

## Reviews

**Akhimie**, Patricia, *Shakespeare and the Cultivation of Difference: Race and Conduct in the Early Modern World* (Routledge Studies in Shakespeare, 29), New York and Abingdon, Routledge, 2018; hardback; pp. 219; 14 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £115.00; ISBN: 9780815356431.

*Shakespeare and the Cultivation of Difference* presents a refreshing and insightful look into the intersections of class, conduct, race, and oppression in the early modern period, placing the works of William Shakespeare in dialogue with sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century conduct manuals. The key argument and contribution of the work concerns the central position of the body and its somatic markings as both a sign and symptom of character traits, social status, and potential in early modern thought. The high status concepts of ‘conduct’ and ‘cultivation’, Patricia Akhimie argues, comprise both the controllable, external characteristics of behaviour, dress, and education, but also embodied somatic markings. Access to the ability to improve one’s own status through cultivation and conduct depended upon the absence of stigmatized bodily traits, even if those bodily marks were themselves imposed or acquired from outside forces, since even natural features have negative meanings constructed by dominant cultural powers.

For Akhimie, the unusual and challenging situations into which playwrights place their characters provide an ideal location for the boundaries of these social divisions to be revealed, tested, and lampooned. Othello, Shakespeare’s quintessential foreigner confronting racial prejudice, is treated through the lens of treatises on the ‘art of travel’, exposing how his blackness and foreignness become connected to his individual character flaws. This confirms that foreigners, while interesting to visit and potentially instructive for travellers, are fundamentally dangerous and prone to contagious corruption, and cannot reliably participate in the norms of Christian socioeconomic life. Dromio of Syracuse and Dromio of Ephesus from *The Comedy of Errors* are marked with undifferentiated status by their similar physical features as twins, showing the ease with which individuals with similar bodies are conflated. Increasingly, however, they are rendered into homogeneous inferiors through their repeated beatings, domestic advice manuals drawing a direct line between servile status, the act of physical discipline, and the bruises and stripes left by this treatment, and vice versa, such that these marks become just and reasonable brandings of social class.

*A Midsummer Night’s Dream* considered alongside hunting instructions offers an insight into the contrasts between the upper classes, who are bodily suited to higher mental responsibilities and thus require the mental recreation of leisure (enacted through performatively elaborate hunts and entertainments), and the working-class rude mechanicals, whose rough manual-labouring hands are

evidence of unsophisticated minds, rendering their external, acquired differences into immutable and inherent traits. Finally, Caliban is explored with husbandry texts, whereby his upbringing under Prospero becomes a ‘cultivation’: first as that of a son, with nurturing and education, and then after Caliban’s attempted rape of Miranda, through torment and deprivation, as that of a disobedient beast. Prospero’s treatment in his attempts to control and harness his servant leaves visible ‘pinch’ marks on Caliban’s body and further exaggerates his monstrous appearance, such that the Algerian witch’s son can never be redeemed, despite his evident knowledge and mastery of the island he once ruled. Though these plays highlight the norms of social difference, they also emphasize the dissatisfaction of those marginalized, ‘social climbers’ like Iago and Caliban who resent their exclusion from access to advancement, or ‘honest strivers’ like Othello and the Dromios who lament their unjust treatment.

In this book, Akhimie makes pioneering use of conduct manuals to bring together multiple categories of social difference under one unifying theory of somatic markings and external conduct. Using classic racial texts *Othello* and *The Tempest* alongside new readings of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* and *The Comedy of Errors*, Akhimie brings together the ‘imbricated’ stigmas associated with differences of race and class. She highlights clearly both the normative and contested nature of the stigmas and social pathways explored in the book. Akhimie’s work promises to be of broad value in many settings, but particularly where status is inverted or challenged. For my own research, for example, this work sheds powerful new light on the confrontation of Barbary captivity, where high- and low-status Europeans alike were branded together as slaves, while free middling-sort traders and diplomats went hunting with the Maghrebi elites and ambitious converts achieved advancement impossible at home. For scholars of early modern class or race, of the emerging middling sort, or of social mobility, this work is stimulating reading.

NAT CUTTER, *University of Melbourne*

**Atkin**, Tamara, and Francis **Leneghan**, eds, *The Psalms and Medieval English Literature: From the Conversion to the Reformation*, Cambridge, D. S. Brewer, 2017; hardback; pp. xviii, 344; 18 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. US\$99.00, £60.00; ISBN 9781843844358.

In his introduction to this valuable collection of thirteen essays Francis Leneghan identifies the psalter as ‘the most highly prized, frequently copied and widely used of all books of the Bible’ (p. 1) for medieval Christians. Throughout the volume its foundational role in intellectual culture is emphasized as contributors examine how memorization of and repeated exposure to the Psalms impacted literature. This, alongside a recurrent interest in the varieties of voice present in the Psalms, creates an ongoing conversation which is one of the volume’s great successes. A thematic structure assists the creation of connections between essays. This usefully destabilizes period boundaries and establishes links between

vernacular engagements with the psalter across the volume's roughly 800-year scope (c. 700–c. 1500). In making these associations it offers an important and necessary contribution to the recent upsurge of scholarly interest in the Psalms by drawing together expert contributors from different periods and placing their work in dialogue.

Leneghan's useful introductory essay traces the reception of Psalm 50.1–3 from the Vespasian Psalter to Thomas Brampton's fifteenth-century paraphrase of the Penitential Psalms, and highlights the constancies and differences present in approaches to the psalter over time. Opening the 'Translation' section, Jane Roberts's chapter examines the fifteen psalters with a vernacular gloss that survive from Anglo-Saxon England. She focuses on the relationship between gloss and manuscript, distinguishing between 'opportunistic' glosses at one end of the scale and 'integral' at the other (p. 40). Concentrating on one of the psalters Roberts discusses, Mark Faulkner argues persuasively that an archaic exemplar for the idiosyncratic Old English gloss found in the twelfth-century Eadwine Psalter was deliberately chosen. Annie Sutherland promotes the significance of the fourteenth-century *Prose Psalter* in her chapter. She demonstrates that the attitude to translation lying behind it, in which it 'translates not what the Psalter *says* but what the Psalter *means*' (p. 126), offers a different rhetorical approach to that found in more imitative translations. The consistent revision of vocabulary between the Earlier and Later Versions of the Psalms in the Wycliffite Bible leads Elizabeth Solopova to argue that these were texts created with different translation strategies in mind. She suggests that the revisions were part of an attempt to develop a 'standard terminology for theological and devotional discourse' (p. 145). The 'Translation' section ends with Katherine Zieman's chapter on Richard Rolle's *English Psalter* which carefully considers the stages of revision this text went through and the motivations that lay behind these.

The 'Adaptation' section opens with Leneghan's compelling reading of the ornamental alliteration in the 'little admired' (p. 179) Old English *Metrical Psalms*. He argues, in perhaps the standout essay of the volume, that this created a musicality in the translation which aided memorization. Daniel Anlezark follows this with a discussion of the treatment of the Psalms in what he re-names the *Old English Office* (formerly the *Old English Benedictine Office*) and examines what this suggests about prayer in the Anglo-Saxon church. M. J. Toswell concludes a trio of chapters on Old English by demonstrating the ways in which the deep understanding of the Psalms in the period is reflected in syntactic and rhetorical parallels in a variety of Old English poetic genres. Completing the section Mike Rodman Jones demonstrates how certain disputational Psalms were deployed at 'distinct and specific textual moments' (p. 252) in Middle English alliterative poetry.

The volume concludes with a section on 'Voice'. Lynn Staley opens this with an examination of the relationship between Richard Maidstone's *Penitential Psalms* and his *Concordia* that places them in their late fourteenth-century

political context. Vincent Gillespie surveys a series of classical and medieval sources to consider the connections between poetic theory and the interpretation, understanding, and, crucially, performance of the Psalms. David Lawton's chapter discusses the effect of the multiple voices articulated in Eleanor Hull's fifteenth-century commentary on the Penitential Psalms and questions what these suggest about her intended audience. Interest in the Psalms' voices continues with Michael P. Kuczynski's analysis of the ecclesiology present in both translations and commentaries. His chapter appropriately brings the volume to a close with a discussion ranging from Wycliffite texts to King Alfred's Old English translation of the first fifty Psalms, highlighting, as essays have throughout, the web of connections between vernacular engagements with the Psalms in medieval England.

As it stands this collection offers an interesting and nuanced discussion of responses to the Psalms in the medieval period and is a valuable reminder for both students and more seasoned researchers of their pervasive influence.

EMMA KNOWLES, *University of Cambridge*

**Barton**, Thomas W., Susan **McDonough**, Sara **McDougall**, and Matthew **Wranovix**, eds, *Boundaries in the Medieval and Wider World: Essays in Honour of Paul Freedman* (Europa Sacra, 22), Turnhout, Brepols, 2017; cloth; pp. viii, 348; 7 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. €90.00; ISBN 9782503568454.

Paul Freedman's Festschrift reflects his approach to studying history, which encompasses the aim of making history alive and using the past to shed light on the present as well as the future. The fifteen chapters that form this volume do not follow predictable or well-worn paths and they do not duplicate existing scholarship. Instead, the reader encounters a bevy of topics all presented with panache and most of them tantalizing the reader with the lure of shifting boundaries, unlikely applications, and penetrating insights. Between the covers of this Festschrift one learns about a variety of topics such as high divorce rates in medieval Jewish communities and the limitations of notarial Latin (Sarah Ifft Decker), and concepts of slavery within convents (Michelle Herder). We also learn that powerful scary women could be every bit as bad as their male counterparts (Jeffrey A. Bowman). In Fontevraud Abbey, a foundation which included both male and female religious, women assumed unconventional and fascinating governance, and unsurprisingly were also considered vessels filled with poison (Annalena Müller).

The volume is divided into five sections under the headings of 'Law', 'Religion', 'Peasants', 'Historiography', and, lastly, 'Food, Medicine, and the Exotic'. The chapters within the sections on peasants and food mirror Paul Freedman's own groundbreaking work over the past forty years. Once more we are introduced to riveting narratives about the social meaning of food (Bobbi

Sutherland and Teofilo F. Ruiz) and the peasant saint who prays for peasants and simultaneously justifies serfdom (Agnieszka Rec), and we discover how-to manuals for cheating the boss (William Chester Jordan). The fifteenth-century Marsilio Ficino recommended that priests study medicine and he enumerated the enemies of the scholar as phlegm, black bile, sexual intercourse, gluttony, and oversleeping (p. 266). The scholar who avoided these foes was better positioned to be reignited by the fires of piety, and we learn further that medieval prayer was much more than mechanical ritual (Matthew Wranovix). Spirituality was sometimes highly emotional (Lauren Manca) where the analytical merged with the aspirational and the meditative with the intellectual (p. 173).

In the medieval bellicosity along the bloody borders which divided Christians and Muslims it is instructive to appreciate that ‘coming into contact with Muslim swords was not a guaranteed path to Christian glory’ (p. 94). The burden of captivity, which convulsed societies and families on both sides of the religious frontier, presents an alternative reality to crusading triumphalism wherein battle with the infidel was divinely sanctioned, heroic, and soteriological.

Underpinning all of the contributions in this volume are historiographical considerations and decisions (Adam Franklin-Lyons). While this is a prosaic observation, the results are instructive. History demands limitations and these have chiefly to do with time and space. What to leave in and what to leave out is a rudimentary historical question that follows from the equally fraught consideration of when to start and when to end (pp. 241–42). Even if one considers a history of everything possible, matters of time and space remain at issue. Drawing lines is a means of creating narrative. The demarcation of boundaries is also part of creating narrative. Paul Freedman’s scholarly *oeuvre* is a fine example of that observation. The *Annales* approach suggests a history about everything, not simply a consideration of what was achieved by civilizations, or religions, or the arts or sciences, or by political structures. This volume tends to establish that observation.

Local resistance to centralized power in Catalonia (Thomas W. Barton), the practice of syneisaktism with possible connections to heresy, and episcopal complaints about the ‘vile promiscuous whore’ Francesca, affiliated with the Benedictine nunnery at Girona (p. 145), offer focused examinations of ideas and issues with potentially broader application. The *Festschrift* contributors neither provide answers to every query nor do they strive to address every potential rejoinder, and as William Chester Jordan observes we may never figure out much of these puzzling Middle Ages but the questions and challenges remain ‘endlessly fascinating’ (p. 217). And beyond this, as Adam Franklin-Lyons points out, ‘connectivity laced with contradiction more likely characterizes most of human existence’ (p. 248).

The key word in the volume appears in the title: boundaries. Boundaries are not to be taken as eternal and impermeable. Boundaries are constructed by every generation and are established by complex negotiation. Paul Freedman is one of those living historians whose life and work is a model for challenging

and crossing boundaries and by doing so he has encouraged others to search out the mysteries and richness in uncharted and unexplored territories. Freedman started out as a medievalist and, while not abandoning that preoccupation, later became internationally renowned as an authority on food, both medieval and modern. For those not au fait with his contributions to scholarship, there is a concise introduction to Freedman as ‘a man of many tastes’ (pp. 1–14) and a useful bibliography of his work published between 1979 and 2016 (pp. 339–46). The volume is a tribute to a lifetime of extraordinary achievement.

THOMAS A. FUDGE, *University of New England*

**Bartoszewicz**, Agnieszka, *Urban Literacy in Late Medieval Poland* (Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy, 39), Turnhout, Brepols, 2017; hardback; pp. xxiv, 484; 28 b/w, 8 colour illustrations; R.R.P. €120.00; ISBN 9782503565118.

During the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries, the period covered in Agnieszka Bartoszewicz’s compendious study of urban literacy in late medieval Poland, the kingdom of Poland or Commonwealth [*Rzeczpospolita*], as it came to be known, developed into a vast, polyglot, multi-ethnic polity. Under the Jagiellonian kings, Sigismund the Elder and Sigismund August, his son by Bona Sforza, Poland enjoyed a ‘Golden Age’ in literature, science, and the arts. Bartoszewicz’s monograph, first published in 2012 (Warsaw University Press) and now translated into English, is the summation of more than two decades of painstaking archival research. She has combed through voluminous secondary literature to provide a most readable synoptic coverage, ‘ordering and recapitulating the state of knowledge on the subject’ (p. 21).

As a glance at the maps included with the prefatory matter (pp. xviii–xxiii) makes clear, the administrative structure and urban networks of the kingdom developed extensively across its western and central territories; that is, around the major cities of Poznań, Warsaw, and Cracow-Kazimierz. In the eastern territories, however, the great city of Lwów may have rivalled Cracow and Gniezno as an ecclesiastical centre but the urban development radiating from it proceeded at a far slower pace. It is also a fact of history that Fate has been far kinder to the old royal capital, its archives and architecture, than it has to most other cities in Poland. Bartoszewicz acknowledges that her book reflects this fact and, perforce, is Cracow-centric.

Given the complexity of her undertaking and its geographical, linguistic, and temporal scope, manageable boundaries had to be set. Although the English-language version includes important new material, updates the bibliography, and substantially revises and reorganizes chapters, it does not broaden the coverage of the original Polish edition to include documents in languages other than Latin, German, and Polish: ‘The rich Ruthenian and Jewish cultures of the written word, which developed simultaneously, cannot be taken into consideration, as they demand different scholarly expertise’ (p. 2). It would be churlish to demand

even more from a study as exhaustively detailed as Bartoszewicz's; and yet, one cannot but wonder how different would be the picture conveyed of urban literacy in Cracow and Lwów, for example, if the contribution of Central Europe's most literate of communities, the Jews, had been sketched in, if only in part. Hebrew was, after all, a subject taught at the Cracow Academy.

The great preponderance of source material, disparate, scattered, and often fragmentary as it is, comes from entries in municipal, court, and ecclesiastical registers that have been preserved in city and town archives. Bartoszewicz meets the challenge of imposing a narrative flow on this welter of detail, much of it dry and repetitious, by highlighting snippets of information, nuggets that give us a glimpse into the lives of individuals, their business dealings, their love-lives, and their preparations for the next life. Playing a key role in the transmission of such lively, personal information were the *clerici uxorati*, a professional group unlikely to be met in studies of urban literacy in Western Europe. They were married clergy with no pastoral responsibilities whose prime means of livelihood was providing scrivener services; occasionally, they also appear as teachers at parish schools.

Particularly valuable is the evidence Bartoszewicz adduces in her chapter 'From Vernacular Memory to Written Record', attesting to the fluid relationship in law that existed during the mid- to late fifteenth century between oral and written testimony, specifically in the matter of wills and testaments. 'Only the most important decisions were put in writing, and the recording might take place after the testator's death, on the basis of the witnesses' depositions' (p. 197). Moreover, the process of registering a will was often accompanied by a ritual that took the form of an oral declaration affirming the right of the testator to dispose of his/her goods. At such occasions often two languages were employed, Latin and either Polish or German.

With its glossary of specialist Latin, German, and Polish terms in translation, its comprehensive listing of archival and published sources, eight colour plates, and thirty-six pages of secondary literature, *Urban Literacy in Late Medieval Poland* should serve as a valuable vade mecum for scholars comparing the spread of literacy in East-Central Europe with that in Western Europe. More's the pity, therefore, that the index of personal names in the Polish edition has been omitted from the English-language version. It is passing strange, too, that Anna Adamska, whom Bartoszewicz gratefully acknowledges (p. xii) as the book's translator, editor, and proof-reader, is nowhere mentioned on either the title page, the copyright page, or even in the British Library catalogue record.

ROBERT CURRY, *The University of Sydney*

**Brown**, Michelle P., Ildar H. **Garipzanov**, and Benjamin C. **Tilghman**, eds, *Graphic Devices and the Early Decorated Book* (Boydell Studies in Medieval Art and Architecture), Woodbridge, The Boydell Press, 2017; hardback; pp. 316; 76 colour, 7 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9781783272266.

