

## Reviews

**Archibald**, Elizabeth, Megan **Leitch**, and Corinne **Saunders**, eds, *Romance Rewritten: The Evolution of Middle English Romance: A Tribute to Helen Cooper* (Studies in Medieval Romance), Cambridge, D. S. Brewer, 2018; hardback; pp. 310; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9781843845096.

Professor Helen Cooper of the University of Cambridge is a pioneer in the field of medieval literary—including romance—studies. She holds a special place of influence at the heart of the works of those who contribute to the collection *Romance Rewritten: The Evolution of Middle English Romance: A Tribute to Helen Cooper*, edited by Elizabeth Archibald, Megan G. Leitch, and Corinne Saunders. Each essay within the book pays direct homage to Cooper through engagement with her scholarship, and the essays are all written by colleagues, friends, and former research students of Cooper's. And, as R. F. Yeager notes in his essay, some contributors used interactions with Cooper to inspire the essay that they produced: 'The germ for this essay originated in a dinner conversation with Helen Cooper—one she may not remember—many years ago' (p. 103).

While the overall topic of this collection is medieval romance, each essay takes time to consider different meanings or new interpretations of well-known medieval romances. Over twelve essays, the collection aims to showcase in-depth textual analysis undertaken by all contributors. While some are more successful than others, the overall aim of the book, to expand on 'current critical issues central to understanding romance' (p. 19), is fulfilled by the end through very nuanced writing and interesting topic choices. Also, the division of the book into four different sections allows for the reader to see the broad range of Cooper's influences on medieval literary scholarship. Importantly, the essays can also be readily applied to fields outside of medieval literary studies. Chapter 2, for instance, considers chivalry in the context of expressed anxieties about warfare (Marcel Elias). Andrew Lynch's chapter on how both medieval and nineteenth-century writers consider chivalry's adaptability and limitations as a cultural idea is also a particularly interesting contribution. The opening chapter by Neil Cartlidge unravels some of the complexities of Middle English, which could be useful for those considering contextual or pedagogical issues. Lastly, Barry Windeatt's chapter on gestures within medieval romances, which uses twelve tables to highlight the frequency of certain emotional gestures—hand-wringing for example—in his survey of twelve medieval romances, could be useful for historians of emotions interested in gestural expression as indication of emotion in literary works.

The main issue with this book is how field-specific it is, with some essays being quite difficult to understand. The introduction, by editor Megan G. Leitch,

was very disjointed and at times hard to follow. Readers from outside the field might find some of the chapters quite challenging to navigate, as the language is sometimes more complex than necessary. Particular chapters left their directions and meanings a little obscure to the reader as they do not have clear introductions or conclusions (Chapters 4 and 8). Chapter 3, by Christopher Cannon, invokes Karl Marx, *Pride and Prejudice*, and Sigmund Freud to discuss the tragedy and comedy in Thomas Malory's 'Book of Sir Launcelot and Queen Guinevere', but there is no consideration of scholarship on medieval humour and comedy, which would have been more appropriate. Moreover, as this book is also a tribute to a leading female scholar in the field, it is also disappointing that eight out of the twelve contributors are men.

However, works like this make it clear that medieval texts such as Malory's *Morte D'Arthur* can be interrogated multiple times and from fresh perspectives. The amount of space Malory takes up in the volume reveals how crucial collections like *Romance Rewritten* are for deconstructing large, often intimidating, medieval works, and for understanding the complexities of the medieval world; five chapters are dedicated to considering a variety of themes, problems, and medieval perspectives that appear in the work. Moreover, a number of the essays show just how important it is to consider medieval romance in the context of its literary legacy, or in comparison to works that come before and after. Chapter 11 by Ad Putter, for example, examines the literary legacy of John Lydgate's *Temple of Glass* on the work *Court of Love*, and Chapter 6, by Elizabeth Archibald, considers the influence of the Post-Vulgate Cycle on the construction on Malory's Arthurian world, whether Malory read it directly or not.

Overall, this edited collection is a well-rounded contribution to the field of medieval literary studies and offers some interesting finds and analyses of works that have been upheld as the best of medieval literature. The collection also aims to highlight some of the more obscure texts of the tradition, such as *The Court of Love*, *The Squire of Low Degree*, and *Chevalere Assigne*. It seems that it would be a well-received and a fitting tribute to the woman it honours, Professor Helen Cooper.

HILARY JANE LOCKE, *Macquarie University*

**Berard**, Christopher Michael, *Arthurianism in Early Plantagenet England: From Henry II to Edward I* (Arthurian Studies, 88), Woodbridge, The Boydell Press, 2019; hardback; pp. 378; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9781783273744.

Christopher Michael Berard examines textual examples of Arthurianism spanning the reigns of five twelfth- and thirteenth-century Angevin/Plantagenet kings: Henry II, Richard I, John, Henry III, and Edward I. He explores the purpose, political significance, intended audience, and effectiveness of examples in the textual record, and incorporates a wide range of literary, annalistic, legal, and

historiographic material across a variety of languages, locating these texts in their broader socio-political contexts.

The argument is broadly as follows. During the reign of Henry II, Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia rerum Britannie* came to be a pivotal work, asserting a historical rather than mythic Arthur and reducing the ethnic Celtic 'Breton Hope' of Arthur's promised return to an absurdity. This theme was developed further through other contemporary works, including Étienne of Rouen's *Draco Normannicus*, Walter of Châtillon's *Tractatus*, and Peter of Blois's epistles. As a result, Henry II came to be portrayed as the symbolic revival of Arthur, while the Welsh/British threat was marginalized as bad-faith Christian. In the next chapter, Berard finds, in the reign of Richard I, a continuation of the discourse of Arthur as the ideal model for, and ancestor of, the Angevins, rather than a king to the Britons to be victorious over the Normans.

The next two chapters, in which Berard traces a decline in Angevin Arthurian pretensions, deal with John and Henry III. During John's reign Arthurianism played out prominently against him: French and Castilian courts and the rebellious English baronage drew upon Arthur as an ideological weapon, and Richard's nominated heir to the throne, Arthur of Brittany (John's adversary), became the 'Breton Hope'. The Capetians vilified John so as to justify their claim on Angevin lands; so too, the Castilians used Arthurianism to argue a claim against Angevin land in Gascony; and the English barons idealized Arthur's court in their pursuit of reform against John. Then, in Henry III's reign, Arthur reached the nadir of his Angevin fortunes, becoming a focal point for the Gwynedd dynasty in the wars against Henry for control of Wales and the Welsh Marches. The final, lengthy, chapter of the book, where Berard discusses a series of Arthurian-themed occasions, looks at the reign of Edward I, arguing that Edward saw himself as the legitimate heir of an historical Arthur, giving justification for his bloody defeat of the Welsh and his expansion into Scotland.

The breadth of vision in this volume is ambitious, and the range of texts examined is extensive, but the book is not without issues. 'Arthurianism', per se, remains undefined, even though it is the main analytical category of the book. In places the concept seems to embrace those aspects of Geoffrey's *Historia* that are wider than Arthur's court: Geoffrey's Trojan history of Britain for example. Likewise, Berard treats Edward I's enactment of a chivalric code as evidence of Arthurianism, but no case has been made for this, nor for Edward's use of knighthood as a means for political control and fiscal resourcing for expansionist politics as being specifically Arthurian. Berard also invokes classical, biblical, and wider (non-Arthurian) courtly material in his discussion, but doesn't seem to approach these as a category of the same class as his Arthurian material. Indeed, some of his analyses even seem to show signs of post hoc theorizing resulting in a set of false positives regarding the role and importance of Arthurianism, absent any wider mapping of the non-Arthurian material, and this is the most noteworthy shortcoming of this book.

There is also a directionality issue here. On the one hand the medieval author is presented as the initiator of discourse, comparing the medieval king against a mytho-historic Arthur. But in places Berard argues that the king was the motivator, modelling himself after the mytho-historic Arthur. The divergent motivations in different Arthurian texts may be significant, but this is not closely examined, and the differences are not considered as theoretically distinct. The volume would have been greatly strengthened had this been further explored. Also, Berard's analyses can be speculative: he often speaks in respect of an argument he is making using such terms as 'could have been', 'might have been', 'might be viewed as', and alarmingly 'there is no explicit evidence for', all of which undermines the specific case being made, and the broader impact of his thesis.

Overall, the scope of texts examined here is laudable and welcome, and the volume is a very useful survey in itself, for this widely ranging exposition on Angevin/Plantagenet kings' reigns offers a thorough and highly useful road map to the terrain of Angevin textualities. Curiously, not unlike Geoffrey of Monmouth's works themselves, this is a useful, but perhaps motivated, source calling out for further scholarship and analysis.

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**Blanchard, W. Scott, and Andrea Severi, eds, *Renaissance Encyclopaedism: Studies in Curiosity and Ambition* (Essays and Studies, 41), Toronto, Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2018; paperback; pp. 467; 1 b/w illustration; R.R.P. CA\$49.95; ISBN 9780772721891.**

In this volume, the editors have compiled a series of essays that examine encyclopaedic practice in the context of a Renaissance 'mentality [that] is situated somewhere in the interstices that lie between modern rationalism and pre-modern anthropocentrism' (p. 14). While the editors suggest that the Renaissance itself produced very few encyclopaedias in the modern sense of the term (p. 15), the focus of the volume is on encyclopaedism, rather than encyclopaedias per se. In this vein, many of the contributions explore the notion of Renaissance encyclopaedic practice as a precursor to the famous early modern encyclopaedias of Diderot and others.

Drawing on a modern concept of an encyclopaedia as a reference work with various identifiable features such as an index or indices, claims or aspirations to comprehensive knowledge, a system of headings and explications, and the rational presentation of facts supported by evidence and citations, the contributions in this volume seek to illustrate how Renaissance scholars deployed these tools in their own writing. In her essay on Lorenzo Valla's *Elegantie linguae latinae*, for example, Clementina Marsico considers how the 'wealth of the accumulated data [...] imbues the text with a truly encyclopaedic character' (p. 62), while Anne Raffarin considers Flavio Biondo's collection and presentation of *antiquitates* and the 'encyclopaedic nature of the quantity of information he produced and

the global nature of his enterprise of “restoring” antiquity’ (p. 160). Andrea Severi’s contribution uses Antonio (Codro) Urceo’s work to illustrate a clear path from scholasticism to humanism as a stepping stone to modern rationality, while Dustin Mengelkoch shows us how Giorgio Valla crafted his *De expetendis et fugiendis rebus opus* as an essential and practical reference work for the Renaissance physician.

By closely examining the construct, content, and context of various Renaissance scholars’ works, primarily in the Italian peninsula, the essays in this volume illustrate the emergence and evolution of Renaissance encyclopaedic practice, assisting the reader to, as the editors suggest, ‘acquire an understanding of the mind of the Renaissance humanist, to recover a mentality that helped shape and reorient the approach and attitudes towards knowledge in subsequent centuries’ (p. 23). While this end is achieved, it is not without some effort on behalf of the reader. Several essays would have benefited from clearer signposting to assist the reader to understand their arguments, and to draw the connections required to map this emergence and evolution. Some of the authors also adopt quite a detailed, micro-analytical approach, which makes it difficult for a non-specialist to relate the works under examination to the broader environment of Renaissance scholarship, particularly the important contemporaneous political context and systems of patronage.

The editors have also taken the somewhat unorthodox decision not to include a precis of each essay, or even each part of the volume, in their introduction, and this reinforces the inaccessibility of some of the contributions. A brief gloss on each chapter and its place in the context of the broader volume would have been a welcome addition. Nevertheless, the introduction is a substantial and valuable essay in its own right, charting the (re)emergence of the term *enkyklios paideia* in the mid-fifteenth century and its use and evolution in the ensuing decades. This provides a useful reference point for subsequent chapters, and several contributors draw on the editors’ discussions of the term’s original propaedeutic connotations, the humanists’ ‘discovery’ of the term in Quintilian and Pliny the Elder, the introduction of the neo-Latin neologism *encyclopaedia* in 1490, and an associated semantic shift away from the idea of an encyclopaedia as an educational curriculum and towards the encyclopaedia as a literary composition.

While individual chapters are likely to be of more value to readers with a specialist interest in encyclopaedic practice, the volume does, taken as a whole, provide valuable insights into the practice of Renaissance encyclopaedism, the evolution of humanist scholarly practice in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and the macro-historical role that this practice played in the arc between medieval scholasticism and modern rationality. For the non-specialist reader, the introductory essay is likely to be of most interest, and presents a useful and articulate argument for the emergence and evolution of recognizably modern encyclopaedic practice in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

CHRISTIAN THORSTEN CALLISEN, *Brisbane, Queensland*

**Bornstein**, Daniel, Laura **Gaffuri**, and Brian Jeffrey **Maxson**, eds, *Languages of Power in Italy (1300–1600)* (Early European Research, 10), Turnhout, Brepols, 2017; cloth; pp. xvi, 244; R.R.P. €75.00; ISBN 9782503540382.

This collection of essays began its life as conference papers at sessions on ‘languages of power in Italy’ of the 2010 Renaissance Society of America gathering, and then was extended to include additional essays. *Languages of Power* re-examines the concept of state building, as noted in the opening pages of the introduction by Daniel Bornstein. This book analyses the issue from a much broader vantage point than had been the wont of previous generations. It has three sections that consecutively interrogate the themes of words, visual imagery, and religious practice in Italy between 1300 and 1600. In doing so, it analyses different types of sources, such as hagiography, chronicles of quotidian life, visual images, diplomatic tactics, rhetorical debates, and the correspondence of noblewomen, to bring new perspectives to bear.

Italian states in the early modern period came in all shapes and sizes, we are reminded in the first essay (Alice Blythe Raviola), which looks at tiny micro-states in the Piedmont region which used mapping of their territory and the definition of borders to develop their own sense of identity as independent states. Marin Sanudo’s massive chronicle of Venice, written in Venetian dialect, reports reactions on the street to gossip, rumours, insults, political speeches, and the swift terrible responses of the State to blasphemy. The power of words was essential to understanding Venetian street life and the reaction of the Venetian state to the words it heard, Elizabeth Horodowich argues. In a masterful survey, Nico Ottaviani analyses how noblewomen in powerful families, courts, and occasionally as ruler-regents, used their correspondence as a vehicle to exercise power by persuading others to their point of view while being seen as powerful sources of influence. The Casa di San Giorgio, a private company, which managed the Genoese public debt and several properties held by the Genoese government, effectively justified their privatization as necessary for public efficiency (Carlo Taviani).

The next few chapters move from a focus on words to images and civic display. The section begins with an analysis of how the Visconti consolidated their rule in Milan in the fourteenth century by using and adapting existing images to emphasize their continuation of previous traditions rather than usurping them (Guido Cariboni). Jessamyn Conrad’s discussion of two Sieneese depictions of the Virgin and Child enthroned in fourteenth-century Siena—the first by Duccio housed in the city’s cathedral and the second by Simone Martini in the town hall—emphasizes that both displayed political messages suited to their surroundings. Sadly, we have to do without the images. The next essay examines the sermons given in Pavia by the Franciscan preacher Bernardino da Feltre. Paolo Evangelisti makes an argument that Franciscan ideals of poverty did not prevent their preachers from adapting to the ideals of civic humanism and its glorification of the civic and of wealth used for pious and magnificent purposes. The theme of continuity, rather

than change, in politics is reinforced in the next chapter (Federica Cengarle). The right of citizens to make laws can create a situation where citizens hand over their law-making prerogatives to a prince who can then rule by citizen agreement. Diplomacy in Florence depended as much on the social cues and social status of the ambassador and on the mode of communication—letter or visit—as it did on political negotiations, Brian Maxson reminds us.

The last six essays focus on ‘religion, power and the state’ and are very varied. The first two essays use hagiographical sources to look at the political importance of two cults: the first venerated a female saint in a very small Tuscan town (Corinne Wieben) and the second involved the veneration of relics in Pisa, which supported the ruling regime (Cecilia Iannella). The next two chapters focus on the kingdom of Savoy and its use of Christian thought and biblical exegesis to legitimate its rule (Laura Gaffuri), and the use of sacrality and sacred spaces to legitimate the kingdom’s sovereignty (Paolo Cozzo). Nicholas Scott Baker’s essay on the religious rhetoric used in Florence’s political advisory body during the siege of Florence in 1529–30, when Savonarolan religiosity ruled, demonstrates how political pragmatism could be outweighed by strong religious idealism. The temporal and spiritual power of the Pope and his ability to rule ‘over the consciences of the faithful’ (p. 230) is examined in light of the Protestant challenge to the papacy in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in the last essay (Franco Motta). The pope becomes the ultimate judge in Catholic theology at this time and his spiritual sovereignty is upheld.

This brief review cannot do justice to the many thoughtful ideas this book raises. A conclusion might have helped draw it all together, but this is a minor quibble about a complex, nuanced, and varied discussion of the varieties of ways political power and state building could be expressed and exercised in Italy between 1300 and 1600.

NATALIE TOMAS, *Monash University*

**Canalis**, Rinaldo Fernando, and Massimo **Ciavolella**, eds, *Andreas Vesalius and the ‘Fabrica’ in the Age of Printing: Art, Anatomy, and Printing in the Italian Renaissance* (Cursor Mundi, 33), Turnhout, Brepols, 2018; hardback; pp. xxiv, 335; 73 colour, 2 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. €100.00; ISBN 9782503576237.

The historical coincidence of the birth of Andreas Vesalius on the last day of December in 1514 and the death of Aldus Manutius a few weeks later in early February 1515 (according to the modern calendar) enabled the 500th anniversary of both these events to be simultaneously commemorated by a conference at UCLA in 2015. The present collection arose in part from papers presented at this conference and has been edited by two senior UCLA professors, one with a medical and medico-historical background (Rinaldo Canalis) and the other coming from Italian studies (Massimo Ciavolella).

The lives of Vesalius and Manutius are not as unconnected as they might seem at first glance, despite their minimal overlap. Manutius, an eminent humanist in his own right, set up the Aldine Press in Venice and established the scholarly practices of this firm that led to the publication, in Vesalius's childhood years, of the complete works of Galen in Greek. The Aldine edition of 1525–26 made the most reliable known texts of this ancient medical authority available to humanists and physicians alike. Vesalius's familiarity with these texts, from his student days onward, contributed in turn to his break with Galenic anatomy.

Vesalius's *De fabrica humani corporis* (*On the Fabric of the Human Body*, 1543) changed the way Western medicine understood human anatomy. It did this not simply by reporting the results of Vesalius's empirical studies as a master dissector of cadavers, in which he exposed many of Galen's errors. It also presented these results to an educated readership in a landmark publication of novel design. The *Fabrica* is a massive folio volume of 659 pages containing both the author's extensive text and a large number of memorable illustrations by Jan Stephan van Calcar, one of Titian's students. Renaissance developments in artistic and printing techniques, then, were important factors contributing to Vesalius's international success.

