# Reviews

**Arad**, Pnina, *Christian Maps of the Holy Land: Images and Meanings* (Cultural Encounters in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, 28), Turnhout, Brepols, 2020; paperback; pp. xxv, 176; 62 b/w illustrations,11 colour plates, R.R.P. €80.00; ISBN 9782503585260.

In this book Pnina Arad focuses on representations of the Holy Land in Christian and Jewish visual culture. Since much of the discussion about maps of the Holy Land have tended to be written with an interest in cartography and historical geography, this has meant that questions about geographical accuracy have played a significant part in the discussion of such works. While a growing knowledge about the reliability of maps, and questions around accuracy, has been of interest, maps in the medieval and early modern periods were also interested in depicting broader questions of cultural concerns, such as religious questions. As is signalled by the book's title, Christianity and the meanings imposed on the region of the Holy Land are the focus of Arad's study.

The book is well illustrated and provides extensive images from the sixth century through to the nineteenth, including Byzantine, Roman Catholic, Protestant, and Greek Orthodox examples. It is set out chronologically, beginning with the sixth-century floor mosaic known as the Madaba Map from Jordan. This Byzantine mosaic is found before the apse of the church of St George in Madaba and is the only known regional map from late antiquity. Arad argues that the map emphasizes its Christological nature by showing the Church of the Holy Sepulchre but not the Temple, perhaps using this erasure to underline the idea of the primacy of Christianity over Jewish beliefs.

The second collection of maps Arad examines are described as innovative Western spiritual iconographies, being devised in the West after the establishment of the short-lived Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem by the Crusaders in 1099. There were three types of maps that were predominant from the twelfth to the fourteenth century. These are: the twelfth-century maps of the Holy Land that were dominated by a circular, disproportionately large Jerusalem; Matthew Paris's versions of the Holy Land found in his chronicles; and grid maps from the fourteenth century. Ten versions of the twelfth-century circular maps have survived; each was attached to a variety of texts including pilgrimage guides, chronicles, religious texts, and encyclopedic compilations. The focus on Jerusalem also meant that only a small number of additional towns or features were included, and these were similar and mainly derived from the New Testament. There is also a close alignment with pilgrimage guides. From the mid-thirteenth century, the maps found in Matthew Paris's chronicles are quite different in type, placing the Holy Land within a wider geographical context including the countries surrounding it. Arad also briefly

summarizes several interpretations of these maps, including those by Daniel Connolly and Katherine Breen, which both suggest that these maps 'functioned as a device for conducting an imaginary journey' (p. 46). Neither the proponents, nor Arad, address the difficulties such an interpretation presented for the reader, given the size and weight of the manuscripts, although perhaps such a use may have been possible before the works were bound. She also suggests that these maps, along with the grid maps she then discusses, may also be influenced by pilgrimage accounts. In the case of Matthew Paris's maps, I suspect that these accompanied history texts and that a major source for Paris were crusaders and other travellers, especially given the information he provides on Acre, an important centre for his contemporaries. Marino Sanudo's *Liber secretorum fidelium crucis* contained a larger set of maps, including a world map. Sanudo was interested in crusading, and the grid that featured on his map was useful for military planning and provided the framework for an index found in his book.

Pilgrimage plays a central role in the next chapter, which deals with fifteenth-century maps, including early printed examples. Two maps, those of Gabriele Capodilista and Bernard von Breydenbach, were included in their accounts of their journeys, while that of William Wey was drawn on large sheets of parchment and placed in a church. The Breydenbach map was the first printed illustrated pilgrimage text, produced in twelve editions. These maps also included references to the Exodus.

In the next two chapters Arad covers the Reformation, focusing on the transitional work of Lucas Cranach the Elder, who produced a map for his patron Frederick III of Saxony, who had gone on pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 1493. Frederick also commissioned three additional paintings to commemorate this event. While pilgrimage was the catalyst for these works, this was not the case with the incorporation of maps in Protestant Bibles. They were often sets of eight maps, including a world map. Their pictorial topographies were new and conveyed the idea that the New Testament fulfilled the promises of the Old Testament. The final group were the Greek Orthodox paintings called 'proskynetaria' (p. 5). These were made in Jerusalem from the eighteenth to the early twentieth century and they transformed the Holy Land into an icon and endowed the pilgrim who had purchased them with the status of a hajji.

Arad has provided us with a large, generous collection of maps. She has also given us a breathtaking overview of this material. And while such a contextual approach is not new, the selection is, and will be a valuable resource for future scholarship.

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**Bennett**, Stephen, *Elite Participation in the Third Crusade* (Warfare in History), Woodbridge, The Boydell Press, 2021; hardback, pp. xiii, 445; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9781783275786.

Despite the enduring fame of its royal leaders and its importance to the history of crusading and the Latin East, the Third Crusade (1188–92) remains under-studied in modern scholarship. Stephen Bennett's new monograph on the participation of north-western European elites in this pivotal crusade is one of only a few studies to have treated the subject at length. Based on Bennett's doctoral dissertation, the book sets out not only to document the extent of participation in the Third Crusade by twelfth-century arms-bearers from the Angevin realm, France, and the Low Countries, but also to illuminate the complex religious, familial, economic, and political factors that influenced individual crusaders' involvement and contributed to their sense of social and military cohesion as they pursued the 'superordinate goal' of recapturing Jerusalem (p. 218).

The book centres on the prosopographical analysis of 583 participants in the Third Crusade, selected from 'an overall pool of over one thousand persons of potential interest' (p. 15). It is unclear who the remaining four hundred or so 'persons of potential interest' are, as is why they were excluded, but Bennett has certainly amassed an impressive amount of data that bears comparison with the efforts of Jonathan Riley-Smith in his seminal book *The First Crusaders, 1095–1131* (Cambridge University Press, 1997). One key respect in which Bennett aims to elevate his study methodologically above older prosopography is in his adoption of social network analysis. While this provides a promising framework for the study, Bennett's introductory discussion of the 'nodes', 'ties', 'dyads', 'triads', 'bridges', and 'centrality' (pp. 16–19) that are key to such an approach bears fruit only infrequently throughout the subsequent chapters. As a result, social network analysis comes across more as a theoretical veneer for the study than a foundational component of the argument.

The first three 'thematic' (p. 26) chapters of the book explore what influenced elites' decisions to set out for Jerusalem and shaped their arrangements and actions both prior to departure and during the crusade itself. Chapter 1 sheds light on 'the spiritual dimension to crusader motivation' (p. 89) by examining identifiable crusaders' donations to and connections with specific religious houses, as well as the ways in which prominent orders such as the Cistercians and Premonstratensians and ecclesiastical leaders like Baldwin of Canterbury and Philip of Beauvais left their mark on recruitment for the crusade. One of the most thought-provoking arguments in this chapter is that the general success of the Saladin Tithe in the Angevin realm resulted in fewer prospective crusaders in these lands having to alienate property to fund their participation, unlike in France (pp. 39–46).

Chapter 2 traces the webs of kinship that knitted participants in the Third Crusade together through descent from crusading ancestors and family connections to one another. Somewhat surprisingly, nearly three quarters of the participants Bennett lists cannot be identified as descendants of crusaders, but the data is more

compelling when it comes to shared family involvement, with 41 per cent of the crusaders studied here known to have had a relative on the Third Crusade as well (p. 107). Chapter 3 interrogates the various 'homophilous' (p. 123) ties connecting crusaders, examining the geographical proximity that shaped certain regional contingents, the involvement of many nobles in the trade of wine, wool, and money-fiefs, and their participation in tournaments. Though this chapter presents interesting and suggestive ideas about how such factors influenced participation in the Third Crusade, the argument tends towards informed conjecture rather than persuasive conclusions grounded in the evidence. This is particularly so in the long final section on tournaments (pp. 146–58), which could explain more convincingly how 'the tournament circuit disseminated crusading as a behavioural and martial expectation' (p. 155) and laid 'the foundation for [Christian] knights […] to fight stirrup-to-stirrup in the Holy Land' (p. 158).

Chapter 4 concludes the study by providing a thorough discussion of the household of King Richard I of England (r. 1189–99) on crusade, which Bennett demonstrates was characterized by both 'diversity' and 'fluidity' (p. 211). The extensive prosopographical data underpinning all four chapters of the book are amply laid out in two appendices (pp. 220–396). That being said, the usefulness of the first appendix is severely hampered by the lack of a clear system of arrangement (for example, alphabetical) for the hundreds of crusaders listed there, and the second unnecessarily duplicates many details supplied in the first, such as bibliographical references.

Although this book exhibits certain issues that are not uncharacteristic of first monographs, including occasional errors in the English translations from Latin sources (for example, the absence of the subjunctive in excerpts from the papal bull *Audita tremendi* on pages 29 and 115, where it is crucial to the sense), Bennett has made a welcome and significant contribution to our understanding of the Third Crusade and its elite participants from north-western Europe. His work lays a strong foundation for further prosopographical research in this area and extends a persuasive invitation to historians seeking to produce a more 'comprehensive history of the Third Crusade' (p. 27). It is to be hoped that such scholars will follow Bennett's lead.

James H. Kane, *Flinders University*

**Benson**, C. David, *Imagined Romes: The Ancient City and Its Stories in Middle English Poetry*, University Park, PA, The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2019; hardback; pp. 216; R.R.P. US$89.95; ISBN 9780271083209.

This fascinating study of Rome, as imagined by Middle English poets, is a work that both identifies and fills a significant scholarly gap. This gap, as the author characterizes it, is a 'systematic study of ancient Rome as a major theme in the works of late medieval English poets' (p. 1). This book answers that gap adroitly. Exploring relationships between Latin source texts and Middle English

poetry, divergent perceptions of ancient and contemporary Rome, paganism and Christianity, and more, the author succeeds in his objective 'to make the case for how much is to be gained from more careful attention to the subject' (p. 144).

The book is divided in two parts, broadly addressing texts that focus on Rome in the first two chapters before turning to texts that have considerable Roman content in Chapters 3–6. The first part begins with the *Stacions of Rome*, a poem that derives from the Latin *Indulgentiae ecclesiarum urbis Romae*, itself focused on Rome's Christian heritage. Benson convincingly argues that the *Stacions of Rome*, full of churches and relics and indulgences, act as 'a textual substitute for Rome rather than a guide to it' (p. 23), wherein the city becomes a conduit for grace by way of imaginary pilgrimage. Benson turns to the *Metrical Mirabilia* in his second chapter, giving considerable attention to the textual relationships between various poems and their Latin precedents in a series of works with more explicitly antiquarian elements focused on ancient Rome and its marvels. Benson shows how an English poet's interpolation into *Mandeville's Travels*, which he characterizes as 'unparalleled in Middle English poetry' (p. 46), makes a case for the superiority of Christian spirituality over pagan Rome's technical achievements.

In the book's second part, Benson turns to some poets who are 'better-known and more accomplished' (p. 59) and surveys the role that Rome played in their narratives. John Gower is first, in whose *Confessio Amantis* Benson sees Rome being used to illustrate exemplary instances of good government that 'is successful in good times and resilient in bad' (p. 73). Geoffrey Chaucer follows, and here Benson draws attention to the ways that Roman power was often deployed against women. 'Nowhere else in Middle English poetry do Roman men in power treat good women with such unrelenting nastiness' (p. 81), he suggests. In William Langland's *Piers Plowman*, in contrast, Benson suggests that Rome serves as a focus for the poet's concern with virtue. Benson argues that the episode concerning Trajan and Gregory helps the poet resolve some of the conceptual difficulties bequeathed to medieval thinkers by the 'dual legacy of ancient Rome, pagan and Christian' (p. 119).

John Lydgate's *Fall of Princes* is the focus of Benson's final chapter, which brings the book to its conclusion. The *Fall of Princes* is here shown to treat Rome with more antiquarian accuracy than the preceding three poets and with a degree of literary sophistication that 'may be unexpected in a poet so easy to underrate' (p. 121). Benson's suggestion that Lydgate 'articulates an Augustinian view of ancient Rome as the paradigmatic earthly city' (p. 143) is an interesting notion, which highlights the overall benefit of this close study of the imagined Rome(s) of Middle English poetry. Rome, as Benson shows, could and did mean many things. It was a repository of stories, but also could be an object of imaginary pilgrimage. Rome exemplified virtues and vices, connections, and contrasts. As Benson so effectively illustrates, the poetically imagined Rome was rarely just a setting.

Nicholas D. Brodie, *Hobart*, *Tasmania*

**Bicks**, Caroline, *Cognition and Girlhood in Shakespeare's World: Rethinking Female Adolescence*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2021; hardback; pp. 294; 13 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. AU$141.95; ISBN 9781108844215.

As the title of the book makes clear, Caroline Bicks is asking us to rethink the way we interpret depictions of female adolescence in early modern drama, specifically to eschew the 'enduring scholarly presumption that early moderns viewed all female psycho-physiognomies as inferior and damage prone' (p. 3). Bicks takes the position that scholars have accepted too unquestioningly their gendered inferiority rather than attending to evidence of cognitive strengths, or what she terms 'the brainwork' of teenage girls. Drawing on a broad range of sources, she puts the case for recognizing the adolescent girl's brain as far from cognitively inferior to the adolescent male's but as intellectually inspirational: 'The changing brainwork of the early modern girl was a lightning rod for some of the period's most vital epistemological debates about the body and soul, faith and salvation, science and nature, God and the material universe (pp. 7, 67).

Bicks grounds her claim in the biological changes at menarche and in her interpretation of Helkiah Crooke's brief statement that the heated adolescent brain leads girls to 'thinke upon husbands' and not, like boys, on lustful imaginations. This example of female cognitive superiority becomes a familiar motif in the book (pp. 15, 42, 71, 186, 208). Having outlined the familiar early modern medical background to menarche, she brings in less familiar material with a clinical description of the brain and its operations as understood at the time and the three particular faculties that provide evidence of female cognitive superiority—imagination, understanding, and memory. The book is structured around identifying each of these qualities in teenage heroines in Shakespeare and others.

*Cognition and Girlhood* relies predominantly on close textual analysis, intertextuality, linguistic clues, and on comparisons between the male and female adolescent brain. In *Romeo and Juliet*, she deftly demonstrates that Juliet exhibits a cognitive and balanced body–mind far superior to Romeo's. What may seem insignificant becomes crucial to the greater argument. For example, Juliet is alert to future tragedy in ways Romeo cannot conceive. His brainwork is vague and diffuse and his own prophesy of doom is the product of dreams, 'a male unconscious means of foresight' (p. 43). Bicks extracts numerous small clues like this to make a persuasive argument for this thirteen-year-old's exceptional cognitive abilities. Her choice of Mary Glover (the fourteen-year-old 'possessed' girl whose illegal exorcism caused considerable controversy in London in 1602) as the companion study in this chapter is less persuasive, to my mind. The biographical evidence becomes complicated by a biblical vocabulary of spiritual despair and the appropriation of the virginal voice by male authors for their own purposes.

Much more convincing is the analysis in Chapter 2 of Alice Egerton, the young heroine in John Milton's *Comus*, who employs the power of her imagination in order to survive. This is followed with another perceptive analysis, this time of *Othello*, where Bicks teases out changes in Desdemona's brainwork as she transitions from bride to wife. The damage done by marriage (repeatedly conveyed as 'the cave of care') to the unfettered virginal brain is a key motif throughout book. It surfaces in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, with a primary focus on the Jaylor's daughter, whose imaginative brain is reduced and controlled by male authority (doctor, father, wooer). Bicks's method of building up her argument with numerous intertextual links is at its strongest here (music, travel, *The Tempest*, Ophelia, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Dido).

Chapter 3 presents her most ambitious argument: that there was a shift in early modern England that 'grants girls a dynamic role in the advancement of new knowledge' (p. 108). Much of the argument here relies on metaphorical and allegorical usage of Time and Truth and Fathers and Daughters in philosophical, educational, literary, and scientific debates (p. 105). Against this backdrop she provides a welcome new reading of Prospero and Miranda in *The Tempest*.

Chapter 4 turns to the way adolescent girls put their memory to intellectual use, with Ophelia in *Hamlet* and Marina in *Pericles* as examples. *Pericles* gets the lion's share, due in large part to a detailed account of the story of Antiochus and his daughter. For those like me who are not familiar with Wilkins's 1608 prose account of the story this is fascinating background material, and indisputable evidence of Bicks's accusation of the 'suppression of difficult histories and silencing of the girls who try to speak to them' (p. 128).

Having dealt with the three major brain faculties activated at menarche—imagination, understanding, and memory—Bicks then turns to the complex issue of deciphering early modern gender play on the stage. Triggered by a quote from a cross-dressed girl in *Gallathea*, she poses the question: 'What would it mean if a girl *could* put on the mind of a boy?' (p. 160). Three plays (*Gallathea*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *The Convent of Pleasure*) provide exempla of 'girl characters [who] put on other minds' in order to resist, disrupt, and delay the heteronormative expectations that awaited them in a male-authored society. One intriguing feature of this disruption is the manipulation of time, identified in 'the herb-wielding Flora that Perdita scripts and performs' in *The Winter's Tale* and echoed in the 'messing with the seasons' in Cavendish's The *Convent of Pleasure* (pp. 177, 186).

*Cognition and Girlhood* concludes with a short biography of Mary Ward, founder of several religious houses on the Continent for English girls, and an example of the powers of the young female brain if freed from the male fold. This positive shift towards adolescent female cognition in early modern England appears short-lived, as the book's coda weighs the increasing 'degradation' of female adolescence against opposing arguments later in the century, leaving us with the pivotal question: 'can these isolated examples from medical, fictional, and archival materials help us understand how most early modern English people

were thinking about girls' brainwork?' (p. 225). The answer for this reader is 'yes'—*Cognition and Girlhood* has started a conversation that deserves to be continued.

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**Boffey,** Julia, and Christiana **Whitehead**, eds, *Middle English Lyrics: New Readings of Short Poems*, Cambridge, D. S. Brewer, 2018; hardcover; pp. xvii, 310; 8 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9781843844976.

**Nelson**, Ingrid, *Lyric Tactics: Poetry, Genre, and Practice in Later Medieval England* (The Middle Ages Series), Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017; cloth; pp. 214; 2 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. US$65.00; ISBN 9780812248791.

That medieval lyric, especially the great body of anonymous lyric, has been accorded less critical attention than it deserves is almost an axiom of literary studies. Despite the existence of outstanding collections by Carleton Brown, Rossell Hope Robbins, and others, and the invaluable resource of the *Index of Middle English Verse*, the sheer volume and variety of shorter verse forms in medieval English, along with the canonical primacy of big names—or indeed, any name at all—have long contributed to the critical neglect of all but a very few of the shorter poems that survive in manuscript miscellanies, commonplace books, and often in contexts that are otherwise anything but literary. These two volumes therefore come as welcome additions to the critical corpus.

Although there is a certain degree of overlap, to the extent that both deal with the fourteenth-century Franciscan William Herebert and with 'Antigone's song' from Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* (of which more in a moment), the two books could scarcely be more different in approach. Boffey and Whitehead provide nineteen essays, all but two of which focus tightly upon specific texts, grouped under the themes of Affect, Visuality, *Mouvance*, and Transformation, and Words, Music, and Speech. The reader is greatly helped by the practice of citing at the outset the poem to be discussed, and by notes cross-referencing other essays in the volume that touch on related questions. The earliest poems discussed date from the thirteenth century; the latest is Sir Thomas Wyatt's '*In eternum*'. Ingrid Nelson, by contrast, approaches her texts from a very specific theoretical perspective, stating that her study (in an echo of the New Historicist Louis Montrose) 'defines the medieval lyric genre as much by what it *does* (its cultural work) as by what it *is* (its formal features)' (p. 6). She, too, begins in the early Middle English period and ends with Wyatt; her book had, in fact, appeared in time for Boffey and Whitehead to engage with it briefly in their introduction.

