

Reviews

Acheson, Katherine, *Visual Rhetoric and Early Modern English Literature* (Material Readings in Early Modern Culture), Farnham, Ashgate, 2013; hardback; pp. 186; 40 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £55.00; ISBN 9780754662839.

This book is a product of Katherine Acheson's study of the visual organisation of knowledge in early modern Europe, and her interest in how diagrammatic forms such as tables, charts, and maps might be profitably used for unravelling complex visual structures in literary texts of the same period.

There are several fascinating chapters that demonstrate extensive research of primary texts and materials, and in each instance Acheson's argument is illuminated with numerous high-quality illustrations. Structured with clarity and logic, the visual and textual components fit neatly into the general topics of 'space', 'truth', 'art', and 'nature'. Acheson does not intend to give a comprehensive survey of literary texts that demonstrate a connection with diagrammatic forms, but aims to provide a methodological foundation that can be applied more broadly. She has selected texts by Andrew Marvell, John Milton, and Aphra Behn on account of their strong engagement with early modern print culture, and their familiarity with various available methods for structuring and representing knowledge.

The first chapter explores the various forms of schematic illustrations used in books on military strategy and tactics popular in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and how they used abstract, two-dimensional models for representing men, equipment, and landmarks. Acheson demonstrates that these books shared a number of features with manuals for garden design produced during the same period, with each relying upon a set of culturally derived 'coding orientations' for communicating meaning to the early modern reader. The neutral, overhead perspective typical of these works is demonstrated in relation to Marvell's poem 'Upon Appleton House', which gives a perspectively complex account of retired English general Lord Fairfax's estate as a militarised garden. Acheson offers an exciting new reading of this perplexing poem based on the conceptual ties between these two genres.

The second chapter looks at the popularity of the dichotomous table for structuring material, and imparting knowledge in a circumscribed way. Acheson observes that these tables were used in fields as diverse as theology, philosophy, history, and medicine, with taxonomic diagrams and genealogical

trees being a few examples. A discussion of the genealogies of the scriptures that were frequently inserted or bound into the Bishop's Bible leads to a discussion of logic and method in John Milton's Protestant poem *Paradise Lost*. A poem occasioned by the question of what cased Adam and Eve to fall, it provides an excellent context for comparing the cause and effect argument asserted by God, with that of Satan, whose argument disrupts and complicates the possibility of a meaningful relationship.

Chapter 3 traces similarities between seventeenth-century drawing books, which became increasingly commercialised and mediated by technology, and writing manuals, also seen as a practice requiring the use of instruments. Acheson discusses ekphrastic poetry as a common form in which painting and writing come together, while 'competing' to prove themselves a superior technique for truthful representation. While the first part of the chapter makes some interesting points, the examples drawn from Marvell's 'Last Instructions to a Painter' (1667) lack depth, and are somewhat disappointing. The competition between poetry and painting is foregrounded in the poem, but this is one of many rhetorical techniques used, and does not sufficiently support her claim that Marvell considers poetry more truthful than painting because it is less mediated by technology, with the voice of the poem's speaker also being extensively mediated by the hand of the poet. Acheson begins by drawing a comparison between the techniques of writing, painting, and empirical science, which was also mediated by (optical) instruments, in order to discuss the relationships in Marvell's poem. This is followed by a discussion of similarities between poetry and empirical science, and the conclusion that Marvell is critical of the use of the microscope and telescope because they create distorted and grotesque images. To make such claims, however, is to misinterpret the analogy between scientific 'revelation' and satiric effect in the poem. Both approaches are capable of producing apparently 'grotesque' images; one being empirical, and the other moral, and Marvell exploits this in order to suggest the surprising 'truths' these fragmentary and distorted representations can offer.

The connection drawn between words, images, and empiricism enables a smooth transition to the final chapter, which discusses three popular approaches to representing animals during the period: natural history, which used generalised images supported by descriptive text to educate readers; comparative anatomy, in which they were represented through images of dissection; and the Aesopic fable which ironically sets natural history illustrations alongside allegorical stories. Acheson uses these genres, and illustrated examples of each, to explore Aphra Behn's varied approach to representing animals in 'Oroonoko', which Acheson hopes will confer a degree of coherence often considered to be lacking in the text.

Acheson makes a valuable contribution to possible methods for interpreting the visual dimension of literary texts, and the numerous, suitably placed illustrations make this book an informative read.

FIONA M. O'BRIEN, *The University of Adelaide*

Anstey, Peter R., ed., *The Oxford Handbook of British Philosophy in the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford Handbooks in Philosophy), Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013; hardback; pp. 672; R.R.P. £95.00; ISBN 9780199549993.

The Oxford Handbook of British Philosophy in the Seventeenth Century consists of twenty-six chapters that have been written by a team of international experts on early modern British philosophy. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, Britain was considered to be an intellectual backwater. By the beginning of the eighteenth century, however, British philosophy was becoming increasingly admired by enlightened Europe and this volume maps this dynamic development.

Part I, 'The Discipline of Philosophy in Seventeenth Century Britain', consists of a single essay. Richard Serjeantson surveys the development of British philosophy over the course of the seventeenth century. While there were occasional lectures on philosophical subjects, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, neither of the two English universities had chairs in the philosophical disciplines of natural philosophy, moral philosophy, metaphysics, or logic, and the discipline was initially only studied as part of the arts course. Later, it developed outside and beyond the university environment. Another of this century's dramatic changes was the replacement of Latin with English as the philosophical language of Britain.

Part II, 'Natural Philosophers and the Philosophy of Nature', opens with an essay on Francis Bacon whose philosophical ideas of experimentation, metaphysic, social, and utopian philosophies were a fundamental legacy for British philosophers of the seventeenth century. It then turns to Robert Boyle's work and principles on experimentation, and the influence of Boyle's experimentation on the work of Isaac Newton. Andrew Janiak, who tackles difficult and controversial topics such as 'Gravity and God', reviews the complexity of Newton's philosophies in a highly informative chapter.

There was an ongoing discussion throughout the seventeenth century about the relationships between mathematics, medicine, and moral philosophy in areas such as observation and mathematics, substance and essence, and the status of theory and hypothesis. Individual works are discussed in relation to these topics. For instance, in a chapter on the nature of body, *Two Treatises* by Kenelm Digby and *Physiologia Epicuro-Gassendo-Charltoiana* by Walter Charleton emphasise the relationship between natural philosophy, medicine,

and the theory of matter. Part II ends with a chapter on soul and body that highlights the diversity of ideas on the brain and the self, and fragility and discontinuity in human cognition.

Part III, 'Knowledge and Human Understanding', consists of four articles that confirm the importance of John Locke in this area. Locke's research on understanding is considered in an article that focuses on *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* – one of the most important philosophical works ever written – together with the influential *Of the Conduct of the Understanding*. Topics included in the subsequent articles cover Locke's *Essay* on the theory of ideas, reasoning, knowledge, and the important role of the study of logic. The different debates on ideas are surveyed and examined especially in terms of their 'existence' and origins. Probability is discussed in relationship to religion, philosophy, science, and the statistical probability of John Graunt and William Petty.

Part IV, 'Moral Philosophy', covers complex questions such as free will and motivation, examining the writers associated with the four major schools of thought: John Bramhall, Thomas Hobbes, Ralph Cudworth, and Locke. An article of hedonism and virtue reveals the growing place that is assigned to a moral philosophy on pleasure in the various accounts of motivation and value. The seventeenth-century approach to passion and affection was uniformly practical in its philosophical aims but nevertheless ensures diversity of opinions. While natural law and natural rights cross over both moral and political philosophy, natural law theories are the domain of the will of God while natural rights theories are of the will of man.

The final Part covers 'Political Philosophy'. An article on sovereignty, Hobbes's *Leviathan*, and Locke's *Two Treatises of Government* highlights the importance of these two philosophers and in light of the previous parts considers their place in the seventeenth-century history of ideas. Philosophies on toleration emerged at this time and a comprehensive overview of these theories reveals how writers responded to the political and religious dilemmas of the era. An article on women, freedom, and equality highlights the role of women philosophers in seventeenth-century philosophy, a topic often overlooked. Margaret Cavendish's utopian work *A Description of a New World called the Blazing World* and Mary Astell's various pamphlets and tracts are discussed, and their differences and similarities in terms of the problems that faced women, and the solutions they each offered, are considered.

This handbook is promoted as being the state-of-the-art book with up-to-date surveys and cutting-edge research; it provides advanced students and scholars with a comprehensive overview of the key issues of seventeenth-century British philosophy. Anstey states in his Introduction that no handbook can hope to be absolutely comprehensive and that there are some gaps and omissions. Nevertheless, it is an extremely far-reaching book that provides

thoughtful and well-written articles, of consistently high quality, and covers key elements of seventeenth-century British philosophy. This collection is recommended for the extensive overview it offers of this important century in the history of philosophy and ideas.

TESSA MORRISON, *The University of Newcastle*

Astell, Mary, *The Christian Religion, as Professed by a Daughter of the Church of England* (The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe: Toronto, 24), ed. Jacqueline Broad, Toronto, Iter/ Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2013; paperback; pp. 344; R.R.P. US\$32.00; ISBN 9780772721426.

Toronto University Press's 'The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe' presents a range of women's writings from the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. The series has presented a range of sacred, secular, medical, and dramatic texts. This edition, number 24 in the series and edited by Jacqueline Broad, features an early eighteenth-century religious text, *The Christian Religion, as Professed by a Daughter of the Church of England* by Mary Astell.

While *The Christian Religion* was addressed to women, it is likely that Astell expected some male readers among her readership. She was writing in response to a number of tracts, one of which at least she suspected was authored by John Locke. But as Broad makes clear, her principal intention in writing the text was to instruct other women.

Broad has selected the 1717 re-edition of the work, as this revision of the original 1705 work is Astell's last word on her subject. Broad's editorial treatment of the text is exemplary. The text itself is clearly presented and a running series of notes offers commentary and glosses on the text unfolding on the pages. In many instances, these notes restore for the reader Astell's original marginal notes.

The significance of Astell's text is twofold. One is that it is a defence of belonging to the established Church of England to the exclusion of any other denominational identity, but one written from the point of view of the 'other voice' and permitting insights from a woman. Defences for the Church or apologies for it are hardly rare in the late seventeenth or early eighteenth centuries. When Astell produced her first edition in 1705, King William III was not long dead, and the schism his accession had prompted in the English Church and the separation of the non-jurors was still current, resulting in a lively body of controversial literature about loyalty to the Church. But this Church did of course have an entirely male sacerdotal ministry and statements in either Parliament or Convocation about the Church were made by men, which gives some novelty value to Astell's work.

The other significance is the way Astell widens out her focus beyond the Church of England to construct and elaborate a series of intellectual edifices, especially in her use of Cartesian logic.

While Astell intended her work to defend the Church and to be a statement from a loyal daughter, it is the way she set about doing this which is the more significant aspect of this work. As Broad makes clear, *The Christian Religion* is the culmination of Astell's literary achievements, and Broad's suggestion to consider the work as the end point of a trajectory of Astell's writings including *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies* (1694) and *Some Reflections Upon Marriage* (1700) is both meaningful and apposite. It continues their emphasis on the need for women to be equipped with a critical apparatus to form their own judgements on issues, including in this case the truth embodied by the established English Church. Astell ranges across various questions and issues, including the need to judge passions and how to improve understanding to how to bear loss.

Astell's work shows her to have been a well-informed reader of contemporary and earlier European philosophers, including not only Descartes but also Nicolas Malebranche and the Englishman John Norris. She also stands with Tory and High Church principles, meaning she upholds the authority of the Church against dissent. Yet ultimately the Church itself can be an at times elusive or at least oblique presence in the text. Astell's discussion centres on matters such as virtue, reputation, vice, envy, power, and so on. Of course it is clear that the answers to these lie within the safe arms of the Church. She quotes from the Church's Thirty Nine Articles (p. 127) and gives traction to her points by the arguments made by Anglican divines, but her arguments are far from unsubtle hammer blows. As such, this will be an interesting and important text for readers and researchers interested in women's writings, but also in the reception and use of continental philosophy in arguments about the politics of religion in England, and in the construction of rational defences of the established order.

MARCUS K. HARMES, *The University of Southern Queensland*

Bailey, Michael D., *Fearful Spirits, Reasoned Follies: The Boundaries of Superstition in Late Medieval Europe*, Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 2013; hardback; pp. 312; R.R.P. US\$55.00; ISBN 9780801451447.

This stimulating book traces a neglected thread in the Western intellectual tradition and challenges those modern prejudices and tropes of medieval superstition that are so irritating and offensive to historians of the period. Although the main focus of Michael Bailey's investigations is predominantly German writers of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, he places them within a discourse stretching back to the Romans and forward into our own time.

Superstition is, of course, a loaded term. Greek *deisidaimonia* and Latin *superstitio* designated an excessively fearful and improper religious attitude. To the Romans, the secretive cult of the Christians was the epitome of superstition. The victorious Church appropriated the invective and turned it against its pagan rivals. From the beginning superstition was closely associated with demons. As always, Augustine was fundamental. His denunciation of divination, condemnation of spirits/demons as intrinsically evil, and association of superstition with an implicit demonic pact reverberated down the centuries. Subsequent writers repeated the same arguments with often-minimal variation. This makes for repetitious reading, especially since Bailey himself is occasionally careless in this regard, but it is an inevitable effect of the medieval devotion to authority and must be endured as such. The reward comes in the subtle shifts engineered by some writers, which only become visible against the uniform background.

The Introduction places the book within the wider scholarly debate on magic, superstition, witchcraft, and science. ‘The Weight of Tradition’ covers Augustine to Aquinas and all the usual scholars in between. Bailey’s reading on the subject is comprehensive and the book could be recommended for this alone. In the fourteenth century, Pope John XXII and the inquisitor Nicholas Eymerich inveighed against the heresy of demonic sorcery while Paris masters lamented the addiction of courtiers to astrology. Nicholas Oresme and Heinrich of Langenstein poured scorn on astrological prediction from a rationalist perspective while Pierre d’Ailly tried to define the legitimate scope of the study of the heavens. Jean Gerson marked an important shift, not so much in the vigour of his attacks on superstition as by linking it with ecclesiastical reform projects and in the process widening his target from the courtly and clerical elite practitioners of learned magic to the everyday practices of the common people. The pastoral theology championed by Gerson proved particularly popular in the new universities of the German Empire, the future heartland of both the Reformation and the Witch-hunt. During the fifteenth century, these regions produced a large number of treatises on superstition, whose authors attempted with mixed success to distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate practices. Debates about superstition fed into debates about witchcraft and so Bailey arrives naturally at Nider’s *Anthill*, Jacquier’s *Scourge of Heretic Bewitchers*, and, finally, Kramer’s *Hammer of Witches*. By this stage, entrenched misogyny and fears of a vast demonic conspiracy were firmly connected. The debate had shifted from practices to persons. Bailey argues that this was at least in part due to the complexity, and indeed ultimate impossibility, of drawing clear lines regarding ritual practices whose moral value still depended in important ways on intent. It is a story of constantly negotiated boundaries, those that separate proper beliefs, legitimate knowledge, and acceptable behaviour from their opposites.

Intrinsic to the debate was the insistence that ritual words and acts cannot possess efficacy in and of themselves; hence the necessary involvement of demons if such rites were held to be other than vain inanities. Yet this was an increasingly difficult position for the Church to maintain. While theologians may have held that even the Mass was a supplication which in no way compelled God to any response, this was probably not how most worshippers understood the role of the priest in transubstantiation, let alone the other rituals of the Church. The fifteenth-century German treatises bear witness to escalating tensions that were destined to have cataclysmic consequences.

Bailey concludes with a speculative essay drawing on contemporary cultural theorists from Weber through Horkheimer and Adorno, to Bruno Latour and Dipesh Chakrabarty. He challenges the progressivist discourse underlying modernism with its supposed radical break between medieval superstition and modern rationalism following the Enlightenment 'disenchantment' of the natural world. If medieval writers can sound so modern when denouncing superstition, and yet affirm a worldview so radically different from our own, should we be more critical of the boundaries we claim to draw so confidently? It is clear that these negotiations have a long history. Bailey is to be commended for approaching these complex issues from a fresh and provocative angle. Students of both science and witchcraft have much to ponder here.

LOLA SHARON DAVIDSON, *The University of Technology Sydney*

Baker, Philip and Elliot Vernon, eds, *The Agreements of the People, the Levellers, and the Constitutional Crisis of the English Revolution*, Houndmills, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012; hardback; pp. 288; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9780230542709.

This collection is edited by a parliamentary historian and a barrister and concerns the so-called *The Agreements of the People*, a series of documents on constitutional matters drawn up by the Levellers during a series of political crises of 1647.

The chapters in the collection evaluate the origins, content, and immediate implications of these agreements particularly in relation to the issuing and taking of oaths in early modern England. *The Agreements of the People* emerged from a meeting at Putney in 1647 of members of the New Model Army, a meeting which editors Philip Baker and Elliot Vernon in their Introduction propose was an attempt to solve a constitutional impasse.

Overall, the collection aims to assess *The Agreements* and the political tenets the documents espoused within their immediate historical context. The editors suggest that more often *The Agreements* and the Levellers, the party of radicals who promoted it, have been assessed in relation to modern

constitutional debate. This point is a valid one, given that at the least a degree of proto-Marxism has often been read into the Levellers and their writings (and they were of immense interest to Marx and Engels themselves). This approach means that many assessments of these seventeenth-century ideas have had more to say about the political history of the twentieth century, including the search by North American liberal thinkers for the origins of their own ideological position, than about the English Civil Wars. As D. Alan Orr points out, the very fact of these being a set of written constitutional documents has prompted many historians and political theorists to seek the origin of later written constitutions in these texts.

The collection also aims to redress what Baker and Vernon suggest has been the simplifying tendency of many historians when approaching *The Agreements*. They particularly single out the tendency to classify neatly the different textual and editorial incarnations of the *Agreements* as the first, second, and third versions, when the textual history is much more complex and not nearly so clear-cut.

Subsequent chapters provide an historical context for the documents that emerged from Putney. A strong degree of historical revisionism defines these chapters, especially Edward Vallance's arguments that at least some of the ideas that found their way into *The Agreements* emerge from the political philosophies found in the *Solemn League and Covenant* and other oaths, covenants, and engagements of the New Model Army. There are, he acknowledges, elements of contradiction in his suggestions, given that the *Solemn League and Covenant* was rigidly Presbyterian and to that extent was inimical to the Levellers as much as to other sects. But Vallance makes a number of sensible points about oaths in early modern Europe in general and their capacity to create 'subscriptional communities' of the kind that *The Agreements* fostered.

Further thoughts on the origins of *The Agreements* are offered by Jason Peacey's chapter on the people responsible for its drafting and their different roles. It also considers the intersection of the ideals of the people involved with the conceptualisation of 'the people' as a political body in *The Agreements*. The chapter contributes to a theme recurring in the volume of demonstrating the greater ambiguity of the relationship between the Levellers and *The Agreements* than is often acknowledged. Historians and political theorists of all hues, from Marxists to S. R. Gardiner, more or less found the Levellers and *The Agreements* to be synonymous, an easy association that the more detailed and questioning analysis in this volume to an extent dismantles.

Other chapters are not so pronounced in their revisionism but do build on earlier re-readings and reconsiderations of *The Agreements*. Baker's chapter builds on reconsiderations of the way the documents proposed a model of state organisation that was decentralised and takes this in new directions relating to the relationship between the Levellers and local authorities.

While earlier chapters consider the earlier constitutional backdrop to *The Agreements*, later chapters assess the implications and influence of the texts in their immediate context, including on the members of the New Model Army, and there is consideration of the re-drafting of *The Agreements* in 1648.

This is a tightly focused set of essays. The focus is partly due to the time limitations, as most survey one or at most two or three years from 1647 up to 1649. The detailed assessment of both precursors and the immediate impact and revision of the ideas contained in *The Agreements* has resulted in a fruitful new set of essays on texts sometimes thought about in simplistic terms.

MARCUS K. HARMES, *The University of Southern Queensland*

Berto, Luigi Andrea, *The Political and Social Vocabulary of John the Deacon's 'Istoria Veneticorum'* (Cursor Mundi, 12), trans. Antony Shugaar, Turnhout, Brepols, 2013; hardback; pp. xvi, 264; R.R.P. €70.00; ISBN 9782503531595.

This volume offers an English translation of a revised version of Luigi Andrea Berto's *Il vocabolario politico e sociale della 'Istoria Veneticorum' di Giovanni Diacono* (Il Poligrafo editore, 2001). The book analyses the chronicle *Istoria Veneticorum*, a fundamental source for the study of medieval Venice for culture or language historians. Berto effectively uses a thematic approach to examine the manner in which political and social vocabulary was used in the chronicle, with a close consideration of the text's original context.

The chronicle, comprising two books, records in chronological order events from the Lombard invasion of Italy [c. 569] up to the period of rule of Pietro II Orseolo (991–1008). It recounts the complicated events surrounding the medieval Venetian dukedom, for instance, the attempt by Duke Obelerio to dethrone Duke Giovanni Particiaco in 830. The unsuccessful coup had terrible consequences for the residents of the Malocco who had supported Duke Obelerio.

Berto also attempts to extend our knowledge of John the Deacon, the author of the *Istoria Veneticorum*, and the general conditions in which he wrote the chronicle. There is actually no explicit reference in the text to the *Istoria's* author or authors. However, the mention of a certain deacon John in the chronicle's final section, has led to authorship being conventionally assigned to John the Deacon. While there is more evidence to support this hypothesis, it is rather difficult to believe that a single author is responsible for the composition of the *Istoria Veneticorum*. Part of the chronicle is made up of fragments taken word-for-word from other works, and, furthermore, some episodes seem to be written in styles of other time periods. Interestingly, some of the events recorded in the chronicle extend beyond the lifetime of John the Deacon: the struggle, for instance, between Duke Orso Particiaco

(864–81) and the Patriarch of Grado Pietro caused by the disagreement over the election of Abbot Domenico as bishop of Torcello.

Berto's linguistic analyses are organised thematically, using categories such as space, social definitions, and kinship. A number of examples are worth citing. I found it fascinating, for instance, to learn in Chapter 1, 'Dukes, Sovereigns, and Holders of Other Offices', that the names of rulers differ in relation to the geographic location. Certain sovereigns from Constantinople were referred to as *augustus*, while those in the West were not: 'we have already pointed out that none of them are ever given the epithet of *augustus*, but we do find the use of *cesar*' (p. 49).

In Chapter 5, Berto tackles the vocabulary of place names. We read that, for example, *provincia* seems to describe an ecclesiastical province, and *ducatu*, is sometimes used as a synonym to 'the office of duke', but its meaning can alter according to whether it is preceded by the adjective *dignitas* or stands alone (pp. 147–49).

In Chapter 6, Berto compares the collective terms for people used in the *Istoria Veneticorum*, for example, *vulgus* and *plebs* (p. 223). We learn that the former was used pejoratively, while the latter seems to have been applied only in generic contexts, such as when the *plebs* elected the deacon Giovanni as Bishop of Olivolo (p. 224). There is also a mention of the term *natio*, which was known to express ethnic affiliation but John the Deacon did not use it (p. 242).

Berto's study is careful and thorough, and overall, by making this important source available to English-language scholars, this volume makes a significant contribution to studies of medieval Venice. It is highly recommended to students and scholars of medieval culture and linguistics.

MARIUSZ BĘCŁAWSKI, *The University of Warsaw*

Bolens, Guillemette, *The Style of Gestures: Embodiment and Cognition in Literary Narrative* (Rethinking Theory), Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012; cloth; pp. xii, 233; 1 b/w illustration; R.R.P. US\$65.00; ISBN 9781421405186.

The Style of Gestures brings interdisciplinary research from the field of embodied cognition to medieval textual criticism, and the results are remarkable. For Guillemette Bolens, we read with our bodies, in a sense, or at least with the knowledge of our bodies; that is to say, with our 'kinesic intelligence', defined by Ellen Spolsky as 'our human capacity to discern and interpret body movements, body postures, gestures, and facial expressions in real situations as well as in our reception of visual art' (p. 1), a definition extended by Bolens to include literature. Her stated goal 'is to develop a narratological perspective that pays close attention to the interpretive processes whereby

a reader retrieves kinesis information, taking into account the way in which a text triggers sensorimotor simulations of salient properties in conceptual combinations' (p. 12). Bolens likens her incorporation of scientific models of cognition into her reading practices with cultivating an ability to listen to detail in music: 'The point is not to impose new harmonies on the piece but to fully hear those already there, in all the force of their particularity. In the same way as it is possible to sharpen one's ear, kinesis intelligence can be refined by an increased kinesthetic sensitivity' (p. 167). The skill, subtlety, and sheer dynamism of her readings attest to her success.