All of these elements are rightly caught up in the volume's title and explored in various ways in this collection, which consists of twelve substantive chapters in addition to the editors' introduction. I would suggest, however, that the title's reference to the 'Italian Renaissance' is unduly narrow, since both Vesalius and Calcar came from the Low Countries, although they worked in Italy, and the *Fabrica* was published by Johannes Opporinus in Basel, not by the Aldine Press or any other Italian printer. In addition, while two of the chapters in the present collection concern the work of Italian anatomists (Gabriele Falloppio and Girolamo Fabricius), another one deals with an English anatomical publication of 1545 that adapted the *Fabrica* for a domestic audience. Finally, two chapters in the present volume focus on rare book collectors and collections in North America.

The editors write in their introduction that the 'volume is aimed at a worldwide and varied readership, ranging from an educated popular audience to specialized academics' (p. xviii). This aim is not something that the book as a whole could possibly achieve, but individual chapters would certainly appeal to particular segments of the collection's intended 'varied readership'. The brief chapters by Kenneth Bartlett and Andrew Cunningham, for example, are written at a fairly elementary, introductory level and would be suitable for undergraduates and non-academic readers. At the opposite end of the spectrum the two chapters contributed by Rinaldo Canalis are much longer and more technical, and would be of interest primarily to medico-historical specialists. Other chapters fall between these two poles, so that both the educated popular audience and specialized academics will be able to find something appropriate to their level.

Volumes that aggregate material written at very different levels of scholarly detail and addressing a wide variety of topics, sometimes only tenuously

interrelated, used to be criticized for lacking coherence and making it hard to anticipate exactly what the volume contained. But this kind of criticism has become largely obsolete now that search engines allow potential readers to locate a particular chapter of interest to them without regard for the other chapters collected in the same volume, or even for the volume's title. It is unfortunate, however, that the present publication did not adopt the practice of listing keyword search terms for each individual chapter, since this device would have made the use of search engines even more effective and would have compensated for the omission of subject entries from the index.

Leaving aside the reservation just noted, however, the editors and publisher are to be congratulated on the presentation of this book, which is happily free from obvious misprints and includes many high-quality illustrations that are valuable adjuncts to the text.

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**Clanchy**, Michael, *Looking Back from the Invention of Printing: Mothers and the Teaching of Reading in the Middle Ages* (Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy, 40), Turnhout, Brepols, 2018; hardback; pp. xii, 211; 49 colour illustrations; R.R.P. €70.00; ISBN 9782503580838.

Both the title and the author—writer of the famous and influential book *From Memory to the Written Record*—excite the would-be reader. But there is a warning in the subtitle *Mothers and the Teaching of Reading in the Middle Ages*. How are the title and subtitle related? The book consists of seven chapters, comprising an introduction followed by six reprints of articles published between 1983 and 2011. The title of the book in fact turns out to be the title of Chapter 2. We are not told whether the articles have been revised, but it appears not and that only the number of illustrations has been augmented (and presumably rephotographed; all forty-nine are in colour and of excellent quality). In their subject matter the former articles are closely interrelated, and this leads to considerable repetition of references to the same pieces of evidence, mainly books and pictures, which some readers may find disconcerting.

Chapter 1 is titled 'Introduction', and is subdivided into sections bearing the titles of the following six chapters. One would expect it to weld them together and make a coherent whole of them. But that is not what it does; it is rather a series of glosses on each chapter, and the book remains a collection of discussions on a group of interrelated topics, not a contribution towards a single one. It does however include two important observations. The first is this: 'Instead of viewing printing as the starting point of a new age, I want to look at it as the endpoint or culmination of a millennium. Writing was of extraordinary importance in medieval culture; otherwise printing would not have been invented' (p. 38). 'And so?', one is prompted to ask, since this observation is not an answer to the question, but only the beginning of one. And it prompts further questions. For instance, what does 'extraordinary importance' mean, in relation to the invention of printing?

One might think of an argument that the expansion of literacy from the fourteenth century on put pressure on the quick and cheap production of multiple copies of the same text, and that one result was printing. But Michael Clanchy does not run this line. Indeed, he points to difficulties with it: the fact that the earliest printers avoided the increasingly-popular vernacular (p. 13), printing instead for a university or university-trained readership; and the fact that decoration and illustration of high quality could not be (and never has been since) mechanized.

The second observation occurs on p. 34: ‘These new images of the teaching of reading stand alone as works of art, as well as being links in the surprising story of how Latin literacy, which for centuries had been the preserve of the male clergy, developed a feminine and mothering ethos—mainly from the thirteenth century onwards—through the use of prayer books in the home’. This glosses p. 130: ‘It is remarkable that this motif ever became popular of Mary taking the initiative in the Child Jesus’s schooling, as it runs counter to the patriarchal norms of medieval society’. Images of mothers engaged in the ‘primary’ education of their children are in fact a central motif running through Clanchy’s book. But to what extent did this possibly increasing maternal activity affect the growth of literacy, whether Latin or vernacular, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries? Did it have any impact on the invention and spread of printing? We are not told in so many words.

What we *are* told is that mothers engaged in this activity by means of ‘ABC primers’, whether unbound booklets of a few leaves only, or alphabets and prayers copied into psalters or books of hours, rarely surviving because they were so heavily used that they rapidly fell to pieces (pp. 31, 81). But they are cited so many times in the book (though there are repeated references to one and the same book), that one wonders just how rare they were. A complete list of them—I count a dozen, spanning the twelfth to early sixteenth centuries—would have been welcome. In fact only two of the survivors (New York, Columbia University, MS Plimpton 258, and Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson C. 209) are booklets, despite the evidence, from literary records, suggesting that the booklets must have been exceedingly common, at least in the late Middle Ages. The rest consists of alphabets and prayers in Latin or English copied into psalters or books of hours belonging to high-status persons.

This, then, is not so much a book that offers answers to a coherent set of questions; rather, it raises interrelated questions and offers lively if sometimes implicit hints at further research projects that seek to clarify the interface between script and print.

RODNEY M. THOMSON, *University of Tasmania*

**Clark, Nicola**, *Gender, Family, and Politics: The Howard Women, 1485–1558*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2018; hardback; pp. 224; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9780198784814.

Studies of ‘dynasty’ and ‘dynastic identity’ in early modern Europe, especially those concerning royal dynasties, have flourished over recent years. Despite a

few exceptions, this interest has yet to extend to include the early modern English aristocratic family. In the Tudor Howards, Nicola Clark has found a very fine case study. Her focus on three generations of Howard women within the context of gender, family, and politics also provides a welcome reassessment of the long-held male-focused narrative of this elite family. Developed from Clark's doctoral project, this work not only adds an English experience to existing studies of dynasty, but also challenges assumptions about the motivations of individuals within a dynasty. Foundational to Clark's approach is Barbara Harris's *English Aristocratic Women, 1450–1550* (Oxford University Press, 2002), which facilitated the integration of women into the late-medieval and Tudor political narrative. Involvement in the political sphere is a key theme in the lives of these women, as Clark places kinship relations at the fore to argue that dynastic ambitions were not always pursued in a similar fashion, nor were they necessarily shared. While the Howard family's status was the result of a fortuitous inheritance through the female line at the close of the fifteenth century, Clark demonstrates how the agency of later Howard women played a significant role in shaping, for better or worse, this family's trajectory. She argues that although these women's experiences were integral to broader understandings of the family, they could not be adequately explained by reference to family identity. Indeed, the complexity of the identities of the Tudor Howard women and the varied ways they exhibited agency across a range of situations is critical to Clark's assertion that there was no one 'Howard woman', a seemingly simple statement that underpins what is a significant contribution to existing understandings of ideas of dynasty, family, and identity in this period.

The introduction begins with a deposition taken in the 1541 treason case against Queen Catherine Howard, indicating from the outset the significance of how Catherine and her family were seen by contemporaries and setting up treason as an important undercurrent. Having established the relevance of kinship and how a Howard woman was identified as such, Chapter 1 concerns the experience of kinship relations in daily life, with Clark arguing that kinship connections were critical and necessarily fluid. Using letters, wills, and household accounts (sources that feature throughout) the idea of *paterfamilias* is explored. Chapter 2 considers the dynastic role of material culture and patronage, including the striking example of a Howard woman using a material object to make a statement about her marriage and identity at a time of crisis. Clark shows how material goods not only provided Howard women a means to express their agency, but could also be used against them to deny or control their position. The third chapter is a highlight. Using case studies of three Howard women, the focus is on marital strife and dynastic identity. The example of Mary Howard/Fitzroy, Duchess of Richmond, who features in a portrait drawing on the jacket image and has been a central figure thus far, stands out as these women are explored against the wider backdrop of Henry VIII's own marital strife. Chapter 4 continues this broader contextualizing with a close analysis of the Howards as courtiers; Clark's treatment of the

shifting relationships between Anne Boleyn and other Howard family members is insightful and nuanced. However, an error: Elizabeth of York, not Lady Margaret Beaufort, was the mother of Henry VIII (p. 97). Chapter 5 considers the transition of the Howard women from political and social success to the descent into treason and rebellion. This engaging chapter also includes an enticing question: Was there something particularly treasonous about the Tudor Howard women? In Chapter 6, Clark explores these women's religious activities to show engagement at an elite level, but that their convictions were not necessarily consistent within the dynasty. The epilogue considers how, at a time when prominent Howard men had fallen, female members of the family worked for the continuation of the dynasty.

Always, these were Howard women regardless of life course, yet Clark shows that their actions were never solely defined by this element of their identity. Clark engages sensitively and expertly with her selected sources throughout, especially in relation to letters and burial sites. One of the successes of this work is that Catherine Howard and Anne Boleyn are given essential familial context. Most significantly, however, this is a study of 'The Howard Women', spanning three generations. It not only shows how contemporaries saw these women, but how they saw themselves and each other and, as it does so, makes an original contribution to existing work on the Tudor Howard family, Tudor rule, and studies of early modern dynasty.

SALLY FISHER, *Monash University*

**Cohen-Hanegbi**, Naama, and **Piroska Nagy**, eds, *Pleasure in the Middle Ages* (International Medieval Research, 24), Turnhout, Brepols, 2018; hardback; pp. xxiii, 386; 10 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. €100.00; ISBN 9782503575209.

*Pleasure in the Middle Ages*, edited by Naama Cohen-Hanegbi and Piroska Nagy, remedies a gap in historical criticism and popular medievalisms that frequently results in the representation of the period as exclusively violent and painful. The seventeen-chapter volume is, by necessity, broad-ranging: the unifying theme of 'pleasure', which has no direct corollary in the Middle Ages, is defined by the editors during an introduction that emphasizes its plurality as 'either an emotion, either spiritual or sexual, as pleasure experienced through the senses or the rational mind, and it may be either lauded or decried' (p. xv). Noting that shifting ideas of the natural world impacted the cultural understanding of pleasure, Cohen-Hanegbi and Nagy state that 'the deep-seated association between pleasure and nature challenges historians to consider what pleasure was in previous societies, the ways in which it was understood, and the ways in which it was propagated' (p. xii). They identify 'medieval anthropology'—the vision and study of humans—as evidencing the changing theological importance of pleasure from the eleventh through to the thirteenth centuries (p. xiv). Modern critical interest, as much as medieval, often adopts the differences between 'natural' and 'unnatural' pleasure as the basis of an ethical investigation in which the experience is deemed to be

good or bad according to a medieval Christian worldview. However, the editors note that these ethical categories, along with other false binaries such as physical/spiritual and pleasure/pain, are fundamentally merged by the experience of pleasure, which is not just described in literature, but fundamentally expressed by literary devices such as simile and metaphor.

Having sprung from a selection of papers given at the 2013 International Medieval Congress at Leeds, the volume incorporates diverse methodologies and historical analysis that ranges from the ninth to the fifteenth centuries. This is suitable for the material, highlighting the individuality of experiences of pleasure as much as the communal and the cultural. While the volume clearly responds to the affective turn, Cohen-Hanegbi and Nagy describe a general resistance by the contributors to directly engage with the theoretical framework provided by the history of emotions, noting that many prefer to treat 'emotions' like any other cultural practice (p. xvii). Nonetheless, the collection does feature essays by leaders in the field of the history of emotions, including Barbara H. Rosenwein and William Reddy, who both adopt modern understandings of emotions, such as neuroscience and self-help books, to present accessible and engaging studies. An essay by the late Philippa C. Maddern likewise contains a useful and applied model of her methodological framework for working with medieval emotions, highlighting the importance of translation.

The editors note that the order of the chapters reveals the varieties of medieval pleasure in a way that reverses a medieval worldview, because it begins with personal experiences of pleasure that become a building block for the way it is expressed in theological and mystical material (p. xix). The first section, 'Pleased Bodies', includes chapters by Esther Cohen, Maddern, Fernando Salmón, Cohen-Hanegbi, Maeve Doyle, Karen Moukheiber, and Reddy. Thematically these chapters range from worldly monastic pleasures including singing and friendship, good health, medical conceptualization and advice regarding bodily pleasure, the aesthetics of reading, the boundary between licit and illicit love in *adab* literature, and the cultural context of courtly love. The middle section, 'Didactic Pleasure', is primarily concerned with pleasure as a means for ethical instruction, usefully examining the cultural impact rather than the 'location' of pleasures, which the division of medieval bodies from spirituality often encourages. Contributors include Rosenwein, Richard Newhauser, Noëlle-Laetitia Perret, Xavier Biron-Ouellet, and Élyse Dupras. Content ranges from moral self-help guides, the rhetorical purposing of pleasure as a means of spiritual guidance, the monitoring of pleasure during education, the role of vices and virtues, and the enjoyment of morality plays. The final section, 'Pleasures in God', includes work by Zachary Giuliano, Ken A. Grant, Constant J. Mews, and Rob Faesen. As the name suggests, this section engages with spiritual pleasure, particularly through analogies with eating and drinking and the mystical portrayal of enjoyable union. Together these contributions show the broad appeal of pleasure as a sensitive, emotional, and culturally specific historical phenomenon. The editors position the volume to

generate new interest and questions about the various types and understandings of pleasure in diverse medieval communities, a task which the wide-ranging volume most successfully—and pleasurably—accomplishes.

CLARE DAVIDSON, *The University of Western Australia*

**Critten, Rory G.**, *Author, Scribe, and Book in Late Medieval English Literature*, Cambridge, D. S. Brewer, 2018; hardback; pp. 238; 3 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9781843845058.

The writers whose works are the subject of this book, Thomas Hoccleve, Margery Kempe, John Audelay, and Charles d'Orléans, were diverse in achievement, class, occupation, location, genre, subject matter, and gender. What they shared was an era—the first half of the fifteenth century—and the English language, in which each composed one or more of their works. *Author, Scribe and Book* brings these authors together on the basis of one further attribute that they shared—self-publication. Each participated in the physical making of their books, either by transcription—Hoccleve—, by dictation—Margery—, by compilation—Audelay—, or by supervision—Charles.

Given the distinctiveness of the chosen authors' books and book-making methods, an important component of Rory G. Critten's achievement has been to unify his analyses under a single claim, namely that 'Hoccleve, Kempe, Audelay and Charles used the occasion afforded by the publication of their works to attempt a wholesale redefinition of their public identities' (p. 25). Many subsidiary analyses and ideas attend the explication of this statement in respect of each author.

Hoccleve's works chosen to elaborate his self-publishing pose are the short dedicatory poems that he addressed to Edward of York and John of Lancaster, and, centrally, the *Series*, which he wrote following a mental breakdown, primarily to advance readmission to his circle of London and Westminster clerical friends. In parallel, the public shaming that Margery received after returning to London from pilgrimage in 1434 motivated her and her scribes to expedite the 'collaborative production of their biography' (p. 78). In Margery's *Book* Critten distinguishes contradictory portrayals of the author as a unique individual and model for contemplation authorized by Mary Magdalen, whose story likewise displays 'discontinuities and discordances' (p. 78). Blind Audelay's dubious claim to be the copyist as well as the compiler, translator, and author of *Poems and Carols* was inspired by penitence and by a comparable wish to mend his own and his patron's ruined reputations. Audelay makes frequent allusions to his infirmity as a source of moral instruction in what are otherwise highly conventional works. Held prisoner after Agincourt first in Windsor and later in Pontefract Castle, in the months before his release in 1440 the duke of Orléans oversaw the making of two collections of his poetry: an English *Book of Love* (London, British Library, MS Harley 682) and a parallel anthology in French (Paris, BnF, MS fr. 25458). Points of difference in content and self-presentation between the two collections reveal that Charles

intended his English book to diffuse distrust among his English captors of what they judged to be as his *cauteleux*, or wily, nature (pp. 148–49).

The quality of scholarship in *Author, Scribe and Book* is outstanding, but some readers may want to resist a few of the findings. The argument that, despite its dedication to Lady Joan Beaufort, Hoccleve's *Series* is ultimately anti-feminist (p. 58) is disappointing but convincing, and one wonders how true this is of Hoccleve's *corpus* as a whole. Feminists may also want to test Derek Pearsall's quoted view that the initial audience targeted in *The Canterbury Tales* was likewise all-male (pp. 62–63). Surviving Middle English writings by women are lamentably few. It therefore seems unfortunate that the reader is urged to think of Margery's *Book* as a collaborative production to which her scribes made a notable, and even an equal, contribution.

In general *Author, Scribe and Book* lives up to the promises of its generalized title. As a study of 'late medieval English literature' that incorporates excursions into biography and palaeography and analyses of Latin and French texts, it demonstrates the disconnectedness of fifteenth-century writing, an aspect that literary histories tend to downplay. Despite what must have been intense centrifugal pressures, Critten holds his dense and complex discussion together. He succeeds in guiding the reader through ideas which, while typically true of one or more of his authors, are usually not true of all. More importantly—and this is where the book's chief value lies—he provides new insights into subjects and texts that have already been extensively written about by other specialists in the field. There is, moreover, an admirable honesty about this book, which habitually outlines previous arguments by others and delineates precisely where the author's own contributions begin and end. An extensive bibliography, index, and footnotes further consolidate the argument and suggest avenues for future research.

CHERYL TAYLOR, *James Cook University*

**Cross, Katherine**, *Heirs of the Vikings: History and Identity in Normandy and England, c. 950–c. 1015*, Woodbridge, York Medieval Press, 2018; hardback; pp. 276; 3 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9781903153796.

In *Heirs of the Vikings*, Katherine Cross undertakes a comparative examination of the evolution and appropriation of concepts of viking identity in England and Normandy in the tenth and eleventh centuries. The similarities in the English and Norman experience of ninth-century viking raiding, settlement, and, ultimately, rule, provide Cross a platform from which to juxtapose the subsequent development of ideas around identity and ethnicity in both regions. That Cross opens the volume with a clarification of terminology rejecting 'viking' as an ethnic identifier (p. xii) and titles her introduction 'The Problem of Viking Identity', indicates that she has no illusions as to the complexity of her task. There is a certain unease in the historiography of ethnic identity in the Middle Ages—ethnicity now, as then, subject to politicization, misinterpretation, and misappropriation. It is, in

part, Cross's awareness of the fraught nature of her topic, and the resultant care and attention to detail with which she provides it, that makes *Heirs of the Vikings* a compelling and successful study of the construction of medieval identities.

