, begins by acknowledging the difference between "What we know" and "What we do not know" (p. 1). An awareness of this, together with the tacit realization that understanding of certain aspects of medieval performance remains irrevocably lost, runs through all twelve contributing essays, 'driv[ing] original research that [...] lead[s] to significant contributions to knowledge' (p. 1).

Brief synopses of each chapter are listed at the end of the introduction, which are very helpful for quick reference. The essays are weighted towards focusing on the late medieval period but are wide-encompassing in their scope. Discussions range from theatrical clothing and costuming (Katie Normington) to scenery (Nerida Newbigin), and from dancing (Jennifer Neville, Kathryn Dickason) and 'what happens' within medieval theatrical performance (Bart Ramakers, Tom Pettitt and Femke Kramer) to automata and animated statues (Max Harris, Leanne Groeneveld, Philip Butterworth).

For this reviewer, the chapters on dance, probing the audience/performer relationship, and questioning when and how one becomes the other, were particularly innovative. The outstanding essay, however, is Claire Sponsler's 'From Archive to Repertoire: The *Disguising at Hereford* and Performance Practices'. Sponsler takes a post-positive approach, arguing that 'we can never know the "past" in its fullness or with any certainty' (p. 17). Yet, she argues,

‘that view does not prevent us from trying to understand the past’ (p. 17). While fully acknowledging the necessity of ‘tap[ping] as many sources of knowledge as possible [...], whether [...] written text, painted image, material artefact, oral testimony, embodied memory, or other means of transmission’ (p. 17), she simultaneously raises the question of practice-as-research. Confronting head-on the concerns of some scholars regarding this—it does not fit easily within ‘established research paradigms’ (p. 31), applying methodology and rigour can be difficult, and some see it simply as ‘fun’ instead of ‘serious’ scholarly research—, she nevertheless argues strongly that investigating medieval performance practice in this way ‘can expand our search for both fuller knowledge about early performance and for heightened awareness about the assumptions of such an attempt’ (p. 34). This is a welcome endorsement and, it is to be hoped, one that will encourage exciting new forays into the performance of medieval drama and related theatre.

Sponsler’s chapter acts as a touchstone for the other eleven. Other authors frequently refer back to her, so that her work becomes a thread linking the chapters—disparate though they are in topic—and running through the entire volume. In a neat symmetry, the last chapter of the book—Butterworth’s “Ymage off Seynt Iorge” at St Botolph’s—both echoes and builds on Sponsler’s suggestion that experiment and creative practice can be a useful way of advancing knowledge. Butterworth’s chapter is an account of his liaison with Eric Williamson to draw up plans for ‘a conjectured version’ (p. 14) of the fifteenth-century semi-automaton St George and the Dragon. The diagrams accompanying the text are particularly helpful for visualizing and understanding how the model may have worked. Hopefully Butterworth and Williamson will one day have the opportunity to take this research to the logical next step, and produce a working replica of the automaton.

This book will be of most interest, relevance and value to those working closely and in detail with late medieval performance, but is also clear and engaging enough to be accessible to advanced undergraduates or those with a more general interest. It is highly recommended.

ELEANOR BLOOMFIELD, *The University of Auckland*

Cervone, Cristina Maria, and D. Vance **Smith**, eds, *Readings in Medieval Textuality: Essays in Honour of A. C. Spearing*, Cambridge, D. S. Brewer, 2016; cloth; pp. xxxvi, 248; 5 b/w illustrations, 1 b/w plate; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9781843844464.

Compiled by leading scholars in American and English universities, this Festschrift contains an overview of approaches taken to medieval poetry since A. C. Spearing published his first book, *Criticism and Medieval Poetry*, in 1964. The editors have created a unity rare in such collections by returning to contributors’ personal acquaintance with Spearing and/or responses to his ideas as points of reference. Moreover, except for J. A. Burrow’s stimulating consignment of the *Confessio*

Amantis and the *Canterbury Tales* to the genre of *dits*, and Ardis Butterfield's elegant manuscript study of 'Maiden in the Mor Lay', each essay builds its argument around selected, usually short, passages from Chaucer, Langland, Gower, the Gawain-poet, or the lyrists. The contents therefore justify the title's respect for 'textuality', which has always been central to Spearing's approach (p. xviii). While the reader may sometimes feel herself to be 'roaming' like Emily in an academic *hortus conclusus*, the parameters imposed by the editors and the seasoned talents of the writers have produced a collection of the highest quality.

Backed by Peter Baker's list of Spearing's publications, Cristina Maria Cervone's and D. Vance Smith's introduction reviews his creative applications over decades of his own and others' thinking on formalism, close reading, subjectivity, narratology, autography, and the pleasure of the text, and traces influences on his work that were at different times contrary (F. R. Leavis, C. S. Lewis, D. W. Robertson) and nurturing (Elizabeth Salter, Helen Cooper). Pointing to his 'drawing on theories from other disciplines or other areas of literary studies, notably film theory' (p. xviii), the editors find in Spearing's publications an adaptability and breadth of learning that might well serve apprentice critics as a model. Baker's and Elizabeth Fowler's 'appreciations' in Chapter 13, and Cervone's transcription from the 1950s of mysterious verses 'apparently by the Gawain-poet' (pp. 219–22), testify to the flourishing of wit and good will in an enclave of humane studies which—as readers who share its values believe—inherently opposes the barbarism of our time. Since the editors further assist readers by summarizing each essay (pp. xxiv–xxvii), I will deal in what follows with what I regard as highlights and a few dark spots in the collection.

David Aers's reminiscence of Spearing's tactful guidance pinpoints the striking reversal that has taken place in medieval literary studies since the 1980s, when 'ideological glossing and language' were encouraged to 'dominate and colonize' medieval texts (p. 87). In an essay that rewrites what he now regards as his former unsympathetic application of the 'discourses of psychoanalysis', Aers analyses Troilus's conversion to love, metaphysical questing, despair, and accompanying winning and losing of moral virtue in the light of Augustinian theology and metaphysics (pp. 88–95). Chaucer, he thinks, recognized the impasse, unresolved even in Boethius, to which anguished consideration of the contradiction between human free will and God's foreknowledge brings Troilus, whose ultimate fate as a pagan remains ambiguous. However, 'the beautiful closing prayer to the Trinity', which Aers quotes, expresses the hope sustained by Chaucer and his fellow Christians that grace and a love 'proportionate to human nature' might lead them at last to the 'pleyn felicite' of heaven (p. 95).

Like Aers's essay, those by Derek Pearsall, Fowler, Claire M. Waters, Michael Calabrese, Butterfield, and Cervone demonstrate how much intellectual distance sensitive close readings, even of textual minutiae, can traverse. The essays in this collection contrast, and in my view vary in quality, according to their use and placement of such readings. By drawing on her researching or teaching of the

Latin beast epic *Ysengrimus*, Coleridge's 'Frost at Midnight', Chaucer's ballade 'To Rosemounde', and two passages about Arcite in the *Knight's Tale*, Jill Mann succeeds in unmasking 'the false opposition between historicism and formalism' (p. 120). Her essay is a model of clarity, which dares to name elephants in the boudoir of literary criticism, such as: 'we academics all *use* literature to pay our salaries (or our pensions)' (Mann's italics; p. 122).

By contrast, Nicolette Zeeman precludes her discussion of two English ballades by Charles of Orleans with a summary of theories of literary subjectivity, and follows it with a four-page 'Psychoanalytic Postscript' drawing on Freud and Melanie Klein. Zeeman's chapter deploys such phrases as 'a sophisticated medieval sense of what it is to be a historically and culturally embedded subject' (p. 100), and 'the literary notion of "love" may have become a figure with which to think about the imbrications of the subject within culture' (p. 101). But is it not anachronistic to attribute such thinking to medieval love poets? Surely such claims are subject to Aers's protest against the 'colonizing' of medieval texts by 'ideological glossing and language'.

Whatever their occasional flaws, these essays prove that close readings, even of single syllables such as Palamon's 'A!', can yield a rich harvest of insights. Accordingly, the analyses included in this volume are likely to generate new knowledge and understanding into the future.

CHERYL TAYLOR, *Griffith University*

Christine de Pizan, *The Boke of the Cyte of Ladyes*, ed. Hope Johnston, trans. Brian Anslay (Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 457), Tempe, ACMRS, 2014; hardback; pp. lxxvii, 622; 13 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. US\$90.00, £69.00; ISBN 9780866985086.

With this new edition of the Middle English translation of Christine de Pizan's *Le Livre de la Cité des Dames*, the purchaser gets two editions for the price of one, for the book incorporates both the text of Brian Anslay's English translation, published in 1521, and an edition, in Middle French, of an early exemplar of Christine's famous defence of women, London, British Library, MS Royal 19.A.xix (*L*), a manuscript that may have been consulted by the English translator (p. xxv). As the editor, Hope Johnson, notes, by printing both the French and English on facing pages, comparison of the two texts and the identification of places where they deviate is greatly facilitated. Since the only other easily available edition of the French text, that prepared by Earl Jeffrey Richards and Patrizia Caraffi (Luni Editrice, 1997), comes with an Italian translation, the inclusion of the French along with the Middle English significantly enhances the publication's usefulness for English speakers.

The introduction offers a brief account of the contents of Christine's defence of women, a short account of her life, with brief details of her other works, a biography of the translator, Brian Anslay, a discussion of the minor ways in which the translation deviates from the original, an account of the editorial history of the

Cité des Dames, some details concerning the printer, Henry Pepwell, and details of the signature irregularities, provenance, and marginalia of the five surviving copies of the English publication. There are extensive notes, which detail the ways in which the text of *L* diverges from British Library, MS Harley 4431 (*R*), the authoritative version prepared for the French queen, Isabeau of Bavaria, in 1414. A bibliography and selective glossary of Middle English words that are likely to cause trouble make up the volume.

An enormous amount of detailed work has gone into the preparation of this pair of texts, and I find the conjunction of the Middle French with the Middle English is an aid in reading both. When the French is obscure, the English helps, and vice versa. As others have noted, Ansley's translation follows the French almost word for word, so that someone with French, and whose Middle English is weak, could use the French to familiarize themselves with Middle English, or the other way around. I suspect that this will make the edition of use to students of both languages. The ease of comparison also promises 'multiple interpretative possibilities for future scholars to consider' (p. li).

This is a very careful, scholarly edition. If it has any fault, it is that it is so careful not to go beyond the available evidence that it offers no interesting new speculations concerning the circumstances of the translation or the influence of it and its French original on later English political debates concerning women's capacity to rule. We learn that the translator was a yeoman who attended Henry VII's funeral and the coronation of Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon. Both events took place in 1509, and at the latter event he was assigned to the 'Queen's Chamber' (p. xl). He was a yeoman of the cellar, married to Anne Polsted, and lived in Kent not far from William Thynne, the 1532 editor of Chaucer's *Works*. Thynne's nephew, Sir John Thynne, acquired one of the surviving copies of the translation, that at Longleat, which bears the name of William Brereton, who was charged and executed on the grounds of adultery with Anne Boleyn' (pp. xliii, lxi). Given the timing of its production—when after eleven years of marriage, Catherine of Aragon had provided Henry VIII with only a female heir—, and in the light of Susan Groag Bell's discoveries relating to the contemporary 'city of ladies' tapestries', which are mentioned, one might have expected the editor to have more emphatically highlighted the political significance of the translation. Many, however, will see this caution as a virtue of the edition, which leaves it open to others to investigate and speculate further.

KAREN GREEN, *University of Melbourne*

Clunies Ross, Margaret, ed., *Poetry in Fornaldarsögur* (Skaldic Poetry in the Scandinavian Middle Ages, 8), Turnhout, Brepols, 2017; hardback; 2 vols; pp. cii, 1076; R.R.P. , €140.00; ISBN 9782503519005.

Nine years ago the undersigned was privileged to review in this journal *Poetry on Christian Subjects* (Brepols, 2007), the first volume to appear on what is intended to be a nine volume critical edition, with English language apparatus and translations of the poems, of what the new publication describes as ‘the corpus of Scandinavian poetry from the Middle Ages, excluding only the Poetic Edda and closely related poetry, and the *rímur*’ (p. lv). This new volume is the fifth to appear, and the second, after *Poetry from Treatises on Poetics*, published in 2017. Its focus is on poetry preserved in *fornaldarsögur* (‘sagas of the ancient time’), a somewhat heterogeneous genre of sagas dealing with heroes and adventures from times before the settlement of Iceland in the 870s. Though these sagas were clearly popular for many generations in Iceland, and were amongst the first medieval Icelandic texts to attract scholarly attention in early modern times, their fabulous and clearly unhistorical qualities caused them to fall into comparative disfavour during much of the twentieth century, until a considerable revival of interest and appreciation in recent decades.

The new volume is under the general editorship of Margaret Clunies Ross, whose introduction discusses the *fornaldarsögur* and their poetry, and outlines editorial practice. One section of the introduction, ‘Metre’, is the work of Kari Ellen Gade. Eleven contributors, including Clunies Ross, are responsible for the editions of the poems, arranged under the names of twenty-one *fornaldarsögur*, as well as of arguably related material (*Merlínusspá I and II*, *Krákumál*, and *Skaufhala bálkr*, attributed to Svartr á Hofstöðum).

The arrangement of the volume will be largely familiar to anyone who has used any of the four that appeared earlier in the series, although here the main arrangement of the editions is normally by saga rather than poet. There is a generally brief introduction to each saga and its poetry. Individual stanzas are presented in normalized orthography, followed by a rearrangement of the text into prose order, an English translation incorporating an interpretation of the kennings (poetic figures of speech), details of manuscripts and variant readings, information about the stanza in the work of earlier editors (particularly Finnur Jónsson), a brief account of the prose context where relevant, and notes. The volume accompanies the editions with detailed listings of general abbreviations, sigla, and technical terms employed, brief notes about contributors (who include several of the most distinguished names in contemporary Old Norse studies), a comprehensive bibliography compiled by Hannah Burrows, and indices of names and terms. Like the four volumes which appeared before it, this one consists of two large, attractively presented hardcover books. As with them, too, its content is also being published in an electronic edition, the responsibility of Tarrin Wills, this electronic edition being ‘fully searchable’ and providing manuscript transcriptions (p. lv).

Like the earlier volumes, *Poetry in Fornaldarsögur* impressively combines scholarship of formidable range and depth with a lucid mode of presentation which makes realistic the expressed hope that the work might find users amongst students of other European languages and in disciplines such as history, archaeology, and the history of religion (p. xciii). The standard edition of skaldic poetry hitherto, Finnur Jónsson's monumental *Den norsk-islandske skjadedigtning* (Gyldendal, 1912–15), which provided very little introductory and explanatory material, will clearly be superseded for the purposes of almost all scholars who wish to use and understand skaldic poetry.

This reviewer will, however, confess to one minor disappointment. In the 'Volume Editor's Preface and Acknowledgments', Clunies Ross acknowledges the role of Rory McTurk, who by speaking from the floor at a Sydney conference in 2000 saved those responsible for the series 'from the serious mistake of omitting the contents of this volume from our new edition' (p. ix). Some account of why it was intended originally to omit the considerable corpus of *fornaldarsaga* poetry and the reasons for reversing this decision might have made interesting reading.

JOHN KENNEDY, *Charles Sturt University*

Crawford, Jason, *Allegory and Enchantment: An Early Modern Poetics*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2017; hardback; pp. 240; R.R.P. £55.00; ISBN 9780198788041.

In an insightful study, Jason Crawford couples enchantment with disenchantment to argue their metaphoric roots 'have genealogies older than early modernity' (p. 10). In particular, Crawford argues that disenchantment is closely linked to allegory. His brief overview of eighteenth century attitudes to allegory reveals a modern sensibility traceable to early Christian texts.

Crawford's critique of allegorical discourse begins with arguably the first consistent literary allegory, Prudentius's *Psychomachia*. In *Psychomachia*, Crawford discovers how allegory resists narrative through the poem's repetitive and static violence. He traces Prudentius's 'narratives of disenchantment' (p. 49) to Plato's dialogues. In *Parmenides*, the infinite replication of likenesses in forms creates a narrative rift that makes allegory possible. Crawford's thesis becomes clearer with his discussion of St Augustine's *City of God*. Augustine's criticism of Roman gods, Crawford argues, begins a narrative of disenchantment explicitly recognizing the Platonic impossibility of the divine and worldly, material and immaterial, co-existing in narrative form. These dichotomies are resolved by the God incarnate, Jesus Christ. Crawford then turns to Origen's *De principiis*. Origen's discussion of Christ enables Crawford to argue that the human body represents Christ, in the same way that Christ represents an invisible God. The fleshly manifestation of God is a revelation comparable to narrative meaning in allegory.

The incarnation of Christ as an allegory is analysed mainly by reference to the B-text of William Langland's poem *Piers Plowman*. The poem also reaffirms

Crawford's thesis that the disenchanted sceptical subject appears alongside allegory. In particular, Crawford analyses Langland's frustration of not being able to merge with Christ. Langland's disenchantment is coupled to a mistrust of allegory that both reveals and distorts the truth of God.

In John Skelton's *The Bowge of Courte*, Crawford considers the attraction of allegorical enchantment as a form of self-defence. He finds, instead, an intriguing allegorical shift into the world of vice. Skelton creates a paranoid allegory or, perhaps, an anti-allegory of a disenchanted consciousness haunted by phantasmal enchantments.

Disenchantment in the form of violence and apocalypse is scrutinized in Book One of Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*. Crawford notes that the first part of *The Faerie Queene* is published just two years after the Spanish Armada. The event enables Crawford to argue that Spenser's allegory is able to link English history with biblical history. However, following a brief examination of Spenser's earlier poems, Crawford reveals that his main interest lies in how Book One mediates the differences between time and eternity.

Crawford focuses on the personification of Despair, as the Redcrosse Knight's shadowy other, who ends up in perpetual despair through being unable to die. The haunting figure of Despair becomes a pathological violence that makes the Redcrosse Knight physically sick. The identification of the Redcrosse Knight's sickness leads Crawford to Galenic humoral medicine, as he considers it as an infection manifested physically in Spenser's *Visions of the Worlds Vanitie*. In the sonnet collection, contrary to the Galenic humoral body theory, Crawford discovers imagery of breeding and invasion. The Redcrosse Knight is similarly infected with corruption and sin. Crawford argues that the beasts he encounters in Book One are allegorical manifestations of his inward spiritual crisis. With hypocrisy represented by Duessa and sin as a blinding secretive corruption, Crawford then feverishly diagnoses the Redcrosse Knight with paranoia. Although fascinating, his Spenserian 'metaphors of infection' (p. 167) are anachronistic. Rather than relying on critical introductions, Crawford could have examined in more depth early modern treatises on melancholy, especially religious melancholy.

Crawford considers John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* the most explicitly disenchanted text he examines. The reason for this disenchantment, Crawford argues, is because Bunyan uses secular language to broach Christian authenticity in a fallen world. While *The Pilgrim's Progress* is universally considered an exemplary Christian allegory, Crawford redefines Bunyan's narrative strategy as 'riddling allusion' (p. 188). In a captivating and brilliant finale to his study, Crawford discovers that *The Pilgrim's Progress* does not so much allude to, but becomes a playful secular-friendly version of the Bible.

Allegory and Enchantment is compelling and mainly well-researched. Each of the five chapters steadily builds on the study's thesis. An annoyance is that, in places, the book could be more structurally cohesive. After stating his main argument for a chapter, Crawford has a tendency to be side-tracked into

investigating related topics and texts. They can distract the reader trying to follow the main thread, which often branches into further complexities Crawford then tries to rein in. However, the book is invaluable for early modern researchers and academics interested in religion, allegory, literary constructions of enchantment and, more prominently, disenchantment.

FRANK SWANNACK, *University of Salford*

Dale, Corinne, *The Natural World in the Exeter Book Riddles* (Nature and Environment in the Middle Ages, 1), Cambridge, D. S. Brewer, 2017; hardcover; pp. x, 217; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9781843844648.