Two broad questions are posed by both approaches. One is the perennially thorny issue of generic definition: 'lyric', with its associations with music and with the evocation of deeply experienced emotion, fits well with many shorter

poems written in the Middle Ages, but not so well with others that are essentially didactic, political, or comic. While opting, *faut de mieux*, to employ the term, both Boffey and Whitehead on the one hand and Nelson on the other acknowledge the problem: for Nelson, indeed, it is the focus upon cultural practice that may offer a way out of the difficulty, although for this reader at least it would take a much more wide-ranging body of material to establish the case.

The other important dimension, clearly represented in both volumes but inviting much more exploration, arises from what has been called the 'codicological turn' in scholarship, a greater awareness both of the importance of manuscript context in understanding how texts were read (or used) and of the significance of scribal intervention in shaping and reshaping the texts themselves. The theme is firmly established in Tom Duncan's opening chapter of the collaborative volume, his meticulous analysis of the minutiae of textual transmission raising crucial questions for any potential editor, but hinting too at interpretative issues that recur in many of the subsequent readings, such as that by A. S. Lazikant of a poem in Trinity College, Cambridge, MS B.14.39, or Michael P. Kuczynski's study of one in Eton College MS 36, or Natalie Jones's reading of another in BL MS Arundel 286. This brings us back to cultural practice, and to the underlying purposes that inform the creation, transmission, and consumption of these texts. Given the strong focus upon religious lyrics by Boffey and Whitehead's contributors, one finds oneself reflecting upon the light that these texts, and their contexts, may cast upon the evolution of devotional practice in England between, say, 1200 and 1450, in both monastic and secular milieux. Some intriguing light on this topic is cast by Mary Wellesley's discussion of the manuscript witnesses of Lydgate's *Fifteen Joys and Sorrows of Mary*, a poem that she describes as both 'a celebration of the readerly experience' and 'a homage to a bookish form of devotion' (p. 129).

The complementary strengths of both volumes are well illustrated by the discussion of 'Antigone's song', the lyric included by Chaucer in Book II of *Troilus and Criseyde* (II, 827–75), by Nelson at pp. 92–107 and by Elizabeth Robertson at pp. 174–85 of the collection. Both readings emphasize the internal tensions and contradictions within the lyric, associating them with Criseyde's conflicting emotions as she contemplates Troilus's suit, as well as the wider conflicts between individual desires and choices and the demands of a society at war; but whereas Nelson's framing concern with lyric tactics leads her outwards to the amatory diction of French courtly verse, and of Guillaume Machaut in particular, and to the rhetorical principles enunciated by Geoffrey de Vinsauf, Robertson takes Theodor Adorno's notion of lyric as a 'subjective expression of a social antagonism' as the springboard for an even more detailed analysis of the strategies by which Chaucer undercuts or negates the apparently unequivocal praise of love that Antigone seems to articulate. Like her editors, Robertson is able to draw on Nelson's work, and if she does not go so far as to associate Chaucer's poem with the 'Wonderful Parliament' of 1386, she does see its tensions, and those of lyrics like 'Antigone's song', as 'an expression of the conditions of Chaucer's life as one struggling

to improve his life as a knight *en service*, as one living in a dangerous courtly environment where friends were executed or quickly became deadly enemies and as one well aware of the vicissitudes of a long-standing and ever shifting war with France' (p. XXX). Readers of both volumes will find much to contemplate concerning the ways in which these texts, many of them much less pored over than *Troilus and Criseyde*, were generated by, circulated within, and experienced by the societies that created them, as well as illuminating dissections of the fabric of the texts themselves.

For readers of this journal, it may be of particular interest to note that in his metacontextual final chapter of the Boffey and Whitehead collection, John C. Hirsh, considering the crucial role of the Oxford scholars Rosemary Woolf, Douglas Gray, and Peter Dronke in the study of medieval lyric, traces the origin of both Gray's and Dronke's preoccupation with the genre to their undergraduate days at Victoria University College, Wellington. Although he does not figure in Hirsh's account, one should extend the line to include Ian Gordon, Professor of English Language and Literature at 'Vic' from 1936 to 1974, who taught both Gray and Dronke as well as several other influential Antipodean medievalists, giving rise to an academic genealogy that is now in its fourth and fifth generations.

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**Bothe**, Lukas, Stefan **Esders**, and Han **Nijdam**, eds, *Wergild, Compensation and Penance: The Monetary Logic of Early Medieval Conflict Resolution* (Medieval Law and Its Practice, 31), Leiden/Boston, Brill, 2021; hardback; pp. 322; R.R.P. €143.00; ISBN 9789004466128.

This volume is an edited collection of observations concerning a revitalization of the study of wergild and conflict settlement in medieval Europe. Interest in this area has peaked in recent decades and this book reflects that interest. This volume contains thirteen single-author chapters that set out to examine the role of compensation in different medieval legal systems. Though some attention is paid to the classical Roman period, in order to demonstrate possible efforts of continuity in the Germanic legal systems, the overall emphasis of this volume is skewed towards Anglo-Saxon England and Frankish and Carolingian France, with some emphasis on Frisian, Scandinavian, and other 'Germanic-like' sources. There is a great deal of dialogue between the chapters, with each author adding their own insights with respect to each other's work. Indeed, this gives the volume a more insightful approach, as each author builds on the overall thesis that aims to uncover how a person's worth was established in the medieval era and why monetary values were applied to resolve certain conflicts.

The first three chapters are largely devoted to analysing the incentive behind wergild as a method of compensation. In doing so, the authors set out to unpack the structural approaches outlined in Germanic law codes such as the *Sachsenspiegel*, the *leges barbarorum*, and the *Lex Frisionum*. These studies are broad and investigate many law codes, yet they deliver a well-rounded preliminary

understanding of early medieval mentalities surrounding conflict resolution. The focus of these first few chapters appears to be on tracking down the transition from ancient Roman law to the beginnings of medieval statehood. It is argued that the phenomenon of wergild was 'superior' to models of conflict resolution, as payment would disincentivize kinship groups from getting involved in individual feuds (p. 10). However, as Stefan Esders quite rightly points out, the problem with quantifying human life in terms of monetary value is that 'value' is always abstract (p. 12). To understand this abstraction, many of the contributors in this volume refer to the idea of honour, albeit represented as an idea numerical in value. The theme of honour runs predominantly through most of the book and is well examined in Chapters 6 and 7. Overall, these studies deliver an enhanced appreciation of understanding why honour played a substantial role in the psychologization behind wergild utilized as payment to resolve conflict. The first half of the volume will appeal to those unfamiliar with Germanic law or early medieval mentalities concerning law and order. For those interested in a terminological analysis of wergild, then Chapters 4 and 5 will beguile the reader. Naturally, they are useful guides for examining links of continuity and similarity between the different Germanic law codes, most of which are examined in this book.

The chapters that make up the second half of the volume are devoted to independent themes. The approaches delivered are less broad and focus on a specific area of law or a particular law code. Rob Meens's chapter interestingly draws us away from what one may consider 'secular' law, as he focuses on penance and penitential practice. Recent scholarship has considered the likelihood that penance would have been part of the punishment process. Meens correctly draws our attention to the idea that many texts that include methods of penitential practice often circulated throughout early medieval Europe and were made to exact punishment from lawbreakers. Making peace with God and absolving oneself from sin was, therefore, arguably just as important as monetary compensation in the process of restoring conflict. It is here that Meens reminds us that there is always an uncertainty between what we consider secular law and ecclesiastical law (p. 233). Both were interrelated in the medieval period. To make a distinction between the two would be to impose our own contemporary understanding of law and order.

The volume concludes with a chapter concerning the 'Western legal tradition' and the demise of wergild. Indeed, this chapter is valuable, as it lays out the groundwork of scholarship to be further examined. Principally, these reflect the 'legal renaissance' of the twelfth century and the 'judicialization of wrong', as Paul Hyams asserts (p. 320). Overall, the appeal of this volume is its accessibility. The book provides well-written papers surrounding the nature of wergild. The main issue of concern in the volume, however, is the repetitiveness concerning ideas already covered by other contributors. Although, beneficially, this sometimes builds towards overall scholarly insight, at other times one finds contributors treading on ground covered already. The comparative approach, which many of

the authors in the volume take, will equip the reader with extensive knowledge of medieval mentalities concerning Germanic styles of conflict resolution. A comprehensive understanding of the function of wergild is, after all, pertinent to discerning early medieval legal systems.

Julian Calcagno, *Flinders University*

**Brentjes**, Sonja, and Alexander **Fidora**, eds, *Premodern Translation: Comparative Approaches to Cross-Cultural Transformations* (Contact and Transmission, 2), Turnhout, Brepols, 2021; hardback; pp. 189; R.R.P. €70.00; ISBN 9782503590974.

The editors of this volume are to be highly commended for looking beyond Western Europe, though there is only one chapter on the Far East. The remaining five focus on the transmission of Greek and Arabic *scientiae* (sciences) into Latin.

In two excellent paragraphs on page 24 Yukiyo Kasai clearly expresses the way that translation needs to balance the cultural influences of source and target languages. The Uyghur translations remind me of the difficulty Europeans had when trying to translate Christian texts into Chinese or Tagalog.

Jens Høyrup's chapter contains both detailed analysis of mathematical problems and textual considerations. These concern not only the origins of the actual texts but also the possible sources of the materials in anonymous texts. Fibonacci (Leonard of Pisa) has been given great credit for introducing Hindu-Arabic numerals to the Latin West. Høyrup investigates some of the possible sources, which are, of course, Arabic. The result is a mixture of intense mathematics and textual study that left this reader unsatisfied.

Alexander Fidora and Pietro D. Omodeo both consider the meaning of theory and practice. Fidora's delicate analysis of the continuing influence of Gundissalinus (1110–1190) is quite fascinating. Gundissalinus embraced Arab philosophy. He distinguished theory and practice, with the latter being 'from our own work' and the former 'not from our own work' (p. 76), and Fidora goes on to give an excellent characterization of that ubiquitous and difficult word *speculativa* (p. 77).

Katya Krause and Henryk Anzulewicz present a very long paper, with an impressive bibliography, on the way that Albert the Great moulded scientific knowledge. The authors concentrate on his *interpretationes*: interpretations of Latin versions of Aristotle, since Albert did not know Greek (or Arabic) (p. 92). This should be borne in mind when the authors refer to 'Arabic sources' (p. 99 and Appendix II).

A central consideration is translation as *ad verbum de verbo* versus interpretation *ad sensum de sensu*, and how these ideas have changed from medieval times. This chapter manages to show how Albert regarded *interpretatio* in a way that went far beyond simple interpretation (in its modern sense) and expanded transmission, translation, and appropriation as parts of the process of seeking after truth and certainty.

One would have liked more contextualization, something the authors were capable of—witness page 111, note 63, with its list of influences on Albert. However, they give a very interesting analysis as to how knowledge frames the intellect and is both a prerequisite for understanding and a means of attaining happiness/fulfilment (see, for example, pp. 100–101). They also consider Albert's important trajectory from moral imperatives to the development of the intellect (p. 113).

It may be best to start Claire Gilbert's chapter with the conclusion (pp. 159–60). Gilbert considers only the work of one person, Alonso del Castillo, an ambitious student of Arabic who served Philip II of Spain. He was a *morisco*: of Moroccan descent but Christian. Gilbert illuminates the hazards of being an Arabic scholar and translator when Arabic books were banned while there was a need for people who knew Arabic to investigate whether 'crime or heresy had taken place' (p. 159).

Gilbert is very conscious of different styles, 'registers' as she calls them, from high court to lowly dialect in both Spanish and Arabic (pp. 143–44), gives a lovely example of how Castillo worked, and shows he had learnt Arabic in a standard (Arabic) way. However, he translated letters from the Sultan of Morocco to Philip II (p. 141), where he had to contend with the formulaic self-praise before the letter got down to the matter at hand (pp. 144–47).

This absorbing chapter would have benefitted from giving, at their first occurrence, definitions of basic terms such as *ʿammiyyāt* (dialect), *fuṣḥa* (classical Arabic), and *alfaquíes* (an expert in Islamic jurisprudence), but especially *plomos*, the 'lead (metal) books' (p. 137), not to mention Anglicized titles of, for example, *Ajurrūmiyya*, a standard beginners' book of classical Arabic in verse (p. 158), and the classic dictionary *Siḥaḥ al-ʿarabiyya* ('Correct Arabic') (p. 153).

The beautifully written chapter by Pietro D. Omodeo recounts both the endeavours of Regiomontanus (Johannes Müller von Königsberg) in the rebirth of ancient knowledge into Latin, and the influence of the Reformation, particularly through Philip Melanchthon, on desirable learning. Omodeo is punctilious about translating terms at first occurrence except, strangely, μεγάλη σύνταξις ('Great composition' = *The Almagest*) (p. 181).

In compiling a book of this compass there are many difficulties. One that is distracting is the lack of uniformity in transcribing non-English words, since many of them are fundamental ones. There is only an index of premodern authors, and even this is problematic since spellings/transcriptions are not uniform throughout the book; but these are minor problems.

This book is serious reading but very rewarding. It is gratifying to see the editors extending the contemplation of the processes of translation beyond the Latin West.

John N. Crossley, *Monash University*

Chaucer, Geoffrey, *Œuvres complètes*, I: *'Le Livre de la Duchesse' et autres textes,* ed. and trans. by Jonathan **Fruoco** (Textes Littéraires du Moyen Âge, 65), Paris, Classiques Garnier, 2021; paperback; pp. 404; R.R.P. €49.00; ISBN 9782406120018.

With the support of the New Chaucer Society, Jonathan Fruoco has embarked on a project that, if we are lucky, will result in a complete parallel edition–translation of the works of Geoffrey Chaucer, with Middle English text presented alongside modern French prose. As someone who teaches Chaucer in Switzerland, I have been following the progress of this project with some interest. Having had a chance to read this first volume, I am convinced of its utility—and by that, I mean that I wish I had had this book six months earlier, when I was working with a Swiss student who had French as a third language. For that matter, I would have gladly used this book myself, as an undergraduate, when I first encountered Chaucer as a student both of French and of medieval English. As well as the parallel text edition and translation, Fruoco offers a comprehensive introduction, and includes text-specific introductions from leading scholars. For teachers in francophone universities, this edition will allow students to focus their efforts on the Middle English text, aided by contextual and interpretive information accessible in their native language. For the admittedly niche market of anglophone scholars like myself who might need to contextualize our work for francophone colleagues, the introduction's historiography of la francophonie's chief encounters with Chaucer, and justification of Chaucer as a multilingual European author and translator, is also particularly useful.

To give some context: it is not that there have been no editions or translations of Chaucer's works in French until now. However, the most comprehensive have focused primarily on the *Canterbury Tales*—most recently, André Crépin's parallel edition and translation (Gallimard, 2000). Crépin also oversaw a complete works translation, with introductions by leading anglophone scholars (Laffont, 2010); but this translation included only fragments of original text. The four texts represented in Fruoco's first volume (*The Book of the Duchess*, *The House of Fame*, *Anelide and Arcité*, and *The Parliament of Fowls*) have been particularly inaccessible to francophone audiences. The fact that these less-popular texts are *also* those least likely to be available in modernized English means they have been little-taught in francophone contexts, which is a particular shame given the close links between Chaucer's dream-vision poems and medieval French literary cultures.

I will keep my comments on the edition and translation brief, as not essential to most of the *Parergon* audience. Due to copyright issues with the Riverside text, the Middle English is based on Skeat's 1899 edition, but has been thoroughly corrected by Fruoco. There is no critical apparatus offered for the Middle English text, but the notes to the translation provide a substantial web of intertextual references and clarifications. The fact that the translation is in prose means that it treads a line between replicating the grammar of the Middle English original and representing the sense in straightforward French. In a few places, I was jarred

by passages that privilege the latter value; but more often, the translation draws my attention to the vocabulary links between Middle English and Old French—especially those no longer viable in modern English.

While Fruoco's primary target audience is the francophone academic market, and secondarily literary-minded general readers, I also believe this series will prove useful outside of the francophone world. Put simply, a modern French prose translation makes an incredibly useful crib to Middle English. The presence of the prose translation will speed up the process of building a Middle English lexicon for learners of French, as well as for native speakers. From my time teaching in Switzerland, and from talking to European colleagues about their reading strategies, I also suspect that many people who are not current French students would be able to use this translation: speakers of other Romance languages, and students and scholars of Latin, in particular. For these reasons, I would recommend that teachers of Chaucer in Australian and New Zealand universities where French is also taught consider requesting a library acquisition of this series, while anyone with an interest in dream-visions and a modicum of French may find this edition a useful supplement to the glossed English editions.

Amy Brown, *University of Bern*

**Church**, S. D., ed., *Anglo-Norman Studies XLIII: Proceedings of the Battle Conference 2020*, Woodbridge, The Boydell Press, 2021; hardback; pp. 216; 6 line, 10 colour illustrations; R.R.P. £50.00; ISBN 9781783276059.

The latest volume of *Anglo-Norman Studies* continues the tradition, dating back to 1978, of publishing the proceedings of the annual Battle Conference in a series that has long since become indispensable for scholars of the Norman period. Now under the editorship of Stephen Church, the 2021 edition—based on the 2020 conference held online—contains a fascinating array of essays on Norman affairs.

As is customary, the opening chapter is based on the Allen Brown memorial lecture, given by an invited eminent scholar. Martin Aurell examines the possibilities for mixed marriages between members of the Christian and Moslem nobilities during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. He takes as his starting point the proposed union between Joan of England, sister of Richard the Lionheart, and Al-ʿÂdil, brother of Saladin, as part of the negotiations to bring an end to the Third Crusade in 1191. Joan refused to take part in the deal, which anyway would have been impossible under canon law. Aurell asks whether any similar marriages did in fact occur, and what conditions would have allowed them to proceed. Using imaginative literature as well as chronicle sources, he offers some limited but intriguing evidence to suggest that diplomatic marriages could, on occasion, occur across religious boundaries.

Perhaps the most significant contribution for scholars of the Normans is Christopher Norton's essay on the Bayeux Tapestry. It makes a compelling argument that the famous artefact (actually an embroidery) was intended for display at Bayeux Cathedral, and was created under the patronage of Odo, Bishop

of Bayeux, and perhaps of William the Conqueror himself. Odo has been the traditional consensus candidate, but his role in the Tapestry's creation has been challenged in recent years, as has the object's likely location. Using architectural and archaeological evidence, Norton shows how the Tapestry could have been displayed in a way that fit perfectly with the contours of Bayeux Cathedral, as it existed in the eleventh century before later reconstruction.

Other studies span the range of the period associated with the Normans, from Charles Insley's examination of Lancashire in the early tenth century to Richard Barton's scrutiny of judicial and ecclesiastical inquests (*enquêtes*) in western France during the thirteenth century. Insley argues that pre-Domesday Lancashire, an area relatively neglected in scholarship, is best understood as part of an 'Irish Sea cultural zone' (p. 122). Barton is concerned to rescue records of inquests from the theoretical approach of legal scholars and to find instead the basis for a rich social history, while also using them to question the longstanding 'progressive scholarly narrative of administrative kingship and state formation' (p. 196).