The Style of Gestures does not restrict itself exclusively to medieval literature (the first chapter is a reading of *Ulysses*, and examples from Proust are prominent throughout), or indeed to literature (the conclusion includes a lengthy discussion of Jacques Tati's films), but in three chapters, Old and Middle English texts predominate. Chapter 2, 'Kinesis Tropes and Action Verbs', explores the blurring of the distinction between the literal and figural in *Patience*, foregrounding the reader's necessary 'resort to the concrete literality of his sensorimotor cognition and kinaesthetic and kinesis intelligence' (p. 67) to tease out textual complexities associated with 'Jonah's stomachic travels' (p. 75), especially their evocation of a masculinised process of gestation and birth. Jonah's abject envelopment within 'the guts of another body from within his own body' (p. 76) is brought about by his desire to 'create a state of nonperception between himself and God' (p. 79), culminating in his sinking into 'a heart that has no location other than an absolute and impossible interiority' (p. 86), a place neither entirely literal or figurative, but a locus that is essential for him to embody (and voice) his own status as prophet. The theme of the 'blurring' of male and female reproductive processes continues with the 'uncanny kinesis trope' (p. 90) of the breastfeeding Arthur in Lazamon's *Brut*. Drawing on traditions that inform the symbolic representation of the masculine breast(s), Bolens works through the connections between the king's *social* role, the *corporeal* trope, and the physicality that the image bestows upon the process of narrative transmission: 'the figural cannot be severed from the literal, nor the mind from embodiment' (p. 90).

In Chapter 3, '*Verecundia* and Social Wounding in the Legend of Lucrece', Bolens directs her considerable talent for weaving kinesis representation, semantic nuance, and the relationship of the subject to the social, towards the social emotion of *verecundia* (loosely, 'shame'), which serves to 'regulate interpersonal behaviour', and thus has a powerful impact on 'kinesis communication' (p. 100). In successive versions of the legend, Lucrece's personhood is subjected to a variety of erasures according to the differing value systems within which the material realities of her rape and suicide are interpreted.

Bolens draws an insightful parallel between Lucrece and Gawain in Chapter 4, 'Face-Work and Ambiguous Feats in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*'. This time, the immobilised protagonist is male, and courtesy is the key concept in the 'intricate relational net' that forces him to submit to the axe's stroke. Bolens emphasises the 'kinesic expressiveness' of courtesy, including language as well as other forms of gesture, and from there draws together the gestural and linguistic echoes and overlaps between the swaggeringly impudent Green Knight, the hunt and seduction scenes, and Gawain's own (tested) social poise. The significance of literal embodiment grounds her insights into how, 'in this narrative, kinesis expressively conveys both the force and fragility of the control system enacted by the idealized hero' (p. 155).

The Style of Gestures brings medieval literary criticism into a vibrant dialogue with research into non-dualist formulations of subjectivity. Engagement with such work has perhaps taken place more slowly within literary studies than in other disciplines because the implications for our understanding of language are profound. Bolens's work demonstrates the clear advantages of embracing the shift towards embodied cognition. Language that participates within, rather than holding dominion over, the complexity of an embodied self revitalises the process of reading, and expands rather than constrains the parameters of critical textual analysis.

MELISSA RAINE, *Independent Scholar, Fitzroy, VIC*

Brackmann, Rebecca, *The Elizabethan Invention of Anglo-Saxon England: Laurence Nowell, William Lambarde, and the Study of Old English* (Studies in Renaissance Literature, 30), Cambridge, D. S. Brewer, 2012; hardback; pp. 256; R.R.P. £55.00; ISBN 9781843843184.

Rebecca Brackmann examines the antiquarian writings of two closely associated Anglo-Saxon scholars within the context of sixteenth-century intellectual concerns. Her specific focus is the creation of English national identity fostered by Elizabeth I's chief advisor, Sir William Cecil, to whose circle Laurence Nowell (1530–c. 1570) and William Lambarde (1536–1601) belonged. Central to Brackmann's thesis is the claim that Anglo-Saxon England was a concept developed by Tudor researchers, and that it was foundational to the Elizabethan English identity that Cecil and others wished to create. She aims to trace 'some of the ways that the process of regarding the portion of history between the Germanic invasions and the Norman Conquest as somehow essentially "English" in nature took shape in the sixteenth century' (p. 3).

Brackmann gives particular attention to Nowell's heavily annotated copy of a Latin school dictionary published in 1552 by Richard Howlet, the

Abcedarium Anglico-Latinum, which has not previously been the subject of extended study. Nowell's annotations, Brackmann points out, bring together in a single volume his work on the Old English lexicon, legal terms, and place names. 'The English language, the English country-side, and the English legal system', she observes, 'could serve as focal points for English identity by claiming to have deep roots in the past, and Cecil wanted exactly such identity fostered' (p. 20).

Part I details the interaction between the studies undertaken by Nowell and Lambarde and their relation to contemporary debates about the nature of the language, particularly the inkhorn controversy. A critical issue for writers and translators in Cecil's circle was the standardisation of modern English: 'The English needed to have a standard way of spelling that represented how they all spoke (or ought to speak), in order to have a uniform Protestant religion giving the Word of God in writing' (p. 77). Nowell does not explicitly discuss the issue but, despite what he must have known about the multiplicity of Old English dialects and spellings, the Old English lexicon he compiled reveals his attempts to impose a form of standardisation.

Part II deals with sixteenth-century research into place-names and local history. Brackmann holds that the fusion of English place-name etymologies and details of pre-Conquest events in the work of Nowell and others helped to create a corporate memory. According to her, 'The memory of the Anglo-Saxon past in the places of England, of "Anglo-Saxon England", first had to be assembled and created before it could be maintained' (p. 94). Greater relative attention is given in Part II to Lambarde, author of the first county history (*Perambulations in Kent*) as well as the first editor of Anglo-Saxon law codes. Brackmann argues that, as Nowell's literary executor, Lambarde gradually abandoned Nowell's secular nationalism and drew nearer to the aims of Archbishop Parker in reintegrating Anglo-Saxon identity with Protestant religious polemic.

Part III focuses on Lambarde's study of legal history. Sixteenth-century study of the law increasingly posited the Anglo-Saxon period as foundational for English identity. Lambarde believed that because English law was indigenous and not Roman in origin, it was crucial to the formation and maintenance of a distinctive identity that clearly distinguished the English from foreign nationals: 'English law's supposed development from Anglo-Saxon law also meant that law and Protestantism could both be traced back to England's past and could support each other as focal points for English identity' (p. 192).

This is a sound, scholarly study. Brackmann casts far more light on the work of Nowell and Lambarde than on their sixteenth-century context, or the contemporary conception of Anglo-Saxon England. The claim that Tudor scholars *invented* the concept of Anglo-Saxon England is misleading.

Whatever the political realities of the Anglo-Saxon period, the concept of a single people (*Angelcynn* or *Engle*) unified by one language (*Englisc*), and by one religion, was enduring. It was implanted c. 730 by Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* ('Ecclesiastical History of the English People'), and it is clearly echoed in texts associated with King Alfred, particularly his Preface to *Cura Pastoralis*. It is further echoed and developed by a number of writers in the late Anglo-Saxon period, such as Ælfric of Eynsham, who, for instance, rejoiced that the English people (*Angelcynn*) was not devoid of saints while holy persons such as St Cuthbert (at Durham) and St Æthelthryth (at Ely) lay buried in the land of the English (*Engla lande*).

The concept of Anglo-Saxon England was repeatedly re-invented thereafter when the nature of national identity was at issue, particularly in the aftermath of the Norman Conquest, which Brackmann mentions briefly, and from the reign of Henry V onwards, which she does not mention at all. The question that needs to be asked is how did the conception(s) of Tudor scholars differ from those that they found embedded in the linguistic and historical sources that they drew on?

STEPHANIE HOLLIS, *The University of Auckland*

Burns, E. Jane and Peggy McCracken, eds, *From Beasts to Souls: Gender and Embodiment in Medieval Europe*, Notre Dame, IN, University of Notre Dame Press, 2013; paperback; pp. ix, 269; R.R.P. US\$38.00; ISBN 9780268022327.

This edited collection follows the trend in medieval studies in which themes and methodological frameworks that have attained prominence in other areas of Humanities research are applied to medieval history and literature, with varying degrees of success. E. Jane Burns and Peggy McCracken take up the issue of post-humanism, most ably championed by Jeffrey J. Cohen, author of *Medieval Identity Machines* (University of Minnesota Press, 2003). This book divided the academic community, with some applauding his 'posthuman' stance and queer theory, and others opining that his contention was simply that the study of people of the Middle Ages has to be contextualised in relation to material culture and social interactions, which had been the case in Marxist-influenced and Annaliste circles for decades. Indeed the Annales school's passion for the *longue durée*, climatic patterns, and geographical features such as the Mediterranean Sea, exhibit a positive disregard of the human individual. The editors of *From Beasts to Souls* are most interested in animality and gender, noting in the 'Introduction' that while carvings on Romanesque capitals often feature animal-human hybrids 'yet, however fanciful and elaborate these cross-species hybrids become, binary gender assignment seems to remain unchallenged' (p. 2). Their scholarly goal is to

look at medieval 'representations of nonhuman or partially human creatures' seeking insights into 'gender and embodiment' (p. 7).

Cohen's provocatively titled 'The Sex Life of Stone', considers this 'most inert, mute, intractable' substance from the point of view of queer ecological studies that insist on the 'aesthetic, affective and practical agencies' that Jane Bennett has asserted all matter possesses. Cohen's chapter does not argue a strong thesis, but rather is a series of vignettes in which (it could be interpreted that) humans project emotion and agency onto objects (not all of them stone). Chapter 2, McCracken's 'Nursing Animals and Cross Species Intimacy' examines cases of animals suckling human infants and the story of the exiled Beritola, who suckled infant deer, but abandoned them when reintegrated into society. Chapter 3, 'The Lady and the Dragon in Chretien's *Chevalier au lion*' by Matilda Tomalyn Bruckner, argues that where the lion is conjoined to Yvain, the lady Laudine's cross-species partner is the dragon. The next essay, Dyan Elliott's 'Rubber Soul: Theology, Hagiography and the Spirit World of the Middle Ages', shifts attention from literary fiction to theology, and what follows is a learned and stimulating tour of Western Christianity's 'strong impetus in favour of an embodied and sexed afterlife' (p. 91). She notes Cathar anti-material and anti-female teachings, and the Beguine embodied and distinctly female spirituality that attempted to counter such attitudes. Her conclusion, that 'God made the androgynous rational soul in his own image; the sexed body remade the soul in its own' (p. 112) is an elegantly expressed conundrum that fittingly ends the chapter.

Elizabeth Robertson's 'Kissing the Worm' continues the theme of the gendered afterlife with an analysis of a Middle English text, 'A Disputacion betwyx the Body and Wormes', and Chapter 6, Noah D. Guynn's 'Hybridity, Ethics, and Gender in Two Old French Werewolf Tales' argues that 'the theme of lycanthropy is seemingly inseparable from that of female betrayal' (p. 157). His texts are Marie de France's *Bisclavret* (c. 1160–78) and *Melion*, an anonymous text (c. 1190–1204). Chapter 7, Burns's 'A Snake-Tailed Woman', is focused on Melusine, one of the more famous hybrids of medieval literature, and Chapter 8, Ann Marie Rasmussen's 'Moving Beyond Sexuality in Medieval Sexual Badges' opens with a dramatic description of a badge she describes as a 'vulva on stilts' which 'belongs to a larger category of badges or pins known as sexual badges' (p. 224), which usually depict female or male genitalia. This entertaining final chapter has eight clear illustrations that definitely assist Rasmussen's discussion of the objects in question. The collection abruptly ends there, with no afterword by the editors to draw things together.

The general impression gained from reading *From Beasts to Souls* is that all the chapters are interesting, and some are genuinely great, but the application of queer-theory-derived models, bioegalitarian ethics, and the agency of

the object is more of a fad than a scholarly turn that will radically alter the discipline(s) of Medieval Studies.

CAROLE M. CUSACK, *The University of Sydney*

Canova-Green, Marie-Claude, Jean **Andrews**, and Marie-France **Wagner**, eds, *Writing Royal Entries in Early Modern Europe* (Early European Research, 3), Turnhout, Brepols, 2013; hardback; pp. xviii, 420; 1 colour, 17 b/w illustrations, 1 b/w table, 1 b/w line art; R.R.P. €115.00; ISBN 9782503536026.

Nineteenth-century antiquarians recorded the details of royal entries in local histories but for much of the twentieth century they were seen as little more than unimportant ritual events to be noted before the narrative passed on to more critical matters. It is not always clear that contemporaries considered them particularly important. When in 1549, Sir William Paget's embassy to Charles V was delayed because Philip was making a formal entry into all the major provinces and their capitals held by the Hapsburgs such as Gelderland, Friesland, Utrecht, Overijssel, Groningen, Holland, and Zeeland there is no indication in his letters that this was more than an irritant, delaying the more vital matters.

Paget's attitude was not duplicated by others observing Philip's progress in 1549. In the period before the decline of the ritual in the later seventeenth century, there was more to a royal entry into a European city than the ceremony and entertainment value. In the Low Countries it was a formal acknowledgement of commitment on both sides, especially important in 1549 since Charles had only recently conquered some of the provinces. Recently, scholars have turned in increasing numbers to exploiting, through various interpretations, the implications of the surviving records of ceremonials. This revived interest has resulted in a detailed examination of the written materials about Court festivities and culture. Specialists are concerned to identify how they were used not merely in literary and material matters but also how the public performances were used to represent and acknowledge power, authority, and perhaps national identity. They are also examining how contemporary historians subverted these official objectives for other ends. As Louise Frappier shows in her chapter, Agrippa d'Aubigné inverted them to promote the justification of the reform movement.

Medieval royal entries are mainly known only from manuscripts or financial records but by the sixteenth century, printing was making the production of narratives, sometimes illustrated, available to the public and provided a new means for the rulers to impress those not able to attend including other monarchs. Whether these books are a true account of what happened is of course another matter but what all the contributors in this

volume acknowledge is the common classical and religious background they employed, the shared iconography that went with that tradition, and the competitive ambition to make your ephemeral structures, costumes, dance, fireworks, and scripts better than your neighbour's. Royal Entries were necessarily extravagant, put the provider into debt, employed many people and so were, in theory, good for the economy while a town with a gift for diplomacy might obtain highly desirable privileges. This volume has four main themes: the status of the printed records; their use as propaganda; their use as historical records; and the transformations that they underwent in different places and times.

It is difficult to select particular chapters for praise as all have their attraction for particular geographical areas or periods. Experts in those fields may or may not be convinced by the arguments – I am not convinced by Alexander Samson's case about the London Entry of Philip and Mary – but all view what we thought we knew from an important and different angle. The way in which European ceremonies and their background were carried to the 'New World' and there transformed has not been widely considered: Jean Andrews's chapter on the depiction of the Aztec emperors in a 1680 vice-regal entry to Mexico City should attract much attention.

Some chapters make points critical for any study of the available material. For example, Marie-France Wagner in discussing Henri IV of France's entry to Moulins in 1595, shortly after the Catholic league had given up its struggle and he had been crowned, shows particularly clearly how the fact of writing an account of an entry and the fictions it involves are intertwined. David Sánchez Cano provides a possible explanation of the relative paucity of publications on such representations in his chapter on Madrid. The way in which commentary on the Entries escaped from the apparently objective to become both subjective and moralised is well illustrated in Marie-Claude Canova-Green's paper on Louis XIV's 1660 Entry to Paris. In France, the Entry had had a sacral element but this was eclipsed in the elliptical approach taken by Mlle de Scudéry.

Claudine Nadelec brings the volume to a suitable end with an enlightening discussion of the employment of parodies of Entries in the theatrical and literary productions of the seventeenth century, most entertainingly, the function of the travesty when there is a formal Entry to Hell.

SYBIL M. JACK, *The University of Sydney*

Cochelin, Isabelle and Karen **Smyth**, eds, *Medieval Life Cycles: Continuity and Change* (International Medieval Research, 18), Turnhout, Brepols, 2013; hardback; pp. xx, 360; 7 b/w illustrations, 3 b/w tables; R.R.P. €90.00; ISBN 9782503540696.

Few edited volumes are quite so well structured to their purpose as *Medieval Life Cycles*. It is an important and useful book that is also a pleasure to read. Dealing with conceptions of human time over a spectrum of different periods and places is no simple task. The chapters gently move from studies of infancy to adolescence, then through adulthood, middle age, old age, and death, and from the Anglo-Saxon through the late medieval periods. Impressively for a volume of studies of the boundaries between different ages, there is a great deal of congruence between papers, periods, and disciplines.

Isabelle Cochelin and Karen Smyth set the parameters of the study nicely, showing the unifying logic of the collection. As ‘medieval people rarely conceived of one age independently from the others’ (p. xi), Cochelin and Smyth note the need for a whole-of-life study of the way that age and ages were understood across, rather than in, the Middle Ages. This is a good complement to existing studies of specific ages or genders, reminding readers of the relational nature of medieval thought and experience. Additionally, in pointing to the multi-disciplinary nature of the collection, the editors propose ‘underlining the complexity of medieval discourses of the life cycle’ (p. xiii). Serving further as an introduction to the period, range of conceptions, and the variety of sources, Cochelin’s own study of over eighty life-cycle definitions from late antiquity to the twelfth century also introduces the focus on continuities and changes. Identifying a broad definitional shift across the centuries, the chapter is concluded with an annotated bibliography of relevant sources, which will be useful for scholars.

Sally Crawford deals with two specific problems related to infant burial in Anglo-Saxon England. The first concerns sources that prescribe a particular burial pattern for unbaptised infants, and the second is the actual burial patterns discernible in the archaeological record. It is an excellent study of attitudes to infancy and baptism and will be of interest to scholars focused on the processes of, and problems with interpreting, the Christianisation of Europe. Mary Dzon’s study of the presentation of Jesus, in antique sources and their later translations, as ‘wanton’ in the narratives of his early life, is a fascinating study of the way that stories are conveyed across cultures and times, as well as a detailed exploration of notions regarding gendered behaviour in children.

Cochelin’s second contribution to the volume is an examination of Cluniac definitions and perceptions of adolescence in the Middle Ages. It specifically charts shifts that occurred in about the tenth and twelfth centuries, drawn from customaries, hagiographies, and the definitions she had identified

in the Introduction to the book. Although noting several explanations for various attitudinal changes, Cochelin is also sensibly open to the possibility of actual teenage rebellion being reflected in the sources. Looking in an entirely different setting, the conversion of Jewish adults and children, Jessie Sherwood also engages with the problems of adolescent obedience and definition, and the grey divide between childhood and adulthood. It is a study with broader applications for those interested in Christian-Jewish relations during the medieval world.

Family, generational gaps, and the fluidity of definitions are themes that are again reflected in Christine Kuhn's survey of a merchant family's letters. Highlighting that the sources served to maintain hierarchy, this study will also be of use to those interested in the methodologies of discerning historical emotion. Counterbalancing an assumed 'adulthood' as the norm against which more specific studies of 'youth' and 'old age' are often set, Deborah Youngs's survey of the problem of defining adulthood is a welcome addition. Examining in particular detail various spiritual discourses of midlife, Young suggests that 'medieval adulthood existed as a desire, as an ideology, and as an achievement' (p. 258). Margery Kempe's 'Middle-Aged Meanderings' follow this in Sue Niebrzydowski's novel approach to the well-studied life of Kempe. Noting how Kempe's pilgrimages cluster by age, and reference other female hagiography, Niebrzydowski can pose midlife as a positive time for Kempe in terms of being free from the burden of childbearing and as a period of intense self-identity construction.

In another study revealing the possibilities of aging for bringing spiritual growth, Philippa Semper examines the old man in Anglo-Saxon literature, refocusing the volume once more on the deeper past. The presentation of old age as 'a specific act of violence against an individual' (p. 194) is an interesting revelation of a warrior culture's perception of something known intuitively by modern readers, thereby once again destabilising any simplified or universally applicable construction of age. Smyth's closing chapter similarly unsettles any sense that there is a universally applicable medieval or even early modern definition of the ages of man or cycle of life.

NICHOLAS BRODIE, *The University of Tasmania*

Cohn, Samuel, Jr, Marcello **Fantoni**, Franco **Franceschi**, and Fabrizio **Ricciardelli**, eds, *Late Medieval and Early Modern Ritual: Studies in Italian Urban Culture* (Europa Sacra, 7), Turnhout, Brepols, 2013; hardback; pp. viii, 364; 14 b/w illustrations, 4 b/w tables; R.R.P. €90.00; ISBN 9782503541907.

This book examines various aspects of ritual in Italian urban culture from the thirteenth through to the seventeenth century via fourteen essays from leading experts in the field. In the Introduction by Samuel Cohn and in a historiographical overview by Marcello Fantoni, both authors admit that everything in Italian urban culture of the period is ritualistic in nature. They argue for the overturning of an older historiography that dismissed the place of ritual in a secular Italian Renaissance, while fully acknowledging more recent work by historical anthropologists and historians such as Edward Muir on Venice and Richard Trexler on Florence who have pointed to the significance of ritual life in the fourteenth to the early sixteenth centuries. The volume extends the discussion of this earlier period to the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when republics have become principalities and rituals take on new forms designed to mesh with the new world view of Catholic reform and papal supremacy.

The first section of the book focuses on the republics and examines the rituals involved in ‘Consensus and Social Identity’. The essays cover the rituals involved in electing the *Signoria*, the supreme governing council of Florence (Ilaria Taddei), guild rituals (Franco Franceschi), the rhetorical language the Florentine government used to communicate its vision of a unified territorial state with recently acquired territories (Fabrizio Ricciardelli), and peacemaking oaths sworn against political factions in Genoa and the papal states (Carlo Taviani). Every day political activity is highly ritualised, the authors in this section argue. While I do not disagree, I wonder if seeing every action involved in every aspect of a group’s collective activity as heavily laden with ritual meaning risks making ritual routine?

The second section on ‘Family and Gender’ investigates the rituals of baptism and marriage in innovative ways. Guido Alfani’s discussion points to the crucial changes imposed on baptism and marriage rituals by the Council of Trent, which reduced the role of godparenthood, which was so vital to extending Italians social networks and relationships. Creatively, they responded by utilising the maximum number of witnesses allowable at weddings (ten) to fill the gap. Christiane Klapisch-Zuber suggests that the appearance of female nudes on the inside lids of Florentine wedding chests in the 1440s is the result of another adaptation: when the wedding chest became the property of the husband instead of forming part of the bride’s trousseau. These nudes were a constant, albeit, hidden, reminder to the wife of her subordination to her husband in marriage.

The next three essays focus on the theme of death and violence, with William Caferro's fascinating essay on the rituals of honour and insult performed during wars in fourteenth-century Italy. They formed part of a shared dialogue between enemies framed around rituals of shaming, disrespect, and defamation through visual images, while at the same time dead soldiers who were the heads of defeated armies could be buried with great honour by the conquering army and its citizens. John A. Marino examines the funeral exequies for the King of Spain, Phillip II, in 1598, in Spain and repeated in many other countries and cities, including ducal Florence, which led to numerous narrative paintings commemorating his life and exploits, reflecting some similarities but also differences in the type of ritual traditions that were being created. Andrea Zorzi's essay emphasises that youthful violence towards executed bodies and traitors has to have the support of the community for it to continue. Changes in ritual practice in Savonarolan Florence that emphasised a good death and Christian burial led to the elimination of these ritual acts by the end of the sixteenth century.

By the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the power of papal Rome and Venice were reflected in their civic and power rituals. By then the centre of papal Rome had become both the Vatican and aristocratic Roman palaces and villas through urban renewal projects that shifted, according to Maria Antonietta Visceglia, the centre of papal power away from its earlier focus on ancient Rome towards its future as a modern capital and centre of power in Catholic Christendom. In Genevieve Warwick's contribution, the increasing control by the popes of urban renewal is exemplified in the transformation of Piazza Navona from an open air food market to a centre of baroque splendour which included the magnificent fountain by Bernini by the mid-seventeenth century. The tendency towards a more distant and absolute monarchy from the sixteenth century is illuminated in Andrew Hopkins's study of a Venetian doge who through ritual becomes increasingly distant from the populace and thus more regal. The final article by Giovanni Ricci documents how the takeover of Ferrara in 1598 by the papacy – as a result of the extinction of the Este line – included symbolic ritual resistance by the youths and widows of Ferrara before the city's final capitulation.

The strengths of this book lie in its examination of hitherto understudied ritual in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as well as in the wide variety of topics it covers in its span of four hundred years of history.

NATALIE TOMAS, *Monash University*

Condren, Conal, *Hobbes, the Scriblerians and the History of Philosophy*, London, Pickering & Chatto, 2011; hardback, pp. 240; R.R.P. £60.00, US\$99.00; ISBN 9781848932234.