This is the first in a new series established to deal with questions of nature, the environment, and sustainability in relation to the medieval period. Dale draws on principles of eco-criticism and eco-theology to consider cultural and biblical influences on depictions of nature in the vernacular Exeter Book riddles.

Over seven thematically focused chapters, Dale examines how certain riddles in the Exeter collection contribute to a programme of resistance to anthropomorphism. Chapter 1 considers the importance of place. While ‘human notions of place may seem to dominate the collection’ (p. 32), certain riddles resist the human-centred point of view, where often the hall or dwelling acts as a point of reference for location. Riddles 60 and 93, for example, describe the antler, which rejoices in its ranging about the forests, fields and streams carried by the deer, before being driven into exile in the scriptorium, transformed into an inkwell. As to Riddle 60, which provides the chapter title (*‘Be sonde, sæwealle neah’*), it describes the ‘watery embrace’ of its home.

In Chapter 2, the travail of the ox is examined in Riddle 72, with exploration of this idea also in Riddles 4 and 52. Here, one of Dale’s central theses begins to be developed in detail, as she argues for the influence of Scripture in order to explain the idea of nature’s subjugation to fallen humanity. The distinctive treatment of the ox as a humble and wounded beast, and a marginalized sentient being, stands in contrast with the typically powerful and dominant animal depicted in ox-riddles such as Aldhelm’s.

Chapter 3 considers Riddle 26 ‘Bible’ as a kind of anti-colophon, shifting focus from the human makers of a book to its animal and material components. Chapter 4 explores another transformation process where trees become objects for human use in warfare or aggression. The subjects ‘are depicted in a post-lapsarian dystopia of suffering and corruption in which the relationship between humanity and nature is damaged’ (p. 27). Chapter 5 examines exploitation of the environment in Riddle 83 ‘ore’. Chapter 6 considers riddles where nature fights back. Riddles 11 and 27 show how the transformation of natural resources into wine or mead will humiliate and damage humans. Biblical sources are at the centre of the argument that in such riddles we find new and distinctive forms of riddling and reflection on an environment with its own integrity. Chapter 7 considers the

limits of wisdom explored in the book of Job, and the development of such ideas in Riddles 1, 2, 3, and 84, depicting natural forces like wind, storm, and water.

In these analyses combining eco-criticism and eco-theology, Dale makes an original and exciting new contribution to the field. The Introduction provides an excellent, concise overview of the literature, and wisely includes a section on ‘navigating the dangers’ of theory-driven textual analysis. Dale concludes that ‘most dangers and pitfalls can be overcome by paying close attention to the text under discussion’ (p. 19). Unfortunately, there is a degree of inattentiveness in the translation and analysis of several riddles. To give a few examples: in Riddle 27, some past verbs are rendered as present (e.g. ‘*mec wægum feþre*’ becomes ‘feathers carry me’), and a plural as singular (‘*Hæled mec [...] bapedan*’ ‘A man [...] bathed me’). In Riddle 26 the ‘*brunne brerd*’ is translated as ‘brown surface [of the vellum page]’, which seems unlikely in view of the next half-line ‘*beamtelge swealg*’ (‘swallowed tree-dye’). The image, most agree, is of the pen, ‘*fugles wyn*’, dipping its after-life beak over the rim of the metallic-brown inkwell. In Riddle 11 ‘ *Ic dysge dwelle*’ is translated ‘I harm the foolish’, where the usual and more cognitive-specific rendering ‘I mislead’, or ‘I trick’, actually supports Dale’s reading of the text.

GREG WAITE, *University of Otago*

Dalton, Heather, *Merchants and Explorers: Roger Barlow, Sebastian Cabot and Networks of Atlantic Exchange 1500–1560*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2016; cloth; pp. 256; R.R.P. £50.00; ISBN 9780199672059.

This remarkable study begins with Roger Barlow, hitherto only known, if at all, as the author of *A Brief Summe of Geographie*, unpublished until the 1930s. In following Barlow’s trail, Heather Dalton has opened surprising vistas on early sixteenth-century England, the Atlantic rim, and South America.

Impressive archival research in Seville found Barlow among a group of English adventurers involved in business ventures in Spain. In 1526, he participated in a Genoese-financed expedition led by Sebastian Cabot. Its aim was to establish a good route to Moluccas but, heading south, Cabot decided to explore the Rio de la Plata. In his later work, Barlow included observations of the geography, natural history, and the Tupi-Garaní people of the region. He was the first Englishman to describe the humming bird and a cannibal feast.

Dalton follows rather than concentrates on Barlow, broadening her focus to discuss Cabot, Barlow’s English associates in the Atlantic enterprise, and Barlow’s brothers who pursued clerical careers in England. Regarding Cabot, she offers new insights on his puzzling career. In discussing the activities of the Thornes and their Bristol colleagues, she demonstrates the accessibility of Spain to English enterprise through to the 1550s. Her study of Barlow’s brothers, John and William, whose careers prospered after the break with Rome, provides a fresh perspective on the English Reformation.

The stories intertwine smoothly and the reframing exercise is always revealing. One revelation is how effectively networks of trust—often familial but surprisingly extended—worked in building capital and knowledge in this uncertain world. A bonus is that Dalton’s approach brings into the frame the lives of some remarkable women, generally so fleetingly observed in the records. Catalina de Medrano, the widow of a conquistador and wife of Cabot, did more than mind the shop in Seville during her husbands’ absences. She pursued her own interests, consolidated partnerships, and served as a conduit in the exchange of knowledge.

On returning to England in 1530, Barlow settled first in Bristol but put down roots in southwest Wales. If he had helped finance the education of his brothers, they now assisted him in making connections and advancing socially. John was Anne Boleyn’s chaplain, promoter of Henry VIII’s divorce, and dean of Westbury. William became bishop of St David’s in 1536. By this time, Roger had leased a substantial property at Slebech, upriver from Milford Haven. Far from the standard cashed-up merchant retiring from the counting-house to a country seat and landed gentility, he had the mindset of a colonist. His estate at Slebech became the centre of an enterprise that drew timber from the hinterland for shipbuilding, participated in illicit as well as licit trade, and profited from anti-piracy operations. Along with his brother, Roger served Thomas Cromwell in establishing the anglicizing and reformist agenda of the government in southwest Wales.

Still looking for wider opportunities, Barlow assisted Robert Thorne in a proposal for exploring a northern route to Cathay in the early 1530s. Nicholas Thorne brought a ship from Seville and acted as Cromwell’s agent in raising a fleet in 1539. Barlow may have supplied naval stores from Slebech. For some time, he had also been working on a translation of Martín Fernández de Enciso’s *Suma de Geographia* (1519). A novel blend of mathematical and descriptive geography, the *Suma* was far in advance of work available in English. Barlow included his observations of the Rio de la Plata, expanded the coverage of northern Europe, and customized Enciso’s work to reflect English needs. Around 1541, he presented it to Henry VIII, along with a map and a reworked version of the tract on the northern passage. It appears to have been simply filed away.

Barlow probably kept in touch with Cabot, who returned to England in 1548. By this time, Londoners were taking the lead in shaping England’s commercial and colonial future. Barlow died in 1552 and thus did not live to learn of the opening of a sea route to Muscovy. When Richard Hakluyt and his circle set to work in the 1580s to celebrate the pioneers of England’s maritime destiny, they had no interest in the history of Anglo-Spanish trade and intellectual exchange. In a Christendom divided ideologically, Elizabethans were keen to document the foundations of England’s rival empire. As Dalton shows, the historians who have followed in their wake have overlooked not only Barlow’s life and career but also important aspects of the world in which he lived.

This rich and stimulating book deserves a wide readership. Its insights will be of interest to scholars in a range of fields, and it is much more than the sum of its

parts. As a study of connection and connectedness, it needs to be read and enjoyed in its entirety.

MICHAEL BENNETT, *University of Tasmania*

Donovan, Leslie A., ed., *Approaches to Teaching Tolkien's 'The Lord of the Rings' and Other Works* (Approaches to Teaching World Literature), New York, MLA, 2015; paperback; pp. xiv, 284; R.R.P. US\$24.00; ISBN 9781603292061.

Leslie A. Donovan's collection is refreshing for both those familiar with and new to medievalist and philologist J. R. R. Tolkien. Her detailed consideration of Tolkien's background in Part 1 of this collection notably frames how the contributors discuss both his fiction and non-fiction. Donovan sets up a clear framework for the reader in her preface, and then in her outlines of Tolkien's context and publication history, followed by an extensive collection of teaching resources available for instructing students. Part 2 begins with a brief essay from Donovan, followed by twenty-nine chapters from other contributors, outlining a myriad of ways that Tolkien's work is built into their teaching both within and beyond literary studies. Many of the teaching resources outlined in the first part of the collection are referred to in Part 2, and so are a helpful foundation for the reader. Part 2 is also divided into subsections, on textual controversy, context, the past, the contemporary, interdisciplinary study, and teaching strategies, responding to surveys of Tolkien educators. Overall this volume's material allows for varied approaches to teaching his œuvre, and proposes within an admirable scope to present Tolkien's work as a contender for strong tertiary instruction within and beyond literary studies.

Part 2 guides the prospective Tolkien instructor through different ideas. Craig Franson and James McNelis both consider how the cultural appeal of *The Lord of the Rings* affects their teaching, and examine its critical reception and literary afterlives in their instruction. Franson's often-varied classroom dynamic of students who know or do not know Tolkien's work well allows him to guide students in 'turning a critical lens on reading conflicts [...] [to] prompt illuminating discussion' (p. 42). McNelis comments that students' responses to 'professional scholarly criticism' strengthens and develops their argumentative foundation skills (p. 49).

This idea of scholarship to support particularly junior students in their argumentative style extends throughout the next subsection. Verlyn Fliieger teaches her students to grapple with both sides of Tolkien's narrative resolutions through the idea of eucatastrophe, and emphasizes that 'studying Tolkien results not in right or wrong answers but in understanding how he expressed his [views]' (p. 55). Yvette Kisor's chapter notably includes detailed tabulation of possible relationships between Tolkien's major and minor works, and the use of this information in setting student assignments (pp. 78–81). Later on, Melissa Ridley Elmes describes prompting her students by the end of the course to decide

and argue whether *Rings* can be counted as an epic, with due deference to both Tolkien's own aversion to seeing his work as allegory, and to the similarities and differences available between figures like Achilles and Aragorn.

Many chapters throughout focus on students' grasp of argumentation, particularly because several of them discuss classes aimed at early college years. This can make some of the overviews seem less detailed, but many contributors also acknowledge ways in which their course can be altered for honours or graduate students too. Thomas L. Martin, for example, notes how the final 'surprise' in his course is to make use of the previous assessment tasks to write annotated bibliographies, abstracts, and even papers for graduate conferences or publications (p. 143). In addition to rhetoric, many of the contributors draw on the medieval texts and English historical records that influenced Tolkien's fictional and non-fictional work. As such, many chapters are still firmly in the realm of literary studies. Some also discuss aspects of Tolkien's mythology in detail, including those by Jane Chance, Leslie Stratyner, and Philip Irving Mitchell.

The final two subsections successfully shift the collection's focus to beyond the humanities. Notable chapters from the subsection focused on interdisciplinary Tolkien studies are science-based examples by Kristine Larsen and Justin Edward Everett. However, some chapters in the final subsection also revealed interdisciplinary and non-traditional points of interest in addition to exploring teaching strategies in more detail. Addressing institutional structures, as well as classes structured as intensives or online communities, or largely through lectures, these chapters balance instructors' ideal possibilities with practical solutions and strategies.

Donovan has orchestrated the contributions effectively to allow for a myriad of ways in which the book may assist educators. This is particularly notable in contributors' discussions of Tolkien's applicability to teaching rigorous academic style. As chapters are all quite short, the book functions well as both a reference tool and overview of the field, and can be relevant to readers who are philologists, medievalists, or scholars in other fields. However, the volume also captures the scale of Tolkien's literary output. While *The Lord of the Rings* is at the fore of many examples, Donovan and others encourage educators, like Gandalf does Bilbo, to venture out into the unknown and make it known.

JENNIFER E. NICHOLSON, *The University of Sydney*

Eriksen, Stefka Georgieva, ed., *Intellectual Culture in Medieval Scandinavia, c. 1100–1350* (Disputatio, 28), Turnhout, Brepols, 2016; hardback; pp. xii, 442; 26 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. €110.00; ISBN 9782503553078.

This edited collection of thirteen essays seeks to reframe our understanding of how the intellectual aspects of Scandinavian literary and material culture evolved in the years 1100–1350. The contributors to this volume undertake to place the cultural pursuits of medieval Scandinavia within the wider intellectual milieu

of Western Europe. In doing so, their focus is upon the influence of European intellectual culture on the development of Scandinavia's own regional intellectual identity, or rather how Scandinavian intellectual culture adopted, adapted, and interacted with foreign ideas.

Stefka Georgieva Eriksen has drawn together an excellent collection of articles, notable for their quality and refreshing variety. Introducing the volume, she presents some definitions that provide important context. Firstly, insofar as the contributions reference a Scandinavian vernacular, this is Old Norse. Thus, the literary cultures of Norway and Iceland are preferred over those of either Sweden or Denmark. Similarly, the literary cultures of Western Europe—Latin, Old French, and German—are preferred amongst those which influenced Scandinavian intellectual culture. Although the desire of the editor to tightly define manageable parameters for her contributors is understandable, that this is at the expense of a more inclusive view of European intercultural exchange is unfortunate. Secondly, 'intellectual culture', as understood within the volume, is broadly defined and includes, alongside scholars, those who pursued art, architecture, liturgy, music, medicine, or literature (p. 7). The book is richer for it.

Conceived as a supplement to Eriksen's introduction, Gunnar Harðarson's contribution surveys Old Norse intellectual culture, highlighting some of its noted thinkers such as Snorri Sturluson and his nephew Sturla Þórðarson. In so doing, Harðarson considers intellectual interaction as represented within Old Norse literary sources. The intent here is twofold: to demonstrate the multidisciplinary nature of Scandinavian intellectual life, and to evidence the ubiquity of Latin intellectual culture.

Following this, Ian P. Wei opens the first of the book's three thematic divisions, 'Negotiating Identity', with an article focusing on the intellectual culture of Paris, touching only lightly upon Scandinavia. While this may seem an odd contribution, it is contextually important to establishing 'mainstream' Latin intellectual culture. Wei asserts that this intellectual culture was more malleable than often assumed and that, rather than introducing broad normative moral assertions into Scandinavian intellectual society, allowed for an adaptable framework of intellectual discourse. Moving into architectural identity, Kjartan Hauglid examines Romanesque stone churches in Norway and their adoption of foreign architectural styles, arguing that the commissioning of such buildings was an expression of secular power. Turning then to Iceland, Björn Bandlien explores learning and text production, arguing that learning and social identity were closely associated in the primarily rural region. To this end, texts were authored not only for a learned clerical audience expecting classical and biblical references, but to a lay audience which anticipated tales of honour and regional association. Closing the section, Kristoffer Vadum takes as his case-study an Icelandic hagiography of John the Baptist by Grímr Hólmsteinsson. Vadum highlights the presence of significant passages drawn from canon law within the text, and uses these to explore the reception of canon law in medieval Iceland, its interpretation, and its use in political discourse.

Section 2, entitled ‘Thinking in Figures’, opens with a chapter by Rita Copeland which focuses on the teaching of grammar and rhetoric more broadly across Western Europe. She highlights the increasing trend toward the use of vernacular, and examines how this process altered interpretations of common tropes. Following this, Åslaug Ommundsen looks at the fragmentary evidence of Latin education in Norway and Iceland. Mikael Males contributes an examination of grammatical studies in the context of Old Norse and how Latin *grammatica* was adapted to native traditions. Closing the section, Mats Malm analyses the cultural absorption of Latin learning through examples drawn from both Iceland and Sweden, demonstrating the importance of regional circumstance on the interpretation of Latin traditions.

The final section, ‘Worldly Existence and Heavenly Salvation’, opens with Sigurd Hareide’s examination of Old Norse interpretations of Latin expositions of the Mass. Remaining within the ecclesiastical sphere, Kristin B. Aavitsland analyses the patronage of church art, with a particular focus on the altar of the Lisbjerg church, and what it may tell us of the self-perception of the commissioning elites. Eriksen draws the volume to a close with her chapter investigating Old Norse literary representations of the body and the soul, concluding that Scandinavian intellectual culture was reliant on the interrelation of emotional, spiritual, and ethical development, alongside the search for knowledge.

Each contribution to this volume is valuable in its own right and, despite the noted limitation of the studies to the development of the intellectual cultures of Iceland and Norway, there is much here of interest. *Intellectual Culture in Medieval Scandinavia* is a welcome resource for anyone interested in intercultural exchange and the history of ideas as it pertains to medieval north-western Europe.

MATTHEW FIRTH, *University of New England*

Escobedo, Andrew, *Volition’s Face: Personification and the Will in Renaissance Literature* (ReFormations: Medieval and Early Modern), Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press, 2017; paperback; pp. 340; R.R.P. US\$40.00; ISBN 9780268101664.

In *Volition’s Face*, Andrew Escobedo argues that premodern personifications channel energy ‘as an expression of will’ (p. 3). They create acts of volition as a discharge of what Escobedo terms ‘prosopopoetic energy’ (p. 6). Escobedo investigates why the medieval notion of the will and prosopopoeia continue to influence early modern literature.

To address the complexities of his study, Escobedo reconsiders the much-studied link between personification and daemons. Through classical and Renaissance critical texts, he establishes that daemonism creates an energizing transaction between subject and external landscape.

The similarities between allegory and personification are then analysed. In a fascinating argument, Escobedo states that personifications partially function

as character and allegorical signs. Through energizing personified traits, personifications spur literary subjects into action.

Escobedo then tackles the widely explored history of the will. In an interesting twist, he discovers that ancient writers made no distinction between the will and self. Furthermore, medieval and Renaissance writers not only conceived of the will as independent, but it was also free from the cognitive processes of reason. Personifications became a part of the self over which the literary subject has no control.

Little critical attention has been given to the Renaissance notion of the daemonic conscience. In the moral interludes of the Tudor period, Escobedo finds a difference between the Catholic and Protestant iterations. Catholic interludes often personify Conscience as activating the remorseful will to oppose despair through the anticipated joy of repentance. In Protestant texts, however, Conscience is separated from the will to become associated with despair.

These differences in Reformed theology are further examined through the repentant will and the changing role of the conscience. Escobedo covers familiar theological ground to state that repentant Protestants have an insight into their own immoral character. His argument becomes satisfyingly more complex, when he examines a second-order act of volition countering the primary sin-driven daemonic conscience. It enables Escobedo to make a crucial distinction in Renaissance theological thought on the will.

Following Conscience, the personification of Despair is examined in Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* and Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*. In order to understand the original usage of Despair by these Renaissance writers, Escobedo first summarizes his previous findings on personification. He usefully recapitulates that personifications flow between 'enactment and transmission' (p. 137). Personifications can represent daemonic energy and, also, be the daemons that possess the literary character.

With Spenser's personification of Despair, Escobedo notes that although Despair commits suicide, he does not die. Spenser distinguishes between suicide as an act of will, and despair as an unavoidable religious malady with its own volition.

In *Doctor Faustus*, Escobedo discovers a different type of prosopopoeia. He argues that the play's angels and daemons do not represent a part of or influence Faustus. Instead, he consumes them. Through an exciting analysis, Escobedo states that Faustus becomes his own autonomous will. The implication is that Faustus has no insight into his own despair. His sense of self has become part of an inescapable personification. Without a mediating act of volition to counter the daemonic conscience, he has become Despair.

With the history of Love overrun with personifications, Escobedo analyses Spenser's Cupid in *The Faerie Queene* through Platonism. He challenges the critical consensus that there are two different Cupids in Spenser's epic poem.

Using Plato's notion of erotic rapture, Escobedo convincingly argues for a cruel daemonic Cupid necessary to inspire a desire for spiritual beauty.