A strength of the volume is that emerging scholars are recognized alongside their established peers. Hannah Boston and Gabriele Passabì, winner and runner-up of the Marjorie Chibnall Essay Prize (Battle Conference on Anglo-Norman Studies), contribute essays on topics with a long tradition in Norman historiography: post-Conquest lordship and chronicle writing. Boston argues for the possibility of multiple tenancies in the Norman feudal model, boldly challenging both the received wisdom on the 'tenurial revolution' dating back at least to F. M. Stenton, and the more recent rejection of feudalism itself as a useful term. Passabì examines a little-known text, the *Continuatio Ursicampina*, to show how Geoffrey of Monmouth's pseudo-historical but highly influential *Historia regum Britanniae*, with its appealing Arthurian core, could be both questioned by and integrated within later historical writing.

Remaining essays deal with connections between forests and the siting of elite residences, using Cheshire as a case study (Rachel Swallow); Harold II's coinage, reappraised in light of a substantial hoard unearthed as recently as 2019 in the Chew Valley near Bath (Gareth Williams); the coronation of the Conqueror's wife, Mathilda of Flanders, as the first Anglo-Norman queen at Pentecost in 1068 (Laura Gathagan); and variations—but also continuities—in the practice and ritual of knighting during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, based on the experience of male members of the Norman and Angevin dynasties (Max Lieberman). Readers may wish to consider this collection alongside the latest edition of the other notable series on Norman affairs, *The Haskins Society Journal*—see my review elsewhere in this issue of *Parergon*.

Lindsay Diggelmann, *The University of Auckland*

**Dale**, Thomas E. A., *Pygmalion's Power: Romanesque Sculpture, the Senses, and Religious Experience*, University Park, PA, Pennsylvania State University Press, 2019; hardback; pp. 320; 21 colour plates, 113 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. US$99.95; ISBN 9780271083452.

Thomas Dale begins his book with a story from Reginald of Durham's *Life of Saint Godric*, in which the saint sees two carved wooden statues come alive, the crucifix and the Madonna and Child. These statues, which may seem rigid and stylized to us, embodied many of the qualities explored here, including their three-dimensionality, their use within various rituals, and the multiple senses that were evoked in these settings. The desire for such statues to come alive has been termed the 'Pygmalion effect'. As Dale points out, these statues were brought to life through public religious processions and liturgical drama, through ritual veneration, and in more private devotional practices.

This important and stimulating book examines Romanesque sculpture that has long been familiar to art historians. It covers images of the Madonna and Child, crucifixions, tomb sculptures, Bible scenes, monsters, and grotesques found on the capitals in cloisters, as well as such porch sculptures of Moissac, Autun, Vézelay, and Conques. The tympanum sculptures of Moissac or Vézelay have come to represent the Romanesque in many art history courses. Certainly, these tympana have featured prominently in mine, and as a first-year student were the subject of my first art history essay. What Thomas Dale has done in this book is to reinvigorate this familiar topic and provide fresh insights on these much-studied works. It has been customary to credit the revival of figurative stone sculpture in the mid-eleventh century to a desire to reclaim the authority of ancient Rome. Here, however, Dale argues that that the revitalized art form is part of a shift to a wider emphasis on spiritual embodiment and affective piety during the late eleventh and twelfth centuries. His work is anchored in a strong historiographical base, as well as a deep knowledge of contemporary literature, moving easily between the two. He is also influenced by cultural anthropology and liturgical studies, in addition to the work of such historians and art historians as Robert Maxwell, Mary Carruthers, and Caroline Walker Bynum.

The book is divided into five chapters, each focusing on a particular type of sculpture. The first examines crucifixes and images of the Madonna and Child or the Throne of Wisdom. Such sculptures have been given prominence in narratives about the origins of monumental sculpture, as they often contained relics and thus overcame concerns about idolatry. Dale, amongst others, challenges this, pointing to their affective qualities and their links to devotional practices. The second chapter concerns the presentation of the nude body, exploring such themes as man as microcosm, Eve and the Fall, pagan nudes as fallen idols, and the asexual nudes of the baptized and the resurrected. The chief object of study, however, is the representation of female lust in the portal of the church of Sainte-Pierre in Moissac. Next, he explores portraiture, both in the reliquaries of the saints and in tomb effigies. These were less concerned with producing a naturalistic likeness

than with an ideal inner one. In the fourth chapter the focus is on monsters and phantasms. Three case studies, encompassing the cloister capitals of the Abbey of Saint-Michel-de-Cuxa, the choir capitals of the collegiate church of Chauvigny in Poitou, and the portal of Saint-Pierre-et-Saint-Paul at Beaulieu-sur-Dordogne, are investigated, interrogating St Bernard of Clairvaux's celebrated critique of such monsters. In the final chapter, Dale examines facades and portal sculpture. The presence of the theophany, in the representation of the Ascension and the Second Coming, and the related Last Judgement, at the entrance of such churches as the Abbey Church of Sainte-Foy in Conques, Autun Cathedral, and Sainte-Pierre in Moissac, is investigated, while the Pentecost tympanum at Vézelay Abbey in Burgundy is also discussed. Close readings of each explore how the different elements work together to create these great tympana at the entrances of these churches. The liturgy provided sources for the iconography of these porches, but also 'its performance before the image activates the depicted scene, stirring memory and breathing life into hard stone figures' (p. 212). These statues were not isolated artworks but were part of a broader religious culture that drew on the senses, 'through a veil of incense and flickering natural sunlight and candlelight in the darkened night' (p. 212). In the conclusion, Dale makes the connection between these works and contemporary events, underlining the power of sculpture today.

This is an important work that revisits images that are very familiar to those who study Western medieval art. Dale reminds us of their importance and represents them in a refreshing new light. He provides us with much of interest that should appeal to both scholars and students.

Judith Collard, *Melbourne*, *Australia*

**Drechsler**, Stefan, *Illuminated Manuscript Production in Medieval Iceland: Literary and Artistic Activities of the Monastery of Helgafell in the Fourteenth Century* (Manuscripta Publications in Manuscript Research), Turnhout, Brepols, 2021; hardback; pp. 275; 192 b/w, 22 colour illustrations, 7 b/w line art, 47 b/w tables; R.R.P. €120.00, ISBN 9782503589022.

On first encountering this volume, potential readers might believe that a coffee-table book, albeit one a bit more 'highbrow' than usual, lies before them. The handsomely bound hardcover quarto size volume, with its two hundred and twelve illustrations of manuscripts, twenty-two of them in full colour, could initially seem intended for the more intellectually minded tourist with some interest in medieval Iceland. In fact, this is an abridged version of a PhD thesis the author defended in 2017 at the University of Aberdeen—Hannah Burrows, formerly of the University of Sydney, being one of his supervisors. The illustrations, of generally high quality and often pictorially attractive and interesting, serve a serious, often somewhat tendentious, scholarly purpose.

Stefan Drechsler declares that his subject is the Helgafell group of manuscripts, 'possibly the most impressive group of vernacular Icelandic

manuscripts from the fourteenth century', identified as 'undoubtedly the golden age of Icelandic manuscript production' (p. 25). A particular focus of his work is the extensive illustrations in the manuscripts, and the relationships between them and the written texts. Despite the use of the word 'literary' in his subtitle, the authorial creation of literature, as distinct from the copying of texts, is not a major concern.

As the abundance of footnotes and the book's very extensive bibliography indicate, the manuscripts have already been much studied by numerous scholars over many years. Drechsler re-examines them, and works that can be regarded as associated with them, in detail. A major part of his contribution to scholarship lies in the evidence and argument he provides that the Helgafell manuscripts are not solely the work of a single monastic scriptorium in an Augustinian house of canons regular, but involved other centres of production in the Breiðafjörður area, with various types of interaction and collaboration amongst these centres. He also explores in depth the influences from abroad that are arguably evident in the Helgafell illuminations, notably influence from France and East Anglia, largely mediated through Bergen.

Though focused on the manuscripts, the book ranges widely, with much interesting information about the fourteenth-century Icelandic milieu in which they were produced, and the known people involved. For most scholars of medieval Iceland, the Commonwealth era (930–1262), during which the famous sagas dealing with Iceland are set, is the period of primary interest, and it is useful to be made more fully aware that many of the sagas and other Icelandic texts we regard today as creations of the thirteenth century or earlier are mainly preserved in later manuscripts from the fourteenth century or later, and were influenced by the circumstances and personalities of post-Commonwealth times. (Most of the Helgafell manuscripts, however, preserve legal and ecclesiastical texts, rather than the sagas best known today.)

The book's origin as a PhD thesis is evident. In particular, the chapter entitled 'The Scriptorium' has a great deal of analysis and scholarly argumentation relating to individual manuscripts, demanding close attention from the reader, and sometimes not entirely convincing—or expressed a little unclearly. Sentences such as 'For a long time, the Scandinavian editorial practice remained attached to the core Lachmannian principles with regard to the quality and importance of any single manuscripts to reject their superiority' (p. 35), or 'Considering that it is unknown whether the original codex once included more sagas, it would be logical to argue that the codex was intended to depict the whole civil war era of Norway (*c.* 1130–1240)' (p. 127) do, at best, give cause for pause. The care taken is generally very impressive; however, the curious claim on page 44 that the *Laxdæla saga* 'was written in two stages during *c.* 1230–60', probably resulting from a misreading of a table in a chapter by Vésteinn Ólason, stands out as an unusual aberration.

The work in its entirety is available online without charge to the user, and the online version can be readily accessed by entering the book title into a search engine. Drechsler's work sheds light on medieval manuscript production in circumstances rather different from what are often believed to have prevailed elsewhere in medieval Europe, and deserves the attention of serious students of medieval Iceland and of medieval manuscript art and medieval palaeography and codicology more generally.

John Kennedy, *Charles Sturt University*

**Fitzmaurice,** James, Naomi J. **Miller**, and Sara Jayne **Steen**, eds, *Authorizing Early Modern European Women: From Biography to Biofiction*, Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 2021; hardback; pp. 288; R.R.P. €99.00; ISBN 9789463727143.

The pacy, wide-ranging essays in this edited collection provide much-needed critical apparatus for studying the proliferation of biofiction on early modern European women over the last few decades. Biofiction is defined by the editors as 'a blended term for *biographical fiction* and refers to fictionalizations of actual figures whether on the page or in performance' (p. 13). The nineteen essays, penned by both academics and writers of fiction, engage with early modern female authors, visual artists, creators of textiles, musicians, letter writers, midwives, nuns, queens, embroiderers, and saints who have become the subject of modern biofiction. The collection focuses on biofiction that represents early modern women as creators in their own right, rather than in relation to prominent male figures. The result is a curation of concise, accessible essays that addresses the multifaceted ways in which early modern women 'authored their own visions' and who have, in turn, been '"authored" and "authorized"' (p. 15) by contemporary writers and creative practitioners.

The diversity of media in which early modern women's biofiction has emerged is striking: from student theatre to musical theatre, Hollywood films to Zoom performances, young adult novels to wax installation figures, to name but a few. In order to examine both the array of early modern female creators and the variety of ways in which their lives have been recreated in modern scholarship and fiction, the volume is divided into four themed sections: 'Fictionalizing Biography', 'Materializing Authorship', 'Performing Gender', and 'Authoring Identity'. Although significant overlap between the themes and topics covered in the essays renders the parameters of the four sections a little vague, this approach works well for a volume dealing with layers of creatorship. By grouping the essays thematically, the editors hope 'to draw out related conceptual topics' (p. 15), inviting readers to make their own thematic connections.

The sound scholarship presented in this volume is complemented and enhanced by anecdotal experience and more conversational moments of reflection. For example, Naomi J. Miller reflects on her dual identity as a writer-cum-academic while fictionalizing Mary Sidney Herbert and Mary Sidney Wroth as

part of her *Shakespeare's Sisters* series of historical novels (in production). She shares that '[s]ome of what thrills me as a scholar/teacher […] is frankly not what attracts trade publishers looking for a novel that can be marketed to the general public' (p. 133). Insight into the creative process and the intersection between creative practice, scholarly research, and the demands of the contemporary reading public and publishing market, is one of the key strengths of this volume.

The essays in this volume share a common interest in examining how writers and practitioners can respect both the historical figure and ensuing decades of (feminist) scholarship, while simultaneously animating the stories of early modern women for a contemporary audience. Bárbara Mujica reflects on the process of novelizing Teresa of Ávila, drawing attention to her competing desires to remain respectful of Teresa's status as a saint while endowing her with a captivating personality that would form the basis of a best-selling novel. In an essay on Morgan Lloyd Malcolm's dramatization of the life of Aemilia Lanyer in the stage production *Emilia* (2018), Hailey Bachrach exposes how contemporary biofiction can elide the religious feminism and complex subjectivity of early modern women. Contributors such as Bachrach and Marina Leslie (writing on Margaret Cavendish in two contemporary novels), signal the pitfalls of biofiction that relies on erroneous or outdated scholarship and the potential for biofiction to reinscribe narratives of marginalization.

A vexed concern at the heart of the volume is the contour of the boundary that separates fact from fiction. Sara Jayne Steen's essay on Arbella Stuart posits that rising interest in biofiction is specifically 'tied to our cultural moment, when people unsure of truth would like to believe their fiction has a basis in fact' (p. 259). In her essay on Margaret Hannay's biographies of Mary Sidney Herbert and Mary Wroth, Marion Wynne-Davies suggests that 'a paucity of verifiable evidence' (p. 124) for early modern female writers renders the relationship between fact and fiction a concern even more pressing. To what extent is it permissible or desirable for gaps in the archive to be imaginatively embellished or manipulated? The essays in this volume serve as case studies that exemplify the tensions and possibilities inherent in this question.

Alongside material for an audience interested in early modern women's history and feminist scholarship, this collection offers methodological and theoretical contributions to research on adaptation and creative practice. The volume also exposes and theorizes ambiguities of genre classification, particularly biofiction, historical fiction, and literary biography. These lively and thought-provoking essays have the capacity to stimulate dialogue between academics, theatre practitioners, writers, and the GLAM (Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums) sector, potentially inspiring more scholars, students, and writers to turn quality research on early modern women into rigorously conceived biofiction and/or public outreach.

Anna-Rose Shack, *University of Amsterdam*

**Gathagan**, Laura L., William **North,** and Charles C. **Rozier**, eds, *The Haskins Society Journal 31* (Studies in Medieval History), Woodbridge, The Boydell Press, 2020; hardback; pp. 233; 6 b/w, 3 line illustrations; R.R.P. £50.00; ISBN 9781783275731.

Volume 31 of *The Haskins Society Journal* presents essays from the organization's 2018 conference, along with other contributions in related fields. The *Journal* honours the American scholar Charles Homer Haskins and is dedicated to those aspects of the history of the central Middle Ages in which he was prominent. Its ambit is somewhat wider than that of the comparable series *Anglo-Norman Studies* (see my review of the latest volume elsewhere in this issue of *Parergon*) but nonetheless takes Norman affairs as its central focus, in line with Haskins's own interests.

Four essays deal with the Crusades. Alheydis Plassmann revisits the much-debated question of *Normannitas* (Norman identity). By comparing the careers of the most prominent Norman First Crusade leaders from the north (Robert Curthose) and the south (Bohemond of Taranto) Plassmann proposes that contemporaries saw very little that was specifically 'Norman' in their character or achievements. While useful, this conclusion does not stray too far from the view of those such as John France who have written on the topic previously. Katherine Allen Smith observes how early crusade narratives are 'replete with references to Babylon' (p. 50) in opposition to Jerusalem. This, in Smith's persuasive view, is a shorthand for a series of powerful dichotomies: Islam and Christianity; pride and humility; sin and righteousness; Augustine's earthly and heavenly cities. Clerical authors who had been trained in scripture and theology brought this mindset to bear when describing the geopolitical rivalries of their own day. Andrew Buck's study of women and power in the crusader principality of Antioch draws on recent debates that seek to remove the framework of exceptionalism from accounts of women's political influence and economic agency in the Middle Ages. Examining both the ruling families and the wider nobility, Buck asserts that 'the exercise of rulership in the principality was not simply a masculine space' (p. 117). Theodore Evergates reflects on the creation and reception of the *Memoirs* of Geoffroy de Villehardouin, marshal of Champagne and later of 'Romania', a key figure in the Latin Empire of Constantinople after 1204. The *Memoirs* provide one of the standard accounts of the Fourth Crusade and the sack of the eastern Christian capital by western forces.

Other contributions delve into Anglo-Norman dynastic affairs and their historiography. Alexandra Locking reminds us that the celebrated marriage of Henry I and Matilda of Scotland, so crucial to uniting the Norman and Saxon royal lines, nearly did not happen. Archbishop Anselm initially objected to the match, as Matilda had taken the veil as a child, before relenting. Locking examines the contemporary debate over this controversy and the way Matilda's reputation was later transformed to position her as a powerful royal figure. Mark Blincoe traces the shifting dynastic identity in Henry II's charters before and

after he became king in 1154. Having been recognized as Stephen's heir in 1153, Henry acknowledged this at first, but soon ignored the reality of Stephen as his predecessor in official documents, emphasizing instead continuity with the reign of his grandfather Henry I, who had died in 1135. This much is well known, but Blincoe makes the cogent point that the strategy forced Henry to implicitly deny the legitimacy of earlier claims to power in England or Normandy by his mother, the Empress Matilda, and father, Geoffrey of Anjou. On the basis of the vernacular history known as the *Chronique de Normandie*, Alex Hurlow argues for the continued importance of Norman identity into the thirteenth century, even if more regional in nature and in competition with the growing power of the centralizing French monarchy.

Three further essays discuss social and legal issues 'from below'. Stuart Pracy examines evidence from witness lists for manumissions in late Saxon and early Norman England to suggest that opportunities for social mobility by the ceorl group of non-noble freemen were expanding. A collaborative study by Gerben Verbrugghe and others focuses on Flemish rural plantations both in Flanders itself and in England, Scotland, and Wales after the Conquest, drawing on historical and archaeological research to highlight the potential of a comparative framework. Of particular note is the essay that closes the volume, by the eminent medievalist and Haskins medal winner William Chester Jordan. Using a case study of a petition presented by Norman villagers to the *parlement* of Paris, Jordan argues for the possibility of thirteenth-century peasants having greater access to higher courts than previously assumed—though unsuccessfully, in this example—and for cases of this nature as providing additional evidence for the transition from oral to written and from customary to documentary legal culture.

Lindsay Diggelmann, *The University of Auckland*

**Gil**, Juan, ed., *Chronica Hispana saeculi viii et ix* (Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis, 65), Turnhout, Brepols, 2018; hardback; pp. 563; 4 colour illustrations; R.R.P. €340.00; ISBN 9782503574813.

None of the texts gathered in this volume of the prestigious Brepols series 'Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis' needed a new edition. And with good reason, since the editor Juan Gil, a member of the Real Academia Española since 2011, is the same scholar to whom we already owe the excellent editions, published decades ago, of the four Latin narratives included in this issue dedicated to Hispanic chronicles of the eighth and ninth centuries. However, *eadem sed aliter* (as Gil notes in his prologue, p. 7), they now find themselves for the first time presented together, allowing readers to contrast two very distinct moments that punctuated what is otherwise regarded as a historiographical desert for the early Latino-Iberian Middle Ages.