Cross's book is fundamentally a literary study. In her introduction, she notes the historical disconnect between the study of Norman ethnic identity and of Anglo-Scandinavian ethnic identity. Where the former has focused on literary sources and Norman identity as a social construct, the latter has preferred philological and archaeological evidence with a view to identifying continuing Scandinavian cultural influence. Cross is, however, clear in her assertion that 'identification with vikings and Scandinavian origins cannot be mapped onto the persistence of Norse culture' (p. 17). This is a key point upon which she predicates her argument and, by extension, the book as a whole. It is not that Cross seeks to reject the conclusions of philology and archaeology—she does draw on both at times—but rather that her focus is upon self-identification and the political appropriation of ethnicity, a practice that often leaves limited evidence outside of written sources.

The book is comprised of five main chapters delineated by literary types—a functional structure, though Cross does not adhere to it prescriptively (an approach that allows the argument to flow well throughout the volume). The first chapter examines genealogy, taking in such famous examples as Æthelweard's Wessex genealogy, and Dudo of Saint-Quentin's genealogy of Norman dukes. Cross examines approaches to inherited identity and compares characterizations of ancestral ethnicity as a construct of Normans and Anglo-Saxon elites. Tying in well with these mythologized lineages, Chapter 2 looks at origin myths, once again with a particular focus (on the Norman side) on Dudo. Here Cross argues that the appropriation and recasting of such narratives represent a politicization of ethnicity. Chapters 3 and 4 turn to historical narrative as represented by hagiography, in which Cross discusses how ecclesiastical elites depicted, and secular elites promoted, an inherited viking identity. She suggests that, despite the varied historical settings, the motifs that inform the depiction of a Scandinavian ethnicity have a certain commonality between England and Normandy. The final chapter analyses a series of charters, attempting to isolate regional variations in the use of viking identity, and how these were adapted to legitimize territorial claims.

If there is a criticism to be made, it is that the volume is somewhat uneven in treating the regions under consideration. Cross's study is most genuinely innovative in her approach to English sources, which is both nuanced and thorough. Perhaps as a result of the historiographical precedent of literary study of Norman identity, the Norman sources are approached with somewhat less vigour. The study of charters could certainly have drawn in more sources, and both charters and genealogies could have been treated with some additional sensitivity to Norman regionalism. It is, however, a small matter and does little to undermine what is an admirably constructed, researched, and argued book.

Cross's intervention in the study of viking identity in *Heirs of the Vikings* is a valuable one. It is convincing in its argument that ethnicity and identity were constructed by political elites in both England and Normandy in the late tenth century—indeed, that they were maintained and promulgated in the interest of personal agendas, whereby a perceived Scandinavian identity was encouraged to become embedded within ancestral narrative. It is a book that will appeal beyond those interested in the Viking Age in Normandy and England, suggesting approaches to questions around medieval identity and its contemporary use more broadly.

MATTHEW FIRTH, *Flinders University*

**Desmond**, Karen, *Music and the moderni, 1300–1350: The ars nova in Theory and Practice*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2018; hardback; pp. xxiii, 300; 21 b/w illustrations, 13 tables, 21 music examples; R.R.P. £75.00; ISBN 9781107167094.

Desmond takes one on a white-water ride, whether as a music theorist, palaeographer, mathematician, astronomer, historian, or whatever, but the result is that one looks forward to the next ride. More questions are raised than answered, but there is no question about the importance of this book for a variety of people. In the Middle Ages people were not restricted as narrowly as many present-day academics—but not Desmond—are now.

Entering the ride, Chapter 1 provides an excellent roadmap of the rest of the book, whose very title provides a problem: did the *moderni* precede the *ars nova* or vice versa? (Labels are only attached after the event.) Desmond's main interest centres on two protagonists, Jean des Murs and Jacobus, a yet to be precisely identified encyclopaedist of music (pp. 10–11), but encounters with numerous other key players are meticulously referenced. The essence of Jean's approach is that whatever can be sung can be written down (*Notitia*, fourth conclusion: see Christian Meyer, *Écrits sur la musique, Jean de Murs: traduction et commentaire*, CNRS éditions, 2000, p. 103). Here the thorny question of dating is also raised, since Desmond points out (p. 29) that the *conclusiones* of the crucial *Notitia* seem to have been added later than 1319, according to the key manuscript Paris, BnF, MS lat. 7378A.

*Subtilitas* is the subject of Chapter 2 but I am not sure what this chapter is supposed to achieve. Its subtleties may escape many. Arguments by analogy were very popular in the Middle Ages but have many pitfalls and the shifts here between music and architecture did not convince this reviewer. Nevertheless, Desmond does show very nicely the development in musical techniques over a relatively short period.

Jean des Murs was indeed a quadrivial scientist, but the author focuses in Chapter 3 on astronomy (anachronistically referred to as 'Murs's core professional activity', p. 114). Geometry gets only a passing mention and arithmetic is given short shrift despite the fact that the longest work Jean des Murs wrote was his

Arabic-influenced almost-500-page *Quadripartitum numerorum*. In Jean's work there is a continuing tension between theory and practice. He is very conscious of actual experience yet wants to have an overriding (abstract or absolute) theory. Jacobus, on the other hand, is wedded to a distinction between form and matter that makes him reify written musical notes almost as if they *were* sounds. Jacobus cannot understand the problems of change and motion, contemporaneously of considerable interest, in particular at Merton College, Oxford, but resolution of these would have to wait till around 1600. Dorit Tanay ('The Transition from the *Ars Antiqua* to the *Ars Nova*: Evolution or Revolution?', *Musica Disciplina*, 46 (1992), 79–104) has shown relevant parallels between the Oxford work and Jean's.

On the matter of subdividing time (Chapter 4) Jean (*modernus*) and Jacobus (*antiquus*) are most divided. Jacobus rigidly adheres to direct correspondence between notation and performance, but Jean des Murs has a new way of looking at musical notation, not static but dynamic, so that in performance written notes may affect other notes. It is not so much about what is written, pivotal and novel though that is, but how it is performed. For Jean the continuum of time can be indefinitely subdivided—in theory—but in practice a note can be successively divided only four times, since further division would produce notes too short to be audible.

Next we enter the deeply turbulent white water. Chapter 6 is awash with technical musical terms and the one-page note (p. xvi) is inadequate for the non-specialist reader. Nevertheless, this chapter is an exhilarating and well-worthwhile ride that takes the reader through a detailed analysis of two specific motets where Desmond cleverly shows just how powerfully the *ars nova* enables a more dramatic approach to music production.

Desmond's book has enhanced this reviewer's knowledge of the origins and impact of the *ars nova* immensely. She covers far more disciplines than is 'normal' these days. The book does, however, leave many questions unanswered. Jean des Murs ruffled feathers around 1300; Desmond does so now. Perhaps the most important technical questions relate to her dating of various people and their writings, but there is also the more general (or personal) one as to *why* Desmond should wish to date so many writings, and hence some people, later than is generally accepted. The brief main dating argument is contained in the epilogue and is based on the Machaut manuscript C (Paris, BnF, MS fr. 1586), which is dated to 1350–55. Desmond goes much further than Elizabeth Eva Leach, who, in *Guillaume de Machaut: Secretary, Poet, Musician* (Cornell University Press, 2011), simply talks about 'new' notation, and the like. Desmond wants to push Jacobus, Jean, and others to the middle of the fourteenth century. Nevertheless, we shall look forward to the next rafting and riveting expedition.

JOHN N. CROSSLEY, *Monash University*

**Earenfight**, Theresa, ed., *Royal and Elite Households in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: More than Just a Castle* (Explorations in Medieval Culture, 6), Leyden, Brill, 2018; hardback; pp. 428; R.R.P. €165.00, US\$190.00; ISBN 9789004360761.

Households in medieval and early modern Europe are not new subjects for scholarly study but they are enduringly fascinating. The contributors in this volume have engaged in what Theresa Earenfight calls a ‘distinct form of scholarly voyeurism’ (p. 1), peering into the lives of many different royal and elite families and households and illuminating them for the reader. Some of these papers were clearly inspired by those given by their authors at the Royal Studies Conference held at Winchester in 2014 (papers by David McDermott, Caroline Dunn, Isabel de Pina Baleiras, Manuela Santos Silva, Germán Gamero Igea, and Hélder Carvalhal). Of the sixteen papers, ten are focused on royal households while the rest deal with elite households.

Despite the ostensible geographical focus being on Europe, there is a bias towards England because, as Earenfight herself points out (p. 2), much of the recent scholarly work has centred on English royal and elite households. This is not necessarily a weakness per se, as the volume includes papers dealing with French, German, Italian, and Iberian (Castile, Portugal, Aragon) regions and monarchies. The lack of any work on Scandinavian royal or elite households is lamented. Nevertheless, the included papers incorporate a range of methodologies and are of a high writing standard, albeit with a few editing errors throughout the volume.

The book’s subtitle, ‘More than Just a Castle’, alludes to the fact that most, if not all, of these papers are focused on the social aspect, that is, the household as ‘a group of people who lived and worked under the same roof’ (p. 1). With the exception of Audrey Thorstad’s examination of how an elite household on the move operated in terms of its economics and consumption, the physical aspects of households for the most part do not feature significantly in any of the papers. In this sense, therefore, this volume occupies a specific niche in the field of histories of household and domesticity. There is an overwhelming emphasis on the people who made up the circles surrounding the royal or noble heads of households. Many of these people belonged to the highest social ranks and were on the most intimate terms with their masters and mistresses, but there were others of lesser ranks who fulfilled vital roles in the households. Readers who are interested in the non-social aspects of royal and elite households will probably need to turn to other published work featuring the structural, organizational, and material aspects of these households, such as *The Medieval Household in Christian Europe, c. 1100–c. 1550* (Brepols, 2003) and *The Elite Household in England, 1100–1550* (Shaun Tyas, 2018).

This volume has two primary strengths, the first being the diversity of households under examination. Many different royal and elite households are explored, not just ones where the king or a lord was the head. McDermott and

Carvalho's papers take a closer look at the households of royal male offspring, revealing insights into the importance of these entities in terms of power and influence; the papers by Alana Lord and Alexander Brondarbit fulfil similar purposes for the households of elite men. Papers by Dunn, Santos Silva, Megan Welton, Penelope Nash, and Zita Rohr feature households headed by queens or empresses, while those by Linda Mitchell, Eileen Kim, and Sally Fisher examine the households of elite women. The latter two papers, in particular, ask essential questions about the nature of a household and what implications may be drawn when the ostensible head of the household is actually a royal prisoner (as in the case of Eleanor of Brittany in Kim's study) or an elite woman who has been convicted for treason (Fisher's work on Eleanor, duchess of Gloucester). Similarly, Earenfight's paper on the women who served Catherine of Aragon between 1501 and 1504 showcases their role in the precarious household of a widowed royal princess.

The second major strength of this volume is that women feature prominently throughout, with only four papers (by McDermott, Brondarbit, Thorstad, and Carvalho) being wholly focused on male-led households. Women are rightly shown to be essential players in the game of politics, and many of the papers show how their households and entourages played vital roles in their political lives. Without expressly stating so, this volume clearly aims to advance the feminist cause by drawing attention to the role of women as members in royal and elite households, as well as queens and elite widows in charge of their own households.

Overall, this volume brings together significant and valuable research conducted on the entourages and social aspects of royal and elite households in Europe. It enables the scholar of royal studies to get a sense of what has been done in this field and is a valuable addition to a number of fields including royal studies, women's history, and research on households.

MICHELE SEAH, *University of Newcastle*

**Edwards, Nancy, Máire Ní Mhaonaigh, and Roy Flechner**, eds, *Transforming Landscapes of Belief in the Early Medieval Insular World and Beyond: Converting the Isles II* (Cultural Encounters in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, 23), Turnhout, Brepols, 2017; hardback; pp. xx, 526; 50 b/w illustrations, 1 b/w table; R.R.P. €120.00; ISBN 9782503568683.

From papers presented at a series of conferences held between 2012 and 2014, editors Nancy Edwards, Máire Ní Mhaonaigh, and Roy Flechner have collated some nineteen articles into a second volume focusing on the cultural changes wrought by the introduction of Christianity in north-western Europe in the early medieval period. The articles, from a range of impressive contributors, are arranged around four themes: writing; the power of the word; ritual practice; and conversion.

The introduction by Edwards and Ní Mhaonaigh identifies how religion shapes both individual and social behaviour, and how the practice of religion affirms

group identity. Conversion, in this instance, can take on two forms: identification with a new faith, or a profound reidentification with faith. Subsequently, Elva Johnston examines literacy in an Irish context. She argues that Christianity created a distinct identity tied to the valorization of texts that could provide a shared norm in a politically fragmented society. Anthony Harvey follows with a study of the heavy influence of Latin on Irish ogham and the implication that Roman Christianity informed the development of Irish literacy. Mark Stansbury argues that the development of an insular script grew out of the way writing was taught in the Roman and post-Roman world, with variations a sign not of isolation, but identity. In a Swedish context, Anne-Sofie Gräslund posits that the fashion for raising rune stones was connected to Christian conversion.

Moving to literary sources, Sébastien Bully and Jean-Michel Picard compare recent archaeological excavations at Columbanus's monastic foundations with Jonas's *Vita Columbani*, reinforcing scholarly doubts over the veracity of the early Life. Helen Foxhall Forbes looks for evidence of conversion in early English laws, arguing that there are some hints of issues with conversion, particularly in the need to legislate for the coexistence of Christians and non-Christians. Ingrid Rembold examines forced conversion, arguing that, in the context of Charlemagne's forced conversion of the Saxons, surviving texts support coercion as a viable strategy. Ní Mhaonaigh takes up conversion narratives in Ireland, arguing that surviving texts represent a sophisticated approach to religious change and the difficulties in maintaining a Christian life. Julianne Pigott follows with an examination of the twelfth-century lives of two sixth-century female saints, Iné and Monnena, pointing out an Irish awareness of the constant fragility of Christian authority.

The influence of Christianity on ritual is explored in the next section, with Elizabeth O'Brien's insight into burial practices in early medieval Ireland indicating that changes took time and were dependent on political and social acceptance. Patrick Gleeson examines assembly places in Ireland, arguing that the Church was co-opted into existing political structures rather than replacing them. Adrián Maldonado looks at the burial practices of the Picts, arguing that the archaeological evidence provides for a more fluid relationship between Christianity and the pagan past, one grounded in the importance of ancestral forces. Meggan Gondeck continues with an examination of Pictish conversion, via stone cross motifs. She argues that Christian symbols in the landscape do not necessarily record 'territorial gains', but merely affirm a local desire to express belief, attached, once again, to ancestral forces. Edwards then compares Pictish inscribed stones with those found in Wales. She argues that, while the Welsh stones confirm a Roman inheritance, the notable differences in the Pictish stones imply a transition to Christianity from Iron Age beliefs.

Conversion is the next theme, and Bernard Maier compares the conversion of the Alamanni in south-west Germany to that of Ireland, reinforcing conversion as a 'top-down' process. Roy Flechner follows with an investigation into 'peasant conversion' in an Irish and Anglo-Saxon context, arguing that Christianity

changed the agricultural regimes of communities and that there was an economic imperative to peasant conversion. Tomás Ó Carragáin subsequently utilizes ‘thick description’ in his exploration of the density of early medieval Irish ecclesiastical sites. His analysis proposes an even conversion process that impacted all levels of society. The conclusion by the editors wraps up the themes of the book with an observation that the contextualization of material culture can reveal the stages of Christianization, but is bedeviled by conflicting interpretations. With the rare textual sources from the early medieval period being fully explored, we are reliant on advances in archaeology to further nuance and refine the conversion period in an insular context.

This volume appears to improve on the previous volume in allowing more space for each article. The result is a more nuanced analysis of the period. While there is a tendency to concentrate on the Irish perspective, this second volume of *Converting the Isles* continues to present the issues impacting early medieval studies in an insular context in a thoughtful and nuanced way. The series does not offer solutions, but is very much a touchstone to a future framed by a better understanding of its past.

STEPHEN JOYCE, *Monash University*

**Forcellino**, Antonio, *Leonardo: A Restless Genius*, trans. by Lucinda Byatt, Cambridge, Polity, 2018; hardback; pp. vi, 351; 66 colour illustrations; R.R.P. US\$35.00; ISBN 9781509518524.

With this volume Antonio Forcellino completes a trilogy of biographies detailing the lives of the most notable artists of the Italian Renaissance—Michelangelo Buonarroti (Italian edition, Laterza, 2005; English translation, Polity, 2009), Raphael Sanzio (Laterza, 2006; Polity, 2012), and Leonardo da Vinci (Laterza, 2016; Polity, 2018). As an eminent restorer of art works from this period as well as an accomplished art historian, Forcellino devotes expert attention in these biographies not only to the stylistic and cultural features of his subjects’ creations but also to the technical and financial aspects of their productions in a way that casts many of their works in a new light.

The present biography of Leonardo, like its two predecessors mentioned above, is a scholarly book aimed at the non-specialist. Notes are provided at relevant points to document important claims and to direct the interested reader to more detailed research, but the writing is always lively and combines the imaginative reconstruction of evocative scenes with more factually grounded descriptions.

As an organizing principle for Leonardo’s biography, Forcellino takes the artist’s illegitimate birth to a peasant girl as the fundamental determinant of his life’s work. Leonardo’s father, a prosperous Florentine notary, never accepted him into the family and left him in the country to receive only a rudimentary education. This circumstance distinguishes Leonardo from the great and much more productive polymath of the previous generation, Leon Battista Alberti, who

was similarly born out of wedlock but whose father raised him and ensured that he was formally educated according to humanist principles.

Paternal rejection, Forcellino argues, prompted Leonardo to devote his life to pursuing an ever-increasing number of fields of inquiry, none of which he could ever fully master, in a futile attempt to position himself as the most outstanding practitioner of all the known arts (as well as some not yet known, such as human flight). Hence the original Italian subtitle of this work, *genio senza pace*, implies much more than the translated phrase ‘a restless genius’, which suggests a person of outstanding abilities who is always active. *Genio senza pace* also suggests a mind that can never be at peace, one that is always dissatisfied because of the impossible quest it has set for itself. This is a plausible thesis, interestingly elaborated, but not to the point of being fully persuasive.

Despite Leonardo’s dissatisfaction with the outcome of many of his efforts, or his loss of interest in them once some challenging technical problem had been solved in the preparatory stage, leading him to abandon them while incomplete, he nevertheless displayed ‘excessive self-confidence’ at the beginning of each new project, an enthusiasm that ‘would constantly lead him to embark on endeavours he was unable to complete’ (p. 111). Toward the end of his life, his reputation for leaving work unfinished was such that during his time in Rome (1513–17), having been invited there by Giuliano de’ Medici, brother of Pope Leo X, he was given no important commissions by the Pope, but was relegated to artisans’ quarters and assigned tasks such as the production of mirrors.

Notwithstanding the possible overreach of the author’s illegitimacy hypothesis, the narrative exposition in this work is compelling and the analysis of Leonardo’s art works, both the finished and the unfinished ones, is always informative. The discussion of how Leonardo transcended many of the conventions of Florentine panel art through the manipulation of light and shade in his monochrome preparatory drawings makes it clear that he presented ‘a very new combination of [colour] tone and light’ in his works (p. 123). As a result, ‘Leonardo paints with shadow what all the others paint with colour’ (p. 123).