In John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, the personification of Sin is examined. Escobedo first investigates the connection between sin and serpents in premodern literature, which surprisingly eschews the beguiling biblical Genesis serpent in favour of Herodotus's *Histories*. Following a fascinating chicken and egg argument over whether pride or sin came first, Escobedo notes how, in *Paradise Lost*, the birth of Sin from Satan's head coincides with the angel's realized capacity for free will. Satan's act of volition triggers a causal relationship to sin, death, and the suffering associated with a corruptible will.

Escobedo concludes his study by lamenting how Renaissance personification as an expression of will transformed into a recognizable human form. However—as Escobedo observes in an interesting final comment—the external landscape is reduced to manageable personified chunks ideal for human interaction. These expressions of will between human and nonhuman are made recognizable by having a face.

Volition's Face is a highly exhilarating, informative, and entertaining study. Escobedo often reminds the academic reader that the most obvious explanations belie a complex theoretical framework.

FRANK SWANNACK, *University of Salford*

Farmer, Sharon, *The Silk Industries of Medieval Paris: Artisanal Migration, Technological Innovation, and Gendered Experience* (Middle Ages), Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016; cloth; pp. 368; 28 illustrations; R.R.P. US\$69.95, £60.00; ISBN 9780812248487.

In this impressive book, Sharon Farmer demonstrates that a luxury silk industry existed in Paris for around a century, from the 1290s to at least 1397. Medieval Paris was the consumer capital of Europe, renowned for production of quality items including illuminated manuscripts, gold work, tapestries, chests and armour, linen and woollen cloth. This study establishes that the city was also a centre for luxury silk textiles. Although the Paris silk industry never seriously competed with the epicentre of production in northern Italy, Farmer shows that Paris silk was highly prized and distinctive enough to be listed in household accounts and inventories of several European courts. It also provided many Parisians, particularly women, with various levels of employment.

Previous research into the Parisian silk industry has been inhibited by the paucity and opacity of documentary evidence as well as lack of material evidence. However, Farmer has extracted much revealing information from the main primary sources including the Paris guild statutes of c. 1266–1365 and the seven extant Paris tax assessments from 1292 to 1313. Her study has been greatly assisted by a database of the tax documents compiled by the Institut de recherche et d'histoire des textes (IRHT), which has provided the basis for the tables in the book's extensive appendices. Even though seventy-five per cent of the population

was not wealthy enough to be taxed, and hence does not appear in the assessments, Farmer's prosopographical analysis allows her to make insightful observations about patterns of migration, relative sizes of professional groups, and relative incomes across professions and gender.

One of Farmer's themes is migration, and she paints medieval Paris as a city of immigrants attracted to the court, the university, and the specialized luxury industries. Taking a swipe at the modern sentimentalized view that the soul of France lies in a native peasantry descended from Gauls, Romans, and Franks, she finds that immigrants arrived from all over Europe, including the Mediterranean basin. Participants in the silk industry included representatives ('Lombards') from large Italian merchant companies as well as workers from Cyprus, the Levant, and former parts of the Byzantine Empire, some of whom may have been sponsored to the city for their technological and artistic expertise.

The best raw silk came from the Caspian Sea region (modern Iran) and the main suppliers were the Italian international merchant companies. No extant sources describe the techniques and organization of the silk crafts in Paris, but Farmer does a remarkable job of extrapolating from available sources. It seems that Parisian weavers created a range of silk items, including narrow wear, diaphanous veils, *cendals*, taffeta, cloth of gold with metallic thread, and velvet. She suggests that unlike in Lucca and Florence, where mercers owned the fibre through every stage of production, in Paris the mercers sold the thrown silk to dyers and weavers, and then purchased back the completed items, thus minimizing any financial risk.

The Parisian silk industry's intersection with gender is another of the book's main themes. Overall, the industry was dominated by women, who comprised as much as eighty per cent of the workers. Perhaps not surprisingly, Farmer finds that the less skilled, lower paid occupations of winding and throwing, requiring inexpensive equipment, were performed mainly by women. Higher status work, such as dyeing and velvet weaving, which required metal vats and expensive, complicated looms as well as demonstrable skill, was the preserve of men. However, compared to other occupations, the Parisian silk industry afforded women extremely high status. Also, encouraged by generous inheritance laws, where widows received half the estate, Parisian silk women sometimes rose to the highest levels: Farmer gives the example of mercer Martine la Thierry, who in 1375–78 sold more than 2,000 francs worth of textiles to the Duke of Anjou.

Farmer also examines the relationship between the poorest of Paris silk women and Jewish and Lombard moneylenders and pawnbrokers, some of whom may also have had some involvement in the silk industry. She suggests that poor silk women were more inclined to resort to Jewish lenders, as they generally offered better terms and were also often female. Lombards, on the other hand, as temporary residents of the city, often resided in all-male households and were seen to represent a degree of sexual threat to poor silk women. They also tended to furnish credit at the upper end of the scale. During the periodic expulsions of Jews from Paris (1327–61 and after 1394), credit may have been provided by those Lombards who had integrated into the community as 'bourgeois de Paris'.

This is an important book for the history of medieval Paris. With her astute and careful analysis, Farmer has given visibility and substance to the Parisian silk industry and to the city's silk women.

HILARY MADDOCKS, *University of Melbourne*

Flechner, Roy, and Máire Ní Mhaonaigh, eds, *The Introduction of Christianity into the Early Medieval Insular World: Converting the Isles I* (Cultural Encounters in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, 19), Turnhout, Brepols, 2016; hardback; pp. xx, 510 pages; 9 b/w illustrations, 2 maps; R.R.P. €120.00; ISBN 9782503554624.

Based on papers presented at a series of conferences held between 2012 and 2014 in the United Kingdom and Ireland, some twenty articles on the introduction of Christianity into the British Isles and Scandinavia in the early medieval period have been collated by editors Roy Flechner and Máire Ní Mhaonaigh, with one article, invoking the spirit of Clifford Geertz, relating the conversion experience in twentieth-century Africa. The articles, from a range of impressive contributors, are arranged around five themes: historiography; mission; perceptions; social and economic contexts; and hagiography.

Following a brief introduction by the editors is a further introduction by Chris Wickham, which divides conversion into four theoretical oppositions: conversion vs adhesion; adhesion vs ecclesiasticization; belief vs ritual; converter agency vs converted agency. Subsequently, in a most useful first section of the volume, Roy Flechner, Thomas Pickles, Nancy Edwards, and Sæbjørg Walaker Nordeide examine the historiography on conversion in an Irish, Anglo-Saxon, Welsh, and Scandinavian context, noting general problems with paucity and retrospection in literary sources, as well as ambiguous material evidence.

Following on, Ian Wood opens the section on mission with a debate on the semantic meaning of the term as an early modern concept imposed on an early medieval past. James Palmer subsequently examines the development of missionary hagiography in a Merovingian context as an extension of the older and influential cult of martyrs, proposing mission as a form of death. Colmán Etchingham explores the evidence for the Roman mission to Ireland in the fifth century, identifying a serious effort in the 430s. Tomas Sundnes Drønen, invoking Geertz, analyses the twentieth-century conversion of the Dii people of North Cameroon by Norwegian missionaries, offering four universal conditions that shape successful conversion in the context of 'modernization': identity crisis, attitude of modernizers, translatability of message, and context of encounter.

Moving to perceptions, Alex Woolf explores the use of *plebs* as a form of ecclesiastical community in areas occupied by Britons in the late antique period. Barbara Yorke examines the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons, proposing conversion as both a repudiation of the past and as a process of compromise. Thomas Charles-Edwards explores perceptions of 'pagan' and 'Christian' in the late antique period, comparing Ireland and Britain to continental Europe, and

the subtle distinctions between the uses of *gentes*, *pagani*, *ciues*, and *populus* as descriptors.

Under the theme of society and economy, Rory Naismith examines the relationship between coinage and conversion in West Britain and Ireland, Anglo-Saxon England, and Scandinavia, noting the Church as active in the monetary economy, but not as a driving force. Martin Carver follows up with an archaeological investigation into belief systems in a Pictish or Scottish context, regarding both conversion and reversion as agents of change. Orri Vésteinsson studies material culture and conversion in an Icelandic context, observing that conversion does not necessarily change material culture, and that the speed of change is dependent on cost. Gabor Thomas compares the economic development of Anglo-Saxon Kent with the expanding role of monasticism in the conversion of rural areas. Wendy Davies and Roy Flechner investigate the causal links between conversion and economic change, focusing on the role of the Church as a landowner, a producer, an inheritor, and as a taxpayer.

Moving to saints and hagiography, Alan Thacker explores the competing lives of Cuthbert and their representation of a divided community shaped by issues of conversion. Barry Lewis examines the lack of a tradition of origins of conversion in the Brittonic areas, noting surviving sources focusing on the (re)conversion of bad Christians rather than pagans. Following, Siân Grønlie analyses the unsaintly depictions of Viking missionaries to Iceland, pointing to conversion as a legal and social process requiring an awkward mix of missionary saint and legendary hero. Finally, Máire Ní Mhaonaigh sums up the themes of the collection, pointing to conversion as a profound change within delimited contexts.

This volume tends to reflect its beginnings in conference presentations: the articles are uniformly short and descriptive, presenting issues rather than analysing them in depth. Having said this, the breadth of the presentations and the calibre of the authors make this volume a very useful introduction to the complex issues of conversion in an insular context. Whilst I remain uncertain that conversion in Scandinavia is a matter for the insular world, I welcome the 'nod' to the continued importance and relevance of the pioneering work of Clifford Geertz. For a return to the issues of insular Christianity in the early medieval period, or for the advanced student tackling it for the first time, this volume presents relevant problems, with a historiography that is very much state-of-the art.

STEPHEN JOYCE, *Monash University*

Flood, Victoria, *Prophecy, Politics and Place in Medieval England: From Geoffrey of Monmouth to Thomas of Erceldoune*, Cambridge, D. S. Brewer, 2016; hardback; pp. 252; 1 line, 4 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9781843844471.

Victoria Flood's book is a careful and thorough analysis of prophetic literature and its political usage and implications in England, Scotland, and Wales from the twelfth century to the fifteenth century. Flood undertakes to explore prophetic

writings as discourse. As such, these writings not only reflected historical events and understandings, but also influenced them.

The first chapter investigates political prophecy from the 1130s to the 1260s. While the central theme emerging is of the conquering king who will unite the nations of England, Scotland, and Wales, the interpretation of these prophecies is dependent on, and reactive to, geography. The same, or very similar, prophecies take on different meanings in the borderlands between England and Scotland, in Wales, or in England. Geographical perspective is everything in providing the standpoint through which this literature is understood. Consequently Flood examines the role of prophetic literature in extending boundaries. Her close analysis of texts distinguishes various definitions of England and Britain, on different sides of the borders.

Chapter 2 focuses on Galfridian prophecies and their relationship with contemporary Scottish and Welsh prophetic literature. Her comparison of the Welsh, Scottish, and Galfridian literature leads her to the conclusion that both the Welsh and the Scottish prophecies ‘present a vision of territorial possession that stretches from the British past to history’s end, establishing English domination as a short-lived historical blip in an otherwise continuous state of indigenous rule’ (p. 84). Whereas the Welsh and Scottish literature was essentially separatist, the English literature asserted a British unity. This chapter concludes with an examination of the ways in which kings Richard II and Henry IV used the imagery of prophecy in order to communicate messages about their own ancestry, associations, and assertions of power. Flood claims that these texts ‘appear to have genuinely motivated political behaviour, as a succinct articulation of a dominant political ideology’ (p. 108). In so doing, they ‘spoke to the interests of polite elites’ (p. 109). This literature was not the domain of the disenfranchised. Rather, it was actively used to influence political outcomes by those invested in maintaining their own power.

Chapter 3 is concerned primarily with the writings of Thomas of Erceldoune. Flood effectively argues a role for Thomas beyond that of articulating ‘gnomic folk wisdom’ (p. 111). Rather, she claims, ‘these texts tell us something, both of the misery of life on the northern border during the wars, and the terms through which the high stakes of insular sovereignty were articulated by authors working in this region, deeply immersed in the long tradition of Galfridian prophesy’ (p. 111). The discussion of the Erceldoune tradition contextualizes Flood’s exceptional effort in tracing the threads of prophetic literature through Wales, Scotland, the borders areas, and England. She observes that the purpose of the literature is to address the ongoing perception of the prevailing ‘crisis of kingship’ (p. 140) or, to modern eyes, the inadequacy of monarchy. Her study of the Erceldoune text over time and place leads to an identification of a shift to the king as crusader, and also to visions of regional lordship being placed above insular unity.

The fourth and final chapter, and the one I enjoyed reading the most, analyses the *Cock of the North* and *Ceiliog y North*, and looks at the transmigrations of

prophetic texts across borders and time, into the fifteenth century. The role of the Percies, the meaning of the prophecies in this context, and the transformation of the prophecies into Lancastrian support, all emerge here. The geographic movement of the prophecies and the ways in which they are used to claim, reclaim, and dispute cultural, historical, and political narratives are charted by Flood with confidence and scholarship. She concludes that ‘prophecy was not simply an interpretative framework, the imposition of order on a disordered world, rather it was hardwired into the medieval subconscious, as a way of talking about political power and territorial claims’ (p. 203).

Flood provides a new and interesting interpretation of the English monarchy through the eyes of those who, through the use of certain texts, sought to protect and strengthen it, and those who, through the use of the same or very similar texts, sought to challenge it. Those readers whose interests lie in textual analysis and comparison will find much to admire in this book. For those whose interests are in the borderlands surrounding England in the later Middle Ages, this book offers a new lens through which to work. Those readers who are inspired by stories of the political manipulation of words, ideals, and images will take pleasure in tracing these prophecies and their intent over time and across locations. Overall, the quality of scholarship is exemplary.

MARY-ROSE MCLAREN, *Victoria University*

Fugelso, Karl, ed., *Studies in Medievalism XXVI. Ecomedievalism*, Cambridge, D. S. Brewer, 2017; hardback; pp. xvii, 262; 7 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9781843844655.

This latest collection in the Studies in Medievalism series offers fifteen essays by diverse hands and an introductory overview by the editor. The essays are divided into two sections: ‘Some Perspective(s)’; and ‘Interpretations’. Their authors turn their attention to the relationship between ecotheory and medievalism, a relationship less firmly cemented in the medieval than in the modern period. The contributors are united in their assertion that ‘the idealization of nature, particularly as it supposedly existed during the Middle Ages, grows in proportion with the medievalist’s exposure to industrialization, urbanization, consumerism, and other ills associated with modernism’ (p. xii).

In the first section of this collection, four essays offer contrasting perspectives that attempt to frame the more focused eleven interpretative discussions that follow. Scott Riley links contemporary ecomedievalism to a fascination with animism in texts ranging from J. F. Cooper to J. K. Rowling. Daniel Helbert follows with an ecological reinterpretation of Sidney Lanier’s refracted nostalgia for the American antebellum South. Lisa Meyers traces environmental concerns in T. H. White’s *Arthurian*, where supposed medieval harmony with nature is seen as an antidote to the destruction brought about by two world wars. Ann M. Martinez finds a similar response to modern violence in J. R. R. Tolkien’s depiction of the elven realms.

Katie Peebles then turns our attention to the seventeenth century in her examination of John Aubrey's influential *Monumenta Britannica*. Dustin M. Frazier Wood picks up on Aubrey's interest in the Boarstall Horn in a discussion of the broader significance of charter horns in late medieval and early modern England.

Renée Ward looks at two adaptations of the Griselda story by Louisa Hervey which show the author's dissatisfaction with the social systems that inform the medieval versions of her story. If Hervey's agenda is overtly political, Harlan Ellison's embrace of Dante may be less so. Jeremy Withers argues that in Ellison's 'I Have No Mouth and I Must Scream' references to Dante, specifically his approach to having the punishment fit the crime, only compound the horrors inflicted upon the characters in the story by a sentient supercomputer. Carol Jamison examines textual interlacement in George R. R. Martin's *A Song of Fire and Ice*, seeing his narrative techniques as copying those of Malory and other writers of Arthurian romance. If Ellison moves beyond the medieval, Martin moves back to it as an anchor for his immensely popular series of novels.

Elan Justice Pavlinich looks beyond literature to examine Disney's embrace of medievalism in *Maleficent* as a way for the corporation to at best pay lip service to progressive causes. The same can be said, Ann F. Howey suggests, for attempts at (neo)medievalism on the part of two television series from the 1990s, *Babylon 5* and *Crusade*. Kara L. McShane argues that such mixed agendas also seem to inform Netflix's *Marco Polo*, which links Orientalism with medievalism in at times troubling ways. The 2014 television program *The Quest* is, according to Angela Jane Weisl, more successful in its use of cartography to allow medievalism to provide a window into the past. Paul B. Sturtevant follows with a qualitative survey of the perceptions which a select group of university undergraduates hold about the Middle Ages and medievalism. Dean Swinford ends the volume on—no pun intended—a different note by examining the intersection of the medieval and black metal music, specifically in Mayhem's *De Mysteriis Dom Sathanas*.

Taken individually, some of the essays here offer valuable new insights into (neo)medievalism in its many forms, but the newness of ecomedievalism as a field partly contributes to a lack of any real cohesiveness of the volume. Such cohesiveness might be more apparent with the addition of an index, which would help readers to see more easily connections among the volume's fifteen essays.

KEVIN J. HARTY, *La Salle University*

Genet, Jean-Philippe, ed., *La Vérité. Vérité et crédibilité: construire la vérité dans le système de communication de l'Occident (XIII^e–XVII^e siècle)*, Paris-Rome, Publications de la Sorbonne-École Française de Rome, 2016; paperback; pp. 611; b/w illustrations; R.R.P. €28.00; ISBN 6782728311774.

This weighty volume is the second in a series on 'Le Pouvoir symbolique en Occident (1300–1640)' published by the presses of the Sorbonne and the École

Française de Rome. It contains most of the papers from the third international conference in the cycle 'Les vecteurs de l'idéal', held at Rome in 2012 as part of the 'Signs and States' program of the European Research Council. As its English title indicates, the focus of the research program is on the symbolic expression of politics, power, and the state in the late medieval and early modern period. This volume concerns the construction of truth as an instrument of political power. It comprises twenty-eight papers, including the introductory essay. Of these one is in English, one in German, and three in Italian. The rest are in French. The contributions are grouped in six thematic sections: philosophy and theology; language; art; law; political communication; history. The editor's lengthy introduction connects these disparate threads while making clear that his own particular interest is the unfolding of the Gregorian Reform's program of papal imperialism.

This theme is variably taken up by the different papers, which clearly cannot be gone into in any depth here. The philosophy section ranges through fourteenth-century nominalism and probabilism (with two papers on Jean Buridan), medieval understandings of Augustine on lying, and realist philosophies of truth from the thirteenth to fourteenth centuries. The Gregorian theme appears in a paper on the doctrine of the Real Presence as a justification for the clerical monopoly of the truth. In the section on language, two papers treat uses of truth by the sixteenth-century French Reformers and their opponents, while one paper deals with metaphor (*transumptio*) as a path to truth in writers of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

The section on the visual arts considers the truth of visual representation as enunciated by Vasari in his sixteenth-century *Lives of the Artists*, the allegorical depiction of music in seventeenth-century paintings, the Grand Gallery of François I as a conscious exercise in political propaganda, the double-edged sword of iconography as a weapon of papal domination and local resistance, and the ambiguous status of the incognito which enabled prominent people to be unofficially present at important festive occasions they could not officially attend.

The section on the truth of the judge opens with Florian Mazel addressing Gregory VII's opposition of truth to custom in his attack on the ecclesiastical practices of his time. In pursuit of its Reform, the papacy assumed the absolute right to define the truth and ultimately defined it as the papacy itself. There follows truth and the role of the judge in seventeenth-century legal thought; the relationship between truth and scandal in fourteenth-century ecclesiastical confession and inquisition; the sixteenth-century trial of Gaston de Foix for tyranny and sodomy, leading to the annexation of his lands, and a similar confrontation between ecclesiastical and secular courts in sixteenth-century Venice.