The mid-eighth century saw the composition in al-Andalus of two texts that Gil included in Volume i of his *Corpus scriptorum Muzarabicorum* (Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1973). The *Chronica Byzantia-Arabica*

was crafted around 741–44 by an anonymous author (Christian or recently converted to Islam) on the basis of an oriental, probably Greek, text. It presents in parallel the history of Byzantium since the reign of Phocas (602–10) and that of the growing Islamic Empire up to the year 741. To this core were interpolated notices about the Hispanic Visigothic kingdom up to its conquest by Muslims, narrated in quite a detached manner. In that sense, the neutrality of this early chronicle strongly differs from the lamentations found in the *Chronica Muzarabica*, which a Christian *dhimmi*, probably a cleric, crafted soon after. This second composition also chronicles concomitantly the history of Byzantium, Islam, and Iberia since the early seventh century up to 754, the date of its completion. Its author, however, contemplated the settlement of Muslims in the peninsula with much more bitterness. Thus, the *Chronica Muzarabica* constitutes the first chronicle in which the idea of the ruin and loss of Christian Iberia, promised to a great future, emerged as a historiographical theme.

This theme would be elaborated upon in the next two chronicles, which Gil had previously edited as *Crónicas asturianas* (Universidad de Oviedo, 1985), along with a Spanish translation by José Moralejo and an introductory essay by Juan Ruiz de la Peña. Crafted in the curial milieu of the expanding Asturian kingdom of the late ninth century, this historiographical revival must be linked to the propagandistic agenda surrounding the figure of Alfonso III (866–910), and marked the emergence of two intertwined ideological stances: that of 'Reconquest'—an interpretation of the historical interaction between Asturias and al-Andalus as the progressive recovery by the Christians of a territory conceived as theirs—and neo-gothicism—a political project glorifying Asturian kings as the regenerated successors of their Visigothic ancestors. Conserved in two versions, both dependent on an archetype no longer extant, the *Chronicle of Alfonso III* offers biographies of the Visigothic, then Asturian kings, from Wamba (r. 672–80) to the end of the reign of Ordoño I, Alfonso III's father, in 866. As for the *Chronicle of Albelda*, completed in 883, it compiles brief Hispanic geographical and chronographic miscellanies, followed by longer historiographical *ordines* dedicated to Roman, Visigothic, and finally Asturian rulers up to the ongoing reign of Alfonso III. It incorporates in its final paragraphs the *Prophetic Chronicle*, predicting the collapse of al-Andalus and restoration of the Visigothic kingdom by November 884.

Novelties in the edition of the four chronicles are limited, although Gil notes that new readings resulted from the discoveries in their manuscript transmission made by Francisco Bautista. The three-hundred-page introduction, however, offers introductory chapters for each chronicle, scrupulously updated in light of the studies they have been the object of since Gil first edited them, including by himself. The choice of an uneven structure of presentation makes it perhaps the most challenging part of the book for the neophyte who, without prior knowledge of the chronicles, might find it sometimes difficult to navigate the editor's train of thoughts on specific points. To this reviewer, however, this

section is the most interesting of the whole editorial project, and it is fascinating to observe Gil reflecting back on these chronicles he knows so well, on the question of their authorship, chronology of production, sources, manuscripts, and so on. The introduction is supplemented by two appendices devoted to questions of orthography and grammar, and a lengthy bibliography. The edition of the four chronicles is followed by brief sections of notes (mostly about terminology, translation, or sources) and a series of indexes (scriptural sources, sources, onomastic, and locations).

The renewed edition of these chronicles will allow any scholar interested in early medieval historiography to access them more easily than before. The critical apparatus will perhaps be more immediately of use to those who are already somewhat familiar with these Hispanic texts and the questions they raise.

Hélène Sirantoine, *The University of Sydney*

**Glauser**, Jürg, and Pernille **Hermann**, eds, *Myth, Magic, and Memory in Early Scandinavian Narrative Culture: Studies in Honour of Stephen A. Mitchell* (Acta Scandinavica, 11), Turnhout, Brepols, 2021; hardback; pp. 456; 17 b/w, 19 colour illustrations, 5 b/w tables; R.R.P. €105.00; ISBN 9782503589879.

*Myth, Magic, and Memory in Early Scandinavian Narrative Culture* is a Festschrift that celebrates the career of Harvard academic Stephen A. Mitchell. The twenty-six articles featured in this volume, divided into four sections, contribute substantially to the field of early Scandinavian studies and mirror, in large part, strands of Mitchell's own research.

Part I treats the subject of 'Myth and Legend' in a broad sense, though most of the articles take the eddic poems as their main focus. Some of the chapters propose new ways or readings; however, the opening chapter, by John Lindow, examines how imagined landscapes were described in Scandinavia from a temporal perspective. The eddic poems examined in this section include *Rígsþula*, *Oddrúnargrátr*, *Vǫluspá*, and *Skírnismál*, the majority being mythological in genre. The one legendary eddic poem that is assessed, *Oddrúnargrátr*, is often cast in a negative light, something that Joseph Harris argues against. And there are similar subversive readings of *Skírnismál* by Lukas Rösli and Richard Cole. The remaining chapters survey manuscript variants of the *vǫlva*'s narration of history in *Vǫluspá* and the identity of the titular figure in *Rígsþula.* The next section, 'Magic and Folklore', signals a temporal shift, since much of the folkloric material has only been gathered recently. The geographic scope is also significantly widened. Only two articles (Terry Gunnell's and Ane Ohrvik's) in fact deal with the Nordic world. In this sense the term 'Early Scandinavian' in the book's title should be questioned. Nonetheless, it is very interesting and illuminating to discover parallel material from a great swathe of northern and western Europe, the Arctic circle, Orkney, and Ireland.

The articles in Part III are about memory and reception. They show that memories of the past and ways of remembering were preserved not only in writing, but also in artefacts, the landscape, and buildings. For example, the cathedral at Trondheim, Lena Rohrbach argues, as well as the medieval town, was infused with the memory of the martyr Óláfr Haraldsson. The last set of articles has to do with 'Influence and Interaction'. It is slightly harder to see how they fit into the overall scheme of the book. The chronology in this section bounces around quite a bit, though most articles adhere to the early modern period. The sense is that Scandinavia at this time was open to influences from abroad. One reason for this was no doubt the adoption of the Lutheran variety of Protestantism. Thus, as Louise Nyholm Kallestrup's article shows, murals depicting Lutheran eschatology became very popular in post-Reformation Denmark. The Hanseatic town of Visby on the island of Gotland was also a place from where foreign influences could disseminate further north. Moving forward in time, many of the influences were literary or philosophical. Lars Lönnroth's article discusses the influence of Herder and Schelling in nineteenth-century Denmark and Sweden, while Pernille Hermann's and Jürg Glauser's articles reflect on forms of literature that were popular in Europe at the time.

It is understandable on the part of the editors to place the first two sections at the beginning, since these strands represent a type of Scandinavian scholarship with an established tradition. Despite this, it is exciting and encouraging to see that new close readings of texts that have a long critical history are still possible. It then makes way for approaches that are only now coming into their own, and we can look forward to seeing many more studies of this kind on memory and reception in the future. One thing that seems to be lacking is a more comprehensive introduction, which would have tied the book together. Although there is some attempt to do so on page 16, certain parts of the book feel slightly disjointed, which some further explanatory material might have eliminated. This one criticism might not be felt by all readers and is not intended to seriously denounce what I regard as an excellent and worthy collection of essays. At the same time, the book's strength clearly lies in its diversity: few studies in any field could pull together seemingly disparate disciplines as mythology, philology, art history, literary studies, and memory and folklore studies, and still retain coherence. The unifying force is Stephen A. Mitchell himself, whose career spanning several decades has had an impact on all of them, sometimes concurrently, and always indelibly.

Manu Braithwaite-Westoby, *University of Sydney*

**Goina,** Mariana, *The Use of Pragmatic Documents in Medieval Wallachia and Moldavia: Fourteenth to Sixteenth Centuries* (Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy, 47), Turnhout, Brepols, 2020; cloth; pp. xvii, 329; 26 b/w illustrations, 2 b/w tables; R.R.P. €90.00; ISBN 9782503587974.

Michael Clanchy, riffing on Claude Levi-Strauss, kickstarted a branch of social history seeking out 'literate mentalities'. In particular, pragmatic literacy studies refer to the uses of documents for everyday or administrative communication or for record-keeping purposes.

Mariana Goina's new book, based on her Central European University dissertation, brings new and interesting light to a late development in European literacy in the principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia (present-day Romania). Oddly, after the Romans exited from Dacia around 271 CE, it was more than a thousand years before another literate culture emerged in the area. How did that happen?

Goina takes on that question in her rich archival study. Her book is organized in three parts: historical background, survey of the sources, and use and dissemination of written texts. The sources range from the late thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries. Goina's multi-chapter survey of sources makes for dense reading, as she gives generous detailed attention to the types of documents, primarily land charters and letters. Her analysis of the uses and dissemination of writing in Moldavia and Wallachia shows how people continued to use oral modes of validation and communication alongside newer, sometimes foreign, written modes. From her sources, she also works out what people thought about the written texts they were using, their 'literate mentalities', whether a land charter needed to be authenticated by oral testimony or whether it could be evidence of ownership in itself, or whether the charter was an aide-memoire for what was considered the primary oral agreement.

Goina's study of Moldavian and Wallachian documents will make better known texts whose genres may be familiar but whose local details and what they reveal about social and political life of the time are less so. The history of literacy is social history, and Goina and her documents don't disappoint. Land ownership was a constant and contentious experience across the social spectrum, from princes and high court officials to merchants and villagers. In late fifteenth-century Wallachia, for example, as higher-ups sought to acquire and consolidate land holdings, free villagers marshalled written authority to certify their ownership and prevent encroachment and their relegation to serfdom. It is sobering to see the extent to which the surviving documents are mostly to do with land inheritance, ownership, and conveyance. Writing goes hand in hand with control or disruption of power.

Goina discusses many intriguing cases of literacy as social practice. She explains the legal fiction by which a family used a specific text to turn a daughter into a 'son' and therefore eligible to inherit land, or the practice of adopting another member of the community as a 'brother' for similar purposes. Textual acts

are constitutive within a social context. At the same time, Goina's evidence points to women's, especially widows', active participation in literate culture, mostly on behalf of inheritance and land ownership.

The surviving documents also reveal the costs of literacy. To make a land charter, an owner or claimant might pay the scribe a horse or forty złotis, but then pay out six times that amount for a feast to gather together 'oath-helpers' to vouch orally for the charter and the land rights.

Goina pays good attention to the languages of charters and other documents in the archives. Charters and other texts survive in Latin, Slovanic, Polish, and German. German communities were especially prominent in the principalities. Wallachian and Moldavian literacy was thickened by the active presence of Hungarian, German, Polish, and other foreign scribes in the principalities. The princes' international relations and the region's geographic location as a major trade route suggest how local practices were partly shaped by other literate contacts, especially merchants.

It is also clear from Goina's research that literate practice in the principalities was a mixture of writing and long-standing customs and other rituals associated with oral cultures. As elsewhere in medieval Europe, medieval and early modern Wallachian and Moldavian pragmatic literacy was a written/oral practice primarily concerned with land rights and inheritance. Surprisingly, religious communities seem not to have played a large role in the development of literacy in the region. Princely authority and its associated literacy were the centres of power.

Mariana Goina's deeply researched survey of the surviving documents of Moldavia and Wallachia is timely and provocative. She is attentive to the local and wider contexts in which the charters and other texts were produced and used. Her analysis of local and international contexts situates literacy in a wider European context. Her translations of charters will provide new insights into the social history of the time and the power of the written word.

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**Gray**, Patrick, *Shakespeare and the Fall of the Roman Republic: Selfhood, Stoicism and Civil War* (Edinburgh Critical Studies in Shakespeare and Philosophy), Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2018; paperback; pp. xii, 320; R.R.P. £24.99; ISBN 9781474427463.

Kenneth Burke observed that a literary text is 'the answer or rejoinder to assertions current in the situation in which it arose' (*The Philosophy of Literary Form*, University of California Press, 1974). Professor Patrick Gray's *Shakespeare and the Fall of the Roman Republic: Selfhood, Stoicism and Civil War* has taken the further step to uncover 'rejoinders' in the playwright's Roman plays to ancient Rome's philosophers, historians and poets, some fifteen-hundred and more years before his birth. For Gray, Shakespeare understood the fall of the Roman Republic and its end in 'autocracy and civil war' was 'not as a by-product of economic, social or political dysfunction' but instead 'a symptom […] of a deeper malady,

an a priori misunderstanding of human selfhood' (p. 8). Shakespeare's Romans are zealous to expunge 'vulnerability', 'inconstancy', and 'frailty', and be like 'the gods'.

Although the late Republic's 'competing moral paradigms' were captured in Sir Thomas North's *Plutarch* for 'Shakespeare's individuals [to] choose' (p. 116), it remains remarkable how he formed his plays so capably and with such bravura and perspicacity beyond the source texts. Do not 'read Shakespeare's Roman plays as if he were a political theorist' Gray contends; read them 'as if Shakespeare were a historian' (p. 11). And what sort of historian would Shakespeare be? For Gray, he would be one with a deeply philosophical mind. He would also be on the side of the angels.

'What Romans really admire […] is power' (p. 82), Gray claims, and proceeds throughout to define *that* power as the nearest the living could ever be to being what the gods are: that is, 'impassible'. Avoidance of 'passibility' is sought by characters like Brutus or Julius Caesar—and, as Gray convincingly sets out to prove, Roman nobility itself. At times Gray agonizes over 'passibility' (see pp. 103–04 in particular): 'Outside relatively rarefied debates about Christian theology the term "passibility" is likely to be unfamiliar' (p. 103), he admits. However, a fusty and forgotten term is refreshed by contemporary critical use. At pains to demystify, Gray rejects merely common 'vulnerability' or 'inconstancy'—this latter linked to Justus Lipsius, a near contemporary of Shakespeare—for 'passibility' embraces more of the human condition, more specifically human passions. Conceptually one's 'susceptibility to being acted-upon' and to suffer, passibility is of unmatched significance in distinguishing the Christian God from pagan deities. Likewise underscoring 'the difference between the human and the divine' (p. 8), Gray does exceptionally well to reduce a difficulty to a datum for the reader. For Christ, though invested with 'all power in heaven and on earth' (Matthew 28.18), was a *passible* God, suffering extremely in death—a 'stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to gentiles' (I Corinthians 1.23), affronting the pagan world with the shocking end, and destabilizing venerable power through growing implication that the passible in a deity has true grandeur.

What strikes one, however, is how terrifically close to impassibility 'passibility' can be, as when Cleopatra self-describes 'in a moment of rare lucidity, as "commanded | By" rather than commanding, "passion"' (p. 200). Reading this, I was struck by what forcefulness of personality does to 'passibility'. *Antony and Cleopatra* ends with Cleopatra still undiminished. Is that because her passion is servant to her personality after all? Cleopatra ('whom Antony calls "idleness itself"', p. 204) was born to indulgence while Antony wastes in a way unnatural to a Roman. Both, however, choose Stoic (or 'Roman') suicide rather than be changed in the eyes of others. On another score, irresistible was the thought 'either way these women suffered terribly' when reading refutations to feminist readings of the Roman plays—to Coppélia Kahn's work on the Roman plays, for example—as feminism misinterpreting correlation for cause when it labels as patriarchy what Gray would attribute to collective Roman (male) scorn for frailty.

In a study admirably 'Cartesian' in the neatness of how its subsections—Part I 'Julius Caesar', Part II 'Antony and Cleopatra'; the first focused on pity, constancy and 'passibility', the second on 'suicide', Stoicism, 'interpellation', and 'the other'—are evenly proportioned, Gray has achieved the enviable result of seemingly having too much to say but somehow finding the room to say it. What business do Calvinism's regard for Stoicism, or Sigmund Freud and Alfred Adler's concept of the ego ideal and deities, have with Shakespeare's Roman plays? What about Martin Buber's 'I–Thou' relation philosophy, Hegel's interpretation of history, and Nietzsche's 'transvaluation of values'? Should the reader want to know how Shakespeare regarded merciless ambition or constancy of intent shown by the withdrawal of political favours to friends and relations—both moments of *Julius Caesar*—for example, they won't be kept wanting.

We are reminded that Shakespeare used a great variety of figures of speech, as when Gray concentrates on hyperbole: 'As for her person, Enobarbus declares, "It beggared all description"' (p. 199). It is on the use Shakespeare makes of figures of speech continuous throughout an entire play, or what we might consider 'controlling metaphors', that Gray comes into his own and brings his large history of ideas thesis in direct relation with the primary texts. Controlling metaphors, such as 'statues' and 'stars' on the one hand, and 'blood' and 'tears' on the other, in *Julius Caesar*, show Shakespeare as almost uncannily aware of the 'rejoinder' he makes to Stoicism. In fact, Gray is so marvellous in his close reading textual work—Caesar is 'dangerously oblivious' (p. 131), Antony possesses imagination while Coriolanus does not (p. 180), Cleopatra's Stoicism is '*ad hoc*, superficial' (p. 197), Portia and Calpurnia work as 'projections' of what their husbands cannot access: namely, pity (p. 115)—that I scanned ahead of my reading to find more. I was never disappointed.

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**Guiliano**, Zachary, *The Homiliary of Paul the Deacon: Religious and Cultural Reform in Carolingian Europe* (Studies on Patristic, Medieval and Reformation Sermons and Preaching, 16), Turnhout, Brepols, 2021; hardback; pp. 339; 1 b/w, 3 colour illustrations, 13 b/w tables, 2 b/w line art; R.R.P. €90.00; ISBN 9782503577913.

This is a model of what a monograph should be. It is a groundbreaking, seductively written introduction to what the author demonstrates to be a text of the first and widest importance ('The homiliary is a monument in the history of Europe and the world, eminently worthy of further study', p. 249). Compiled a few years before 800 CE, at Charlemagne's order, Paul the Deacon's Homiliary, on the evidence of the surviving copies alone, was to become one of the most widely distributed and most influential liturgical books of medieval Europe. In his first chapter, Dr Guiliano establishes the content of the original text, formerly based (R. Grégoire, *Les Homéliares du moyen* âge (Spoleto, 1980), pp. 423–78) upon half a dozen ninth-century manuscripts to which were ascribed wrong dates,

provenances, and interrelationships. All this Guiliano corrects, mainly based on first-hand examination of the manuscripts. He lists fifty-seven copies from the ninth and tenth centuries, including thirteen copies of special authority because they preserve at least part of Paul's original preface. This is an example of the positive help that digital technology is giving to manuscript studies. Whereas nineteenth- and early twentieth-century scholars were dependent upon word of mouth, or perhaps printed catalogues (often wrong) for information as to the whereabouts of manuscripts, today one can sweep databases and be reasonably sure of the results. Not that, even now, such research is easy (the difficulties, and Dr Guiliano's doggedness in tackling them, are outlined on pp. 39–41, 148). Mind you, the difference it makes to Grégoire's list of the Homiliary's contents is not so very great (p. 66), mainly involving renumbering rather than alterations to the texts.