This is not a book for the faint-hearted: complex language is used to address difficult philosophical issues and their historical position. It requires concentration, and sometimes an etymological dictionary, if the propositions are to be understood. It is, however, worth the effort, for Conal Condren has important things to say about avoiding anachronism in trying to comprehend how philosophy was perceived in the past. These go far beyond the particular aspects of Thomas Hobbes he seeks to elucidate, critical as Hobbes is in the history of philosophy. Condren focuses on the various ways that writers used to ridicule the pretensions of those described as philosophers, although finding contexts and contextualising a problem, because contexts are not 'neatly self-contained' and 'decidedly porous at the margins' (p. 75) which complicates his search.

While many researchers seek to recover authorial intention, Condren deconstructs the over-rigid structure of contemporary academic disciplines that separates philosophy and history, which he has elsewhere described as corrosive. His aim is to reform our present-day reading of earlier texts to enable us to at least attempt to read as our ancestors would have done, and so with an understanding of how past ideas and values are recorded in words whose meanings have since shifted. Hobbes himself is held to have taken a familiar language and transformed it. It was no easy task and his approach was derided, especially by clerics, as ludicrous. Mockery was a favourite method of bringing down one who had exceeded his 'office', and to claim to be a philosopher was to claim an office with the status, rank, universality, and permanence that that implied. The Scriblerians, a club founded in 1713 by Pope, Swift, Fielding, Gay, and others, wrote satirically about contemporary modern philosophers to undermine their *auctoritas*. Their main creation was a shoddy, imaginary philosopher, one Martinus Scriblerus, and although they never name Hobbes, Scriblerus indirectly was a caricature of Hobbes. Condren claims that 'if Hobbes had not lived, the Scriblerians would have needed to invent him' (p. 125).

Condren's core contention is that before the shifts now embedded in our present post-Kantian approach, the subject of the philosophical persona and his *auctoritas* and *dignitas* had, from classical times, been a serious matter inextricably linked to philosophical knowledge; that it was contested and that appreciating what intellectuals expected of this persona at the time is essential for a balanced insight. This book develops a particular aspect of Condren's earlier work on Arbuthnot and Satire, and his study of oaths and offices called *Arguments and Authority in Early Modern England* (Cambridge University Press, 2006), which is almost required prior reading.

The message is that the absurd must be taken seriously. It was an integral part of the assessment of how satisfactory a philosophical argument was. The almost universal seventeenth-century opposition to Hobbes was in part the result of his sense of his own superiority as an independent and original thinker and his claims to have recreated philosophy. Laughter was thought the appropriate response. Condren examines the problem of context in history as a paradox parallel to the quantum physics problem of superposition – what today is often thought of as the paradox of Schrodinger’s cat.

This is not a broad study of Hobbes’s philosophy and although he is concerned with the way in which writers in the seventeenth and early eighteenth century borrowed from the Greek philosopher Lucian, who made extensive use of paradox and ridicule, Condren does not otherwise consider Hobbes’s position in European philosophy or even such matters as his theory of knowledge or his attitude to scepticism. The book is tightly focused on the philosophical value of the ‘persona’. Its wider focus is on the question of how important the historical context is to present-day philosophical use of past arguments given that context is a slippery and variable construct. Condren’s analysis of the degree to which Austinian speech acts are useful and what models can be developed in examining this problem makes at least one thing clear. The complexity of philosophical argument was not intended for the ordinary person in the seventeenth century and in this, nothing has changed today.

SYBIL M. JACK, *The University of Sydney*

de Beer, Susanna, *The Poetics of Patronage: Poetry as Self-Advancement in Giannantonio Campano* (Proteus, 6), Turnhout, Brepols, 2013; hardback; pp. xxxii, 431; 16 colour, 45 b/w illustrations, 12 b/w line art; R.R.P. €120.00; ISBN 9782503542386.

Literary patronage in the Quattrocento and early Cinquecento in Italy has been greatly neglected in comparison with that of the visual arts. There are several reasons for this. Literary patronage tends to involve writers in celebration of their patron and opens them to charges of flattery or adulation, modes that give rise to wariness, at the least. Equally important is the greater difficulty of access and creating a tradition of reading. Works of visual art have not only been widely available longer but they have a longer history of interpretation. Most of the important literary works of this period are in Latin, and many have not been reprinted since the sixteenth, seventeenth, or eighteenth centuries. Often the lesser works that form their context have never been printed.

For a pioneering treatment of literary patronage in the Quattrocento, it would be hard to choose a better figure than Giannantonio Campano

(1429–1477). Now regarded as the most important Latin poet of the Roman Quattrocento, he was a humanist whose ambitious pursuit of a career saw him writing for a series of important supporters, or hoped-for supporters, presented in five ‘case studies’. First, and discussed in Chapter 1, was Pope Pius II Piccolomini, himself a humanist writer and poet. Campano wooed Pius with his poems and was rewarded with positions as Bishop of Crotona in 1462 and Teramo in 1463, as well as a recognised position in the pope’s entourage, which did him service after Pius’s death.

Chapter 2 focuses on Campano’s relationship with Giacomo degli Ammanati, whom Pius made Cardinal in 1461. Ammanati initially was asked to help Campano in his approach to Pius. He admitted Campano to his court and his library and recommended him to his next influential patron, Cardinal Pietro Riario, nephew of the new pope, Sixtus IV. The poetry for Riario and Campano’s fortunes and misfortunes under Sixtus are discussed in Chapter 3. Riario died and Ammanati encouraged Campano to try his luck in the court at Naples, with King Ferrante I and his son Duke Alfonso (Chapter 4). Campano had hoped to return to his native Campania, but he failed to win a position with the Neapolitan court. The last supporter to be discussed, but not a new one, is Federico da Montefeltro of Urbino. From 1472, Campano had helped Federico build up his library, and it came to hold four manuscripts comprising Campano’s *Opera omnia* (Chapter 5).

Campano is an ideal subject not just for the wealth of interest these various attachments provide. The corpus of his poetic œuvre is sizeable but manageable, and most of his poems are ‘occasional’ with named addressees. His life is well documented in his letters (like his poems, last printed in 1707, and in facsimile reprint 1969) and this allows the role of individual poems to be teased out in considerable detail. As Susanna de Beer shows, his knowledge of classical poetry was considerable, as befitted a university teacher (he was appointed Professor of Rhetoric at Perugia in 1455) and member of the ‘Academies’ of Pomponio Leto and Cardinal Bessarion in Rome in the late 1460s.

This book makes two important contributions. The first is philological and relegated to Appendices I and II: a path-breaking analysis of the textual transmission of Campano’s poetry, with interesting remarks on the circulation of the different, overlapping, collections. Appendix III consists of a critical edition of the poems discussed in the volume, necessary because the early printed editions are unreliable, and also because it is important to be able to read the poems discussed in full. There are no translations here, but all extracts quoted in the case studies are translated. The translations are generally helpful but occasionally suffer from the fact that the author is not using her native tongue.

Most important is the argument that runs through the book. This is that Campano's poems must be read against the ancient poems (by Horace, Ovid, Martial, and Statius) that he used as models. What de Beer calls 'classical patronage discourse', that is, the ways ancient poets appealed to or even criticised their patrons, allowed Renaissance poets, such as Campano, to shape their own relationships with their patrons by constructing semi-fictional identities to enable such negotiations. It is not just that humanist Latin poets imitated classical Latin poets but that they created a 'strong analogy with ancient patronage'. They were able to do this because in both societies patronage relationships 'were pervasive at every level' (p. 283). Without recognising the literary strategies of Campano's poetry, de Beer argues, we cannot understand the patronage relationships in which he was involved. In her analyses, de Beer successfully combines historical, sociological, and literary approaches to open up productive thinking about literary patronage in late Quattrocento Italy.

FRANCES MUECKE, *The University of Sydney*

Dinkova-Bruun, Greti, Giles E. M. **Gasper**, Michael **Huxtable**, Tom C. B. **McLeish**, Cecilia **Panti**, and Hannah **Smithson**, eds and trans, *The Dimensions of Colour: Robert Grosseteste's 'De colore'* (Durham Medieval and Renaissance Texts, 4), Toronto, Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2013; paperback; pp. x, 94; R.R.P. US\$ 19.95; ISBN 9780888445643.

Robert Grosseteste's short scientific treatise *De colore* is commonly found lurking in a volume of his collected works and often the piece does not receive the critical attention it deserves. In *The Dimensions of Colour*, a dedicated multi-disciplinarian team strives to reverse this trend. The editors state in their preface that the multi-disciplinarian approach allows modern scientific interest, intellectual history, and philosophy, coupled with linguistic and paleographical skills to combine and inspire each other to produce a sound critical edition with intellectual engagement.

The text is part of a bigger project called the 'Ordered Universe Project'. This project is dedicated to interdisciplinary readings of the scientific works of Robert Grosseteste. This method of research centralises the importance of the original treatise while allowing a more detailed analysis of a text written by a man in an age that did not have the same intellectual boundaries often found in modern scholarship. It validates the thinking contained in an original, specialist text of fewer than 400 words. The present work is neatly divided into four distinct chapters which each can be read alone as a specific analytic approach. Alternatively if the book is read entirely, it provides a diverse and

intellectually demanding consideration of Grosseteste's work across many disciplines.

De colore dates from the early thirteenth century and contains a convincing argument for a three-dimensional colour space that does not follow the linear arguments that Grosseteste had inherited from previous philosophers, in particular Aristotle and Averroes. With great attention to mathematical detail, the editors of the present edition show Grosseteste's model to be a careful construction of a three-dimensional conceptual space of colour. The two main elaborations in this edition are summed up, firstly, as a text which, although based on Aristotle's and Averroes's views of colour, independently extends the concept into a framework of the doctrine of light-incorporation and, secondly, as a theoretical application of the process of generation of an 'experimental universal principle' of science (p. 42). Being an English and Cultural Studies researcher, I was initially concerned that the mathematical theories might not be easily accessible, but the clear diagrams more than adequately illustrate the 'middle space' of colour in a three-dimensional rather than linear formation (p. 59). The text, complex yet accessible, addresses the current, modern need for interdisciplinary work which allows a scholar to engage with more than the individual historical, scientific, literary, or theological significance.

The depth and scope of footnotes and bibliographical material allows readers to continue their own investigations into the subject while the new translation is sensitive to the evolving use of Latin in the thirteenth century. An important contribution this edition makes to the Robert Grosseteste corpus is that textual corruptions that were transcribed in previous modern translations have been rectified. This allows further research to proceed with the certainty that the conclusions being drawn resonate with the original thinking behind the scientific text. The most significant departure from previous translations is the change from the Bauer edition of nine colours in the colour model describing Grosseteste's ascending and descending scheme of colours to fourteen in the present edition. This change allows modern mathematical supports for Grosseteste's theory to be explored and proved correct. In order to make the textual corrections the clear pedigree and hierarchy of the extant manuscripts is discussed.

The editors try to answer the question of whether it is possible to map the colour space of the *De colore* onto any modern construction of colour, when modern colour science strictly separates terms that describe human experience and terms that describe physical stimuli, divisions that do not reflect the thirteenth-century approach. In their attempts to answer the question, they prove the conceptual sophistication of Grosseteste. However, one might have one or two reservations about the conceptual leaps being made without explicit conceptual frameworks in the original text. In the main, the editors achieve their aims of impressing the importance of the

short treatise within the Grosseteste canon, within the history of Aristotelian reception by the West in the Middle Ages, and within the History of Science. A timely reminder about the alacrity with which Grosseteste's treatise was incorporated into Bartholomaeus's enduring encyclopedia is further testimony to its contemporary popularity.

One major disappointment in an otherwise outstanding volume is the physical expression of the book. Within a couple of page turns the spine had disintegrated and most pages were flying loose when the time came for a reread of the book; regrettable for what should become a reference text to be referred to repeatedly. Overall the text is a valuable addition to both the student's and the scholar's library providing a valuable niche book that will expand medieval science, philosophy, theology, and more.

BRID PHILLIPS, *The University of Western Australia*

Dinshaw, Carolyn, *How Soon Is Now? Medieval Texts, Amateur Readers, and the Queerness of Time*, Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 2012; paperback; pp. 272; 7 illustrations; R.R.P. US\$23.95; ISBN 9780822353676.

Carolyn Dinshaw's *How Soon Is Now?*, titled after the Smiths' song, is part philosophy, part history, and part literary analysis, but its greatest value is to queer studies and medievalism. Her professed goal is 'to claim the possibility of a fuller, denser, more crowded *now* ... This means fostering temporalities other than the narrowly sequential. This means taking seriously lives lived in other kinds of time' (p. 3). Two broad temporal dichotomies emerge as Dinshaw's themes: professional, 'clock-bound' time as opposed to the less-regulated time of amateurs; and the time of 'the normative life course ... what José Esteban Muñoz calls "straight time"' (p. 31), set against queer time. 'Time can queer you', she argues (p. 137), and 'by "queer" I don't mean only "gay" or "homosexual" ... And I don't mean just "odd" or "different", though there's inevitably some of that here, too. In my theorizing of temporality I explore forms of desirous, embodied being that are out of sync with the ordinarily linear measurements of everyday life' (p. 4). A hypothetical embodiment of 'straight time' haunts *How Soon Is Now?*, assumed to exist but never encountered within the text, in which queer temporalities proliferate instead; although Dinshaw writes that her main use for the binary oppositions is 'to set up a general framework for more nuanced looks at engagements with medieval texts' (p. 28).

This volume offers both a reading of texts and a reading of readers, including early medievalists, 'amateur' responders to the medieval, and the author herself. Chapter 1 covers 'asynchrony stories', tales 'of people shifted into another temporality', which express 'the constant pressure of other

temporalities on our ordinary image of time' (p. 136). In 'The Monk and the Bird', a retired monk follows a singing bird some distance, only to return to the abbey to find time has moved on. Once his temporal mystery is solved, the monk dies: he 'cannot simply live on with a temporal gap inside' (p. 54). In Dinshaw's reading, the monk is queered by his desire for another kind of time. Dinshaw later returns to asynchrony stories in Chapter 4 with the tale of Rip van Winkle.

Chapter 2 explores *The Book of John Mandeville*, in which 'to travel east ... is an asynchronous activity: it is to travel back in time' (p. 75). From here, Dinshaw moves to nineteenth-century responses to Mandeville, including Andrew Lang's 'Letter to Sir John Mandeville', and a parody by M. R. James. Lang's 'Letter' describes India in terms of England's conquest, thus reading *The Book of John Mandeville* as 'proto-imperialist' and the British Empire as a realisation of Mandeville's project, fulfilling 'the past in a glorious neomedieval present' (p. 94). In this colonial context, Dinshaw reflects on her family heritage, and her childhood in California in which her mother's American culture commingled with her father's Parsi heritage, including different kinds of time: her father's birthday, in the Zoroastrian calendar, was a moveable feast (p. 103). So, 'A different time frame was always subtly but definitely present. It meted out my forward strides a little out of step, a little behind "real" Americans: I was always playing a no-win game of catch up ... It has made me keenly attuned to the ways that cultural differences get turned into temporal distance, the ways sex, gender, race, religion and nation, work and play, West and East get graphed on a timeline. It has made me permanently feel like an amateur' (p. 103).

Chapter 3 begins with the asynchronous experiences of Margery Kempe. Dinshaw argues that an 'historical understanding' of Margery Kempe 'is made possible by a prior experience of contemporaneity between us and Margery' (p. 116). The nineteenth-century scholar Hope Emily Allen experienced a connection with Margery which 'bred yet more and more connections, with perhaps less and less distance, so that finally the closed form of the professional, scholarly book was unable to accommodate them' (p. 122), and her planned work was never finished. In the archives at Bryn Mawr College, which both Allen and Dinshaw attended at different times, Dinshaw experiences her own connection with Allen, as 'time present and time past collapsed', along with time future (p. 124).

The final chapter discusses *A Canterbury Tale*, a film with 'a startlingly peculiar premise', 'that people must be forced to desire the past' (p. 153). In her final pages, Dinshaw notes that 'desire, as Heather Love has powerfully demonstrated ... is so thoroughly marked for queers with loss, isolation, and shame' (p. 170). In part, *How Soon Is Now?* is an argument for unashamed amateurism. Dinshaw's texts and their readers experience time

in a multiplicity of ways, but their amateurism is ironically validated by their becoming the subject of Dinshaw's 'professional' work.

ANNA WALLACE, *The University of Sydney*

Driver, Martha W. and Veronica **O'Mara**, eds, *Preaching the Word in Manuscript and Print in Late Medieval England: Essays in Honour of Susan Powell* (Sermo, 11), Turnhout, Brepols, 2013; hardback, pp. xv, 393; 24 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. €100.00; ISBN 9782503541853.

This *estschrift* honours Professor Susan Powell, well known to her fellow medievalists as an editor of Middle English sermons, on the occasion of her retirement from the University of Salford. It contains twelve studies and three editions, all relevant to English and Latin texts that can be regarded as 'sermons' in one sense or another.

The volume opens with Derek Pearsall on G. R. Owst, 'the first founder of English sermon studies' (p. 11). Pearsall excavates Owst's personal background as an 'outsider' to explain his attitude towards the medieval Church, his belief in vernacular sermons as a national shaping force foreshadowing the Reformation and in their value as a source for social history, and his uncritical attitude towards his sources. R. N. Swanson follows with an account of a fifteenth-century parish priest's anthology containing part of a sermon-cycle, the so-called *Italian Homiliary*, which surprisingly turns out to date to the eleventh century. The individual texts, however, are Carolingian and their circulation in late medieval England raises interesting questions about medieval perceptions of the past. Anne Hudson writes on two Bohemian manuscripts of John Wyclif's sermons. She demonstrates that, although far removed in time and place from Wyclif himself, they are often textually superior to the earlier manuscript Cambridge, Trinity College, MS B.16.2, that was written in England. William Marx examines *The Devil's Parliament* as a 'sermo literarius' (p. 64) that was designed to be read but never delivered, and the ironic role within it of the Devil as narrator. Margaret Connolly studies sermon expositions of teaching on the difficult subject of the Holy Ghost and, in particular, the short texts enumerating the Seven Gifts typically found in devotional anthologies. John J. Thompson writes on 'preaching with a pen' (p. 101) in Mirk's *Festial* and Love's *Mirror*, which both circulated far beyond their primary audiences during the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, in numerous manuscripts and print editions. Stephen Morrison discusses 'scribal performance' (p. 116) and recomposition in a group of late fifteenth-century sermon manuscripts, four of which were written by the same scribe.

The remaining five 'studies' are considerably longer than the preceding. Vincent Gillespie studies the Syon brothers and the 'often aphoristic' (p. 142)

daily readings on the priestly life contained in their Latin *martiloge* in BL, MS Additional 22285: many concern preaching and teaching by example. Jeremy J. Smith studies the unusually sophisticated punctuation practices, probably designed to guide silent private reading, in a manuscript copy made in Scotland of an early printed edition of Mirk's *Festial*. Joseph J. Gwara reassesses, with copious black and white illustrations, the evidence for the dating of Wynkyn de Worde's output between 1501 and 1511. Martha Driver (who shares the editing of the whole collection) contributes a comprehensive study of the visual representations of 'preachers' as varied as Christ, Geoffrey Chaucer, Jonah, Mohammed, Langland's Dobet, and interchangeable bishops, in and out of their pulpits, in late medieval English and early Tudor manuscripts and printed texts. The final 'study' is by Julia Boffey, on the textual transmission of Middle English verse found in sermons. By reviewing 'a small sample of sermon material incorporating verse of some kind' (p. 260), she shows that such slipperly verse had a life of its own.

The group of 'texts' opens with Oliver Pickering's discussion and re-edition, with glosses, of the late thirteenth-century *South English Legendary's* All Souls' Day poem on Purgatory, as found in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud misc. 108. This is not a sermon but has preaching characteristics and, he argues, 'is the work of more than one writer' (p. 288). Kari Anne Rand edits extracts from the hitherto unpublished Syon Pardon sermon for the feast of St Peter ad Vincula, from BL, MS Harley 2321, probably made for a Birgittine brother. She has also recently discovered a second manuscript, Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 156, which contains eighteen lines of the text and was, she argues, copied by a monk from Christ Church Cathedral Priory, Canterbury, sometime after 1468. The final contribution is from the co-editor of the collection, Veronica O'Mara, on the vagaries of the nineteenth-century printer and publisher John Gough Nichols's edition of the fifteenth-century Boy Bishop sermon, characterised as 'the first homiletic incunabulum to be edited in "modern" times' (p. 363). O'Mara also re-edits the text and discusses its date and attribution.

The volume concludes with a list of Powell's publications compiled by Ronald Waldron, who also contributes the Preface, a succinct appreciation of 'Susan Powell and the Growing Study of the Middle English Sermon'.

ALEXANDRA BARRATT, *The University of Waikato*

Eliav-Feldon, Miriam, *Renaissance Impostors and Proofs of Identity*, Houndmills, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012; hardback; pp. viii, 292; R.R.P. US\$92.00, £60.00; ISBN 9780230547063.

This study examines the phenomenon of assumed identity, of passing for somebody one was not, in early modern Europe. It seeks to explain why

people perpetrated such frauds and how the powerful improvised technologies of authentication.

Imposture flourished, or doubts about social authenticity were abnormally high in this period, for several reasons. However, the root cause, Miriam Eliav-Feldon contends (in Chapter 2, disproportionately the longest), was religious strife, compounded by serial failures in authentication; those who had claimed or been judged to be of one community were eventually found to belong to another confession or class, prompting further waves of anxiety that all were not as they seemed. The conversion of Jews and Muslims in Spain, Catholics in Protestant territories, and Europeans in the Moorish Mediterranean, triggered religious dissimulation and panic about fifth columns and raised questions concerning the nature of faith and the reliability of knowledge based on sensory perception.

Paradoxically, the wars of religion within and without Christendom, between the later fifteenth and early seventeenth centuries, lent plausibility to impostures and otherwise help explain the credulity of contemporaries who took the bait. For example, in the early 1520s, David Reuveni presented himself as the princely emissary for several Tribes of Israel. Both Portuguese and Venetian authorities welcomed him because of the implications for their continuing – yet at times apocalyptic – struggle against Suleiman I. Similarly with the pretence of those alleging they came from the realm of Prester John to aid Western Christendom in its time of need.

Layers of deception piled one on top of the other, and this circumstance seems to be the justification for discussing other sorts of impostor: sturdy beggars, false saints, witches, and gypsies (Chapters 4–5). Thus indigents could themselves pretend to be the victims of Ottoman tyranny. Witches masqueraded as proper Christians and mystics were exposed as servants of Satan. And there are suggestions that the Roma presented themselves as pilgrims before they became vagrant. Fatal assumptions were made about their true origin and character: assumptions the Roma may occasionally have owned but which were otherwise foisted on them and appropriated by false gypsies, serving only to tarnish further their reputation.

The official response (Chapters 6–8) was varied. Some sought to cure the epidemic with a regime of corporal punishment. Prevention, or at least faltering attempts at it, relied upon policing the appearance of the well-to-do courtesy of sumptuary legislation and watching for bodies marked by earlier run-ins with the law. As more people were thought to be dressing above their station in the context of urban anonymity, or otherwise disguising past stigmas, attempts were made to use bureaucracy rather than bodies to prove identities. Veritable (and verifiable) paper trails were gradually established with central registers, licences and passports, health certificates, and university testimonials.

Citing examples from across Europe, Eliav-Feldon draws extensively on scholarship in several languages. Notwithstanding its ambitious scope and the evidentiary challenges, some will find this collation not quite to their taste.

The Introduction avers that this is not a study of identity. However, this seems at odds with establishing imposters' motives, or arguments for the growing prominence of lineage, and with it the emergence of a racist mentality. Despite the importance of Spanish edicts concerning blood purity (*limpieza de sangre*), more than one reference to heraldry's semiotics (p. 182) would strengthen the case that European elites were preoccupied with who was who. Likewise, consideration of transvestitism, as part of a deliberate fraud, probably requires acknowledgement of ambiguous premodern understandings of sexual difference *per se*.

Notwithstanding some case studies, the book tantalises with terse references to the historiography. Particularly when it comes to the proving of identity, and unmasking impostors, mention is made of archives bearing final witness, but direct quotation from these materials is sparing. This abridges the very processes of identification, of identifying as someone or being identified as somebody else. Some of the primary evidence might be more closely contextualised too, otherwise readers will miss its true significance. For instance, the observation of a London beadle concerning gypsies is framed as plainly descriptive (p. 130). Yet this beadle was fictional; the imposition was the pamphlet itself. Probably penned by Samuel Rid, who is mentioned on the same page, these observations were part of the rogue literature that conjured, for profit, with tales of a vast criminal underworld.