In the political communication section, Elizabeth Brown proposes that Guillaume de Nogaret made up the entire Marguerite Porete affair as an exercise in self-promotion. The trial documents are forgeries, the chroniclers' accounts lies, and the fourteenth-century mystic never existed, therefore the book attributed to

her cannot have been burnt or written. Brown seems to present no evidence other than general scepticism for her unusual view. Other papers deal with two works on truth by the fifteenth-century Burgundian polemicist George Chastelain, the resolution of the Great Schism, and Tudor debates on the theatre.

The final section on truth, history, and memory proposes contemporary scepticism about the fabulously popular Geoffrey of Monmouth in its political context, remarks on the increasing prominence of historians in their own narratives, and examines the production of festival books as political propaganda in Renaissance Italy, and the confusion of historical and fictional characters in sixteenth-century courtly literature. The section concludes with Erasmus's ideas on truth, history, and time.

Although largely confined to the heartland of Western Europe, the thematic and temporal range of the book is so wide that its appeal is likely to be to those with an interest in the individual contributions, rather than those seeking any general understanding of the political functioning of truth in this period. Both the introduction and the volume more generally provide a French perspective which does not differ substantially from that common in Anglophone scholarly circles, but contrasts with the latter both in its emphasis and its phrasing within the domain of discourse.

LOLA SHARON DAVIDSON, *University of Technology Sydney*

Hagger, Mark, *Norman Rule in Normandy, 911–1144*, Woodbridge, Boydell Press, 2017; hardback; pp. 824; 8 b/w, 6 line illustrations; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9781783272143.

Scholarship on the Norman period has been expanding rapidly in recent years. As well as increasing our knowledge of Norman activities in England, southern Italy, and elsewhere, the nature of Norman lordship and society within Normandy itself, both before and after 1066, has come under scrutiny. Mark Hagger's new study makes a significant and welcome contribution to our understanding of the development of ducal rule and is likely to become an authoritative statement on the topic. With its narrower but highly detailed focus on the duchy itself, it complements other recent volumes with a wider perspective, such as David Bates's *The Normans and Empire* (Oxford University Press, 2013) and the essays in Stringer and Jotischky (eds), *Norman Expansion* (Ashgate, 2013), or Bates's biography of *William the Conqueror* in the Yale English Monarchs series (Yale University Press, 2016).

The introduction offers an extended overview of the sources on which Hagger bases his study. The four major narrative sources (by Dudo of Saint Quentin, William of Jumièges, William of Poitiers, and Orderic Vitalis) are all familiar to scholars of the period. But in surveying recent historiography on these authors, Hagger offers new interpretations. For example, he hypothesizes that William of Jumièges composed the *Gesta Normannorum ducum* in part to reconcile rebellious nobles to their duke's rule (pp. 14–18). Indeed, one of the book's major themes

concerns the way in which both narrative and administrative sources (especially the latter) are better understood as part of a dialogue between the dukes and their subjects. Since many of the surviving *acta* were produced not by ducal officials, but by those making requests of their ruler, they can tell us just as much about the 'reception of ducal power by the dukes' subjects and beneficiaries' (pp. 30–31) as they can about the motivations of the rulers themselves. For Hagger, charters and related documents 'provide views from the bottom up rather than the top down' (p. 37).

The book contains two large sections. The first offers three chronological chapters following the development of ducal authority from its origins in the early tenth century to the conquest of Normandy from King Stephen by his Angevin rivals in 1144, as well as chapters on ducal relations with the Church and with the neighbouring kings of France. The focus stays tightly on the expansion and expression of power within the duchy, as exercised through grants of land, military activity, marriage alliances, and the management of relationships with family members and aristocratic rivals. Consequently, Hagger deliberately avoids extensive coverage of better-known external events, including the campaign of 1066. By emphasizing local developments in the regions of Normandy and showing how individuals and families asserted their autonomy or benefited from ducal patronage at different times and in different ways, the author builds a careful and thorough argument suggesting that the establishment of full ducal control was a slower and more piecemeal process than has previously been thought. Normandy may have become a 'viable political entity' by the late tenth century but it was not until *c.* 1120, Hagger argues, that Henry I was able to gain full control over all parts of the duchy (p. 184).

The second section presents six thematic chapters on topics including justice, finance, and the military household. Each of these forms a substantial study in its own right. The chapter on courtly ritual and the performance of ducal authority is representative in the way it presents an eclectic mix of evidence. Hagger re-examines witness and signatory lists to show how petitioners at court were part of an elaborate system of ritual through which the dukes could 'broadcast and maintain their authority' (p. 364), even while attendees asserted their own claims to power, property, and recognition. A section on the 'political theatre of landscapes and buildings' (p. 381–94) draws on recent work on castles, architecture, and medieval urban spaces to argue that ducal buildings were 'not just the stage for their courts' but 'part of the staging, too' (p. 394).

The final section benefits from historiography of the emotions to question what chronicle representations of ducal anger or the imposition of fear on others may or may not reveal about the underlying reality of power.

Finally, Mark Hagger's magisterial work contends that, while the Dukes of Normandy asserted their authority in multiple ways, they 'were given it by their subjects, too' (p. 696). Thus, their power was 'more limited and more fragmented' (p. 693) than the previous consensus would allow. Hagger presents a compelling

case, which is sure to give rise to further robust debate about the characteristics of what David Douglas once called ‘the Norman achievement’.

LINDSAY DIGGELMANN, *University of Auckland*

Krafl, Pavel Otmar, ed., *Sacri canones editandi: Studies on Medieval Canon Law in Memory of Jiří Kejř* (*Ius canonicum medii aevi*, 1), Brno, Reprocentrum, 2017; paperback; pp. 265; 4 colour illustrations; ISBN 9788027020980.

Jiří Kejř (1921–2015) was an outstanding scholar and an individual of sterling character and humanity. His long life was marked by numerous achievements and he is known principally for his work on the history of the Hussite movement and for his acumen as a specialist in medieval canon law. The present volume is a posthumous tribute devoted to the latter subject. The editor is an authority on the history of ecclesiastical law and administration in the Middle Ages. His study of the synods and statutes of the medieval Moravian diocese of Olomouc (Prague Institute of History, 2014) is a model of textual scholarship. The present volume consists of a foreword by the archbishop of Prague, an introduction by Pavel Krafl outlining Kejř’s life and works, followed by ten chapters; one in German, the rest in English. The contributors come from Germany, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Italy, Poland, the Canary Islands, United States, and Argentina. Despite significant contributions to medieval canon law, Kejř is not well-known beyond Czech-language scholarship. This is regrettable, and some of the details of this major figure can be accessed in this volume. Kejř’s work avoided overt confessional bias; he was neither motivated by political commitments nor did he become enmeshed in the Marxist interpretation of history which dominated Czech historiography between 1948 and 1989. As the title reveals, the volume focuses on editions of canon law, a preoccupation which interested Kejř.

The studies which honour Kejř will appeal mostly to specialists. Close reading of manuscripts reveals scribal errors which, as Przemysław Nowak points out, alter the meaning of the text. We also encounter discussions of palaeography, examination of manuscripts, proprietary annotations, colophon puzzles, and related technicalities. But there are also some useful findings and arguments that will appeal to the non-specialist. Two of the chapters are noted for their brevity; those by Peter Landau, on a decretal of Pope Celestine III relating to a wooden ceiling in a German church (pp. 176–80), and Nicholas Coureas, on a cartulary connected to a cathedral in Nicosia (pp. 181–85). A third chapter by Martin Bertram and Uta-Renate Blumenthal is by far the longest (pp. 81–134), examining the interesting fragments of a twelfth-century decretal of Gratian extant in Rieti (central Italy). José Miguel Viejo-Ximénez draws attention to the important notion of the medieval *quaestio*. *Quaestiones* are legal issues not incorporated into account by the law but which are decided following the weighing of options and a variety of outcomes. Hence, a matter might be advanced as an actual situation accompanied by hypothetical questions for consideration with

options of resolution, for or against, followed by a solution (p. 72). In this sense, *quaestiones* were academic exercises, sometimes oral, other times written, with affinities to the university disputations or quodlibets, which were the most popular academic exercise of the medieval university. Martina Šárovcová discusses a hitherto unknown illuminated fragment of the *Decretum*, noting the miniatures that visualize each of the thirty-six lawsuits under consideration (p. 142). The thirty-second case examines a man requesting separation from his infertile wife, also complaining that she is a whore. Giovanna Murano considers a list of *paleae* (interpolations) in a Vatican Library manuscript of the *Decretum*. Bradley Franco draws attention to fourteenth-century legislation which reveals eager bishops pledging to excommunicate any one practising simony, including clerics, while similar laws tried to regulate clerical behaviour and ameliorate public perception. He also notes that because clerical misconduct was considered a leading cause of anticlericalism, priests were forbidden to enter taverns, warned to stay away from disreputable women telling jokes in or around a church, and the like.

One of the compelling expositions is the chapter by Andrea Vanina Neyra on the topic of women in Burchard of Worms (pp. 40–63). Burchard's collection of laws may be the most important before Gratian. Here, we find comment on superstition, night-riding, the devil, pagan Diana, practice of the evil arts, and the need to expel such practitioners as heretics in order to preserve the faith from the plague of heresy. Connections with the later witch-hunts are possible. In another essay, Paola Maffei notes that in 1385 an anonymous wealthy man in Padua, who had no children, donated his current and future assets to a sacred painting. The lawyers were flummoxed over the validity of the gift and the question of who should enjoy the assets.

As Bradley Franco reminds us, law is prescriptive and has limitations as a window into the past. Its impact on the lives of medieval people requires additional research with different sets of material. This book raises as many good and interesting queries as Jiří Kejíř did in his own publishing career that spanned fifty-five years. I suspect he would be pleased.

THOMAS A. FUDGE, *University of New England*

Kuuliala, Jenni, *Childhood Disability and Social Integration in the Middle Ages: Constructions of Impairments in Thirteenth- and Fourteenth-Century Canonization Processes* (Studies in the History of Daily Life (800–1600), 4), Turnhout, Brepols, 2016; hardback; pp. xiv, 380; 4 tables; R.R.P. €100.00; ISBN: 9782503551852.

This study examines child-healing miracles in the canonization of twenty-one saints in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Europe, yielding 231 miracles where a child was cured entirely or partially of a physical impairment. Jenni Kuuliala finds in these processes evidence for how childhood disability was understood and treated in medieval Europe, including 'the long-term effects of disability and its possible effects on children's socialization' (p. 15). Her mentalities approach

results in a focus on the everyday experience of children within their communities, including the ways in which the notion of miraculous cures was itself part of a broader fabric of lived experience. Hagiographic sources are valuable for providing insights into the ‘views and experiences of the often uneducated laity’ (p. 3), although, as Kuuliala repeatedly emphasizes, surviving testimony is based on personal memory and the internalization of miracle narrative conventions by those testifying. It is also heavily mediated by the conventions and goals of the process enquiry, thus requiring a cautious interpretative approach.

Kuuliala applies ‘disability’ specifically to physical impairments affecting mobility and the senses, especially vision, hearing, and speech. She unpacks the intersection of this term with overlapping concepts: ‘a person could be infirm, ill or healthy, possibly more than one of these at the same time, and at the time there was no vocabulary to distinguish illness from impairment, let alone disability when understood as a sociocultural phenomenon’ (p. 325). Indeed, the ambiguity of the notion of impairment is one of her key findings; similarly, she does not find clear or consistent associations of shame or community rejection in relation to these physical differences, in contrast to some other studies of medieval disability. Her analysis adheres carefully to how her materials intersect with broader conceptualizations of physical impairment in medieval culture. Kuuliala thus enters into dialogue with other researchers, giving her points of explicit disagreement particular force, as when she questions and at times refutes claims in other studies (as they relate to her sources) concerning cruelty towards the disabled, sinful and supernatural origins for disability, and the association of disability with social liminality in the Middle Ages.

Although concerned with impairment and social participation, Kuuliala throughout engages with theoretical frameworks for ‘the social model of disability’ (p. 6) as well as critiques of this model. The complex processes and meanings with which her source documents were concerned are factored carefully into her findings: ‘An ailing human body was a surface on which the powers of saints could be, quite literally, manifested. Saints, however, also cured the potentially socially disabling consequences of bodily ailments, so that the power they worked on the human body extended beyond it to the other aspects of human life. Body and social spheres are thus inseparably intertwined in the narratives’ (p. 335). For her own purposes, ‘the impaired body is not omitted from the analysis, but considered as something which greatly defined the experience of the beneficiaries’ (p. 7).

Childhood Disability begins with family testimony, followed by community testimony, and finally considers evidence for reconstructing lived experience. Testimonial features that differ from more general patterns in the processes provide useful information about childhood. The large number of female witnesses testifying, frequently given primary place (the most important witness position), is a case in point, as women were forbidden in Gratian’s *Decretum* from testifying. Kuuliala systematically reviews the evidence for beliefs about

causes of impairment, family and community impacts and attitudes, class, gender, and medical and spiritual authority, to determine and treat impairments. The assembled detail and variety of information about the children themselves is at times fascinating; at others, the vagueness or silence of the source materials is frustrating, but Kuuliala always explores the implications of these absences.

To assess lived experiences, Kuuliala considers references to pain; socially coherent presentations of disability, especially significant for beggar children, who needed to express their impairment effectively to be worthy of charity; communication and interaction more generally; access to everyday spaces; ‘children’s self-image and understanding of themselves as people with bodily defects’ (p. 294); nicknames given to the child; the experience of living through failed repeated attempts to be cured; the presence of traces of the cure through their adult lives. Kuuliala’s familiarity with her sources is a valuable guide to her reader, and while she is scrupulously careful not to extrapolate on her findings, and unerringly points out where claims of other researchers are not borne out by her material, more qualified judicious inferences in her concluding remarks would have been welcomed. Other readers might, by contrast, be grateful for her avoidance of precisely such a tendency. This thorough, detailed study is a valuable resource for researchers of disability and childhood in medieval Europe.

MELISSA RAINE, *University of Melbourne*

Laynesmith, J. L., *Cecily Duchess of York*, London, Bloomsbury, 2017; hardback; pp. xxii, 262; 10 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £85.00; ISBN 9781474272254.

Cecily Neville, Duchess of York, styled herself at different junctures of her life as the king’s mother and as the queen’s grandmother. She was the mother of two Yorkist kings, Edward IV and Richard III, and her granddaughter, Elizabeth of York, daughter of Edward IV, was married to Henry VII, the progenitor of the Tudor dynasty. In comparison with some other individuals in this extended family, there is not as much scholarly work focused on the duchess even though she figures prominently in the political landscape of the later fifteenth century. Previous literature centred on her includes popular biographies and historical fiction, and a handful of scholarly articles.

This latest biography of the duchess by J. L. Laynesmith marks the culmination of many years of research that began with her Master of Arts dissertation and is another fine testament to the expertise of this noted queenship scholar. Laynesmith’s admitted aim is to produce a ‘broadly chronological biography’ (p. 2), and to illuminate both Cecily Neville’s life story and those political events in which she was involved by weaving both these aspects together. Therefore, the book is arranged in a series of chapters, each one matching a particular period in her life. The first four chapters approximately correspond with the first four decades of Cecily’s life, detailing her birth, childhood, marriage, and childbearing years. The next five chapters, encompassing the following two decades, appear to

parallel her position as rebel's wife, widow, and king's mother, although their titles do not quite make sense in this regard. The penultimate chapter covers the period from just before Edward IV's death to Richard III's loss of life and crown in 1485, while the last chapter is concerned with the duchess's last decade of life during which she 'celebrated her own status as the queen's grandmother' (p. 165) before ending with her death in 1495.

Happily for Laynesmith, she has plenty to work with in terms of primary evidence in the form of account rolls for Cecily Neville's estates, the duchess's will, court cases and records, correspondence, and her books, to name only a few types. This evidence is skilfully used and intertwined with the narrative and analysis of each chapter, and it is rare that the author is unable to refer to specific sources and resorts to conjecture. The first chapter is one such example. Little is known about the duchess's birth and early life apart from her birth-date. Therefore, as Laynesmith herself admits, she uses the wider knowledge available about the fifteenth century in conjunction with family records to recreate the world of Cecily Neville and present a plausible account of her birth, baptism, and childhood. The other chapters, in contrast, draw upon a large amount of varied and detailed evidence, and bring the duchess to life in a way that speculation alone cannot do.

A substantial bibliography and the use of wide-ranging primary evidence demonstrates the book's grounding in solid research and excellent scholarship. Laynesmith writes in a very engaging style, which makes the material lively and beguiling. Rich and vibrant descriptions of the baptism (pp. 8–9) and daily life in Berkhamsted (pp. 171–73) are examples of her ability to vividly re-construct the fifteenth-century world in which the duchess lived, and add much to the enjoyment of the book. At the same time, the chronological structure allows the reader to easily trace the developments in Cecily Neville's life and the events she lived through. It should be noted that not all the events of the period are discussed in great detail since Cecily was not directly involved in all of them. For instance, individual battles such as the battles of St Albans, and the battles of Towton and Bosworth, all of which were crucial military events in the Lancaster–York conflict, are dealt with succinctly but only in relation to the specific consequences for the duchess and her family members.

If there is any criticism to be made, it is that the chronological narrative and analysis makes it a little challenging for the reader to come to grips with wider thematic concepts such as Cecily's roles as a landholder and administrator, or religious patron. The interested reader has to work harder to gain an appreciation of the duchess in those terms. On its own merits, nevertheless, this book is a well-crafted work that does much to counter the neglect of an important individual who has for too long languished in the historical shadows of her male kin. It is a welcome addition both to the relatively sparsely populated historiography of Cecily Neville and to studies of medieval noblewomen in general.

MICHELE SEAH, *University of Newcastle*

Miller, Peter N., *Peiresc's Mediterranean World*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2015; hardback; pp. 640; 33 b/w illustrations, 11 charts, 2 tables; R.R.P. US\$39.95, £29.95, €36.00; ISBN 9780674744066.

In 1932, it seems, Fernand Braudel—then at the beginning of his career—encountered the archives of Nicolas Fabri de Peiresc and failed to understand their value and relevance. And yet, the 119 volumes of correspondence, notes, and memoranda preserved in the Bibliothèque Inguimbertaine in Carpentras, near Avignon, are a remarkably rich record of the Mediterranean network of one of the leading antiquarians of the earlier seventeenth century. Peiresc (1580–1637) is little-known today, but his contemporaries regarded him as one of the most important, active, and well-connected participants in the Republic of Letters, widely admired for his ‘vast erudition and insatiable curiosity’ (p. 4), and especially for his knowledge of the history of the Near East and the Levant. From his bases in Marseille and Aix-en-Provence, he corresponded with scholars all over Europe, as well as keeping up a flurry of letters to merchants, traders, mariners, and artisans across the whole of the Mediterranean.

Peter Miller has studied Peiresc’s archive in great detail and knows more about his life and work than anyone else. But this book is not a biography of Peiresc; nor is it a narrative history of scholarly communication or Mediterranean commerce in the early seventeenth century. Miller’s aims are more challenging and provocative. His goal is to ‘bring to the reader as much of the researcher’s experience as possible of working in the archive’ (p. 27). Instead of imposing a single narrative line, he allows ‘a degree of centrifugal force’ and tries to reproduce the sense of gaps in the evidence, and ‘the historian’s sense of disorientation’ in the face of archives that do not tell the whole story (p. 27).

The result is a book with an unusual and untypical structure: thirty-six sections which vary greatly in length and which deal with a diversity of topics emerging from the way in which Peiresc himself ordered his archive. The general momentum is from Marseille outwards and eastwards across the Mediterranean, looking at merchants, finances, ships’ captains, routes, maps, timings, corsairs, ransoming, and so on. The longest chapter (over eighty pages) goes through Peiresc’s correspondence with the Levant in chronological order, tracking his activities between 1626 and 1637. Some of the evidence is presented in non-narrative form: statistical analyses of the correspondence, a lengthy list of patrons and captains, and a diagram of the web of connections between Peiresc and specific people (which would work well as a database). All this is followed by more than 170 pages of notes.