Dr Guiliano is constantly alert for opportunities to make observations of general importance, and anyone interested in Carolingian Europe should read his book. For instance, at the beginning of his chapter on the Homiliary's theology:

> Thus, if we know the theological topics most important to Charlemagne and we know that he thought his homiliary was the greatest collection of patristic texts in his cultural world, it behoves us to ask just what sort of doctrine is found in it and how it relates to the topics outlined in the *Admonitio Generalis* [... and] other similar pieces of instruction from the period, such as Alcuin's list of topics for the instruction of the Avars. (p. 175)

Again, a painstaking examination of how long it would have taken to make a copy of the (usually two-volume) Homiliary—between one and two years—enables Guiliano to conclude that only a dozen or so copies could have been made before Charlemagne's death (pp. 127–37). Many more copies survive from the eleventh and twelfth centuries, which is why so many manuscripts of this date figure in his list of authoritative copies. This observation must modify the opinion of those scholars who have maintained that Charlemagne 'ordered' that the Homiliary should be used, to the exclusion of all others, throughout his Empire:

> We cannot know how many communities knew they were using or copying Paul's text; we cannot even assume that Paul's preface was consulted by every user of the homiliaries that transmitted it, nor that anyone felt constrained by it. Charlemagne and Paul may have intended the homiliary to be used in a particular way, but others could have used it for all sorts of purposes. (p. 199)

A discussion of Paul the Deacon as the 'author' of the Homiliary leads to a consideration of the medieval concept of 'author' generally (pp. 91–101). And an examination of the sources for the Homiliary's contents leads to the conclusion that no single library in the Carolingian world could have supplied more than about half of them:

> It is evident that Paul could not have obtained all the necessary volumes for his homiliary in one place, even if he were working fifty years later than he did, after well-endowed monasteries and cathedrals had spent most of that century making deliberate acquisitions. Therefore, it is unlikely that he could have acquired all in a single location at the end of the eighth. (p. 112)

How and where, then, did Paul obtain his exemplars? The answers to these questions are understandably vague, except that Paul is known to have been a great traveller and evidently collated information found in several places—his work in this regard alone is described as 'monumental' (p. 109). As so often in the book, this research combines detailed analysis with far-reaching observations and conclusions.

With such a rich array of material, it would be surprising if this book did not present opportunities for ongoing scholarship. Sometimes the author is explicit about this, as when he notes that the contents of the two-volume Homiliary represented by Cologne, Dombibliothek 172 + St Gallen, Stiftsbibl. 422, have 'never been studied; its contents are largely unknown and deserve further investigation' (p. 142; see also p. 146, on Florus of Lyon).

The book terminates with five useful appendices: 1–4 contain editions of the Homiliary's prefatory material, including Charlemagne's letter (*Epistola generalis*); the fifth is a list, with brief descriptions, of no fewer than some 408 extant copies, made between the ninth and sixteenth centuries (pp. 263–99). Here too there is scope for more research on the Homiliary's afterlife, for the author only examines the distribution of the early copies. But the more serious problem for Dr Guiliano was what to include and exclude. For the Homiliary was so often modified and added to and influenced the texts of so many other homiliaries and breviaries. One day, Guiliano tells us, he will publish a complete edition of the Homiliary. That will be a great labour, but may we not have to wait too long for it!

Rod Thomson, *University of Tasmania*

**Hurley**, Mary Kate, *Translation Effects: Language, Time, and Community in Medieval England* (Interventions: New Studies in Medieval Culture), Columbus, The Ohio State University Press, 2021; hardcover; pp. 226; R.R.P. US$99.95 ISBN 9780814214718.

'Translation effects' is the term Mary Kate Hurley uses to characterize the observable traces of the translation process in medieval texts. Translation effects may lend authority to a translated work or imply cultural continuity across discrete peoples. The central premise of her argument is that the process of translation acts as a bridge between the original audience of the source text and the audience of the translated text, connecting old and new communities. The focus is not localized groups—but rather on communities anticipated within the translated text itself. The connections between these virtual or imagined communities could be deployed as powerful identity markers for the audience of the translated text.

Hurley argues that translation is inherently an act of interpretation. She suggests that: 'if we approach translations as a negotiated series of interactions between humans and texts, we can better understand their temporal, textual, and community-oriented interests' (p. 7). Hurley develops her argument in three stages. She examines literal translation in the Old English *Orosius* and Ælfric's *Lives of the Saints*, demonstrating how these texts expanded their imagined communities temporally and spatially. She traces the manuscript tradition of texts straddling the Norman Conquest (Ælfric's homilies and the 'Life of Constance' in works by Nicholas Trevet, Geoffrey Chaucer, and John Gower) to show how pre-Conquest texts were used post-Conquest to shape views of the past that facilitated emerging narratives of community in Middle English. In the final section, the focus returns to Old English: Hurley uses *Beowulf* to illuminate the role of narrative transmission in the construction of community within a text.

Hurley's work draws upon established scholarship on the complex nature of medieval translation by scholars such as Robert Stanton, Nicole Guenther Discenza, and Rebecca Stephenson. The analysis of *Beowulf* expands her argument beyond the traditional conception of translation as a movement between two texts, an identified source text and a version in a different (in this period, often vernacular) language. Hurley argues that *Beowulf* partakes of much of the same cultural logic as traditional translations. In *Beowulf*, metaphorical translation is used as a self-positioning device. The way that communities coalesce and disintegrate are demonstrated and explained through the telling and retelling of stories.

In making her argument, Hurley explicitly departs from the position that medieval translators conceived of translations as a narrow form of linguistic transfer, essentially a paraphrase; or that their audiences expected the translator to remain invisible and neutral, a mere conduit. Elements of refashioning within a translated text may not be aberrations, attributable to scribal ineptitude. They may be deliberate and important expressions of the cultural values and aspirations of the community in which the translated text was intended to circulate. While Hurley's case studies are of English texts, her argument has interesting implications for scholarly research into identity formation in a variety of communities and contexts across the medieval period.

This is a well-written, easily absorbed text. It does not claim to be a comprehensive survey of medieval translations, nor to articulate a universal theory of translation applicable to the period. It offers a methodology for examining translations that is apt to bring into sharp focus the wider contemporary concerns of both translator and audience, to use the translated text itself to contextualize the circumstances of its production and reception. In particular, the study of translation effects may help scholars to better understand how a particular community understood their history and signalled their identity.

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**Krutak**, Lars, and Aaron **Deter-Wolf**, eds, *Ancient Ink: The Archaeology of Tattooing*, Seattle, The University of Washington Press, 2018; hardback; xii, 354; 24 colour plates, 157 b/w illustrations, 7 maps, 2 tables; R.R.P. US $60.00; ISBN 9780295742823.

Just as tattooing has become more acceptable and visible within mainstream Western society over the last couple of decades, academic studies of tattooing, encompassing a variety of methodological approaches to investigating both contemporary and historical practices, have similarly increased. The archaeological approach is primarily concerned with the physical evidence for tattooing within the material record: evidence of tools and pigments, of representations of tattooing, and of course tattooed human remains. The editors of this volume, Lars Krutak and Aaron Deter-Wolf, have aimed for this to be 'the first book dedicated to the archaeological study of tattooing [… which is not] region specific, [does not] contain dated or suspect scholarship [… and is not] overly academic and unapproachable for the general public' (p. 4) .

Within these admirable parameters, *Ancient Ink* is divided into three unevenly weighted parts. Part 1, 'Skin', focuses on tattooed human remains in whole and in part; Part 2, 'Tools', focuses on the archaeological identification of tattooing tools and toolkits; and Part 3, 'Art', discusses how ancient societies represented their tattooed selves. However, in addition to this tripartite division, *Ancient Ink* is also evenly split between what can be termed 'archaeological' and 'experimental' chapters. Each of the archaeological chapters provides an excellent scholarly overview of various physical, historical, and iconographic forms of evidence for tattooing within its own geographical focus. Uniquely, each of these is then followed by an experimental chapter that discusses either the same designs or the same culture within the context of modern tattooing revival or other experimental practices. Each experimental chapter is co-authored by at least one of the co-editors, providing this book with not just a clear stylistic continuity throughout, but also highlighting the real-world continuity of various tattooing traditions. The editors' approach is to be commended, as it effectively meets one of their stated aims, 'bridging the gap between academic and popular works on tattooing' (4).

Krutak and Deter-Wolf make the comment in their introduction that 'tattooing is an almost universal human tradition' (p. 8), an assessment evident through the geographical extent of historical tattooing and the demonstrably fundamental transcultural similarities of tattooing technology, design, and purpose. But in considering whether *Ancient Ink* fulfils this statement of global relevance, it is useful to reflect on how various historical and contemporary tattooing cultures have been both over- and under-represented by the editors.

With six chapters, the historically culturally contiguous zone from the steppes of central Asia to south-eastern Europe represents over a quarter of *Ancient Ink* across all three sections, and it is the most comprehensively covered cultural zone. While this is not to say that the material does not merit such a treatment—indeed, the chapters from Svetlana Pankova, Petar Zidarov, and Leonid Yablonsky provide

important insights into the archaeology of Iron Age tattooing among the Scythians. Northern Europe, given its lack of archaeological (though not literary) evidence for tattooing, is understandably only referred to in passing by Gemma Angel (p. 107) and Luc Renaut (pp. 260–61). Modern European tattooing is covered by Krutak and Deter-Wolf, with an examination of collections of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century skin fragments in museums, as well as the short but thought-provoking chapter on organizations founded in the last decade for the purpose of allowing individuals to legally have their own tattoos preserved for them after death.

North-eastern America and Alaska are represented with three 'Tools' and two 'Art' chapters, which is a fair reflection of the available archaeological evidence in these areas, being largely restricted to historical descriptions, depictions, and toolkits. Two of these chapters, both co-authored by Deter-Wolf, on the archaeological identification of tattooing tools, are must-read contributions to the field. But looking further south, there is no mention in *Ancient Ink* of the tattooing cultures of South America, especially that of the Chimú culture of Peru, which has yielded several tattooed mummies from the eleventh to fifteenth centuries CE, and would have been a valuable contribution to 'Skin'.

Oceania is represented only in 'Tools' by Louise Furey's excellent informative summary, and Krutak's discussion of the revival of tattooing in Papua New Guinea. However, it feels strange that there is no dedicated contribution which deals with Māori traditions, given both their long history and widespread current practice of tattooing. The (indigenous) history of preserving and (in the nineteenth century) trading in, tattooed *mokomokai* heads would have been at home within 'Skin', while a discussion of the development of their unique chisel would have sat well in 'Tools'. And while their traditions were not extinguished to the same degree as elsewhere in Polynesia and Micronesia, there is a strong indigenous tattoo revival within New Zealand and abroad that would have been useful as a stand-alone experimental chapter.

With three 'Skin' articles on different aspects of ancient and modern tattooing in the Philippines, this region is treated quite thoroughly; however, it is the only Asian region to receive such treatment. The lack of any mention of traditional tattooing practised elsewhere in Asia is notable, given the rich tradition of *irezumi* and indigenous Ainu traditions in Japan alone. The mountainous neighbours Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos, and Thailand are similarly omitted. This is especially surprising given that some of Krutak's other publications have explored tattooing within these cultures.

Yet in no way do these omissions detract from the importance of this work both for increasing our knowledge of the archaeology of historical tattooing traditions, as well as informing how indigenous communities are reclaiming their histories and identities by reviving their tattooing traditions. The resources also go further than just the chapters, with a generous twenty-four colour plates and over one hundred and fifty black and white photographs and illustrations throughout, as well as an extensive (though not exhaustive) integrated bibliography.

*Ancient Ink* is the culmination of many years' worth of research and collaboration with industry professionals and indigenous communities leading the rediscovery and revival of their tattooing cultures, and this book is 'intended as a modest contribution to the study of ancient tattooing practices and technology (p. xi). In fact, it far surpasses this goal, and could easily be described as a landmark contribution to the field. Krutak and Deter-Wolf have set the bar for subsequent publications, and this thorough, well-researched, and beautifully illustrated work should be an indispensable volume for any researcher involved in the study of tattooing.

Erica Steiner, *The University of Sydney*

**Leneghan**, Francis, *The Dynastic Drama of 'Beowulf'* (Anglo-Saxon Studies, 39), Woodbridge, D. S. Brewer, 2020; hardback; pp. xxii, 302; 1 b/w illustration; R.R.P. £60.00, ISBN 9781843845515.

*Beowulf*, the longest extant poem within the Old English corpus, has been the subject of countless books and articles which seek to understand the nuances, authorship, and cultural context of this single poem. Entire careers have been both launched and sustained on the back of such work, and with *The Dynastic Drama of 'Beowulf'*, Francis Leneghan builds on his previous years of scholarship. Fundamentally, this book seeks to argue that 'the dynastic material does not merely serve as 'background' but provides the essential context for the monster-fights, while the monster-fights themselves serve to dramatize dynastic legend' (p. 6).

*Dynastic Drama* opens with a brief account of the poem's historiography, the importance of kings, and the qualities of an ideal king. Chapter 1 analyses the progression of events by applying the tripartite division of the human lifespan used by classical and medieval Christian authors to the lifespan of a whole dynasty. Thus: the period of *pueritia* is used to reflect the 'birth of a dynasty', *iuuentus* describes the period of 'dynasties in crisis', and *senectus* concludes with the 'death of a dynasty'. Chapter 2 examines the evolution and origins of the character of Beowulf and argues very persuasively that he was an amalgam of a folkloric hero and a 'fictionalization, or poetic double, of his legendary uncle, King Hygelac' (p. 120). Chapter 3 discusses the importance of Grendel, Grendel's mother, and the dragon within the poem, the manuscript and the early medieval period 'as portents of dynastic and national crises (p. 155). Chapter 4 analyses the influence of different models of kingship—from the Old Testament, the Merovingians, Carolingians, and the earlier centuries of early (southern) English dynasties. To conclude, Leneghan presents how he views the reception of the poem to have worked within three periods: seventh-century Mercia and Northumbria, Alfredian Wessex, and the turn of the millennium.

Those parts of *Dynastic Drama* which feature literary analysis shine with a rare depth and understanding. By highlighting the language of youth versus old age, Leneghan's approach is fruitful on a number of levels: personal, temporal, and prefigurative. The source of the conflict between Grendel and Hrothgar is

presented through the lens of illegitimacy and usurpation centred on an analysis of the *gif-stol*. And the closing description of Beowulf as both *manna mildust* and *lof-geornost* is shown as being textually indebted to Bede's interpretation of biblical kingship. Very often it is not only within the body of *Dynastic Drama* that Leneghan's measured and thorough analysis is on show, but in the footnotes, which must be singled out for their detailed and important extensions of the argument.

However, within a generally excellent book, there are two related areas where *Dynastic Drama* falls flat. Firstly, there is a persistent thread of commentary which casts Beowulf's lineage—being the grandson of Hrethel through his daughter—as somehow lesser than those of his peers who were descended of the paternal line. Leneghan refers to 'the weaker, maternal line' (pp. 15, 57), 'the privileged male line' (p. 19), '[Beowulf's] relatively weak claim [to the Geatish throne] via his mother' (p. 86), and that 'Beowulf's descent from Hrethel comes through his mother, thereby weakening his claim' (p. 88). Indeed, he buries his clearest statement within a footnote in the front matter, stating that '[t]he absence of these [royal women's] names may reflect the fact that dynastic power passes through the male line in the world depicted in the poem' (p. xxi, n. 1). However, this entirely neglects the important role which was played in early English—and indeed early medieval—society in according importance to both foster-kin relationships and an uncle–nephew relationship mediated specifically through a female relative. It is important to remind oneself that Beowulf was cast in the roles of both foster-kin (to Hygelac and Hrothgar) and sister's son (to Hygelac), thus making him a part of the *mǽg*, or (male) kinship-group eligible for the throne of both the Scyldings and the Hrethelings. This word and its compounds are one of the most common in the poem, showing that the poet is deeply concerned with not just the dynastic succession, but its greater relevance and application to the kinship-group in the first place. Lorraine Lancaster reminds us that even in the ninth century, it is not clear which kinsmen within a given *mǽg* were the preferred heirs: male- or female-descended (L. Lancaster, 'Kinship in Anglo-Saxon Society: II', *British Journal of Sociology*, 9 (1958), 359–77).

This brings me to my second point of contention: that Leneghan quite clearly advocates for a date of composition in the late seventh/early eighth century (pp. 26, 237–40). Unfortunately, he does not discuss the technical debates (palaeographic, lexical, metrical) which have surrounded the dating of the poem. While a comparable conception of early English kingship might be found in seventh- and eighth-century texts, it is equally found in the later ninth- and early tenth-century texts, for instance in the Alfredian translations of both Bede and Gregory, two texts which Leneghan cites as influential for an early *Beowulf*. Lenghan may argue that the seventh and eighth centuries were when Germanic legends were more popular (p. 21), but recent research has pointed instead to the Alfredian and post-Alfredian court of Wessex of the late ninth and tenth centuries as being the period when interest in the earlier legends was at its height (Craig R. Davis, 'Gothic *Beowulf*: King Alfred and the Northern Ethnography of the Nowell Codex', *Viator*, 50.3 (2019), 99–129).

As a thematic study of *Beowulf*, *Dynastic Drama* is an outstanding work. Leneghan cogently argues for the structural unity of the poem and for the integral importance of the 'digressions', which in his analysis, are placed on an equal footing with the monster-fights. If it falters slightly with regard to the analysis of the women of *Beowulf* and their role in society and wobbles a bit more in trying to pin its conception of kingship to a certain period, this does not detract from the essential importance of the work. In rehabilitating the integrity of the digressions as equal in importance—for narrative and stylistic continuity, as well as thematic content—to the monster-fights, Leneghan has done a great service to *Beowulf* studies. It is certain that *Dynastic Drama* will continue to be an essential reference work for many years to come.

Erica Steiner, *The University of Sydney*

**Lo Conte**, Angelo, *The Procaccini and the Business of Painting in Early Modern Milan*, New York, Routledge, 2020; hardback; pp. 174; 12 colour, 36 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. US$160.00; ISBN 9780367275396.

This elegant, slender book charts the strategic manoeuvres enacted by the Procaccini patriarch Ercole the Elder (1520–1595), and his sons, Camillo (1561–1629), Carlo Antonio (1571–1630), and Giulio Cesare (1574–1625), in promoting and maintaining a thriving workshop of artists in Milan in the first decades of the seventeenth century.

In his introduction, Angelo Lo Conte invokes the potential of theoretical approaches to family history to unpack the 'formation and dissolution of family patterns over time' (p. 2) but doesn't return to these theories in any great depth. Nevertheless, the narrative works well to locate the success of the Procaccini within a framework in which interlocking family dynamics inform the entrepreneurial development of the workshop. It is also a story (like that of their contemporaries, the Carracci) of eventual diversification into individual careers and from a reliance on public commissions to a lucrative private market.

The Procaccini emerged in a late-Mannerist Bologna deeply influenced by Correggio and Parmigianino and dominated by artists such as Prospero Fontana (father of the painter Lavinia Fontana) and the Passerotti. In the first chapter, Lo Conte canvasses his sources, from Carlo Cesare Malvasia's account in his 1678 *Felsina Pittrice* (informed by Antonio Carlo's son, Ercole the Younger) to more recent studies by Nikolaus Pevsner, Hugh Brigstocke, and Nancy Neilson, while noting that few of these examine the Procaccini as a family unit. He places them in the context of northern Italian post-Tridentine culture, foregrounding the austere cultural reforms propounded by Carlo Borromeo, his cousin Federico, and Gabriele Paleotti.

Chapter 2 describes the establishment of the workshop in Bologna by Ercole the Elder and interactions with the Carracci, including teaching in the Carracci academy. Chapter 3 spends some time rehabilitating Milan, to which the family moved around 1587, as a cultural centre. In this phase, driven by Camillo,

Lo Conte locates them in a city bustling with the reconstruction and decoration of religious buildings consistent with Milan's importance as a strategic capital in Spanish-ruled Lombardy.

In Chapters 4, 5, and 6 the author is comprehensive in his account of their commissions and describes the way their 'trademark style' (p. 7) was promoted through the distribution of prints. Their teaching practices provided a solid visual education for the younger brothers and assured a bank of assistants who worked according to Camillo's designs. The increasing individuation of each family member is described; Giulio Cesare, who trained as a sculptor, became a painter from 1602, and Carlo Antonio specialized in landscapes and flowers. Finally, the author illustrates relations with patrons ranging from the important Genoese collector Giovanni Carlo Doria to Milanese collectors and Spanish diplomats.