One note of caution, however: because the book’s interweaving of a cultural and historical narrative with its artistic and technical discussions is so skilful, and these latter discussions are so impressive, the reader may be misled by some historical inaccuracies in the contextual narrative. For example, Isabella d’Este, wife of the ruler of Mantua, is twice called the duchess of Mantua (p. 189, p. 215) although Mantua was a marquisate during Leonardo’s lifetime (1452–1519) and did not become a duchy until 1530. Similarly, Ludovico Sforza, ruler of Milan and one of Leonardo’s great patrons, is described as the brother-in-law of his predecessor Galeazzo Maria Sforza (p. 102), whereas in fact he was Galeazzo’s brother. This latter slip seems to result from the translator’s misunderstanding of Forcellino’s Italian, which correctly suggests that Ludovico was the brother-in-law of Galeazzo’s wife, not Galeazzo; but the original text then incorrectly identifies that wife as ‘Maria’ rather than Bona of Savoy.

Fortunately these factual errors, and several others throughout the work, concern matters that are incidental and not central to Forcellino's main points. Nevertheless, anyone recommending the book to students should warn them not to rely on the text for matters of historical detail.

W. RANDALL ALBURY, *University of New England*

**Forni, Kathleen**, *Beowulf's Popular Afterlife in Literature, Comic Books, and Film* (Routledge Studies in Medieval Literature and Culture, 9), Abingdon and New York, Routledge, 2018; hardback; pp. ix, 207; 9 b/ w illustrations; R.R.P. US\$140.00, £115.00; ISBN 9781138609839.

Why do we keep retelling a story of precarious provenance, written in alliterative Old English verse, and taken from a single surviving manuscript dating back over a thousand years? Kathleen Forni's book *Beowulf's Popular Afterlife in Literature, Comic Books, and Film* examines the resonance of the Old English epic poem *Beowulf*, which continues to be retold and appropriated in many adaptations, and offers a detailed analysis of the afterlife of *Beowulf* in various media targeting very different audiences.

*Beowulf's Popular Afterlife* is organized into eight sections: two introductory chapters begin the book, which is then split into two categories, examining various retellings and appropriations of *Beowulf*. In the general introduction, Forni defines retellings and adaptations in terms of fidelity to the text. Retellings of *Beowulf* 'describe adaptations that make use of the plot and characters of the poem, and are set in a distant past' (p. 9). Appropriations of *Beowulf* are those adaptations that 'are set in the present—or even the future—and incorporate aspects of the myths into new narratives' (p. 9), with Forni later clarifying her definition to add somewhat dismissively that appropriations are 'set in the present and are less concerned with rewriting or interpreting' (p. 144). A chapter that examines the topic of monsters in *Beowulf* follows this introduction. In it Forni offers an overview of the function of the various monsters in the text as a way to gain insight into why *Beowulf* is part of the canon and still remains popular in the twenty-first century. Forni suggests Grendel's 'indeterminacy is [...] frightening' since 'the instinctive reaction when we are unable to define, categorize, and control is fear' (p. 19), and examines how some scholars view Grendel's mother as a 'challenge to male dominance' (p. 25). Forni concludes that popular adaptations of *Beowulf* 'both update and undermine' a 'nostalgic and authoritarian vision of social order' (p. 33). The chapter is a useful overview of monster studies and of monsters in *Beowulf*, but would have been more effective if incorporated into an extended introduction.

Forni categorizes chapters 'according to audience and medium' (p. 40); thus, each of the rest of the book's chapters focuses on a specific medium of adaptation. Chapters on the retellings in adult fiction, children's literature, comics, film, and television adaptations are followed by a single 'catch-all' chapter on appropriations that do not easily fall into the before-mentioned categories. I found the book's structure slightly problematic. I understand that Forni wishes to differentiate

between retellings and appropriations; however, the unhelpful focus on fidelity when defining both these terms, and the connection of fidelity with the past (Forni defines retellings as set in the past, and appropriations are set in the present/future), reinforces an exclusionary canon, and prevents more overt and interesting comparisons between the two forms of adaptations. Rather than being appended and condensed into their own chapter just before the book's conclusion, a more useful analysis could have occurred if appropriations were afforded extended analysis and valuable page space alongside the many retellings that have been included. Likewise, the short chapter introducing the lengthy surveys of retellings in various media could have been part of an extended introduction, which could have also expounded on appropriations—its position *after* the chapter on monsters in *Beowulf* was a confusing choice.

Despite this, Forni's book offers a detailed survey and analysis of the many ways in which *Beowulf* is adapted largely in retellings, and also reworked in appropriations, and demonstrates its legacy to popular culture, and why its story of monsters, violence, and heroism remains relevant to modern readers and audiences. Forni's writing is clear and accessible, and provides a good entry into *Beowulf* and its afterlife in popular culture. This book will be of interest to those studying *Beowulf* and its adaptations, and also more generally those interested in medievalism in adaptations in various media.

MARINA GERZIĆ, *The University of Western Australia*

**Fulton**, Helen, and Michele **Campopiano**, eds, *Anglo-Italian Cultural Relations in the Later Middle Ages*, Woodbridge, York Medieval Press, 2018; hardback; pp. 224; 2 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9781903153697.

This is a book about 'the variety of ways in which British and Italian cultures spoke to each other' (p. 1). Words thus feature prominently within its constituent essays as signifiers of communication. Margaret Bridges examines the *Polychronicon*, partly focusing on place names. 'Italian toponyms evoke a distant past and foreign clime' (p. 21) she notes, before going on to unpick an erudite medieval literary gaze focused more on the Roman past than any Italian present. Caroline P. Collette unravels a 'shared bibliophilia' (p. 42) that bridges time and place for Richard de Bury. Threading through issues like the reception of Petrarch, the habits of humanism, and the movement of books and texts, Collette deftly blurs the sometimes too-arbitrary distinction between medieval classicism and early humanism. Similarly focused on text and people and time, Michele Campopiano explores 'some less well known evidence for the reception of Italian legal and political works in the northern English city of York' (p. 52). European volumes with English annotations reveal how jurisprudential ideas developed in Bologna were read in the light of contemporary concerns in York. These are small but telling bits of evidence for wider networks of trade and information transfer, Campopiano

argues, which should encourage further exploration of such connections in ways that expand beyond centre-and-periphery scholarship.

Ignazio Del Punta's focus is economic. Pointing out that modern and medieval financial crises are not as cleanly comparable as popularly assumed, Del Punta then explores and exposes structural elements of the medieval monetary system. He concludes that 'efficient international banking companies fostered speculative spirals' (p. 8). What worked well in good times proved unable to cope with the bad. The next chapters move from macroeconomics to societal micro-studies. Bart Lambert provides a survey of the Lucchese community in England by drilling into a case study of the Gigli family. Through a fascinating use of Italian sources he presents 'a surprisingly clear view of the businesses of one of the most important foreign trading groups in late medieval England' (p. 88), revealing where they lived, prayed, and travelled. Complementing this well is Helen Bradley's essay on London's Italian merchants, principally traced through examination of their wills. She focuses on the everyday 'linguistic, economic and social interface between cultures' (p. 103) that such individuals reveal, finding evidence for 'several distinct Italian city-state communities' (p. 108) in medieval England, among other things of interest.

Victoria Flood investigates Franciscan prophetic texts and rumour in a study of political Joachism. Following threats from Italy to England, Flood notes how 'political Joachism presented not only a possible overture to good rulers, but a mechanism for the critique of the bad' (p. 136), explaining how 'Franciscan prophecies were part of an oppositional culture' (p. 149). Thus, Italian prophecy helped inform and interpret Franciscan relationships with English monarchs. Similarly showing a broader cultural influence informing English texts, Helen Fulton offers 'a redefinition of what urban history was and what forms it took in medieval Britain' (p. 150) by charting continuities over time, particularly those that link urban centres with political narratives and agendas. From Bede to Camden, Fulton casts a wide net to make a compelling case that British urban history has a long history with clear Italian and classical resonances.

While at once broad and particular, as most edited volumes are, this book highlights the diverse range of ways wherein English society was influenced by Italian culture. Revealing links personal, economic, and textual, it is a counterpoint to any view of England that would see it in isolation from Europe generally, or Italy specifically.

NICHOLAS D. BRODIE, *Hobart, Tasmania*

**Gerzić**, Marina, and Aidan **Norrie**, eds, *From Medievalism to Early-Modernism: Adapting the English Past* (Routledge Studies in Medieval Literature and Culture, 11), Abingdon and New York, Routledge, 2019; hardback; pp. 280; 9 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £115.00; ISBN 9781138366572.

Marina Gerzić and Aidan Norrie's edited collection is motivated by the question, 'why is there not an equivalent term like *medievalism* for early modern historical and cultural afterlives?' (p. 1). This question is one with which those of us who work on this material have had to grapple, and Gerzić and Norrie's intervention into this debate is welcome. They propose the term 'early-modernism', with the hyphen used to avoid confusion with modernism, as a means to address this gap. As the editors note, the terms 'Tudorism' and 'Shakespearean' are sometimes used, but both of these terms are very specific and English-centric, thus excluding material on global early-modernisms (p. 3). One might be moved to wonder, then, why half of this collection is devoted to medievalist subject matter. Certainly, the chapters dealing with early-modernist material are amongst the most entertaining and genuinely novel contributions to the scholarship. However, a closer reading of this volume reveals that the editors were wise to combine medievalist and early-modernist material here. The contributions nicely speak to each other across traditional period divides and cultures and, as Gerzić and Norrie highlight, such a division would only 'perpetuate the reductive and unhelpful division between the medieval and the early modern periods' (p. 7).

Gerzić and Norrie note that the volume is wholly concerned with, as the subtitle suggests, adaptations of the English past, and one would hope that this volume will provide a useful model for further work on global approaches to the subject matter. The editors should also be commended for the diverse range of voices included in this volume, from graduate students and early career researchers to more senior scholars in the field.

The collection is divided into two sections: 'Cultural Medievalism and Early-Modernism'; and 'Historical Medievalism and Early-Modernism'. The first section deals with adaptations of cultural, mostly literary, texts. The subject matter of this section ranges from Wonder Woman and the *Nine Ladies Worthy* to reimaginings of Chaucer, the Arthurian legends, Shakespeare, and medieval and modern zombies. Lisa Hopkins's work on the influence of *The Duchess of Malfi* on the Harry Potter series is one of the most entertaining of the volume, as Hopkins convincingly argues that the representation of sibling relationships in Rowling's novels, in particular, is informed by John Webster's Jacobean tragedy (p. 117). Polina Ignatova's exploration of the resonances between popular cultural representations of zombies and medieval folklore about the walking dead is also particularly illuminating in its conclusion that 'the zombie story is as constrained as its subjects, with the same plots being recycled again and again' (p. 79).

The second section of the collection examines adaptations that present the historical past, rather than a specific text. Subjects canvassed include video game

adaptations of medieval history, graphic novel depictions of the Hundred Years' War, the afterlives of Elizabeth Barton, ghosts of the Civil War past, religious conflict in the film *Elizabeth* and, of course, *Game of Thrones*. The highlight of this section, however, is Marina Gerzić's reading of Benedict Cumberbatch's performance as Richard III in *The Hollow Crown*, a recent BBC adaptation of Shakespeare's history plays. Gerzić traces the way that Cumberbatch's previous roles, and star image, fed into the interpretation of his performance, particularly by his enthusiastic fans (known as the 'Cumberbitches'). Gerzić's use of fan studies to inform her reading of how Richard III is represented in the production provides a useful framework for further research in the field, especially given the immense popularity of certain medieval and early modern subjects in internet subcultures. Ben Redder's contribution on medievalist video games is also particularly interesting, given the immense popularity of the form and the ability of video games to present a highly stylized, often immensely violent, version of the medieval past.

*From Medievalism and Early-Modernism* is a useful, engaging contribution to the growing body of scholarship interested in the ways in which the medieval and early modern periods have been rethought, adapted, and reinterpreted across centuries. In its innovative and fresh approach to the material, including insights gleaned from the disciplines of film and television studies, video game studies, and fan studies, it is likely to be of significant interest to scholars working on the complex, often surprising, afterlife of the medieval and early modern periods.

STEPHANIE RUSSO, *Macquarie University*

**Gray**, Madeleine, ed., *Rewriting Holiness: Reconfiguring Vitae, Resignifying Cults* (King's College London Medieval Studies, 25), London, King's College London, Centre for Late Antique and Medieval Studies, 2017; hardback; pp. 338; 9 colour illustrations; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9780953983896.

Madeleine Gray's edited collection is a significant contribution to the study of the transformations undergone by saints' hagiographies, and how they relate to wider, contemporary cultural and political changes. The book's aim is to bring to attention the importance of the variations present in the *Vitae* as sources of information on *mentalités*: 'what people wanted to have happened is arguably more illuminating than what "actually" happened' (p. 2). The introduction provides an extensive overview of literature on the subject, engaging with different approaches to the study of the lives of saints and representing a helpful tool for the uninitiated. Most of the thirteen contributions that make up the collection address one aspect of the book's general project. The sources employed range from the textual (hagiographies to parodies) to visual, archaeological, and, in one case, musical. Nearly half of them focus geographically on England, Scotland, Wales and/or Ireland, while two chapters (Jayita Sinha, James M. Hegarty) analyse the lives of holy men from non-Christian traditions.

The book is subdivided in four sections. The first, 'Rewriting Monasticism', looks at the tensions extant between different religious lifestyles and how they influenced the rewriting of saints' lives. The asceticism of Serapion the Sindonite and its different interpretations are the focus of Svitlana Kobets's paper. John R. Black looks at English textual and visual depictions of the lives of Saints Mary of Egypt, Guthlac, and Cuthbert, to show how elements related to coenobitic life were systematically emphasized in texts written after the Norman Conquest. Kate Helsen and Andrew Hughes consider cases of rewriting of new chants and texts dedicated to saints, by looking at Thomas Becket's office, its Benedictine origins, and its link with the later rewriting and promotion of John Peckham's Trinity Office.

In the second part, 'Re-Gendering', Gray analyses the *Vitae* of Saint Gwenfrewi. She traces the origins and the innovation of Gwenfrewi's defining characteristics, to exemplify how they were informed by different conceptualizations of female sanctity, and how they interacted in a contact area of Welsh and Anglo-Norman influences. Karen Casebier draws a comparison between the hagiographic text *La Vie de Sainte Euphrosine* and the more parodic *Frère Denise*, by considering how they both display the tensions between the older, lay, model of marriage, and the emerging ecclesiastical one.

The third section, 'Translating Cultural & Religious Identities', begins with a chapter on Irish saint Darerca and the developments that made her into Anglo-Norman Modwenne. Diane P. Auslander shows how Darerca's asceticism, following the transformation of Irish Christianity from admired to disparaged, is subjected to a different interpretation, which makes it the mark of female, not Irish, holiness. The function of the cult and beatification of Florentine Umiliana de' Cerchi, to establish the endurance of her family's power through the city's changing political landscape, are the focus of Anne Schuchman's essay. Jayita Sinha tackles the concept of 'saint' in a non-Christian setting by analysing the figure of Kabir, a holy man venerated by Muslims and Hindu alike, who moulded his image and the accounts of his life to better fit their needs and support their beliefs. Adam Coward expands the applicability of the conceptual framework when he considers the 'saint-like attributes' (p. 205) of Independent minister Edmund Jones, and how they fit or rejected common elements of Welsh expressions of holiness.

Slavia Barlieva's contribution on Saints Cyril and Methodius opens the fourth part, 'Appropriating Political & National Identities', by looking at how their cults, initially Slavic and supranational in nature, have undergone 'intense "nationalization"' (p. 229). In the following chapter, Gray delineates Henry VII Tudor's devotion to a minor Welsh saint, Armel, and how his figure was used to display support to the previous dynasty. James M. Hegarty shows how the Sikh hagiographies of Guru Nānak helped negotiate political, theological, and everyday demands, making his example less austere while introducing elements borrowed from other traditions. The last contribution of the book, by Samantha Riches, considers an ample collection of textual and visual sources to trace the

evolution of the figure of Saint George, from eastern Mediterranean martyr to national patron-knight.

Despite the occasional typographical error, this collection reads smoothly, supported by nine illustrations, and provides a wide range of examples that illustrate the theoretical framework anticipated in the introduction.

LINDA ZAMPOL D'ORTIA, *Venice, Italy*

**Grenier-Winther**, Joan, ed., *La Belle Dame qui eust mercy & Le Dialogue d'amoureux et de sa dame: A Critical Edition and English Translation of Two Anonymous Late-Medieval French Amorous Debate Poems* (MHRA Critical Texts, 60), Cambridge, MHRA, 2018; paperback; pp. lxxi, 99; R.R.P. £12.99, US\$17.99, €14.99; ISBN 9781781882856.

Alain Chartier's *La Belle Dame sans mercy* (1424) generated controversy and imitative works now called the Belle Dame cycle, from which Joan Grenier-Winther has edited two short debate poems, contained in the manuscript Paris, BnF, MS fr. 1131, fols 184<sup>r</sup>–189<sup>v</sup> and 195<sup>r</sup>–201<sup>r</sup> respectively. *La Belle Dame qui eust mercy* (378 lines) has already been edited, with English translation, by Joan E. McRae: *Alain Chartier. The Quarrel of the Belle dame sans mercy* (Routledge, 2004, pp. 20–21, 453–84), on the basis of Paris, BnF, MS fr. 20026. Attested in twenty fifteenth- and sixteenth-century manuscripts, three incunabula and early printed editions containing collections of works, it was more widely known than *Le Dialogue* (414 lines), which is found in only four manuscripts and three incunabula and early printed collections, and is edited here for the first time. In all the witnesses, the texts follow Chartier's poem and are single and separate from one another.

Like the courtly *partimen* and *jeu-parti*, and Chartier's poem, both texts consist of alternating sequences, here of three stanzas, exchanged by an unhappy suitor and a courtly lady. In the first, surprisingly, the lady decides finally to relent and show favour, reversing the outcome of Chartier's debate. In the second, a merciless lady sternly dismisses the pleading lover, telling him to look elsewhere.

In the introduction Grenier-Winther has set out material, stylistic, and thematic evidence supporting her claims, concerning the bipartite structure, authorship, and dating of the texts, based in part on those proposed by Arthur Piaget in 1894, which he subsequently did not pursue. The versification of both texts changes about midpoint, from eight- and ten-lined stanzas respectively to unusual thirteen-lined stanzas with a different rhyme scheme, which suggests that in each case two originally separate poems might have been combined. Accordingly, in this edition each text is divided into Poem 1 and Poem 2. Material evidence and the development of the argument in each text are considered. Although Poem 1 of both texts is a coherent entity and might stand alone, it is not so attested in manuscripts. Furthermore, as had Piaget, Grenier-Winther attributes Poem 1 in both instances to Oton de Granson (d. 1397), whose poetry she has edited. This attribution has, however, the disadvantage of situating the composition of Poem 1 of both texts

in the fourteenth century, before Chartier's *La Belle Dame*. There is insufficient evidence to determine authorship and dating of the two sets of *treizains*, which remain anonymous (pp. xix–xxx). Despite Grenier-Winther's wish to attribute partial authorship to Oton de Granson, the edition's subtitle describes the texts as anonymous.