The book itself is a fascinating and exhaustive guide to Peiresc and his world, refracted through the surviving documentary archive. We learn an enormous amount about the details of his activities and the kinds of knowledge which he was continually seeking and acquiring. The sheer scale of his interests is illuminating and impressive, as is the way in which he worked closely with merchants and ships’ captains as intellectual partners. But Miller is wary of drawing broader

conclusions from the evidence of Peiresc's archive; the reader should not expect a series of generalizations about the history of the early modern Mediterranean, nor an easily-digested narrative account of scholars and their lives.

This book is about much more than Peiresc, in fact. Miller aims to challenge our assumptions about historical research and historical writing, to re-balance 'the familiar relationship between research and narrative [in a way] that better exposes the craft practices—and struggles—of the historian' (p. 24). As part of doing this, he reaches back into the history of antiquarianism as envisaged by Arnaldo Momigliano, trying to reflect the world of detail, incompleteness, and nonlinearity inherent in the research process without entirely jettisoning narrative and storytelling as modes of organization and explanation. The result is a thoughtful, inspiring and innovative approach to historical research and its communication, as well as a remarkably informative tour around Peiresc and his Mediterranean world.

TOBY BURROWS, *The University of Western Australia and University of Oxford*

Morgan, Hollie L. S., *Beds and Chambers in Late Medieval England: Readings, Representations and Realities*, Woodbridge, York Medieval Press/Boydell Press, 2017; hardback; pp. xii, 254; 19 colour illustrations; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9781903153710.

A turn to material culture has brought the role of the everyday and mundane into the production of social, cultural, and political life. Studies of the use of household space have moved the discussion of the development of 'chambers' and 'closets' from histories of architecture to explorations of privacy and production of the self. More recently, furnishings have come under greater scrutiny, not just as objects to be used, but as items that carry meanings and shape the production of our worlds. The bed, in particular, is an object of growing interest, with scholars such as Sasha Handley, Joanne Begatio, and myself placing it as a key symbolic site in the production of families and households. Hollie Morgan's *Beds and Chambers* contributes to this discussion with the first monograph length-study that considers the bed as a cultural object. Defining chambers, for the purpose of this book, as rooms that contain beds, Morgan first gives an overview of what a bed is, providing a detailed reconstruction of its physical makeup, before going on to highlight how it was understood and used as a cultural object in writings of late medieval England.

The bed and its chamber, a room set away from the hall and so associated with the social elite, offered a space for a range of private and intimate communications. It was a place for devotion and spiritual practice, where people might pray beside or within the bed, or conduct spiritual reading in the bedchamber. It was a site for private discussions and negotiations between friends and allies, locating it as a key site of a politics underpinned by intimacy and friendship. The bed here could encourage a greater levelling of social hierarchies. As a room to meet in, the chamber could be a place for private leisure, including reading, gaming, talking, and gossiping, with people sitting on and around the bed. Perhaps most obviously,

the bed was a place for sex, most appropriately in the evening before sleep. As a space for intimate engagement between men and women, it was thus a place where women often found their voice and provided wise counsel to male partners. Indeed, as Morgan argues in a final chapter, the bedchamber was a predominantly female space. If it did not exclude men and their social practices, it was the site where women held power and authority, carried out their mysteries, and kept men captive. Across the book, we are offered a bed that acts as site for the personal and intimate—it is not a space that removes power but allows for its complex productions in a location that destabilized formal political hierarchies. These are perhaps conclusions that could have been pushed further, offering suggestive implications for the nature of privacy, power, and the medieval self.

Morgan's book is a cultural history that combines inventories and art works that provide access to the physical bed, with its uses, and discussions in a range of medieval literatures. It makes use of word clouds to help visualize the medieval bed—highlighting interesting things such as the predominance of red, blue, and green bed coverings—and its association with female pronouns. This method is relatively untested in history and it provides an early example of how we might use digital technologies to enhance history. More importantly however, it offers a rich and insightful discussion of the nature of the bed, providing material not just for medievalists but for historians exploring such questions in later centuries.

KATIE BARCLAY, *University of Adelaide*

Nakashian, Craig M., *Warrior Churchmen of Medieval England, 1000–1250: Theory and Reality*, Woodbridge, Boydell Press, 2016; hardback; pp. 304; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9781783271627.

The warrior cleric is a familiar figure of medieval history, represented on the cover of this volume by the Bayeux Tapestry depiction of Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, fighting at Hastings. Yet the warrior churchman is also a uniquely ambiguous figure, straddling the ecclesiastical and secular spheres of authority—at once prohibited by canon law to participate in war, and expected by secular powers to participate in regional politics. It is this ambiguity which Craig Nakashian seeks to explore in this volume, focusing on the military activities of English clerics. As implied by the book's subtitle *Theory and Reality*, Nakashian aims to contrast the theoretical expectations of clerical behaviour with evidence of English churchmen participating in war. In so doing, Nakashian's intent is to challenge the perception, within medieval studies, that churchmen who partook in military campaigning were aberrations and considered as such in their own social milieux. It is a task he undertakes admirably as he analyses the evident reception of such behaviour in the historical record, and what it reveals of societal expectations and understanding of clerical militancy. Central to his thesis is that, despite the prohibitions of canon law, military activity among English clerics was common, and only subject to the censure of commentators when undertaken in pursuit of personal riches or glory.

The volume is comprised of two sections, the first containing three chapters, the second five chapters. The first section, entitled ‘The Prescriptive Voices of the Debate’, examines canon law and literary archetypes, focusing on ‘theory’. The second section, entitled ‘The Debate in Practice’, looks toward the ‘reality’, and undertakes a series of case studies that challenge the ‘theory’ as prescriptive reality. It is a serviceable structure for the discussion, though ‘the debate’ must be understood as a modern construct contrasting ecclesiastical and secular views on the role of churchmen in war. The nature of Nakashian’s sources are such that they rarely relate the involvement of lower orders of clergy in campaigns, with accounts restricted to prelates and necessarily tying their actions to political agendas. As such, Nakashian is not able to present any individual case study in which descriptions of military service are so varied as to provide evidence of an active contemporary debate relating to the military activities of clerics. Clerical involvement in secular society was an accepted and ubiquitous element of medieval power structures and, though Nakashian demonstrates that diverse opinions on the benefits of clerical militancy certainly existed, these perceptions vary between—rather than within—examples of such activity. This remark is not intended as an indictment of Nakashian’s methodologies, so much as a semantic clarification to the reader who may expect to find evidence for direct dialogue between coeval sources presented within this volume.

In the first part of the book, chapters 1 and 2 take a close look at Church prohibitions on clerical activity in war. Providing necessary background to the discussion, Chapter 1 investigates the evolution of canon law on the matter from the early Church councils up to the focal period of the study (1000–1250). Chapter 2 then undertakes to contemplate the official position of the Church regarding warrior churchmen during the period under examination. Both chapters present clerical militancy as transgressive and widely disparaged, while simultaneously noting the manifold instances of clerics leading campaigns, and even receiving Church approval to do so. Chapter 3 is an interesting study of the *Song of Roland* and related chivalric literature. Here Nakashian seeks to uncover cultural perceptions of warrior churchmen, demonstrated in their characterization as either rightly seeking God’s glory, or wrongfully pursuing personal glory.

Turning to the second section, chapters 4 to 8 represent a chronological series of case studies. Chapters 4 and 5 focus on the Norman Conquest and its immediate aftermath, looking at a number of archbishops and bishops well-known for their military activity, and exploring how these men were represented by their commentators. Chapter 6 considers the ‘Anarchy’, with a particular interest in the activities of King Stephen’s brother, Bishop Henry of Blois. Chapters 7 and 8 examine Angevin England in the reigns of Henry II through to Henry III. Once more focusing on leading prelates and their military activity, Nakashian emphatically reinforces his thesis on the contemporary reception of such behaviour: praised when in aid of the king and the Church, condemned upon the suspicion of worldliness.

Nakashian achieves what he sets out to do. He ably demonstrates that canon prohibitions on clerical involvement in war were subordinated to regional interests; that warrior churchmen were not an aberrant phenomenon; and that the reception of such activity as acceptable or transgressive was reliant upon societal perceptions of what motivated a cleric to take up arms. This volume represents a valuable contribution to our understanding of the function and reception of prelates as active participants in the political and social structures of medieval England.

MATTHEW FIRTH, *University of New England*

Newman, Barbara, *Making Love in the Twelfth Century: 'Letters of Two Lovers' in Context* (Middle Ages), Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016; cloth; pp. xvii, 365; R.R.P. US\$59.99, £50.00; ISBN 9780812248098.

Barbara Newman's translation and interpretation of the correspondence known as the *Epistolae duorum amantium* ('Letters of Two Lovers') is a contribution to a fascinating 'authenticity' debate launched by Ewald Könsgen, whose edition was published in 1974. Könsgen suggested that the letters were exchanged between a couple 'like' Abelard and Heloise, and now for almost a half-century the issue of whether the letters were *actually* written by Abelard and Heloise, or any lovers (and not as a literary exercise composed for educational purposes), has been the subject of vigorous debate by a range of scholars, who do not all agree. Newman wryly notes that 'rhetoric and sincerity have always had a stormy relationship' (p. 19); certainly, the technical excellence of the Woman's literary style is obvious in contrast to the plainer style employed in the Man's letters, though Newman argues that her sincerity is perceptible through her seriousness and the absence of humour in her letters. It is clear that Newman wants the attribution to Abelard and Heloise to be vindicated, and for this reader the intrinsic interest of the texts is enhanced by that possibility, too. It is academically respectable to concentrate on matters of style and content in medieval texts that are anonymous. Perhaps, however, modern readers desire to know the identity of the author of what they read, despite the critical positing of the 'death of the author' in literary studies?

This edition of the *Epistolae duorum amantium* is valuable because it provides a full translation of the letters, which can be checked against other translations such as that of Constant J. Mews and Neville Chiavaroli, found in Mews's *The Lost Love Letters of Heloise and Abelard: Perceptions of Dialogue in Twelfth Century France* (St Martin's Press, 1999). Newman's work is also important because it situates the letters in the context of several other collections of texts that are arguably similar or can shed light on the *Epistolae*. These, also given in translation, are: the love letters from the Bavarian abbey of Tegernsee, which date from the twelfth century and were in the main written by women, presumably nuns; the lyrics known as the Regensburg Songs, found in a twelfth-century manuscript that was 'preserved by the monks of Schäflarn' (p. 257);

and a letter poem called 'To a Fugitive Lover', which is an Ovidian exercise that expresses 'the lament of a seduced, abandoned, and pregnant woman' (p. 279).

Newman's position that the Heloise and Abelard ascription is 'highly probable' (p. 78) relies heavily on the (putatively) unique situation of Heloise as a highly educated woman who was not married or a nun, living in an urban situation where she had opportunities to meet with Abelard, a situation identical to that of the Woman. Newman admits that the Man's letters do not resemble Abelard's later known works as much as the Woman's letters resemble the later correspondence of Heloise, but plausible arguments are made to incline the reader towards the identity of the two lovers.

This book is well-written and researched and represents a summary of scholarly work to date on this intriguing manuscript. It is entertaining to read, thought-provoking, and of interest to scholars and students outside of the narrow field of twelfth-century Latin literature.

CAROLE M. CUSACK, *The University of Sydney*

Nolan, Kathleen, and Dany **Sandron**, eds, *Arts of the Medieval Cathedrals: Studies on Architecture, Stained Glass and Sculpture in Honor of Anne Prache* (AVISTA Studies in the History of Medieval Technology, Science and Art, 9), Farnham, Ashgate, 2015; hardback; pp. 314; 31 colour plates, 126 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £70.00; ISBN 9781472440556.

This collection of thirteen essays centred on Gothic art and architecture stems from the sessions organized by the Association Villard de Honnecourt for the Interdisciplinary Study of Technology, Science and Art (AVISTA) at the 2010 International Congress on Medieval Studies at Western Michigan University. The proceedings of these sessions, along with invited contributions, form the present volume honouring the life and scholarly work of Anne Prache, and highlight recent scholarship on the design, decoration, and functions of Gothic buildings. The essays are divided into three categories: architecture; stained glass; and sculpture; and are preceded by a foreword from the editors, a preface on Prache's work and methodological approaches to the study of medieval art and architecture, and an introduction to the volume. The contributions in each part begin with an essay on Reims Cathedral that complement Prache's work and her 1991 volume on the celebrated cathedral at Reims. Prache's husband, Gérard P. Prache, offers the afterword to the volume.

The essays cover a wide range of topics related to the architecture of specific buildings, their sculptural and stained glass programs, as well as issues centred on patronage, workshop practices, style, iconography, and chronology. A number of the contributions emphasize the importance of the historical and archaeological evidence to the examination of Gothic architecture, as well as the application of new technologies to the design of medieval buildings. Other essays integrate the study of architecture, sculpture, and stained glass in efforts to understand Gothic buildings through 'artistic integration'.

In the first article in the section on ‘Architecture’, Walter Berry re-examines the building chronology of Reims Cathedral based on excavation data from the 1990s. Michael T. Davis explores the urban environment of Paris by scrutinizing a document of Guillebert de Mets’s fifteenth-century description of the city with a focus on the cathedral, the royal palace, and the new mansion of Jacques Duchie. The last two architectural essays—by Ellen M. Shortell on the analysis of the choir of Saint-Quentin, and by Nancy Wu on the designs of smaller Gothic doorways—look at new technologies and the application of geometry to the study of Gothic buildings.

In the second part on ‘Stained Glass’, Sylvie Balcon-Berry returns to Reims Cathedral and examines its stained-glass windows with a particular focus on those destroyed during the 1918 bombardment, which she investigates through surviving drawings. Turning to Saint-Denis, Michael W. Cothren attempts to reconstruct the stained-glass cycle of the Infancy of Christ in Abbot Suger’s famous choir. Claudine Lautier’s study centres on the western rose window showing the Last Judgment from Chartres Cathedral, and Philippe Lorentz’s essay examines the Annunciation window of Bourges Cathedral.

Turning to ‘Sculpture’, William W. Clark contextualizes the exterior sculptural program of the radiating chapels at Reims Cathedral, and considers the motivations of the patrons relative to the choice of imagery in the figural sculptures. In examining the elaborate central portal sculptures of Bourges Cathedral, Fabienne Joubert discusses thirteenth-century mason workshop practices with a focus on the conception and execution of figural sculpture programs. Charles T. Little looks at a small limestone head from the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and situates the object in the thirteenth-century dismantled choir screen at Chartres Cathedral. Kathleen Nolan and Susan Leibacher Ward study the narrative and symbolic meanings of the statue-columns of the collegiate church of Notre-Dame-en-Vaux. In considering the findings of a 2011 archaeological project at Lyon Cathedral, Nicolas Reveyron investigates in the final essay the iconography and style of the fourteenth-century façade sculptures of the cathedral.

The individual essays are beautifully written and accompanied by detailed footnotes and mainly black and white images and diagrams. Thirty-one coloured plates are nestled at the centre of the volume. Although architecture and architectural sculpture ‘reads’ adequately in black and white reproductions, coloured images would have enhanced the stained glass details in particular. This interdisciplinary volume is relatively cohesive with respect to the selection and organization of the varying contributions. In celebrating the rich scholarship of Anne Prache, this volume also serves as a valuable addition to the study of medieval, and in particular Gothic, art and architecture.

Alice Isabella Sullivan, *Lawrence University*

Olson, Lynette, ed., *St Samson of Dol and the Earliest History of Brittany, Cornwall and Wales* (Studies in Celtic History, 37), Woodbridge, Boydell Press, 2017; hardback; pp. vii, 219; 1 b/w map; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9781783272181.

Editor Lynette Olson has collated eight articles based on a colloquium held in 2013 in Sydney on the potentially earliest surviving insular life, that of the significant British monastic and episcopal figure, St Samson of Dol. The *Vita Prima Samsonis*, dated variously from c. 600 to c. 850 in a Breton context, narrates the life of Samson (d. c. 565), active in Britain, Ireland, and Gaul in the sixth century. The articles, from a range of impressive contributors, investigate questions of dating, ascetic networks, literary contexts, *peregrinatio*, and commemoration.

In a useful introduction, Olson lays out the issues encountered when approaching the *Vita Prima Samsonis* (*VIS*). Setting out its unique geographic and chronological landscapes, and the problems marrying them with a satisfactory date of composition, Olson points to the need for contextualizing the work. She raises important questions that are subsequently dealt with by the other contributors. Richard Sowerby tackles the unusual emphasis on Samson's genealogy in the *VIS*. In examining the narratives stressing Samson's active involvement in extending family control over monastic houses, Sowerby proposes the *VIS* as an exemplar for spiritual against covetous family networks. In doing so, he advocates that the *VIS* is based on an earlier original composed in late sixth- or early seventh-century Cornwall, countering detractors of Samson's aristocratic family as it moved from the secular to the religious life. Joseph-Claude Poulin follows up on Sowerby's use of family networks to attempt a dating of the *VIS* in its current form. His article, in French with an introduction in English, identifies two distinct perspectives in the text. This, combined with an analysis of formal borrowings, leads Poulin to conclude that the *VIS* was written toward the end of the eighth century in Brittany, but was based on an older version.

The theme of formal borrowing is taken up by Caroline Betts in the next chapter. In it, she examines the notable narrative similarities between the *VIS* and the Gallican life of Bishop Paternus of Avranches (d. c. 564), a neighbouring contemporary of Samson. The *Vita Paterni* was written by Venantius Fortunatus (d. c. 600) in the last decades of the sixth century. She concludes that the borrowings from the *Vita Paterni* are integral to the *VIS*, and must belong to the older lost version in the context of some form of territorial contestation. Subsequently, Ian Wood examines Samson as representative of a British form of *peregrinatio*, one that precedes the more well-known Irish model as represented by Columbanus (d. c. 615). He argues that Columbanus followed an established British tradition, but that this was subsequently overshadowed by a reading that privileged the Irish.

This notion of privileging the Irish is touched upon by Constant Mews in his chapter comparing the literary and liturgical settings of the *VIS* with a defence of Gallican and Irish liturgical traditions known as the *Ratio de cursus*, perhaps

written by a devotee of Columbanus in North Italy. Mews notes that while the *VIS* records the beginnings of a British mission to Europe without acknowledging the British apostle to Ireland, Patrick, the *Ratio* celebrates an Irish-inspired monastic network in Europe that includes Patrick, inferring distinct contexts in the seventh and eighth centuries respectively. Jonathan Wooding follows up with an examination of the *VIS* as witness to monasticism. Noting that the main concerns of the *VIS* are monastic rather than episcopal, he tracks the narrative that reflects Samson as distant from the monastic communities he lived in and as a reluctant abbot, a narrative that propels Samson into the requisite role of pastoral leadership. Wooding argues that the ascetic progression from monastic communities to the solitary life is integral to becoming both a bishop and a *peregrinus* in the *VIS*. Finally, Karen Jankulak examines the lack of a cult dedicated to Samson in Wales despite Welsh monastic communities being a formative part of his education and monastic life. She argues that the lack of attested medieval dedications to or commemorations of Samson, along with reports in the *VIS* of a thriving cult of Samson in Wales at the time of its construction, implies the deliberate deconstruction of his cult via political competition between ecclesiastical centres.

The *VIS*, potentially describing a British Church in the sixth century, is enormously important in tackling a pervasive impression that this Church had fatally fragmented prior to the arrival of Augustine of Canterbury. This volume presents the issues with in-depth analyses, pointing to the significant presence of British ecclesiastics on the continent in the early medieval period, a presence that goes against ongoing notions of insularity and disconnection that bedevil studies in this area. Not quite fleshed-out in depth, however, were the implications of Samson's episcopacy and its problematic relationship to *peregrinatio*. Thematically cohesive with sterling contributions, this volume is a significant addition to the discourse on Bishop Samson of Dol.