Chapters could be more tightly integrated. Contextual points are repeated (e.g., pp. 24, 142, 177 for the *sanbenito*, or sackcloth of the Inquisition; pp. 8 and 217 for counterfeiters known as 'jarkmen'; pp. 127 and 131 for gypsies as *heiden*/heathens). Acknowledgement of older research proves generous yet overly diligent, with the study eventually refuting arguments that are neither current nor mainstream (e.g., p. 119, n. 90). There are a number of sections that conclude with distracting demurrals about just-stated issues being not central or of small concern (pp. 9, 25, 98, 150, 154, 166).

MARK S. DAWSON, *Australian National University*

Forni, Kathleen, *Chaucer's Afterlife: Adaptations in Recent Popular Culture*, Jefferson, NC, McFarland, 2013; paperback; pp. 176; R.R.P. US\$40.00; ISBN 9780786473441.

Kathleen Forni's book examines the Anglophone popular culture reception of Geoffrey Chaucer in the past two decades or so, consciously building on earlier work by Candace Barrington and Steve Ellis. Chaucer has been a mainstay of Middle English studies since the very early days of the academy –

and of English poetry for much longer – and his reputation, and the reception of his works in later centuries has been the topic of considerable interest in recent decades. At less than 170 pages, it is a slim volume, but nonetheless makes a solid contribution to the field.

In her Introduction, Forni contests the categories of professional (academic) and popular, ‘positing a continuation rather than a chasm’ between them (p. 11). She takes a cultural studies approach to assert the significance of Chaucer’s popular reception in an argument that largely parallels those made to justify the study of popular medievalisms much more broadly. That it does not reference the ongoing discussions around medievalism is one of the more striking gaps in this Introduction, one which leads it substantially to re-cover already trodden ground. Making connections to that scholarship would also have contextualised the argument and discussion of Chaucer within the much broader context of contemporary popular receptions of the Middle Ages.

The first chapter is the most substantial in terms of both length and analytical depth. It offers an overview of much of the material the book covers, structured by four different modes of intertextuality: adaptation, appropriation, invocation, and citation. This framework provides a vocabulary for talking about how meaning is made by different kinds of reference to Chaucer and his work. The approach allows Forni to demonstrate a veritable ‘proliferation of meaning’ (p. 59). Genre and medium variously shape what Chaucerian intertextuality signifies; neither the icon nor his works have a fixed meaning across the diversity of popular culture. The comparative framework, however, also allows Forni to identify pilgrimage and satire as two common motifs. She also finds more coherence between the framing story of pilgrimage and embedded tales in modern works than in *The Canterbury Tales*, with the framing story acting as ‘an inclusive discursive platform, allowing a diversity of voices’ (p. 59).

The remaining four chapters consist of case studies of texts and genres, engaging in greater depth with some of the works initially discussed in the first. Chapter 2, ‘Chaucer the Detective’, focuses on historical murder mysteries which either take place during the pilgrimage to Canterbury, presenting it as an historical event and the pilgrims as suspects – and at times victims – and a second set which delve into the gaps in Chaucer’s known biography to see him play detective. Chaucer, in such works, becomes an agent of social order, and although he at times acts on behalf of the powerless he is also often unable to act against the corrupt.

The third chapter, ‘Chaucer on the TV Screen’, explores two of the most well-known recent adaptations of *The Canterbury Tales*: the BBC’s modernised *Canterbury Tales* (2003), and Jonathon Myerson’s animated *Canterbury Tales* (1998–2000). Forni argues that both have a certain fidelity or respect for their source material, while also exploring the many changes wrought by the new media and the new cultural context.

Chapter 4, 'The Canterbury Pilgrimage and African Diaspora', presents material that, though likely to be unfamiliar to Australian and New Zealand readers, attests more than any other to the diversity of Chaucer's popular afterlives. The works it considers, moreover, are closer to the literary or high-culture end of the spectrum than either the mystery novels of the first chapter, or the television series of the second. 'Cultural, social – and especially female – exclusion and oppression' are recurrent themes (p. 121).

'Chaucer the Brand' is the short final chapter (the book has no Conclusion). It considers Chaucer and his name as cultural commodities. Forni shows that Chaucer-as-brand has consistent meanings, in contrast to the diversity of significances attached in more creative works, as is 'most often associated with tradition, specifically British cultural heritage, historical authenticity, and artisanal craftsmanship' (p. 122).

This book is a valuable resource for studies of Chaucer's popular reception in the twenty-first century. Both by collecting a great amount of information about the many appearances Chaucer and his works make in contemporary popular culture, and by offering multiple approaches to analysis of this extremely varied material, which clear the ground for further work.

HELEN YOUNG, *The University of Sydney*

Fudge, Thomas A., *The Memory and Motivation of Jan Hus, Medieval Priest and Martyr* (Europa Sacra, 11), Turnhout, Brepols, 2013; hardback; pp. xiii, 291; R.R.P. €80.00; ISBN 9782503544427.

Over the past two decades Thomas Fudge has established himself as one of the leading authorities on the early fifteenth-century Bohemian heretic-martyr, Jan Hus and the eponymous central European, pre-Reformation, religious reform movement, Hussitism. In a steady stream of articles and monographs, Fudge has systematically mined the primary material (Hus's writings alone run to more than twenty-five volumes) and assimilated voluminous secondary and ancillary literature in Latin, Czech, and German. In English-language scholarship on Jan Hus, Thomas Fudge dominates the field.

Memory and Motivation is a book of deep reflection and impressive erudition but there is nothing remote or dry in Fudge's writing. This is history *engagé* conveying in lively, often discursive prose something of the heady quality and impassioned oratory that characterised Jan Hus's preaching. Elsewhere, Fudge has articulated his four new perspectives on Hus: he actively contributed to his own death; he cultivated a martyr's complex; the men of the Council of Constance went to some lengths in an effort to spare his life; at one and the same time he was devout reformer and heretic. In varying degrees these, themes are in play throughout the 'Memory' and 'Motivation' of this volume.

Chapter 1 summarises Hus's rise from obscurity to prominence as the leading preacher at Prague's Bethlehem Chapel, the most persuasive voice calling for reform of the Latin Church. Among the various ideas that set him at odds with the Church was his belief that immorality disqualified clergy from exercising priestly office in addition to his denial that obedience to the pope was necessary for salvation. In sketching out the intellectual battle lines, Fudge makes clear that whatever the social and political ramifications attributed to Hus's ideas, his prime motivation was spiritual renewal and a revitalisation of the authentic faith after the manner of the early Christians.

Chapters 2 and 4 delve into Hus's writings, correspondence, and trial documents in quest of *fons et origo*, the motivating forces which animated his thoughts and actions. Fudge reveals a man of great rectitude and equally great naivety. Firm in the belief that he was a divine messenger, Hus possessed unshakable conviction that he alone understood the truth and that he alone would determine the criteria for discerning it. Many of Hus's attitudinal traits are found encapsulated in the curiously titled *Knížky proti knězi kuchmistrovi* ('Booklets *contra* the kitchen-master Prelate'). In this little treatise, written only a year before his death while in exile from Prague, Hus responds to attacks on him ostensibly from an anonymous former priest. Fudge's close reading of this text (in fact, a systematic rebuttal by Hus of the full complement of major accusations most frequently levelled against him) provides us with many subtle insights into what Hus thought he was doing: standing firm in defence of truth; practising the imitation of Christ; and preparing for martyrdom.

Fudge's rather rambling chapter dealing with Hus's ethics corroborates Jiří Kejř's contention that 'Hus created for himself an idealized reality that represented for him acting in accordance with the will of God without regard for the feelings and perception of the surrounding world'. Ethically irreproachable and blithely disdainful of his enemies, Hus inevitably drew fire from less righteous clerics. And none proved to be a more tenacious opponent than the ecclesiastical lawyer, Michael Smrdař. His unrelenting and ultimately successful campaign against Hus is given detailed coverage in Chapter 5.

Chapters 6 to 8 address the various ways Hus's *memoria* was constructed. Drawing on the latest musicological research and refining interpretations he first advanced in *Magnificent Ride*, Fudge explores the wide variety of song texts (popular tunes, satirical songs, *cantiones* contrafacts, processions, and liturgical hymns) that arose soon after Hus's martyrdom and continued to be produced for several generations. All sides engaged in the polemics of song to press their interpretation of Hus's legacy: *miles Christi* and divine instrument for some, devil and heretic, the bringer of misery and conflict for others. Liturgical commemoration, too, played an important role in securing Hus's

place in memory; processions marking his feast day on 6 July could become highly charged public events.

Important in the construction of *memoria* were the various 'lives' of Hus that came about shortly after his death, Petr Mladoňovice's contemporaneous *Relatio* being the best known and factually accurate. Fudge focuses on three hagiographic accounts post-dating the *Relatio* that constitute the earliest historiography surrounding Hus. He contrasts the factual accuracy and tediousness of Petr's account with the more vivid and engaging texts by Jan Bradatý, George the Hermit, and the anonymous *Account of the Death of Hus*. He notes that unlike most other hagiographic texts these sources contain no accounts of miracles or divine intervention nor do they directly identify individuals responsible for Hus's martyrdom. Their significance, Fudge believes, lies not in factual accuracy (all three contain apocryphal stories and fanciful elements) but in their 'truthfulness', their fidelity to the aura of saintliness-per-martyrdom that burnished the memory of Jan Hus.

In the book's dense final chapter, Fudge essays an encapsulation of 'The Spirit of Hussite Religion', the fractious reform movement that Hus inherited which never melded into a unified whole. Drawing from a welter of sources, historical and theological, and from Hus's and his own writings, Fudge challenges the reader with an argumentative amalgam of interpretations, provocative conjectures, and arresting insights: 'the movement cannot be understood apart from a consideration of the *devotio moderna*, late medieval mysticism, the impulse of apocalyptic thinking, to say nothing of nominalism'. This volume is the second in a trilogy, and as one might expect, much remains to be said.

ROBERT CURRY, *The University of Sydney*

Furlotti, Barbara, *A Renaissance Baron and his Possessions: Paolo Giordano I Orsini, Duke of Bracciano (1541–1585)* (Cursor Mundi, 15), Turnhout, Brepols, 2012; hardback; pp. xxviii, 336; 6 colour, 9 b/w illustrations, 4 b/w line art; R.R.P. €100.00; ISBN 9782503534749.

Barbara Furlotti's study of Paolo Giordano Orsini, first Duke of Bracciano, presents us with an interesting perspective on the late sixteenth-century Roman baronial courts. After careful consideration of documentation held in international archives, in particular a series of unpublished inventories in Rome, the author challenges historic opinion of the violent and volatile Orsini Duke as being unrefined and largely uninterested in the arts. Eyewitness accounts of his behaviour after the death of his wife Isabella de' Medici, whom he is thought to have killed, continue to hold a morbid fascination. However, John Webster's portrayal of him as Brachiano in *The White Devil*, which publicly presented an anarchic image of the man in 1612, seems to

have contributed negatively to the Duke's reputation as a patron of the arts. Furlotti attributes much of this image to his inability to adapt to the changing circumstances of aristocratic values present in Rome in the second half of the sixteenth century, when former military models of nobility were superseded by a courtly vision of aristocracy.

Conveniently divided into three sections on the 'Creation of a Renaissance Baron', his 'Possessions', and their 'Mobility and Value', the structure of the book clearly reflects its author's interests in the socio-political and economic motivations which determined the accumulation, display, and movement of art and luxury goods. In the first chapter, the reader is presented with a biography of Paolo Giordano as very much a product of his times. His marriage into the Medici family is described in terms of family politics and networks of aristocratic alliances. According to Furlotti, Paolo Giordano's extravagant expenditure on luxury goods and entertainment were 'proxies for the prestige, prosperity and refined taste and manners of the nobility' during the second half of the sixteenth century. Despite magnificent costumes and public jousting performances, the Duke was unable to attract the attention he needed to fulfil his military ambitions. In the following chapter, the author's perceptive examination of household inventories reveals the Duke as an avid participant in ephemeral events, and also a discerning patron of music and literature.

The third chapter reviews the vast array of property owned by the Orsini baron, from the internal and external decoration and trappings of his estate to his collection of art and antiquities. A variety of painters, sculptors, gardeners, and tapestry weavers were employed alongside the *maestro di casa*, the *computista*, and various other agents who made up the household staff. Furlotti's analysis of Paolo Giordano's interest in classical sculpture and architectural remains is particularly illuminating. Her description of the Duke's excavations, thefts, acquisitions, and gift giving, thoughtfully describes how beneficial the antiquities market was to the landed gentry in and around Rome. Property such as Palo on the Orsini estate, once an important Etruscan port and a holiday resort for the Romans, held a wealth of ancient remains, which, on excavation, represented a valuable form of hard currency. The dynamics of consumption are explored in the following chapter, where the figure of the Duke is evaluated in terms of his network of service providers.

Despite their vast patrimonies, late sixteenth-century Roman barons evidently all experienced problems with cash flow. Chapter 5 deals with the Orsini household's frequent recourse to pawning property with Jewish banks and obtaining credit. The banks also provided an ulterior service, renting the aristocratic courts objects such as carpets, beds, mattresses, and linens when occasion demanded. When the Duke entertained large parties of guests, he could rely on friends and relatives to supply the dearth of tableware for the

banquet. This arrangement benefitted both the lender and the borrower, as the family crests decorating these objects clearly demonstrated the host's social alliances and network. One of the most remarkable objects in the Orsini baron's possession was a ring containing the relics of St Bridget. The Duke rarely lent this thaumaturgic object and only to his most intimate friends, but, more importantly, in owning it, he was indirectly invested with supernatural healing powers.

In her final chapter, Furlotti observes that gifts were usually prompted 'to recompense a service received' or to insure 'against a future service that might be needed'. It comes as no surprise that inventory records of the Duke's gifts and acts of charity are remarkably higher in number than the objects received. Evidently, even Paolo Giordano's household accounts were drawn up to promote him as a noble man of wealth, liberality, and social prestige. A minor observation, considering the book's late sixteenth-century focus, is that Christopher Celenza's analysis of the will of cardinal Giordano Orsini (ob. 1438) and his possessions does not appear in the bibliography (see *Traditio*, 51 (1996), 257–86). This, however, does not detract from the fact that Furlotti's thoughtful discussion of Paolo Giordano, not only succeeds in redefining the Duke's patronage of the arts, but also provides us with a valid benchmark for future comparison of Renaissance practices of consumption and collection.

PIPPA SALONIUS, *Humboldt State University, California*

Garrison, Mary, Arpad P. **Orbán**, and Marco **Mostert**, eds, *Spoken and Written Language: Relations between Latin and the Vernacular Languages in the Earlier Middle Ages* (Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy, 24), Turnhout, Brepols, 2013; hardback; pp. xii, 364; 4 colour, 8 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. €80.00; ISBN 9782503507705.

This collection of papers in linguistics, socio-linguistics, and philology, all stem from a conference held in Utrecht in 1999, a full fourteen years earlier than publication. The prefatory material admits that much has been published on the relationships between Latin and the vernacular languages in the intervening period, and this volume seems to be occupying a curious place in the discourse, inviting readers to consider 'whether the assumptions and conclusions of the contributions ... have stood the test of time', and in this light exhorting rigorous reading to be able to answer that question.

It is unusual for an academic volume to start so apologetically, and this is an odd frame from which to set the collection up; in fact, this publication does not conform readily with a number of academic standards of publications that the readership can expect, not unreasonably, from this publisher. Perhaps Brepols was not paying close attention when they put this one to bed. The

volume lacks an Introduction, instead only including an anonymous and very brief preface. Given that there are two editors who are not contributors, it is not unreasonable to expect a more developed Introduction, perhaps guiding the reader to commonalities, issues of contention, and an overarching structure of the publication, as has been done for many of this volume's stable mates. Moreover, there is no index. Neither is there any biographical information about the twenty contributors, and given that the volume is multilingual – eleven contributions in English, three in French, and six in German – it is surprising that there are no abstracts for each contribution. There is even a change in font size within one chapter.

But putting these matters to one side, the scholarship in this work is certainly to a high standard (at least as far as the English language papers are concerned), and the collection delivers some very useful insights into an array of contextual and linguistic issues around the relationships with Latin literacy of a variety of vernacular languages and their users, notwithstanding the fact that some decade and a half has passed since these works were written, and the preface notes that 'in some cases the authors have updated their bibliography [*sic*]'.

These papers traverse a wide geography, dealing with issues of relationships, linkages, literacies, and the social context of interactions with Latin of a smorgasbord of antique and medieval languages, including Middle Welsh, Greek, Old Swedish, and related Scandinavian languages, Old and Middle Irish, Old English, a number of Romance languages (such as Castilian, Leonese, Old and Middle French, Gaulish Latin), and Old High German. In places, the contributions consider social conditions that influence usage, such as Michael W. Herren's consideration of Frankish/Irish interactions between Adamnan and Arculf, Inger Larsson's assessment of Scandinavian literacy (a field certainly progressed somewhat since 1999; see, for example, Zilmer and Jesch, eds, *Epigraphic Literacy and Christian Identity* (Brepols, 2012)) and Nicholas Brooks's comparison of Latin usage in ninth-century Canterbury with Old English, and the possible gendering of the vernacular against Latin. There are also contributions that provide overviews of the (then current) state of play, such as Anthony Harvey's review of Celtic-Latin vocabulary, and Michael Richter's look at traces of Welsh in Latin recorded in an early fourteenth-century manuscript from Hereford Cathedral, and in such works it would take further research to know the extent to which such topics have advanced.

In all, this is a potentially very useful collection to specialists in these languages, and to scholars interested in well-worked examples of socio-linguistic interactions between different historical language groups, notwithstanding the production issues identified.

RODERICK McDONALD, *Swansea University*

Groves, Peter, *Rhythm and Meaning in Shakespeare: A Guide for Readers and Actors* (Literary Studies), Clayton, Monash University Publishing, 2013; paperback; pp. xxiii, 193; R.R.P. AUD/US\$39.95; ISBN 9781921867811 (review copy supplied by Footprint Books).

In his informative new text, Peter Groves strives to restore 'richness and precision' to performing and reading Shakespeare's texts, saying 'if we trust Shakespeare as an artist, it is always worth at least exploring the performance suggested by the metre, because that is most likely to embody his rhythmical intentions' (p. xix). There is evident need for his book when you consider that little of Groves's teaching is replicated elsewhere. For example, Scott Kaiser states in *Mastering Shakespeare: An Acting Class in Seven Scenes* (Allworth Press, 2003), that one aim is to give American actors clues to the secret which English actors seem to know from birth – that of mastering Shakespeare. Yet he does not cover in detail the metre embedded in Shakespearean text. Indeed, Kaiser suggests breaking the text down specifically to suit modern listening skills which cuts up the metre. In contrast, Groves stresses in his book areas where both British and non-British actors and readers may err in their metrical and performative delivery of Shakespeare's texts.

The performance of early modern drama has latterly become the subject of much academic research. Such publications as *Performing Early Modern Drama Today* (eds Pascale Aebischer and Kathryn Prince, Cambridge University Press, 2012) include performance listings in acknowledgment of this fact. However, much research has focused on exploration of space and stage design, the material culture of costuming, props, and lighting, without exploring the technical aspects of the actual writing itself. For an 'original practices' season at Blackfriars Playhouse in Virginia, players were given, as a resource, *Making Shakespeare*, an excellent tome by Tiffany Stern (Routledge, 2004). Stern notes that early modern texts rely on language but there is little on how that language should be transmitted to the audience. Stern advocates reading a part in terms of passions with actors breaking their speeches down into individual passions, matching pronunciation with weighty telling gestures. Other texts such as Erika T. Lin's *Shakespeare and the Materiality of Performance* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), concentrate on cultural attitudes and practices that were mediated through performance, but the complex subject of staging and performing the text is rarely dissected.

Groves focuses his concern on how Shakespeare 'organises the rhythms of speech in verse, and uses them to create and reinforce meanings in the theatre (and in the mind of the reader)' (p. xiv). By necessity the book is quite a technical volume. Chapter 1 covers the music of English speech or prosody; Chapter 2 demonstrates normal ways in which the performance material is patterned in verse, pointing out variations which, with regulation, contribute to the patterning; Chapter 3 focuses on breaks and pauses which

provide powerful effects in the delivery process; while the fourth and the fifth chapters investigate off-beats and demonstrate the way in which performance can be cued; the sixth chapter deals with other kinds of spoken verse in the plays; while the seventh makes a foray into metrical analysis.

In such a dense work the accompanying sound files prove very instructive. Readers are directed to a link on Monash University Publishing's website in a user-friendly manner in order to experience aurally the lessons being expounded in the text. As the sound files would prove crucial to the self-learner one hopes that there is an adequate system for future-proofing the accessibility of the listening experience. One minor issue is audio example eleven which does not correlate to the text but rather appears to relate to audio example twenty-one. The sound files are clear and distinct and are executed in melodious and natural tones. The wonderful appendices are worth a special mention for the richness they bring to the volume. They range from topics such as 'Pronouncing Shakespeare's Names' to 'A List of Symbols used in Scansion'. In the first appendix, Groves rightly points out that productions attempted in 'original' accents are not to make a purist attempt at authenticity but rather to preserve where possible the rhythmic structure of the verse.

Groves manages to impart a wealth of information without a prescriptive tone allowing the reader space to move through the chapters gaining confidence in a complex subject little taught today. Both the novice and the more experienced Shakespearean reader are catered for in this book but, as the content is quite dense, signposting in the Introduction about working through the course at an individual pace might have proved useful. It is probably best to view the book as a comprehensive course in rhythm, metre, and the like, and the best learning experience is gained if it is followed sequentially. Overall the writing maintains a light conversational tone allowing an easy rapport between author and reader. By the end of the book one becomes aware of the similarities between modern speech and writing and, implicitly, Shakespearean speech and writing; this greatly increases the reading, performing, and auditory pleasure of Shakespeare's plays.

BRID PHILLIPS, *The University of Western Australia*

Gunnell, Terry and Annette **Lassen**, eds, *The Nordic Apocalypse: Approaches to 'Völuspá' and Nordic Days of Judgement* (Acta Scandinavica, 2), Turnhout, Brepols, 2013; hardback; pp. xvii, 238; 6 colour, 3 b/w illustrations, 2 b/w tables; R.R.P. €75.00; ISBN 9782503541822.

This collection of essays is the result of a conference, held in Reykjavik in May 2008, that took a multi-disciplinary approach to *Völuspá*, arguably the most famous medieval poem from Iceland, situating it in the context of material

culture. The two most significant material items were a twelfth-century wooden image of the Last Judgement from Hólar Cathedral, the fragmentary remains of which had recently been the subject of an exhibition at the National Museum, and the ‘huge stained-glass windows’ that the artist Leifur Breiðfjörð had created for ‘the new reception area of Grand Hotel Reykjavik in 2007’ (p. xv). The volume has eleven illustrations, including colour images of the windows, and reconstructed drawings of the situation of the Hólar image, which, it is argued, has Byzantine antecedents.

After the brief ‘Introduction’ by Pétur Pétursson, Annette Lassen’s opening chapter sketches the reception history of *Völuspá* from the thirteenth to the seventeenth century. She draws attention to the fact that the oldest manuscript of the *Prose Edda* of Snorri Sturluson (which comments on *Völuspá*) is about fifty years older than the first manuscript of the *Poetic Edda*, and describes the *Codex Regius* (c. 1270) and the two younger manuscripts *AM 748 I a 4to* and *Hauksbok* in some detail. Lassen locates the beginning of the study of the Eddic poems to around 1643 when Brynjólfur Sveinsson (1605–1675), the Lutheran Bishop of Skálholt, acquired the *Codex Regius*. This historical context situates the subsequent three sections, focused on oral, written, and visual traditions. The first of these opens up the vexed question of the dating of *Völuspá* and whether or not it was only slightly influenced by Christianity (in the process of shifting from oral to written form) or heavily influenced by Christianity and thus preserving little or no pre-Christian religious material.

In ‘*Völuspá* and Time’, Vésteinn Ólason concludes that ‘in essence it may be a poem composed around or possibly a little before 1000 and partly based on older material, a poem which has kept its structure (in the *Codex Regius*) but over time in oral tradition has attracted material of Christian origin inviting a more Christian interpretation’ (p. 41). John McKinnell’s ‘Heathenism in *Völuspá*: a Preliminary Survey’ tackles this vexed scholarly question by an investigation of what can be known of the composer of the poem (the poet), given that the versions preserved in manuscripts are quite different, and the scribes are clearly not the authors. McKinnell reinforces the scholarly consensus that ‘the bulk of the text shows a consistent and original poetic sensibility, one characterised by acute observation of nature, a capacity for encapsulating mythological scenes in brief, memorable images, an apocalyptic outlook, and a tendency to combine words and motifs in new and striking ways’ (p. 95). Above all, he concentrates on what *type* of heathen material a thirteenth-century Christian scribe might deem usable, which is a useful approach.