A list of all witnesses, a full description of the base manuscript, shorter descriptions of other manuscripts and early printed editions, and their affinities are included (pp. xxxi–xlix). J. C. Laidlaw's system of identifying Chartier's manuscripts (*The Poetical Works of Alain Chartier*, Cambridge University Press, 1974) has been adopted, and supplements information on the order of poems in collections. Sections on titles, language, versification, stylistics, rhetorical elements, and a bibliography complete the long introduction. A few oversights occur: foliation of manuscript *Qd* should be '57<sup>r</sup>–63<sup>v</sup>' (p. xxxv); omission of a section number '§7' (p. xlvi); the date of Piaget's article on Oton de Granson should be '1890' (p. lxii).

The text has been established according to sound principles and is complemented by copious variant readings (pp. 54–77), tables of rhymes (pp. 78–92), and a glossary (pp. 93–99). English translations on the facing page correspond to the French text line by line. Grenier-Winther has thus made the medieval text and courtly register comprehensible to modern readers.

Transcription of the text is generally reliable but, from reading the digitized texts on the BnF Gallica website, I noticed a few discrepancies. In *La Belle Dame qui eust mercy* I read: lines 9 *Veuliés*; 14 *Ne vul*; 43 *Aussy*; 145 *sourse*; 172 *n'aront*; 233 *lacz*; 238 *tout poins*. Emendations to lines 211 and 279 need explanation. In line 103, the manuscript reading *puisqu'a faire faire* should have been corrected to *puisqu'il fault faire*, as justified by the sense and the variants (p. 58). In *Le Dialogue*, line 222 ends with *mainz* (not *maiz*), rhyming with the manuscript readings *reffrains*: *n'estains* (lines 225–26), which might have been retained (cf. *estaindre*: *reffraindre* (lines 217–18).

This edition of two short but significant texts of the Belle Dame cycle allows further examination of the complex intertextual threads knitting together works inspired by Chartier's poem in a climate of controversy, debate, and competition. The cover illustration from the luxury manuscript New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Library, MS 1216, fol. 102<sup>r</sup>, preceding *La Belle Dame qui eust mercy*, makes the edition an attractive addition to MHRA Critical Texts.

GLYNNIS M. CROPP, *Massey University*

**Gribling**, Barbara, *The Image of Edward the Black Prince in Georgian and Victorian England: Negotiating the Late Medieval Past* (Royal Historical Society Studies in History New Series), Woodbridge, Royal Historical Society, The Boydell Press, 2017; hardback; pp. 189; 5 colour, 12 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £50.00; ISBN 9780861933426.

Barbara Gribling's book makes an important contribution to the fields of medievalism, reception studies, and royal studies. Gribling skilfully navigates the intricacies of the reception of Edward 'The Black Prince', providing a nuanced analysis of the uptake of the historical figure over the course of the Georgian and Victorian periods in England. This broad scope of focus, encompassing both the Georgian as well as the Victorian, is significant, as it highlights the oft-overlooked popularity and influence that discourses of medievalism had on the eighteenth century and the earlier part of the nineteenth century. Gribling acknowledges the distinctiveness of the medievalisms of both periods and their representations of the Black Prince, and crucially and effectively maps the development of depictions of the medieval figure alongside shifting social, political, and cultural interests and key events. Moreover, and importantly, the book examines how the past was remembered and reinvented for and by English royalty as well as for and by those engaged in 'popular' discourse. This decision, to map the reception of a figure of medieval royalty by Georgian/Victorian royalty and, simultaneously, by lay people, works to reveal the breadth and variety of medievalism at this time in English history as well as the widespread appeal of the Black Prince's story.

Gribling's book is separated into two distinct parts: 'Royal Use of the Black Prince' and "'Popular' Uses of the Medieval Past'. In the first section, in three chapters, the book surveys how the Black Prince was utilized by royal figures of the Georgian and Victorian periods. Chapter 1 examines the reign of George III and how his uptake of the medieval prince was filtered through a desire to engender loyalty and patriotism in his subjects; Chapter 2 looks at how George IV and his supporters utilized the mythology around the Black Prince to justify George's political ambitions; and Chapter 3 extends upon previous examinations of the medievalisms of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert to put forward a nuanced analysis of how their uptake of the Black Prince was used as a means to cement their political standing in society. The second part of the book, also in three chapters, examines the uptake of the Black Prince in 'popular' discourse. Chapter 4 centres on the moniker 'The people's Prince' and the Black Prince's role in the Good Parliament of 1376, highlighting how these aspects of his mythology informed the popular depiction of the prince as a champion of the people, but this chapter also inspects how this uptake was at times rejected as royalist, antidemocratic propaganda. Chapter 5 studies the centrality of the figure of the Black Prince to shifting conceptions of manliness, chivalry, and the English gentleman from the late eighteenth century and throughout the Victorian period. The final chapter deals with how the figure of the Black Prince often functioned as an archetype of English manliness to support the myth of the 'English warrior',

delineating how this myth was informed by, and in turn helped shape, English expansionism and imperialism.

Gribling's study draws great strength from its depiction of medievalism in both the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as not a unified, stationary endeavour but as a constantly shifting, always nuanced, and often contradictory enterprise. This strength is brought to the fore especially in the last three chapters of the book where, unimpeded by the constraints of focusing on the use/interpretation of a single monarch, Gribling is free to examine the ideological intricacies and contradictions of the reception of the Black Prince in more detail and with more nuance. The book also triumphs in its mapping of English medievalism within a longer tradition, as this broadening of the scope of study provides a clear timeline of the development of certain ideologies associated with the medieval prince to emerge. The book, through a fascinating case study on the reception of a medieval prince, provides a sound contribution to the study of how societies utilize artefacts of the past to reflect and impact their present.

ELLIE CROOKES, *Macquarie University*

**Griffin, Carrie, and Emer Purcell**, eds, *Text, Transmission, and Transformation in the European Middle Ages, 1000–1500* (Cursor Mundi, 34), Turnhout, Brepols, 2018; hardback; pp. xxii, 245; 4 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. €75.00; ISBN 9782503567402.

This volume originated from a conference on 'Transmission, Translation, and Dissemination in the European Middle Ages c. AD 1000–1500' held at University College Cork in 2012. It promises to address a rich and fascinating area of inquiry in medieval studies: the ways texts and ideas were transmitted between languages, regions, and audiences. Notable is the immense scope of what is a relatively small volume: as indicated in the title, topics of chapters range chronologically from 1000 to 1500 and geographically across Europe, from Scandinavia to Iberia. Editors Carrie Griffin and Emer Purcell are quick to address this in the introduction, noting in the first line that the volume includes 'examples of research that would almost never be located within the same book but which, when read together, offers a unique and illuminating perspective' (p. xi). They emphasize how the volume is a departure from publishing trends that favour tightly focused monographs and collections, which have the effect of 'isolating certain research findings and discussions [...] thus discouraging the integration of similar kinds of research carried out across different contexts' (p. xi). In this mission, the volume should certainly be considered a success. By focusing on the themes of textual transmission and transformation, the collection avoids the siloing of particular linguistic, geographic, and even disciplinary specializations and allows—rather fittingly—for the study of transmission across the European Middle Ages.

The collection offers ten contributions on a wide variety of texts from different periods and geographic regions. First is Kevin Murray's study of the development and transmission of the Irish voyage narratives of Snégdus and Mac Ríagla from

c. 1000 into the sixteenth century, with a particular focus on the relationship between poetry and prose forms. Tom Birkett provides an exploration of textual transmission between rune poems in Anglo-Saxon England and Scandinavia, challenging the idea that similarities found in the different texts were the result of a since-lost source poem. Beth Ann Zamzow's discussion of how Latin and mixed Latin-English carols in fifteenth-century England constructed and conveyed layers of meaning is one of the highlights of the volume, as is Anthony Lappin's following chapter on the composition and reception of the 1143 *Alchoranus latinus*, a Latin translation of the Qur'ān produced in Christian Spain by Robert of Ketton and Hermann of Carinthia. The diverse range of topics made possible by the book's broad scope is further illustrated in Krista Rascoe's study of Dante Alighieri's understanding of late-medieval optical physics and the transmission of these ideas through his *Paradiso*. Tamara Pérez-Fernández brings the themes of transmission and translation to the fore in her discussion of the reception of John Gower's bilingual English/Latin *Confessio amantis* in Iberia. Nóirín Ní Bheaglaoi and Caoimhe Whelan both take the works of Giraldus Cambrensis (Gerald of Wales) as their focus, exploring the revision of the *Topographia Hibernica* by its author and the translation and reception of the *Expugnatio Hibernica* into English in late-medieval Ireland respectively. Anna Dlabačová's study of the distribution of vernacular texts in the late-medieval Low Countries and Germany is another excellent contribution that explores modes of transmission by authors and readers. The volume concludes with a fascinating study from Matthew Wranovix on the instruction of clergy in late-medieval Germany, challenging the assumption that clergy in this period were illiterate or poorly educated.

A brief afterword by Donnchadh Ó Corráin summarizes the contributions, though the author diverges with a lengthy discussion of Giraldus Cambrensis and the manuscript tradition of the *Expugnatio Hibernica*. As a result, three chapters are hurriedly summarized in a single sentence. Given the cohesiveness of most of the volume and how well the contributors responded to the theme, the afterword is a missed opportunity to bring these ideas together and reinforce the value of the approach.

Central to the success of such a collection are two key considerations: how accessible each chapter is to a non-specialist reader and how well each chapter connects with the broader themes of transmission and transformation. The chapters in this volume respond to these challenges with varying levels of success. For the most part, the chapters connect well with the themes and make their content and contributions clear to a non-specialist reader, although the book may have benefited from a more consistent translation policy. Additionally, Kevin Murray's chapter, with its extensive untranslated material from Old Irish and detailed grammatical discussions, gives the sense that it would have been better suited to the kind of specialist volume the editors are deliberately eschewing.

Overall, however, *Text, Transmission, and Transformation in the European Middle Ages* makes a valuable contribution to medieval studies and scholars of

all disciplines will find something of interest in its pages. The editors further demonstrate the value of exploring a particular theme or concept across different periods, regions, and disciplines.

ELISABETH ROLSTON, *University of Canterbury*

**Griffiths, Fiona J.**, *Nuns' Priests' Tales: Men and Salvation in Medieval Women's Monastic Life* (Middle Ages Series), Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018; cloth; pp. 424; 29 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. US\$69.95, £58.00; ISBN 9780812249750.

This interesting study by Fiona J. Griffiths explores the way in which the priests who attended to the spiritual needs of medieval nuns made this service central to their own spirituality, and how they rhetorically justified and defended it. The timeframe considered, the late eleventh century to the end of the twelfth, was characterized by a reform of the Church and of the relations between the laity and the clergy. The following promotion of clerical celibacy made access to women one of the major differences between laymen and priests, resulting in an intense scrutiny of the relationship between nuns and the priests who took care of them. Mainstream attitudes declared it dangerous for the spiritual well-being of the priest, since temptation was considered unavoidable, and as an onus with no evident compensation. Therefore, priests who dedicated themselves to this activity appeared 'suspicious and problematic' (p. 18). This perspective, and the paucity of documents that provide the nuns' priests' viewpoint, made these men and their service, which was vital for the salvation of the nuns, mostly invisible in historiography too.

This monograph focuses on these priests and the reasons that motivated their work, which was not considered a burden, but an opportunity. Some of them cultivated spiritual friendships with the women under their care, or founded religious communities that welcomed both men and women. Griffiths starts from the consideration that these men were not as exceptional as previously believed, and considers their writings as representative of larger trends, suggesting the existence of 'a culture of support for the involvement of men with religious women [...] that had a distinctive vocabulary and rhetoric' (p. 37).

Chapters 2 to 4 of this monograph focus on a variety of traditional figures whose endeavours included caring for women, as they represented a major rhetorical support for these priests' work. Chapter 2 looks at how exemplary men of the Bible were used as examples, keeping with trends of twelfth-century reform. Jesus's acceptance of women and his particular attention towards them in his ministry set clearly an important precedent. Other examples that supported the possibility of chaste relationships between men and women were that of John, who took care of Mary as his adoptive mother after Jesus's death; and of proto-martyr Stephen, who was especially dedicated to widows. While offering these models for medieval priests, the gospels' narrative displays the spiritual strength of these women, who accompanied Jesus to his death. For being the first to witness

Jesus's resurrection and announcing it, these female followers were considered 'the apostles to the apostles'. To medieval writers, these exemplary female apostles were evidence that contemporary women too were spiritually worthy of the priests' help.

Chapter 3 is dedicated to the example provided by church father Jerome with his care for Roman women, especially widows. His disparate relationships with female disciples became models for twelfth-century spiritual affiliations between nuns and priests, and could be used rhetorically by each, to shape and influence the forms they could take. Jerome's interpretation of devout women as brides of Christ too was influential in the perception of the role of the nun as *domina* (that is, 'female lord', p. 104) to the priest's role of servant of Christ.

Chapter 4 analyses another model for inspiration in spiritual relationships, that of the 'saintly siblings' (p. 113). Although in conflict with the idea of spiritual kinship, blood kinship emerged already in the fourth century as model for monastic life. The *Vitae* of holy men, to enhance their piety, often depicted them as accompanied by sisters, or other female relatives. These relationships set influential precedents for monks, and a model for siblings that spiritually benefited both and, in some instances, could include former spouses too, without coming under suspicion. Chapter 5 considers the reasons why these priests should involve themselves with the pastoral care of women. It analyses the role of women as intercessors, as part of their identification as brides of Christ, often in exchange for the spiritual services provided by priests. Their prayers, considered more powerful than men's, held also a wider social importance, and could be an incentive for donors to help monasteries.

As conclusion the author provides a short overview of the ways in which nuns fought against medieval misogyny, so that their voices could be heard, and their spiritual needs attended to. Even if positioned peculiarly, this last chapter still fits with the overall aim of the monograph, satisfactorily achieved, to show 'the productive ways in which [medieval] women and men nevertheless interacted, and the positive view of "woman" that some religious men held' (p. 197).

LINDA ZAMPOL D'ORTIA, *Venice, Italy*

**Haki** Antonsson, *Damnation and Salvation in Old Norse Literature* (Studies in Old Norse Literature), Cambridge, D. S. Brewer, 2018; hardback; pp. 272; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 978184384072.

As scholars have increasingly appreciated in recent decades, Iceland when its famous sagas took their present shape, largely in the century and a half from about 1180, was a part of Western European Christendom. Haki Antonsson's book is an exploration of the hitherto little examined role played in the sagas by the most fundamental concern of medieval Christians—their fate in the afterlife, whether it be salvation in heaven, damnation in hell, or a period of atonement for their sins in Purgatory prior to admittance into paradise.

Haki covers a very impressive number and range of works, but states that he focuses on those ‘that illuminate and exemplify the principal themes and patterns that I have observed in reading the Old Norse corpus’ (p. 2). Much of his attention is devoted to sagas set in a clearly Christian milieu—*Sturlunga saga*, the sagas of the Icelandic bishops, and sagas of the kings of Norway—but several representatives of the more famous *Íslendingasögur* genre also receive attention, along with a handful of poems and other works.

Some chapter headings, including ‘Confession and Penance’, and ‘The Hour of Death’, give a clear indication of their content. Others deal with life as a journey toward salvation or damnation, often fatal betrayal of a central character by family or friends, outlaws and marginal figures including Gísli Súrsson and Grettir Ásmundarson, and supernatural and preternatural indications of salvation and damnation in the world surrounding the saga figures. The final chapter, ‘Last Things and Judgement Day’, is primarily an exploration of how the book’s concerns play out in medieval Iceland’s most celebrated prose work, *Njáls saga*.

This is a book setting out to argue a case, that by focusing on the twin Christian concerns of salvation and damnation we obtain an enriched understanding of the nature of the works discussed, how they are structured, and how they would have been understood by audiences at the time they were composed. Especially in the case of sagas set in the twelfth and thirteen centuries the case is quite convincing, but at times we are asked to accept that the audience had a degree of theological knowledge and sophistication about which there might be debate. Thus, we read that ‘although *Yngvars saga* never explicitly states that Yngvarr’s quest is for his own salvation, a well-versed audience would have recognized the signs that his journey carried religious connotations’ (pp. 85–86). Similarly, it is said of *Svinfellinga saga* that ‘like most other sagas, [it] refrains from explicitly claiming that a character is damned. Rather, subtle yet clear hints are made about the sinner’s poor posthumous prospects’ (p. 103). It does seem open to doubt whether after Gunnarr’s celebrated defence in *Njáls saga* an audience should be aware of his ‘seeming damnation’ as someone who ‘dies as a pagan’ (p. 212), or whether the lights in his burial mound might possibly ‘evoke the four points of the cross’ (p. 216).

While it would be unjust to suggest that this is not an impressive piece of scholarship, based on thorough research in the primary sources and extensive reading in secondary literature relating directly to Scandinavia and more broadly to medieval Christendom, it is somewhat disfigured by an unusual number of usually slight blemishes. On p. 106 a passage presented in Old Norse and English in accordance with the book’s normal practice states that Þorgils skarði was invited to feasts and received gifts. It is provided as evidence of ‘Þorgils’s lavish display of gift-giving and feast-holding’. The intention was probably to quote the immediately preceding paragraph in the saga. The reference to Högni Njálsson on p. 215 should be to Högni Gunnarsson. Bróðir’s prophecy before the Battle of Clontarf is significantly misrepresented on p. 226. English translations can be

surprisingly free or omit without acknowledgement sense elements present in the Old Norse (e.g. pp. 24–25, 74, 99, 114, 115, 201). Published translations quoted are not always duly referenced (pp. 148–49), and a few incorrect references (pp. 178, 179) and ‘typos’ (pp. 87, 149) were observed.

Despite these generally minor shortcomings Haki Antonsson has provided in a remarkably wide-ranging work an important contribution to our growing appreciation of the important Christian dimension in Old Norse saga literature. It deserves to be read by serious saga students and scholars but also by those from other fields with an interest in the popular religion of medieval Western Europe.

JOHN KENNEDY, *Charles Sturt University*

**Huot**, Sylvia, *Outsiders: The Humanity and Inhumanity of Giants in Medieval French Prose Romance* (The Conway Lectures in Medieval Studies, 12), Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press, 2016; paperback; pp. 360; R.R.P. US\$40.00; ISBN 9780268031121.