Christianity is a religion of signs. Early Christians indeed believed that God could puncture the barriers between heaven and earth to reveal his will through visual messaging. Little wonder then that sacred books for these believers were objects comprised of more than just mundane words on a page, but divinely inspired entities—where the designer could deploy graphic symbols, letters, gems, and even texture and colours to imbue the text with deeper spiritual meaning—which, if interpreted properly, offered the ‘reader’ a precious taste of the sacred plane. Yet, as the editors of this volume argue, modern scholars tend to ignore ‘the visual nature of writing even in lavishly decorated late antique and medieval books, preferring to “look through” writing to the meaning it contains’ (p. 2). Seeking to counter this ‘logocentrism’, the fourteen inspiring chapters examine the symbolic meanings of ornament from a variety of methodological angles and theoretical perspectives to decipher the ‘rafts of underlying meaning’ (p. 3) in this graphicacy over a wide spectrum of cultures.

What follows is a brief summation of the chapters that I particularly appreciated. Chapter 1 opens in a recently Christian mid-fourth century Roman Empire to discuss the calligraphic monogram found on the dedication page of the Calendar of 354. Ildar Garipzanov argues that the creator of our calendar, Furius Dionysius Filocalus, wielded techniques like those used by modern graphic designers, which employ contours to create visualized concepts. Capitalizing on the links between drawing and writing, Furius crafted a monogram for its recipient, the Roman noble Valentius, that not only reflected contemporary trends in personal monograms, but also steeped his image in Christian and Neoplatonic messaging to appeal to Valentius’s appreciation of Christian and pagan learning.

Lawrence Nees’s chapter on quire marks in Frankish and Islamic manuscripts in the seventh and eighth centuries shows how graphicacy can be used to tackle important historiographical issues from hitherto untried perspectives. Deftly guiding the reader through the heated debates surrounding the date, production, and contents of the earliest Qur’ans, Nees suggests that richly decorated verse markers are a feature of Qur’ans dating from the eighth century or possibly earlier. By comparing them to similar marks found in seventh-century Latin manuscripts, Nees argues that by 700 CE there was a thriving production of ‘richly decorated manuscripts [...] of which we have only fragments today’ (p. 97). Moreover, he sees in this sharing of techniques evidence of far more entangled Islamic and Christian worlds in the seventh and eighth centuries than is usually suggested.

I found Cynthia Hahn’s chapter on the sign of the cross ‘as both metaphor and metonym’ (p. 101) particularly rich. She demonstrates that by the Middle Ages the cross as a sign had developed a ‘tremendous flexibility of meaning’ (p. 102).

Early Christians emphasized Christ's victory on the cross, a triumph that not only thwarted the Devil, but allowed God's grace to descend upon the earth. In a Roman world, where crucifixion was a particularly disgraceful death, Christ's victory also offered a more palatable message for prospective converts. This might explain aspects of the emperor Constantine's conversion, where famously before the battle of Milvian Bridge in 312 he had witnessed a vision of a shining cross in the sky accompanied by the words *hoc signo victor eris*, 'by this sign you will conquer'. Constantine's successors had adopted and adapted this Christian imagery. For humbler Romans, wearing a crucifix or making the sign of the cross granted the power to avert evil or bad luck. For medieval intellectuals astronomy and theology went together. As Hahn concludes, 'the cross of the early Middle Ages serves as the ultimate graphical sign. It forms letters and words, it shapes actions and bodies, but so much more, it organizes and rules the heavens' (pp. 122–23).

Benjamin Tilghman insists that the image of Jesus found in the ornate pages of the *Book of Kells's* (c. 800) depiction of the Temptation of Christ, which the modern audience primarily enjoys for its aesthetics, evoked a deeper and more spiritual response in its medieval audience. For example, the letters 'knotted and woven together' with 'blue, purple, and scarlet' painted spaces between them create 'the idea of the divine text as a veil which must be opened or passed through on the way to spiritual learning' (p. 177). By weaving his words and images, the designer reminded the reader to not just read the text with his eyes 'but through the spirit, lest scripture remain a veil' (p. 177).

This attractive volume replete with ornate images reveals the insights gained when one understands the symbolic thought-world behind the theological messages contained within these graphic devices. Indeed, to rely only on the verbal and ignore the visual is to risk missing much of the ornamental book's intended meaning.

MICHAEL EDWARD STEWART, *University of Queensland*

**Busby, Keith**, *French in Medieval Ireland, Ireland in Medieval French: The Paradox of Two Worlds* (Medieval Texts and Cultures of Northern Europe, 27), Turnhout, Brepols, 2017; hardback; pp. x, 516; 20 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. €110.00; ISBN 9782503570211.

Consensus that Anglo-Norman (or insular) French was a degenerate dialect, not worth serious study, has dissipated. However, prior to this monograph there was no comprehensive review of Ireland's contribution to insular French. As Keith Busby's title suggests, his work has interlocking objectives. It examines both French in Ireland, from before England's invasion of 1169 to the fourteenth century, and the function of Ireland in French literature over the same period. The double perspective allows a sophisticated argument. Ireland was reputed a land of marvels before French-speaking Anglo-Normans appeared. Their presence helped advertise Ireland's legendary aspects within *la Francophonie*, whilst also acquainting outsiders with the real, non-marvellous island. The book explores the

consequences of this twofold change. Busby's undertaking demands a nuanced approach, especially since it spans two centuries, multiple languages, much of Europe, and several disciplines: history, linguistics, literary studies. He succeeds.

Chapter 1 offers a sociolinguistic account of the situation. French entered Ireland several decades before 1169's irruption of French speakers from Britain, with the establishment of Cistercian houses there; by 1217, disputes between native Irish and immigrant, Francophone monks made necessary formal visitations from Cîteaux. Busby investigates other scenarios in which knowledge (or ignorance) of the language had potential to affect social relations, including within marriages and among trading communities, and considers the social and political roles of interpreters. Limited evidence, especially for spoken French and for the earliest years, creates difficulties, which he partly addresses by judicious application of common sense and analogies with the linguistic situation elsewhere.

Chapter 2 interrogates surviving Hiberno-French texts, including fragmentary examples such as gravestone inscriptions, assessing genre, message, authorship, intended audience, and so forth. These works frequently have historical, not just literary, significance: *La Geste des Engleis en Yrlande* is one of only two contemporary accounts of the events of 1169, for instance. While most of the works have previously been examined independently, assessing them as a group allows Busby to bring a new perspective to bear. He also uncovers new information. Because Jofroi de Waterford is known to have collaborated with one Servais Copale, a native of Liège, it has been assumed Jofroi was based in Paris. Busby, though, demonstrates that a Servais Copale resided in Waterford as Jofroi was writing.

Chapter 3 canvasses Ireland's reputation as an isle of wonders, something that 'lent [it] the sort of mystique that authors of all kinds found irresistible' (p. 191). This reputation well pre-dated 1169. Monastic scribes preserved Irish legends and supplemented them with accounts of local saints; Irish monks stationed abroad then carried stories of St Patrick's Purgatory or St Brendan to communities elsewhere in Europe, from whence they could enter vernacular languages, cementing Ireland's reputation as a place of marvels.

Busby notes in Chapter 4 that, although the English became increasingly acquainted with the real Ireland, for a lengthy period this coexisted in literature with the Ireland of myth. Chivalric romance, the origins of which precisely coincided with the English arrival in Ireland, revolved around marvels. Ireland was a fertile source of these. Over time, romances' portraits indicated growing familiarity with Ireland's real circumstances, despite inevitable focus on its exotic wonders too. It was the provenance of giants and dragons, the site of magical items. However, romances echoed characteristic Irish power struggles, showed awareness of Ireland's political situation, and presented the place as somewhere to acquire and control—mirroring its real position vis-à-vis England. Busby points out that the advantageous marriages Anglo-Welsh younger sons made in Ireland after 1169 had their fantasy counterpart in the ubiquitous Irish princess of romance.

Prolonging his examination to the 1366 Statutes of Kilkenny, which introduced major political change to Ireland just as French romances stopped being written, Chapter 5 considers the ongoing importance to romance works of some Irish connection. The Irish reputation for marvels obliged writers to allude to the place, locating adventures there or giving their protagonists Irish ancestry. Contemporary Irish affairs, however, meant romance equally portrayed the Irish as barbarous and rebellious. Busby closes in the 1360s, when insular French's own days were numbered, with Froissart's *Melyador*, in which Ireland is devoid of marvels and the Irish themselves presented unsympathetically. The realistic standpoint was ascendant.

As can be seen, the volume covers a great deal of ground and, at times, the examples marshalled to support Busby's case threaten to overwhelm it. The writing, however, is clear, often with a dry turn of phrase. The number of editing errors rises above the threshold of consciousness, although without impeding comprehension or appreciation of the sophisticated, persuasive argument. A valuable work for several disciplines.

PATRICK BALL, *Hobart, Tasmania*

**Cefalu, Paul**, *The Johannine Renaissance in Early Modern English Literature and Theology*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2017; hardback; pp. 368; 7 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9780198808718.

Paul Cefalu's study *The Johannine Renaissance in Early Modern English Literature and Theology* is written as a corrective to an orientation to the Pauline in recent critical work on the period, through an examination of the devotional poetry of the seventeenth century. In early chapters Cefalu draws on the discourses of Luther, Calvin, Cranmer, and Peter Martyr Vermigli to establish the importance of John to the wider Reformation. In the penultimate chapter he argues for the unrecognized importance of the extension of, or radical appropriation of, Johannine discourses to the dissenting movements of the seventeenth century. The focus here is on sectarianism and antinomianism, with a strong claim that Johannine discourses are central to understanding both.

The Christ of John's Gospel has seen God, he has descended from heaven and returns to it, leaving the Paraclete as comforter. God is love in John's First Epistle. Some key biblical passages, of the true vine and the good shepherd, the turning of wine into water, the raising of Lazarus, and Christ's description of himself as the bread of life, are found only in John and much devotional poetry draws on these themes. It is hard to see, considering this, how the importance of John might have become downplayed.

One of the illuminating strengths of the study is its analysis of the poetic application of Johannine irony, the Socratic-like process through which misunderstandings on the literal level lead to higher and more spiritual forms of understanding. In much of the poetry the result of interpreting a puzzle is reassurance, and there is an interesting relationship between the coolness of the

intellectual process and the character of the comfort provided through it. Cefalu's central point is that interpreting the poems through the lens of the Johannine re-orientates the quest away from individual poetic idiosyncrasy and back to a reflection of the biblical source. The poems, in other words, make sense as devotions based in John and there is no need to reach for extraneous explanations beyond this.

This kind of summary naturally oversimplifies a complex and nuanced argument that is in turn grounded in, or responds in careful detail to (and through expansive footnotes), the complex critical work of many others. The study is often tantalizing because many of its points could have been usefully expanded to monographs in their own right. As a corrective it is not the purpose of the study to tease out the complex relationship between the Pauline and Johannine, although some of the subtlety of the task is glimpsed from time to time. It is a useful reminder, for example, that the Augustine whose interpretations of Paul so influenced the Reformation was also well-known by the Reformers for his sermons on the gospel of John.

The discussion on the spiritual comfort of the Paraclete and Johannine agape into the work of Donne and Milton, and of Herbert, Vaughan and Traherne respectively, forms the heart of the study. This analysis is preceded by an exploration of the Eucharist and John 6, Christ as the bread of life, and the importance of hearing for believing in the *noli me tangere* episode of Mary's encounter with the risen Christ, an episode that also appears only in John. After his treatment of the early modern dissenting movements, Cefalu returns, as if to move the study away from extremes and back to comfort, to the nature of disciple misunderstanding and the Johannine irony in the work of Herbert and Vaughan.

Cefalu argues, for example, that Herbert's use of the vine imagery in 'The Bunch of Grapes' works to allow a single Johannine portrayal of the divinity of Christ to emerge. In 'The Agonie' the imagery of the piercing of Christ's side conjoins the passion and love as in John 3.16. In 'Love Unknown' what is involved is a Johannine correction of Isaiah, a depiction of the natural character of Christian unbelief in John 12.39–41 leading through misunderstanding in a Johannine way to illumination. Cefalu's point is that 'Herbert's poetry is often revelatory rather than paradoxical in nature' (pp. 302–03).

The primary purpose of these poems is, for Cefalu, not a Pauline struggle with the nature of faith so much as a poetic depiction of the divine nature of Christ. In the afterword Cefalu describes his study as demonstrating a seventeenth century 'enchantment narrative that typically exalts sacred presence' (p. 313), something he had phrased in the introduction as Christ-mysticism. This approach, he has demonstrated, can go two ways, back to correspondences with earlier forms of Christian mysticism, and towards the more radical forms of Protestantism of the dissenters. How these differing directions fit within the cross-currents of theological thought in this period is a question that remains largely and inevitably unanswered within the scope of this interesting and often illuminating study.

GILLIAN HUBBARD, *Victoria University of Wellington*

**Clasby**, Eugene, trans., *Guillaume de Deguileville: Le Pèlerinage de l'âme (The Pilgrimage of the Soul)* (Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 471), Tempe, Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2017; hardback; pp. xxii, 154; R.R.P. US\$56.00; ISBN 9780866985246.

French Cistercian monk Guillaume de Deguileville (c. 1295–1358) was the author of a popular trilogy of allegorical poetical works: *Le Pèlerinage de la vie humaine (The Pilgrimage of Human Life)*, *Le Pèlerinage de l'âme (The Pilgrimage of the Soul)*, and *Le Pèlerinage de Jhesucrist (The Pilgrimage of Jesus Christ)*. This trilogy of devotional narratives in rhymed, octosyllabic couplets provided its lay audience with an entertaining spiritual guide for how to live a moral Christian life. The first two works in particular were widely read and translated during the Middle Ages and have been cited as major influences on Langland, Chaucer, Bunyan, and others.

*Le Pèlerinage de la vie humaine* was translated into modern English prose in 1992 by Eugene Clasby, who has now made the second work of this important trilogy available in English with his clear and engaging prose translation.

The *Pilgrimage of the Soul* continues the allegorical dream vision narrative of the *Pilgrimage of Human Life*. In the first work, the narrator/pilgrim describes his resolution to travel to the celestial city of Jerusalem. Guided by the beautiful Grace Dieu, the hapless pilgrim embarks on his journey through life, making many foolish errors and falling prey to a series of fearsome, misshapen hags, personifications of the seven deadly sins. Finally, he meets Death, only to be woken from his reverie by the bell for Matins.

His journey post-death is resumed in the *Pilgrimage of the Soul*. Again falling asleep, the narrator finds himself high in the air, looking down on his 'foul and disgusting' body (p. 1). Guilty of many sins and weaknesses during his lifetime, he must now suffer the consequences. He teeters on the cusp of eternal damnation as his guardian angel and the Devil argue over his soul. Finally, he is led before the heavenly tribunal for judgement before St Michael with Justice, Reason, Truth, and Mercy as witnesses. The devil also calls on Synderesis, his conscience, a 'monstrous and hideous old hag' with a long, thick worm-like tail (p. 13). Justice, Reason, and Truth agree that the soul should be condemned; Mercy alone supports him. On great scales, St Michael weighs the case for and against: of course, the damning evidence grossly outweighs the positive and the soul seems doomed to an eternity in hell. It is only when Mercy produces a document from Jesus Christ himself that the scales tip in the soul's favour and he is consigned instead to Purgatory for cleansing.

The narrator carries the burden of his sins to Purgatory in the form of a pack containing 'horns, claws, teeth and plenty of other filthy things that I will not describe because they were so foul' (p. 31). In Purgatory he is scorched and roasted, the agony relieved only by the soothing ointments of a woman, Prayer. Taking him by the hand, his angel instructs him on the nature of Purgatory, Hell and Paradise and shows him the ghastly punishments meted out for various vices.

For example, those guilty of sloth are roused from their torpor by being bound to a wheel and smashed so hard against a pillar that their brains are dashed out and eyes burst from their sockets. After the angel digresses at length on various complex theological subjects including original sin and the fine distinctions between the soul and the body, the pilgrim finds his torments easing. He realizes that the Trinity is ‘like a peacock’s tail, three colours in one, red, gold and green’ (p. 130) and that the many mansions of heaven, as described to him by the angel, are ‘great comfort, great delight, great joy everlasting, so marvelous that the heart cannot conceive it and the tongue may not tell of it. It is the city of Jerusalem that you once set out for’ (p.108). Finally, having accomplished his quest, the pilgrim wakes up, a great light from high falling upon his eyes.

Clasby is to be commended for providing an accessible, long overdue translation of an important medieval text and for retaining its complex didacticism, irony and sly humour. His translation is based on J. J. Stürzinger’s Old French edition of 1895, in turn drawn primarily from the fifteenth-century Paris, BnF, MS fr. 12466. Clasby provides a useful introduction and detailed explanatory notes, including biblical and other literary references. He also includes the most recent list of some fifty manuscripts containing the work. The present location of two of the three illustrations reproduced uncritically from Stürzinger could have been easily identified (and reproduced more accurately): London, British Library, MS Add. 38120, fol. 11<sup>v</sup>; and Manchester, Manchester University Library, French MS 2, fol. 123. The third illustration, on the cover, is from a late fifteenth-century manuscript last seen in 1937 in a sale of books from the library of Henry Gibbs, first Lord Aldenham.

HILARY MADDOCKS, *University of Melbourne*

**Cook, Harold J.**, *The Young Descartes: Nobility, Rumour, and War*, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 2018; hardback; pp. xvi, 276; 16 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. US\$35.00; ISBN 9780226462967.

Harold J. Cook’s new biography of René Descartes, *The Young Descartes: Nobility, Rumour, and War*, tackles the somewhat mysterious upbringing of the French philosopher. The book addresses a significant gap in our knowledge of Descartes’s intellectual development, and thus serves to shed light and contextualize the early days of Cartesian philosophy. In this task, the book goes to great lengths to describe the political and social circumstances of Descartes’s youth, which ultimately led to the philosophical vocation the Frenchman would choose.

The book begins by setting up the biographical problem Descartes scholars face. We have some knowledge of his youth, but his early adulthood is shrouded in mystery. Through his early biographers, such as Poisson, Borel, and Baillet, we know Descartes travelled widely, but beyond a few scattered details, our historiographical records are scarce. Cook highlights this by assessing and quickly rejecting A. C. Grayling’s proposal that Descartes’s frequent travels can be explained by the possibility that the Frenchman was a spy. As Cook

suggests, 'such moves toward trying to understand Descartes's life in light of the politicoreligious situation of his day are important and right, even if they are wrong in their speculative conclusions' (p. 24). The second chapter aims to do just that by focusing on the political and social background in France at the time of Descartes's youth. Cook argues that there were two possible reasons for why he would spend most of his life in exile: firstly, his break with his father, which indicated a set of political allegiances for Descartes; secondly, his lack of success with securing patronage from a wealthier noble.