The second section considers the relationship of *Völuspá* to Christianity through the textual tradition, and features chapters by Kees Samplonius, Gro Steinsland, Karl G. Johannson, and Pétur Pétursson. These chapters traverse issues like the cultural background of the poem, its relationship to

the Sibylline oracles, the Apocalypse, and overt Christian themes in the text. The final section on visual traditions is focused on the Judgement Day panels from Hólar, with chapters on their original position in the Cathedral, and their later preservation history.

The essays in this volume are lively and interesting; the illustrations are attractive and enrich the reader's appreciation of the material. It will be of interest to all scholars and students of medieval Scandinavian culture and is highly recommended.

CAROLE M. CUSACK, *The University of Sydney*

Higgins, Sydney, *Theatre in the Round: The Staging of Cornish Medieval Drama*, London: All drama, 2013; paperback; pp. iv, 192; 57 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. unknown; ISBN 9781484947050.

This study recreates the process of production for plays that were once performed in Cornwall over a period of five sequential days. On each of the first three days, a full-length play of approximately three thousand words was performed. Together they formed a cycle of Biblical plays. All three were written in the Cornish language, but later became known by Medieval Latin descriptive titles respectively as *Ordinale de Origine Mundi*, *Passio Domini Nostri Jhesu Christi*, and *Ordinale de Resurrexione Domini Nostri Jhesu Christi*. Over the next two days the story of a saint's life, *Beunans Meriasek*, translated as *The Life of St Meriasek*, was performed.

There is some surviving archaeological evidence for the distinguishing feature of medieval Cornish drama: it was performed in the round. According to Sydney Higgins, there were numerous rounds, of differing construction, in Cornwall. He offers a comparative account of the round at St Just and the Piran round to indicate the features of each. While the ceremonial or ritual origin of the rounds in Cornwall probably antedates the performance of drama in them, their use for drama was important for a substantial period. He suggests that in medieval drama, the rounds may have encompassed cosmological significances. There is some discussion of the extent to which *The Castle of Perseverance* offers an analogue.

There are five surviving plans for the performance area, one for each of the original manuscripts. These are discussed in relation to remaining verbal traces in the text. Of particular interest is the set of performance locations outside the central arena. Higgins argues that the Cornish rounds were not simply regional oddities and that they had analogues on the continent of Europe, going back in concept and construction to the amphitheatres of Roman times. Collateral evidence is adduced from the visual arts of the later Middle Ages, particularly the frescoes of Giotto on Biblical themes. In asking why some aspects of Giotto's representation seem unrealistic, Higgins replies:

'For me, the answer to these questions is not that Giotto had no understanding of perspective but that he was depicting the life of Francis, using the stations, special effects and costumes used in plays at the time' (p. 61).

Two chapters are devoted to the *St Meriasek* plays. The name of Meriasek is discussed as being evidence for pan-Brythonic Celtic relations between Cornwall and north Wales in one direction and Cornwall and Brittany in the other. Higgins says that as very little of the saint's life was spent in Cornwall, 'it is necessary to consider why a Breton saint was the subject of a Cornish play' and he points out that 'Both people spoke a common Celtic language ... and until the fifteenth century, many of the town-dwellers in Cornwall came from Brittany' (p. 75). There follows a very detailed discussion of the complex staging for the Cornish plays, accompanied by a number of diagrams for use of the sunken central space and the surrounding raised spaces. There is a surprising amount of action too, with some startling effects and some elaborate stage properties: for example, there is a very substantial ship on wheels. On the first day audiences will have seen 'a rock that moved, a magic spring and a tree that caught fire' (p. 102). They will also have witnessed 'a dozen miracles, the hanging of two Christians and a battle between two armies' (p. 102). All this on the first of the two days, so very few spectators would wish to reject the Duke of Cornwall's invitation to come to the second day.

After a chapter devoted to the staging of the Creation play, the *Ordinale de Origine Mundi*, Higgins sums up with a chapter on 'The Medieval Audience and its Theatre'. The long-standing controversy between Richard Southern and Glynne Wickham is countered with a convincing argument for a third way. Reviewing in detail the sequence of scenes in two of the plays, Higgins concludes, with the aid of diagrams, that the audience was neither contained within the inner circle nor ranged on the outer mound but rather was peripatetic, moving several times from one sector to another of the whole performance area during the course of a play.

All in all, this book provides new and well-grounded insights. The argument is strongly based on evidence gained from many productions. Sydney Higgins speaks with the authority of long experience both in teaching and in practice.

CHRISTOPHER WORTHAM, *The University of Notre Dame Australia /
The University of Western Australia*

Hourihane, Colum, ed., *From Minor to Major: The Minor Arts in Medieval Art History* (Occasional Papers, 14), Princeton, NJ, Index of Christian Art, 2012; paperback; pp. 336; 257 colour, 42 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. US\$35.00; ISBN 9780983753711.

This is a magnificently presented volume produced under the auspices of the Index of Christian Art in Princeton. Focusing on the so-called minor arts, each of the sixteen essays is accompanied by a generous collection of coloured photographs that, in their beauty, challenge assumptions about major and minor arts. The approaches to the question around which the originating conference was organised are also varied. Some of the authors provide thought-provoking discussions of assumptions made in their discipline while others present very useful scholarly introductions to their fields and overviews about the history of research.

An examination of hierarchies in the arts is both useful and, to some degree, anachronistic. As someone working in a department dominated by modernists, however, these hierarchies are still surprisingly strong, particularly in New Zealand where books on local art are often focused solely on painting. I was stunned to discover when I first arrived here that manuscript illumination was considered by some so minor as to be not worthy of inclusion among the Fine Arts, while architecture was of little interest. These assumptions have been rightly challenged both in contemporary art practice and in the study of earlier periods.

At the same time, the inclusion of a variety of works in different media and genres has been salutary. The presence of seals, coins, pilgrimage badges, and misericords is a useful reminder of how rarely these items are discussed and how frequently they are skated over in general survey courses or in specialised research. The authors also remind us of the very different expectations of artists and patrons in the high Middle Ages. As Paul Binski points out in his thoughtful essay questioning these very hierarchies, magnificence and wonder and respect for the artist's skill were also highly valued. The separating of media into high and low categories also overshadows our perceptions of influence and regard. Goldsmith was a label given to many medieval artists and, as Binski argues, the influence of small works could have a significant effect on the larger arts, such as architecture. Cynthia Hahn, writing on medieval enamels, examines the impact of what are much more accessible works on our perceptions of medieval art. These works are often small in scale and highly portable, as is demonstrated by their presence in collections internationally. Her essay, together with its excellent photography, does much to evoke the charm and power of the small, as well as its great beauty and the wonder of its glowing preciousness.

Colour, ornament, and decoration are words that are also explored in these essays. Thomas Dale draws on historiography to examine nineteenth-

century connoisseurship and the ravages of time as well as the impact of understandings of significance of scale in the valuing of art in his essay on colour and, in particular, wall-painting. Dale, like Binski and others, also underlines the importance of the integration of different media in his readings of Romanesque wall paintings, as well as the combining of liturgy and ritual objects such as vestments and metalwork to create sacred spaces. Neglected media such as tiles, and regional differences, or biases, are also brought up in Sharon Gerstel's discussion of ceramic revetments and paving tiles, as are the influences of Byzantine artistic practices on the West. Alicia Walker also examines Byzantine 'decorative arts' such as metalwork, ivories, and woven garments, which she points out were as loaded with social and artistic meanings as any other 'fine arts'. She demonstrates too how ornamentation has been crucial to the renewed interest in these works, and also the impact of new areas of thought including material culture, visual culture, and thing theory in this reappraisal.

Stained glass and tapestries are two art forms that have strongly influenced our understandings of Gothic art. Michael Cothren's essay on stained glass highlights the extent to which modernist approaches have impacted on discussions of these forms, while showing the rich possibilities brought out by considering reception and viewing as well as the physical environments. Laura Weigert, too, re-examines tapestries, such as the 'Lady and the Unicorn' series in Paris, highlighting the inadequacies of art historical methodologies focusing on iconography, connoisseurship, and patronage for the investigation of these works, together with artificial divisions between the medieval and Renaissance which hide the continuities found in art.

This is an important collection, and the essays are of consistently high quality. Kim Woods's work on alabaster carving that ranges from impressive, valued tomb sculpture, to smaller devotional imagery, is a revelation, as are David Areford's work on print-making and Harold Wolter-von dem Knesebeck's on the secular arts. Altogether, the questions presented and the authors' thoughtful insights demonstrate growing recognition of the integration and cross-fertilisation of the arts in the medieval world, and the importance of work that was once unfairly dismissed as 'minor'.

JUDITH COLLARD, *The University of Otago*

Jean d'Arras, *Melusine: or, the Noble History of Lusignan*, trans. and intro. Donald Maddox and Sara Sturm-Maddox, University Park, Penn State University Press, 2012; hardback; pp. 251; 2 maps; R.R.P. US\$69.95; ISBN 9780271054124.

The medallion on the front jacket combines three significant components of Jean d'Arras's late fourteenth-century prose romance: the mythical fairy–

serpent Melusine; the feudal fortress of Lusignan; and the arms of this once powerful dynasty. The love and marriage of Raymondin, son of Hervé de Léon, and the unknown lady Melusine, daughter of a king of Scotland, gave them ten sons, eight of whom became rulers of important lands in France, Western Europe, and along the Mediterranean to the Near East. Military aid to a ruler threatened by the Saracens, marriage to his daughter, and accession to supremacy over the territory gave splendid opportunities for the sons' formidable exploits and the display of chivalrous and humane qualities. Integrated in this feudal context are features from legend and folklore: the fantasy and mystery of Melusine's origins, wealth and passion for building (e.g., the Lusignan fortress), the condition she imposed on the marriage, and the superhuman strength, violence, and wrath of the sixth son, Geoffroy Big-Tooth, who eventually became Lord of Lusignan.

The sons' destinies and achievements are the main narrative focus in the series of wars forming the Lusignan dynasty. It had, however, nearly petered out when Jean d'Arras composed *Melusine* in 1392–93. The romance was commissioned by Jean, Duke of Berry, a Lusignan descendant, who supplied the source chronicle or story. At that time he had just wrested Lusignan back from the English, and Léon VI of Lusignan, exiled king of Armenia, was living his last days at the French court. This enthralling story, which reflects contemporary preoccupations with both the war between France and England and the lingering idea of further crusades to the East, helps justify Jean de Berry's rightful claim to Lusignan. The Melusine myth and its association with the history of Lusignan have had a long literary life, including Coudrette's verse romance (c. 1401), and have generated much scholarship.

In this, his only known work, Jean d'Arras has a lively prose style that is well conveyed in the translation. He frequently alerted readers to a shift from one place or action to another, and to coming events, thus achieving a clearly articulated narrative, with sustained pace. He regularly mentioned his use of the true story, his source. He described vividly the formation of armies and battle scenes, with certain traits of epic style, and more succinctly court festivities, sometimes fast-forwarding the story with a quick remark: 'Let us not linger on this ...' (p. 35), or 'Why give a long account?' (p. 45). He commanded different styles, from the didactic and sententious to the abusive insults exchanged by adversaries on the battlefield. Authorial craftsmanship is evident.

The Introduction is an excellent account of the background, the blending of history and fiction, Melusine and her mythical and human roles, Geoffroy Big-Tooth's infamy and eventual inheritance, Jean de Berry's claim, Coudrette's verse romance, printed editions and manuscripts, the prose style and its translation. Donald Maddox and Sara Sturm-Maddox have resolved problems of the kind faced by translators of medieval works and provided a

thoroughly readable text, expressing in places the élan, drama, and emotion of the story. Without loss of meaning, they have sensibly compressed needless repetition and reduced instances of wordiness, such as in passages on King Elinas's death (p. 26) and Melusine's bathing (p. 181). I noted with interest the different translations of French *fantosme* by 'phantasm' (p. 33), and by 'phantom' and 'apparition' (p. 189), and the expression 'on God's side' to render 'de par Dieu'.

A curious textual discrepancy merits comment. Froimont is the seventh son, as listed on p. 71, but later, when the birth of Melusine's last two sons is mentioned (p. 148), Froimont is named as the ninth son and identified correctly as the son who becomes a monk. In fact, Remonnet is the ninth son and figures appropriately with Thierry, the tenth son, later in the text (p. 193). Is there something here to tease out in the manuscript tradition? Is it a mistake by Jean d'Arras, or an error in his source material? It remains an enigma.

The Notes are clear and concise and the Bibliography and Index complement the text. Two maps (pp. 17–18) are useful, but inadequate as they omit some important places, for example, Lusignan. I spotted two minor editing oversights: the title of Coudrette's romance is *Roman de Mélusine*, not 'Roman de Lusignan' (p. 12); in the Bibliography, Jacques Le Goff's works are entered twice (pp. 76–77).

This excellent English translation, with its critical material, is extremely valuable from the literary and historical perspectives, and certainly gave me the pleasure and enjoyment the translators wish for readers of their work.

GLYNNIS M. CROPP, *Massey University*

Jensen, Kurt Villads, **Kirsi Salonen**, and **Helle Vogt**, eds, *Cultural Encounters during the Crusades* (Studies in History and Social Sciences, 445), Odense, University Press of Southern Denmark, 2013; hardback; pp. 329; 25 colour illustrations; R.R.P. DKK325.00; ISBN 9788776746599.

Emerging from a 2009 conference held in Damascus, the framing of this collection of papers through its Introduction is curiously understated for its themes. Editors Kurt Villads Jensen, Kirsi Salonen, and Helle Vogt start off by painting a picture of the increased interest in cultural encounters over the past thirty years, both in scholarship and in the way in which cultural interactions are reflected in geopolitical tropes. With a rise in globalisation and the resultant cultural exchange and instability, they foreground the essays in the ways in which medieval Europe has been contested, either as the starting point for nation states and languages which must be held on to, or as a open era before passports, immigration worries, and the like.

The editors argue that the two key concepts of the collection – cultural encounters and crusading studies – have a lot to offer each other, if built on this central contestation of the medieval period and what it means for modernity, especially in relation to the Crusades. The prospect of entangling the two allows for a reconsideration of the borrowing between Crusader Christian and disparate Muslim, and a consideration of their parallels.

The first article by Jensen considers the ‘Clash of Civilizations’ thesis that emerged in the 1990s through the historical Crusading perspective, to ground that modern idea in previous practice, and to argue this is not possible without the Crusades being used as an anchoring moment for modern perceptions. While the subsequent articles do not return to this theme, it hangs over the collection to some extent, with further questions prodding the back of the reader’s mind.

Many of the contributions quite usefully consider the didactic thought behind the Crusades. Paul E. Chevedden, in particular, argues for a reconnection of the Crusading period, by suggesting that both leading Christian and Muslim thinkers saw the Mediterranean as one united front: the battle for territory, for dignity, and defence was the same whether fought over Jerusalem, Muslim Sicily, or the early *Reconquista* of Spain.

Torben Kjersgaard Nielsen’s contribution switches to the Baltic crusades of conversion, and the depiction of pagan Russians in the chronicle of Henry of Livonia. This interjection abruptly forces the reader to reconsider the idea of ‘crusade’. Unfortunately, the Introduction does not lay sufficient groundwork to enable the reader to connect the traditional capital ‘C’ Crusades with those beyond the Middle East battlefield.

Jonathon Phillips then approaches the figure of Saladin (back to the Middle East again) but complicates the layperson’s understanding by examining Saladin through the lens of a Muslim author and traveller, Ibn Jubayr. This contribution provides a useful reminder of the political and social undercurrents among the arrayed Muslim forces. Following this reminder, the collection turns again to a European field with Janus Møller Jensen’s consideration of how the crusading history of one Danish king – Erik Emune – may have been suppressed by his rivals and successors in order to ignore the lustre of such a history and focus on his domestic mismanagement.

The next four papers all examine cultural constructions of particular crusading concepts. Helen J. Nicholson considers the encounter between the Christian warrior and his Muslim opponent across epic and chronicle, and finds it allows for recognition of the Muslim warrior’s skill, nobility, and piety. Sini Kangas continues the theme by examining how the ‘encounter model’ was shaped in crusading narratives and limited by warfare (this seems a little repetitive coming so soon after the previous paper). Osman Latiff interestingly considers the use of Jesus as a Qur’anic image to create

a priestly warrior ethos in contemporary Muslim poetry, hinting at the class distinctions inherent in those who consumed poetry and those who did not. Lastly, Bertil Nilsson provides a short outline of Gratian's *Decretum*, at least where it applies to legal decisions regarding pagans and infidels.

Salonen follows with a survey – and unfortunately it is just a survey – of some recently uncovered material from the Archives of the Apostolic Penitentiary between 1458 and 1464. The limited number of petitions for breaches of common law by trading with Muslims and others underscores the need for further research to put these petitions in a bigger context, to draw out some of the implications.

Of the remaining essays, the one that stands out the most is Andrew Jotischky's on the ways in which Muslim communities engaged with Christian ritual across the Crusader states. But this paper, like many across the collection, seems to lack any close connection with the Introduction, or the hints of an overall theme emerging from Jensen's initial overview. Too many of the papers come across as interludes, and the rich variety of themes and undeveloped implications calls out for a Conclusion, a proper summing up and placing in context. Without it, this collection is but a series of interesting, isolated ideas.

DAVID JAMES GRIFFITHS, *Canberra, ACT*

Kahlos, Maijastina, ed., *The Faces of the Other: Religious Rivalry and Ethnic Encounters in the Later Roman World* (Cursor Mundi, 10), Turnhout, Brepols, 2012; hardback; pp. viii, 324; R.R.P. €80.00; ISBN 9782503539997.

The concept of 'Othering' is particularly useful and interesting across the late Roman period, when, as Maijastina Kahlos's Introduction suggests, ideas of identity were themselves so mutable. Kahlos describes the process of Othering as defining ourselves in the negative. By saying our opponents are weak, for instance, we imply that we are strong, and so come to know ourselves through the contrast. But still, those who were 'true' can claim the rhetorical high ground by pointing at the Other, at the flaws of the outsider, and in doing so, reduce the diversity among an external group to a faceless band of homogenised barbarians, pagans, or atheists, not only unknowable but not even worth attempting to know. The late Roman world especially was one of incredible political and cultural flux and Kahlos highlights the ways in which the flexibility of Othering was itself key to its success – it did not really matter who 'us' were, as long as 'us' was not like 'them'.

Each paper in the collection is fairly meaty: the shortest are just under twenty pages and the longest around forty. Divided into two parts, the first half of the collection considers religious difference, while the second looks

at ethnic. Unfortunately, the most verbose paper starts off the collection: a close reading of Paul by Anders Klostergaard Petersen, which examines Othering in II Corinthians and only manages to produce one concrete case. Perhaps the case study approach was not as fruitful as intended and something more contextual could have been used to identify Othering in Paul and other early apostolic writings. Despite this paper, however, this is overall a very interesting collection of essays.

The paper by Marika Rauhala on the Cult of Cybele and its changing depictions by Romans and Christians is a good reminder of how appeals to masculinity (the cult involved ritual castration) complicated just how 'Roman' its antecedence and prestige was. In this case, the Others were the castrated priests, rejected by the pagan Roman elite while their goddess was embraced. The depiction of Cybele even changed as pagan apologists sought to reaffirm the need for ritual under a growing Christian majority.

Similarly, solid papers by Päivi Vähäkangas and Kahlos examine the ways in which, through rhetorical effects and binary comparisons, Christians depicted heretics and pagans as an unformed mass. It is clear that Othering occurred, even though the Christian mainstream was still undefined. It was easier to work out what they were not ('immoral', 'stupid', 'barbarous', 'provincial', etc.), although Kahlos also observes how the figure of the good Pagan could be used as a moral incentive to spur Christian adoption of moral norms. Othering could be used reflectively rather than negatively: the constructed figure of the Other invites questions as to how and why it was constructed, not whether it had any basis in reality.

Anders-Christian Jacobsen's article on 'Images of the Other in Tertullian' is most comprehensive, although it, like the Kahlos article, exhibits a tendency to veer into lists of examples from primary sources. What keeps both scholars focused is the clear theoretical framework from the Introduction, a framework that underpins and brings together the whole collection robustly.

Turning to the second part, Antti Lampinen ably demonstrates the ways in which Gauls were constructed as a barbarous, ferocious Other, and how the same traits were then transferred to Germans. The images persisted, however, as Gaul broke into rebellion and dissent in the third century. The use of the same imagery to describe both Gauls and Germans reaffirms both the use of Othering as a purely cultural device of rhetoric and stigma – everyone outside was Other in all the same ways, the same non-Roman ways – and hints perhaps at lingering social stratification well after the integration of Gaul into the Empire proper.

Benjamin Issac's paper on Ammianus is somewhat jumbled, with other writers being brought in alongside Ammianus, and a lack of clarity over what we are supposed to glean from whom. A thematic structure, some sub-headings and a further draft would have helped.

A second Kahlos article closes off the collection by exploring how Roman identity became a foreign land to pagans from the fourth century, and the added complication of how non-Roman, Christian-but-Arian barbarians should be treated. That second idea probably could have been treated as a whole article in itself; the power dynamics inherent in the treatment of Arian Christian identity are not explored to the depth they deserve.

In spite of some apprehension at the idea of 'theory' and its underpinnings in cultural studies being brought into the study of history, this collection proves a very easy guide.

DAVID JAMES GRIFFITHS, *Canberra, ACT*

Katritzky, M. A., *Healing, Performance and Ceremony in the Writings of Three Early Modern Physicians: Hippolytus Guarinonius and the Brothers Felix and Thomas Platter* (History of Medicine in Context), Farnham, Ashgate, 2012; hardback; pp. 466; 40 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £70.00; ISBN 9780754667070.

In *Healing, Performance and Ceremony in the Writings of Three Early Modern Physicians*, M. A. Katritzky investigates the intersection between healing and performance in early modern Europe by means of a detailed and insightful consideration of the writings of three German-speaking early modern physicians: the Lutherans Felix (1536–1614) and Thomas Platter (1574–1628), and the Catholic Hippolytus Guarinonius (1571–1654). The cross-disciplinary approach provides important new insights into both theatre history and the history of medicine by focusing particularly on the ways medical practice was shaped by early modern performance culture. Katritzky critically analyses newly discovered archival material, and provides documentary evidence that has previously been inaccessible to non-German-literate scholars.

Katritzky begins by reminding us of the theatrical nature of healings rituals, such as the Royal Touch, public dissection, and public exorcisms, and their contribution to early modern political power systems. She gives particular attention to the intersection between the theatrical and scientific public display of so-called monstrous humans. This meeting of ceremony, spectacle, and healing is extended to cover the theatrical elements of the practices of astrologers, wise women, snake charmers, and the like. In particular, Katritzky's analysis of the writings and observations of the three physicians provides crucial insights into fairground selling of medicines and miracle cures by itinerant quack troupes who travelled the continent in the early modern period. Here Katritzky's study makes a valuable contribution to the growing scholarship on 'quack performance' as she provides a detailed

analysis of the performances of *commedia dell'arte* and clarifies the connections between quack medical practice and performance.

Katritzky's most valuable contribution in *Healing, Performance and Ceremony* is her erudite interpretation of theatrical performance and spectacle witnessed by the three physicians. Her elucidation of their private journals and medical writings focuses on observations of carnivals, court festivals, Jewish ceremony, fairground displays, annual markets, theatrical performances, and the *commedia dell'arte* in Europe. The physicians' life writings also include a wealth of detail on theatrical costumes and stage practice, and illuminate observations on stage magic and the marketing of medicine. Felix Platter's journal provides accounts of court spectacles witnessed during his duties as court physician to the Margrave of Baden. He provides rich insights into the festivals, ceremonies, and tournaments of early modern Protestant court life. Thomas Platter's travels to England, France, and Spain in the late sixteenth century resulted in observations on and interpretation of theatrical events and include, among other aspects of theatre culture, depictions of magic, medicine, and gender on the Elizabethan stage. Guarinonius's *Grewel*, published in 1610, provides details of the popular *commedia dell'arte*, and explains the stage routines of itinerant quack troupes within the context of public health and health-threatening sins and vices.

The contrasting medical interpretations of festive and theatrical culture of the Protestant Platter brothers, compared to those of the Catholic Guarinonius are especially revealing. Katritzky astutely shows how the different religious affiliations and social backgrounds of the physicians shaped their reactions to and perceptions of the festivals and performances that they observed and commented on. The more tolerant Platter brothers commended the therapeutic powers of spectacle and celebration, laughter, comedy, and music. They interpreted Carnival as a vibrant force capable of healing individuals and uniting a disparate society in joyous celebration. Guarinonius, on the other hand, feared the dangers to body and soul from the licentious behaviour and overindulgence encouraged by the 'carnal, bestial Carnival' (p. 73). Even so, when it came to his own health, Guarinonius acknowledged the healing power of laughter and admitted that attending even the more dubious carnivals could precipitate a cure for melancholy.