Sylvia Huot’s *Outsiders* examines the multi-faceted roles played by giants in medieval French literature. As exceptional human beings situated at the intersection of humanity, bestiality, and demonry, giants ‘elaborate fantasies of racial and cultural alterity and [...] explore the traumas and desires that shape Christian chivalric subjectivity’ (p. 25). *Outsiders* persuasively develops this thesis by drawing on a wide body of evidence, primarily consisting of prose Arthurian material, but ranging across epic, *chansons de geste*, ancestral romance, and lyric poetry, with a brief nod to manuscript iconography. The author’s judicious use of critical theoretical frameworks, including postcolonial, anthropological, and psychoanalytical approaches to subjectivity and race—a term which Huot acknowledges lacked sustained theorization in medieval (European) culture—also draws out pertinent analogies between medieval, early modern, and modern concerns with identity, alterity, and security.

*Outsiders* begins, logically, by exploring the origins of giants to reveal how their liminal ontological status is figured by their location on the borders of courtly civilization and by their identification as peoples indigenous to hitherto unexplored realms. These marginal gigantesque societies are characterized by a distortion of Christian, political, structural, and moral values that become conflated with a racial and cultural alterity shared with ‘Saracens’. This alterity informs giants’ resistance to, and rejection of, the master civilization embodied by Arthur’s chivalric court.

In their effort to overcome this threat to courtly society, knightly encounters with giants reflect an intersection between ‘the physical and ideological violence of military adventuring, imperial expansionism, and the consolidation of cultural hegemony’ (p. 107). Detailed analysis of the prose *Tristan* and *Lancelot* romances uncovers how giants (and Saracens) contest, and yet ultimately fail to subvert, courtly historical narratives: attempts to disrupt the Arthurian polity with violence are overturned by heroic archetypes of chivalric and devotional virtue.

*Outsiders* elucidates the evolution of knightly subjectivity as a consequence of violent encounter with giants in light of giants' allegorical potential as 'vivid fantasies of racial and ethnic difference' (pp. 237–38). Ultimately, *Outsiders* affirms the importance of violence in the formation of knightly identity and in chivalric culture's quest to protect and extend Christian society: it is a knight's civilized control of his violence that justifies its exertion over gigantesque barbarism and savagery.

Huot's discussion is dense with critical observations and evidence, yet the prose remains clear throughout and helpful subheadings enable readers to absorb her insights in digestible sections. Iconographic analysis suggests how giants could be invested with various meanings contemporaneously, although some reflection on how representations of literary giants changed across the Middle Ages would have been interesting. This contribution to an ever-growing literature on non- and barely human figures in medieval literature offers many new insights into the role of alterity in medieval literature. *Outsiders* also illustrates how modern anxieties about self and identity, encounters with Others, and the control of historical and cultural narratives were embedded within the medieval European world.

TANIA M. COLWELL, *Australian National University*

**Insley, Charles, and Gale R. Owen-Crocker, eds, *Transformation in Anglo-Saxon Culture: Toller Lectures on Art, Archaeology and Text*, Oxford and Philadelphia, Oxbow Books, 2017; paperback; pp. xviii, 136; 30 colour and 16 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £38.00; ISBN 9781785704970.**

This volume contains five lectures delivered at Manchester University between 2009 and 2014, with an introduction by Gale Owen-Crocker, and an index. As proclaimed in the title, 'transformation' is a key theme explored in the lectures, highlighting the Anglo-Saxon capacity for 'adaptation to new circumstances' (p. xv). All contributors have long and distinguished careers and the experience and breadth of vision necessary to explore successfully such a theme. In different ways, each lecture provides a window into and a summation of their respective research interests.

John Hines's contribution is titled 'A New Chronology and New Agenda: The Problematic Sixth Century'. This lecture arises out of the large-scale, multi-authored research report edited by Hines and Alex Bayliss, *Anglo-Saxon Graves and Grave Goods of the 6th and 7th Centuries AD: A Chronological Framework* (England Society for Medieval Archaeology, 2013). Hines discusses the team's revision of major material-cultural dates bounding the period of particular types of furnished burial, previously placed with the period c. 570–720, but, under the revised chronology, considered to span the period c. 530–680. Within the first half of this period, observed shifts in material culture in both male and female graves raise new questions about the environmental and sociopolitical circumstances that may lie behind the steep decline in burial with grave-goods around 570, followed

by a resurgence, particularly for female graves, after the first quarter of the seventh century.

In 'Anglo-Saxon Art: Tradition and Transformation', Leslie Webster draws on themes explored in her major study, *Anglo-Saxon Art* (Cornell University Press, 2012). Ranging over six centuries of Anglo-Saxon art, from zoomorphic decoration and figural decoration on the earliest metalwork (and the brooding pottery figure on a cremation urn lid from Spong Hill) to the Bayeux Tapestry, Webster focuses on the nature of visual literacy and the decoding (as in riddles) of artistic motifs in the pagan period, running through their adaptation and fusion with imported traditions mainly introduced with the advent of Christianity. Both before and after this watershed in artistic traditions, the Anglo-Saxons succeeded in transforming traditions unique to their particular insular environment.

Barbara Yorke's 'King Alfred and Weland: Tradition and Transformation at the Court of King Alfred' assesses the degree to which Alfred had transformed himself into a philosopher king (as his biographer Asser portrays him) in relation to the traditional expectations of a war leader. The appeal to Alfred of heroic and martial figures like Weland and Hercules, either already present or inserted into his translations, and his idiosyncratic treatment of free will in the translation of Boethius suggest (together with his portrayal in the *Chronicle*) that he wished to present himself as a martial figure as much as if not more than an intellectual one.

Michelle Brown, in a wide-ranging lecture titled 'Strategies of Visual Literacy in Insular and Anglo-Saxon Book Culture', explores the 'complex cognitive challenges of fully integrated word, sound and image' (p. 99) initiated in book culture in early medieval Britain and Ireland. Brown's mastery of her field is evident in, for example, her exegesis of the Ezra portrait in Codex Amiatinus as encapsulating the dynamics of scholarship and pastoral care in early book production.

In 'The Vercelli Book as a Context for *The Dream of the Rood*', Éamonn Ó'Carragáin examines how the poem fits into a context of thematically selected texts dealing with approaching death and Judgement. He considers the manuscript to be an old-fashioned one, reflecting the culture of pre-Benedictine reform houses of canons. Equally interesting is the author's discussion of the other two texts of the *Dream* in context: that is, on the Brussels Cross and the Ruthwell Cross respectively.

This book will be essential reading for specialists in the fields of archaeology, history, art history, and literature. Simultaneously it functions splendidly as a survey text for non-specialists.

GREG WAITE, *University of Otago*

**Jones, Chris, ed.,** *John of Paris: Beyond Royal and Papal Power* (Disputatio, 23), Turnhout, Brepols, 2015; hardback; pp. xiii, 421; R.R.P. €100.00; ISBN 9782503532806.

John of Paris, or John Quidort, has become a recognized name in the history of medieval political thought, but relatively little is known of the man himself. As this rich collection of essays shows, moreover, there is still much to debate concerning even his best-known work, *De potestate regia et papali* ('On royal and papal power'). As befits its stature in the field of medieval political theory, *De potestate* is the primary concern of most essays here. However, new light is also brought to John's many other works, including his commentaries, quodlibets, and his works on the Antichrist and the Eucharist respectively. John emerges from these discussions as a controversial and even combative intellectual, deeply engaged in the university debates and politics of his era. It makes satisfying, if sometimes dense reading.

The collection of essays presented here makes no claim to completeness. Instead, it represents a smorgasbord of new research and stimulating interpretations, drawn deliberately from a range of disciplinary perspectives that juxtapose political, philosophical, intellectual, and religious historical approaches to John and his work. Although the chapters stand alone as useful contributions to their fields, therefore, the book repays holistic and comparative reading.

Several essays address the issue of the context and debates to which John was responding. The essays by Joseph Canning, Chris Jones, Andrew Theng, and Karl Ubl, for example, present a variety of perspectives on John's intention in *De potestate*, emphasizing variously contemporary hierocratic debates, Dominican identity, and the quodlibets and factional divisions within the University of Paris. Jones and Anna Milne-Tavendale both offer close analyses of John's approach to compilation and integration of his sources, albeit in different works. Another group of essays addresses the issue of how John's works were used. The chapters by Martin Cable, and Lidia Lanza and Marco Toste, in particular, explore two very different moments of reception and response to *De potestate*: the former teasing out why a fifteenth-century Franciscan may have made a copy in dialogue form; the latter examining how John's arguments affected other works on papal power in the decades immediately following its publication.

The volume's division into four parts provides one map for the reader pursuing a thematic approach. But other combinations would make equally compelling selections. For example, Lanza and Toste's detailed treatment of reactions to John's arguments on papal power makes a stimulating companion to Theng and to Jones, who each treat John's reaction to *his* sources in different ways. Read together, these chapters situate *De potestate* in a rich ecosystem of scholarly debate.

The pluralist approach of the collection extends to the authors' conclusions on recurring topics, such as the relationship of *De potestate* to the Franco-papal conflict between Philip IV and Boniface VIII. The volume imposes no consensus

on the question of whether John was writing specifically in order to advance a royal French position, for example, or even on whether the Franco-papal conflict constitutes the appropriate contextual frame for this work. This is indicative of the undercurrent of lively debate that animates each chapter, and the collection as a whole.

KATHLEEN B. NEAL, *Monash University*

**Juster**, Susan, *Sacred Violence in Early America* (Early American Studies), Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016; paperback; pp. xiii; 288; 17 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. US\$26.50, £19.99; ISBN 9780812224191.

This is a book that recommends itself to scholars in all fields of early modern European research, but particularly to those who consider the early modern Transatlantic. While it focuses on the Anglosphere, the themes of the book are relevant to the entire European encounter with the New World. *Sacred Violence in Early America* is, Susan Juster writes, ‘a deep cultural history of the theology of violence: the presuppositions, referential chains, and linguistic homologies that structured how early Americans narrated, rationalized and fantasized about, and occasionally apologized for violence against a variety of religious “others”—heretics, sectarians, and, especially, Indians’ (p. 3).

Juster shows, clearly and vividly, that the violence inherent in the European religious contestations of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries moved with them to the New World. Once there, far from becoming a new people as was once supposed, they continued the patterns of thought, behaviour, and belief structured and attuned to violence as fundamental to their religious project, and thus to all other habits of life. Juster goes about ‘unearthing the logics that sustained such paradigmatic acts as warfare, captivity, conversion, heresy-hunting, and iconoclastic attacks’ from ‘English justifications for their own actions with an ear attuned to the rich semiotic and devotional traditions’ of Western Christianity (p. 3). Through an ‘archaeology of discourse’ Juster examines the ‘distinct theological paradigm’ of ‘blood sacrifice, holy war, malediction and iconoclasm’ (each a chapter) and ‘peels away the discursive layers to reveal the medieval and early modern antecedents’ that provided ‘form and meaning for [...] colonial violence’ to ‘reconstruct the grammar of religious encounter’ (p. 4).

Her method is to ‘identify and then tug, sometimes vigorously, at the ideological and rhetorical threads that bind early American religious violence [...] to Europe’s wars of religion’ (p. 4). This enables Juster to follow the ‘bright red line’ of blood sacrifice, or the more episodic appearance of cannibalism, or concern about unruly tongues, through ‘the entire corpus of colonial texts’ (p. 4) to show that violence was in the very bones of the European encounter with ‘America’. Juster’s literary methods may not please all readers, particularly those attuned to the traditional political and religious histories of Puritanism. But what Juster offers here is not ‘individual findings, many of which have been known to scholars for some time, but the assembling and juxtaposing of these historical fragments

to create a discursive map of early Anglo-American encounter with the religious other' (p. 5).

Juster's work particularly reveals how the language of religious violence saturated everyday religious life for early Anglo-Americans. Her contention is that understanding this aspect of their religious mentalities enables comprehension of 'the combustible mixture of sacred and profane fears and desires that led English men and women to behave [...] in such a savage manner toward their enemies in the New World' (p. 7). In calling this 'sacred violence' Juster is saying that even quotidian violence (against Quakers, Native Americans, African-Americans, other Anglo-Americans) was 'motivated and justified in significant part by religious aversion and/or desire' (p. 6) intended to 'restore the boundary between the sacred and the profane or to render profane what others find sacred' (p. 7). While not saying religious motivations were the only motivations to violence in early Anglo-America, Juster (with a nod to Natalie Zemon Davis, p. 7) demonstrates that the 'conquest and settlement of the New World was in fact the final bloody chapter of the Reformation Wars' (p. 13).

If there are any concerns about this work, they would relate to what it does not include. This is in no way a criticism of Juster's study, which, in addressing the continuity of paradigms of religious violence from Europe to the New World, is a major contribution to the historiography of the early modern Transatlantic World and provides an important new perspective. But in taking her insights further, scholars must, I think, include the violence against the natural and Native world of what Europeans called 'America'. When the early Puritan colonists were not sitting in their meeting houses hearing the violence-saturated religious teachings of their clergy, they were out denuding the landscape of forests, building roads, erecting fences, diverting water courses, killing animals for their skins and other products, and planting non-Native crops in Native soils, and this activity of 'settlement' has to be regarded as part of their violence. European colonists in their 'New World' killed not only the people they found there, but conquered the natural landscape with farms, villages, and towns. Early Anglo-American sacred violence was not just against people or religious artefacts and practices, it was against a sacred natural world as well.

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

**Krafl, Pavel Otmar**, *Quam ecclesiam in honore sancta Marie Virginis intitulari volumus: Study on the Kłodzko Monastery of Canons Regular of St. Augustine in the Pre-Hussite Period*, trans. by Miroslav Košek (Canonici regulares sancti Augustini, 1), Brno, Středoevropské centrum slovanských studií, 2018; hardback; pp. 93; ISBN 9788086735191.

Since the Potsdam conference at the end of World War Two, Kłodzko has been part of Poland. In the Middle Ages, it belonged to the Kingdom of Bohemia (as Kladsko), though there were bitter conflicts because Poland also claimed the town. Modern Kłodzko lies ninety kilometres south of Wrocław, 150 kilometres north

of Brno (the capital of Moravia), and 200 kilometres east and slightly north of Prague. These relevant details are absent from the book and the author takes for granted that Western readers are au fait with Central European geography. The volume could benefit from the inclusion of a map. Established formally on 25 March 1349, the Augustinian cloister emerged as a key font of culture in late medieval Central Europe and played a significant religious and political role in the history of Bohemia. Between the 1330s and the outbreak of the Hussite Revolution, the Canons Regular of St Augustine were a major influence in the Czech territories. These religious houses were centres of education and artistic achievement. For scholars of religious renewal it is worth noting that the *Devotio moderna* found receptive soil amongst the Augustinians. Czech bishops seemed to favour the order and many of the monasteries established in the Kingdom of Bohemia owe their foundations to episcopal influence. This slim volume seeks to emphasize the role of the Kłodzko canonry in the period leading up to the Hussite movement. Pavel Krafl is among the very best scholars equipped to deal with the topic, having established himself over the past twenty years as a leading scholar of Czech religious history, publishing numerous papers, essays, monographs, and editions in areas related to the present study. The bibliography lists no fewer than twenty-seven items from his pen.

In late medieval Czech history, the Hussite uprising forms a dividing line in the historiography. This is true of this book and its author adheres to that demarcation. The entire district of Kłodzko plays a role in the history of Hussites but that is not part of the present study. In the period between its foundation and the Hussite movement (c. 1350 to c. 1415) numerous conflicts involving the religious house and the community can be observed. Beyond these, extant records reveal numerous internal disputes that convulsed the Kłodzko canonry.

The book comprises a brief introduction, a substantial survey of sources, and relevant historiography including editions of monastic records, encyclopaedias, synthetic studies, monographs, and essays. This enables the reader to situate the present volume within the larger body of scholarship. This introduction is followed by chapters dealing with the foundation of the Augustinian house at Kłodzko, especially the role of Ernest of Pardubice, archbishop of Prague, an elaboration of the canonry and its sphere of operations, an explanation of the law of patronage and its relation to incorporated churches, a discussion of the important dispute with the Hospitaller commandery (Order of Saint John), and a delineation of the election of provosts in the pre-Hussite period, complemented with brief treatments addressing the jurisdiction of the provost and prior over members of the convent, and disputes between the Augustinian provost and the convent. One of the longer chapters deals with the confraternities of the convent followed by a prosopographical survey up to the Hussite period.

Krafl presents the reader with brief allusions to a number of particularly interesting and piquant notes from the sources. These include an archiepiscopal mandate against anyone wishing to attack the monastery or rob the Augustinians,

and a decree issued by King Charles IV enlarging the judicial immunities enjoyed by the Kłodzko canonry. The most interesting element includes a statute repealing all future laws that might be issued in subsequent times that might obtrude into the immunity enjoyed by the Augustinians in 1350. Disagreements between local nobles and the convent over felled shrubbery underscore the political dimensions of what may be regarded as pedestrian concerns. More curious and worthy of additional consideration is the decision that the canons were to preach in the vernacular only after breakfast but not prior to that meal. There is some wonderful specificity including the election of a provost occurring precisely ‘on 3 June 1413 at 3 o’clock’ (p. 52). The charter of the Kłodzko house is unique in terms of privileges, and notably the archbishop of Prague declined to retain for himself and his successors any special authority over the persons of the convent. The relationships between Kłodzko monastery and the seven villages under its immediate purview might likewise be fruitfully explored.

The study might have suggested what remains to be done to fully utilize the extant data, along with more explanatory delineation of the limitations of the materials, and how these sources contribute to a broader tapestry. But Krafl has fulfilled his intention of introducing selected aspects of a rich topic.

THOMAS A. FUDGE, *University of New England*

**Kurelić, Robert**, *Daily Life on the Istrian Frontier: Living on a Borderland in the Sixteenth Century* (Studies in the History of Daily Life (800–1600), 7), Turnhout, Brepols, 2019; hardback; pp. viii, 232; 6 b/w illustrations, 2 b/w tables; R.R.P. €75.00; ISBN 9782503551869.

Robert Kurelić has written both a remarkable and a frustrating book. It is frustrating because, despite a brief overview, the complicated political background of the difficult and diverse corner of Europe studied here has been scattered through the chapters in a way that cannot be easily put together. In order to appreciate the significance of Kurelić’s analysis the reader is constantly obliged to review the context elsewhere. It is remarkable because the author has found useful ways in which to extract the information he wants from material not immediately intended to provide it. Interpreting the surviving records for the area is no simple matter, but Kurelić has achieved it in a way that he makes plain to readers. The contemporary analysis of the changes Istria underwent in the period analysed is pessimistic, but Kurelić reviews their presentation and offers a more nuanced exposition.

No two frontiers are the same and Kurelić shows that Istria had apparently suffered a more severe loss of population due to famine, plague, and pestilence than most other frontiers in the years since the Black Death. After 1453 Istria was pressured by the increasing threat from the Ottomans, which resulted in the migration from areas overrun by the Turks of many people, known as Morlaks, whose culture was distinct, and who brought with them behaviour deemed criminal by the locals. This differs markedly from the position on borders elsewhere in Europe. Given the nature of the intrusion, Kurelić’s conclusion, that the greater

part of the very different populations managed to coexist despite frequent boundary conflicts and the ever-present feud, is unexpected but well argued.