The third chapter covers some of Descartes's military background. According to Cook, Descartes is likely to have been seeking to prove himself in one way or another and in so doing to find patronage. This seems plausible, given the culture of the day. The chapter also covers Descartes's meeting his friend and mentor Isaac Beeckman in 1618 at a market in Breda where the two struck up a conversation while solving a mathematical problem posted for the public. The friendship, as Cook shows, had a huge impact on the young René. Finally, the chapter touches on Descartes's famous *Olympica* dreams from the winter of 1619–20, which supposedly made such an impression on the young man that he decided to pursue a life of philosophy.

The fourth and fifth chapters focus on the period from 1620 to about 1630. Here, Cook argues that Descartes's travels coincided with the major political events happening in Europe at the time. While he doesn't go so far as to say this, he implies that Descartes's trips were quite unusual if he were merely travelling for his own interest. Cook argues that with the death of Descartes's potential patron, the count of Bucquoy, his military career came to a halt, since he was left without many prospects for employment and advancement.

From about 1625, the story of Descartes's life is better known. At this point, however, Cook begins to focus on the somewhat puzzling motivation behind the philosopher's move to the Netherlands and abandonment of France. The speculation is that the party at fault was Cardinal Richelieu, who was responsible for much misery amongst Descartes's friends, especially the death of Pierre de Bérulle. Descartes only returns to France after the Cardinal's death, which seems to coincidentally, at least, support this thesis.

In general, Cook provides an interesting and plausible account of Descartes's early life, and makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the French philosopher's youth. While the historical records here are too scant to ever conclusively determine all of the facts, this book goes a long way to assess what little we know. Ultimately, this book will be of interest not just to scholars interested in the history of Cartesian philosophy, but also those keen on the intellectual world of seventeenth-century Europe. In the preface to this book, Cook admits he is neither a historian of philosophy, nor a Cartesian, nor even a historian of France (p. xvi). I think with the publication of this book, he will be gladly welcomed into any of these groups.

MAKS SIPOWICZ, *Monash University*

**Coombe**, Margaret, Anne **Mouron**, and Christiana **Whitehead**, eds, *Saints of North-East England, 600–1500* (Medieval Church Studies, 39), Turnhout, Brepols, 2017; hardback; pp. xviii, 363; 19 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. €100.00; ISBN 9782503567150.

This volume is the product of a conference held at Oxford in 2015, providing some much-needed foci for medieval north-east England. This region and period, as the introduction itself states, is often neglected not just in medieval studies but also more generally. When one thinks of the North it is usually of an industrial or post-industrial landscape. By contrast, what this volume's contributors aim to do, and I believe achieve, is to aid in the revival of an intellectually and culturally vibrant North-East, charting this through the ecclesiastical lens of the Middle Ages, feeding into the revival narratives we can see in the region today. The introduction is a well-considered piece that really sets the tone for the rest of the volume, and this work has much to recommend it to a broad and multidisciplinary medievalist audience. It must be noted that despite the large chronological span mentioned in the title, this is a volume predominantly dedicated to the Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman Church, with the postscript providing the later medieval and early modern context.

As an archaeologist with a background in medieval studies I find this volume at once very stimulating (due to the supposed multidisciplinary) but also at points disappointing. The editors and authors repeatedly attempt to engage with material culture and other archaeological content, talking of landscape, churches, coffins, bodies, and saintly objects. However this is done with what I feel is a fundamental lack of critical engagement with the archaeological literature on these places, objects, and theoretical frameworks. For instance the project led by Chris Gosden at Oxford on English Landscape and Identities (EngLaID) would be useful here (<<http://www.arch.ox.ac.uk/englishlandscapes-introduction.html>>), or any work by David Petts and Sarah Semple, who specialize in the archaeology of early medieval Northumbria. Alan Thacker's chapter, titled 'The Saint in his Setting: The Physical Environment of Shrine in Northern Britain before 850', is particularly lacking in archaeological content despite its premise, with the now rather outdated three-volume survey by H. M. Taylor and Joan Taylor on *Anglo-Saxon Architecture* (Cambridge University Press, 1965–78), the works of David Rollason, and Tomás Ó Carragáin's study on the early medieval churches in Ireland (Yale University Press, 2010) being the only archaeology mentioned. It is missing key texts such as John Blair's *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society* (Oxford University Press, 2005), Tom Williamson's *Environment, Society and Landscape in Early Medieval England: Time and Topography* (Boydell Press, 2012), or any other environmental and landscape archaeology, or even palaeoecology. Such scholarship would have benefited the chapter, making it more rounded, and not

just strictly architectural in terms of the physical environment. It should perhaps be rephrased as ‘the built environment’ to better reflect the mostly ecclesiastical architecture and church archaeology bent in the piece.

Similarly, Allan Doig’s contribution, ‘Sacred Journeys/Sacred Spaces: The Cult of St Cuthbert’, whilst interesting and well conceived, might have considered some archaeological and material culture theory in terms of sacrality and the use of space. Whenever saints and especially the relics or bodies of these saintly individuals are mentioned throughout the work, I found myself yearning for a discussion over the concepts of the corpse, embodiment, necroagency, archaeoethanatology, and decomposition; and how medieval people might have interacted with these saintly bodies in life as well as in death (an approach developed by Howard Williams). In terms of the ever-present Cuthbert, it seems a shame to not bring these considerations to any discussion of his incorruptibility. However, this book is primarily historical and literary in focus and achieves some good breadth across these disciplines, also incorporating (as mentioned above) architecture and art history. The visual experiences conveyed by Richard Sharpe and Lynda Rollason are welcome additions and add great colour and depth.

It is overall a very good collection of some of the best scholars of Northumbrian history, literature, architecture, and art history, with some refreshingly different perspectives on the region such as Sarah Foot’s points on Bede’s ‘nationalism’, David Rollason’s contribution on Hexham shining some needed light away from Bede and Cuthbert, Lindisfarne, and Durham, and Margaret Harvey’s postscript giving us an intriguing early modern contribution which is rare in such volumes. The post-Reformation perspective is a nice addition, although it seems a little disjointed with the rest of the collection. The need for this volume and more research into the formation of this region’s identity are absolutely vital, and the North-East’s unique saintly heritage is an excellent avenue into this. As Margaret Coombe, Anne Mouron, and Christiania Whitehead state, this is the land of Bede and Cuthbert, a region that has been highly contested (likely even before the Romans), and which is still constantly renegotiating its identity and heritage today. Well worth a read for any early medievalist interested in the region or its major figures and religious houses.

SAMANTHA LEGGETT, *University of Cambridge*

**Coss, Peter, Chris Dennis, Melissa Julian-Jones, and Angelo Silvestri**, eds, *Episcopal Power and Local Society in Medieval Europe, 900–1400* (Medieval Church Studies, 38), Turnhout, Brepols, 2017; hardback; pp. xi, 293; 2 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. €80.00; ISBN 9782503573403.

This engaging volume contributes to a burgeoning literature about medieval bishops. It stems from the first Power of the Bishop Conference, “‘In the Hands of God’s Servants’: The Power of the Bishop in Western Europe”, held at the University of Cardiff in 2013. Following the recent trend away from examining bishops on a broader stage, the volume focuses on bishops in their own dioceses.

As the excellent introduction asserts, we need to understand how bishops created, cultivated, and articulated their power at the local level to fully comprehend the function, position, and nature of episcopal office.

Part 1, 'Constructing Episcopal Power', begins with Peter Coss's analysis of how monastic narratives affect modern accounts of Coventry's twelfth-century bishops and should be counterbalanced by probing episcopal activity throughout the entire diocese. Next comes Heidi Anett Øvergård Beistad's engaging account of Bishop Árni Þorláksson of Skálholt's success at reconstructing episcopal authority in thirteenth-century Iceland through ties to family, friends, local aristocracy, and the Norwegian king. A successful relationship with King William the Conqueror, as Chris Dennis reveals, helped the bishop of Coutances acquire the resources to restore and enrich his church in Normandy. Changing focus, Angelo Silvestri's contribution analyses how Bishop Robert Grosseteste of Lincoln's education and early years influenced his ideas about, and exercise of, episcopal power. Part 1 concludes with Melanie Brunner's noteworthy examination of how c. 1300 the bishop of Sion (in modern Switzerland) negotiated local networks and physical space to exercise his authority over the cathedral chapter.

Building on Part 1, Part 2, 'Enhancing Episcopal Power', demonstrates the methods bishops used to boost their existing authority. It begins with Maria Chiara Succurro's study of how the abbey of Leno's twelfth-century charters 'highlight the scope' of the bishop of Brescia's power and how 'it conditioned local society' (p. 118) as he established his authority over the monastery. Christine Axen's study of Bishop Zoen of Avignon's mid-thirteenth-century episcopate shows how he rebuilt and increased episcopal power, using various tools to successfully navigate perceived local threats to his position. Similarly, Jelle Lisson uncovers how the bishops of Liège used different methods to expand their diocese's borders, thus enhancing their authority by bringing new regions under their control. Pieter Bytbeier's chapter on Bishop Gerard of Cambrai highlights how prelates engaged with the cults of local bishop-saints to amplify respect for the episcopal office and themselves. Switching to the legal sphere, Aaron Hope concludes Part 2 by illustrating how the development of the episcopal vicar-general's office signals the increased 'power of the bishop at the local diocesan level [following] the twelfth-century legal renaissance' (p. 196).

Part 3 functions as a chronological case study, focusing on the visual and written expression of episcopal power in England after the Norman Conquest and Barons' Wars. First, Charlotte Lewandowski discusses how disputes with the cathedral chapter over post-conquest episcopal building activity at Durham impacted on the boundaries of the bishop's power. Melissa Julian-Jones's excellent investigation of thirteenth-century episcopal seals and their iconography reveals that in response to national events, bishops altered visual representations of themselves to stress links with their kin, emphasizing their status and ability to manage their dioceses. Taking a literary focus, Andrew Fleming shows how stories of miracles performed by bishop-saints can be used to interpret non-elite attitudes towards episcopal power. Lastly, John Jenkins's thought-provoking study

of Bishop John Grandisson of Exeter demonstrates how Grandisson constructed an image of a prelate who successfully asserted his authority in the fourteenth century, concealing the truth of his failure.

As shown above, this volume has a large geographical and temporal range, unlike some recent studies on medieval bishops. Although there is a strong focus on England, reflecting the interests of the conference attendees, chapters also consider prelates from Iceland, France, Italy, and Switzerland. This wider range of places and time periods reveals some broad themes.

One persistent theme is that bishops everywhere had to work within and exploit complex local power structures to ensure their success. Prelates who lacked relationships with royal, secular, and religious stakeholders and networks in their diocese had difficulty fulfilling their episcopal office. Another related theme is that successful bishops used various methods to increase or enhance their power, depending on local circumstances and available resources. Recurring examples include bishops expressing territorial control through building activities and instituting tithes, and associating themselves with their saintly predecessors.

By demonstrating the importance of the local, diocesan level for building, enhancing, and expressing a bishop's power this volume fulfils its intention. An enjoyable and stimulating read, it has begun a discussion that will ultimately accomplish the book's purpose of helping create a framework for examining episcopal power in its local context.

KYLY WALKER, *Monash University*

**Dumitrescu, Irina**, *The Experience of Education in Anglo-Saxon Literature* (Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature, 102), Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2018; cloth; pp. xiii, 235; R.R.P. £75.00; ISBN 9781108416863.

In this book Irina Dumitrescu selects five texts and investigates how they represent encounters between teachers and students. The aim is not so much to study the nature and history of education in Anglo-Saxon England as to explicate texts through exploration of how they problematize the transactions of teacher and pupil (or pupils), and how the educational experience involves 'a host of energies both dark and productive: desire, pain, fear, and failure' (p. 2). The critical lenses and theoretical framings applied differ from text to text and, as Dumitrescu notes, the particular kind of readings derived from her approach need not occlude other readings. The apostle at the heart of *Andreas*, for example, can be read both as a model saint, and as a failed pupil. The book succeeds admirably because of this variety and the author brings to her analyses a strong interdisciplinary grounding in philology, history, literary theory, educational theory, and other fields.

Chapter 1 introduces the earliest text, Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica*, and focuses on Bede's account detailing John of Beverley's healing of a pauper who was speechless from birth and disfigured by his scabrous head. The enactment of processes of instruction derived from Latin grammatical learning to restore

vernacular speech to the youth resonates with other episodes in the *Historia* such as the stories of the Anglian slaves in the Roman market, Caedmon's transformation, and the freeing of Imma; and beyond these, with biblical analogues involving linguistic rupture and unification.

Chapter 2 explores *Solomon and Saturn I* and the desire of Saturn to learn the Pater Noster. It highlights the fear that accompanies this desire to know a prayer so powerful against the Devil, and perhaps against the recipient, who was schooled in the sciences of Libya, Greece, and India before his instruction by Solomon. Chapter 3, 'Violence: Ælfric Bata's *Colloquies*', provides a provocative reading of this strange Latin textbook, simultaneously 'threatening, funny, serious and ludic' (p. 89). The interplay of dramatization, punishment, trauma, and memory forms a central focus of this chapter, which casts much new light on Ælfric Bata's educational strategy.

Chapter 4 sets out an innovative interpretation of the problematic poem *Andreas*, whose author, it is claimed, has drawn on a theory of learning as recollection, or *anamnesis*, going back to Plato, adapted by Augustine, and to be found in Cynewulf's *Elene* and Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy*, whence they influenced the *Andreas*-poet. Just as Philosophy teaches Boethius, so too *Andreas* teaches its audience, through dynamic recollection, 'to reflect, question, and ruminate' (p. 119). Finally, in Chapter 5, 'Desire: *The Life of St Mary of Egypt*', a new relationship of pain, desire, and learning is presented as Mary, whose martyrdom is psychological rather than physical, teaches the pride-filled Zosimus and critiques the varied forms of monastic education that shaped him.

There are occasionally places where the evidence might be probed more deeply. It seems odd to observe that *Solomon and Saturn I* is 'scribbled' in the margins of the copy of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* in CCC MS 41 (the Old English translation of the *History*, to be precise), when the hand that entered it also copied the other marginal texts, and all of them in a workman-like book hand. It might be observed that the hapax legomenon 'gebrydded', which is interpreted as 'terrified', to support the argument, is perhaps paralleled by the forms *innbryded*, *inbrydnesse*, and *onbrydnesse* written earlier by the copyists of the Bede text in CCC MS 41, where they are scribal variants of forms with *-bryrd-* in other manuscripts of the text. The form in *Solomon and Saturn I* might too be considered a 'corruption' by a West Saxon scribe copying an unfamiliar Anglian word, and that the author's word *gebrydded* (or *inbrydded*?) was intended to mean 'pricked, inspired'. This is a minor quibble, nonetheless.

This is a book that should be read and digested by all Anglo-Saxonists. It is a model of clarity and well-structured argumentation. It is deeply informed by the author's wide reading and skill in critical interpretation, and forms a highly significant contribution to the field.

GREG WAITE, *University of Otago*

**Gade**, Kari Ellen, and Edith **Marold**, eds, *Poetry from Treatises on Poetics* (Skaldic Poetry of the Scandinavian Middle Ages, 3), Turnhout, Brepols, 2017; cloth; 2 vols; pp. clii, 1359; R.R.P. €165.00; ISBN 9782503518947.

This is another volume (in two parts) to appear in the nine-volume series ‘Skaldic Poetry of the Scandinavian Middle Ages’ in progress. Since 2008 five have appeared (1, 2, 3, 7, and 8), and through the splendid website and database readers already have some access to the volumes in preparation, or can consult earlier editions of the texts yet to appear in newly edited form. Furthermore, each print edition as completed is also available online as a fully searchable electronic text.

The aim of the series is to provide a critical edition, with accompanying English translation and notes, of the entire corpus of medieval Norse poetry, excluding only the *Poetic Edda* and closely related poetry, and the *rímur*. The edition is based on the evidence of all known manuscripts of each text, and a thorough review of previous editions and commentaries. A century after the appearance of Finnur Jónsson’s *Den norsk-islandske skjaldedigtning*, this series provides a new collected, standard edition of Norse poetry in a form accessible to the wider academic world. Indeed, one of its express aims is to make skaldic poetry available to students and scholars not only in the field of Old Norse studies, but also in disciplines such as history, archaeology, the history of religion, and comparative literature. As such it is generous in its provision of introductory and explanatory materials, and a model of clarity, from the key to the editorial structure (on the front and rear pastedowns of each volume) to the detailed lists of sigla and bibliographical references, the glossary of technical terms, and the various indexes. Texts are presented in normalized orthography, followed by a rearranged version in prose word order, and accompanied by a translation with a key to the kennings embedded within it. The economy and clarity of this system is admirable, and as with so many features in these volumes, shows how carefully the editors and contributors have thought through issues of accessibility for a wide readership.

The present volume is distinctive in its nature because of the diverse and fragmented material it must handle. It collects the poems, stanzas, and numerous fragments of stanzas, couplets or single lines cited in the prose treatises of Snorri’s *Edda*, the *Third* and *Fourth Grammatical Treatises*, and *Laufás Edda*, along with the þulur, and a few other scattered items. A line or two, or a *helmingr*, cited in Snorri or one of the other sources, is sometimes all that survives from a particular poet’s output: this is the case for example with the *helmingr* by an otherwise unknown poet called Steinarr, cited by Snorri to illustrate a particular kind of kenning for ‘woman’ (p. 384). Sometimes a fragment may survive from a known poet’s work cited more expansively in a family saga or king’s saga, or from a poem by a known poet otherwise lost (Einarr Skúlason’s *Øxarflokkur*, for example, pp. 140–51). Fragments can also only tentatively be attributed to a named poet, as

for example in the case of a *helmingr* cited by Snorri and attributed to ‘Hallr’, who seems to be Hallr Snorrason (pp. 228–29). In part, the volume serves as a guide to the ‘lost literature’ of Scandinavia, providing glimpses of so much that has not survived.