STEPHEN JOYCE, *Monash University*

Pépin, Guilhem, ed., *Anglo-Gascon Aquitaine: Problems and Perspectives*, Woodbridge, Boydell Press, 2017; hardback; pp. 214; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9781783271979.

As the editor suggests in this volume's introduction, 'this field of historical research is still somewhat badly understood in France and in England' (p. 12). In remedy, he offers a lengthy historiographical survey, with the sort of author-by-author detail that is reminiscent of biblical begetting. Highlighting the evidentiary significance of the English-held Gascon Rolls, an increase in bilingual studies, and the liminal position of the subject relative to French and English national surveys, Anglo-Gascon Aquitaine is introduced as a field of study ready for further investigation and better integration into relevant national histories. The essays that follow provide something of a historiographical buffet or tasting platter, allowing readers to test portions of the wider subject.

The volume's structure is essentially chronological, moving from the thirteenth century to the fifteenth over ten substantive chapters. The first two mostly address questions of authority and rituals of power. Frédéric Boutouille charts the increasing appearance and importance of provosts in the early thirteenth century, which he sees as shifting and diminishing the role of traditional local elites by undermining their authority. Through examining oath-taking processes as part of the constitutional framework of English-controlled Aquitaine, Guilhem Pépin points to deep continuities in local practice and culture being utilized for political effect.

The next four chapters test the limits of documentary evidence, plumbing the potential for further research along the methodological lines they deploy. Examining royal pardons in connection with military recruitment, and focusing on 'a war that tends to be largely forgotten by historians' (p. 49), Simon J. Harris provides early information about an ongoing research project and affirms that 'this study has revealed the potential for further study' (p. 74). Addressing slim documentary evidence for the transfer of sovereignty, Françoise Lainé uses a case study to focus on the importance of reading such documentation in context, although ultimately admitting that the limited evidence really only offers 'a partial view' (p. 94). Covadonga Valdaliso introduces, contextualizes, and translates segments of a Castilian chronicle, offered as a useful comparison with the English and French sources in which she identifies much confusion about Castilian names and events. Through a case study of a fifty-two point list of demands, Nicolas Savy argues that security concerns were paramount for local communities during transfers of sovereignty in the mid-fourteenth century.

Old notions of a late medieval decline get tested by the following two chapters, which turn about certain phenomena that have been assumed to flow from political dysfunction. Robert Blackmore's study of the Anglo-Gascon wine trade reveals that characterizations of 'the later fourteenth century as an era of overall collapse in trade' (p. 139) is an oversimplification, as 'islands of prosperity' (p. 139) and evidence for continuing trade belie earlier suppositions about the economic situation based on the political one. By closely analysing accounts, variously partial and in duplicate, Guilhem Ferrand identifies payments to *routiers* and explores the meaning of such payments in context to good effect, highlighting some of the nuances of governance in the late fourteenth century.

Finally, the volume ends by pairing two interesting surveys of foreign military service. Andy King explores the role of and evidence for English soldiers in Gascony between 1369 and 1450, highlighting the unique elements of this circumstance, while also situating this as part of a wider picture of overseas English service. Pierre Prétou unveils in some detail the fascinating story of 'Scottish Guyenne' (p. 171), exploring the role of Scottish forces in the service of the French Crown. Both would make useful references for comparative analysis in other regions. A detailed bibliography closes the volume.

As evident from the above summary, the contributors reflect a transnational academic interest in their shared subject, although, as the editor admits, it is an under-resourced field dominated ‘by individuals, not by institutions’ (p. 12). Collectively, these essays convey the interesting phenomenon that foreign sources and archives, especially English ones, help document a sizable chunk of France’s medieval history. This is a book about military conquests, chivalric cultures, local identities, national histories, and colonial legacies. Admittedly, like most books subtitled ‘Problems and Perspectives’, it bears more than a touch of the bitsy academic stamp of its originating conference. Nonetheless, confounding both nationalist histories and national historiographies, Anglo-Gascon Aquitaine is certainly a welcome topic in this present age of border walls and Brexit.

NICHOLAS D. BRODIE, *Hobart, Tasmania*

Quinn, Judy, and Adele Cipolla, eds, *Studies in the Transmission and Reception of Old Norse Literature: The Hyperborean Muse in European Culture* (Acta Scandinavica, 6), Turnhout, Brepols, 2016; hardback; pp. xvi, 355; 5 colour, 27 b/w illustrations, 7 tables; R.R.P. €100.00; ISBN 9782503555539.

Judy Quinn and Adele Cipolla declare that the figure of the ‘hyperborean muse’ represents a departure from ‘current scholarly nomenclature’, highlighting the ‘creative interface between critical thought and artistic creation’ (p. 2). Their ‘muse’ is the driving force for the influence, impact, and reception of a culturally distant north (both geographic and temporal) in more southern and recent cultures. The volume is divided into broadly chronological sections, and while it is not necessary to read these kinds of collections from start to finish, when read in this way, the fact that the volume coheres as a whole speaks to both the overall vision and conception as well as the quality of the editorial work.

The first section, ‘The Transmission of Old Norse Literature before and between Manuscript Witnesses’, deals with theoretical and methodological issues and problems in historical editorial approaches, the transmission of textual variability, and the evolving principles of textual scholarship. There are three chapters in this section: Adele Cipolla looks at the editorial history of *Snorra-Edda*, Judy Quinn examines principles of textual criticism in relation to oral traditions, and Odd Einar Haugen assesses methodological issues for textual criticism. All of these essays are strong teachable texts for manuscript studies, taking to task recent and historical approaches to editorial scholarship and textual reconstruction that elides or denies the heterogeneity of the ‘highly unstable text’ (p. 37). Both Haugen and Quinn criticize methods that simplify the construction of textual stemmata, and Cipolla explores the inherent instabilities in the reception of Eddic material and the associated construction of an authorial ‘Snorri’ despite textual variability.

Part 2 of this volume, ‘Adaptations of Old Norse Literature and their Influence’, shifts focus onto early modern hyperborean interests, specifically the

reception of the Hamlet archetype and the impact of ‘the North’ on romantic and modern literature and culture. Of the eight chapters here, two deal with the Scandinavian Hamlet narrative outside of its specific Shakespearean reflex: Ian Felce seeks the ‘Icelandic Hamlet’ in manuscript evidence for *Amlóða saga* and Marcello Rossi Corradini explores the transposition of Saxo Grammaticus’s version into eighteenth-century Italian opera. Next come two chapters on reflexes of Old Norse in romantic literature, with Mats Malm tracing the stylistic evolution of the translation of Old Norse poetry in the ideologies of eighteenth-century European nationalism, and Tereza Lanzing taking a long view of Hrólfr Kraki’s appearance in literatures from medieval Saxon and early modern Icelandic *rímur*, through Danish Romanticism, to the twentieth-century science fiction of Poul Anderson. Two chapters then focus on August Strindberg. Massimiliano Bampi maps out the importance of the character of Starkaðr, tracing critical contextual polarities that informed Strindberg’s works and noting a sense of authorial identification with the character, while Maria Christina Lombardi examines the changes wrought by Strindberg to *Áns saga bogsveigis*, wherein the Norse original becomes a narrative shaped to the stylistics and culture of late nineteenth-century Expressionism. This section concludes with Alessandro Zironi delivering a tight forensic examination of William Morris’s use of Norse sources, both in his original works and his translations, and Julia Zernack examining the use of Norse myths for political purposes, focusing in particular on the rise of twentieth-century European right-wing propaganda, although she also identifies similar, but by no means as extensive, appropriations by the left. A key thesis in Zernack’s chapter is that myth is used for ‘a veneer of eternal truth, to remove the arbitrariness from political decisions and replace it with an assertion of metaphysical necessity’ (p. 241). She chooses a particular example in *Hávamal* to reveal the wilful revision of text in translation for cynical political purposes.

The third and final section, comprising four chapters, is entitled ‘The Contemporary Reception of Old Norse Literature’. Heather O’Donoghue describes aspects of Norse mythology in the work of modern English and Scots poets, and Chiari Benati and Carolyne Larrington each discuss modern Icelandic murder/detective genre novels by, respectively, Viktor Arnar Ingólfsson and Arnaldur Indriðason, both of whom have produced plots concerned with Norse manuscripts in the twentieth century. In the final chapter, Fulvio Ferrari reflects on the translation of saga literature into comic books in Iceland and Italy.

This volume is a strong, coherent collection with a finely expressed thematic thread tying it all together. It represents some of the best most recent scholarship to be found on these topics, and reminds us that the muse inspires us as well, daring us to think about the interface between art and science, between imagination and critical thought, between inspiration and perspiration, and to keep asking the difficult reflexive questions about what it is we are all doing here.

RODERICK McDONALD, *Sheffield, UK*

Riehle, Wolfgang, *The Secret Within: Hermits, Recluses, and Spiritual Outsiders in Medieval England*, trans. Charity Scott-Stokes, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2014; hardback; pp. xx, 427; 16 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. US\$35.00; ISBN 9780801451096.

In 2011, Wolfgang Riehle's monograph *Englische Mystik des Mittelalters* was published (C. H. Beck). *The Secret Within*, translated into elegant English by Charity Scott-Stokes, is a modified version of this earlier book. Riehle's focus is on mystical texts, and to this extent the original German title is more accurate than the new English one. Riehle has been publishing on medieval English mysticism for many decades, and in *The Secret Within* he engages not only with a wealth of scholars' views from both English- and German-language scholarship (often in the rich and detailed endnotes), but also with his own earlier assessments (for example, in his view that his earlier research had dismissed Margery Kempe too quickly).

On one level, the book is a chronological study of mystical texts produced in England between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries. Familiar texts are studied: *Ancrene Wisse* (dated here to the late twelfth century, and seen as a text promoting many Cistercian themes), Richard Rolle's writings (practically all of them, including lesser-studied ones such as *Melos Amoris*), *The Cloud of Unknowing* and related texts, Walter Hilton's writings, and the works of Julian of Norwich and Margery Kempe. Less familiar texts are also included, cause and effect of Riehle's idea that the so-called canon of mystical literature needs to be expanded, particularly given that medieval mystical texts could never be contained within a single genre. Thus, Riehle studies *A Talking of the Love of God*, the Meditations of the Monk of Farne, the Middle English translation of Marguerite Porete's *Le Mirouer des simples âmes*, as well as, more briefly, *The Abbey of the Holy Ghost*, Nicholas Love's *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*, plays from Chester and elsewhere, and much more. It is in the large number of texts analysed that readers can really appreciate the depth and breadth of Riehle's achievement here. Riehle aims to 'consider the texts as works of literary and theological significance' (p. xv), and the book certainly succeeds in these twin aims, at times arguing that the theological sophistication of certain texts has been under-appreciated in previous scholarship (e.g. in relation to Julian of Norwich), and in the process providing the reader with a thorough reminder of the long and varied textual tradition (e.g. the Psalms, Pauline writings, Origen) from which medieval mystical writers could gain both certainty and confusion in theological matters.

On another level, the book provides more than a survey of many mystical texts. It also has various running arguments. One is that English mystical writing was heavily indebted to twelfth-century Cistercian theology; another is that English mystical texts had much in common with continental mystical writing, particularly with respect to female mysticism. On the former topic, Riehle discusses twelfth-century Cistercian themes presented by Bernard of Clairvaux, Aelred of Rievaulx, and the hymn *Dulci Iesu memoria*. On the latter, he identifies

instances where themes in the English texts appear also in writings by Gertrud of Helfta and Mechthild of Magdeburg (as with Julian of Norwich), Mechthild of Hackeborn (as with Margery Kempe), and others. Both these arguments are big ones in their ramifications. I sometimes felt that there was scope to question further the difference between similarities that might happen to appear in different texts on the one hand and direct causal influences that might be present between these texts on the other hand. But this is simply to recognize the ambitious scope of this book. I think that readers will gain much from using it to frame their own approaches to medieval mysticism.

This is a dense book, packed with material. It is not a book for students, but for those already familiar with at least some of the material it covers. At times the reader may wish for elaboration of some of its points, for example the reasons why Riehle agrees or disagrees with earlier scholarly interpretations. But, then again, this is simply to acknowledge the large number of texts this book examines and the extraordinary depth of Riehle's familiarity with these.

ELIZABETH FREEMAN, *University of Tasmania*

Rogge, Jörge, ed., *Killing and Being Killed: Bodies in Battle. Perspectives on Fighters in the Middle Ages* (Mainz Historical Cultural Sciences, 38), Bielefeld, Transcript, 2017; paperback; pp. 272; R.R.P. €29.99; ISBN 9783837637830.

Violence fascinates and killing is standard fare in virtually all contemporary media, and a prominent feature in literature from the Bible right on down to the sources under consideration in this book. In it, Guido Berndt points out that violence contributes to a sense of community and can function as a form of identification (p. 19). However, while there is plenty of information about the nature of medieval combat, there is little about how war affected the medieval warrior. How did fighters feel? We know almost nothing about the psychological effects of medieval combat. Fortitude is a virtue that sits between fear and courage. How is it assessed? Braccio da Montone was killed in 1424 and though his body perished, one source insisted that 'he felt undefeated in his soul' (p. 184). Individuals and indeed entire geographical areas were profoundly shaped by war, and this volume attempts to explicate the claim. Its chapters are based on papers delivered at a conference convened at the Johannes Gutenberg University in Mainz in 2015.

The theme is built around the experiences of fighters, and a full range of battle images emerge. These include evidence and argument that scars and injuries may indicate a signature of courage. These communities of violence (*Gewaltgemeinschaften*) provide considerable scope for research. The display of prisoners in postures of humiliation or the display of severed heads indicate winners and losers. Mutilation is symbolic: the amputation of limbs, genitals, noses, and tongues became *de rigueur* at different times. The Byzantine emperor Constantine V in 763 ordered the bodily destruction of a captive including the amputation of arms and legs, and a pre-mortem dissection from the genitals

to the chest. Ritualized violence is also apparent and in some instances there were specific symbolic meanings associated with wounds and the deployment of violence. Injuries to the back were dishonourable, whilst those to the chest or face were seen as honourable.

There were rules too. We hear of just war theory, and canon law mandated the categories of people who should be considered non-combatants ineligible for targeting. Routine violation suggests that these mandates and suggestions of restraint, as reflected in chronicles, are probably rhetorical, rather than real. Some fighters became remorseful and dedicated the remainder of their natural lives to penance. Occasionally, we read of ex-warriors deploring careers of violence and asserting that the lives of knights were passports to hell.

The sources are problematic. Fight books reflected ideals, not realities, as many of the chroniclers and writers were not combatants. Many also wrote well after the events. Some of the accounts are exercises in art, rather than history. When writers defined acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, or engaged in representations of honour, it is prudent to query their understanding with respect to the ethics of combatants. Another consideration is the extent to which the reader should accept at face value the nature and extent of recorded atrocities. Were they true and factual, or only true, and by what criteria? When Henry Knighton referred to atrocities occurred a century earlier, surely caution should be exercised.

Savagery and patterns of brutality, and even attitudes about such matters, may not be well served by relying on certain records. What are we to make of the fate of Elias the Clerk who was, in 1317, 'displayed in death with his severed head protruding from his anus' (pp. 214–15)? The return of mutilated warriors has been interpreted by some scholars as examples of walking propaganda, albeit a two-edged advertising sword.

We also encounter fleeting references to women in war in the early fourteenth century (both in the sources and in these essays), but these glimpses are too brief to be useful. The uses of theoretical approaches like feminism are interesting but they do not serve to answer historical questions.

Finally, it is intriguing to ponder the query whether a fighter can survive his or her dead body. The challenge of historical silence is profound, and medieval killing, as this book makes clear, is sometimes lost in a series of generalized euphemisms.

The eleven essays comprising the book are salutary, though the final chapter is essentially a summary of the book. It is not possible to comment on each of the chapters, but I found those by Bogdan-Petru Maleon, Trevor Russell Smith, Guilia Morosini, and Alastair J. Macdonald to be particularly noteworthy. It is a pity that the conference did not include a paper on the Hussite wars or the crusades against heretics. There are a variety of typographical errors throughout, and some infelicities in expression, while the absence of an index reduces the usability of the book. Nevertheless, the volume contributes to our understanding of war, warriors, and pain in the Middle Ages.

THOMAS A. FUDGE, *University of New England*

Romig, Andrew J., *Be a Perfect Man. Christian Masculinity and the Carolingian Aristocracy* (The Middle Ages series), Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017; cloth; pp. 264; R.R.P. US\$65.00, £54.00; ISBN 978081224924.

In 789, a then king Charlemagne launched his famous program of *correctio* and *renovatio*. Although the reformers of Church practices and mechanics of government achieved many of their goals, most modern scholars deem Charlemagne and his successors' attempts to implant new moral norms within the Carolingian aristocracy a failure.

In this provocative monograph Andrew Romig challenges aspects of this consensus. He declares that in their efforts to make their society truly Christian, Carolingian moralists like 'Paulinus and Alcuin wrote nothing less than ideological manuals for the Frankish aristocracy' (p. 35). For Romig, *caritas*, loosely defined in English as 'universal love', lies at the heart of these directives. He argues that 'love of God and neighbour' gradually developed into the 'core aristocratic value from which all other values derived' (p. 39). As a result, 'the ascetic male remained forever at the pinnacle of Christian hierarchies of masculine power' (p. 157).

Laying the foundation for this sure to be controversial thesis, the opening chapter examines the intimate connections between *caritas*, asceticism, and 'true' manliness in early Christianity. Regrettably neglecting much recent work on ancient masculinities and early Christian violence, the chapter is less nuanced than it could have been. By retracing the well-worn pathways established by Peter Brown in *The Body and Society* (Columbia University Press, 1988), irenic and ascetic forms of late antique Christian ideologies are magnified, while early Christianity's more militant, violent, and less inclusive principles are largely excluded. Admittedly, the writings of Sulpicius Severus (d. c. 420), Augustine of Hippo (d. 430), and Gregory the Great (d. 604) are mined adeptly to show how Christian intellectuals prioritized irenic, interiorized, and metamorphic forms of 'New Testament' masculinity over more worldly and militaristic 'Roman' strains. In Romig's view, it was Gregory's conviction that *caritas* could offer laymen access to salvation and worldly power, which proved particularly enticing for Carolingian aristocrats striving to serve both God and their earthly king.

Chapter 2 shifts to the second half of Charlemagne's reign. Instead of seeing Charlemagne's moral reforms coming at a time of strength, the author contends that the *Admonitio generalis* appeared at a time when the Frankish ruler felt vulnerable: politically, militarily, and spiritually. His reform program indeed reflects Charlemagne's need for reassurance that the Franks were truly God's new 'Chosen People'. In Romig's opinion, Charlemagne placed much of his hope for success upon the aristocracy.

In Chapter 3, the author discusses the ways in which Louis the Pious's reign (814–840) experienced a subtle reshaping of ideals of rulership and masculinity. For Carolingian intellectuals, Louis's capacity for unbending *caritas* stood as a masculine attribute. Romig contends that what most modern scholars see as

contemporary criticisms of Louis's failures to retaliate against his enemies or to punish his sons must be interpreted within the context of the impending civil war in 841. The anonymous Astronomer's highlighting of Louis's seemingly unlimited capacity for forgiveness was not meant as criticism, but praise.

Chapter 4 divulges how, in the wake of the dissolution of the empire after 841, the compatibility of secular and spiritual ideologies of manliness began to unravel. Romig reads in the debates surrounding the 'rebel' predestinarian monk, Gottschalk of Orbais (d. c. 867), symptoms of both theological crisis and broader societal shifts, which saw manly *caritas* cut off progressively from men's deeds in the secular world.