Kurelić concentrates on the relationships between the areas under Venetian and those under Austrian influence. The cultural divide he identifies, however, is not so much between the two states as within them. He shows that the coastal towns in the Venetian area enjoyed a different culture and language similar to that of Venice itself, while the interior settlements, both those owing allegiance to Venice and those obeying the Habsburgs, largely spoke the same language, and practised the same local symbolic rituals and traditions. The structure and management of their local churches, which involved the local election of priests, added to the similarity, since they worshipped using the same distinctively different language and rites. It is less surprising that many of the popular beliefs for the whole place and period were common—many supernatural superstitions were Europe-wide if one allows for some local distinctions.

Kurelić also illustrates how the administrative structures in all these places were very similar. He shows how throughout the period the entire area was still socially and economically struggling with the loss of population that meant some villages and even towns had disappeared. He highlights the way that agriculture was giving way to animal husbandry and that the people who remained had difficulties in supporting themselves. In showing that local feuding over resources was kept within limits he makes the legal position clear. Whose courts had authority was ill-defined and disputed. The poorly marked boundaries and conflict over the rights and ownership of the territory, especially in the forests, which was of key importance to the residents, resulted in numerous long-drawn-out and inconclusive conflicts. The restrictions that resulted help explain the limitations on the authority of the local officials, especially the *zupans*.

To explain the dynamics of life in Istria Kurelić turns to the difficult concept of honour, differing as it did between the Morlaks, who were basically egalitarian, the established local nobility, and the outside authority. Kurelić concludes that even though the frontiers were a mosaic of complexities and periodically subject to violence, they were ultimately tolerant of the different groups. The frontiers were no impediment to economic, and as a result social, intercourse and business, and the possibility of profit at the level of daily life dominated more political aspects of the borders. Undoubtedly, as he demonstrates, this was a transitional period but one in which key elements of local identity were established.

Kurelić adopts the general theories of Stephen Ellis and Gunter Vogler, who see borders as often imprecise and as places where cultures are in significant contact across boundaries. He follows them in suggesting that in the sixteenth century the precise marking of frontiers, the allocation of land to one side or the other, and the marking of the boundary on the ground itself were often more critical to the local residents in Istria than to the more distant rulers whose interest was more political. He provides a clear analysis of the financial problems that divided states anxious to fund the defence of their realms from their subjects

who eventually fled from overwhelming taxation. It is a major contribution to frontier studies.

SYBIL M. JACK, *The University of Sydney*

**Marshall**, Simone Celine, and Carole M. **Cusack**, eds, *The Medieval Presence in the Modernist Aesthetic: Unattended Moments* (Studies in Religions and the Arts, 11), Leiden and Boston, Brill, 2017; paperback; pp. xii, 194; R.R.P. €105.00; ISBN 9789004357020.

The ten specialist essays in this collection examine how ‘medieval artistic, religious, scientific, and philosophical traditions’ were ‘reinterpreted into the broad Modernist aesthetic’ (p. 3). They deal with an array of canonical figures: late Wagner; early Yeats; Pound (early and late); Proust; Ionesco; Beckett (twice); Evelyn Waugh; and Russell Hoban. Literature and literary reception predominate, but other cultural forms and scholarly disciplines feature importantly—opera; liturgy and ritual; architecture; art; philology; classicism; philosophy and theology.

An abiding impression of the collection is how much the modernists knew and cared about aspects of the medieval. Jonathan Ulliot, whose discussion of Pound’s classicism and late nineteenth-century medieval philology is one of the best essays, reminds us that Pound had university training in ‘Dante’s Italian, Old French, Old Spanish, and Provençal’ (p. 44), along with Old English. Pound kept up with work like Joseph Bédier’s ‘virtuosic philological technique of reconstructing the original Tristan myth through a series of fragments’ (p. 53), which Ulliot sees matched in Canto LXXXI: ‘to have gathered in the air a live tradition’ (p. 54). Pound’s confidence that he could identify the original and real *Odyssey*, before Homer got to it, is also redolent of this period of medieval philology.

Pound is also very well served by a learned essay from Mark Byron on the translation of Guido Cavalcanti’s *Donna mi prega* in Canto XXXVI. Byron argues that Pound saw ‘the critical importance of Islamic philosophy in transmitting Platonic and Aristotelian thought into the European High Middle Ages’ (p. 78), and relates movingly how war, incarceration, and extradition deprived his work of its intended Averroist *Paradiso*, where ‘the paradisaical moment [...] is one grounded in the physiological experience of love and its trigger of recognition to the memory’ (p. 96).

One general observation these essays provoke is that many modernist writers operated in or against situations where versions of medievalism were already well entrenched: Carole M. Cusack’s essay on Wagner’s *Parsifal* shows the composer discriminating between several varieties, including his own Ring Cycle, to promote not a modernist sense of heroic ambivalence, but ‘tradition and stability’, where ‘the *Gesamtkunstwerk* could function as religion in modernity’ (p. 24). Joseph A. Mendes argues that Yeats deliberately engaged with earlier poetry on the abdicated king Fergus to highlight the problems of choosing a ‘wind-blown’ (pp. 35, 40) mystic as a model for action. As Gro Bjørnerud Mo indicates, Proust’s fascination with Gothic architecture and sculpture was inspired mainly by Ruskin,

creating his fascination with ‘exchanges between sacred space and everyday life’ (p. 64). And Octavian Salu points out that the young Ionesco’s native Romania was under the spell of the ultra-right nationalism of the philosopher Nae Ionescu, a figure possibly behind the murderous ‘Professor’ of *The Lesson*.

Rina Kim treats the early Samuel Beckett’s involvement with Robert Burton’s *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621) as one basis of his *Dream of Fair to Middling Women* and *More Pricks than Kicks*. Kim reads Burton’s and Beckett’s misogyny as a counter-strategy against the melancholy deriving from medieval love-longing for an unattainable object, often read as a maternal figure. Beckett ‘reject[s] the Platonic concept of erotic transcendence and the sublimatory form of mourning’ (p. 129) in his ‘artistic impulse to recuperate [...] the lost maternal object’ (p. 131). Still, as Kim argues, these early texts remain misogynist for all that. In another lively essay, Holly Phillips discusses Beckett’s early poem *Whoroscope* (1930) as a work whose ‘Medievalism is a “distancing” mechanism’ (p. 137): ‘the only way to be rid of the “false consciousness” of high-Modernism’s transcendentalism is to expose the machinery that generates the aesthetic effect’ (p. 137), in this case by introducing a deliberate medievalist ‘clunking’ (p. 137) that disturbs the potential for epiphany.

Evelyn Waugh’s *A Handful of Dust* and Pound’s Canto VI are discussed together by Anna Czarnowus. She reads Waugh as drawn to Victorian medievalism, especially its architecture, but only when it is genuinely suffused with Catholicism. Pound, by contrast, moves in an eclectic cultural and religious ambience, with a more flexible sense of ‘medieval’ time and space. Finally, Chris Ackerley reads Russell Hoban’s *Riddley Walker* as a traditional four-fold allegory, with special attention to three *figurae*: the late-medieval wall painting of St Eustace in Canterbury Cathedral; a carved wooden foliate head; and Mr Punch.

It would have been a valuable addition, though certainly a difficult one, to give this volume a more substantial introduction that analysed its religious themes more fully, engaged with existing work on medievalism and modernism, and discussed the various approaches and methodologies its essays display. Nevertheless, this is overall a valuable and scholarly collection that will offer much to readers in the area.

ANDREW LYNCH, *The University of Western Australia*

**Maskarinec**, Maya, *City of Saints: Rebuilding Rome in the Early Middle Ages* (Middle Ages Series), Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018; hardback; pp. 320; 21 colour, 33 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. US\$55.00, £42.00; ISBN 9780812250084.

Maya Maskarinec’s new study on early medieval Rome utilizes theories of space and place to analyse the impact of the city itself on the landscape of early medieval Christianity. Articulating Rome as a ‘storehouse of saints’ within an ‘ecosystem of sanctity’ (p. 6), Maskarinec examines the visceral impact of Rome on the wider Church through case studies involving Byzantium and Francia in a period from the

sixth to the eighth centuries. Her focus is on the influence of saints' cults patronized and endorsed by Rome, but with an emphasis on saints not native to the city.

In Chapter 1, Maskarinec uses a variety of sources to take the reader on a walking tour of Rome as seen through the eyes of a Frankish visitor in the mid-eighth century. Select areas sketched out in this stylized walk subsequently form the backdrop for closer analysis in the rest of the volume. The next five chapters explore the impact of Eastern saints localized within the urban landscape of Rome. Chapter 2 concentrates on the Forum Romanum, and the special interest of Byzantine imperial authority in Rome from the sixth to the eighth centuries. Maskarinec's study of the eastern saints established and patronized in Rome in this period, with an emphasis on soldier-saints, adds significant evidence to the ways in which Byzantine imperial authority projected its interests on the city. Chapter 3 extends this approach to the Palatine and the presence of Eastern soldier-saints such as Sts Sergius and Bacchus, along with the patronage of foreign saints with deep connections to former Western imperial authority such as St Caesarius. Subsequently the influence of Byzantium is explored through charitable foundations built around substantial Greek communities on the Tiber, communities noted for patronizing eastern cults emphasizing the powers of spiritual and physical healing, including the seminal eastern soldier-saint, St George. Moving to the elites established on the Aventine Hill, Chapter 5 describes how the rich fashioned and patronized unique saints' cults based on archetypes who were themselves aristocrats in the service of imperial authority and Rome. Finally, Chapter 6 investigates how the papacy invoked Rome as a home for all the saints and the popes' role as guardians of their memory.

Chapters 7 and 8 move to how the Carolingian and post-Carolingian world absorbed the rich and complex 'storehouse of sanctity' in Rome in the context of closer ties with the papacy and an embracing of Roman reform. Returning to the Frankish text influential on Chapter 1—the *Einsiedeln Compilation*—Maskarinec explores how the four monasteries of Fulda, Weissenberg, Prüm, and Reichenau imported eastern saints' cults from Rome, including Sts Sergius and Bacchus, St Caesarius, as well as St George. Subsequently, she investigates the martyrology of Ado of Vienne (d. 875) and the way saints' cults endorsed in Rome came to be integrated into Carolingian perspectives. An epilogue highlights the importance of foreign saints' cults in Rome as a condition of its universality. The book concludes with a useful appendix of foreign saints venerated in Rome c. 500–800.

There is much to admire in this book. Maskarinec's emphasis on the visceral actuality of the patronage of foreign saints in Rome has raised some interesting perspectives on the cultivation and projection of universal authority. However, structural weaknesses muddy these perspectives, particularly in the weighting given to the case studies of Byzantium and Francia. The sense of Rome as an importer of foreign saints, and what this means for the projection of both internal and external authority, is not quite matched by Rome as an exporter of indemnified foreign saints and what this might mean, again, for how this projection of

authority might interact with local authority. However, there is much to be said for Maskarinec's methodology, one that, in a sense, combines an archaeological approach with literary sources. Overall, a book with interesting insights, but one that needed, perhaps, a tighter scope.

STEPHEN JOYCE, *Monash University*

**Meyer-Lee, Robert J., and Catherine Sanok**, eds, *The Medieval Literary: Beyond Form*, Cambridge, D. S. Brewer, 2018; hardback; pp. 288; 28 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9781843844891.

In *The Medieval Literary: Beyond Form*, editors Robert J. Meyer-Lee and Catherine Sanok interrogate the fluid and anachronistic parameters of a formalist methodology. The collection responds to institutional and disciplinary engagement with literary form as an object of critical investigation, challenging its ambiguous reliance on 'form' as a qualifier. Meyer-Lee and Sanok show that form is a structural paradigm with cognitive, conventional, rhetorical, spatial, and temporal attributes, which means that form is 'a sequence or dynamic process, a phenomenon of mediation or that which is performed' (p. 3). This contemporary approach builds on the formalism of the mid-twentieth century, continuing to recognize form as a political, aesthetic, and cultural expression of power. Medieval contexts, as well as modern, offer a plurality of theoretical and operative definitions for 'form' and 'literature', and this variation is expressed through the different approaches and material found in the volume. Following Caroline Levine's influential *Forms: Whole, Rhythm, Hierarchy, Network* (Princeton University Press, 2015), the essays that make up the volume, many of which riff on temporal disparity between the medieval and modern, show how ineluctable critical anachronism can be positively reconfigured as 'analytical affordance' (p. 7). In this way, the project of the volume is an opening up or an expanding of form rather than a stretching 'beyond', to which its name alludes.

The critical search for literary form is essentially operative, not abstract, and the essays go on to emphasize the specific material, political, and artistic extensions of medieval literary form and the aesthetics of reading. The volume is divided between three sections, which gradually expand the idea of form from an instrumental or utilitarian aesthetic, to a performative ideal, and finally to a shifting temporal quality. Claire Waters shows how aesthetic sensibilities and formal habits inform the inherently literary practice of reading Marian poetry. Ingrid Nelson likewise argues that medieval readers and writers understood the literary to be a practice, which is embedded in the rhetorical expansion of meanings through *dilation*. The formal reception of medieval literature is also key to Shannon Gayk's essay on stylistic juxtaposition in the Towneley Shepherds' plays. Jessica Brantley examines the visual and versified forms of liturgical calendars in books of hours, showing how these reveal an aesthetic and material form as well as a literary. The materiality of the expressive face provides a universal analogous basis for the individual and cultural specificity of literary form in Maura Nolan's

essay. Nolan examines the production of self as a ‘formal matter’, showing how the self is part of a dialectic that opposes the type from the individual. Through a reading of rhymed and alliterative verse, particularly *King Horn* and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, Kathryn Kerby-Fulton and Andrew Klein demonstrate how the formal qualities of reception are shaped by the *mise en page*. Likewise concerned with the materiality of form, Emily Steiner identifies the relationship between the history of the book—and particularly Richard de Bury’s extensive fourteenth-century book collection—and the idiosyncratic history of literary form, highlighting the violence of literary knowledge as a material field. Steiner examines that which is ‘beyond form’ by finding the cultural rivets, disasters, and elitism that have shaped ‘form’ throughout history.

Seeta Chaganti studies the formal qualities between medieval dance and literary form in *The Franklin’s Tale*, considering the way the former models receptivity to the movement of time in the latter. Chaganti expands this analysis to the modern interpretation of medieval literature, introducing an ‘irritant’ to falsely historical reading of causality in the form of comparison with the 1970s American avant-garde artwork, *Spiral Jetty*. Complementing this focus on dance as literary form, Sarah Elliott Novacich examines the qualities of inaudible music in *Sir Orfeo*, showing the ways in which melody is beyond textual representation but inherent to artistic form. Anke Bernau provides an engaging meditation on the formal role of translation, both within and of medieval texts, emphasizing the ethical dimension of alliterative poetry. Bernau draws attention to the history of literary criticism and its methodologies, evoking the possibility of going ‘beyond form’ by relinquishing familiar spatial, temporal, and linguistic terms. In looking ‘beyond form’ this collection usefully adopts ‘formalism’ as a flexible critical tool through which to engage with a range of medieval texts. Contributors variously engage with form as a historical ideal or chart the creation, replication, and translation of form in the modern reception of historical literature. The volume offers a deliberate expansion of formalist approaches to literature, and indeed an opening up of ‘literature’ itself, through applied focus on medieval form, highlighting the significance of the ‘form’ to the ‘message’.

CLARE DAVIDSON, *The University of Western Australia*

**Morillo**, Stephen, with Michael F. **Pavkovic**, *What Is Military History?*, 3rd edn, rev. and updated, Cambridge, Polity, 2017; paperback; pp. viii, 183; R.R.P. US\$19.95; ISBN 9781509517602.

This is the third edition of a volume first published in 2006 that was intended to give a brief introduction to the field of military history. As such, this third edition is testament to the book’s reach and influence over the past eleven years in an area the authors point out is an important and ever-expanding field. It is a good starting point for students, but one that in its third iteration exposes its limitations. Morillo and Pavkovic are at pains to point out how military history is more than a simple preserve of enthusiasts and ex-military strategic experts. From an historiographical

line they discuss frameworks and scope for studies, which is where the volume's strengths are to be found. The book provides an overview for the public, students, and scholars new to the area, pointing out the disjunction and tensions between the lack of professionalism and academic credit that still dogs the discipline.

While the book offers a good overview of the field from the nineteenth century onwards, there are sparse examples for the classical world, and only fleeting reference to any scholarship and approaches up to the nineteenth century. For any medieval and early modern scholars it is disappointing, as its focus is firmly from the nineteenth century onwards, and the American Civil War. Yet the women who fought in the American Civil War, discussed in DeAnne Blanton and Lauren M. Cook's *Women Soldiers in the American Civil War* (Louisiana State University Press, 2002) are not mentioned, and nor is Blanton and Cook's book cited.

Scholars working in the areas of medieval and early modern histories of religious wars, heresy, and witchcraft that incorporate aspects of military history will also find this book wanting. Morillo and Pavkovic are extremely limited in their discussion of non-combatants, women, children, and men, making only passing reference to women on pp. 73–74 under a subheading entitled 'gender studies'. Only one reference is cited: J. Lynn's book *Women, Armies and Warfare in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge University Press, 2008). This propensity to cite male authors sees the groundbreaking work by Barbara Donagan on the early modern laws of war written in the 1990s, which remains highly relevant today, omitted. Women contributed to the war effort in a variety of ways. For the early modern period Mary Elizabeth Ailes's *Courage and Grief: Women and Sweden's Thirty Years' War* (University of Nebraska Press, 2018), as well as Barton C. Hacker and Margaret Vining's earlier work published in 2012, *A Comparison to Women's Military History* (Brill), are not cited.

On campaign women and men provided support services to armies in the field. On the home front women helped to minimize disruptions incurred within their frayed communities. As increasing numbers of men left to fight, women took over local economic activities and defended their families' interests against troops from either side of the conflict seeking quarters or armies conducting sieges. Such activities, as Ailes's work demonstrates for Sweden, significantly altered the fabric of early modern Swedish society. Studies about women during war and conflict demonstrate how the experiences of unmarried camp followers and officers' wives, as well as peasant women who remained in the countryside during times of conflict and upheaval, flesh out the reality of war's effects in societies.

As this is a book aimed at students, it is a shame that the coverage of literature for the 'English speaking student', the authors' stipulated audience, is not more comprehensive. The American focus also means the book turns a blind eye to important studies such as The British Academy Symposium of 2006 held on the weekend after the bicentenary of the Battle of Trafalgar (1805), which resulted in Holger Hoock's edited *British Academy Occasional Paper, 8: History, Commemoration, and National Preoccupation: Trafalgar 1805–2005* (Oxford

University Press, 2007). This important volume is also not cited or offered as further reading. This edition will get seasoned academics thinking about what is missing from the book. It is just a shame that issues of gender, discussed as a fully fledged category of analysis, did not extend as a major theme throughout the book, for war frames not just women but also masculinities, as much as gender stereotypes are then challenged and contested through the realities of war.