In addition to the two principal editors, no fewer than eleven other experts in the field have edited sections of the volume. Reviewers of volumes in the series up until now have acclaimed the work for its scope and for the meticulousness and acumen of the scholarship within them. This volume is no exception, and the editors are to be complimented on the way that such a disparate and sometimes intractable range of fragments has been put under the microscope of critical and editorial inquiry.

GREG WAITE, *University of Otago*

**Gómez Muntané**, Maricarmen, and Eduardo **Carrero Santamaría**, eds, *La Sibila: Sonido. Imagen. Liturgia. Escena*, Madrid, Editorial Alpuerto, 2015; paperback; pp. 305; R.R.P. €19.50; ISBN 9788438104897.

**Gómez Muntané**, Maricarmen, ed., *El Juicio final: Sonido. Imagen. Liturgia. Escena*, Madrid, Editorial Alpuerto, 2017; paperback; pp. 352; R.R.P. €21.00; ISBN 9788438105009.

It is not often that a group of scholars, all leaders in their respective disciplines, come together to examine a topic from all angles, leading to an exciting interdisciplinary collaboration. In this case, the twenty often interrelated chapters of the two books here reviewed grew out of two symposia, held respectively at the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters at the Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona in 2014, and at Castelló d’Empúries in 2016. The resulting volumes are bookended by thoughtful observations from central members of the ‘team’—Maricarmen Gómez, Eduardo Carrero, and José Enrique Ruiz-Doménec, all from the Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona. Gómez edited the first volume with Eduardo Carrero, and the second alone, and it was indeed through their passion for a true *integration* of humanistic enquiry and scholarship across disciplinary boundaries that this project took wings.

Maricarmen Gómez has been, for many years and through many publications, the primary scholar of and spokesperson for the Song of the Sibyl (*Canto de la Sibila*) from its earliest documentable beginnings in Spain through to the latest reconstructions and performances of various versions. The Song of the Sibyl refers to a liturgical drama and chant in which the Sibyl prophesies the signs that describe the Apocalypse. The most ancient texts were Greek, better known through a Latin translation attributed to St Augustine in the Middle Ages in the *Sermo de Symbolo*, but now attributed to Quodvultdeus, Bishop of Carthage from 437 to 453. The earliest known written-down chant comes from a miscellaneous collection from the ninth or tenth century (St Martial of Limoges, F-Pn lat.1154).

Although the introduction of the new Roman breviary in 1568 led to the abolition of the Song of the Sibyl, scholars have continued to revive it, and various versions are now performed in a number of places in Spain and elsewhere. There were and are many versions that have survived over a long period of time, in some cases with a written record, and in others through oral transmission. As Gómez has pointed out, the majority of these versions come from Spain (26) and include six in Catalan, and one in Gallo-Portuguese; and although no two versions are identical in their texts, the chants remain fairly stable. Declared a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO on 16 November 2010, the Song of the Sibyl has been performed in one guise or another from the Middle Ages up until today. Daniel Rico's magisterial opening chapter in the first book provides a full background to this UNESCO decision and meditates on its meaning, providing a context and paving the way for the complex studies that follow.

Inextricably related to the Song of the Sibyl, the Final Judgement (*el Juicio Final*)—referring to the passage in Matthew (25.31–46) in which Christ will come in all his glory, accompanied by all his angels, and sit on his throne of glory—was a recurrent subject of representation in both the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, and manuscript evidence goes back to the first third of the fourteenth century, with the representation of the mystery of the *Jour du Jugement* (Besançon, Bibl. Municipale, M 579).

While the preservation and discovery of the past, musicologically speaking, began with the recovery of manuscript evidence and its interpretation from a technical point of view, scholars today have moved far beyond a linear and single-focused approach. Now, any discussion of music or texts of the past must consider questions of context and meaning. In the case of the Song of the Sibyl and the Final Judgement, all of the elements that feed into the total experience must be regarded as equal players in the whole. The prophesies and signs of the Sibyl lead to the Last Judgement, and by extension to the *Exultet* where a reference to the 'trumpet of salvation' from the Song of the Sibyl reappears in the opening lines and invokes the Second Coming and the Last Judgement.

The two volumes under consideration here take in all three elements; and the Song of the Sibyl, the Final Judgement, and the *Exultet*, are considered and are often intertwined. Both books are loosely structured around the four strands of the original symposia (*Sonido. Imagen. Liturgia. Escena*) and include, broadly speaking, studies in the following areas: language and textual history, the musical text, the liturgical/ritual components, and spatial issues and dramatic scenography. However, it is the frequent crossovers that make these books so rich.

Three chapters look closely at textual matters, two by Eva Castro, the first of which deals with the history and authorship of the Song of the Sibyl, and the second with the Latin medieval literary tradition and the signs of the Judgement. These demonstrate Castro's mastery of her topic and should be read with the chapter by Sadurní Martí in *El Juicio Final*, in which that author provides

a complex and thorough interrogation of the text of the Song of the Sibyl. He weaves a rich tapestry that includes all known Occitan and Catalan manuscript testimonies and is able to conclude that although they may have been affected by oral transmission and by copies produced from memory, it is possible to produce a compact recension. To these should be added Francesc Vicens's discussion of oral traditions as they apply to the Sibyl.

Studies of the texts lead seamlessly into considerations of the music. Here, scholars move all the way from a consideration of the Song of the Sibyl and Portuguese sources (Manuel Pedro Ferreira), related material of the *Exultet* (Kathleen Nelson and Manuel Castiñeiras), to a seventeenth-century version by Calderón de la Barca (Alvaro Torrente and Ferran Huerta). Finally, in a chapter in each volume, Gómez takes us from the earliest documentable beginnings in Spain right up to the latest reconstructions and performances of various versions taking place today, thus adding to her considerable list of publications on various aspects of the Sibyl story.

While text and music provide the basic material for both the *Canto de la Sibila* and *El Juicio Final*, it is in their liturgical-ritual meanings and theatricality that they come to life. Castiñeiras takes us through the mythical underpinnings of the Song of the Sibyl, and Gabriel Seguí, in presenting extracts from customaries and medieval ceremonials from Mallorca from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries, allows the reader insights into *how* the items were performed within a liturgical context in one specific place. This leads naturally into considerations of the use and meanings of liturgical and theatrical space (Castiñeiras). With Eduardo Carrero's chapters in each volume, 'Entre el transepto, el púlpito y el coro. El espacio conmemorativo de la Sibila', and 'Levantaos a luizio: topografía y escena de la predicación', we enter a world of the art and architectural historian. These chapters are complemented by those of Stephanie Klauk, Francesc Massip, and the second study by art historian Daniel Rico.

One of the strongest aspects of these two related volumes is the degree to which the reader is introduced to a whole world of Hispanic culture that is for the most part unknown to the English-speaking world. Extensive bibliographic material offers a way in to the content of each chapter, thus encouraging the reader to follow, in the spirit of scientific investigation, the material that precedes each individual study.

Space does not permit a journey through each chapter or a discussion of the work of each author. Suffice it to say that the whole collection has been curated with expertise and flair and offers a model of how true interdisciplinarity can work in the hands of experts.

JANE MORLET HARDIE, *The University of Sydney*

**Güttner-Sporzyński**, Darius von, ed., *Writing History in Medieval Poland: Bishop Vincentius of Cracow and the 'Chronica Polonorum'* (Cursor Mundi, 28), Turnhout, Brepols, 2017; cloth; pp. xii, 289; 6 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. €80.00; ISBN 9782503569512.

Bishop Vincentius of Cracow was an important twelfth-century church figure and writer now largely forgotten. His *Chronicle of Poland* is a lasting monument to his life's work. The chronicle invents Poland's historical roots in an effort to provide legitimation for the country's authority and fictional existence as the '*serenissima res publica Poloniae*' and to present a history of the Poles consonant with the rule of law, justice, and organic unity. For the episcopal chronicler the subject of history is the state, and he abandons biography in favour of politics. Vincentius writes that 'the Poles should be judged by the courage of the spirit, the strength of their bodies rather than their wealth' (p. 131). He presents the Poles as a 'depository of virtues' (p. 185) and his chronicle supports that assumption as he argues for inherent moral qualities in Polish history and identity. Zénon Kałuža points out that Vincentius's work is historical reconstruction in the form of a *Gesta* featuring the fluidity of power as a force within history that translates from one locus to another and is seen most clearly in the political divisions of the state (pp. 140–43). From time to time, the chronicler uses myth to create myth. Given the uncertainty about many realities concerning the Polish High Middle Ages, Vincentius's narrative must be regarded as projecting an ideal as opposed to reflecting established political theory.

There are many historiographical debates about Vincentius and his chronicle but there is near unanimity about the significance of the narrative. The chronicle signals a shift away from oral communication. Vincentius functions as an agent of change and in consequence the chronicle helps to establish Poland's self-identity. Many copies exist but there is no extant autograph of the chronicle. The structure of the narrative takes the form of a dialogue in the first three books but shifts in Book 4 to a direct sequence-of-events narration. The writer does not tell us why. Is this the result of a time-lapse, change of writer, or a deliberate literary technique? The chronicler repeatedly presents himself as 'a servant who carried the quill and the inkwell' (see pp. 8, 52, and 102) and who became designated as 'the only and extraordinary record-keeper' (see pp. 8 and 179). He draws upon the church fathers, Scripture, along with Greek and Latin writings—Vincentius clearly had access to a broad corpus of philosophical works—but humbly says that he is a dwarf upon the shoulders of giants. Vincentius employs the idea of linear time and history in bringing Poland to the forefront of historical awareness. Tellingly, he focuses on politics and avoids theology and its implications.

The extant copies of the chronicle feature interlinear glosses, marginalia, and notations about words. The work has been considered difficult chiefly on account of its linguistic ornateness featuring adverbial nominal phrases in the ablative

absolute form, superordinate nouns, unvaried predicates, and paronomasia. Further, one regularly comes across ‘elaborate nominal phrases, subjective as well as adverbial and verbal’ (p. 97) used to create a new narrative style devoted to the chronicler’s intention of creating a re-formed concept of Polish history. It should also be noted that Vincentius’s chronicle is prosimetrical, featuring both prose and verse. It is useful to appreciate that Vincentius had legal training and composed his chronicle like a musical score. Despite challenges from later historical writings, the chronicle was studied in Polish universities by the fifteenth century, though a declining interest can be discerned by the 1480s.

Darius von Güttner-Sporzyński has edited a fine volume consisting of twelve contributions. The quality of the chapters is generally high, shedding important light on various aspects of this typical example of the twelfth-century Renaissance. The chronicle was influential for two-and-a-half centuries and there is evidence it was studied, copied, imitated, commented upon, and used as a type of university textbook. There is a fair amount of repetition in the essays but this is not fatal. Vincentius’s chronicle is a fine example of those antique and medieval *auctores* (authors) who possessed *auctoritas* (authority) and it raises the question of how a writer comes to possess authority. The answer lies in what Polish philosopher and historian Krzysztof Pomian has posited as the past being an object more of faith than of knowledge. The essays describe in multiple ways how the critical assessment of the past led to a questioning of historical sources and their writers, and in this manner the authority of those sources and writers began to be challenged. Vincentius was part of this cycle. This twelfth-century chronicler took the view that the task of the historian is to set forth what happened in the past just as it occurred and his personal attributes have no impact on the content of his work (p. 100). That medieval view has now been supplanted.

THOMAS A. FUDGE, *University of New England*

**Horobin**, Simon, and **Aditi Nafde**, eds, *Pursuing Middle English Manuscripts and their Texts. Essays in Honour of Ralph Hanna* (Texts and Transitions, 10), Turnhout, Brepols, 2017; cloth; pp. xviii, 262; 9 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. €75.00; ISBN 9782503566702.

Festschriften divide opinion: for some, the appearance of such a volume signals the end of a career, but here the word ‘pursuing’ conveys the zing of momentum and excitement. ‘As Ralph continues to publish, unhindered by retirement’, editors Simon Horobin and Aditi Nafde enthuse, referring to twenty-five books, all with prestigious publishers, arising from individual and collaborative authorship, as well as 140 articles and counting, ‘this list [of publications] will soon be out of date’ (p. 241).

This Festschrift begins with Vincent Gillespie’s panegyric for his friend and colleague of more than thirty years that culminates in the word ‘noble’: I have not read such genuine praise, unreserved respect or acute judgement anywhere else. Gillespie traces ‘Ralph’s’ distinguished and influential career from his first degree,

taken at Amherst College when it was still a men's college (1963), through his MA at Yale, then the PhD, also Yale, directed by Marie Borroff (1966); his sustained and wide-reaching contribution at the University of California, Riverside; his appointment, succeeding Malcolm Parkes, as university lecturer in palaeography and fellow of Keble College, Oxford, followed by promotion and tenure as Professor of Palaeography until his (official only) retirement in 2011. Above all, Gillespie honours Hanna's great humanist allegiance to 'lived experience and practice' that are, in Hanna's own words, 'complex and fractured, and include resistances, as well as joys' (p. xiv).

This volume exemplifies the aggregated practices Gillespie calls 'total codicology' (p. xiv) and counts the great and the good among its contributors: Derek Pearsall, Linne Mooney, Thorlac Turville-Petre, A. I. Doyle, Anne Hudson, Alastair Minnis, Richard Beadle, Traugott Lawler among those providing essays; others, including Mary-Jo Arn, the inestimable editor of Charles d'Orléans, Toshiyuki Takamiya, the great collector, and celebrated younger scholars like Andrew Cole and Daniel Wakelin sparkling on the *tabula gratulatoria*. The essays instantiate 'the tight networks of affinity and kinship within book-making, book reading and book-transmitting' (p. xiv).

Ian Doyle is hard-headed about the contents of Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Ashmole 750, 'a volume in a simple calf binding [...] with four raised bands [...] now [comprising] over 205 numbered leaves', twice catalogued by William H. Black and Larry M. Eldredge and identified by C. H. Talbot as a commonplace book 'once the possession of John Kylling, monk of Vale Royal, Cheshire' (p. 113–14). 'That is not however the whole story, or even the last of it' (p. 114): first, this manuscript is not a 'commonplace book' (p. 114) and, secondly, in the midst of it all, Doyle asks: 'What was brother John Kylling doing, being paid a regular stipend for his services, by an extensive list of inhabitants of [...] neighbouring villages, clergy and laity?' (p. 121). Hanna would approve the question.

Andrew Galloway uses Hanna's codicological achievements in 'reframing London[']s literary and intellectual history' and the textual ambit of 'the Augustinian canons and their hangers-on' (p. 178) to model a discerning investigation of Peter of Cornwall's *Liber disputationum*, *Pantheologus* and, especially, Peter's most sustained work, *Liber revelationum*—a huge compendium of visions, surviving in a single witness, now London, Lambeth Palace, MS 51. Galloway identifies Peter as an ambitious book-maker, a clever and innovative editor, for all that he is thrillingly appreciative of rhetorical brilliance (such as expressed in Bishop Gilbert Foliot's sermons). Crucially, Peter is alert *ad utilitatem multorum*, to the needs of 'a more "public" or civic milieu than an academic or remotely monastic one' (p. 196), a wider, bigger, more diversified community. In other words, Galloway identifies another version of Hanna's 'affinity' (p. xiv).

Anne Middleton contributes a masterly account of both the scholarship and codicology of the 'distinctive array of paratextual marks and signals' including the 'transmitters' attempts to specify an integral, explicit, and reliably edifying

purpose' (p. 199) for the A-text version of *Piers Plowman*. Her chapter trains this formidable apparatus on A's Passus XII, found only in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson poetry 137 (R) with its 'framing features' (pp. 206–07). Middleton develops an argument integrating the 'argumentative logic of [the poem's] narrative sequence and the textual mechanics' (p. 218) of A's redactors and B and C's scribal continuers, who were tasked with responding not only to 'the poet's enterprise' (p. 217) and the 'versioning' it occasioned but also 'the argument, not merely the *ordinatio* that informs it' (p. 221). Middleton is candid about revising her former opinions: again Ralphudian 'scepticism' (p. 210) produces consequential results.

Ralph Hanna's prodigious work across a dazzling array of manuscripts underpins these essays, as the asides, footnotes, and acknowledgments show. There is a palpable sense of Hanna's thorough scepticism shaping total codicology, its diverse disciplinary protocols, its purposive but subtle methods, and its exacting but sustaining values. This book gives unconditional support for Vincent Gillespie's judgement that 'the fair field full of medievalists is an intellectually better, richer and more robust place for [Ralph's] role in it' (p. xviii).

JENNA MEAD, *The University of Western Australia*

**Işıkşel, Güneş**, *La Diplomatie ottomane sous le règne de Selim II: paramètres et périmètres de l'Empire ottoman dans le troisième quart du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Collection Turcica, 20), Paris, Peeters, 2016; paperback; pp. xxv, 253; R.R.P. €65.00; ISBN 9789042931411.

This excellent new study from Güneş Işıkşel presents a Selim II who, while certainly not a sultan of conquest like his predecessors, shifted Ottoman foreign policy from an expansionist paradigm to a pragmatism reconciled to new realities of the Ottoman territoriality. The second half of the sixteenth century arguably marks a fundamentally important development in the relationship between the Ottoman Empire and European polities, producing formal diplomatic capitulations (*ahidnâmes*) with France and England. At the same time, Selim's foreign policy was international, with demands extending from the Maghreb to Aceh, and including the Caucasus and Safavid Iran. Selim may not have been at the helm of expansion (excepting Cyprus), but he solidified and fixed Ottoman frontiers (the '*paramètres et périmètres*' of the book's title) through diplomacy. The author chose Selim's reign not only for its rich source base, but also because it represents a new chapter in Ottoman history where diplomacy was front-and-centre. Işıkşel's work is certainly relevant to Ottomanists, but also to historians of early modern diplomacy.

Işıkşel opens by surveying Ottoman foreign policy and worldview in the sixteenth century. As Ottoman expansion slowed following the death of Suleiman I, a growing recognition of the empire's territorial limitations found its expression in treaties with neighbouring powers such as the Habsburgs, Safavids, and Venetians. Conquest now impracticable, a new concept of international relations was elaborated, grounded in a universalism that positioned the sultan as a 'supra-

sovereign'. As Işıksel explains, 'instead of the warrior sultan whom we see fighting at the head of his armies, [is] the figure of the "sultan *cosmocrate*"' (p. 211).