Katritzky's analysis of medical history, however, lacks a thorough understanding of the early modern medical marketplace and the multifarious identities of medical practitioners and could have benefited from the approaches of medical historians such as Margaret Pelling, Harold Cook, and Andrew Wear. Boundaries between unlicensed practitioners and learned physicians were permeable, to say the least, and frequently breached by people from all levels of society in search of affordable remedies. Similarly, the term 'quack' was a contentious one in the early modern period and

Katritzky gives insufficient consideration to the contemporary application of it. Popular healers were sought out by the general populace, but denigrated as ‘quacks’ by learned physicians resolved on enhancing their professional monopoly.

Despite this minor shortcoming *Healing, Performance and Ceremony* provides valuable insights into the flexible boundaries between performance and healing in the early modern period. Katritzky’s deft analyses of the writings of the three physicians significantly inform our understanding of the intersections between early modern theatrical and medical culture. She firmly establishes the invaluable contribution of life and travel writing to the history of theatre. Above all, Katritzky explores a neglected area of medical history with her thorough and engaging investigation of the way physicians interacted with the prevailing theatrical culture.

JUDITH BONZOL, *The University of Sydney*

Knight, Jeffrey T., *Bound to Read: Compilations, Collections, and the Making of Renaissance Literature (Material Texts)*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013; hardback; pp. 288; 33 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. US\$59.95, £39.00; ISBN 9780812245073.

This book focuses on a wide range of textual practices (compilation, collecting, arranging, and book-binding), showing how these had a defining and lasting influence not only in book production and reception, but also in writing itself, in literary reading, and in hermeneutics. Through its pages, we are reminded that bibliographical description has never been opposed to interpretation in the history of printed books, but rather that critics have chosen to see it as such. Drawing on a long and fruitful tradition of scholarship in book history, Jeffrey T. Knight demonstrates with great focus and an extraordinary wealth of examples the embodied nature of textual production. He also shows convincingly how reading and writing are decisively shaped and determined by the material and historical conditions (individuals, institutions, and structures) where they take place.

The archival material presented is priceless, starting with the first quotation and the first plate included in Knight’s book. The quote, taken from a table of verbs c. 1530, states the functional equivalence of editorial compiling and literary composition: ‘I Compyle: I make a boke as an auctour doth’. Knight goes on to provide ample and varied examples to illustrate the many ways in which this concomitance was explored in both directions, with authors acting as compilers or curators, and editors or collectors taking on different authorial roles. The above-mentioned plate is an etching, taken from Johann Comenius’s *Orbis sensualium pictus* (London, 1685), which shows in great detail the quasi-geometrical layout of a seventeenth-century bookshop,

with books being kept in horizontal stacks of unbound sheets, for readers to bind themselves in their preferred configuration, and with only about a third of the stock kept in ready-bound form, sitting vertically on the shelf, fore-edge out. Two points are thus made clear from the outset. First, that compiling was, in fact, a compositional activity – a fact often obliterated or made invisible by sanitised modern editions, or by institutional librarianship. Secondly, that binding was often left to the reader of the text, and linked to other practices such as compilation, commentary, selection, cropping, and miscellaneous assembly.

Knight's book is divided into two large sections that articulate cohesively a truly cornucopian array of textual practices, techniques, and procedures. First, the author presents different instances of textual setting and arranging from the point of view of the reader. The case of William Pugh's AB catalogue at the University of Cambridge and that of the Parker Register (Corpus Christi College, Cambridge) provide fascinating insights into the transition of books from private collections to institutional ownership. A fascinating chapter on Shakespeare follows, where the concept of 'material intertextuality' is applied in detail to more than a dozen documents that include manuscript copies, early printed materials, and different combinations of both. The examples are varied, always relevant, and arranged logically in a neat way that clearly explains the different processes of textual assembly and interpretation in hand. From that exuberant *silva textualis*, a clear idea emerges with ever more convincing and nuanced evidence: the reception and interpretation of Shakespeare was often established by the people who, in a very literal sense, *made* the books; by readers that lived in a precise historical context and that, by virtue of their reading activity, were also collectors, compilers, conservators, and curators actively engaged in the process of textual production.

A second large section entitled 'Writers', focuses on the role played by these material practices in the generation of new text through three successive chapters, dealing with the notions of transformative imitation, of the compiling self, and of a custom-made corpus. The examples chosen include verse and prose composition, and a range of genres and texts by Spenser, Watson, John Lilliat, Sidney, Montaigne, and Chaucer. This section will be of particular interest not only to the Renaissance scholar, but also to anyone working in the digital humanities, and to anyone – reader, writer, and interpreter – navigating the deep waters of our postmodern, hyper-textual age and being forced to impose order (and meaning) upon its abundance of liquid, malleable, fluid texts.

Quite clearly, most of the ideas that make up Knight's analysis are not new notions, and perhaps one of the greatest qualities of this book is the scope with which the author is able to frame the subject and his own position in a long-standing tradition of scholarship, mapping out its current

challenges and directions. The book acknowledges its intellectual links with Roger Chartier's *L'ordre des livres*, Michel Certeau's *L'invention du quotidien*, as well as with Foucauldian notions of the archival. The concept of 'material intertextuality' refers both to reception theory and to classical discussions on the nature of Renaissance literary imitation, bringing together the early modern and the postmodern. The book also benefits from specific notions of Renaissance textuality, such as the ideas of 'patchwork' (Linda Woodbridge) or 'framing' (Mary T. Crane), as well as the recent work of William Sherman, Jennifer Summit, and Alexandra Gillespie. The author explains clearly and with great focus the relevance of his contribution in this context, and includes an equally lucid epilogue that helps the reader frame the relevance of his approach for possible avenues of future exploration. *Bound to Read* is an extremely well researched piece of scholarship, an outstanding contribution to the history of the book, and a model for future research in material cultures and in Renaissance Literature.

CARLES GUTIÉRREZ-SANFELIU, *The University of Queensland*

Kopár, Lilla, *Gods and Settlers: The Iconography of Norse Mythology in Anglo-Scandinavian Sculpture* (Studies in the Early Middle Ages, 25), Turnhout, Brepols, 2012; hardback; pp. xl, 242; 55 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. €75.00; ISBN 9782503528540.

Gods and Settlers: The Iconography of Norse Mythology in Anglo-Scandinavian Sculpture is an important new addition to recent studies on the acculturation process of Scandinavians in England during the ninth and tenth centuries. In particular, it provides a detailed assessment of all known Anglo-Scandinavian sculptures that may include Norse mythological or heroic imagery.

The work is divided into two parts, 'Images' and 'Encounters'. The first focuses on the images on the stones, and examines whether any of them relate to Norse mythology. All figurative Anglo-Scandinavian stonework is considered, including those examples which were once thought to depict mythological scenes but have since been rejected by scholars such as Richard Bailey and James Lang. As may be expected, the Gosforth Cross receives the most attention and the discussion of the Cross is most impressive, including seven pages on the significance of the female attending the crucifixion, variously interpreted by scholars as Ecclesia, Mary Magdalene, or a valkyrie; Lilla Kopár suggests, however, that it may be the Norse goddess Hel. Indeed, she suggests that some of the other cup-bearing female figures may also represent Hel in her role of hostess rather than a valkyrie as is commonly supposed. To help the reader understand the scenes (possibly) being depicted in the corpus, Kopár provides background information on such figures as Sigurd the dragonslayer and Wayland the smith, drawing on pre- and post-

Viking Age sources as well as Viking Age Scandinavian images, especially those on picture stones on Gotland, plus skaldic poetry. Black-and-white photographs, of almost all the sculptures discussed are included, taken primarily from the Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture, which makes the detailed descriptions of the possible scenes being depicted easier to follow. This section includes a number of interesting ideas, including that the bound Christ figure known in post-conversion Scandinavia may have been influenced by the popularity of bound figures in the pre-Christian tradition.

'Encounters' provides necessary background information on the debate over the number of Scandinavian settlers, the state of the church during the settlement period, and the likely relationship between patron(s) and sculptor(s). Kopár offers important new insights into the intellectual framework of the sculptures, arguing that figurative thinking – a recurrence of patterns that are 'not a conscious interpretive method directed to scripture, but rather a mindset or mental furniture' (p. 172) – is a more useful tool for considering the works than typology. The 'table of possible correspondences' provided on p. 174 is helpful for understanding this system. Kopár also stresses that the sculptures under discussion are Christian monuments at Christian sites so they represent an integration of pagan gods and heroes into the Christian system. Therefore, the sculptures occurred during the middle phase of Christianisation, where traditional beliefs and lore were still recognised but were being accommodated within a new cultural tradition. Consequently, Kopár argues that the sculptures should not be viewed as products of Scandinavian communities but of mixed Anglo-Scandinavian ones, where both traditions were familiar. It is suggested that some of the sculptures required the intellectual engagement of the audience and that they acted as visual riddles inviting cross-referencing between different narratives. Indeed, 'every single attempt to interpret the iconography of these monuments was a step on the path of religious and cultural integration' (p. 207). The Gosforth Cross features heavily in this section, where it is argued that it may have served as a preaching cross, and that the otherwise out of place 'Hel' figure standing below and to the right of Christ in the crucifixion scene on the Cross helps to link the Christian and Scandinavian traditions.

For this reviewer, 'Encounters' was the really interesting part of Kopár's work, so it is unfortunate that 'Images' occupies approximately two-thirds of the text, leaving only sixty-seven pages to discuss the 'intellectual framework and social context of the artefacts', that was promised on the back cover. In particular, that only a 'brief overview rather than a detailed evaluation of the evidence' (p. 182) was offered was disappointing. This is not to diminish what was said during the final third of the work, but one would have liked to have had as much discussion devoted to the cultural, intellectual, and religious significance of these sculptures as there was to their description. Despite this

quibble, this is an important, well set out, and clearly argued work that brings us a step closer to understanding the multi-faceted process of acculturation that took place in Viking Age England.

SHANE MCLEOD, *The University of Stirling*

McInnis, David, *Mind- Travelling and Voyage Drama in Early Modern England* (Early Modern Literature in History), Houndmills, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012; hardback; pp. 256; R.R.P. £50.00; ISBN 9781137035356.

David McInnis argues that voyage dramas give the audience 'a kind of vicarious travel experience' (p. 1). The most fascinating part of his argument is his suggestion that, rather than being regarded as a primitive version of the twenty-first-century theatre, 'the early modern stage was a technologically advanced machine for imaginative travel' (p. 3). He uses the theory of distributed cognition to argue that costume, props, sound effects, and the play's dialogue all aided the audience's imagination to travel to distant lands.

Chapter 1 begins by analysing the *ars apodemica* or 'instructions for travel' treatises. McInnis finds in the *ars apodemica* the familiar idea of early modern travel as a potentially corrupting engagement with the exotic other. Yet, crucial to McInnis's argument is the notion that it is not the information per se being conveyed in the *ars apodemica* that is important. What McInnis terms 'mind-travel' enables 'the reading subject to *feel* the sensations of travel' rather than 'simply being entertained' (p. 35). In this context, McInnis adds the eighteenth-century notion of ideal presence to his argument, whereby a person is completely immersed by the imagination in a dreamlike state.

In the second half of the chapter, mind-travel and ideal presence are used to analyse choruses. The choric plea to invite audience participation actually encourages playgoers to use their imaginations to help create the play's exotic scene. McInnis goes one stage further to argue that choric scene setting helps transport the audience to an alternative reality within their minds.

In Chapter 2, Christopher Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* plays are analysed for their stress on desire. Despite the play's colonial or imperial depiction of the New World, McInnis claims that *Tamburlaine* is also concerned with the early modern desire to travel. By-passing the play's eponymous power-hungry conqueror, McInnis focuses on Marlowe himself. The playwright's inspirational use of Ortelius's *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* essentially sees Marlowe indulging imaginatively with exotic landscapes, an intoxicating experience he shares with his playgoers.

In Chapter 3, McInnis examines Ben Jonson's conservative attitudes to travel and Thomas Heywood's more positive evaluation. With Jonson, McInnis finds a similarity in attitudes towards theatre and travelling in that both are considered dangerously idle and corrupting pursuits. What is interesting

is that Jonson uses mind-travelling to educate his audience in Englishness, history, and morality. By contrast, Heywood had actually travelled abroad. In many of his plays, McNnis finds that Heywood uses the concept of travel as a fantasy of escape or indulgence for his characters.

Chapter 4 tackles McNnis's twin concerns of 'mind-travelling at the theatre and the staging of voyage drama' (p. 123). He finds in Richard Brome's *The Antipodes* an ideal play to extend his argument. Contrary to many critics who see only satire in Brome's play, McNnis argues 'that *The Antipodes* should be regarded as one of the most accomplished early modern travel plays' (p. 124). Through its protagonist Peregrine, he claims the play focuses on mind-travelling rather than physical travel. Peregrine's reading of *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville* leads to an enhanced appreciation of the over-familiar home, and the life-changing qualities that a change of scenery can offer.

In Chapter 5, McNnis investigates the correlation between painted scenery in the theatre and sightseeing abroad. He examines these similarities in plays by William Davenant, Saint Évremond, Sir Robert Howard, and John Dryden. Of particular interest is the *Periaktoi*, a revolving prism that could depict three different scenes. McNnis, though, is at pains to point out that painted scenery 'acts as a form of external memory' to aid the playgoer's imagination rather than replace it (p. 161).

Chapter 6 examines Aphra Behn's *The Widow Ranter* and *Oroonoko*. McNnis finds in Behn's voyage dramas a reinvention of older genres with which to address New World issues. Tragicomedy is used to depict English colonisation in terms 'of the domesticated exotic, not the colonised exotic' (p. 193). In the conclusion, McNnis argues for a reconsideration of voyage drama as a genre in its own right. He claims theatrical travel made sightseeing popular before overseas travel became available to the masses.

McNnis provides an important new insight into how travel was regarded in the early modern period. A strange omission from the bibliography is John Gillies's *Shakespeare and the Geography of Difference* (Cambridge University Press, 1994) that seems appropriate to McNnis's thesis. Even so, *Mind-Travelling and Voyage Drama in Early Modern England* is a ground-breaking study that will appeal to students and academics alike.

FRANK SWANNACK, *The University of Salford*

Mertens, Thom, Maria Sherwood-Smith, Michael Mecklenburg, and Hans-Jochen **Schiewer**, eds, *The Last Judgement in Medieval Preaching* (Sermo, 3), Turnhout, Brepols, 2013; hardback; pp. xxxiv, 185; R.R.P. €70.00; ISBN 9782503515243.

Marianne Cecilia Gaposchkin noted a few years ago that the literature on preaching in the later Middle Ages is vast and growing. Beryl Smalley, whose

work on Franciscan preaching in the fourteenth century was innovative at the time, might be surprised at the ways in which present-day historians think sermons can be used to illuminate aspects of past everyday life. As Nicole Beriou comments in her Introduction to another collection on sermons, they include attitudes to marriage, death, the body, sanctity, and women.

Only death and sanctity are considered in this volume. It is part of a series on patristic medieval and Reformation sermons and preaching that has sprung from one of the various distinct conference groups that have come together to study aspects of the role and function of the sermon in society, in this case the European research group established in Berlin in 1996. It is the much delayed publication of the papers presented at a conference held in Brussels and Antwerp in 2000 which may help explain why some of them have appeared elsewhere in a slightly different form.

Most of the contributors to this collection are involved in the production of *repertoria* of the surviving sermons in various vernacular languages, in emulation of Johannes Baptist Schneyer's massive *Repertorium der lateinischen Sermones des Mittelalters*. Although their chapters are directed to the specific issue of sermons on the Last Judgement, the *repertoria* in many cases shape their approach giving the manuscripts and their sources priority in the discussion of the way ideas about death and judgement vary depending on the place, the period, the audience, and the theological background of the sermon writer.

It is perhaps unfortunate that all but one of the chapters are concerned with Dominican writers as it is likely that different emphases would emerge from a study of Franciscan and other orders of preachers but these seem to preserve the circle around Beverley Mayne Kienzle and the International Medieval Sermon Studies Society. Christopher Burger's examination of an Augustinian sermon in Latin on the Advent of Christ as Judge, probably designed for the opening of a synod, is the only exception and he does not stress the distinctions.

Stephan Borgehammar is the only other author in this collection who considers Latin Sermons and in a somewhat disjointed piece expresses the hope that understanding of how the Latin and vernacular traditions interlock might help explain 'how that whole reality works' (p. 13) but so far this has eluded the specialists contributing to the volume.

Readers unfamiliar with the structure of sermon collections may be surprised at the relative paucity of references to the Day of Judgement in recorded sermons. Representations of the Day of Doom in medieval churches from the grand entrances on cathedrals to the humbler wall paintings in parish churches would suggest that consciousness both of particular judgement and of the Final Judgement was frequently present in medieval minds but sermons were tailored to the liturgical calendar. Although Veronica O'Mara shows in

her study of medieval English prose sermons that in England they were a popular category outside the set dates such as the second Sunday in Advent, in most vernacular collections commentary, as Maria Sherwood Smith shows, they were confined to the Sundays when the relevant gospel passages Matthew 25. 31–46, Luke 21. 10–11, 25 were the gospel readings. Preaching on Revelations was less common probably because as Carola Redzich explains in her examination of Johannes Nider's sermons on Revelations 22. 14–15 it was seen as a difficult text and one that often led people to heresy. She makes the important point that sermons on the Last Things were not necessarily associated with consideration of Eternal Life before the fifteenth century because the two concepts were derived from different exegetical traditions.

The authors look at the motifs that supplied the pegs on which the expositions were hung – the fifteen signs of the Doom, the 'Ubi Sunt', and the 'Dry Bones' – and examine the changes in interpretation offered by sermon writers from different backgrounds.

Jussi Hanska provides an interesting example of a sermon on a natural disaster that avoided the obvious apocalyptic explanations, using Old Testament texts and blamed God's anger at the sins of mankind. The final chapter by Michael Mecklenburg takes sermons away from the pulpit, considering how they differ from the performance of German Last Judgement plays popular in the Upper Rhine region in which the scene drawn from Matthew 25 includes other elements such as the fifteen signs, and ends with Christ refusing intercession for the damned from his mother. He concludes that the narrative problem of representing the future in an ecclesiastical setting was hard to surmount and explains the relative infrequency of sermons on the subject.

SYBIL M. JACK, *The University of Sydney*

Mortensen, Lars Boje and Tuomas M. S. **Lehtonen**, eds, *The Performance of Christian and Pagan Storyworlds: Non-Canonical Chapters of the History of Nordic Medieval Literature* (Medieval Identities: Socio-Cultural Spaces, 3), Turnhout, Brepols, 2013; hardback; pp. x, 448; 20 b/w illustrations, 6 b/w line art; R.R.P. €100.00; ISBN 9782503542362.

This engaging collection explores continuities and discontinuities, relationships, influences, and cultural connections across a range of early medieval Nordic literature, spanning, geographically, from Iceland to east of the Baltic, from Finland to Byzantium, and classical influences from the sunny south. Along the way it considers the characteristics of, and transitions between, oral and literary cultures and the pre-Christian and Christian worlds.

This work explores the non-canonical in 'Nordic medieval literature', looking in most part (there being a couple of exceptions) at material that is not commonly studied in the standard academic curriculum. Moreover, this

volume turns a 'performative lens' onto this material, focusing on the role and importance of the 'performance' of text – the circulation, reception, revision, and development of literary material – in ethno-cultural practices, and the role that performance and literary practices play in forming and maintaining social and cultural identity.

The exceptions involve discussions of the prose *Edda* and the *Íslendingasögur*, but even in the articles that deal with this material, the treatment is non-canonical. Here the authors discuss textual variability and instability, the importance of understanding the array of performative realisations, and the role of traditional referentiality against a modern reader's literary sensibilities and expectations.

The volume divides into four parts. The first is concerned with Latin literacy, and the impact of medieval liturgy on the vernacular. Åslaug Ommundsen traces the localisation of Latin liturgy and the role of Saint Olaf in establishing local liturgical relevance. Tuomas Heikkilä considers the expansion of medieval Finnish literacy (both Latin and vernacular) not just in terms of religion and sacred practices, but in strengthening civic order and secular administration. In the third chapter in this part, Tuomas M. S. Lehtonen looks at the text *Ramus virens olivarum*. It negotiates the divide between the vernacular and the Latinate, where the Latin original has moved into vernacular Finnish, establishing a 'vernacular oral culture ... vividly infused by Catholic Christianity ... paradoxically recorded in script' (p. 130), where 'written, aural, chanted, and performed Christian traditions in Latin lived side by side with syncretistic oral traditions' (p. 133).

The second section frames pagan stories within a literary Christian discourse. Both Jonas Wellendorf and Henrik Jansen review variance among the *Edda* manuscripts, and consider the apparatus that readers bring to their reading, with Wellendorf looking at the 'cultural qualifications' that a readership is understood to have possessed. Jansen argues that the divergence between orality and literacy is not just a simple pre-Christian/Christian dichotomy, as twelfth- and thirteenth-century Icelandic culture, both oral and literate, was clearly Christian. Jansen also challenges the common idea that Snorri's work reflects a pre-Christian worldview. In the section's third chapter, Lauri Harvilahti locates St Olaf's hagiography in the context of folk religion, and emphasises the importance of understanding genre in religious and ideological practices, changing to accommodate social values. Harvilahti usefully configures genre as contingent on culture, and explores the interpretation and adaptation of genres within an oral/literate dynamic.

The third section deals with textual performance codifying social discipline, values, and behaviours. Aidan Conti considers the practical balance of liturgy against sermon and the multifocal nature of audience in early Scandinavian church performance. Slavica Ranković challenges the modern

reader to make sense of the paradoxically different and yet same characters (such as Þorgerðr Egilssdóttir in both *Laxdæla saga* and *Egils saga*) and objects (such as *Bergr* the sword in both *Vatnsdæla saga* and *Grettis saga*) across different sagas, using for insight the iterative and socially embedded sense of saga as ‘performance’.

Also in the third section, Irma-Riitta Järvinen tracks the early occurrences of St Anne in Finnish and Karelian religion and folklore, and the varied role she has played in cultural terms, with reflexes in folkloric performative customs, while Linda Kaljundi takes a contextual, sociological, and historiographical view of ritual and performance associated with the thirteenth-century Chronicle of Henry of Livonia. Noteworthy in Kaljundi’s analysis is the importance of recognising motivations and associated performative contexts: the Chronicle being put to use for missions, for the battlefield, and in establishing history.

The final section is focused on cultural tradition and the performance of oral poetry with Pertti Anttonen taking a comparative approach to the thirteenth-century English ‘Judas’ and the Finnish oral ballad ‘St Henry’ based on the thirteenth-century Latin narrative *Legenda sancti Henrici*. Anttonen looks at these ballads in the context of social values, behaviours, martyrdom cults, and sacred space, and discusses issues such as the misogyny of the motif of the deceitful woman, and the role of Judas in fulfilling the divine plan.

The last two chapters are explicitly concerned with gendering the song and the role of women. Else Mundal traces mourning women from a range of textual evidence, with compelling suggestions around the unrecorded obscene songs referred to by Adam of Bremen, and links with fertility cults. Fertility cults also appear in the last chapter in this book, in which Senni Timonen assesses the Finnish-Karelian ‘Song of Mary’ and its variants in the context of apocryphal and folk-religious Marian texts to expose a polysemous synthesis of the sacred and the profane, and the oral and the literary. Timonen traces the folk development of reflexes of Christian mythopoeics in the oral cultures in which the Song of Mary flourished.

RODERICK McDONALD, *Swansea University*

Muchembled, Robert, *A History of Violence: From the End of the Middle Ages to the Present*, trans. Jean Birrell, Cambridge, Polity, 2012; paperback; pp, vi, 377; R.R.P. AU\$41.95; ISBN 9780745647470.

Robert Muchembled has explored violence throughout his career in a series of studies of the region of Artois and of France more broadly, and his key arguments are presented as a unified thesis here in the English translation of his 2008 *Une Histoire de la violence* (Seuil).

Significantly, what Muchembled really means by violence is something much more particular. His interest is homicide, a crime whose value is in its shared meaning across time and European cultures which makes it measurable for the kind of large-scale analysis intended here. As such, the changing cultural definitions and nature of many other violent behaviours are not examined. With this starting premise, the answers that can be ascertained are necessarily broad-brush on the one hand and limited on the other.

Moreover, there are frequent slippages and generalisations about what violence means and does as a result. For example, the focus on homicide concentrates attention on the cultural codes and behaviours of a certain type of young male offender (and victim). This provides valuable insights but Muchembled's broader claims that violence is in decline in the modern era really only hold if we understand it as a particular act that is carefully controlled by legal institutions. What of boxing, domestic, and verbal forms of violence? Muchembled, however, claims his thesis goes further since, for example, there has been no 'major military conflagration' in Europe since 1945 (p. 304).