In view of the often conventional 'factory of images' employed (p. 116), it would have been fascinating to hear more of Giulio Cesare's *abbozzi autonomi*, oil sketches produced for discerning patrons that apparently influenced Genoese artists. Likewise, the portraits and self-portraits are barely mentioned—genres that offer a revealing alternative to the conventions of history painting. Five self-portraits by Giulio Cesare are extant and his *c.* 1600–05 self-portrait in the Koelliker Collection has been suggested (by Ann Sutherland Harris, 'Vouet, le Bernin, et la "ressemblance parlante"', in *Simon Vouet: Actes du Colloque*, ed. by Stéphane Loire, Paris, 1992, pp. 193–208) as a prototype for the speaking portraits that were explored by Simon Vouet (who met Giulio Cesare in Milan in 1621) and Gian Lorenzo Bernini.

Also, a little more stylistic unpacking would be helpful. While the author lists their influences, what is the 'recognizable style' of the Procaccini (p. 114), which we are told displays 'deliberate borrowings from Parmigianino and Correggio' (p. 115) and Flemish and Netherlandish prototypes (p. 102)? If they achieve a 'different kind of artistic reform' (p. 26) to that of the Carracci and Caravaggio, how does this look on canvas? When the author does venture into a description of style, he tends to rely on studies by Nancy Ward Neilson and Hugh Brigstocke (p. 115).

The illustrations are not of the highest quality and some of the most important paintings are not present. The San Fedele altarpiece, described by a source as 'the most beautiful work of Camillo's career' (p. 63), is only represented by an etching (Fig. 4.1). The celebrated *Martyrdom of Saints Rufina and Seconda* now in the Pinacoteca di Brera in Milan, painted by Giovanni Battista Crespi, Pier Francesco Mazzucchelli, and Giulio Cesare, is only portrayed in a half-page black and white illustration. There are some uncomfortable grammatical incidents and some repetitive use of colloquialisms. Inexplicably, 'Procaccinis' is sometimes used as the plural for the family name.

It is, however, difficult to do justice in a short review to the sheer volume of material in this important contribution to studies of early modern family

workshops, and particularly of the Procaccini dynasty, whose members were much admired as active participants in a fertile period of Lombard art.

Esther Theiler, *La Trobe University*

**Marshall**, Susan, *Illegitimacy in Medieval Scotland, 1100–1500* (Scottish Historical Review Monograph Second Series, 3), Woodbridge, The Boydell Press, 2021; hardback; pp. xv, 264; R.R.P. £50.00; ISBN 9781783275885.

One of this volume's stated aims is to restore balance to our understanding of medieval British illegitimacy: though the situation in England has been well served, research on the Scottish scene has been lacking. In her concluding remarks (p. 195), Susan Marshall observes that the limited previous scholarship on Scottish illegitimacy has 'lacked nuance'. Her own study delivers nuance in spades. This is a polished production. Copious footnote references amply contextualize the main text; the standard of editing and proofreading is excellent; the writing itself is a pleasure to read. Marshall gets her broader message across with clarity and economy, supporting it with a wealth of factual specifics expertly deployed, so that the facts illustrate her points without leaving the argument mired in detail. She makes her case with appropriate caution and qualification, following (or preceding) her own conclusions with alternative possible explanations, and displaying an appreciation that phenomena may have multiple compatible causes. This certainly creates the impression of balance and good judgement. While her focus is Scotland, comparisons with other nations are drawn as necessary.

The monograph provides a good, clear introduction to the issues surrounding medieval illegitimacy in general, not just in Scotland. The subject touches many areas. It requires Marshall to balance canon law against secular law and traditional practice, and to set the demands of primogeniture against notions of inheritance by worth. She has to address the difference between the rules and how life actually worked, but also to describe how both changed and how individuals exploited the prevailing circumstances, sought to evade regulations, or behaved inconsistently. The English approach to illegitimacy has sometimes been taken as a pointer to what was going on in Scotland. Marshall takes care to indicate when this seems misguided. As she acknowledges, the sparse evidence of illegitimacy at the subaltern level creates an inevitable bias in the work towards elites.

Chapter 1 surveys developments in canon law over the centuries under consideration, illustrated with Scottish examples. This is a valuable introduction for anyone entering the field, giving a run-down of the different forms of illegitimacy and the terminology used. As Marshall points out, to determine who was illegitimate one needed definitions of valid marriage—the concepts went together like horse and carriage. These definitions altered over time. Chapter 2, another introductory chapter, addresses bastardy's influence on inheritance. It not only barred people from inheriting property but also from transmitting it to any but their own lawful offspring. However, did the subsequent marriage of two parents allow their offspring to be legitimated retroactively, entitling them

to inherit? Canon law said 'Yes'; English secular law said 'No'; Marshall argues that the presumption Scots law followed England may be mistaken. Illegitimacy provided a fruitful source of dispute (and thus primary source material), since if you could demonstrate someone's illegitimacy their possessions might fall to you. Litigants created precedents of canon law, hoping for their own advantage. One piece of heritage of especial interest was Scotland itself, and the volume devotes two chapters to royal illegitimacy. Traditionally, Scottish inheritance of the kingship had depended largely on prowess. With the increasing ascendancy of primogeniture illegitimacy became an impediment. Marshall explores how bastardy was (or was not) a hindrance in any claim for the throne—before, during, and after the Great Cause, when rival descendants of the royal line, some through illegitimate channels, advanced their cases. Chapter 5 concerns women: the value and uses of female royal bastards, royal women as mothers of illegitimate children, and double standards in regard to gender. Chapter 6 deals with clerical illegitimacy. Bastardy might affect a priest's career, while there were (potentially) consequences to having illegitimate offspring. Canon law settled its definitions of valid marriage around the time clerical celibacy became compulsory; priests' offspring became illegitimate by definition. In Scotland, though, concubines and illegitimate offspring seem to have remained common, relatively speaking. This raises its own questions. Marshall's final chapter returns to the field of political life, investigating, for example, how the inheritance of magnates' titles and estates might turn on arguments that these had descended via an illegitimate line—even if, in fact, the marriages in question only came to be seen as invalid retrospectively, following a change of thinking.

Marshall's study draws upon social, legal, and religious history, not to mention the history of Scotland, and addresses political and genealogical history, gender studies, and other fields, rendering it a potentially valuable resource for several subdisciplines. Her admirable synthesis of a mass of disparate material means also that the monograph could profitably be considered a template to be followed by other authors.

Patrick Ball, *University of Tasmania*

**Martin**, Molly A., *Castles and Space in Malory's 'Morte Darthur'* (Arthurian Studies), Cambridge, D. S. Brewer, 2019; hardback; pp. 305; 8 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9781843845270.

Molly Martin's *Castles and Space in Malory's 'Morte Darthur'* offers a sustained and generative insight into the representation and literary function of castle-spaces across the *Morte*, and also provides a model and resource upon which others can draw. There are relatively few studies of Middle English romance that approach the built environments of the text through the lens of spatial theory, rather than through psychoanalytic approaches or by an analysis of the correspondence with real historical architecture and geography. Jan Shaw's *Space, Gender and Memory in Middle English Romance* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016) is one I have

found useful—and which Martin has not used—but as Martin's work focuses on a more typically canonical text, its audience will likely be broader. Unlike Shaw's work, Martin's is not firmly located in the domain of gender studies, although considerations of masculinity, femininity, and sexuality are threads woven throughout the book.

*Castles and Space*, at its core, posits that the fictional castles in the *Morte* are always 'more-than'. Like real castles, they are more than military installations, and more than dwellings. They are prisons and prizes and keepers of ritual. Just as important, they are homes for many in the text. In addition, they are more than fictional transpositions of real-world castles known to the author, which is the lens through which Malory's castles have been most extensively studied. Castles, and spaces within castles, serve symbolic functions, shape expectations and interpretations of characters, and are themselves produced by the actions of characters within them as much as by descriptions. Martin draws on a range of theoretical and interpretive frames throughout her analysis: chief among these is space theory, best known to medieval studies through the work of Barbara A. Hanawalt and Michal Kobialka. A wide range of architectural scholarship underpins Martin's work, but does not limit it. She draws on geocriticism, arguing the distinction between *place* and *space* made by that field is not strictly relevant to literary settings, and also makes use of Gaston Bachelard's work on domestic space in literary texts.

Perhaps the most significant contribution of this book to the fields of Arthurian studies, Middle English studies, and romance studies is its breadth. Having made some efforts myself to incorporate spatial analysis into work on Arthurian texts, I am all too aware that doing so involves pursuing a wildly disparate range of secondary fields. Martin juggles these with aplomb, and by focusing on a single, substantial text, is able to deliver chapters that approach Malory's castles in all their multiple functions. Chapters deal with, in sequence: castles as political centres and political symbols; castles as sites of communal identity; castles as sites of ritual; castles as domestic spaces; castles as prisons; and castles in warfare. Scholars of Malory will find their work enriched by considering all of these, while scholars across a much broader range of texts will find themselves drawing on one or two chapters as key references. For instance, those interested in gender will find that both the first chapter, on castles as political identities, and the fifth, on castles as prisons, provide useful insights into the connections between castle spaces and aristocratic masculinity, while the fourth chapter, on castles as domestic spaces, looks at women's spaces and sexuality. Others have studied all three of these aspects before, but none place them in conversation with each other.

I do not find there to be any significant lack or oversight in *Castles and Space*. The *Morte* being the sprawling epic it is, Martin does not cover every book in equal depth, so there remains space for others to develop and expand on the function of castles in some of the less-well-read episodes. Likewise, given my own interests, I wished for more extensive engagement with Malory's sources

and analogues, but most readers are likely to find that Martin manages to signal significant source relationships without allowing that to overwhelm or weigh down her work on Malory. In short, *Castles and Space* is comprehensive enough to stand on its own, but should also provide an excellent resource for further explorations not only of Malory but of many related texts.

Amy Brown, *University of Bern*

**Rivera Medina**, Ana María, ed., *Ports in the Medieval European Atlantic: Shipping, Transport and Labour*, Woodbridge, The Boydell Press, 2021; hardback; pp. xvi, 202; 16 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £75.00; ISBN 9781783276158.

As Jésus Ángel Solórzano Telechea remarks in the epilogue to this volume (p. 168), port history has emerged as a subdiscipline of urban history only in the past thirty years. Historical scholarship on ports had previously reflected other interests, touching on ports themselves only incidentally. As most recent research has a more modern focus, this book is designed to cater to medievalists, or those wanting a grounding in the medieval history of ports as background to the study of more recent centuries. The specific focus is smaller port towns. The work covers France and the Atlantic side of the Iberian Peninsula, with a closing chapter on the Canary Islands. The British Isles are not considered; in fact, only the opening chapter deals with France. This reflects the fact the volume grew from a collaboration between two Spanish research groups. The Iberian focus gives the book unity but renders its title somewhat misleading; it is also a misnomer in the sense that most chapters devote themselves partly or wholly to the sixteenth century, not the Middle Ages per se. Although different cultural practices and regulatory frameworks may mean the studies presented are not perfectly transferable, the work has comparative value for researchers investigating other regions or periods—the constraints and pressures on port communities were often the same. Certain chapters explore some specific aspect of port infrastructure, with the result that scholars not specialized in ports may find them interesting. The outstanding example of this is Amândio J. M. Barros's examination of slave trading logistics in Portuguese ports.

The volume's production values are excellent. Maps, images, tables, and diagrams are clearly set out and well captioned. Footnote references are copious and informative. The editing (including English-language editing) is to a high standard. The chapter organization is primarily geographical (working down the coast of France, along Iberia's western front, then jumping to Tenerife) but this fits the chronological and thematic structure well too: the first chapter deals with the medieval era; the next two cover the late Middle Ages and sixteenth century; subsequent chapters increasingly concern the sixteenth century. Were it not for the fact that these considerations more or less impose the chapter order adopted, I would have said that the two last contributions were best suited, from their nature, to introduce the subject: they present a bird's-eye view of their topic,

permitting them to showcase the subject matter clearly and straightforwardly. In some respects, the earlier chapters involve more specialist concerns.

The opening chapter, Mathias Tranchant's, is something of an outlier. Tranchant describes who had jurisdiction over France's medieval coastline—local lords, great lords, or the sovereign—how far out to sea these different jurisdictions extended, and how they might clash. While he does not differentiate ports from the coast in general, the work does not suffer from this. Then follow two chapters on cargo handling in northern Spain: Ana María Rivera Medina (the volume's editor) on Basque stevedoring structures, and María Álvarez Fernández on Asturias. Rivera Medina's contribution is, in particular, crisply and concisely written. Both touch on coastal geography's limiting effect on ports. Natural deficiencies often demanded or stimulated the development of infrastructure and institutions. Chapters 4 and 5 concern Portuguese ports. Barros's examines specific logistical issues around the slave trade and the role of slaves in port communities. Sara Pinto's takes the port of Caminha as a case study, discussing cross-border interactions between Portugal and Spain and discussing the phenomenon of border interfaces more generally. Finally, Enrique José Ruiz Pilares considers infrastructure and stevedoring in Andalusia, while Roberto J. González Zalacain looks at Tenerife in the Canary Islands, where Andalusian practices were influential. Tenerife's case was atypical: an island whose indigenous inhabitants had had no port infrastructure before their conquest by Castile in the fifteenth century, with the result that the island's infrastructure developed at short notice to reflect its new role as a crucial victualling stopover en route to the Americas.

The different chapters feature various common themes: geography's role in promoting or hampering ports' establishment and the infrastructure that arose in them; how ports evolved in response to contemporary events (such as Columbus's voyage to the Americas); the appearance (or non-appearance) of associations of port labourers; the role of minority or marginalized groups such as women, slaves, or foreigners; interactions between ports; and the conflict between different layers of authority in regard to control of the coastline. These identifiable common features render the volume, though somewhat specialized, a worthwhile starting point for investigations of medieval port history.

Patrick Ball, *University of Tasmania*

**Salzman**, Paul, *Editors Construct the Renaissance Canon, 1825–1915* (Early Modern Literature in History), London, Palgrave MacMillan, 2018; hardback; pp. ix, 167; 10 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. US$99.99; ISBN 9783319779010.

Both fuel emission consciousness and pandemic-interrupted travel plans have stymied archival access over the last few years, but Paul Salzman's *Editors Construct the Renaissance Canon, 1825–1915* opens a window onto the importance of both digital and in-person editorial investigation in the archive. His project offers a look in on forgotten histories of early modern English textual

approaches, focusing on the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as times that inform our contemporary views on editing. Readers new to the topics of textual approaches like New Bibliography will find Salzman's summaries within his wider arguments clear, and any reader with an interest in the history of such editorial practices will newly appreciate both the distinctions and similarities between past and present editors of early modern texts.

After an introduction, Salzman reviews the conservative but editorially radical processes of Alexander Dyce. Dyce's roll call of women writers in particular speaks to his interest in acknowledging work at risk of being passed over in favour of more known writers, in turn reflecting the resurgence of interest in early modern women's writing today. Furthermore, although he did move towards and eventually produce Shakespearean editions, he took the long route, first editing his way through George Peele, John Webster, and other early modern playwrights. Salzman moves deftly through Dyce's approaches to each text, positing their connections to other key editors and practices of the time. Chapter 3 likewise presents an editor as a case study, this time focused on James Halliwell-Phillipps, but expanding out to consider his context, also shared to an extent with Dyce, Edmund Malone, and the more controversial J. P. Collier at later points. By contextualizing the careful editorial work of this early period, Salzman asserts the ongoing significance of early modern literary history and editing informed by research appropriate to editors' access and commitment to accuracy. He affirms the value of more ephemeral texts being preserved through such a process, while also carefully evaluating the difficulties that arose from Collier's forgeries, including, but not over-critiquing, the repartee that flew between editors as relationships broke down over such circumstances. For Halliwell-Phillipps, meticulous collections of sources now preserved for contemporary readers in scrapbooks made up of cut outs from early texts are a mixture of delightful and horrifying evidence of such early approaches to source analysis and compilations. Salzman's thoughtful approach to such evidence is helpful: 'This excision of pages […] seems a shocking act of vandalism' but the strategy can be seen 'in the context of accepted nineteenth-century book collecting [… and] a conscious repurposing of early modern texts with some continuity with early modern practices', namely common-placing (p. 71). While we can remain horrified at Halliwell-Phillipps's 'book bin' (p. 75), where he kept texts he considered of no value ready to be tossed, Salzman also allows us to appreciate this editor's extensive contributions to a conversation about archival valuing that informs today's understanding of these texts.

Throughout Chapter 4, Salzman revives the contributions of key amateur editors. An interest in the idea of completeness dominates much of the work from Alexander Grosart, and pre-Renaissance texts also enter the conversation through attempts at complete works from F. J. Furnivall, Thomas Tyrwhitt, Thomas Wright, and Walter Skeat, mainly focused on Chaucer. Salzman then pivots to account for the institutionalization of Shakespearean editing and takes particular note of

how relationships between complete or authoritative editions begin to build a set of traditions that now-major editions continue to use, such as line numbering, beginning with scholars like Edmund Capell and collections from Methuen, and Oxford and Cambridge presses. Here, Salzman's achievement and contribution lies in the neat synthesis of key examples and approaches from varied editors and presses, accounting for their responsiveness to one another and the gradual shift towards what was seen as the necessity of professionalized knowledge for high-quality editions. The final chapter accounts for R. B. McKerrow and W. W. Greg's approaches, analysing how their editorial principles—including those of New Bibliography and New Textualism—intersected. Perhaps of most interest is Salzman's observations about historical commitments to annotation having explicitly or implicitly influenced how editions are valued. This occurred in an immediate sense for William Montague Summers, whose edition of Aphra Behn was likely a catalyst for Vita Sackville-West and Virginia Woolf's access to her work and therefore influenced their approach to literature and feminism.

Ultimately, Salzman offers a balanced tour through a century of editorial practices. His synthesis of this history is poised to inform and extend our contemporary understanding of past and current approaches to early modern texts, bringing new comparisons to light and connecting them with elements of known history. Although editorial practices continue to foster arguments, this volume invites the interested expert or new reader to consider current approaches as part of a long history that informs contemporary criticism and reading.

Jennifer E. Nicholson, *Sydney*, *Australia*

**Simmons**, Clare A., *Medievalist Traditions in Nineteenth-Century British Culture: Celebrating the Calendar Year*, Cambridge, D. S Brewer, 2021; hardback; pp. 238; 8 colour, 15 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9781843845737.

Clare A. Simmons's *Medievalist Traditions in Nineteenth-Century British Culture: Celebrating the Calendar Year* sets out to 'examine how nineteenth-century Britons connected seasonal celebration with a conception of the medieval past that helped them think more sympathetically about what their ancestors' lives may have been like before the Reformation' (p. xi). As outlined by Simmons in her introduction, the focus of her book is 'primarily literary, tracing how this medieval tendency found its way into both historical and imaginative works' (p. 13). The intention of her project is not, according to Simmons, to make assertions about what the nineteenth century 'was really like' (p. 13), but rather to compile and thus help to better understand the stories that were told about the medieval past—its value, significance, and continuing presence—in the nineteenth century. Thus, Simmons avoids staking a claim about the broader impact of these individual works or about what they reveal of wider ideals or ideologies of the time.