As a young *şehzade*, Selim established diplomatic relations with foreign powers while his father, Suleiman, was sultan. In this second chapter, Işıksel investigates Selim's central role negotiating with the Safavid shah and the French king, the latter constituting 'an important stage in [his] initiation [...] into the diplomatic affairs of western Europe' (p. 74).

The remaining chapters examine sultan Selim's foreign policy on three key frontiers: Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and the Mediterranean. Upon succession, one of Selim's immediate tasks was to consult his council on foreign policy and the question of pursuing war or peace with emperor Maximilian II. This is the focus of the third chapter where Selim, under the guidance of grand vizier Sokollu Mehmed Paşa, delivered diplomatic success that better defined the troublesome Ottoman–Habsburg frontier.

The following chapter deals with the Muscovite advance into central Asian territories, Kazan and Astrakhan, that significantly unsettled both commercial and pilgrimage routes, as well as the geopolitics of the northern Caucasus. Mention is also made of Selim's hesitancy towards involvement against the Portuguese in Aceh and the Persian Gulf.

The author then turns to the major theatre of Ottoman military engagement under Selim—the eastern Mediterranean—, notably the capture of Cyprus, the Venetian success at Lepanto, and subsequent protracted peace negotiations. Drawing on both diplomatic correspondence and narrative chronicles, Işıksel concludes that this period was central to the Ottomans delimiting their Mediterranean frontier to the east (and disengaging from the western Mediterranean).

Selim may have eschewed a military presence in the western Mediterranean, but he did pursue a diplomatic alliance to secure Ottoman objectives in that theatre. In the final chapter, Işıksel turns to the alliance between the Ottomans and French, reinvigorated under Selim II and Charles IX in the wake of Philip II's involvement in the Venetian–Ottoman conflict and the formation of the Holy League. The *amitié* with the French offered some diplomatic leverage and range in Ottoman engagement with western and eastern Europe.

Işıksel concludes with a compelling summation of how Selim had adapted Ottoman foreign policy to new realities, with a strong emphasis on diplomacy and defining frontiers. If conquest or expansion is the defining paradigm for Ottoman history, then Suleiman I's death marks its apogee—the 'classical age' of Halil İnalcık—and a precursor to Ottoman decline. Işıksel urges us to momentarily shelve this paradigm of expansion so as to understand the empire's continuity beyond such a 'Golden Age'.

The author pulls together an incredible range of diplomatic and official sources, including Ottoman (the *Mülhimme Defterleri*), Venetian, Habsburg, and French archives. Such a range of sources affords a more global, multi-perspectival view onto these frontiers. It is also fascinating to see the flexibility of

Ottoman foreign policy in dealing with courts that were north African, European, and central Asian, as well as Muslim and Christian. The only criticism is that, while the author's detailed and extensive accounts of historical developments and geopolitics are very clear, some further analysis of the kind found in the conclusion could have been more prevalent throughout the course of the book.

İşiksel's work lays down the terrain of diplomacy and foreign policy in the post-conquest Ottoman Empire under Selim, that Ottomanists, early modernists, and historians of diplomacy alike will find important.

DARREN M. SMITH, *The University of Sydney*

**Llewellyn**, Kathleen M., Emily E. **Thompson**, and Colette H. **Winn**, eds and trans, *Jeanne d'Albret: Letters from the Queen of Navarre with an Ample Declaration* (The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe: Toronto Series, 43; Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 490), Tempe, Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2016; paperback; pp. 116; R.R.P. US\$31.95; ISBN 9780866985451.

This is a slim but perfectly formed volume, both elegant and informative in its explanatory introduction, notes, and careful translation of the rhetorical virtuosity of this most intriguing of women, Jeanne d'Albret, queen of Navarre, daughter of Marguerite d'Angoulême (Marguerite of Navarre), niece of François I of France, and mother to Henri III of Navarre, future Henri IV of France.

The editors take care to situate both their subject and her work in an extended introduction, divided into four coherent parts: 'A Woman of Strength and Power', 'Jeanne and the Reformation', 'The Last Years', and 'The Afterlife of the *Ample Declaration*'; each punctuated by user-friendly sub-headings. While this reader is at one in describing Jeanne as a 'Woman of Strength and Power' (p. 1), she hesitates to conclude that she was 'an exceptional woman'. The most recent queenship scholarship, and studies of powerful premodern women more generally, demonstrate that elite and royal women were not exceptional for their times; like their male counterparts, rank made them exceptional, but not their involvement in public affairs. Roughly contemporaneous with Jeanne, we can point to Margaret of Parma (d. 1530); Jeanne's mother, Marguerite d'Angouleme (d. 1549); Mary, Queen of Scots (d. 1587); Jeanne's nemesis, Catherine de' Medici (d. 1589); Catherine's daughter, Marguerite of Valois (d. 1615); and Elizabeth I (d. 1603). This is not to suggest that Jeanne did not live an extraordinary life.

Despite Jeanne's mother Marguerite remaining a Catholic all her life, her religious beliefs were underpinned to a considerable extent by new French thinking about religion, and she protected both the Protestant Calvin and the Catholic humanist Rabelais. Like Erasmus, Prince of the Humanists, Marguerite, 'Mother of the Renaissance', sought to mediate between Catholics and Reformists to try to reform the Church from within, emphasizing a middle way rather than a complete break. Jeanne was exposed therefore to Reformist thinking from her earliest years, choosing in 1560 a different path from her mother Marguerite's and that of her

quisling husband Antoine of Bourbon who, after a couple of false starts, remained within the Catholic Church. It is hardly surprising that their Protestant son, Henri of Bourbon, reportedly conceded in 1593 that '*Paris vaut bien une messe*' (Paris is well worth a Mass), ascending the vacated Valois throne of France as Henri IV.

The introduction is followed by a useful 'Note on the Translation', highlighting the pitfalls of translating Jeanne's words due to her tendency to ramble and digress as well as her intentional ambiguities (p. 37). Five very important letters open the translated works: the first 'To the king' (Charles IX); the second 'To the queen, my sovereign lady' (the queen-mother, Catherine de' Medici); the third; To Monsieur, [brother of the king]' (Henri, duke of Anjou, later Henri III of France); the fourth 'To Monsieur my brother, Monsieur le Cardinal, etc.' (her brother-in-law, Charles of Bourbon); and the fifth, seeking military support, 'To the queen of England' (the Protestant monarch, Elizabeth I). The first four were all written from Bergerac on the same day, September 16, 1568. The letter to Elizabeth I was written on 16 October 1568 from the fortified port of La Rochelle where Jeanne embedded herself as the leader of the French Protestant party and from where she controlled Protestant propaganda, fortifications, finances, and intelligence gathering. What follows is Jeanne's very detailed rhetorical treatise, *Ample Declaration* (or justification) of the preceding letters.

Jeanne's *Ample Declaration* was not just destined for her epistolary correspondents—she intended it to be circulated widely in inexpensive, readily produced and distributed pamphlets. We must not forget that she controlled Protestant propaganda from her fortified headquarters in La Rochelle whence she had decamped with her children Henri and Catherine in the face of a combined Spanish and French Catholic offensive. Moreover, many parts of the *Declaration* exhibit features of performative rhetoric (p. 16). Even if she had wanted to, sixteenth-century Jeanne would not have been able to separate the private from the public in her correspondence (p. 16). Jeanne therefore goes to work, constructing an image of herself as a devoted mother of her children, her subjects, and reformist Christians—a loyal subject of France, a devoted friend of the queen-mother, Catherine de' Medici, but an implacable enemy of the influential Guises, particularly the Cardinal of Lorraine, whom she excoriates in unambiguous and repetitive terms.

This is an impressive addition to 'The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe' series, one which is sure to find a home on the shelves of teachers, students, and scholars keen to know more about the Reformation from a female perspective, to which insufficient attention has been paid.

ZITA EVA ROHR, *Macquarie University*

**Mancall**, Peter, *Nature and Culture in the Early Modern Atlantic* (Early Modern Americas), Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017; hardback; pp. 212; 12 colour, 51 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. US\$29.95, £24.99; ISBN 9780812249668.

This book is ‘about humans and nature in the sixteenth-century Atlantic basin’ (p. ix). It is a short work in an elegant edition, whose original form as Mellon Distinguished Lectures gives the book an accessibility a longer work might lack. The goal of the book is twofold: firstly, to ‘explicate European and indigenous American interpretations of nature’; and secondly, to argue that in order to ‘understand the environmental history of the sixteenth-century Atlantic basin, scholars must consider the wide range of potentially relevant evidence’ (p. x). Specifically, Peter Mancall analyses a series of visual images and oral histories (through printed versions) which, he argues, have ‘played too scant a role in scholars’ exploration of the initial encounter between peoples’ (p. x).

Across three chapters, a postscript, and an essay on sources, Mancall demonstrates that such evidence is both accessible and useful. Chapter 1 deals with early modern Americans’ and Europeans’ ‘capacious sense of nature’ (p. x) around 1500. Chapter 2 ‘traces changes in the natural world of the basin as a result of trans-oceanic encounters’ (p. x), and Chapter 3 focuses on the outer banks of North Carolina: ‘a place so well documented that it has become a synecdoche to represent all of early North America in many historians’ works’ (p. x). The postscript discusses two early modern texts about insects, one Mexican, the other European, and the ‘Note on Sources’ ‘set[s] the images and texts that are central to the main chapters into the context of writing about the environment in the early modern world’ (p. x). These notes are particularly good, providing a terrific guide for students and scholars alike, and with a wider scope than the chapters of the book itself.

Mancall argues that historians have already understood the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as critical turning points when humans re-thought what they knew of nature, but that this acuity now needs to be pushed back into the sixteenth century. This project should include the integration of previously unconsidered sources—visual images and oral history—into the ‘potentially relevant evidence’ (p. x) with which scholars are familiar. Mancall uses this evidence to demonstrate the complex reciprocity that underwrote the ‘Columbian Exchange’ (p. 38). It is for example the case with the extraordinary moment when, in Mexico in 1576, ‘Nahua artists who had likely studied a copy of Pliny’s *Naturalis Historia* in the library of the Real Colegio de Santa Cruz in Tlatelolco embraced his ideas in their depictions of indigenous plants at a time when an epidemic was reducing the Mexican population by perhaps fifty percent, thereby creating a memorial to their world in a visual language used by early modern Europeans to explain phenomena known in ancient Rome’ (p. xiii).

This work provides an excellent survey on its topic, and its shortened form would be really useful for students coming to grips with the field. I want

to conclude with two issues. Firstly, I am not totally convinced by the use of ‘Americans’ to describe the First Peoples of what we now call the Americas. I understand its utility. However, the term would have made no sense to the peoples Mancall is referring to, and ‘America’ itself was a European construction. I do however appreciate Mancall’s impulse in using it, and that brings me to the second issue, which is not just for Mancall’s book, but for all early modernists writing about this period in Atlantic history. This book is obviously underwritten by a desire for a more balanced historiography, one that treats the First Peoples as agents, not merely subjects of European will. But in doing so, my feeling is that it implies an equity of exchange which is largely fictive: the Nahua people mentioned above were dying as a consequence of European invasion. Mancall has closed out a problem with which we still need to grapple. How do historians of early modern Europe and its colonies properly reconcile the history of Europeans in the Americas, with its death, disease, and land theft, with the knowledge that historical grievances remain unresolved at a national and international level, and while the communities of the First Peoples are still living with the consequences of European invasion of their world? Writing as an Australian conscious of the injustices of colonialism on my continent, and the ongoing legacy of dispossession, I find it increasingly unsatisfactory that early modern Europeanists do not take explicit account of this brutal empire-building in their intellectual and cultural histories. For historians of the early modern Atlantic basin, the past was indeed a foreign country: one that was already inhabited.

E. J. KENT, *University of New England*

**Morton**, Nicholas, *Encountering Islam on the First Crusade*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2017; paperback; pp. xii, 319; R.R.P. US\$29.99, £22.99; ISBN 9781108444866.

So much has been written about the First Crusade in recent decades that the appearance of a new monograph on the subject is more likely to inspire weariness than enthusiasm. Fortunately, Nicholas Morton’s *Encountering Islam on the First Crusade* manages not only to offer innovative perspectives on the (in)famous expedition to reclaim Jerusalem launched by Pope Urban II in 1095, but also to advance an intriguing reinterpretation of one of its most frequently discussed aspects. In an ambitious and wide-ranging study, Morton sets out to assess the extent to which the First Crusade acted as a turning point in the history of relations between Christianity and Islam. His conclusions form an explicit counterpoint to the notion of the First Crusade as a ‘Clash of Civilizations’ and cast doubt on the utility of ideas inspired by Samuel Huntington’s model to the field of crusading history. Though the pervasiveness of such ideas among specialists is perhaps overstated (or, at least, implicitly overemphasized), this argument acts as a useful corrective to long-standing popular conceptions of the crusades and underpins Morton’s nuanced analysis of Christian perceptions of and interactions with Muslims at the time of the First Crusade.

As Morton himself indicates, this topic is ‘well trampled’ (p. 11), and the first half of the book features some unavoidable re-treading of old ground. Readers who are familiar with the crusades and the history of Christian–Muslim relations will find little new in Chapters 1 and 2. These lay the groundwork for the ensuing analysis by outlining the patterns of conflict and contact between the two religions prior to the First Crusade and examining the objectives of the expedition in light of what the crusaders themselves actually knew—or thought they knew—about ‘the Turks’ specifically and Islam in general before their departure. The conclusion here is that the Turks ‘were largely unknown’ (p. 109) to western Europeans until the arrival of the earliest crusaders in Asia Minor in 1096, whereas generic ideas about ‘pagans’ and ‘Saracens’ were widespread. Morton deduces this important (though perhaps unsurprising) point from a careful reading of contemporary charters, letters, and chronicles that demonstrate just how inchoate knowledge of different Muslim ethnic and political groupings was in western Christendom at this time.

The issue of the crusaders’ encounters with their Muslim opponents only really comes into focus in Chapters 3 and 4, which constitute the book’s most substantial contribution in terms of the history of crusading ideas and experiences. Through a thoroughly documented study of the major chronicle sources for the First Crusade, Morton traces changing Western depictions of the crusaders’ Seljuq and Fatimid enemies and demonstrates that the earliest non-participant chronicles of the expedition drew on twelfth-century scholarly trends and traditions to refine and reshape the portrayal of Muslims in the ‘eyewitness’ accounts. This section of the analysis opens up a fascinating discussion about the extent of anti-Islamic ‘hatred’ among the crusaders, the notion of the Turks as flawed human beings just like Christians, their role in crusading ideology as intended recipients of the spiritual ‘message’ of the crusade, and the influence of eastern Christian writings on conceptions of Islam in the Western intellectual tradition (though not very persuasively in the case of Robert the Monk’s use of Deuteronomy 32.30, which Morton ascribes to familiarity with the *Apocalypse* of Pseudo-Methodius, pp. 222–24).

The final chapter of the book, which deals with the impact of the First Crusade on western Christendom’s attitude towards the twelfth-century Islamic world, is perhaps the least compelling. While Morton’s argument that ‘the First Crusade does not seem to have had the effect of convulsing western Christendom into a more hostile stance towards Islam’ (p. 268) holds true in many respects, his quantitative methodology, which relies on counting and tabulating the number of references to Muslims in letter-collections and chronicle sources, is hampered by the difficulty of obtaining a statistically significant and representative sample from a corpus of extant texts that represents only the tip of an iceberg. That Morton expressly adopts the approach of ‘researchers studying modern-era history, who often judge an issue’s importance by the number of column inches devoted to it in a specific newspaper or magazine’ (p. 238), hinders this analysis from the outset.

One of the most stimulating and refreshing ideas to emerge from this book is that ‘the First Crusade was simply the latest in a long line of counter-offenses launched against Turkic groups by multiple civilisations whether Islamic, Christian, or Hindu from across Eurasia and Northern Africa’ (p. 73). By both expanding the geographical lens of the traditional enquiry and providing a detailed examination of the terminology and ideas embedded in a tightly-knit group of sources, Morton succeeds in making a thought-provoking contribution to long-standing debates about the First Crusade. It may not have been a ‘clash’ of Huntingtonian proportions in historical reality, but Morton is surely right that ‘multiple societies have assumed that it [was]—and then built their history and identities around that “fact”’ (p. 280).

JAMES H. KANE, *The University of Sydney*

**Muecke**, Frances, and Maurizio **Campanelli**, eds, *The Invention of Rome: Biondo Flavio’s Roma Triumphans and Its Worlds* (Travaux d’Humanisme et Renaissance, 576), Paris, Librairie Droz, 2017; paperback; pp. 296; 5 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. €39.00; ISBN 9782600047890.

Nothing better illustrates the *Birth of the Modern* (to use Paul Johnson’s memorable title) than the almost total eclipse that has been the fate of books and compilations that once enjoyed nearly universal respect among scholars of an earlier age. This volume undertakes the task of reinstating the reputation of Biondo’s *Roma triumphans* (1459), an encyclopedic treatise in ten books on the institutions of ancient Rome, and achieves its purpose comprehensively. The work itself, in the words of the editors, ‘is one of the greatest literary monuments of Italian humanism and its greatest legacy to European culture in the early modern period. As an encyclopedic work of all-encompassing scope it might be called a cultural space, a site in which the culture of an entire epoch is collected, synthesized, and passed on’ (pp. 11–12). This is high praise verging on hyperbole, reflecting the editors’ obvious passion for their subject. Phrases like ‘greatest legacy’ and ‘cultural space’ come on a bit strong but to be fair they are skilfully backed up and persuasively defended by an array of learned essays by first-rate scholars who share the editors’ enthusiasm.

The taut if effusive introduction is followed by thirteen papers classified into three parts: 1. Context, Genre and Purpose; 2. *Mores et instituta*; and 3. Reception. Five items conclude the volume: lists of contributors, editions cited, and illustrations; and two indexes of manuscripts and of names.