Muchembled's overarching argument is that state intervention, from municipal action to legislative and punitive regimes, has been crucial since the Middle Ages in reducing violence in everyday life. Changing cultural codes of (masculine) conduct filtered from the elite down to the peasantry, except for a small proportion (of young men) for whom status and identity were forged through violence. The continuing power of honour culture is one example.

After defining violence and its capacity for measurement, Muchembled examines violent youth cultures of the Middle Ages and the involvement of urban organisation in shaping conduct. He identifies a changing sentiment towards violence from 1500–1600 and examines first resistance to it, then widespread acceptance over the period 1650 to 1950. Muchembled argues that sensationalist narratives in popular literature and culture helped to satisfy latent aggression and desire for morbid thrill, shifting homicide from reality to fantasy.

Much of his material naturally comes from previous studies of Artois and France, and women are very much the second sex in this analysis. They are rarely present as perpetrators, featuring largely in the discussion of infanticide, nor are 'daughters of Eve' often victims for, Muchembled suggests, 'when they are struck by men, it tends to be with a degree of moderation, as the latter often avoid sustained attacks in their faces, bellies or reproductive organs' (p. 2). This may reflect their statistical representation but seems a lost opportunity to explore gendered, as opposed to masculine, dimensions of homicide in more detail.

The scholarship of violence is vast. Muchembled explores philosophical and psychological approaches in considering long-term aggressive behavioural

trends. He alludes to rather than engages directly with research by historians, and the more recent cultural analyses of historical violence focused on close readings and contexts is not the aim here.

Much of Muchembled's work in this area will already be known to early modern historians, perhaps making his readership here those from other disciplines. A delay of five years in translating the original work means that it inevitably cannot engage with the most recent research in the field. It is an ambitious work, reflecting the achievement of an impressive career, but whether it is equally the springboard for future research in this area, for historians or for other scholars of violence, is less certain.

SUSAN BROOMHALL, *The University of Western Australia*

Nagy, Joseph Falaky, ed., *Writing Down the Myths* (Cursor Mundi, 17), Turnhout, Brepols, 2013; hardback; pp. x, 326; 12 b/w illustrations, 2 b/w tables; R.R.P. €80.00; ISBN 9782503542188.

Writing Down the Myths contains a collection of recent scholarly research relating to mythography. Rather than focusing on the myths themselves, each chapter aims to do exactly what the title says, that is, critically address the activity of writing down the myths, together with how this has affected their preservation, interpretation, and modern understanding. *Writing Down the Myths* does not restrict itself to one period of time or one geographical area. Instead, its chapters demonstrate that the questions faced by scholars exist across the field of study, irrespective of place or time, and this strengthens the academic reliability of the book.

While the chapters cover a wide range of themes, all chapters will be of interest to any scholar interested in myths and their origins. For medievalists and early modern historians, approximately half of the volume is of specific significance. Among these, several stand out. The first such chapter is that by Jan Ziokowski, 'Medieval Latin Mythography as Death and Resurrection of Myth', which argues that myth and mythography have been underrepresented in medieval Latin studies at the expense of classical works. Ziokowski also considers the link between the survival, and more correctly, non-survival, of myth as a result of religious change.

'Snorri Sturlason and the Construction of Norse Mythography', by Margaret Clunies Ross, aims to place Snorri Sturlason's writing in its medieval context through a discussion of its sources and reception in both Iceland and in mainland Europe. The chapter includes an interesting look at the *Edda* as an educational device during Snorri's life, with a suggestion that it was in fact more useful in teaching the art of Norse poetry than as a record of Norse mythology. The chapter also argues that Snorri's work was more creative than previously recognised, even suggesting that the *Edda* is one of the most original works of the period.

Gísli Sigurðsson's chapter, 'Thor and the Midgard Serpent: Whom Should We Read, Snorri or Finnur?', is of particular note for readers with an interest in the study of the supernatural in texts. Sigurðsson considers the problems associated with determining the extent to which the sources represent traditional knowledge and beliefs, against that which was created by those who first recorded the texts in writing. Again, the chapter also recognises the poetic value of such myths.

While the title of Stephanie W. Jamison's chapter, 'India and the Graphy O' Myth', suggests that it is solely concerned with Indian myths and their origins, this is far from the case. This chapter begins with an enlightening discussion of the similarities in the first written recordings of myths across cultures. Jamison's main discussion centres on the *Rig Veda*, to demonstrate how the generally accepted models of mythology and mythography do not fit ancient and medieval Indian texts. This thought-provoking chapter challenges readers to think about whether the sources within their own area of study actually fit within set guidelines.

Other chapters in the book utilise examples as wide-ranging as Hittite, Greek, Roman, Celtic, and early modern Japanese mythology to demonstrate their arguments, and while the book is written to a high academic standard, the reader does not need to possess expert knowledge in these cultures to be able to appreciate the chapters. Individual authors are successful in their discussions of the problems and theories of the study of mythography related to their own particular area of research, while still providing interesting ideas that could be extended into others.

Overall, the volume is successful in creating a starting point for ongoing scholarship and discussion related to the activity of writing down myths. Anyone interested in the links between history, mythology, and the action of writing down of myths across all cultures and times will find *Writing Down the Myths* an interesting read.

JANE-ANNE DENISON, *The University of Highlands and Islands*

Nocentelli, Carmen, *Empires of Love: Europe, Asia, and the Making of Early Modern Identity*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013; cloth; pp. ix, 262; 10 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. \$US55.00, £36.00; ISBN 978081244830.

Empires of Love explores the important yet still underexplored topic of sexual relationships between Europeans and the peoples of 'India' (primarily the Indian subcontinent, Burma, and Southeast Asia) in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century representation. Considering a range of poetic, dramatic, and pamphlet sources alongside private correspondence, travel literature, and administrative documents, Carmen Nocentelli succeeds in illuminating

a relatively neglected realm of European literary and cultural history. Her scope is wide and her aims ambitious.

By piecing together sources from English, Dutch, Portuguese, French, Italian, and Spanish exploits in the Indies, Nocentelli seeks to identify changing European perspectives on inter-ethnic intimacy and their role in helping to shape emergent concepts of race. Moreover, she suggests that the increased opportunities for erotic encounters between western men and Asian women during this period of colonial expansion caused Europeans to confront their expectations regarding normative sexuality with new urgency. As Valerie Traub has argued, the era saw the development of a European ideal of 'domestic heterosexuality', which shifted justifications for sexual activity from reproduction toward an ideal of marital love and conjugal desire. Nocentelli's chief addition to sexual historiography is her contention that this shift was influenced by interest in, and ultimately rejection of, inter-ethnic relationships in a process that took place over two centuries and involved multiple forms of literary representation.

The ostensibly transparent terms 'race' and 'sexuality' are revealed to be not only unstable and in formation during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but also mutually constitutive. Race, Nocentelli persuasively contends, was in this era 'less a category of biological difference than a broad spectrum of practices and discourses concerned with religious affiliation, cultural habitus, geographic origin, and humoral composition'. Meanings of sexuality must similarly be rethought for this context, signifying not sexual orientation so much as 'an interlocking set of marital injunctions and proscriptions against nonreproductive sex' (p. 5). Racial and sexual concepts thus became interwoven, particularly in colonial contexts where normative sexual marital regimes were challenged not only by observation of practices Europeans found culturally alienating, from penile modification and sodomy to polygyny, but also by erotic and reproductive relationships between western men and Asian women. Nocentelli explores the diversity of European responses to such challenges through her sensitive readings of texts and images, indicating a gradual shift away from promotion of intermarriage towards a hardening of attitudes to cross-ethnic sex within both official and populist representations. While each chapter incorporates examination of several sources, greatest attention is paid in turn to Pigafetta's *Relazione* (c. 1526), Camões's *Os Lusíadas* (1572), Linschoten's *Itinerario* (1596), Argensola's *Conquista* (1609), Fletcher's *Island Princess* (1621), Head's *English Rogue* (1665), and Dryden's *Amboyna* (1673). The richness of the corpus testifies to the importance of the themes of travel, cross-cultural encounter, and inter-ethnic relationships in the canon of early modern European literature.

There is no Conclusion and so the potentially broader implications of the book's readings remain underdeveloped. The suggestion that European experiences in Asia and their re-imaginings in literary and dramatic form were instrumental in shaping the ideal of 'domestic heterosexuality' remains tantalising yet unresolved. The lack of closure is somewhat frustrating, as is the author's preference for an at times indirect prose style. Still, there is much to praise in this innovative and highly intelligent study and I hope it may signal a move to greater scholarly interest in premodern European encounters with Asia and their role in reshaping national, ethnic, and sexual boundaries in Western cultures.

KIM M. PHILLIPS, *The University of Auckland*

Padel, O. J., *Arthur in Medieval Welsh Literature* (Writers of Wales), new edn, Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2013; paperback; pp. 166; R.R.P. US\$25.00; ISBN 9780708326251.

Arthur in Medieval Welsh Literature is an Important Book. While slight in appearance, its survey of medieval Welsh literary references to Arthur provides a useful compendium for those whose Welsh is a little rusty or even non-existent. Certainly its importance is underscored by its academic reputation: it is a fairly standard 'go to' for medieval Welsh and Arthurian study, and I have a fond nostalgia for it based on its appearance on several postgraduate reading lists. The publication of a second edition underscores its ubiquitousness, but unfortunately, the overall approach to updating the text is poorly lacking.

The Introduction remains a brief and satisfying frame of what O. J. Padel's scholarship explores – namely, the various depictions of Arthur and his associated legendarium – across a variety of Welsh texts. The Introduction makes it plain that those looking for deeper analysis and further connections will need to turn to Cornish, Breton, or southern Scottish folklore.

The first section of the book briefly deals with the earliest Welsh texts, the *Historia Brittonum*, the *Gododdin* and other early heroic lament poetry, and the Welsh Annals. A simple dating of each text is given, with some mention of textual issues, before the focus is shifted to the portrayal of Arthur in the given text. Padel highlights early issues, such as the contradictory portrayal of Arthur in the *Historia Brittonum*, and makes a few rudimentary comments about other secondary analyses of the text, before moving on. Padel only mentions other scholars to gloss over or refute their interpretations and his assessments are not adequately contextualised within the scholarly disputes. This makes it hard to assess for ourselves and underscores the limitations of the book.

The next section, dealing with *Culhwch* and the Gatekeeper poem, continues this pattern. The analysis is solid, highlighting the deficiencies in considering a Welsh literary approach that typically casts Arthur not as a central figure but as a supporting character, designed to evoke a certain ethos or suggest a certain setting. Padel uses direct quotations from the text to allow for close reading, but does not make clear which version of the text he relies upon. At this point, Padel draws connections from the overall treatment of Arthur and his band, linking them to the Irish Fianna cycle of stories, and so locates Arthur in a supernatural, monster-infested 'band of brothers' routine, somewhat different from the battle lord of the earlier histories.

What follows is a range of Welsh texts relating to the central Middle Ages. This includes a consideration of 'Preiddau Annwn', various Saints' Lives, Welsh poetry of the period, and the work of Gerald of Wales. This section also uses the Welsh prophetic poetry of the period to examine a key facet of the portrayal of Arthur: his invariably explained absence. As in the work of Gildas, the Welsh prophetic poetry does not mention Arthur, as supernatural celebrant, war leader, or once and future king. In casting others into the role of restorer of Wales, the prophetic tradition perhaps underscores the use of Arthur by Bretons or Cornish, or as some sort of formative Other to the English. These are uses that Welsh literature does not posit, but literature about the Welsh says they do. Yet the texts discussed in this section have their own complications. The Saints' Lives cast Arthur as a secular ruler and administrator of justice; while secular he is not evil and he does not oppose the saints so much as form part of society. He is even a 'king', possibly. The elegiac poetry and Gerald of Wales echo previous uses of Arthur: the warrior-comparison and the supernatural folk hero, respectively.

The next three sections of the survey examine dialogue poems, the matter of Britain, and the context of the Welsh material within a continuing tradition. They continue the use of quotations and analysis that have given the rest of the book its strengths and weaknesses. Again, lengthy excerpts are used without even a short assessment of their textual transmission or the complications of translation. Again, Padel's assessment is not contextualised and there is not even a brief mention of other secondary sources noted previously in the text; a rather problematic limitation of this particular survey-style approach.

The last two sections provide an overview of the changing depiction of Arthurian characters ('Some Arthurian characters') and a conclusion ('The Arthur of the Welsh'). Both act as backbones to the entire piece, summarising and justifying. The second edition includes a separate bibliography tacked on to the first one, with the note that none of the main text was changed from edition to edition. Although this remains an Important Book to students and

scholars of medieval Welsh literature, the second edition does not make any compelling new additions to the field.

DAVID JAMES GRIFFITHS, *Canberra, ACT*

Pender, Stephen and Nancy S. **Struever**, eds, *Rhetoric and Medicine in Early Modern Europe* (Literary and Scientific Cultures of Early Modernity), Farnham, Ashgate, 2012; hardback; pp. 310; R.R.P. £65.00; ISBN 9781409430223.

This collection of ten essays, edited by Stephen Pender and Nancy S. Struever, seeks to 'address the relationship between rhetoric and medicine' (p. 23) by examining a wide range of texts and placing them within their cultural and intellectual communities. In doing so, this volume shows how closely rhetoric and medicine are intertwined in both the theory and practice of medicine in the early modern period. The essays are framed by an Introduction by Pender and an Afterword by Struever.

The volume opens with two essays that demonstrate how physicians used rhetoric as a mechanism to promote cures in the early modern period. Pender takes an historical view of how classical authorities, such as Hippocrates, Plato, and Aristotle, showed the relationship between medicine and rhetoric. He argues that this relationship exists because rhetoric was recognised as a means of determining how clinical reasoning could be shaped. This reasoning took not only the condition of the body into account, it was also employed to examine the condition of the soul and the polity. Through this discussion, Pender introduces two of the major themes of later essays: the early modern view of the passions of the soul; and how ideas of dissection influenced ideas of political frameworks in the early modern period. Pender also examines how these classical ideas of rhetoric and medicine influenced early modern physicians, not only in developing systematic processes to identify disease but also as an aid to healing. The physicians used their rhetorical skills as a means 'to conjure, to grasp through "mental sight", the absent presence of disease' (p. 59).

In the second essay, Jean Dietz Moss describes how rhetoric was employed to promote the benefits of one cure over another. This essay examines how pamphlets and other advertising material persuaded many that taking the waters at Bath was more efficacious than at other spas. It was this promise of cure that fuelled Bath's popularity as its attractions broadened to become a social venue to meet the right people and enjoy other entertainments.

The next three chapters examine the intersection between anatomy, politics, and language. Richard Sugg explores how the definition of dissection not only related to anatomy but was also used to dissect the necessary attributes of statecraft. Andrea Carlino looks at how language shaped the development

of anatomical texts by focusing on Andreas Vesalius's milieu in Padua, arguing that these texts were based on humanist rather than scientific principles. Daniel M. Gross looks at how modern political science evolved from the humanist principles that sought to 'reshape humankind' (p. 129) rather than scientific knowledge that described or experimented with humankind.

The next three chapters look at the notion of the passions in early modern thought. In her contribution, Amy Schmitter examines how the passions could be used to define an individual's vulnerability and examines the differences between Descartes's and Spinoza's methods of overcoming these vulnerabilities. Guido Gillioni discusses how Cardano saw the use of rhetoric in the practice of the early modern physician, while Julie R. Solomon explores the concept of the passions and their effect on the workings of the early modern mind.

In the final two essays, both Grant Williams and Struever return to a discussion of language. Williams investigates how Burton's attempts to develop a system of defining melancholy by its symptoms were frustrated. Each description of melancholy he collected from a sufferer produced a new depiction of symptoms, making it almost impossible to systematically describe the common symptoms of this condition. Struever discusses how Bertini used rhetoric and language to renegotiate the status of medicine in society.

Overall, the essays are well written, but are rather dense and occasionally difficult to read, and previous knowledge of the source texts is generally assumed. Recommended to early modern scholars who have a solid grounding in the history and philosophy of medicine in this period, this volume would be very valuable.

DIANA JEFFERIES, *The University of Western Sydney*

Pugh, Tison and Susan **Aronstein**, eds, *The Disney Middle Ages: A Fairy-Tale and Fantasy Past* (New Middle Ages), Houndmills, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012; hardback; pp. 304; R.R.P. £50.00; ISBN 9780230340077.

Tison Pugh and Susan Aronstein's edited collection explores the multiple ways in which the Walt Disney Company's products, from theme parks to animated films and websites, reimagine the Middle Ages. This contribution to the growing number of explorations of popular culture medievalisms is one of the most targeted to date. As a result, it does justice to the depth and breadth of its subject, one of the largest and most influential entertainment companies in the world.

Like the majority of contemporary scholarship on popular culture medievalism, the aim of the collection is, as Tison Pugh states in his

Introduction, 'not to lament [Disney's] exploitation of the Middle Ages for corporate ends, but to examine how and why these medieval visions prove so readily adaptable to themed entertainments' (p. 2). Pugh lays out terminology that is taken up in the majority of later chapters, arguing that Disney's medievalisms enable 'retrogressive and transtemporal transformations' of past, present, and future (p. 4).

The volume is divided into three parts. The first, 'Building a Better Middle Ages: Medievalism in the Parks', has three chapters which explore cartography, castles, and pilgrimage, and does the most to compare the medieval and the modern directly. In the first, Stephen Yandell reads Disney theme parks alongside medieval *mappa mundi*, arguing that both present 'a world that embodies perfection and allows one to be simultaneously lost' (p. 35). Martha Bayless notes the geographical and conceptual centrality of castles in Disney theme parks, and shows that in films they are gendered, domestic, and transforming spaces that guarantee family life and happiness to the girls who enter them. The final chapter in the section, by Susan Aronstein, considers Disney parks as the sites of modern pilgrimages, putting them in conversation with medieval pilgrimage to explore the place of the material and commercial in what are principally designated as spiritual journeys.

The second part, 'The Historical Middle Ages', has five chapters that examine Disney's fraught relationship with medieval history. Based on a series of interviews with members of the public, Paul Sturtevant shows that Disney films 'influence individuals' understanding of the Middle Ages' (p. 92), a concerning trend given their clear ideological underpinnings and deliberate transtemporality. Erin Felicia Labbie discusses animation, alchemy, and Disney's use and representation of technology through its three iterations of the 'The Sorcerer's Apprentice' tale. Rob Gossedge examines Disney's Arthurian animations, considering them as examples of American triumphalism and *translatio*. Kevin J. Harty offers a comprehensive account of Disney's multiple iterations of the Robin Hood story, arguing that they all share a general 'opposition to tyranny and oppression', but that 'politics of any kind is soft-pedaled' (p. 149). Amy Foster turns to Disney's science fictional, 'futuristic' medievalisms, arguing that they support the 'American way' of progress, modernity, and technology.

'Disney Princess Fantasy Faire', the final section of the volume, has five chapters that explore the varied medievalisms of Disney Princess culture. Clare Bradford's chapter explores Disney's Princess website, demonstrating that it 'positions young girls to regard traditional forms of femininity as preferred modes of being female' and encourages them to conform to those modes by consuming Disney products. Kathleen Coyne Kelly examines Disney's construction of nature and ecology as both medievalised past and hoped-for future in *Snow White* and *Sleeping Beauty*. Ilan Mitchell-Smith shows

that Disney's non-White Princesses are constructed through racial – racist – and cultural stereotypes, but that the movies in which they appear also 'use racially and culturally specific medieval pasts to offer a fantasy in which irresolvable tensions in contemporary American female identity can somehow coexist' (p. 222). Kelly's and Mitchell-Smith's chapters provide working examples of the kinds of intersectional investigations that are increasingly concerning to feminist scholars. Allison Craven examines Disney's adaptation of *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame*, exploring its representation of the cathedral itself, and showing that the film draws on a long history of Orientalism with its depiction of the gypsy Esmerelda. Maria Sachiko Cecire's chapter focuses on a single film, *Enchanted* (2007), arguing that it 'celebrates female intuition and creativity so long as they do not undermine the patriarchal structures of Disney's previous Princess films' (p. 255).

In addition to the Medieval Studies and Medievalism specialists who have contributed to the volume, there are a number of chapters from scholars whose work mainly sits in other fields, which brings new perspectives. The volume is grounded in theory and the scholarship is of a high standard while also being accessible, and individual chapters may be useful at undergraduate level. It will be of interest not only to scholars of medievalism, but to those working in gender studies and popular culture studies more broadly as well.

HELEN YOUNG, *The University of Sydney*

Sigurðsson, Jón Viðar and **Thomas Småberg**, eds, *Friendship and Social Networks in Scandinavia, c. 1000–1800* (Early European Research, 5), Turnhout, Brepols, 2013; cloth; pp. viii, 312; R.R.P. €80.00; ISBN 9782503542485.

Though appearing in a series 'founded by the Australian Research Council Network for Early European Research, and now directed by The University of Western Australia Centre for Medieval and Early Modern Studies', this is very much a Scandinavian volume. With the exception of Joanna Skórzewska, who obtained a PhD from the University of Oslo, all the contributors are said to have an ongoing association with a university in Denmark, Iceland, Norway, or Sweden, and all the contributions focus on these countries (and usually on just one of them). All, however, are written in excellent English, and only one, that by Nanna Damsholt, is said to be a translation.

Following an Introduction in which the editors consider previous scholarship on friendship and its relation to power structures, and briefly outline the achievement of each contributor to the volume, there are twelve essays, arranged with one striking exception in basically chronological order. Up to nine might be broadly regarded as dealing with Old Norse subject matter, though in many of these the focus is not the traditional Old Norse one

on Iceland. When saga literature is considered, the emphasis is on what it tells us about the society in which it was created, and about the original audiences.

Lars Hermanson in 'Holy Unbreakable Bonds: Oaths and Friendship in Nordic and Western European Societies c. 900–1200' ranges over a geographically wide area but focuses on oaths. His attention to sociological theory is far from unique in the volume, but seems greater than average. In contrast, Jón Viðar Sigurðsson ('The Changing Role of Friendship in Iceland, c. 900–1300') focuses on the chieftains of the medieval Icelandic Commonwealth and the period immediately following, aiming, as he puts it, 'to pull together some of my main conclusions and ideas' (p. 43) from previous work. Joanna A. Skórzewska ('The Motif of Friendship in Vernacular Icelandic Hagiography') devotes considerable attention to the remarkable Guðmundr Arason (Bishop of Holar in Iceland 1203–37) and his friends (including the saints). In the volume's fourth essay, Randi Bjørshol Wærdahl ('Friends or Patrons? Powerful Go-Betweens in the Norwegian Realm in the High Middle Ages') deals with Icelanders but focuses on the Norwegian court.

'The Reception and Adaptation of Courtly Culture in Old Norse Society: Changing Conceptions of Hierarchy and Networks in Two Versions of *Tristrams saga*' by Hans Jacob Orning is mainly a study of the Norwegian *Tristrams saga ok Ísöndar*, dated to 1226, and the Icelandic *Saga af Tristram ok Ísodd*, usually dated to the fourteenth century. Mia Münster-Swendsen's 'Educating the Danes: Anglo-Danish Connections in the Formative Period of the Danish Church, c. 1000–1150' is perhaps more an interesting piece of historical detective work than a study of friendship. It is followed by Nanna Damsholt's 'Masculinities and Friendship', which employs the *Gesta Danorum* of Saxo Grammaticus and the letters of Abbot Vilhelm of Æbelholt to explore understandings of gender and friendship in Denmark around 1200. Thomas Småberg ('The Language of Masculine Friendship: Idealism and Political Realism in a Swedish Fourteenth-Century Rhyming Chronicle') focuses on friendship and chivalry in *Erikskrönikan*, a work that, he suggests, 'played a role in the transformation of the Swedish magnate group into the emerging Swedish nobility of the early fourteenth century' (p. 208).

Three essays with a focus on the early modern period follow. Gunner Lind ('The Friendship of Kings: Friendship and Clientelism around the Kings of Denmark, 1600–1750') considers the kings' relationship with various groups of friends who were mostly also their servants, and how these varied over time. Both Ola Teige ('Friends, Brokers and the King: A Norwegian Merchant's Informal Political Networks in Copenhagen in the Early Eighteenth Century') and Bård Frydenlund ('The Value of Friendship in Trade and Political Networks: An Interactive View of the Late Eighteenth-Century Urban Elite of Christiania') provide case studies, of an individual and a family respectively, dealing in both cases with very wealthy Christiania timber merchants.

The final essay, Helgi Þorláksson's 'Friends, Patrons, and Clients in the Middle Ages' takes us back to the medieval Icelandic Commonwealth. It also discusses several though by no means all the essays presented in the book, sometimes taking issue with the views presented, notably those of Jón Viðar Sigurðsson.

Despite a few apparently confused footnotes (pp. 45–46, p. 132) and the absence of an index, this is an attractively presented volume. Scholars studying the concept of friendship and the many different forms that it has taken on over time, often unlike our usual modern understanding, will value the volume, but most readers of *Parergon* are likely to find one or more essays of interest.