Romig concludes, in Chapter 5, that reformers gradually gave up trying to adapt their moral codes to secular norms. Instead, they moulded a more exclusive Christian masculine ideology that casts laymen to the wayside. To explore this growing rift, Romig examines Odo of Cluny's *Vita Geraldi* (c. 930). One of the few hagiographies dedicated to a lay saint, Gerald of Aurillac's (d. 909), *Vita* may seem a strange text for Romig to consult to further this chapter's thesis. Romig, however, counters consensus, which suggests that Gerald offered an example of lay manliness for aristocrats to emulate. He believes instead that Odo intended the *Vita* for an ecclesiastical audience, and sought 'not to encourage a new kind of secular masculinity but rather to contain and control it' (p. 147). Hence, the *Vita* offers more evidence on the increasingly 'impermeable boundary line between spiritual and secular realms' (p. 154).

As the closing chapter reveals, for Romig history is not just about uncovering the past, but also about finding gateways to possible futures. He posits that the Carolingian's adulation of emotionally aware men could offer an attractive alternative to modern masculine ideals built around men who are 'insensitive, uncaring, and callous' (p. 155).

While I question whether empathetic forms of manhood have ever been completely muted, Romig's book deftly illuminates the resonance of these codes for Carolingians. Yet, we must always remember that the Carolingians condoned slavery, exalted the status of the nobility over the lower classes, and praised heinous deeds in battle. We can trace some of these contradictions in the Carolingian world to similar paradoxes found within Christianity from its beginnings. Further exploration of these incongruities would add needed nuance to Romig's enticing, yet somewhat selective vision of hegemonic 'Christian' masculinity in the Carolingian age.

MICHAEL EDWARD STEWART, *University of Queensland*

Root, Jerry, *The Theophilus Legend in Medieval Text and Image*, Cambridge, D. S. Brewer, 2017; hardback; pp. 297; 6 colour, 54 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9781843844617.

As an Associate Professor in French and Comparative Literature, Jerry Root does not fail to impress with the scope of this work, providing a comprehensive and

detailed analysis of the visual and textual representations of the Theophilus legend across fifty-four French manuscripts. The legend tells the story of the downfall and subsequent redemption of Theophilus, a bishop who signed a pact with the devil to gain material wealth and power. It recounts his spiritual revelation and devotion to the Virgin Mary, who intercedes, nullifying the contract and guiding him on his journey to redemption. Root analyses both the textual and visual representations of this legend, focusing on the redemptive value of devotional images and their significance as a vehicle for representations of medieval anxieties of identity. Root argues that the legend is ‘a performance of the theological understanding of the *imago*—one individual’s journey from dissemblance to resemblance’ (p. 201). He conceives the valorization of images as an important part of the individual’s journey from dissemblance—the human state resulting from original sin—to restoration to the likeness of God’s image. Following scholars such as Cynthia Hahn and Michael Camille, Root argues for the changing nature of the gaze from extramission, wherein the object is produced by the gaze, to intromission, wherein the image looks back, engaging the audience’s response. Root asserts that Theophilus’s active devotional vision of the Virgin enables an interaction with her, in which she reveals ‘a similitude which allows him a new kind of image of himself and a way out of the region of unlikeness’ (p. 11). Hence, the Theophilus legend is seen to actively encourage this new way of seeing as a pathway towards redemption fostering a positive self-image. These points are well integrated and do not detract from his key argument, which maintains that the Theophilus legend actively promotes the power of devotional images and the way in which it harnesses them to appeal to aspects of medieval identity.

The structure of this work is well justified and insightful, providing a fruitful framework to integrate Root’s discussion of this theological journey with pertinent social and religious matters relevant to medieval identity. Chapter 1, ‘Homage to the Devil: Ritual, Writing and Seal’, explores the role of the contract with the devil and rituals of homage, drawing parallels with aspects of social responsibilities and obligations. Here the author argues that the contract represents a reciprocal social bond and the power of ritual homage in enabling self-realization and self-determination. The second and third chapters, ‘The Self as Dissemblance’ and ‘Intervention of the Virgin’, develop the argument for the legend as an exemplar of the journey from dissemblance to resemblance and the shift from negative to positive self-image. The former explores the notion of dissemblance as otherness and the power of divine versus individual agency in restoring the positive image through self-reflection. In the latter, Root examines the role of the physical ‘*yimage*’ as a mediator between the human and divine spheres, and of the Virgin Mary in facilitating the shift to resemblance. The final chapter, ‘Sacramental Action and Neoplatonic Exemplarism’, examines the final stages of Theophilus’s journey. This chapter provides a compelling argument for the way in which the legend showcases the subordination to the Church hierarchy and rituals of public devotion in completing the transformation back to resemblance as both a confirmation and demonstration of renewed faith and identity.

The methodological choice of comparative analysis is unsurprising given Root's speciality, particularly with such an abundant collection of primary material. Addressing the collection as a whole allows Root to provide a general overview of how the legend engages with key social and cultural issues. This approach does have its drawbacks, however, as it does not allow the scope for conclusions to be drawn about many of the patterns and divergences in the representation of the legend uncovered across manuscripts. This work would benefit from more historical context in places, especially in relation to discussing its position within the wider developments of twelfth-century rituals of devotion. Nothing is mentioned, for example, about the influence of the canonization process, which was undoubtedly a factor which assist in explaining the prominence of the mediatory role of the Church throughout the legend. There is still much to be said about the patterns within the manuscripts, also in relation to how the motivations of the authors shaped the different versions of the legend. This book holds appeal to an interdisciplinary audience and is accessible for a student audience as well as specialist scholars. At its core, it is a valuable contribution towards understanding the power of the image in late medieval rituals of religious devotion. It also provides a detailed examination of the legend and the way in which it appealed to key aspects of medieval identity, creating a platform that demonstrates the way in which these anxieties are overcome on the journey from dissemblance to resemblance.

ZHIVANNAH COLE, *University of Auckland*

Rose, Jacqueline, ed., *The Politics of Counsel in England and Scotland, 1286–1707* (Proceedings of the British Academy, 204), Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2016; hardcover; pp. xii, 303; R.R.P. £70.00; ISBN 0197266038.

The Politics of Counsel addresses a curious lacuna in the scholarship: what does counsel actually mean? The concept is referred to in a rather nebulous way, primarily because, as Jacqueline Rose and her contributors demonstrate, it means different things to different people in different places. This excellent collection brings together the themes of counsel and politics across an ambitious timeframe in ways that have generally been overlooked.

While Rose has produced an excellent opening essay on the 'problem' of counsel, the forty-three page introduction is daunting for readers. It would have been better to separate out the introduction and chapter summaries from the methodological framework Rose has so thoroughly outlined. Nevertheless, Rose makes a clear case for the need to consider the histories of counsel and councils together: intellectually, politically, and socially.

Michael Brown analyses Scottish counsel from the mid-thirteenth to mid-fifteenth centuries, and suggests that the nobility was generally more involved in counsel than has previously been noted. John Watts's contribution analyses counsel in England from the mid-fourteenth to mid-sixteenth centuries. Ambitious

in its sweep, the chapter certainly has a more historiographical focus, but ends by reminding us how ‘counsel is a broad term covering a range of different constitutional needs and political and governmental processes’ (pp. 84–85).

An analysis of the earliest surviving written memoranda of counsel, from early fifteenth-century England, is the focus of Jeremy Catto’s contribution. These memoranda are notable for their businesslike vernacular: they mirror the spoken word. Similarly, Eliza Hartrich focuses on urban councils in the same period, arguing that municipal and royal councils share many more common traits than is usually acknowledged—especially as urban councils counselled the mayor.

A single political poem from fifteenth-century Scotland, ‘The Harp’, is the focus of Claire Hawes’s chapter. While she argues convincingly that the piece should be read as a criticism of James III, her conclusions are sometimes implausible. Richard Rex studies the reign of Henry VIII, with an emphasis on the 1530s, demonstrating that Henry used the ‘image’ of listening to counsel to impose his authority on his subjects.

Susan Doran’s chapter on Elizabeth I and counsel is a much-needed reassessment of a topic that has become somewhat nebulous in the scholarship. Doran’s conclusions—that Elizabeth sought advice from the relevant people, that Parliament was a particular kind of counsel, and the importance of Elizabeth putting on a show to appear that she was listening to counsel—are all points that are not made clearly enough in the current scholarship.

Paulina Kewes’s excellent contribution analyses counsel and early Elizabethan drama. In focusing on the powerfully public nature of dramatic counsel, Kewes offers a much-needed interdisciplinary assessment of the way drama and dramatists both demonstrated their loyalty and offered counsel and commentary on contemporary politics.

With the accession of James VI of Scotland as James I of England, an awkward system of conciliar government was imposed in Scotland. James, for instance, only returned home once after 1603, in 1617. Alan MacDonald’s chapter thus analyses Scotland between 1603 and 1638, demonstrating the difficulties Scots had in counselling an absent monarch.

Technically outside the volume’s scope, Alexander Haskell’s chapter on the general assembly convened in Virginia in 1619 is nevertheless illuminating. While focused more on ‘council’ than ‘counsel’, Haskell demonstrates both that councils provided stability, and that they preserved the colonists’ privileges in sometimes self-perpetuating ways.

Roger Mason’s focus is on the theory of counsel, and he analyses political thought in seventeenth-century Scotland by focusing on the writings of David Hume of Godscroft, William Drummond, and Sir James Balfour. These men held disparate political leanings, but all expounded the need for counsel.

The final two chapters are by Rose herself. The first is a study of royalist ideas of counsel during the English Revolution. She uses Sir Edward Hyde as a case study, and argues that councillors’ oaths influenced the advice they gave.

Her second chapter is a broad study of counsel and the Union question in the seventeenth-century. This piece clearly is the foundation of a much larger piece, but her discussion of the rarity of, and problems associated with, 'British' councils, is certainly thought provoking.

The collection is incredibly cohesive, with chapters engaging with each other. Its focus is certainly skewed towards early modern England, and the noticeable absence of Wales and Ireland does prevent a clear picture of the relationship between a monarch and their subjects emerging: as much as I enjoyed Haskell's chapter, it could have been replaced with one on Wales or Ireland. Nevertheless, this is a superbly-edited collection that makes an excellent addition to the scholarship on counsel in medieval and early modern England and Scotland.

AIDAN NORRIE, *The University of Warwick*

Tieszen, Charles, *Cross Veneration in the Medieval Islamic World: Christian Identity and Practice under Muslim Rule* (The Early and Medieval Islamic World), London, I. B. Tauris, 2017; hardback; pp. x, 229; R.R.P. US\$95.00, £59.00; ISBN 9781784536626.

Any satisfactory account of inter-religious dialogue and debate should illuminate the perspective of more than just one party to the discussion. Charles Tieszen's new book does this admirably. Drawing on a wide range of argumentative texts composed by both Christian and Muslim authors between the eighth century and the fourteenth, Tieszen provides a detailed and thoughtful analysis of how the idea and practice of cross veneration served as a kind of rhetorical whetstone against which writers on both sides of this medieval religious divide attempted to sharpen the truth claims of their respective faiths. Among the many insights of this valuable study is the conclusion that 'disputational literature' (p. 6) dealing with cross veneration was not penned simply to score points in esoteric theological debates. Rather, one of the key concerns of authors writing in this genre was to delineate the boundaries of their faith more clearly, and thereby reinforce the religious identity of their readers, in a milieu in which they believed it was in urgent need of strengthening. Such texts could therefore fulfil a hortatory and self-reflexive purpose just as readily as they could function as polemical weapons or apologetic instruments.

Chapter 1 lays the foundation for the analysis with a lucid overview of defences of cross veneration against late antique pagan critics and in texts of the *Adversus Judaeos* tradition, which Tieszen argues left an enduring imprint on the arguments exploited by the Christian authors he goes on to discuss. One of these authors, John of Damascus, features prominently from the outset. Tieszen situates his work against the broader intellectual backdrop of debates regarding the worship of icons and symbols in the eighth-century Byzantine and Islamic worlds. Chapter 2 offers a particularly nuanced reading of John of Damascus's justification of cross veneration in his *De haeresibus*. In it, indirect 'counterattacks' in the works of Islamic authors such as 'Abd al-Jabbār (in 995) and Ibn Abī Ṭālib al-Dimashqī

(in 1321), and further rebuttals by the ninth-century East Syrian Christian writer ‘Ammār al-Baṣrī, allow Tieszen to demonstrate how both Christians and Muslims manipulated the issue ‘as a means for [religious] navigation [...] and identification’ (p. 45).

Developing this theme, Chapter 3 elucidates in detail the ways in which various Christian authors moved beyond simply ‘comparing Christian and Muslim piety [...] [to] concentrate on offering explanations for their veneration of the cross’ (p. 61). Tieszen suggests that many of these explanations, which foreground the symbolic nature of the cross and its inherent power, were designed to give Christians living in Islamic contexts ‘a response to offer those Muslims with whom they were having [theological] discussions’ (p. 90) and a way of buttressing ‘the stability of their faith against the mounting pressures of Islam’ (p. 91). Chapter 4 carries this argument even further with an analysis of some of the more innovative ideas in works by authors such as the ninth-century West Syrian theologian Abū Rā’iṭah al-Takrītī, who stressed the need to venerate unembellished (e.g. wooden) crosses, explained the cross as a Christian *qiblah* orienting worship towards God through Christ, and interpreted it as ‘Christ’s proxy on earth until he returns’ (p. 104). Ideas such as these reinforced the notion of the cross as an essential distinguishing mark for Christians in the multireligious context of the medieval East.

Choosing how to arrange the material in a study that focuses on ‘texts spanning seven centuries’ (p. 93) is far from straightforward. Though understandable, Tieszen’s decision to structure his analysis thematically rather than chronologically does not always ‘[ease] the work readers must do in navigating through a large corpus of literature’ (p. 15). Despite points of conceptual commonality, non-specialist readers may be somewhat disoriented by his leaps from authors writing in the eighth century to those working in the thirteenth and back again. The relegation of much enlightening discussion of individual authors’ contexts to the notes and appendices only accentuates this problem. That being said, the main analysis is so thorough and the central arguments so convincing that the structure of the book does not reduce the overall value of Tieszen’s contribution.

Displaying a deep knowledge of the scholarship and sources, and a subtle interpretation of the key concerns surrounding cross veneration, Tieszen opens a window onto a fascinating issue that lay at the heart of debates between medieval Christians and Muslims. The substantial appendices that follow his insightful analysis should serve as an indispensable research aid to those who are eager to explore this topic further. It is clear that this book will appeal not just to readers interested in the cross itself, but to scholars from various disciplines who concern themselves with any aspect of Christian–Muslim relations in the Middle Ages.

JAMES H. KANE, *The University of Sydney*

Trocmé-Latter, Daniel, *The Singing of the Strasbourg Protestants, 1523–1541* (St Andrews Studies in Reformation History), Farnham, Ashgate, 2015; hardback; pp. xvi, 385; 11 b/w illustrations, 3 music examples; R.R.P. £85.00; ISBN 9781472432063.

It is hyperbole to suggest that everyone, in any given culture, enjoys music, and speculation to imagine that all people sang hymns in their homes. It is no exaggeration to argue that music facilitated a variety of reformations in sixteenth-century Europe. But it is important to keep in mind that vernacular singing and congregational participation were not unheard of in the Middle Ages in connection to movements of religious reform. The Hussite tradition is one example, albeit so much of that vibrant history has languished in the shadow of Luther and his Protestant colleagues and has been further obscured by the linguistic barrier which demarcates the medieval Czech world. With that caveat in mind, it is not difficult to recognize the significant achievement developed and articulated by Daniel Trocmé-Latter in this study of music in Strasbourg. With respect to the Czech context, it should be noted that four volumes of hymns by the Bohemian Brethren were printed at Strasbourg in the 1530s, although this does not reflect the popular richness of the Hussite vernacular ethos.

If Luther regarded singing as a manifestation of theology in musical form appropriate for common people, Trocmé-Latter points out that Martin Bucer and other Strasbourg reformers considered singing a tool of considerable importance. In that sense, the differences between Strasbourg and Zurich were substantial. Unlike Wittenberg, however, Strasbourg's new liturgy eschewed choral music. There has been a great deal of research into music and its relation to the European reformations, including the work of Philip Hahn, Jan-Friedrich Missfelder, Hans-Christoph Rublack, Rebecca Oettinger, Christopher Boyd Brown, Rob Wegman, Bartlett Butler, Christian Meyer, and Christine Dempsey. Some of this body of scholarship has not been taken into account by Trocmé-Latter, who exhibits an occasional tendency to minimize the work of other historians and musicologists.

Where this book excavates new territory is within the richness of the Strasbourg archives. Trocmé-Latter is not the first to delve into those sources, but he is the first to bring together many previously overlooked or underutilized evidence, in order to produce a cultural history of music within one specific Reformation setting, by intentionally analysing manuscripts alongside printed sources. The achievement is both impressive and important. The story of this development cannot be accessed singly by means of hymnbooks or liturgical orders. The archives are indispensable. They reveal the non-public thinking and development of the part played by music within the multiple worlds of religious change. Trocmé-Latter points out the conviction that many reformers believed music could convey and instil the word of God in a myriad of ways. This was quite different from the critique that monks and nuns merely muttered incoherently and uselessly 'howled away for an hour or two' (p. 143) without spiritual or religious benefit. Bucer dismissed the Mass as the greatest form of medieval entertainment

but he believed that a properly conceived and constituted use of music, combining the vernacular with congregational singing, could be a fundamental tool of evangelism. This resonates with the parallel argument made a generation ago by Bob Scribner with respect to the catechetical role of visual images ‘for the sake of simple folk’ (pp. 3–4). In the days of Bucer and Wolfgang Capito, Strasbourg looms above a religious landscape where church music sometimes disappeared. In Strasbourg, the history of liturgy and the hymnbook experienced changes in function and composition, and this book provides considerable assistance to understanding the relationship between congregational singing and liturgy.

Despite apparent enthusiasm for music, some Protestant authorities feared certain songs, forbade *contrafacta*, and desired strict control over the religious uses of music. What we cannot determine is whether and how Strasbourg congregations actually sang. Luther once complained that too many people sat around like ‘blocks of wood’ (p. 245). Were the Protestants of Strasbourg different than the ‘Lutherans’ of Wittenberg? One can only ponder what a church service in Strasbourg *c.* 1535 might have sounded like. That said, it is Trocmé-Latter’s merit and achievement to have conducted systematic research in order to apply music as a historical filter through which to evaluate aspects of the reformations in Strasbourg over the course of two decades.

In general, Trocmé-Latter would have us believe that Strasbourg represents a *via media* between German and Swiss models. His monograph presents compelling evidence and argument for those who doubt. *The Singing of the Strasbourg Protestants* is supplemented with almost a hundred pages of documents which relate centrally to the musical history of the reformation in the city. These provide a basis for additional research and consideration by historians, musicologists, and scholars interested in the varieties of reformation in sixteenth-century Europe.

THOMAS A. FUDGE, *University of New England*

Tyler, Elizabeth M., *England in Europe: English Royal Women and Literary Patronage, c. 1000–c. 1150* (Toronto Anglo-Saxon Series, 23), Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2017; cloth; pp. xx, 436; 1 b/w illustration, 1 genealogical table; R.R.P. CA\$95.00; ISBN 9781442640726.

Elizabeth Tyler’s transformative study of English queens’ patronage of Latin literature in the eleventh and early twelfth centuries builds, in new and adventurous ways, on developments in the study of late Anglo-Saxon culture that have occurred over the last two or three decades. To a high degree, these developments have been influenced by the closer collaboration between English and continental scholars that has been facilitated by membership of the European Union.

Tyler’s over-arching aim is not merely to contribute ‘new, more European frameworks’ (p. 11). She seeks ‘to move Anglo-Saxon literary culture from the periphery to the centre of Europe and to show that its impact continued as a constitutive role in European culture well beyond 1066’ (p. 19). This centrality becomes apparent only if we ‘radically revise our established understandings

of eleventh-century English literature by including women and changing our chronological and geographical parameters' (p. 5).