We are faced with a worldview that is not easily recovered by any reader who is not very familiar with the ancient as well as medieval intellectual furniture associated with the closely-related notions of *humanitas* and *Romanitas*. Biondo’s major preoccupation was with the notion of ‘*Roma aeterna*’, the continuity of Rome, from the empire of the Caesars to the City of God, from paganism to Christianity. To thinkers like Biondo, and Dante too, there is a mystical quality about Rome that transcends ordinary patriotism: Rome is the world’s mother,

the common inheritance not only of Europe but of men everywhere ‘from the Caucasus to the Don and the Ganges’ (Angelo Mazzocco, p. 58). The naïve cast of mind behind this mode of thinking could not be better illustrated than by Dante’s simple statement in the second book of his *De Monarchia*: ‘Romanus Populus fuit nobilissimus; ergo convenit ei aliis omnibus praeferrī’ (‘the Roman nation is the noblest; it is therefore appropriate that it be given a place before all’).

Biondo, Mazzocco continues, held that in the *Respublica Christiana* ‘the numerous Christian officials discharge duties identical to those of the *Respublica Romana*. Thus the pope is Rome’s consul, the cardinals her senators, the kings, the princes, the dukes, the marquises, the counts, and other nobles of the Christian world are respectively her legates, her quaestors, her tribunes’ (p. 59).

Biondo completed his book when it became clear that the new crusade, so longed for by Pius II, was not to have the support of the Christian princes of Europe. It was a time of bitter disappointment for those who felt that the ‘New Rome’ was unworthy of its predecessors, ‘our pagans’ (*gentiles nostri*, Frances Muecke, p. 87). This interesting phrase points again to that attitude of mind, grounded on an almost mystical belief in *Roma aeterna*, that sees *Romanitas* as being close on the heels of *Christianitas* in the blessings it confers on humanity: those old Romans, he seems to be saying, may have been pagans, but at least they were *our* pagans! Biondo criticizes old Rome for its superstitions, and clearly views Christianity as the ultimate revelation to humankind, but also insists that old Rome ‘still has much to teach his own time’ (James Hankins, p. 109). In this he is firmly on the side of those who could link David with the Sibyl as harbingers of the Gospel.

The greatest unresolved question in this collection of papers relates to the reception of Biondo in the centuries that followed his time. Paul Gwynne writes of the ‘virtual conspiracy of silence among the later humanists’ (p. 215)—such as Pomponio Leto, Maffei and Calderini—, a surprising conclusion that is somewhat difficult to square with Stenhouse’s assertion that ‘the reputation of [...] the *Roma triumphans* remained high in the late sixteenth century’ (p. 259). Tramezzino dedicated his 1544 translation of the work to Michelangelo, suggesting that even he ‘could benefit from Biondo’s profound understanding of ancient civilization’ (William Stenhouse, p. 264). So is our author undeservedly neglected or not? If you accept Gwynne’s opinion he certainly is.

Whether or not one fully accepts the editors’ enthusiastic acclamation of Biondo’s work as one of the greatest legacies of the Renaissance, and though one may be puzzled by the variance in estimating the force of his influence on later ages, one is likely to admire a work that so faithfully reports a view of the world that was hardly touched by the nominalism of Ockham and others, that clung to Great Ideas the brilliance of which might be dimmed by circumstances, but never fully eclipsed. *Vivat Roma!*

DAVID DAINTREE, *Colebrook, Tasmania*

**Musson**, Anthony, and Nigel **Ramsay**, eds, *Courts of Chivalry and Admiralty in Late Medieval Europe*, Woodbridge, The Boydell Press, 2018; hardback; pp. 272; 13 colour, 4 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9781783272174.

What law could be enforced in medieval Europe when state confronted state in public war? Whose courts could deliver judgement acceptable to all? The royal courts might check private war but what power did they have to judge in wars with other states? Was the law of arms more than a system of customary law mainly for the rights and obligations of individual soldiers and not the legal responsibility of the state? These questions have been re-examined recently in different projects that have opened up difficult aspects of the enforcement of law between nations that led eventually to international law.

The contributors to this book are concerned with various aspects of a jurisdiction that stretched beyond the single state and implied a notional agreed common code of law. This by the fourteenth century was known as the Law of Arms and was taken to be binding on soldiers whichever side they were on. The papers included examine some of the controversial issues that arose from the complexity of the possible jurisdictions that existed at the time and the common military culture they sought to enforce. The monarch may have been the fount of honour, but all the authors remind us of the social structure that established the position of the aristocracy and made critical their claims to dominant status. Challenges to an individual's right to arms were heard in the monarch's courts, tested by trial by combat, and those who failed were punished by the downgrading of their arms.

The papers also remind us that heraldry was no side issue but vital in political and financial rights and also fundamental to social and cultural position. Julian Luxford, in examining the many different objects on which an individual's arms might be inscribed, reveals how essential heraldry was to identity. Also critical was the formal arming for a duel, as Ralph Moffat's paper demonstrates. Richard Barber re-examines the timing whereby the heralds obtained a formal status and authority in England and Laurent Hablot considers similar aspects in French armorial disputes.

It has long been recognized that the detailed testimony of witnesses could be exploited to inform us of the forgotten life stories of lesser military men. Andrew Ayton's investigation of the history of Nicholas Sabraham illuminates the typical development of such a career and what it can tell us about the culture of a society in which standing armies were a rarity. Philip Morgan takes the familiar story of the Scrope–Grosvenor controversy and looks at it from a different angle, while Bernard Schnerb reflects on the rather different story of the role of the constables and marshals of France. The most significant papers are probably those by Thomas Heeboll-Holm and Anne Sutton, who are investigating English Admiralty jurisdiction, because a claim to sovereignty over the sea was a legal novelty and hard to justify. Which monarch first had the audacity to claim it? Anne Sutton also

establishes a new aspect of Richard III's career by examining the exploitation of his control of social status through his joint position as both admiral and constable of England.

These authors are shedding renewed light on ideas that were explored a generation ago by Frederick Cheyette and Pierre Chaplais, about the ways in which new claims were asserted. Their modified conclusions are likely to be controversial as they bring to the fore in their analysis considerations of political manoeuvring. For example, the wars England was involved in during the fourteenth century are analysed to account for the chronology of the appearance of an English Admiralty court. Maritime law relating to issues such as piracy or wreck and other events at sea had been heard in a variety of courts before the Admiralty courts appeared, but at this time the admirals began to assert authority in the area. The power and role of an admiral in most European countries were focused on war but the English Admiralty courts acquired a wider jurisdiction. The English courts then adopted maritime law, not English common law, creating a conflict with the local courts that could also hear various cases involving events at sea. The authors point to this as an area deserving further study.

The final paper by John Ford points to the way forward for further research through the ideas promulgated in the contemporary law schools and the problems of medieval prize law. Although the reader might prefer a book in which all these aspects of the Law of Arms were integrated into a single explanation, the individual chapters are impressive and thought-provoking.

SYBIL M. JACK, *The University of Sydney*

**Nash, Penelope**, *Empress Adelheid and Countess Matilda: Medieval Female Rulership and the Foundations of European Society* (Queenship and Power), New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2017; hardback; pp. xxxi, 292; 7 b/w, 1 colour illustrations; R.R.P. US\$109; ISBN 9781137585141.

In so many ways, Penelope Nash's first monograph is a very useful and welcome addition to Palgrave Macmillan's 'Queenship and Power' Series. Its user-friendly and eminently instructive 'Notes on Names' (pp. xv–xvi) and the inclusion of detailed and accurate chronologies for Nash's 'masterful and formidable ladies' are a boon to the reader, especially if one is not entirely au fait with Ottonian queens and empresses of the early to High European Middle Ages (pp. xvii–xxii). These handy tools are followed by a map of 'Adelheid's and Matilda's World' (p. xxiii), and the two well-drafted genealogical tables, respectively of 'Adelheid's and Matilda's Family Connections and the Burgundian Rudolfings' and 'Adelheid's and Matilda's Family Connections and the Liudolfings' are indispensable assets to those of us navigating our way through unfamiliar waters. Additional maps are contextualized and included to assist the reader in the more complicated parts of Nash's analysis (pp. 101, 144, 147, 165, 170, 174), Nash moreover providing the reader with detailed notes, a very helpful index, and an extensive bibliography. However, in the interests of a fair and balanced reading of *Empress Adelheid and*

*Countess Matilda*, there are several issues to be highlighted to frame both the merits and shortcomings of Nash's very interesting study.

While this reader is by no means a specialist historian of Ottonian royal women, in Chapter 1 'Masterful and Formidable Ladies', Nash's uncritical acceptance of the paradigm that 'changes in the eleventh century' (p. 6) in European politics excluded women from power and influence is somewhat troubling. Her over-reliance on the half-century-old interpretive methodologies of Georges Duby, Richard Southern, Carl Leyser, David Herlihy, and others is strikingly *démodé*. Like the refuted conclusions of Marion Facinger, the work of scholars such as Miriam Shadis and Theresa Earenfight have consigned such interpretive methodologies to the dustbin of women's history. Moreover, because medieval and early modern European power structures were anchored in the domestic orbit of the dynastic family and its households, the most effective way to 'retrieve' a woman's political agency and influence is to refer to her family, her lineage, her kinship, her networks, and the structure and nature of her domestic household.

This Nash does in part towards the end of Chapter 2, 'Kin and Kith: Keeping Friends and Placating Enemies', and her central paradigm discussed *supra* seems not to hold in light of this ostensible disconnect. The other slightly discordant feature of Nash's study is the inclusion of an anthropological framework of comparison, highlighting the case of the Arrernte people of Central Australia (pp. 15–16) to make a point about the weakening of property rights and mutual obligations to family members as they aged. Apart from the intrusion into her discourse of this 'right-thinking' anthropological model, she never engages with it again, providing the reader with no real basis for weaving this anachronistic example into the fabric of a discussion pertaining to tenth- and eleventh-century conceptions of property rights and familial obligations within the Empire. Nash's digression is interesting, but it adds very little to the context of the protagonists she has chosen to compare. The role played by governments is hardly mentioned, which is surprising in light of current scholarship pointing to the intersection of public and private spheres in premodern polities. None of this is to denigrate the considerable amount of useful and engaging information to be had from this chapter. It just does not seem to be woven together tightly enough by a unifying argument.

Chapter 3 presents the reader with a relatively brief foray into 'Land: Building and Maintaining a Property Portfolio'—of interest to aspirational Sydney-siders and medieval royal women both. Nash structures her analysis around three case studies, comparing and contrasting the ways in which her protagonists manoeuvred to control their respective land holdings. In her discussion of the inauguration of an imperial travel route by Adelheid's intervention in the affairs of Alsace, Nash makes the salient point that women could and did effect changes to topographies and land use. Chapter 4, 'Models of Rulership and the Tools of Justice', Nash's longest and most detailed chapter, digs deeply into the ways in which Adelheid and Matilda fashioned and represented themselves. Adelheid's strategy was to

complement her husband's rule in gendered and socially acceptable ways, legitimizing his rule in Italy. This fits well with Earenfight's model of flexible and durable corporate rulership. Matilda, on the other hand, 'fashioned herself into a great lord' (p. 162). However, in the greater scheme of things, the comparison between these two women appears difficult to sustain—a veritable apples and oranges dilemma—due to the disparities in their ranks, the dispersal and nature of their territories, and that most important aspect of a royal woman's life stages: motherhood.

Notwithstanding this, Nash's book is an important addition to the study of premodern royal women, highlighting as it does the many different strategies deployed by women as they sought to rule, exercise their power, and exert their influence.

ZITA EVA ROHR, *Macquarie University*

**Reeser**, Todd W., ed. and trans., *Symphorien Champier: The Ship of Virtuous Ladies* (The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe: The Toronto Series, 61), Tempe, Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2017; paperback; pp. 161; R.R.P. \$US39.95; ISBN 9780866985857.

Todd Reeser's English translation of most of Champier's famous work is a boon companion to Judy Kem's masterful modern French translation and critical edition of the complete treatise, *La Nef des dames vertueuses*, published by Honoré Champion in 2007.

Reeser opens proceedings with an introduction contextualizing Champier's 1503 treatise historically and in terms of his rhetoric. *The Ship* is a complex and, in some ways, problematic text. Reeser cautions his reader not to take Champier's claim at face value that he is on a mission to defend women against unjustified misogynist attack. To do so would be to ignore his problematic decision to include a translation of Mathieu (Matheolus) of Boulogne's thirteenth-century *La Malice des femmes* in his *La Nef des princes* published the year before. Notwithstanding this, Reeser acknowledges that Champier was a humanist physician who prioritized the art of rhetoric (pp. 9–10). Champier himself writes of the importance of a solid grounding in rhetoric (and the seven liberal arts) for any successful physician (pp. 109–10).

The potential patron to whom the text is offered is all important to Champier. His motivation, apart from demonstrating that he could argue both sides of the woman question, was to secure a post as Anne of France's personal physician, demonstrated by his detailed account of what to look for when appointing a skilled personal physician to a princess's household. He criticizes both Jewish doctors and apothecaries who seek to usurp the authority of Christian humanist physicians whose virtuous integrity is unquestioned. In his exhortation that a princess should take especial care in choosing her physician, Champier shares a similar motive with Machiavelli, whose later political treatise *Il Principe* was in part framed to offer himself as the perfect advisor to the Florentine court of the newly returned

Medici. However, to dismiss Champier's—and Machiavelli's—motivation as being just to secure a job in the prestigious Bourbon—or Medici—court would be a significant injustice. In dedicating his treatise to Anne of France, Champier aims to advise her daughter Suzanne, poised on the cusp of womanhood.

Book 1, 'Praise, Flowers, and the Defense of Women', is 'dedicated and offered to the most noble and virtuous princess Anne of France' (p. 39) and contains Champier's most convincing pro-female arguments. He explains how and why it is that both sexes are complementary to one another, which is clear to him from the way God created them. He argues that it is men who have committed more evil in the world than the too often accused women. Ending Book 1 with a long register of famous mythical and historical women, Champier follows Boccaccio's catalogue of women in his fourteenth-century *De mulieribus claris* (*Concerning Famous Women*), making it more accessible to French-speaking audiences. Reeser acknowledges that this was done by Christine de Pizan almost a century before Champier took up his pen but, like Judy Kem in her critical edition, *Symphorien Champier: La Nef des dames vertueuses* (Champion, 2007), he does not believe that Champier owes any debt (acknowledged or unacknowledged) to Christine's defence of women. There certainly is no evidence of such a specific literary debt, despite the fact that Anne of France owned multiple copies of Christine's works (p. 2).

Champier inserts a 'Ballad for Everyone', *Marriage is the Foundation of Everything*, at the end of Book 1 (pp. 93–94), translated with sensitivity by Reeser. Book 2, 'Rules for Marriage', although dedicated to Suzanne of Bourbon, daughter of Anne of France, targeted a wider audience of privileged young women. It is a seductive section, full of all manner of advice on all manner of subjects, and not without moments of unintended levity for the modern reader. Reeser does not include Book 3, 'The Prophecies and Oracles of the Sibyls', which this reader found a little disappointing and unsatisfying. Reeser argues that Book 3 consists largely of 'a translation of a translation' (p. 25) and that Champier's letter to André Briaud at the end of it, written in Latin, has been already translated very well by James B. Wadsworth (*Lyons 1473–1503: The Beginnings of Cosmopolitanism*, The Medieval Academy of America, 1962). Book 4, 'The Book of True Love', dedicated to Anne of France, concerns itself with the power of love. Champier identifies three types of authentic love: men's love for their wives; wives' love for their husbands; and men's love of men, constructing his own version of Marsilio Ficino's Neoplatonism, one that includes a place for women.

With Anglophone tertiary students so rarely fitted out with a language other than English, high quality accessible translations of texts and letters such as those being produced by the Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies are a godsend for students, teaching colleagues, and researchers alike. Reeser's user-friendly, yet very sophisticated, translation of Champier's sixteenth-century treatise, *The Ship of Virtuous Ladies*, offers us an excellent companion resource

for those engaged in gender studies, feminist studies and studies of masculinities, intellectual history, women's history, medical studies, and premodern literatures.

ZITA EVA ROHR, *Macquarie University*

**Rikhardsdottir**, Sif, *Emotion in Old Norse Literature: Translations, Voices, Contexts* (Studies in Old Norse Literature), Cambridge, D.S. Brewer, 2017; hardback; pp. 223; R.R.P. £50.00; ISBN 9781843844709.

As a corpus, the Old Icelandic literature is often characterized by an economy of expression. It is a literary style that can provide a narrative with a sense of detachment from its material, establishing characters who seem dispassionate and inexpressive. Indeed, the paucity of passages that verbalize the feelings and emotions of saga characters make those few that can be found remarkable within the corpus. However, readers familiar with the style of the sagas know that this apparent objectivity is merely a veneer. The sagas may not preference dramatic displays of emotion, yet the laconic exchanges and tersely described interactions of saga characters are imbued with subtle indicators of emotional engagement. When these narratives are understood within the cultural contexts of both setting and authorship, it becomes evident that the characters operate within a rich emotional landscape. It is this emotional landscape that Sif Rikhardsdottir seeks to explore in this volume, identifying both the literary formulas through which it finds expression, and the emotive and behavioural codes that inform its parameters.

The book is comprised of five chapters, each taking a literary case study (or studies) as its framework for discussing a different aspect of emotion in Old Norse-Icelandic literature. It is not an unusual approach for such thematic examinations of Old Norse texts, and serves to make manageable a topic as broad as that which Rikhardsdottir has undertaken to explore. Yet this does mean that the book cannot be considered a comprehensive survey of emotion in Old Norse literature. Rikhardsdottir limits herself to three 'genres', putting forward two chapters framed around the *Íslendingasögur*, two focused on the adoption and adaption of romance literature into Old Norse, and one on Eddic poetry. Moreover, as Rikhardsdottir herself notes, the volume deals nearly exclusively with Old West Norse dialects, limiting the study to Iceland, with occasional shifts to Norway (p. 2). But these are minor criticisms and, at worst, it could be said that the volume title—*Emotion in Old Norse Literature*—is somewhat misleading. Rikhardsdottir makes the parameters of her study immediately accessible in the introduction, and her reasons for limiting the book to the selected 'genres' and regions are justifiable on the basis of what is representative of thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Scandinavian literary production.