JOHN KENNEDY, *Charles Sturt University*

Siraisi, Nancy G., *Communities of Learned Experience: Epistolary Medicine in the Renaissance* (Singleton Center Books in Premodern Europe), Baltimore, MD, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013; hardback; pp. 176; 4 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. US\$45.00; ISBN 9781421407494.

Nancy Siraisi's book is founded on the Singleton Distinguished Lecture Series given at the Johns Hopkins University in 2010. After a brief Introduction, the work comprises three chapters. In the first, 'Contexts and Communication', Siraisi points out that there are substantial surviving collections of the Latinate correspondence of physicians and natural historians, a large proportion of which were published. She argues that the letters 'embody the notion of free communication among equals inherent in the concept of the Republic of Letters' (p. 3). A considerable correspondence took place across the Alps, between Northern Italy and the German States.

Siraisi draws on the correspondence of various well-known sixteenth-century physicians who published their letters and makes it clear that these physicians saw letter writing as a means to various ends. These included the established practice of giving individual medical advice to patients and other physicians, and also furthering their own connections, enhancing their career prospects, and engaging in discussion of contentious medical issues. The latter was conducted for the most part with decorum appropriate to humanist ideals, but at times became heated, even antagonistic. The subject matter of the letters was not always confined to medical issues, but ranged into natural philosophy, natural history, and the exchange of books and specimens. Particularly as a result of the impact of Paracelsus, even religion became a topic of discourse. This variety of interests expressed in the correspondence places such physicians within the Republic of Letters.

The two following chapters consider specifically Siraisi's chosen exemplars of the German physician, Johannes Lange, and the Italian, Orazio

Augenio. This choice has enabled her to cover a large part of the sixteenth century, with these physicians operating in different geographical, political, and confessional environments. Both men were, however, typical products of the Renaissance medical training provided by the universities. They studied arts before learning a medicine founded on Hippocratic and Galenic principles.

Lange was born in Löwenberg in Silesia and completed his arts studies at Leipzig. He undertook his formal medical studies at Bologna and Pisa during which time he also made visits to other medical centres in northern Italy. He followed this with a position as a Court physician at Heidelberg in the Rhineland Palatinate, which he held for more than forty years until his death. Lange was a prolific writer, providing consultations to patients and other physicians, and entered into medical discussions and disputes. His letters included a large number of 'secret remedies' (p. 49). While he had various networks of contacts with whom he corresponded in Germany and Switzerland, Siraisi comments that 'there does not seem to be any evidence ... to suggest that he corresponded with anyone in Italy after his return to Germany' (p. 53). That of course does not mean that, once published, his letters were not read widely. His letters were contemporaneously claimed to be 'useful for the Republic of Letters in general ... for all students of literature, as well as for medicine and natural philosophy' (p. 40). On the other hand, according to Siraisi, 'his ideas about medicine and much else were, unhappily, not shaped by ideals of humanist learning, but instead strongly influenced by social and religious attitudes of his time and place' (p. 60).

Augenio was born in le Marche, part of the Papal States. It is not known where he obtained his medical degree, but he spent time at the medical universities of Pisa, Padua, and Rome. After a short spell teaching medical theory at the University of Rome, he spent twenty-eight years as a town physician before taking up professorships in medicine, firstly at Turin, and then Padua. Augenio's letters and consultations, when finally published, amounted to almost a thousand pages in folio. Unlike Lange, he made '[a] practice of incorporating short medical treatises on medical topics into his ... letters' (p. 87). Augenio's influence included providing medical expertise to ecclesiastical and civil authorities. Siraisi concludes that 'medical letters were at least in part a humanistic genre' (p. 85).

Siraisi's work on epistolary medicine will be of interest not only to those studying Renaissance medicine, but will also provide a useful backdrop to those studying the topic in the early modern period. It will appeal to historians of the Republic of Letters and the humanist movement who may not have given consideration to the correspondence of physicians of the period. While there is no bibliography, the extensive endnotes provide a useful historical and historiographical resource.

ROBERT WESTON, *The University of Western Australia*

Spence, John, *Reimagining History in Anglo-Norman Prose Chronicles*, Woodbridge and Rochester, York Medieval Press/Boydell, 2013; hardback; pp. 236; R.R.P. £55.00; ISBN 9781903153451.

John Spence's field of interest in this study of a specific group of later medieval texts is carefully and narrowly defined and his stated aim is crisply executed. His purpose is to examine a series of prose chronicle histories written in Anglo-Norman French during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Spence's primary focus is on the ways in which these texts present their stories by adopting and adapting earlier material, including legends and romances as well as histories, in order to arrive at new versions of the contested British and English past. These 'reimaginings', to echo the book's title, say more about their authors' own priorities than they do about accurate historical representations. Notably, Spence is concerned neither with what his authors copy precisely from their sources, nor with additions which are completely original. The latter, in particular, might normally be of interest to literary scholars wishing to emphasise the importance of their text. Instead, Spence deals with the major alterations, and the minor amendments and changes of emphasis that can be identified when the original sources are well known, as they often are. These shifts, he claims, 'provide the clearest insight into the intentions and historical methods of their authors' (p. 23).

To illustrate, one might look at Spence's second chapter, dealing with the legendary history of early Britain. The foundational works are Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae* and several of its twelfth-century successors, especially Wace's *Roman de Brut*, itself an Anglo-Norman verse translation and adaptation of Geoffrey's Latin original. These well-known texts provided the raw material for a whole series of thirteenth- and fourteenth-century *Bruts* with which Spence is concerned. One might consider the decision to focus solely on prose versions to be a somewhat arbitrary limitation, since later verse adaptations in Anglo-Norman, such as Langtoft's fourteenth-century chronicle, are an important part of the literary genealogy in question. Spence gives his reasons – that prose texts, in his view, provide 'echoes of an authoritative documentary culture' (p. 23) – yet the distinction remains slightly unsatisfying and one almost feels that part of the story is missing.

All the same, within the parameters that he has set himself Spence's analysis reveals a keen eye for detail. All of the authors in question struggle with how best to incorporate clearly apocryphal tales, especially those dealing with Arthur, into their historical narratives. Spence argues that their efforts to do so reflect both intellectual and political concerns, such as the need to justify Edward I's claim of sovereignty over all of Britain. That Edward used Arthur in support of his claims has long been known and examined, but Spence's study makes a valuable addition to this area of scholarship in that

it can trace the progression of versions of the Arthurian story over several generations. Prose chronicles detailing the 'passage of dominion' from British to English rule needed to perform a delicate 'balancing act' weighing up the competing priorities of 'historical credibility and narrative appeal' (p. 73).

Other chapters examine the 'rhetoric of confidence' (p. 26) observable in the prologues of the major texts (this, Spence argues, represents a shift from an earlier authorial standpoint of humility in similar situations); the representation of 'English' heroes (Havelock, Guy of Warwick, and others) whose stories are grafted on to the 'British' content in order to create a new sense of national origins; and retellings of the Norman Conquest. One of Spence's key texts in all of these cases is Sir Thomas Gray's *Scalacronica*. It typifies the hybrid nature of all the works which Spence studies in that it draws on earlier histories, the *Bruts* and the romance tradition, among others, to present a version of the English past that could be closely attuned to fourteenth-century sensibilities. A useful appendix includes two transcribed and translated extracts from Gray's chronicle.

In tone and style the book is clear but workmanlike; thoroughly scholarly but somewhat formulaic in its structure and presentation of argument. At times, it has the feel of a catalogue in which evidence is listed and put on display sequentially in an almost rote fashion. Chapters 1 to 4 tend to follow a similar pattern of assessing each of the major texts or groups of texts one after the other, noting variations in approach to the theme under consideration. This can create a sense of repetition in format if not in detail. Chapter 5 introduces different material setting forth genealogies and family histories, but is organised similarly. Nonetheless, there can be no doubting the value of the underlying analysis which shows how a series of sometimes under-appreciated texts can reveal much about the shifting sense of a shared past among later medieval writers and readers alike.

LINDSAY DIGGELMANN, *The University of Auckland*

Starkey, Kathryn, *A Courtier's Mirror: Cultivating Elite Identity in Thomasin von Zerclaere's 'Welscher Gast'*, Notre Dame, IN, University of Notre Dame Press, 2013; paperback; pp. 472; 102 illustrations; R.R.P. US\$55.00; ISBN 9780268041441.

Kathryn Starkey's new book brings to light the Middle German *Welscher Gast*, an epic-length, didactic poem written in 1215 by the cleric Thomasin von Zerclaere. The text is not well known among German medievalists, and even less well known among English scholars, making Starkey's fascinating and detailed analysis of this rich poem very satisfying. Besides being one of the first German vernacular didactic texts composed for a lay audience, the *Welscher Gast* is also the first extant vernacular German poem compiled

with illustrations in mind from the start. It is the visual aspects – images and formatting – that Starkey uses to further her argument that the 1340 redaction (Gotha Memb. I 120) was illustrated with a burgeoning aristocratic identity in mind.

Given that only minor alterations were made to the text between the 1215 original and the Gotha redaction 125 years later, Starkey argues that the images reveal the manuscript patron's interest in 'constructing and affirming a particularly courtly identity' (p. 118), reflective of the gender and status ideals of mid-fourteenth-century Germany. She argues that both the manner in which the images have been interpreted, and the way in which the text has been interpreted through the images, have changed, taking this as evidence of how social norms and social identity among the late medieval German elite also changed. The images of the Gotha manuscript are clearly aimed at an aristocratic audience: the figures are identifiable as courtiers by their dress, and the characters are depicted as being engaged in courtly activities within court settings.

To further the argument that the poem was meant for an aristocratic audience trying to invent itself, Starkey shows how the Gotha redaction was formatted with that reference in mind. The unknown mid-fourteenth-century redactor made it easier to search out information by adding a prose foreword (again a first in German vernacular, didactic poetry) that describes the 'poem's organization, its subdivisions, and the topics that it addresses' (p. 20). It also includes an 'indexing apparatus' (p. 20) which allows the reader quickly to locate both specific topics or sections within the text. Upon comparing the two oldest complete manuscript redactions (Heidelberg Cpg 389, 1256 and Gotha Memb. I 120, 1340), the differences in formatting become evident: the 1340 redaction consists of two columns of text instead of one, and it is twice as large (Starkey notes that codex size was one aspect of showing status, lending credence to her argument). The Gotha manuscript's prose foreword functions as a contents page which, along with its more explicit indexing system consisting of visually encoded 'chapters', allows for more engaged and active reading.

Starkey has divided the book into two sections, with the first consisting of a comprehensive Introduction and five chapters. The first chapter addresses the complex issue of readership and how the manner in which the manuscript was meant to be approached dictated not only the literary aspect, but also the visual. Starkey's argument that the Gotha's revised way of presenting the poem is indicative of a more active and self-aware audience is persuasive.

In the second chapter, Starkey explores the ways in which the Gotha manuscript's illustrator deviated from the text. For example, she shows that there are more frequent discrepancies between the grammatical gender and the gender of the characters in the Gotha illustrations than in the other

manuscripts, indicating that grammatical gender was less important than the gender of the characters.

The third chapter concerns itself with gender and stereotypes within the courtly motif. Starkey's analysis shows how implicitly intertwined gender is in the images and how closely this relates to the formation of an elite identity. This theme follows on to the fourth chapter, which deals with what Starkey terms 'elite self-fashioning' (p. 119). The illustrations' strong focus on nobility and courtliness belies, in Starkey's view, the manuscript patron's desire to engage with contemporary views of aristocratic self-fashioning. In the final chapter, Starkey shows how the use of the mirror in the Gotha work again reveals an active reader: the mirror changes from reflecting others in the older manuscripts, to reflecting the viewers themselves in the 1340 redaction.

The second section consists of four appendices, with the first providing a catalogue of all extant manuscript redactions of the *Welscher Gast*. The second appendix offers a synopsis of the Gotha manuscript's poem. The third reproduces all of the Gotha manuscript's pages that contain illustrations, along with facing page translations and transcriptions of all the labels and banderoles for each illustration. It is this section in particular that bears mention, as it enables both students and scholars with little or no familiarity with Middle High German access to the 'remarkable visual program' (p. 6) of the Gotha manuscript.

The most impressive feature of this book is that it makes a little-known German didactic poem accessible to English speakers, both students and experienced scholars. This fascinating text and its amazing illustrations have been brought to light on both sides of what is a considerable linguistic divide.

DEBORAH SEILER, *The University of Western Australia*

Tracy, Larissa, ed., *Castration and Culture in the Middle Ages*, Cambridge, D. S. Brewer, 2013; hardback; pp. xiii, 365; 5 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9781843843511.

Larissa Tracy has tackled head on a potentially sensitive and confronting topic that had an evocative and profound sense of cultural significance for medieval society. Her book, *Castration and Culture in the Middle Ages*, is an edited collection of fourteen essays that reveal the many ways in which castration was depicted and understood in the Middle Ages.

While this work builds on the existing scholarship on castration, it moves away from the current theoretical and psychological explanations of castration to focus on 'the real, literal act of castration' (p. 4). Tracy's goal is to provide specific, localised discussions that focus on current lacunae in the considerable, but sometimes general, scholarship on castration. To

achieve this, Tracy has assembled an inspiring selection of established and talented scholars who have produced a variety of works concerning literary, literal, and imagined castration in medieval Europe. The fourteen essays are chronologically organised from antiquity to the early modern period, which possibly contravenes the periodisation promised in the title. Nonetheless, the range of topics is engaging and naturally focuses on questions of masculinity, effeminacy, and identity. Equally engaging is the topic's place within the scholarship of the medieval body as an obvious methodology, which subsequently attracts interpretations of castration as a means to inscribe religious and secular power on men and occasionally women.

Tracy's review of the existing scholarship reveals the multiple ways in which medieval society depicted, understood, received, and enacted castration. She confidently situates her Introduction within the influential work of scholars such as Kuefler, Rubin, Cohen and Wheeler, Karras, and Bynum. Tracy starts with a history of castration from ancient times, and moves through the early Christian era to the Middle Ages. She considers the different modes of castration seen throughout these periods: medical, religious, violent, oppressive, and punitive. She reflects on the influence of biblical representations of castration and the paradoxes and ambiguities that arose from these readings, as well as Jewish and Muslim attitudes to castration, which all played a role in medieval approaches to it. In this section, Tracy also discusses the case of Abelard's castration, which she describes as 'one of the most famous (infamous) episodes' (p. 12).

The arrangement of the essays is essentially thematic. The essays in Section I consider eunuchs from archaeological and textual perspectives. Section II contemplates castration through religious discourses, while the third section has a legal focus. The fourth section presents accounts of castration in popular medieval literary genres, and the final section offers some early modern explanations of castration.

Several of the contributions are worth noting. Jack Collins's analysis of a confusing episode in the first Gospel, Matthew 19. 11–12, concerning the role of eunuchs in Christian society is especially attractive and provides an alternative and refreshing reading of Matthew's perplexing words. Among the literary essays, Mary E. Leech's contribution of the fabliau, *La dame escolliee*, provides a particularly informed and profound analysis. Superficially understood as a 'taming the shrew' motif, Leech unpacks the text to reveal a series of inversions of anticipated societal norms: the son-in-law usurps the father-in-law's role; the son-in-law's trickery and deception are actions usually performed by the fabliau wife; and the tale ultimately exposes male authority over another male rather than the female. The violent, if literary, pseudo-castration unveils the social transgressions rather than sexual transgressions of castration.

After Tracy's solid analysis of the medieval world's famous castrate, Abelard and his *History of Calamities*, it was encouraging to see some of the essays on literary depictions taking the opportunity to historicise their analyses. Jed Chandler's analysis of male chastity, medieval Grail texts, and Simon de Montfort is a case in point. Ellen Lorraine Friedrich's essay on the *Roman de la rose* which argues that each author provided a defence of masculinity certainly extends the current scholastic thought and is the result of a thorough investigation and reading of the text and subtext.

Ultimately, Tracy has assembled an impressive compilation of essays that consider the complex and myriad ways in which castration was carried out and understood in the Middle Ages. Each contribution is equally engaging and provides an account that can be read as a stand-alone work; likewise, read in conjunction, the fourteen essays sit well together to provide a detailed picture of castration in medieval society. Tracy has certainly achieved her goal to fill a gap and add to the corpus of literature on a complex and multi-faceted topic.

KATHRYN SMITHIES, *The University of Melbourne*

Uman, Deborah and Sara **Morrison**, eds, *Staging the Blazon in Early Modern English Theatre* (Studies in Performance and Early Modern Drama), Farnham, Ashgate, 2013; hardback; pp. 232; R.R.P. £55.00; ISBN 9781409449003.

Editors Deborah Uman and Sara Morrison claim the essays collected in this volume 'complicate what has become a standard reading of the blazon' (p. 3). However, the blazonic dismembering of the female body is a somewhat over-familiar trope in early modern studies. Perhaps in recognition of the difficulty of providing fresh insights into the subject, the editors admit that the anthology is indebted to the critical work of Nancy Vickers and Jonathan Sawday. The essays also draw heavily upon Lynn Enterline's *The Rhetoric of the Body from Ovid to Shakespeare* (Cambridge University Press, 2000).

Grant Williams's essay uses Jacques Lacan's psychoanalytic theories and early modern notions of lovesickness to interesting effect. Unfortunately they lack clarification, and the essay seems rushed. A far more accomplished piece is Katherine R. Kellett's analysis of the underappreciated female ghosts in the complaint poems of the 1590s. She finds an affinity with these female ghosts in Hermione from *The Winter's Tale*. Hermione's uncertain state between living and dead allows Kellett to explore the blazon through an incorporeal body.

Elizabeth Williamson examines courtly love in *Two Gentlemen of Verona*. The confusion of gendered identities and bodies caused by a boy actor playing Julia finds its expression with a sympathetic audience. Lisa S. Starks-Estes investigates the blazon being staged literally in *Titus Andronicus*. She argues that

Shakespeare uses 'a fresh, new, innovative Ovid' to reinvent the Petrarchan sonnet (p. 54). Her reading of Lavinia being played by a boy actor and the conceit's resonance with Ovid's *Metamorphoses* is fascinating. Sara Morrison finds a refreshing change in the use of blazonic language by female characters in *Measure for Measure* and *The Duchess of Malfi*. In particular, she gives details of how Petrarchan conventions are used to depict scars on the female body that represent pain on stage.

Patricia Marchesi's captivating essay examines how theatrical props and human limbs become interchangeable in the B-text of Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*. The fact that traitors' dismembered limbs were displayed in Elizabethan society finds an intriguing correlation with the way Faustus's body is easily pulled apart. Added to this is Marchesi's insight that Faustus is comparable to the objectified beloved of a Petrarchan sonnet. Ariane M. Balizet's subject is cuckoldry in *Arden of Faversham* and *A Woman Killed with Kindness*. More specifically, she looks at 'blazons of men by men' (p. 98). Balizet argues that the dehumanising effect of the cuckold's horns erodes the husband's role as the head of the household.

Thomas P. Anderson explores Julie Taymor's *Titus* (1999), a film adaptation of *Titus Andronicus*. He argues that Lavinia's fragmented body in the film 'offers a form of corporeal feminism' (p. 111). The most fascinating section of Anderson's essay is his exploration of the artificial limbs and how Lavinia attempts to make her dismembered body whole again.

Joseph M. Ortiz investigates other uses for the blazon apart from erotic desire. In Shakespeare's history plays, he finds faces being scrutinised for signs of royal legitimacy. His impressive close reading of *Henry V* finds an allusion to printed history books. Lisa Dickson examines scenes of fragmented and dismembered bodies and texts in *The War of the Roses* and *The Plantagenets*. Erin E. Kelly argues that *The Rebellion of Naples* should be regarded as a play rather than a play-pamphlet. Its graphic depictions of violence imitate the falling apart of Charles I's body politic. The ending to Kelly's essay is the most enigmatic and chilling in the anthology.

The problems of blazoning the female reproductive body in *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* are investigated by Sara D. Luttfiring. In particular, she examines Giovanni's anxieties over his sister's sinful womb. Nancy Simpson-Younger explores identity in the sleeping or dead characters in *Cymbeline*. She argues that the blazoned sleeping or dead body becomes a therapeutic whole for the living. She also raises interesting questions about identity. The play's characters are made real and lifelike in the same way corpses are. Both become living bodies within the same acceptable social context. In the final essay, Cora Fox analyses female trafficking in *Troilus and Cressida*. She finds in Cressida an uncommon female desire to make her body a powerful whole, rather than becoming the blazoned fragments of male desire.

There is plenty of detailed scholarship to admire in Uman and Morrison's anthology. The very best essays breathe new life into an exhausted subject dominated by Vickers, Sawday, and Enterline. As such, *Staging the Blazon in Early Modern English Theatre* is an essential contribution to early modern studies.

FRANK SWANNACK, *The University of Salford*

Wilcox, Jonathan, ed., *Scraped, Stroked, and Bound: Materially Engaged Readings of Medieval Manuscripts* (Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy, 23), Turnhout, Brepols, 2013; hardback; pp. xvi, 240; 23 b/w, 14 colour illustrations; R.R.P. €80.00; ISBN 9782503545493.

This collection grew out of a research seminar held at the University of Iowa Center for the Book on 'Extreme Materialist Readings of Medieval Books' (p. 4). Participants were given the opportunity to experience hands-on the process of medieval book-making, from preparing parchment, to practising scribal arts, to bookbinding – the 'Scraped, Stroked, and Bound' of the title. The contents of the volume are also divided into these three key arts, with two detailed discussions of whole books by Karen Louise Jolly and Martha Rust providing the conclusion. Throughout the collection in-depth scholarly analysis is juxtaposed with practical accounts of these three main book arts – paper/parchment-making, letter art, and bookbinding – making for a refreshing and fascinating read.

In the opening chapter, Matthew T. Hussey cites the common medieval aphorism 'three fingers write and the entire body works' (p. 16). This focus on the importance of the whole experience, of reaching greater understanding of the whole through informed analysis of minutiae, becomes a recurring theme throughout the volume. Hussey's chapter examines scribal *habitus* and the importance of practised and subconscious mechanical production to mastery.

Patrick W. Conner's exploration of matched scribal hands is particularly engaging, and challenges many of the core assumptions used for dating in palaeography. This chapter is also notable for its comparison of medieval and modern book making by setting its examination of various early medieval manuscripts (such as the eleventh-century Guild Statutes for the Abbotsbury Parish Guild, the Book of Kells, the Exeter Book, and the Beowulf manuscript) alongside the modern Saint John's Bible project.

Those chapters contributed by craftspeople – Cheryl Jacobsen's comparison of medieval and modern scribes, Jesse Meyer's brief but instructive account of parchment making, and Gary Frost's exploration of the mechanics of medieval bookbinding – proved stimulating in their different perspectives on codicology. Jacobsen reflects on her experience of reproducing a page from the Exeter Book. Through the eyes of a modern letter artist, the Exeter

book lacks the precision and uniformity valued in modern calligraphy, yet its variation is due to the mastery of the scribe.

Jennifer Borland's piece explores the use of the manuscript as a physical object of devotion, focusing on the defaced *Passion of Saint Margaret*. Borland ponders what inspired the sustained and targeted violence against this particular manuscript and how it might have been carried out. The answers reveal much about changing attitudes to images, the treatments of which become tangible connections to the past for the modern scholar. Martha Rust also explores the medieval use of the material book, in this case the book of the anchorite and book artist John Lacy. The book itself becomes a physical focus-point for devotion, both in its creation by Lacy and its continued use.

The tight focus of the volume works in its favour as each successive chapter adds to a greater understanding of the whole. Themes developed throughout the collection include the importance of sensory experience of material objects, the value of learning through experiencing rather than just watching or studying, the equal importance of contributions by scholars and craftspeople, and the importance of collaboration and collective learning (both for medieval and modern scholars and craftsmen). Although mostly accessible for those unfamiliar with codicology, the detailed studies of specific manuscripts that make up the latter part of the book may prove somewhat dense for the casual reader.

This collection is valuable because it respects the medieval book as a work of art in and of itself. The authors often express even greater admiration for the skill and dedication of the medieval scribes and book-makers once they have experienced the process themselves. The essays carefully consider material aspects of the book in a time when so much attention is given to digitalisation. Many of the chapters warn of the danger that digital facsimiles pose to a full, multi-sensory appreciation of the text. And indeed, the book is as much a disquisition on the senses as it is on books – from the smell of the parchment preparations vividly described in Jonathan Wilcox's Introduction, to the – sometimes destructive – touch in Borland's study of a vandalised hagiography and her reminder of the active, multi-sensory nature of medieval visuality. The volume is, quite literally, a study of ways in which the modern scholar or craftsperson can touch the past by examining the most tangible remains of the touch of medieval users – imperfections, evidence of use, and deliberate traces left on artefacts.

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