As such, at times I found myself wanting more direct analysis of the cultural, political, social, and religious impulses and concerns that underpinned the

reclamation and/or (re)invention of the medieval past in the nineteenth century; for the author to more directly draw together the trends that motivated, that were mapped by, and that were in turn influenced by, these artistic projects. In essence, I wanted to know more about these fascinating case studies of medievalist calendar traditions in the nineteenth century beyond the sum of their parts. I wanted to understand the intersection of these nineteenth-century treatments of the calendar year—the seasons, the holy-days, the events—with British culture more broadly and in more detail. This I believe would have aided in more direct engagement with what in her introduction Simmons teased to be some of the key preoccupations of nineteenth-century British medievalism, namely that:

> 1. The way of life of English people of the Middle Ages gave them a stronger sense of values […]
> 2. English people of the Middle Ages had a finer appreciation of artistic style […]
> 3. English people of the Middle Ages had a stronger connection to community both at the national and local level […]
> 4. English people of the Middle Ages had more fun than we do now. (p. 4)

These ideas, particularly the last two, which are highlighted by Simmons as a new area in need of exploration, are unquestionably embedded in the framework of Simmons's book, but I found myself striving for more explicit and direct engagement with the nuances of their presence and significance within and between each of the texts discussed.

Simmons's book is, however, invaluable for bringing together a wide and diverse range of high and low medievalismist art of nineteenth-century Britain, much of which has long been relegated to the periphery of medievalismist scholarship. Simmons works with significant urtexts (by the likes of Alfred Tennyson, Charles Dickens, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and Robert Browning) but her study also draws on lesser known, 'lowbrow' works of literature: popular poetry, almanacs, works of historiography, Christian calendars, prayer books, hymns, and popular songs. As such, the book is awash with fascinating and under-studied examples of nineteenth-century medievalism, and is thus a valuable work of scholarly recovery and a thoroughly enjoyable and interesting read.

The book is broken into seven chapters. The first examines five projects (a poetry collection, a long narrative poem, a Tractarian historiographical tract, an Anglican work of hagiographic historiography, and a daily meditative 'reading diary') all of which were seemingly designed to retain and/or venerate a 'medievalized' Christian liturgical calendar year, with varying levels of financial and critical success. The second chapter examines what Simmons calls 'calendar experiments', secular creative projects that, through the melding together of modes such as the Christmas gift almanac / gift book with the novel form or the narrative poem, 'rais[ed] the question of how calendar time and narrative time might work together' (p. 39). The chapter surveys works by William Makepeace Thackeray,

Charles Dickens, William Morris, and Alfred Tennyson to examine how 'reading and recreating stories of the Middle Ages [was] a way of rethinking medieval inheritance of a sense of calendar' (p. 54). The remaining five chapters centre nineteenth-century uptake or continuation of traditions associated with calendar events (Christmas, the feasts of St Agnes and St Valentine, Easter, May Day, Passion Plays, Harvest-Home, and the Lord Mayor's Show) as connected to the four seasons, which Simmons argues is underpinned by real and imagined ideas of a medieval past. Real gems of close analysis are unearthed in each. Chapter 3 is, in particular, a really lovely musing on weather/seasons, temporality, medievalism, and Christmas, and is particularly deft at drawing together Simmons's rich and fascinating array of source material.

Ellie Crookes, *The University of Wollongong*

**Simpson,** James, *Permanent Revolution: The Reformation and the Illiberal Roots of Liberalism*, Cambridge, MA, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2019; hardback; pp. xv, 444; R.R.P. US$35.00; ISBN 9780674987135.

James Simpson, a literary historian of the late medieval era, has contributed to the study of early modernity in *Burning to Read: English Fundamentalism and its Reformation* (Harvard University Press, 2007). His insights always lead to the present era and illuminate aspects of the past that are often ignored or elided. In *Permanent Revolution: The Reformation and the Illiberal Roots of Liberalism*, Simpson argues that the triumphalist narrative of Whig history, which viewed the Reformation as the direct ancestor of modern liberalism, depends on taking the Glorious Revolution of 1688 as the entry point for historical studies. However, historians starting with Martin Luther's *Ninety-five Theses* in 1517 expose a different Reformation, which was illiberal, repressive, and characterized by phenomena often termed medieval, including 'iconoclasm, slavery, persecution of "witches", judicial torture in England, Biblical fundamentalism, political absolutism' (p. 6). Part 1, 'Religion as Revolution', argues that evangelical Protestantism produced theology that was inherently revolutionary, in that it demanded the destruction of what came before (Catholicism) to remake the world according to God's will. Simpson further asserts that the radicalism of Puritan theology proposed 'permanent revolution' in which anti-Catholicism dissolved in the face of violent internecine conflict between factions within Protestantism itself.

Part 2, 'Working Modernity's Despair', posits that while forms of despair are detectable in the later Middle Ages, an epidemic of hopelessness resulted from Protestants who 'placed despair-producing inadequacy and depravity […] front and brutally center of a theological program' (p. 58). Predestination of the elect resulted in a psychology that was very different from the concern in *Piers Plowman* with how Christians may work toward salvation. Simpson contrasts the dramatic moment of being born again (which involved the absolute rejection of the past

self) with the idea of advancing virtue by incremental self-reform. This section concludes with analyses of literary texts, including Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, poems by Thomas Wyatt and Fulke Greville, and John Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Part 3, 'Sincerity and Hypocrisy', continues the discussion of psychology, noting that, like despair, hypocrisy was not deeply important in medieval thought, but accusations of hypocrisy were characteristic of Protestantism, as revolutionaries 'often fall victim to profound self-doubt and doubleness precisely because they set the bar for wholly consistent, unitary authenticity at so high a level' (p. 114). This requirement of absolute sincerity is especially dangerous to theatre and the visual arts and produces an iconoclastic culture. This section ends with a review of a range of theatrical texts.

Part 4, 'Breaking Idols', considers phases in the history of Puritan iconoclasm, from the early, 'energetic' years from 1538 to 1553 to the 'more painful, unjoyful' (p. 161) years from 1558 to 1625. First, images of the saints were banned, and idolatry was condemned. Second, Simpson argues that 'the seductions of the image' (p. 175) were combatted in the human mind itself, and he analyses William Shakespeare's *A Winter's Tale* (1610–11) as an artistic rehabilitation of the image as true and therapeutic. Part 5, 'Theater, Magic, Sacrament', discusses the shift from medieval Catholic allegory to Protestant literalism, noting that Evangelicals' hostility to theatre was essentially identical to their opposition to Catholic sacraments, a rejection of the view that performative language could 'mak[e] something happen in the world' (p. 205). Simpson contrasts the Corpus Christi cycles of the Middle Ages with John Bale's evangelical plays and notes how in the former God acts in a theatrical manner, but in the latter only diabolical figures perform magical actions. Evangelical hostility to magic in the theatre was played out in the world via persecution of witches, which had medieval precursors but was intensified from 1580 to 1620 and then throughout the Civil War, tailing off after the Restoration of Charles II in 1660.

Part 6, 'Managing Scripture', tackles the Protestant triumphalist narrative of the Bible democratizing reading and religion after the Reformation. The activities of translation and interpretation of scriptures are covered, and Simpson asserts that Martin Luther and William Tyndale, among others, imagined that their vernacular scriptures would be used to attack Catholics, whereas it resulted in fissiparous Protestant sectarianism and violence. He also demonstrates that external wars and public conflicts were paralleled by 'private scriptural anguish', which he illustrates by discussing Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, and John Bunyan as readers. Surrey was beheaded for treason aged thirty-one on 19 January 1547. The psalm paraphrases he wrote in prison are filled with suffering, betrayal, pain, and a sense of persecution, which 'is the only imaginable consolation on offer, since it is a very sign of election' (p. 290). Bunyan's *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners* (1666) was written while he was imprisoned from 1661 to 1672 for unlicensed preaching. Simpson describes the text as 'repetitive cycles of chronic despair' (p. 293).

Part 7, 'Liberty and Liberties', traces the progress from liberties plural to 'absolutist, singular Liberty' (p. 319). Evangelical and political ideals of liberty are unremittingly hostile to liberties; Simpson sees this as a case of what Max Weber calls 'rationalization' in the early modern era. For all its emphasis on freedom of conscience, Protestantism supported absolutist rulers. In the brief 'Conclusion', Simpson argues that viewing Liberalism as a worldview is incorrect; it is rather 'a tool for governing worldviews' (p. 350) that bears the weight of its origin in permanently revolutionary evangelicalism. Simpson has produced an intellectually challenging, exhilarating book in *Permanent Revolution*, and I cannot recommend it too highly.

Carole M. Cusack, *The University of Sydney*

**Slavin**, Philip, *Experiencing Famine in Fourteenth-Century Britain* (Environmental Histories of the North Atlantic World, 4), Turnhout, Brepols, 2019; hardback, pp. xxiv, 442; 24 b/w illustrations, 47 b/w tables, R.R.P. €100.00; ISBN 9782503547800.

Famine is currently a major risk in war-torn Africa and the Yemen, and drought-stricken areas, despite global relief mechanisms, and climate change may exacerbate future harvest failures. Philip Slavin proposes that investigating the Great Famine of 1315–17 can enhance our understanding of the mechanisms that escalate historic and modern food shortages to famine levels. Many studies of premodern famine take a broad view, either geographically or examining both famine and disease across the late medieval period. Examples include William Chester Jordan's *The Great Famine: Northern Europe in the Early Fourteenth Century* (Princeton University Press, 1996) and Bruce Campbell's *The Great Transition: Climate, Disease and Society in the Late-Medieval World* (Cambridge University Press, 2016). Other researchers have investigated specific aspects such as crop yields or grain markets.

Slavin builds on existing research and focuses in-depth on the British Isles and the Great Famine of 1315 to 1317. This enables him to dig deep; how deep is indicated by his acknowledgements showing the enormous range of unpublished archival sources that he has uncovered, particularly English manor records. Other sources, too numerous to list, include sheriff's and customs accounts, and subsidy, goal delivery, and coroners' rolls.

Slavin uses this information to investigate his premise that food shortages, precipitated by extreme wet weather causing crop failure, only become famines when human factors are considered. He investigates current theories on why famines happen, concluding that neither the environmental nor the demographic (Malthusian) approaches are sufficient. Nor can the institutional approach, based on Amartya Kumar Sen's entitlement theory (*Poverty and Famines*, Clarendon Press, 1981), fully explain why some shortage situations become famine and others do not. Slavin proposes a complexity model based on a combination of these approaches, focusing on climate, food production and supply, management

practices, market factors, transportation, storage, and the impact of external factors such as war.

Slavin then embarks on a rigorous and detailed account of this complexity model. First, he explores the effects of the extreme wet weather of 1315–17 on harvest failures and food production. He then examines the factors leading from shortage to famine. Inclement weather contributed to transportation and storage problems and escalating costs of basic foodstuff, compounded by piracy and theft. Focusing on grain, he finds that management practices reduced the calories available to the peasant population. Relevant factors include retaining a high proportion of the harvest as seed, high tithes, and a large proportion of the population having insufficient landholding to feed their families. He finds that market practices and market failures also contributed to the transition from shortage to famine.

Warfare was a major factor in the north of England, Scotland, south Wales, and parts of Ireland in the famine years, decimating crops through pillaging and *chevauchée*, and increasing demands on taxation and food supplies. Analysing the relationship between population levels and available land and food resources, Slavin proposes population losses in England of up to seventeen per cent. The most fascinating aspect is his discussion of coping strategies of individual famine victims, backed up with facts and figures. In conclusion, Slavin reiterates the complexity of factors tipping this medieval food shortage into famine.

In his final chapters, Slavin advances theories on how the famine may have affected the health and resilience of survivors and their offspring, leading to reduced resistance to *Yersinia pestis* in 1348. New studies and analytical techniques are constantly enhancing the understanding of this topic. Slavin's notes that environmental lead pollution was more prevalent than previously thought and would have affected health. While it undoubtedly would, lead may be less important than the health burden of localized fine particulate emissions from coal used in lime-burning and indoor pollution from domestic heating in poorly ventilated spaces, as documented by Peter Brimblecombe in *The Big Smoke: A History of Air Pollution in London since Medieval Times* (Methuen, 1987). Exposure to indoor pollution may have been greater in the years of inclement weather, leading to chronic respiratory conditions, particularly among the most vulnerable, an aspect deserving further investigation.

Slavin's significant contribution to studies of medieval and other famines rests on the depth of his research, the extent of primary source material he has collated, and his use of corroborating evidence from more recent and better-documented famines. As with any collection of medieval sources, there are lacunae both in time and space. Throughout his analysis he anticipates exaggeration and hearsay in chronicles, and misreporting and uneven coverage in manor accounts and other sources. He is careful to acknowledge these, sets out where he has extrapolated available data, and explains conflicting regional data. He strikes a balance between presenting an eyewatering selection of information summarized in tables and

graphs and providing context and putting a human face on the tragedy by telling individuals' stories, and paves the way for further research into this topic.

Barbara Rouse, *Massey University*

**Sobecki**, Sebastian, and John **Scattergood**, eds, *A Critical Companion to John Skelton*, Cambridge, D. S. Brewer, 2018; hardback; pp. 245; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9781843845133.

In his introduction, Sebastian Sobecki presents two rationales for this impressively wide-ranging critical edition. Firstly, that despite the growing traction of early Tudor literary culture amongst scholars and general audiences—a vogue that has included several monographs specifically on Skelton—no critical introduction to Skelton as yet exists. And, as Sobecki's second rationale insists, Skelton needs one. Combining erudite classical learning with a rustic and frequently vitriolic style (most famously in his signature metre, the Skeltonic), Skelton's body of work can be a disorienting study. His posthumous legacy may be even more tangled than his contemporary reception: in his own time, Skelton relentlessly self-styled himself as 'poet laureate' (an honour bestowed by the universities of Oxford, Cambridge, and Louvain) and, after being appointed as orator regius (1512) began to don a robe embroidered with 'Calliope' to indicate his allegiance to classical poetic tradition. However, after his death Skelton's grandiose self-promotion took a turn as he transformed into a popular stock jestbook character—Merry Skelton—and it was not until the Romantic period that his radical experiments with form began to be redeemed from this murky association. The chapters in this collection begin to untangle these many strands with clear and detailed contextualization, doing much to illuminate Skelton's complex and seemingly contradictory *oeuvre*.

Following a useful introduction to Skelton's life and career by John Scattergood, the chapters adhere to two broad sections. The first is dedicated to Skelton's historical and ideological contexts and includes chapters by Thomas Betteridge ('Religion'), Sebastian Sobecki ('Law and Politics'), John Scattergood ('Classical Literature'), and David R. Carlson ('Humanism'). In this section, a clear tension begins to emerge from the task of contextualizing a figure whose body of work is, itself, highly distinctive and individualistic, and whose impact lies in an ability to reconfigure inherited (and evolving) rules of decorum to dizzying effect. This is a tension these chapters productively lean into, revealing gaps and synergies between Skelton's dynamic Tudor context and his often-pioneering literary form. Thus, Betteridge's chapter explores the line between poetic licence and priestly failure in Skelton's work (despite his vitriolic and often lewd material, Skelton took holy orders in 1498 and was Rector of Diss, Norfolk, until his death in 1529); Sobecki teases out Skelton's legal and political views, juxtaposing them with the tenets of increasingly dominant Erasmian humanist thought; Scattergood writes about Skelton's vitriolic application of Latinity, which drew on Juvenal's satires as a model; while Carlson distinguishes Skelton's grasp of the classics from

his participation in the humanist movement, aligning him with the older Apuleian school, rather than emerging Erasmian humanism.

The sizeable second section goes on to dissect Skelton's writings and includes chapters by J. A. Burrow ('Satires and Invectives'), Julia Boffey ('Lyrics and Short Poems'), Elisabeth Dutton ('Skelton's Voice and Performance'), Jane Griffiths ('Literary Tradition'), Greg Waite ('Skelton and the English Language'), Carol M. Meale ('Skelton's English Works in Manuscripts and Print'), A. S. G. Edwards ('Skelton's English Canon'), and Helen Cooper ('Reception and Afterlife'). These essays vary broadly between standard works of criticism and more technical, detailed surveys. This breadth results in occasionally jarring changes in tone—the more discursive works of Burrow, Boffey, Dutton, and Griffiths stand in contrast with the highly technical overviews of Skelton's linguistic quirks, manuscripts and canon by Waite, Meale, and Edwards. Yet each chapter makes an invaluable and detailed contribution to our understanding of Skelton and, taken together, they form an exhaustive scholarly resource. The collection is complemented by a useful research biography from Nadine Kuipers, and two indexes, one on manuscripts and the other on printers and stationers. Overall, the collection is a rigorous and generous portrait of a man whose creative vernacularizing force was instrumental in both defying and moulding his own time.

Katrina Spadaro, *The University of Sydney*

**Thomson**, S. C., ed., *Medieval Stories and Storytelling: Multimedia and Multi-Temporal Perspectives* (Medieval Narratives in Transmission, 2), Turnhout, Brepols, 2021; hardback; pp. 319; 19 b/w, 3 colour illustrations; R.R.P. €90.00; ISBN 9782503590509.

*Medieval Stories and Storytelling* is the second volume in the Brepols series 'Medieval Narratives in Transmission' and collates essays across a surprisingly vast chronological and topical frame. In the introduction, editor and contributor S. C. Thomson acknowledges that a volume on a theme as diffuse as storytelling could (and should) never be comprehensive. The stories that are examined in this collection, Thomson writes, are examples of storytellers 'stitching a historical person into the fabric of the metahistorical, or storied time' (p. 20). This is a poetic but useful way of conceptualizing a medievalist story space, as it enables the essays to span both medieval texts and post-medieval adaptations. It is in its broad-reaching theme that the collection finds its greatest strength, as it functions to bring together vastly different but comparatively intriguing case studies under a cohesive analytical frame. Medieval textual stories (and architecture) do receive more of a focus across the chapters, in comparison to new technologies and remediations such as medievalist video games, but there is still a significant value in the choice to include some chapters with this exploration of modern media despite this imbalance, as this volume can then mark its larger argument that these are interconnected topics.

The introduction is an eloquent ode to the power of stories and situates the volume amongst a well-chosen array of theoretical scholarship on storytelling and multimedia narratives. Even within some of the case study work in the volume, medieval and modern storytelling is explored in tandem. In the first chapter on *Beowulf* adaptations '*Beowulf* Goes to School', Jane Coles, Theo Bryer, and Daniel Ferreira discuss how they integrated both recent technologies and ancient modes in the creative thinking taught during their workshops in schools (p. 35). A small but powerful decision that deserves mention here is that the same formatting is used in this chapter for quoted text of the 'rules' from *Beowulf* video games, designed by the workshop participants, and the original (translated) *Beowulf* stanzas quoted earlier in the chapter. This formatting choice guides the reader's perspective on these two very different types of media by forcing us to read them comparatively and equally in the context of the chapter (though they also provide useful game screenshots). The research in this chapter was a strong choice to begin the volume, because it contextualized the broader utility of this field by reflecting on practical workshops run by the authors with student teachers, thereby effectively building on the more theoretical ruminations of the introduction.

The first two chapters pair well, as both explore *Beowulf* adaptations, though Jorge Luis Bueno Alonso's chapter (the second of the two) actually contained analysis of the genealogy of *Beowulf* adaptations that might have been useful to readers before reading about Coles, Bryer, and Ferreira's work. The remainder of the chapters focuses on various elements of medieval stories both in context and as they have been viewed in post-medieval times. The pair of chapters on architecture and art in physical space, as well as a later chapter on medieval metalwork, are nice interludes between the very textually focused chapters, and are distributed well across the volume. Christoph Witt's chapter on *Titurel* offers a very multilayered, meta perspective, as he analyses a fictional story within a fictional story, thus using a story itself to tell us a story about storytelling. That each chapter could take a very different medium and methodological approach and still contribute (very well) to the same broad theme is a considerable achievement.