Chapter 1 uses as its texts *Ívens saga* and *Tristrams saga ok Ísödar*—Old Norse translations of *Yvain ou le Chevalier au Lion* and *Tristan*. Here Rikhardsdottir introduces two terms: 'emotive literary identities' and 'emotive scripts'. The former is defined as the cultural framework of values that guides a

text's intended audience in how to interpret a character's emotive motivations. The latter refers to the more generic codes of behaviour that are recognizable to the audience as literary tropes and thus inform the reading of emotions through generic formulas. These terms and their underlying theories are the foundation of the book. Rikhardsdottir tests them against the process of narrative transmission in the translation of courtly romance from one culture to another. By comparing the Old French texts with their Old Norse translations, she is able to demonstrate that the expression of emotion within the narratives also undergoes a process of translation. Gone are the overt concerns with courtly love and feudal society present in *Yvain* and *Tristan* as these emotive scripts are rejected and the literary identities of *Íven* and *Tristram* are modified to adhere to Icelandic literary norms.

The next four chapters shift to native literary traditions. Chapter 2 approaches *Egils saga Skallagrímssonar*, using it as a platform to explore emotional interiority and how to read emotion in a literary tradition that eschews outward display of internal emotion. Of particular interest is Rikhardsdottir's assertion that the scarcity of emotive words lends those that are there deeper meaning and greater complexity, while also lending non-emotive words a degree of emotive content. Chapter 3 looks at Eddic poetry and the vocalization of emotion through poetry. The focus here remains largely with *Egils saga Skallagrímssonar*, contrasting the emotional reticence of the prose with the occasional vocalization of emotion in verse. Chapter 4 turns to *Brennu-Njáls saga* and *Laxdæla saga* and considers that in them the purpose of gesture, rather than demonstrating emotion, may in fact be to obscure emotion. This is examined in the context of the gender-coded saga trope of 'whetting'—leveraging emotions to goad action. The final chapter returns to romance, but in this case the native romance tradition, considering how emotive scripts were borrowed and adapted and, by focusing on the social discomfort with female agency evident in the *Siguðar saga þogla*, how they fed back into society.

This is a solid volume, well researched and well executed within well-defined methodological boundaries—a pleasure to read. It represents a unique and valuable contribution to both the study of the history of emotions and Old Norse studies, and will prove thought-provoking to scholars in both fields.

MATTHEW FIRTH, *Flinders University*

**Salisbury**, Eve, *Chaucer and the Child* (The New Middle Ages), New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2017; hardback; pp. xiii, 279; 1 colour illustration; R.R.P. US\$99.99; ISBN 9781137436368.

As one would expect from the title, *Chaucer and the Child* considers the young characters who are found in Chaucer's collected works. Where do they appear and how does their presence resonate within their narrative contexts? What does the concept of the child mean for Chaucer's literary practice, for its relationship with its historical moment, as well as for the ways in which Chaucer has been read in subsequent historical periods? Salisbury naturally examines narratives where a child plays a central role, such as the little clergeon of the *Prioress's Tale*, or the

youthful Virginia, but treats with comparable deliberation disparate and at times fleeting allusions to infants, children, and youths, down to the disturbing ekphrasis in the *Knights Tale* of an infant devoured by a sow in a temple fresco. Salisbury contends that even in examples such as the silent, sleeping baby of the *Reeve's Tale*, we can—and should—attend to the child's presence; although ostensibly passive, he or she is never truly inconsequential. Accordingly, infants (children under seven) in Chaucer's writing 'emanate meaning by their presence, by the spaces and temporal settings they inhabit, by their proximity to others, by the actions taken on their behalf, and by the objects surrounding them' (pp. 74–75). This insistence on reading for the impact of the presence of a young person within a narrative, even when that individual is disempowered, extends to older children, including adolescents. For example, Salisbury considers the implications of the fox's invasion of the farmyard in the *Nun's Priest's Tale* for the widow's briefly mentioned (and universally overlooked) daughters. By exploring their youthful female agency within a feminized, single-parent working environment, Salisbury enriches critical understanding of this literary tour de force by drawing attention to the play between fables and modes of childhood instruction, further inflected by gender and social status.

Salisbury's investigation of the child in Chaucer's work extends beyond literal childhood in an extended discussion of the *puer* or *puella senex*, a trope that disrupts linear temporality and hierarchical structures, exposing 'a range of biases about youth and age both in the poet's own time and in the stories of previous epochs enfolded into his work' (p. 223). This expands her investigation into a consideration of what it means when characters such as the Prioress and Oswald the Reeve express or claim for themselves childlike characteristics. Whether children bear exceptional features of adulthood or adults emulate the condition of childhood, 'they expose the vulnerability of the child who finds himself or herself in a hostile environment, subject to corrupt institutions and cultural values that put them at risk' (p. 222).

*Chaucer and the Child* goes further than offering readings of Chaucer's younger literary personnel, or those who display traits associated with youth. Salisbury aims to liberate Chaucer the author from the constraints of 'paternal function' within which his work has been confined since the fifteenth century, in order to recuperate 'Child Chaucer', who is 'resistant and rebellious, mischievous and sly, obtuse and unpredictable, noisy and carefree, and as capable of conformity and obedience as he is of resisting the conventions that constrain him' (p. 7). 'Child Chaucer' is a creative mode and not confined to representing children; Chaucer's narrative personas in *Sir Thopas*, *The House of Fame* and *The Book of the Duchess* all display non-adult characteristics that in each case inform the status of the text as a vernacular rendition of a mature tradition, or a form of literary infancy. This line of inquiry leads to a reconceptualization of Chaucer's relationship with his own literary sources as 'the recognition of a shared responsibility among like-minded poets involved in a transference of poetry from the past to the present with an eye

toward its perpetuation into the future' (p. 228), an expression of 'childlikeness in the reception and imitation of an earlier poet's work' (p. 228). Her re-evaluation of Chaucer's literary authority contributes to a larger interrogation of medievalist textual practice, where quasi-familial relationships (principally of fathers and children) can inhere in critical responses to texts composed in an earlier period; to embrace the child-like rather than child-ish course is to promote a more complex and integrated 'mode of engagement [that] infuses life into words frozen silently upon the page' (p. 229).

In Salisbury's hands, childhood is not simply a theme; *Chaucer and the Child* demonstrates a deep concern to work with the disempowerment of children effectively and without distorting the historical realities that generated their marginality, in the process raising questions about larger conceptual issues that intersect with the significance attributed to childhood. Salisbury's approach effectively creates a methodological and ethical insistence that associates humanity with these fictional, barely present children, a kind of critical embrace through which she holds them discursively, and so prevents them from slipping out of critical attention.

MELISSA RAINE, *University of Melbourne*

**Smith, James L.**, *Water in Medieval Intellectual Culture. Case Studies from Twelfth-Century Monasticism* (Cursor Mundi, 30), Turnhout, Brepols, 2017; hardback; pp. xvi, 209; 8 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. €75.00; ISBN 9782503572338.

In this first monograph from his hand, James Smith sets out to investigate how water functions as an intellectual entity within medieval monastic thought. To do this, he presents a 'model for the power of water as an ingredient in the motion of composition, providing an image of medieval graphicacy, or "visual literacy", that is composed in a lively and motive fashion' (p. 3) with the following goals in mind: first, to better understand the relationship between medieval thought and its ideas of water; second, to explain the ways in which monastic rhetoric used the properties of water to express complex thought. The third goal combines the previous two to find new ways of reading a variety of texts written by monastics of the twelfth century. These three goals serve the overarching aim of gaining new insights into 'the history of monastic thought and our understandings of water in the wider Middle Ages' (p. 3).

The first two chapters serve as an introduction to the debates in the study of water as a complex metaphor and the various challenges encountered during these studies. Chapters 3 to 5 contain the case studies and explore three medieval texts, each using water as an important structural, metaphorical, or philosophical part of its message. Smith discusses Godfrey of Saint-Victor's poem *Fons Philosophiae* and the navigation of the 'rivers' of the *trivium* and *quadrivium* in the third chapter of his book. This embedding of knowledge into a fluvial structure allowed Godfrey to show the course of knowledge he had seen and the revelations gained from this.

The letters of the Benedictine Peter of Celle are the focus of the case study in the fourth chapter. In these letters, the very act of writing is rendered an act of metaphorical speech, ‘a flow of words as a flow of ink’ (p. 121), connecting authors through the abstract flow of the rivers of knowledge. In the fifth chapter, Smith discusses the anonymous *Description of the Position and Site of the Monastery of Clairvaux*. This case study focuses on the fountain and its symbolic flows of spiritual essence and purity, nourishing the monks’ souls as well as their bodies. A link is made between the waters of the fountain and the rivers that flowed from Eden, the monastery like a reflection of Paradise separate from the outside world, the waters and influence of which spread far beyond the limits of its closed space.

Smith concludes that patterns, both environmental and intellectual, are part of how humankind makes sense of the world. More specifically, the medieval hydrological symbolism this book investigates was intertwined with the patterns of human life in such a way that water metaphors were always more than just an image. ‘Water’, he says, ‘was an intellectual entity of complex power for medieval minds, and remains so today. It is an indispensable cultural vocabulary’ (p. 184).

Smith’s *Water in Medieval Intellectual Culture* provides new understanding of twelfth-century culture and monasticism and paves the way for further analysis of medieval thought through what he calls a ‘medieval frame’ (p. 182). He makes a convincing case for further study of premodern knowledge visualizations and medieval graphicacy. The book has a logical structure and the separation of the more theoretical chapters from the case studies makes it possible to read the theory in its own right and to apply it more widely than the author has done in this work. While well written and filled with impressive insights, the book contains such rich and illustrious language that it loses some of its readability. Especially those without prior knowledge of the subjects discussed or the non-native English speakers among us may have some difficulties grasping the full meaning behind Smith’s masterfully crafted sentences. Regardless of this, *Water in Medieval Intellectual Culture* is a remarkably insightful book and an absolute joy to read.

FLORA GUIJT, *The Hague, The Netherlands*

**Strong, David**, *The Philosophy of Piers Plowman: The Ethics and Epistemology of Love in Late Medieval Thought* (The New Middle Ages), New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2017; hardback; pp. vii, 224; R.R.P. US\$109.00; ISBN 9783319519814.

This book explores correlations between *Piers Plowman* and the teachings of Duns Scotus, William Ockham, and other philosophers whose works were prominent in Langland’s lifetime. Analysis focuses on the will (allegorically Will, the Dreamer) as possessing freedom and natural dominance within a subordinate matrix of reason and the other cognitive faculties. Following an introduction that announces this thesis and a chapter that surveys relevant aspects of fourteenth-century thought, *The Philosophy of Piers Plowman* selectively traces Will’s intellectual, moral, and spiritual journey through the B-text. Some of the synergies detected

in passing, for example with contemporary contemplative works like *The Cloud of Unknowing* (pp. 15–16), suggest directions for future research. Meanwhile this study's obvious though unstated foundation on a present-day Christian faith has inspired an interpretation that may prove as fruitful in the long term as sceptical readings drawing on recent literary and social theories. More accessible and engaging in its later chapters, David Strong's book poses a refreshing challenge to the critical status quo.

A compressed version of the argument is as follows: Chapters 3 and 4 consider *Piers's* earlier Passūs as dedicated to social, political, and legal rights and freedoms, the acquisition of knowledge, and the limits of cognition. Chapter 3 examines Will's encounters with Holy Church, Mede, Conscience, and Reason. Strong understands these as demonstrating, in accordance with Ockham's theory of individual rights, that singular acts of charity 'can supersede socially adjudicated mores' (p. 54). Chapter 4 applies Scotus's and Ockham's distinction between 'intuitive' and 'abstractive' cognition to Will's conversations in the middle Passūs with Piers, the two friars, Study, and Ymagynatyf.

By contrast, Chapters 5 to 7 of this book focus on the affective concerns of later Passūs as privileging the need to love rather than know God (p. 7). In arguing for the will's primacy over reason and the sensory appetites, Chapter 5 compares selected contemporary ideas to Langland's distinctive formulations as mediated by *Anima* and *Liberum Arbitrium*. Chapter 6 proceeds to elucidate Will's further encounters in Passūs 16 to 17 as showing how, by privileging charity, 'a properly functioning will' furthers the simple goal of loving God rightly and in himself (pp. 135–36). After arguing for analogies between Scotus's *affectio commodi* and *affectio iustitiae*, and the choice that Will must make between personal ambition and working diligently with others, Chapter 6 skilfully articulates Scotus's and Ockham's overlapping views on cooperation between human faculties as producing morally upright actions (pp. 150–58). Application of these ideas to negative examples like the drunken Brewer leads to the conclusion that, since the divine transcends the rational, Langland's characters attain wisdom only when society judges them to be foolish (p. 155). This book's analysis of Passus 20 again opposes the scholarly trend by seeing Will's interlocutor Need as an immoral as much as amoral figure. Countering Need and his effects therefore depends ultimately on human choice, that is, on Will.

The seventh and most articulate chapter of *The Philosophy of Piers Plowman* seeks to justify what most critics regard as the anti-climactic ending to Will's quest. Kynde's simple counsel: 'Lerne to love [...] and leef alle othere' (Passus 20, line 208), overflows with the plenitude of Will's discoveries throughout his wanderings and the reader's throughout the poem. Will has rebounded from one personified figure of learning to another, only to find that human beings' rational faculties cannot guarantee fulfilment (p. 171). Accordingly, he abandons his quest in Unity, and Conscience—a faculty that transcends reason—takes his place. With a laugh that marks his realization of the underlying goodness of their vocation,

Conscience grants entrance also to the friars, whose commitment to their vows is at best ambivalent. Strong defends Conscience's action by interpreting the sequence of his earlier appearances in *Piers Plowman* as a transition through social, moral, and intellectual levels (*scientia*), to a final attainment of 'the affective modes of knowing' (*sapientia*) (p. 187). Accordingly, he regards Conscience's ongoing pilgrimage, not as an ideologically subversive failure to close the narrative, but as 'highlight[ing] the continual quest that confronts each individual who wishes to love fully' (p. 185).

I have supplied the above shortened rendition of the argument as a help for readers likely to be deterred by this book's structural uncertainties and multiple errors of expression. Sub-headings and summarizing opening sentences were needed to aid progress through chapters with such unhelpful headings as 'The Natural Rights of Virtue' and 'The Continual Pursuit of Love'. The book's many smaller slips include repetitions and otiose phrases; misplaced correlatives; tautologies; mixed, dead, and inappropriate metaphors; pronoun and number confusion; odd and obscure vocabulary; jarring modern clichés; subject-verb disagreements; mislaid referents; misspelled English and non-English words and phrases; and frequent misquoting of Langland's text.

Despite these substantial problems of composition and presentation, this book's application of fourteenth-century and earlier philosophies has produced a reading that both reflects the intellectual context of *Piers Plowman* and strives to mediate Langland's instructional wisdom for the edification of readers in the present.

CHERYL TAYLOR, *Griffith University*

**Treharne**, Elaine, and **Greg Walker**, eds, *Textual Distortion* (Essays and Studies), Cambridge, D. S. Brewer, 2017; hardback; pp. 188; 9 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £30.00; ISBN 9781843844792.

Elaine Treharne's introduction to the collection edited alongside Greg Walker opens with questions like 'What results from distortion? Need it always be a negative phenomenon?' and 'Are we always obliged to acknowledge distortion?' (p. 3). Their questions challenge authenticity and originality in a fruitful way that continues as a thread throughout this wide-ranging collection. The essays cover material from Ojibwe origin stories and manuscripts in the Bodleian Library to Korean encounters with Shakespeare and the challenges of creating digital facsimiles. Around half of the chapters engage with topics and texts that relate to the medieval and early modern.

The potential for positive or negative distortion is framed in relation to manuscripts by several authors in this collection. Matthew Aiello, for example, discusses Oxford, Bodleian Library, MSS Junius 85 and 86 in a chapter that works against a 'problem in English manuscript studies—the tacit belief that less ornate, visually modest manuscripts are somehow "low status" and have little to offer the field' (p. 7). Giovanni Scorcioni's and Claude Willan's chapters consider

the physicality of reproducing such texts, neutral aspects of distortion, and the resonances generated by this clarification. Emma Cayley's chapter on distortion as a 'positive gain' (p. 27) in medieval studies is a wonderful rereading of Exeter riddles' afterlives in hotels and apps, providing an entry point to interpreting texts as a result of editions and their functionality. Each of these chapters speaks to the physicality of textual reproduction, distorted or otherwise, generating curiosity for the reader both familiar and unfamiliar with the sources at hand.

In the centre of the collection, Dan Kim asks 'how does Korea self-consciously craft, translate and stitch together its nation on the international stage?' (p. 74). Discussing *Henry V*, *Hamlet*, and *The Tempest* as examples of transnational Shakespeare in Korea and elsewhere in Asia, he insists that their producers and audiences should look beyond national boundaries to landscapes that are 'neither fully localised, nationalised nor globalised' (p. 84). In the following chapter, Sarah Ogilvie suggests that when dictionaries are published, lexicographical description often jostles up against political prescription. Both Kim's and Ogilvie's works energetically redirect readers' and critics' assumptions about their subjects and ask intriguing, globalized questions about language.

Between these two topic areas, three other chapters make critical contributions to the dialogue surrounding distortion. Aaron Kelly considers how working-class literature is indeed neglected as literature, and sketches out working-class novelist Lionel Britton's 'formal experimentation' (p. 71) with representations of time, history, and causality as a means to reconsider misrepresentation as separate from distortion. Thomas Powell's chapter restructures American literary studies through an acknowledgement of the immeasurably 'massive distortion' (p. 98) of American cultural diversity by colonization. By analysing a recording of an Ojibwe origin story, accompanied by a drum that 'becomes an active participant' (p. 106) in the narrative, Powell discusses how power and language can be embedded in texts that fall outside categories determined by American literary studies. Greg Walker offers a 'case study of chronological and epistemological distortion' (p. 130). He argues that Freud's uncanny is a helpful means to access the effects of late medieval Lollard texts recirculating in parliamentary debates of the mid-1500s, thereby functioning 'out of time' (p. 132). Kelly's, Powell's, and Walker's chapters reject neat categorization but each maintains an inviting style for readers both familiar and unfamiliar with their subject matter.