Taylor's multidimensional and multilayered study is not easy to grasp whole, much less summarize, and her brief introduction and conclusion do not do justice to the complexity of her study. Essential to the perspective shift she aims to bring about, however, is that the three English queens she chiefly discusses (Emma, Edith, and Edith/Matilda) were at the forefront of major and ongoing developments in high medieval Western European literary culture by their patronage of Latin historical writings as a vehicle for dynastic and polemical purposes.

It is worth recalling that the mainstream view of Latin literacy in eleventh-century England was (and arguably still is) that it was almost exclusively the province of a few male religious houses reformed in the tenth century by Bishop Athelwold. And it was saved from extinction in the eleventh century only by the arrival of scholars from the continent, particularly after Edward ('the Confessor') returned from Normandy in 1042 to claim the English throne. As Christopher Hohler viewed it in *Tenth-Century Studies* (Phillimore, 1975), 'except in as much as an insignificant minority of scholars was prepared, as well as able, to provide translations [of Latin], the [English] Church remained cut off from the general cultural heritage of the West' (p. 74). Christine Fell, in her ground-breaking study *Women in Anglo-Saxon England* (Blackwell, 1984), demonstrated women's participation in Latin literary culture in the early period, but affirmed that 'the equality of the sexes which flourished in the eighth century in learning and literacy was replaced in the tenth by equality of ignorance' (p. 128).

Continental clerics, then, according to this view, were seminal to the diffusion of cultural influences, particularly in England where, it is still commonly held, the first stirrings of what would become the twelfth-century Renaissance were brought by highly educated scholars like Archbishop Lanfranc in the wake of the Norman Conquest. Tyler, by contrast, aims to establish that royal women, particularly English royal women, who were widely dispersed on the continent by marriage and exile, were at the heart of networks of literary influence, and played a greater part than clerics in the development of court literature.

Tyler is at her most convincing in her close textual analysis of the Latin writings dedicated to Edith and Edith/Matilda. Her particular focus is classical allusions, specifically to the *Aeneid*, which she regards as a distinctive feature of avant-garde literati. She makes a strong case for both Edith and Edith/Matilda as highly educated women who were closely involved in the production of the Latin histories they commissioned.

Central to Tyler's argument in these chapters is the role of the Wilton nunnery, where both queens were educated. Tyler describes Wilton as 'on the cutting edge of new developments that would change the face of both Latin and French poetry [...] and at the heart of the most exciting new spiritual and intellectual developments [within the European mainstream]' (p. 247). Eve of Wilton (for whom Goscelin wrote the *Liber confortatorius*), in her removal to Angers, thus

appears as a seminal figure in the intellectual and social networks that linked Wilton and the Loire poets.

Having struggled, in *Writing the Wilton Women* (Brepols, 2004), to make the case for Wilton as a centre of learning in the face of the ‘established understandings of eleventh-century English literature’ (p. 5), I congratulate Tyler on her innovative and extensively researched recontextualization of the role of the institution. I hope it is not ungracious to remark that I have reservations about her claim that Wilton was the intended audience of the *Vita Ædwardi* commissioned by Edith. By the time it was completed, after 1066, the support of the Wessex aristocracy that pre-conquest Wilton might, theoretically, have gained for Edith, was of no use to her. What Goscelin thought that post-conquest Wilton needed by way of support was the approval of Archbishop Lanfranc, and Edith’s completed *Vita* will, I think, more easily bear the construction that Edith and her author had similar aims in mind.

STEPHANIE HOLLIS, *The University of Auckland*

Veldhuizen, Martine, *Sins of the Tongue in the Medieval West: Sinful, Unethical, and Criminal Words in Middle Dutch (1300–1550)* (Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy, 36), Turnhout, Brepols, 2017; hardback; pp. xiii, 208; 3 b/w illustrations, 3 tables; R.R.P. €70.00; ISBN 9782503569468.

Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me. Or so they say. Regardless of the fact that it has been medically proven that words, in truth, can inflict real physical pain, words can cause many other kinds of harm. They can be used to slander, incite, and lie, hurting both those who utter them and those who listen. These are just a few of the speech acts which were considered dangerous and morally damaging in the Middle Ages.

Sins of the Tongue in the Medieval West: Sinful, Unethical, and Criminal Words in Middle Dutch (1300–1550) by Martine Veldhuizen aims to ‘investigate the extent to which there is an overarching discourse of destructive speech behaviour in Middle Dutch writings between 1300 and 1550’ (p. 3). Aware of the recent and ongoing research in separate linguistic areas, the author manages to be innovative by identifying an overarching discourse in three distinct domains. On top of that, Veldhuizen uses modern language theory insights to reveal patterns and improve the clarity of the analysis. Through this, she aims to gain insight into harmful speech behaviour as a conceptual whole and investigate the existence of a certain cohesion between the ecclesiastical, secular-ethical, and judicial domains.

These three areas form the framework in which the author studies and describes discourses on harmful speech behaviour. After the first two chapters, consisting of a thorough demarcation of her research and an overview of the language theories she utilizes, Veldhuizen gets straight to the point, discussing first the ecclesiastical domain and its ‘sins of the tongue’ (p. 45). There appears to be a clear connection between the intent behind words and their degree of sinfulness, and restraint is regarded as the best way to manage one’s speech. The medieval

texts emphasize the impact of speech sins on both the ones who talk and those who hear them, and state that words can damage both one's social standing and one's soul.

Second, Veldhuizen discusses the secular-ethical domain and 'improper words', which are defined as words 'unsuitable or impolite in the eyes of one's fellow man' (p. 85). This second chapter deals with two groups of speech acts: 'foolish' speech, such as bickering, and speech acts involving flattery and slander. Similar to the first chapter, the material which Veldhuizen investigates speak of the harmful potential of the source behind the words. The tongue is ambiguous, and can both break and build its surroundings. The intention of the speaker plays an important part in the effects of the spoken words.

Third, the author investigates the judicial domain through a case study of a dispute between a landlord and his tenant in 1480. These men had had previous disagreements in court about rent business, which came to an ugly climax when the landlord defamed his tenant by calling him a 'perjuring crook'. Veldhuizen analyses the case and explains in clear terms what implications this defamation had for the men involved.

The closing observations show the overarching results of Veldhuizen's analysis on the ambiguous power of the tongue. Next to that, she points out the merits of using modern language theory to identify similarities in notions on speech behaviour. The approach shows that within the corpus of texts, there is a significant focus on the effect of the words and less emphasis on their actual content. Veldhuizen states that while her results are indicative, her research methods appear to create new ways to compare various kinds of texts and might help us gain more insight into linguistic trends.

While the research is solid and well executed, a few minor shortcomings blemish this book. It contains several typographical errors and in a few cases it appears the author has forgotten to translate words from her native Dutch to English. An example of this is her mention of the city of Bruges, which she writes by its Dutch name: Brugge (p. 51). Sadly, these few minor errors can make the passages seem rushed and detract from the book's persuasiveness. In spite of this, Veldhuizen's work is a pleasant read and offers a refreshing view on ways in which texts may be analysed.

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Vulić, Kathryn, Susan **Uselmann**, and C. Annette **Grisé**, eds, *Devotional Literature and Practice in Medieval England: Readers, Reading, and Reception* (Disputatio, 29), Turnhout, Brepols, 2016; hardback; pp. vi, 284; R.R.P. €80.00; ISBN 9782503530291.

Contributions to this volume build on the recent scholarly interest of the last half-century into late medieval readers, authorship, and reading practices, focusing on England between the ninth and sixteenth centuries. The stated aim of this work is to show how varied reading and textual production could be in this

period—that is, how the interrelationships between reader, author, and text were often malleable and up for negotiation. Collectively, the essays of this volume suggest that typologies of devotional reading (learned/lewd, male/female, author/reader, literate/illiterate, clerical/lay) are inadequate for the vast array of practices associated with reading in late medieval England. Rather, ‘it is more revealing to define what devotional literature *does* rather than what it *is*’ (p. 4), as Susan Uselmann lays out in her introduction.

The volume is broken into three conceptual sections, each comprising three essays on the respective topics of representations, practices, and modelling of reading. The first group of three examines the link between literacy, Latinity, and devotion. Anna Lewis shows how the religious controversies of the late Middle Ages, in particular Wycliffism and Lollardy, were to a large extent disagreements of hermeneutics—that is, how the Bible and devotional literature were supposed to be read. Perhaps more than might be expected, *how* one read was inextricable from orthodoxy or heterodoxy. Thus, the process of catechesis, argues Kathryn Vulić, was really, in texts like *Speculum Vitae*, a process of enculturating readers in *how* texts ought to be read rather than simply teaching the things one ought to *know*. In Elizabeth Schirmer’s analysis of *Dives and Pauper*, ‘all sin is thus on some level a matter of mis-reading and/or mis-signifying’ (p. 107). As much as heterodoxy was understood as a problem of interpretation (and therefore doctrine), this was thought to be caused not so much by faulty interpretation by itself, but by the unwillingness of some biblical interpreters to approach texts with requisite humility and *caritas*.

The second section (authored by Karmen Lenz, C. Annette Grisé, and Susan Uselmann) lays out the relationship between the textual output of monastic literature and lay consumption, arguing that porousness and negotiation was involved in transactions between the cloister and the laity. From the late thirteenth century onwards, devotional literature multiplied the options available for lay devotion. However, these texts very often demanded they be read in lockstep with the ‘liturgical rhythms of the larger church community’ (pp. 12–13).

The final section (Christina M. Carlson, Stephanie Morley, and Catherine Innes-Parker) examines the roles played by the reader and the author, arguing that a typology of authorial control and the submissive reader, particularly in the case of literature as *cura monialium*, is inadequate. By comparing texts contained in the devotional anthology of Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Holkham Miscellany 41, Innes-Parker shows how female authors could move beyond secular, denigrating typecasting of their gender to embrace a model of femininity that could account simultaneously for both female virtue and sinfulness without falling into *topoi* of either woman-as-saint or woman-as-temptress.

As Annette Grisé observes in her afterword, the challenge for scholars in this field is one of synthesis and definition. Given the burgeoning of scholarship on lay reading, especially on women readers, there is a need to move beyond particularized examples of devotional reading and textual production towards

integrating these findings into a coherent unity. This is the case especially for the relationship between humility and interpretation, a latent basso continuo throughout the contributions to this volume. In this respect, much more attention could have been given to the connection between interpretation and godliness—semiotics and sinfulness. The medieval sense of the humble, godly reader as the good interpreter is pervasive throughout this collection as a powerful force that shaped how texts were read. This insight is tantalizing, and further analysis would have been well received.

Added to this, it seems difficult to fully account for the hermeneutics of the texts examined in this volume without a sense of how ecclesiastical authority figured in the hermeneutical process. Where ecclesiastical authority is treated, the presence of authority is generally understood as an exercise of power upon this process, rather than a productive aspect of it. It would be interesting to consider how Church magisterium might figure in a more constructive sense of providing the hermeneutic in realms within which fecund interpretation might take place, as was the case for much monastic literature.

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Wenzel, Siegfried, *The Sermons of William Peraldus: An Appraisal* (Sermo, 13), Turnhout, Brepols, 2017; hardback; pp. xii, 219; 2 tables; R.R.P. €75.00; ISBN 9782503567983.

The French Dominican William Peraldus or Guillaume Peyraut (apparently known also in sermon-reading circles as *Parisiensis* or *Parisius*) belonged to that large section of highly-educated clergy whose members devoted their scholarly attention to scriptural exegesis and homiletics. The ‘Sermo’ series, of which this title is the thirteenth to appear, has boldly shouldered the task of unlocking, for an often sceptical modern readership, an intellectual environment in which the devoted study of Sacred Scripture and Tradition was considered not merely important, but supremely necessary for the fulfillment of the human person. Even for believers the chasm between that world of the High Middle Ages, with its sublime spiritual aspirations, and our own pragmatic and realistic (our words, not theirs!) comfort zone, is a challenge to cross.

Siegfried Wenzel’s contribution to this is, in almost every respect, a model of good scholarship. Peraldus was extraordinarily prolific. His best-known works were *Summae* of virtues and vices, but he also wrote several cycles of sermons. Wenzel concentrates on two such cycles, which cover the Epistles and Gospels for the Sundays of the year. He then homes in on two: the Epistle sermons for the first Sunday in Advent (Advent I) and the Gospel sermons for Advent III. The full texts are provided as appendices, together with his own close and accurate, if somewhat pedestrian, translations. There is extensive introductory material, as well as a selection of sermon material from other writers who appear to have been influenced by, and who sometimes quote, Peraldus’s work. Two indexes—‘General’ and ‘Manuscripts Cited’—and a full bibliography complete the picture.

Oddly the bibliography also includes a list of manuscripts ‘cited’ (perhaps ‘consulted’ would be a better word, for the lists do not tally) as well as primary and secondary sources.

Peraldus of course wrote very much in the scholastic tradition: he dissects every verse of Scripture, analyses it, sorts its components into categories, extracts every possible interpretation, practical and mystical. I found myself thinking that he had found the perfect commentator in Siegfried Wenzel, who appears to have the same precise cast of mind. What a partnership! Perhaps the match is inevitable, for the close examination of hundreds, no doubt even thousands, of sermons is not an area of scholarship that would appeal to many. One can only admire his painstaking and careful devotedness.

There are a few areas in which the book might have been improved. Certain technical terms are to my mind overused: no doubt Wenzel would defend his use of *thema* throughout rather than theme, but surely it is unnecessary. Calling one of the most prolific writers of the age *Januensis* rather than by his more familiar name Jacobus a Voragine does seem a little affected. He is also very fond of ‘pericope’ for an extract from Scripture, but sometimes appears to extend its use as a collective term to cover the whole selection of daily liturgical readings, which somewhat blunts its force. But the greatest deficiency is in the area of clerical professional practice: one longs to know what precisely these ‘sermons’ were used for and by whom. They are not sermons in the sense that a modern reader would understand. Even to the medieval reader, we can be certain, they would lack that crisp didactic and rhetorical character that one expects in the authentic public preaching of Augustine or Ambrose. So they are not homilies either, a point that Wenzel concedes, nor mere *postillationes*. It appears, then, that they belong to a category, long since obsolete, of advisory notes and fodder for the construction of homilies and sermons (in the usual modern sense), the compilation and circulation of which must have been a major clerical ‘industry’ in the high Middle Ages. And they were written in Latin, the lingua franca of the time, a rather drab but reliably unambiguous register of the language whose practical functionality served the Church until long after the Reformation and right up to the threshold of the modern world.

How did a thirteenth century cleric occupy his days? How much of his time did he or could he give to teaching and instruction? How large was Peraldus’s potential readership? Was the use of such material within the competence of the average parish priest? Could some French congregations still understand preaching in Latin, albeit Latin spoken according to the French rules of pronunciation, or did each priest’s compilation of a sermon or homily necessarily entail translation into the current vernacular? How was the material circulated? Did individual priests exchange single sets of notes on loan, or were they produced in multiple copies by monastic scriptoria or commercial copyists in the larger university centres? These are the sort of questions that one would like to see comprehensively addressed.

This otherwise excellent book well describes the material but pays too little attention to the process.

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Whetter, K. S., *The Manuscript and Meaning of Malory's Morte Darthur: Rubrication, Commemoration, Memorialization* (Arthurian Studies, 84), Cambridge, D. S. Brewer, 2017; hardback; pp. xiii, 245; 16 colour illustrations; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9781843844532.

Except for feminist and other theory-based approaches, this book provides comprehensive coverage of the vast and contested field of Malory scholarship and criticism. It also offers the most detailed study to date of the Winchester manuscript (British Library, Additional MS 59678) in the context of comparable manuscripts. The argument is twofold: concerning 'manuscript', that 'Winchester's rubrication pattern is unique and that the most likely source for Winchester's layout is Malory himself' (p. 105); and in relation to 'meaning', that 'Winchester's consistent rubrication of names and its marginalia recording seemingly random knightly deeds all reinforce Malory's focus on the earthly values of knighthood, love and fellowship, and *worshyp*' (p. 105).

Because an unknown number of medieval manuscripts has been lost, and the number of surviving manuscripts makes comprehensive checking impossible, the first claim, that Winchester's rubrication is unique, is ultimately unprovable. In supporting it, Dr Whetter nevertheless provides useful first-hand comparisons with rubrication in a selection of English and French romance, chronicle, and mixed-genre fourteenth- and fifteenth-century manuscripts. He further explores the ways in which Winchester's rubrication differs from that in manuscripts, currently held in British libraries, of Malory's French and English sources.

The 'manuscript' half of this book therefore combines comprehensiveness with meticulous attention to detail. However, it also revisits, admittedly with additions or expansions, theories that have previously been confirmed or rejected. For example, in 2000 Helen Cooper pre-empted an important part of the 'thesis' (p. 72) when she deduced from her reconstruction of Caxton's missing exemplar that Malory himself devised the pattern of rubrication preserved in Winchester. Conversely, a page-long recapitulation of Takato Kato's attempt in 2002 to reduce the stages between Malory's archetype and Caxton's print ends with an acknowledgment that a discovery by the *Morte Darthur's* most recent editor, P. J. C. Field, has ruled out Kato's theory (p. 73). Perhaps it is an inevitable consequence of the labyrinthine state of Malory scholarship that this book sometimes retraces scholarly processes.

Regarding 'meaning', the view that 'the earthly values of knighthood' (p. 105) predominate in the *Morte Darthur* virtually to the exclusion of what the discussion sometimes pejoratively refers to as 'religiosity', is both extreme and, as its many iterations suggest, difficult to defend. Overall the argument is a backward step in an interpretative process which, following what have often been

more nuanced excursions into both chivalric and religious readings, has achieved a desirable equilibrium (see p. 115).

Among the objections to, or plausible alternatives for, this book's expositions of 'meaning', only a few that are closely text-related can be outlined in this short review. While Dr Whetter concedes that 'religious' prayer and prayer 'that is both sacred and chivalric' do occur, he cites polite requests between characters as support for the proposition that prayer in the *Morte* is 'formulaic rather than pious' (pp. 105–06). This seems to confuse two senses of 'prayer'. Again, the omission of rubrication for 'Amen' in most of Malory's colophons is alleged to support the *Morte*'s 'secularity'. However, the phrasing of these prayers surely suggests that they are heartfelt and urgent.

Unless a source is found, 'The Healing of Sir Urry', strategically inserted between Books VII and VIII, will retain its value as evidence for the priorities that Malory as an originating *auctor* enshrined in his Arthuriad. After Arthur and 110 knights have failed to heal the pitifully wounded knight, the king's stated reason for commanding the latecomer Launcelot to make an attempt accords with Dr Whetter's view that the episode's 'emphases [...] poignantly reiterate and celebrate earthly fellowship' (p. 176). Yet Arthur's preliminary command, that Launcelot should not be forewarned, reveals a deeper motive that aligns with the episode's overall purpose, which is to demonstrate Launcelot's moral eminence by a test. Once again, a prayer, this time by Launcelot, makes the point: 'I beseche The of Thy mercy that my symple worshyp and honesté be saved'. Dr Whetter argues that Launcelot is praying for the preservation of his 'knightly reputation and glory' (p. 178). Yet 'worshyp' in the *Morte* also means 'praise', and its pairing here with 'simple' and 'honesté' demonstrates that salvation, not fame, is the goal of Launcelot's prayer. He continues: 'and Thou Blyssed Trynyté, Thou mayste yeff me power to hele thys syke knyght by the grete vertu and grace of The, but, Good Lorde, never of myselff'. In accordance with a fifteenth-century lay understanding of penance, Launcelot's faith and humility therefore provide the foundation for the miracle, which reaffirms his position, established in the Grail quest but by this juncture called into question, as 'the beste knyght of the worlde' (i.e. as far as worldly knights go). After Launcelot's death, the bishop's vision of his reception into heaven and Sir Ector's famous eulogy respectively reconfirm his balanced religious and secular worthiness.

Despite what seems to be an excessive commitment to one side of an interpretative binary, this book deserves credit for expounding many fresh responses to Malory's manuscript and meaning.

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