Though the introduction effectively summarizes the overall goals of the volume, the book does not offer a conclusion after the final chapter. The concluding section of the final chapter brings in some reference to the broader work of the volume, but is then only followed by a short appendix that explains the *Manas* storytelling tradition in China in very specific detail. This leaves the reader at a very micro level of analysis, where it could have been beneficial to include a final concluding reflection to draw the reader back to a macro perspective on the overarching messages of the volume.

Overall, this volume is a beautiful example of successful interdisciplinarity, living up to its subtitle of *Multimedia and Multi-Temporal Perspectives*. Even Thomson's use of the perspectives of characters from medieval stories to comment on post-medieval ideas about storytelling is a masterful example of the layered meanings explored and produced here. Beyond its value as a model for a broad

thematic collection of essays, and the deep analysis performed on individual texts in each chapter, any book where a paragraph can contain both the Wife of Bath and Ursula Le Guin is well worth your time.

Tess Watterson, *The University of Adelaide*

**Tischler**, Matthias M., and Patrick S. **Marschner**, eds, *Transcultural Approaches to the Bible: Exegesis and Historical Writing across Medieval Worlds* (Transcultural Medieval Studies, 1), Turnhout, Brepols, 2021; pp. viii, 253; 19 colour illustrations; R.R.P. €80.00; ISBN 9782503592855.

Few would question the assertion that the Bible ranks amongst the most important volumes in Western civilization. What has not been examined as thoroughly is the way in which Scripture has been utilized in creating and manipulating human memory, especially across transcultural medieval worlds. Naturally this is a large task that cannot be accomplished in a single thin volume. But this collection takes an initial step in that important direction. With a specific focus on the Iberian context, Latin Europe, the Near East, and the Baltic world, we are introduced to a series of vignettes drawing attention to the nature of Biblical interpretation and historical writing across these medieval worlds. Unsurprisingly, we learn the ways and means in which the Bible provides theological justification for crusading, explains how and why crusaders are God's special people, provides an explanation for understanding the post-biblical nature of providential history, and how marginal glosses explain and correct the vagaries of Scripture, while at the same time elaborating how different cultures and events represent extensions of biblical narratives and truths.

All of this is approachable and explicable by seeing beyond simplistic Sunday school notions of Scripture as a single text, reflecting a linear and unified programmatic agenda, possessing a priori metahistorical authority adopting modern assumptions like inspiration, verbal dictation, and theological politics creating the 'word of God'. What is essential is understanding a complicated transmission process, a virtual lacuna surrounding canonization, and claims about authority that are often little more than the habit of repeated reading. As this volume makes clear, none of these components ever existed in an untouchable sacrosanctity. Cultures past and present, of course, have preferred to see the Bible as an instrument of unassailable power and authority. Many writings outside the biblical canon retained authority for communities of faith throughout the ages and informed efforts to frame concepts of salvation-history in the post-biblical world of the Middle Ages. Scripture was used, sometimes misused, occasionally abused, in a quest to explain history by adapting Iberian motifs, for example, to biblical narratives wherein typological connections between medieval and the Hebrew Bible worlds suggest prophecy, fulfilment, and justification for events, ideas, and practices. In this way, knowledge of the Bible plays a major part in interpreting contemporary affairs, thus enhancing the role Scripture plays in historical writing. Untangling these two discrete texts is difficult.

Knowledge of the Bible occurred aurally, optically, and dramaturgically, rather than through reading. Crusade narratives, for example, are peppered with Scriptural citations and allusions. The crusades become salvific, the Bible indispensable for crusaders, and we find arresting accounts of armies chanting hymns or psalms as the military machine advances in the name of God. Crusade texts are one example of how and why the Bible was quoted to provide credibility or justification.

This volume underscores the role of historians toiling in the dimness of the medieval world, labouring to see mundane human efforts in the beam of divine light, interpreting human affairs with reference to the work of God, and setting forth these typologies in clearly enunciated exegesis. In consequence, contemporaries and posterity understand medieval matters in terms of the eternal now. Several chapters underscore the work of many medieval writers in identifying and applying the most appropriate biblical text for any number of respective contexts. Biblical manuscripts are utilized, by means of exegetical gymnastics if necessary, to illuminate divine approbation in the varied cultures of a world centuries removed from the sacred text. The more successful of such efforts resulted in medieval chronicles that are truly sustained dialogues with the Scriptures.

Of particular interest is the dispute about clerical sexuality by means of an innovative use of Ezekiel 23, wherein we find absorbing elaboration of 'condemned sisters, effeminate brothers, and damned heretics' by Lydia M. Walker. Sodomy is not a single act but a rather more complex phenomenon possessing its own traditions, language, and political clout. One is amused about the disorder that attended such deliberations. Jacques de Vitry tells us about masters lecturing in brothels; in one room theological disputations occurred while in the next whores argued with pimps. Shameful acts were committed downstairs, discussions about God transpired above. The fear of contagious heresy lingered, and malevolent wolves ever threatened the benign sheep.

Some of the figures require higher resolution for useability. The introductory editorial drowns in its own acuity, which succeeds in getting lost in a jumble of hybridization, métissage, asymmetries, normativity, spatial turns, mental maps, macro and micro contradictions, asynchrony of historical phenomena, global entanglements, and so on—just a few ostentatious terms in a dizzying discourse. What the editors want to achieve is important. They should express it in less pretentious vocabulary. What this book achieves is a significant contribution to the global Middle Ages and a reminder that ignoring the Bible contributes to cultural illiteracy.

Thomas A. Fudge, *University of New England*

**Turner**, Victoria, and Vincent **Debiais**, eds, *Words in the Middle Ages / Les Mots au Moyen Âge* (Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy, 46), Turnhout, Brepols, 2020; hardback; pp. vi, 340; 100 b/w illustrations, 6 b/w tables; R.R.P. €85.00; ISBN 9782503587950.

This bilingual collection of fourteen essays—eleven in English and three in French—offers an intriguing book cover: it shows a panel of the famous eleventh-century Tapestry of Creation, housed in the Museum of the Cathedral of Girona (Spain). Its central scene is delimited by two concentric circles, with Christ Pantocrator in the middle. Two of the three scenes illustrated in the bottom half of the larger circle are represented on the cover: the creation of the birds ('volatilia celi'—'birds of the air') and of the aquatic beings ('mare'—'sea'); and Adam, naming the animals around him, with the index of his right hand pointed to them. The inscription reads: 'Adam non inveniebatur similem sibi' ('Adam did not find any creature of his own kind'). These striking scenes, with beautiful colours and fantastic animals (including a unicorn), offer a graphic illustration of the power of the word in the Middle Ages.

Indeed, the status of words in the Middle Ages is at the core of this volume, which constitutes the proceedings of the 2016 symposium of the International Medieval Society (IMS) held in Paris in conjunction with the Laboratoire de médiévistique occidentale de Paris (LAMOP). Philologists, historians, epigraphers, palaeographers, and art historians interrogate the concept of 'word' by scrutinizing all sorts of support—texts, images, objects, and buildings. According to its editors, Victoria Turner and Vincent Debiais, this volume 'traces the status of the word from ontology to usage, encompassing its visual, acoustic, linguistic, and extralinguistic forms' (back cover).

The volume is organized 'using the zoom-out principle, from the letter to the context of the writing, from the detail contained in the pen stroke to the material and monumental environment of the text' (p. 3). Firstly, Adrian Papahagi ('Words with Masks: A Note on the Nomenclature of Some Late Medieval Initials', pp. 5–20) clarifies the codicological vocabulary, while Dominique Stutzmann ('Words as Graphic and Linguistic Structures: Word Spacing in Psalm 101 *Domine exaudi orationem meam* (Eleventh–Fifteenth Centuries)', pp. 21–59) explores a corpus of forty-eight manuscripts to address 'the definition, perception and measures of blank spaces between words' (p. 23), with the open source Oriflamms.exe proving a very useful tool.

Focusing on page space, Anne Rauner scrutinizes parish obituaries and their 'visual rhetoric' ('Managing a Living Book: The Planning and the Use of Page Surface in Parish Obituaries in the Late Medieval Diocese of Strasbourg', pp. 61–88), while Arthur Westwell ('Correction of Liturgical Words, and Words of Liturgical *Correctio* in the *Ordines Romani* of Saint Amand', pp. 89–107) examines the words of the liturgy and their lexical and morphological characteristics.

Jennifer M. Feltmann ('Aligning Word and Deed: The Emergence of Confessor as a Priest who Hears Confession', pp. 109–30) scrutinizes texts as well as sculptures and images to trace the semantic instability of the word 'confessor'.

Focusing on the French Grail romance, Lucas Wood ('The Origin of the Text and the Authority of the Word in Robert de Boron's *Joseph d'Arimathie*', pp. 131–44) discusses the topos of the ancient, authoritative source.

Morgan Boharski ('Kisses on Stitches: Words of Active Fetishisation of Cloth Bodies in Old French Romance', pp. 145–59) turns her attention to two French romances and the erotic dimension of 'cloth bodies'—a *chemise* and a *manche*—offered to the protagonists.

Liam Lewis ('Quacktrap: Glosses and Multilingual Animal Contact in the *Tretiz* of Walter of Bibbesworth', pp. 161–79) studies a bilingual list of animal noises and argues that it offers 'a contact zone between human, animals, and birds' (p. 163).

Focusing on a set of Gallic epitaphs devoid of royal computation, Morgane Uberti ('Un règne sans roi: Le Non-dit du temps dans quelques inscriptions de la Gaule du haut Moyen Âge', pp. 181–208) questions the dating system, while Estelle Ingrand-Varenne examines captioned images, and in particular names that are hyphenated on either side of the character depicted ('Nommer, couper, incorporer: Quand le nom rencontre le corps de l'image', pp. 209–28).

In a fascinating study, Katja Airaksinen-Monier interrogates backwards writing in texts and images ('Mirror Writing in Devotional Texts and Images', pp. 229–51).

The last three chapters (by Caroline Schärli, 'Encircling Inscriptions in Early Byzantine and Carolingian Sacral Buildings, pp. 253–84; Francisco de Asís García García, 'Épigraphie et création artistique à l'époque romane: Le Paysage monumental du Haut-Aragon autour de 1100', pp. 285–306; and Jörg Widmaier, 'Between Written and Spoken Words: The Use and Function of Inscriptions on Medieval Baptismal Fonts', pp. 307–28) examine inscriptions on monuments and their contents. They show how words interplay with the architecture (Schärli) in order to provide for the ontological experience of the sacred (Widmaier). A short introduction and a list of abstracts complete the volume.

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**Weston**, Robert. *A Country Doctor in the French Revolution: Marie-François-Bernadin Ramel* (Routledge Focus), New York, Routledge, 2020; hardback; pp. 104; 7 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. US$60.00; ISBN 9780367271893.

This slim volume in the Routledge Focus series tells the fascinating story of a little-known physician, Marie-François-Bernadin Ramel, whose career spanned the Revolutionary and Napoleonic eras. Robert Weston has scoured national and regional archives to produce a detailed account of Ramel's eventful life. As his study demonstrates, Ramel was by no means an unknown individual in his

lifetime, but rather an educated man of recognized professional status who was intent on engaging in the major political and medical debates and developments of his age.

Born in Aubagne, educated at Marseille, then taking his qualifications from the relatively unprestigious medical faculty at the university at Aix-en-Provence, Ramel took up his first position in North Africa as an employee of the Royal Company of Africa. His experiences at Bône and La Calle provided valuable insights into a range of diseases, beyond the usual fare for a provincial physician, and gave Ramel the opportunity to explore their connection to the climate of the region. Meteorological effects on health were a keenly debated area of contemporary medical debate, and Ramel travelled equipped with the latest technologies, including a barometer, eudiometer, and hygrometer, to contribute his own analyses. It was to be a subject on which he published in characteristic forceful style, critical both of the value of these new instruments and of the blanket way he felt other physicians were applying perceptions of air to all questions of disease.

As Weston explains, Ramel understood himself to be engaging in what he termed 'the republic of medicine'. For a physician trained and practising in rural towns in France and abroad, married to the daughter of a ship's captain, Ramel lacked many of the social networks that could have advanced his career. Yet he employed the dissemination pathways of his day, especially letters, society competitions, and print, to participate in making medical knowledge, as well as using the new opportunities of the Revolution to advance his ambitions. Unusually, in 1789 the *Société royale de médecine* awarded Ramel a medal for his services, in addition to several others awarded for specific research topics he addressed. In his later life, his expertise on the disease burden of marshy lands was called upon by the États of Artois.

Returning to France around 1780, Ramel established his practice in La Ciotat, but he was present in action between France and Britain in Minorca in 1782 and later, as the Revolution took hold, joined the Armée d'Italie. Weston fleshes out the wider story of the relationship between medical men and the revolutionary movements, among whom Jean-Paul Marat and Joseph-Ignace Guillotin are perhaps the most famous protagonists. Weston, though, documents the significant loosening of professional standards that may have influenced Ramel's decision to seek the security of a military appointment. Ramel most commonly adopted the term *officier de santé* to describe his military appointment, implying a temporary form of war service. Intriguingly, as Weston observes, both Ramel and Napoleon Bonaparte were at the siege of Toulon in 1793 in which Bonaparte was injured. Had Ramel treated him? Weston notes that in the years shortly after, Bonaparte appeared to have good intelligence of La Ciotat that might have been supplied by Ramel. Later, Bonaparte appointed Ramel mayor of La Ciotat.

Ramel's superior officer at this time described him 'always meddling in political affairs' (p. 73), and Weston spends considerable time weighing up the evidence for Ramel's revolutionary zeal. The comment of Ramel's superior may

also hint at the nature of Ramel's character. Contemporary accounts do not suggest an easy personality, and his own publications indicate his willingness to enter polemical debates. Ramel himself lamented the narrow-mindedness of France's small-town provincialism, a position reflected in the ambitious way he engaged in both politics and medicine.

Despite his many activities in his lifetime, memory of Ramel and his contributions faded soon after his death. Weston, however, has recovered Ramel from obscurity. Over the past few years, I have followed the twists and turns of his search for Ramel and am well aware of the persistence and lateral thinking it has required. Despite the compact nature of the Focus series, Weston has managed to present a Ramel situated in the wider contexts and challenges of his day, and in relation to other contemporary rural physicians.

A thorough edit of the final typescript from Routledge, particularly for a work operating between French and English, would certainly have cleaned up typographical errors and matters of consistency. It is hard to assess the quality of the translations, since the tight format has not allowed space for the original sources to be included in the notes.

In all senses, therefore, this is a compact book with all the advantages and disadvantages that this entails. Weston is efficient in his style, and as such manages to present an impressive wealth of information that should stimulate researchers to engage further with Ramel into the future. To be left wanting more speaks to the success of the work. As Weston concludes, Ramel very much wanted to be known. Thanks to this book, he now will be.

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**Williams,** Katherine Schapp, *Unfixable Forms: Disability, Performance, and the Early Modern English Theatre*, Ithaca/London, Cornell University Press, 2021; hardback; pp. 309; R.R.P. US$59.95; ISBN 9781501753503.

Katherine Schaap Williams's book *Unfixable Forms: Disability, Performance, and the Early Modern English Theatre* is an exciting and transformative study of the relationship between disability and performance in early modern English drama of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Drawing on a social model of disability, which focuses on how those who are impaired are disabled by barriers in society, Williams shows how early modern theatre produces a concept of disability that is 'interactive, temporally in flux, and constituted through the volatile form of the actor's body' (p. 6). Williams explores how theatrical form 'remakes—and is in turn remade by—early modern disability' (p. 5). In doing so, *Unfixable Forms* deepens our understanding of a range of plays, including more familiar works by William Shakespeare, Thomas Middleton, Thomas Dekker, and Ben Jonson, alongside less well-known unattributed plays such as *A Larum for London* and *The Fair Maid of the Exchange*. Williams expertly reads dramatic texts alongside a wide range of sources, including medical treatises, surgical manuals, and philosophical essays.

*Unfixable Forms* contains an introduction, six chapters, and ends with a coda. Throughout, Williams astutely analyses early modern theatrical practice, and shows how we understand disability in these early modern dramatic texts, both as a 'cultural analytic and as an aesthetic experiment with the medium of the actor's body' (p. 223). In Chapter 1, Williams brings new light to the standard bearer of early modern disability studies, Shakespeare's *Richard III*. Williams looks at medieval and Elizabethan historical sources, as well as the unattributed play *The True Tragedie of Richard III*, to show how disability in *Richard III* is anything but fixed. Williams's analysis of performances of *Richard III* featuring renowned actors such as Colly Cibber, Richard Burbage, and Antony Sher, highlights both the slippage involved in becoming Richard on stage, and the dangers involved in the act of performing disability.

In Chapter 2, Williams examines how the character of the lame soldier is represented in works including *A Larum for London* and Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, and how the staging of these characters differs from early modern medical discourse. Williams shows that while these medical texts champion prosthetics as a means to 'fix' bodies damaged from wars, the actor's body performing 'lame' characters, such as Stump and Ralph, 'points at the body's disabling' (p. 57).

Chapter 3 offers a detailed discussion about the counterfeit-disability tradition in early modern theatre, in particular the figure of the 'crippled' beggar. Williams's analysis centres on the character of Cripple in *The Fair Maid in Exchange* and the on-going exchange between the actor's body (playing Cripple) and that of the characters. While Frank Golding in *Fair Maid* can borrow Cripple's prosthetics as props for his counterfeiting, Williams argues that Cripple's ability to play other roles within the play in fixed. Cripple stands out in his simultaneous surplus and deficiency: he is both a character with a missing limb being played by an actor with an excess leg, as well as character who is crippled and thus incapable of playing other roles.

In Chapter 4, Williams considers ugliness—a form of disabling that focuses not on what the body can do, but how the body looks. In her analysis of Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher's *The Captain,* Williams shows how spectators' assumptions about Jacomo's distinctive body are undercut by the humorous marriage plot. Similarly, in *The Changeling*, by Middleton and William Rowley, spectators are conscripted into the gaze of De Flores, who 'unsettles the normative frame of bodily interpretation' (p. 132).

Chapter 5 considers the sick body, afflicted with palsy, convulsions, and epileptic fits, in works such as Shakespeare's *Othello*, Middleton's *Hengist, King of Kent*, and Jonson's *Volpone*, and how they disrupt the text. Williams argues that the display of these convulsions and fits 'discloses a fault line' (p. 179) between the body of the actor and that of the character. This is seen most keenly in Volpone's counterfeit palsy, with Williams highlighting how Volpone crosses the 'boundary between actor and character throughout the play' (p. 181). Through performing his afflictions, they are made real, and this both affirms the instability of disability, and underscores its performativity.

In the final chapter, Williams demonstrates how the monstrous body highlights the representational work of performance. Early modern texts often read monstrosity as an analogue to disability. Through an examination of plays such as Jasper Mayne's *The Citye Match*, William Royley's *The Birth of Merlin*, and Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, and how they render an actor's body monstrous through the use of stage properties, Williams argues that fixed assumptions about the meaning of the monster in these works, such as its alterity, are complicated through the performance by the unfixable human form of the actor.

*Unfixable Forms* is an important addition to the study of disability and performance in early modern English drama and shows how disability is central to our understanding of early modern theatre and the actor's body on stage. Williams's invaluable book will undoubtably shape the future study of disability in early modern theatre and will be of great interest to scholars of early modern theatre and performance, and more broadly those interested in disability theory and embodiment in performance.

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