Each of these chapters successfully articulates answers to new or ongoing questions about distortion in textual studies in a clear prose. While broad topics in the volume are attractive and stimulating, its somewhat uneasy location between scholarly subcategories sometimes feels jarring as the reader moves from one chapter to the next. However, the essayists' desire 'to inspire further reflection and scholarship with this work on distorted notions of visible and invisible things' (p. 5) is tantalizing. The interdisciplinary possibilities generated in the volume suggest promising avenues of inquiry now made more accessible by this collection.

JENNIFER E. NICHOLSON, *The University of Sydney*

**Wellendorf**, Jonas, *Gods and Humans in Medieval Scandinavia: Retying the Bonds* (Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature, 103), Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2018; hardback; pp. x, 206; R.R.P. £75.00; ISBN 9781108424974.

This short study is an important contribution to the emergent literature on the reception and interpretation of pre-Christian Scandinavian culture and religion by medieval and early modern Scandinavian writers. Chapter 1, ‘Retying the Bonds’, is interesting because recent scholarship has moved away from the view that texts by Christians contain no real information on ‘pagan’ religion; Jonas Wellendorf notes general agreement that ‘prevailing notions of fundamental categories such as time, fate, and divinity changed radically in the course of Christianization’ (p. 2). Christians demoted polytheistic deities to demons, and Wellendorf considers a range of texts to ‘examine a number of responses elicited by the metamorphosis of gods into demons as expressed in Scandinavian texts from c. 1200 to the early eighteenth century’ (p. 6). He uses the model of Varro (d. 27 BCE), who classified accounts of the gods in three ways: mythic, physical (from *physis*, nature, and indicating a kind of natural philosophy), and civic. The Eddas are mythic, but are systematized in various ways (for example, the World Serpent fights at Ragnarok, so versions in which it perished in Þórr’s fishing are downgraded). Christianity destroyed the cultic aspects of Scandinavian religion, and the philosophical aspect was underdeveloped. This book explores how the bonds between humans and gods, severed in the conversion, were ‘re-tied’ by authors who created a ‘physical theology’ (p. 22) that explained them anew.

Chapter 2, ‘The Hierarchy of Disbelief in Antipagan Polemics’, discusses false gods as presented in the deutero-canonical *Wisdom of Solomon* and in *Baarlams saga*. The latter is a thirteenth-century Norse version of the tale of Baarlam and Josaphat, a popular Christian story ‘which ultimately derives from an Indian legend about the Buddha’ (p. 27), in which Nachor makes a speech that ranks types of wrong or false beliefs hierarchically. Chapter 3, ‘Universalist Aspirations in *Hauksbók*’, examines ‘On the Origins of Disbelief’, which is based on *De falsis deis* by the English abbot Ælfric of Eynsham (955–1010). Wellendorf argues *Hauksbók* is a collection that ‘betrays a considerable interest in paganism as a historical phenomenon’ (p. 61). The view that is expressed in it is of universal pagan gods, the identity of Norse deities being matched to Roman deities. Chapter 4, ‘The Byzantine Gods of Saxo Grammaticus’, analyses the *Gesta Danorum* in terms of its author’s euhemerist approach to the pre-Christian gods, the way he reserves full condemnation of paganism for the Wends but not the Danes, and the influence of ‘silver age Latin authors’ (p. 82) including Maximus and Justinus.

The final chapter, ‘Gods and Humans in the *Prose Edda*’, argues that demonology is not present in the *Prose Edda* or *Ynglinga saga*, but rather ‘a set of analogies between Christian and Norse teachings has an ennobling effect on Norse myth’ (p. 91). The *Prose Edda* includes themes of analogy, euhemerism, poetry, and invention. Wellendorf notes that the lengthier version in the *Codex Wormianus*

is less sympathetic. His ‘Epilogue: Óðinn and Odysseus’ continues the universalist mode of interpretation with the identification of Óðinn and Odysseus posited by the eighteenth-century Norwegian priest Jonas Ramus. Wellendorf indicates that Ramus, though unpersuasive, was compared with Olof Rudbeck (1630–1702), who accorded a higher status to Scandinavia as the ‘cradle of humanity’ (p. 117). This connection between Germanic tribes and the Greeks manifests in the Trojan origins of the Franks found in Gregory of Tours and is not historical, but testifies to the myriad ways that Christians in the medieval and early modern eras found clarity and structure in the relationship of their pasts to their presents. *Gods and Humans in Medieval Scandinavia: Retying the Bonds* extends beyond the Middle Ages and is highly intelligent, well-written, and deserving of a large audience. It is highly recommended.

CAROLE M. CUSACK, *The University of Sydney*

**White, R. S.**, *Ambivalent Macbeth*, Sydney, Sydney University Press, 2018; paperback; pp. ix, 211; R.R.P. AU\$30.00; ISBN 9781743325483.

R. S. White’s *Ambivalent Macbeth* argues for layers of ambivalence and ambiguity in *Macbeth*, contending that potentially divergent ideas and images saturate ‘all levels of *Macbeth*, as the play’s defining aspect’ (p. 10). The play is therefore ‘multi-vocal and open to a range of interpretations—some contradictory’ (p. 34). After a prologue juxtaposing *Faustus* with *Macbeth* and an initial chapter addressing common textual issues (such as dating and sources), Chapter 2 outlines some of the rhetorical, numerical, and thematic ambiguities. White posits that because of such ambiguities, the issues that arise in *Macbeth* (e.g. political, psychological, and moral) and indeed the play itself are ‘equally open to opposite lines of interpretation’ (p. 38). In his four subsequent chapters, White sets upon such issues by analysing various structural, dramatic, and linguistic elements: in Chapter 3, the circles of characters around the Macbeths and the ambivalence of those characters resulting from the primacy of plot; in Chapter 4, time’s nature, order, and disruption, as well as time’s linguistic limits in English; in Chapter 5, the interplay between the emotional and the rational (i.e. passion and reason) and how this interplay motivates or moves ideas; and in Chapter 6, the play’s wide-ranging imagery, imagery that White argues might be best understood through combined emotional effect. Chapter 7 concludes by chronicling how theatrical productions and filmic adaptations have dealt with *Macbeth’s* ambivalence.

White recognizes that *Ambivalent Macbeth* grew from his *Shakespeare’s Macbeth* (Sydney University Press, 1995); he has positively improved upon and expanded this predecessor. For example, White’s section on filmic adaptation is a clear upgrade, still discussing important older filmic adaptations, such as Orwell’s, Kurosawa’s, and Polanski’s, but now also describing numerous adaptations from the more recent commercial revival of Shakespeare on film, such as Reilly’s *Men of Respect* (1990), Bhardwaj’s *Maqbool* (2003), and Kurzel’s *Macbeth* (2015). His

survey and descriptions there provide useful starting points for those unfamiliar with the many available adaptations.

As can be said for most compact monographs about Shakespearean plays, *Ambivalent Macbeth* might be a bit more probing in places. For example, White initially groups filmic adaptations by generic or thematic categories, such as mafia (*Joe Macbeth*, *Men of Respect*, and Wright's *Macbeth*) or food industry-inspired (*Scotland, PA* and *ShakespeaRe-Told*); the chapter perhaps could have juxtaposed the same adaptations through ambivalent ideas. For instance, in *Shakespeare: An Oxford Guide* (Oxford University Press, 2003), Linda Woodbridge notes that *Macbeth* 'destabilizes simplistic thinking about men and women or about "masculine" or "feminine" character traits' (p. 226). A black comedy like *Scotland, PA* can helpfully probe this type of thinking in ways that dramatic adaptations like Wright's *Macbeth* can sometimes unhelpfully reinforce, as Jennifer Drouin has noted in *Shakespeare on Screen: Macbeth* (Presses universitaires de Rouen et du Havre, 2013). Or again, in his fifth chapter, White rightfully asserts that Christianity pervades *Macbeth* and that temptation was a prominent concern for early moderns in general and *Macbeth* more specifically: 'It is [Macbeth's] temptation and fall that provide the central fulcrum of the play's psychological dimension, and in broader terms temptation underpins the questions raised by the Witches' prophecies concerning whether the future is predetermined or changed by human choices acting with free will' (pp. 120–21). While White subsequently discusses Adam and Eve's temptation, he might further explore the idea of ambivalence in Jesus's temptations in the wilderness. Those temptations intrigued early moderns in part because of Jesus's perceived divinity and humanity. As William Perkins's contemporaneous *The Combat Betweene Christ and the Divell Displayed* (1606) highlights, 'Christ must be considered two wayes; first as man in the forme of a seruant; secondly, as God, euen the sonne of God, yea God himselfe: Now as Christ was man, he was subiect to Gods prouidence, and so was led and guided by the Holy ghost: but as he is God, he is not subiect to prouidence, but is the author therof, and is not himselfe led or sent, but together with the father sendeth the spirit' (p. 3). Such an example of ambivalence could be central to White's argument at this point, particularly as Shaheen's *Biblical References in Shakespeare's Tragedies* (University of Delaware Press-Associated University Presses, 1987) suggests Jesus's temptations are alluded to shortly after Macbeth first meets the witches (1.3.123–25).

These suggestions should not deter readers from engaging *Ambivalent Macbeth*; rather, they demonstrate that White's hope for this work to provide 'suggestions which other scholars might take up' (p. viii) was indeed well placed. *Ambivalent Macbeth* helpfully foregrounds the many questions that *Macbeth* raises and certainly prompts further research.

MICHAEL COP, *University of Otago*

**Whittle**, Jane, ed., *Servants in Rural Europe, 1400–1900* (People, Markets, Goods: Economies and Societies in History, 11), Woodbridge, The Boydell Press, 2017; paperback; pp. 286; 19 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £19.99; ISBN 9781783272396.

In this edited collection, a wide variety of individuals from the late medieval to the modern eras are studied together under the broad category of rural service. Jane Whittle presents us with eleven essays exploring the complicated demographic, economic, and legal nuances of service, defined as live-in waged labour, in rural northern and western Europe, with one last chapter on southern Europe for comparative perspective. This volume seeks to rebalance the historiography of European labour and labourers which has to date focused heavily on domestic service and urban settings. It succeeds in this worthy aim, with thorough archival research and compelling case studies illustrating the experiences of children, women, and men who were servants in rural Europe, and the shifting nature of their labour over space and time.

Whittle provides an expert introduction, placing servants firmly within their historiographical context as essential to our understanding of the family, and particularly the European marriage pattern, the agrarian economy, and the development of law. These themes are embedded throughout, as well as themes of gender, agency, mobility, and power. In the first chapter, Lies Vervaeke examines a coastal farm near Bruges from the fifteenth to sixteenth centuries, finding points of continuity over time in the highly seasonal, mobile, and gendered nature of rural service. Then, Thijs Lambrecht remains in sixteenth-century Flanders to offer a more regional study, similarly finding the favouring of skilled, male labour on larger farms. By looking beyond the payment of wages to question their expenditure, Lambrecht offers a fascinating glimpse into the lived experiences of servants who worked to maintain connections with home. In the third chapter, Whittle narrows in on rural England from 1500 to 1660, to show that prior to the long eighteenth century, service was not determined by hiring fairs and annual contracts, but by more individual arrangements and often lengthier employment periods. Charmian Mansell continues in early modern England and develops this idea of flexibility, using church court records to demonstrate how communities balanced concepts of idleness and economy when choosing whether to prosecute youths, particularly young women, found living outside of compulsory service.

Chapter 5 moves to rural Sweden (c. 1670–1730), where Cristina Prytz makes innovative use of biographical notes from parish registers to suggest that service could be a lifelong career that earned a deserving Christian reputation at death. Hanne Østhus is then the first author in this volume to really acknowledge the ‘porous boundaries of the term “servant”’ (p. 129). Investigating local and regional distinctions in service in early modern rural Norway, Østhus touches on the labour of foster children and conscripted soldiers. In the seventh chapter, Christine Fertig examines servants in eighteenth-century rural Germany to affirm a more conventional picture of unmarried youths entering service for a short period

as a way of gaining some financial, social, and geographical mobility, at least for young men. Following this, Jeremy Hayhoe takes a long view of servants in rural eastern France (c. 1700–1872), revealing a slight shift over time in the age and marriage status of servants in this region.

In the ninth chapter, Carolina Uppenberg returns to Sweden during the Agrarian Revolution (c. 1750–1850) to rightly offer a more critical interpretation of service as a patriarchal institution, in which servants were socially and legally subordinate and vulnerable. In Chapter 10, Sarah Holland affirms the evolution and survival of service in rural Yorkshire over the nineteenth century. Interestingly, Holland contends that middle-class ideas of Christian morality played out in campaigns to end public hiring fairs, deemed demoralizing for servants, though they actually provided opportunity to barter for higher wages. In contrast, Richard Paping then finds a gradual decline in service in the Dutch countryside over the long nineteenth century, as alternative options arose for youths, including remaining at home. In the final chapter, Raffaella Sarti examines an array of quantitative data to offer observations on service in rural Italy from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries. Although this project warrants further investigation, Sarti successfully complicates the idea that Italy was so distinct from the Western pattern of youthful service and late marriage, as well as the notion that these events were intrinsically linked.

*Servants in Rural Europe, 1400–1900* contributes a fresh and much-needed cross-national study of the many ordinary people who laboured outside of towns for centuries. The voices of servants are often absent or obscured by the voices of their masters in the historical record, yet the authors of this volume have offered important quantitative data for rural service, as well as colourful glimmers of qualitative narrative throughout. What is clear, though not entirely explicated, in the conflicting accounts of rural service in this collection and in the many references to legally-enforced labour, to work paid in kind, and to the labour of children, is that defining rural service, especially as an institution distinct from slavery, is not altogether easy.

OLIVIA FORMBY, *The University of Queensland*

**Zysk, Jay**, *Shadow and Substance: Eucharistic Controversy and English Drama across the Reformation Divide* (Reformations), Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press, 2017; paperback; pp. 392; 9 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. US\$45.00; ISBN 9780268102296.

Jay Zysk analyses the controversial semiotics of Jesus Christ's Eucharistic body in a wide selection of early English dramas. Previous literary studies of the Eucharist created dichotomies between medieval/early modern, religious/secular, and word/flesh, whereas Zysk favours a more fluid 'trans-Reformational course' (p. 2). He follows Sir Thomas More's rejection of interpreting the Eucharist allegorically. Instead, Zysk's trans-Reformational reading transposes the Eucharistic fluidity between the literal and figurative on to early English dramas. The fascinating

aspect of Zysk's thesis is that the ambiguity over whether Christ's spiritual or physical presence is in or represented by the bread and wine creates a signifying system combining the literal and figurative to make transubstantiation possible.

The trans-Reformational semiotics of Christ's Eucharistic body enables Zysk to compare Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* to biblical dramas. Despite it being a Roman tragedy, Zysk argues Shakespeare's play transfers Christ's wounds on to Coriolanus to highlight their differences. Whereas Christ's wounds are displayed publicly and interpreted openly, Coriolanus's wounds are removed from social discourse. Zysk's discussion also joins recent critical studies in which biblical drama is valued as individual complex literary texts, and not dismissed as repetitive allegories.

The relationship between Christ's body and a king's mystical body are examined in the regicides of John Bale's *King Johan* and Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. In *King Johan*, the king's divinity is ordained by the Word of God, not the Eucharist. However, anti-Eucharistic semiotics are used by the Catholic monk who gives the anointed king poisoned wine. The connection between anti-Eucharistic semiotics and anti-Catholicism is further explored in *Macbeth*. Macbeth's murder of Duncan, and Banquo's ghost, engage with the semiotic confusion of whether Christ's Eucharistic body is present or absent in flesh or spirit.

The liturgy and linguistic nuances of the Mass are examined in Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*. To this reviewer, this is the strongest chapter in an already engaging study, where trans-Reformational semiotics enables Zysk to ironically imply a renaming of the play as 'Father Faustus?' (p. 119). Zysk discovers that Faustus's rituals of black magic are derived from sacramental rituals, which previous criticism has not sufficiently explored. Faustus's necromantic book is compared convincingly to the missal that contains the prayers enabling 'the priest to transubstantiate bread and wine' (p. 130). Zysk argues that Faustus's necromancy is based on the divine magic of the Eucharistic ritual. His trans-Reformational approach further rationalizes Faustus's demonic spells as unauthorized liturgy that becomes a Eucharistic parody when performed on stage.

Saints' relics as body parts and objects making fleshly contact with a saint are described and examined in three dramas. Zysk draws attention to how saints' relics are easily forged for semiotic deceit. The most powerful reading is of John Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi*. Ferdinand's waxwork bodies of Antonio and his sons that deceive the Duchess draw upon the semiotics of the Saint's synecdochic representation. Zysk also observes Ferdinand using Eucharistic language. The trans-Reformational conceit is fully realized when Zysk reveals that wax was used to preserve a saint's sanctified remains.

In the final chapter, Zysk explores how Christ's physical and spiritual bodies provide a sensual experience. Zysk's trans-Reformational semiotic fluidity is extended into the Emmaus narrative of Christ's disguised appearance, revelation, and disappearance. Zysk examines the semiotic tension of interpreting disguised and real bodies in the early Tudor play *Jack Juggler*. Jack Juggler steals the page

Jankyn Careaway's identity for comic effect. However, Careaway's failure to recognize his own body echoes the Eucharist controversy re-represented in the Emmaus narrative.

Zysk acknowledges recent criticism of a transubstantiation parallel in Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*. However, he cleverly argues, Hermione is not miraculously resurrected or transformed from stone to flesh, but simply reveals herself as the fleshly body she has been throughout the play. In the 'Afterword', rather than providing an interesting background, Zysk reflects on how Eucharistic debates create a powerful dramatic context that shaped early English plays.

Zysk's insightful and well-structured approach studies Christ's Eucharistic body as a semiotic goldmine from which differing religious and philosophical interpretations influence the writing and performances of late medieval and early modern English drama. His clearly written original argument reveals how the semiotics of the bread and wine, word and flesh of the sacrament, are given surprising new contexts in each play. *Shadow and Substance: Eucharistic Controversy and English Drama across the Reformation Divide* is essential for scholars interested in religion, early modern drama and literary theory.

FRANK SWANNACK, *University of Salford*