Today in Australia the government-driven revitalization of ANZAC and World War One commemorations has seen the public face of military history promoted and funded as the aspect of Australian history focus for the past decade. War continues to dominate the primary, secondary, and tertiary history curricula. Yet in the United Kingdom the Conservative government purposefully decided not to commemorate the anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar (1805–2005), although it did commemorate World War One. Morillo and Pavkovic's third edition raises important issues about the politics of war, and national memory. With the book's American focus I was surprised, therefore, to find that the uses of medieval history by the far right in American and Western society today was not covered, as it points to the perils of the continuing uses and misuses of remembering past conflicts in the present.

DOLLY MACKINNON, *University of Queensland*

**Naismith, Rory, ed, *Money and Coinage in the Middle Ages* (Reading Medieval Sources, 1), Leiden, Brill, 2018; hardback; pp. xi, 362; R.R.P. €149.00; ISBN 9789004372467.**

This edited volume on the role of money in the Middle Ages is an interdisciplinary study. Twelve authors cover various aspects of the use of money and the production of coins, from c. 400 to c. 1500. The impetus behind the publication is to 'show ways in which money can be incorporated into the analysis of the Middle Ages more broadly, both for particular periods and in specific thematic contexts such as art, literature, and economic analysis' (p. 1).

The first two chapters set the scene. They discuss two key aspects of money—money as a unit of value and as a means of payment. The second section comprises four chapters and covers the chronological phases of money and coinage. The origin of money is discussed by Alessia Rovelli. She also outlines the transition from gold to silver coin from the fifth to the ninth century. Andrew R. Woods continues the narrative. The period c. 800 to c. 1150 saw the emergence of the silver penny, which became the norm across Europe. At the beginning of the period, only the king had the right to strike coinage, but by the end many institutions were granted rights to administer the production or to strike coins.

An increase in the quantity and variety of material objects is a feature of the next two centuries. The number of hoards of coins that have been discovered in Europe, coupled with the surge of surviving records, means that the period from c. 1150 to c. 1350 is rich with comparable data. Richard Kelleher takes us through these two centuries and also reminds us that his work builds on the seminal work

by Peter Spufford. Spufford's key study, *Money and Its Use in Medieval Europe* (Cambridge University Press, 1988), is mentioned by more than one author in this edited work. Spufford outlined the history of money, including an analysis of credit and barter. Kelleher takes a similar approach by documenting medieval exchange rates and the emergence of gold currencies, or florins, in the mid-thirteenth century. Philip Robinson Rössner completes the chronological study by examining the period after the Black Death to c. 1500. He notes that 'neither the pound nor the shilling, actually existed physically, i.e. as coins' (p. 161). He suggests that this is akin to the modern concept of 'virtual money'.

The final section outlines various methods of analysing medieval money and coinage. Rory Naismith sets the historical context in this section. He argues that recent discoveries of coins in sites such as towns, churches, and rural villages, have opened up new avenues for researching the role of money in medieval society. He notes that in the late twelfth century, in order to circumvent the lack of ready cash, bills of exchange were used by merchants to transfer large sums of money remotely. Small coins were also often in short supply. Nick Mayhew examines the importance of silver coins in the later medieval economy. He argues that the extreme shortage of silver at this time could have been a factor in the recession of the fifteenth century. The lowest value gold coin, a half angel, which was worth 3s 4d, was worth far more than the average daily wage of 4d. This meant that many people in the late medieval economy were unable to readily access coins for everyday uses.

The last four chapters examine money and coins from archaeological, literary, and iconographic perspectives. Although authors in the earlier chapters in this book include evidence from hoards of coins that have recently been discovered, Nanouschka Myberg Burström concentrates on the use of coins as archaeological material. She asserts that coins are not easily falsified and can be of great assistance when dating other archaeological material. Anna Gannon and Lucia Travaini examine the creative aspects of minting a coin in the last two chapters. Gannon studies Anglo-Saxon creativity, whereas Travaini analyses the iconography and the variety of images which were stamped on coins by the issuing authority.

The chapters are well integrated, and they offer a rich holistic approach that will be relevant to a number of research fields. For the economic historian, it supplements Spufford's research and intersects well with Christopher Dyer's work on the intimate details of the life of a wool merchant in his work *A Country Merchant, 1495–1520: Trading and Farming at the End of the Middle Ages* (Oxford University Press, 2012). Although some authors overlap their chronological analysis with other authors, there is sufficient differentiation in their ideas and approaches. This book is available as an open access monograph. This decision means that a wider audience will be able to appreciate the excellent detail that can be found in this well-constructed edited volume.

JUDY BAILEY, *University of Adelaide*

**Nasrallah**, Nawal, trans., *Treasure Trove of Benefits and Variety at the Table: A Fourteenth-Century Egyptian Cookbook* (Islamic History and Civilization, Studies and Texts, 148), Leiden: Brill, 2018; cloth; pp. xix, 704; 94 colour illustrations and plates; ISBN 9789004347298.

Nawal Nasrallah's long-awaited English translation of the anonymous *Treasure Trove of Benefits and Variety at the Table* is a delectable addition to her earlier translation of the famous tenth-century Baghdadi cookbook, *Annals of the Caliphs' Kitchens* by Ibn Sayyar al-Warraq (Brill, 2007). It includes a scholarly introduction that provides an overview of the five surviving manuscripts and of earlier Arabic editions of the text and, at the end, a useful 'Index of Ingredients, Dishes, Beverages, Aromatics, and Other Preparations'.

This fourteenth-century cookbook is unique in being the sole example of an Egyptian cookbook produced under the Mamluks. And it is indeed a treasure trove, with a coverage that is so extensive that it surpasses all surviving medieval Arab cookbooks. It is a massive collection with 750 recipes (plus another seventy-nine included in two of the manuscripts) divided into twenty-three chapters. It offers no less than 142 recipes for main dishes, ten of which include sparrows, evidently eaten at the time by kings and dignitaries to boost their libido (p. 161). It also boasts the largest extant collection of recipes for fish (thirty-six in all), some eleven variations for what appears to be the precursor recipe for hummus (crushed boiled chickpeas mixed with tahini), seventy-five recipes for pickles, eighty-one for sweets, and, importantly, the sole recipe for okra in the entire Arab Middle Ages.

The anonymous author/compiler gives equal attention to recipes for sweet and fermented foods and drinks as is given to preserving fruits and vegetables to produce them unexpectedly and to one's guests' delight in any season. In addition, the compiler of the fourteenth-century Egyptian cookbook includes multiple recipes for digestive beverages and devotes much space to matters of hygiene, like washing one's hands with fragrant soaps, using scented powders and deodorants, flossing one's teeth after eating, and consuming aromatic pills to sweeten the breath. There is also much attention to the use of incense to add fragrance to the body, to a particular room or space, and even to the containers and bottles preserving certain sauces. Early examples of aromatherapy, no doubt.

It is perhaps not surprising that the wide range of recipes contained in this cookbook should include commentary on the health benefits of certain foods and how to treat specific conditions, situating the work at the intersection of gastronomy and medieval public health. From the very first chapter of the cookbook, the author gives 'indispensable instructions for cooks' (p. 66) on the importance of cleanliness of hands, vessels, and ingredients. The cook 'needs to keep his fingernails trimmed at all times' (p. 66) and 'kitchen utensils and pots are to be cleaned with pure clay followed by potash and rose petals' (p. 67). Later on the author lists recipes that enhance coitus (pp. 177–78), that nourish the sick

(p. 184), treat fever and excess yellow bile (p. 185), or nausea, heartburn, and diarrhoea (p. 187).

Nasrallah's translation provides a rare insight into the culinary tastes of Egypt's multi-ethnic population in the fourteenth century—a combination of Arab Muslims and Copts, but also Turks, Kurds, Moroccans, Sudanese, Persians, and Iraqis—as well as into the culinary accommodations and substitutions of ingredients—using sugarcane molasses instead of honey, or pure white salt instead of rock salt for example—made by different social groups and cultural heritage. It is an invaluable resource for the study of medieval Egyptian foodways, as it includes a large number of references to both indigenous foods and ingredients imported from abroad but used in Egyptian cooking at the time, such as Levantine cheese and Ceylon cinnamon (p. 134), Macedonian parsley (p. 202), or Moroccan caraway (p. 203).

Because of the wealth of information it provides on medieval Egyptian cuisine, this cookbook has already become essential reading for the contemporary Egyptian slow food movement. But this work will also be of great interest to medievalists from all disciplines, especially scholars interested in medieval material culture and culinary historians. And because of its colloquial style, this work will also be valuable to scholars of linguistics.

SAHAR AMER, *Montpellier, France*

**Paterson**, Linda, *Singing the Crusades: French and Occitan Lyric Responses to the Crusading Movements, 1137–1336*, Cambridge, D. S. Brewer, 2018; hardback; pp. xviii, 332; 4 b/w maps; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9781843844822.

Linda Paterson has for many years been leading a collaborative project that makes available a corpus of around two hundred crusade-related songs in Old French and Occitan. It is the culmination of decades of study of the troubadours. This project was a collaborative effort involving the Universities of Warwick, La Sapienza (Rome), and Royal Holloway (London), and was funded by the AHRC from 1 June 2011 to 31 January 2016. The project website has been live for several years (<<https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/modernlanguages/research/french/crusades/background/>>), and includes full translations of each text into English and Italian, accompanied by useful and detailed notes on the often murky issues of dating and context. The present book is a digest of 'the best bits' that places the songs in their historical contexts over the period 1137–1336.

Paterson's introduction is helpful and lucid, offering thoughts on thorny questions such as the extent to which these songs can be considered popular culture, public opinion, or secular voices. The introduction also discusses modes of performance, which are largely unknowable. From there, *Singing the Crusades* is structured chronologically, starting around the time of the second crusade because that is when the corpus of French and Occitan songs begins. There are chapters covering each of the major canonical crusades from the second to the

eighth, as well as the Albigenian crusade and the Barons' crusade of Thibaut de Champagne. Each chapter begins with a short description of the crusading context in which the poems are placed, followed by a discussion of how the poems contribute to our understanding of motivations, emotions, and to a lesser extent the events themselves. The book has three appendices. The first is a linguistic analysis by Marjolain Raguin-Barthelmebs, in which she asks to what extent the Occitan troubadours and French trouvères were imitating the themes set forth by crusade preachers. The second and third appendices offer respectively a chronology of the texts and a table showing which songs have melodies preserved in the manuscripts.

Overall, the book does an important service in diversifying crusade studies away from Latin accounts. A 'best bits' approach saves one from trawling through hundreds of crusade poems on the website. The website and book thus complement each other, the former as a repository, the latter as a more approachable narrative of the crusades told through the songs themselves. The poems cover themes that are often difficult to get at through chronicle accounts, including love (of women, god, Jerusalem), piety, pilgrimage, masculinity, departure, commitment, service, duty, and irreverence.

The volume is overall incredibly helpful and enlightening, with translations that are accurate and readable, accompanied (as should be the case) by text in the original languages. I nevertheless found myself harbouring a few small complaints, as comes naturally to any scholarly reader. First, while the book is for the most part approachable, Paterson occasionally assumes knowledge of poetic terminology and indeed medieval poetic terminology (*planh*, *canso*, *sirventes*, etc.) that may alienate non-specialists. The nature of her material necessitates this, but a glossary (such as appears in Mary Egan, *The Vidas of the Troubadours*, Garland, 1984, pp. 113–14) could have been helpful. There is a glossary on the website, but it is not very thorough, and could indeed be improved post hoc.

More importantly, greater signalling of the existence of other crusade songs beyond her corpus would have been helpful. Every study must draw its boundaries, of course, and so I can understand why Paterson did not include discussion of German poetry, Latin poetry, or Old French and Occitan epic poems (such as Ambroise, or the famous Old French cycle relating to the first crusade). However, I worry that a student who picks up *Singing the Crusades* might leave with the mistaken impression that Paterson's is the *only* corpus of crusade songs. An additional paragraph in the introduction could have averted this important lapse.

However, these quibbles should not overshadow Paterson's remarkable achievement. In *Singing the Crusades* and the associated website, Paterson and her collaborators have made available a vast corpus of texts that would otherwise have been very difficult to access. In making them available, the paucity of vernacular voices can no longer skew our broader narratives about the crusades. The translations are of a high quality, and the editions on the website are often new critical editions. The book itself is an enjoyable and accessible introduction to the

broader corpus of publications that has arisen from the project. Crusade scholars are in Paterson's debt.

KEAGAN BREWER, *The University of Sydney*

**Potter**, Ursula A., *The Unruly Womb in Early Modern English Drama: Plotting Women's Biology on the Stage*, Kalamazoo, Medieval Institute Publications, 2019; hardback; pp. 224; 3 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. €77.95, US\$89.99, £71.00; ISBN 9781580443708.

Greensickness, fits of the mother, madness from the womb, puberty, sexual frustration, and disordered wombs are just some of the fascinating topics Ursula Potter canvasses in *The Unruly Womb in Early Modern Drama*. Through nine chapters, Potter examines English dramas across the 1560s to 1640s that feature greensickness, an ailment affecting young, just-pubescent girls, producing a greenish complexion, melancholic or rebellious moods, and breathlessness. Potter uses dramatic treatments of greensickness across this period as a means to explore broader cultural, medical, and religious attitudes to female biology and particularly, the womb.

Despite systematic research over the past fifty years on the subject of early modern medicine, female bodies, and reproduction, there have not yet been thorough accounts of the early modern womb. Potter's systematic research into ideas about the womb reveals that, in contrast to much historiography and literary analysis, it was not represented as wholly or entirely negative. For example, Potter notes that 'it is hard to find any playwright in the early 1600s who did not reflect positively on women's biology' (p. 6), and convincingly demonstrates that attitudes to the womb in the early modern period were nuanced, not just misogynistic. Potter contributes to a growing field of historians and literary scholars who have recently argued for the existence of positive representations of the female reproductive body, like Cathy McClive's *Menstruation and Procreation in Early Modern France* (Routledge, 2016), which argues that 'menstrual misogyny' is an overplayed myth.

This is not to say that none of these attitudes existed, and Potter highlights throughout how male anxiety or repulsion towards women's sexuality informs early modern drama. To set this early modern scene, Chapter 1 knits together medical, social, and religious knowledge about women's biology, presenting discussions on the 'wandering womb' and 'mother fits', as well as a very useful overview of ideas about female virginity and puberty, and the 'disease of virgins', or greensickness. Potter's overall argument is that from the 1560s to the 1630s, there were marked shifts in representations of greensickness on the stage, and this is demonstrated through a chronological exploration of plays across this period. Chapter 2 suggests that earlier portrayals of wombs and greensickness, like those in *The Bugbears* (1566–70), introduced English audiences to the concept of greensickness. The next four chapters consider Shakespeare's and Fletcher's presentations of female bodies on stage, covering *The Taming of the Shrew*

(c. 1592–94), *Romeo and Juliet* (c. 1594–95), *Hamlet* (1601), and *The Two Noble Kinsmen* (1613). Potter's extensive analysis of these plays provides fresh insights into the way that women's wombs, sexuality and autonomy were portrayed. Potter argues that Kate's actions in *Taming* show us a 'frustrated young woman ripe for generation' kept from exercising her bodily desires (p. 74), ideas that align well with seventeenth-century medical arguments about the need for women to release their 'seed'. Revisiting *Romeo and Juliet*, Potter deepens our understanding of the important function that Juliet's greensickness has in the play, particularly allusions to the 'coma advised by the friar' (p. 101), giving Juliet the appearance of death. Medical texts of the time suggested that comas could be a sign of a disordered womb, something overlooked by earlier considerations of the play.

The remainder of the book considers mid-seventeenth century plays such as *The Maid's Tragedy* (c. 1611–13), *Parasitaster, or The Fawne* (c. 1604–06), and *The Hollander* (1635). Potter argues that these, as well as the earlier Shakespearean plays, reveal the use of 'green sickness as a common plot device for domestic discord over pubertal daughters' (p. 215). Historians and literary scholars interested in medicine and physicians will find Chapter 9 particularly illuminating, for Potter's discussion of *The Hollander* draws out social concerns about the intimate and potentially salacious access that male physicians had to female patients. Potter identifies that there is also a shift in the mid-seventeenth century towards portrayals of chaste love—seen in *Comus: A Masque Presented at Ludlow Castle* (1634)—likely because of the influence of religion.

Overall, *Unruly Womb* is a rich and precise study of early modern wombs and female bodies, not just within the plays that represented them, but also the broader medical, social, and religious world. A significant takeaway from this study is the seeming ubiquity of 'actual' greensickness or ideas about greensickness in early modern England, which enriches our historical understanding about young women's bodies and health. Beyond the intellectual contributions this work makes, it also contains instructive pedagogical aspects, including Potter's useful 'system of coding for sexuality' (p. 7) that one can apply when analysing or teaching with early modern dramas. Finally, Potter's supply of an appendix comprising fifty plays with 'explicit or implicit allusions to the womb' (p. 11) for the purposes of future research is very generous, and instrumental for consolidating a picture of the early modern womb, in all its unruliness.

PAIGE DONAGHY, *University of Queensland*

**Proctor-Tiffany**, Mariah, *Medieval Art in Motion: The Inventory and Gift Giving of Queen Clémence de Hongrie*, University Park, PA, The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2019; hardback; pp. 232; 28 colour, 30 b/w illustrations, 5 maps; R.R.P. US\$89.95; ISBN 9780271081120.

Clémence de Hongrie is perhaps the least celebrated of the queens of France. She married King Louis X in 1315, but he died the following year, leaving her pregnant. Her son, named Jean, died within a few days of his birth, and the king's

successor, Philippe V, refused to pay her the income her husband had promised. By the time she died in 1328, the young dowager had succeeded in securing her estate and her royal status, as well as using her patronage and art collecting to promote her husband, her son, and her own family in Naples.

When she died in 1328 her possessions were inventoried. These included objects held in her Paris home as well as at her other estates. In the inventory is recorded details about the origins, sizes, weights, materials used, and their appraisal and sale prices, together with the names of buyers of some 748 individual lots. This was contained in the ninety-nine pages of the manuscript that formed the basis of Proctor-Tiffany's analysis, together with Clémence's testament, dictated shortly before her death. They are provided untranslated in the original language for greater accuracy. These documents not only give an indication of the types of objects a queen might own, but also provide additional information of the circulation, as well as the location, of such pieces within her various properties.

Proctor-Tiffany's book consists of seven chapters and two appendices containing copies of both Clémence's testament and her inventory. These documents are thus made more accessible to those interested in following up areas addressed in this examination. The chapters cover the material found in these primary sources very thoroughly. Not many examples of the actual artefacts recorded in these documents have survived, so Proctor-Tiffany has included examples of equivalent works. This can be quite useful, as pieces associated with other widowed queens have become quite well-known within art history. For example, manuscripts and statues that once belonged to Jeanne d'Évreux have been given a prominence both because of their survival and the quality of their workmanship. It seems likely that objects associated with Queen Clémence would have been of an equivalent standard. Certainly, the evaluations given of these objects in the accompanying documents do provide us with some means of measurement, as well as an indication of their range.

The works are wide-ranging and are in a multitude of different media including sculpture, manuscripts, and jewellery. They also reflected the variety of locations that were important for establishing the identity of a queen, including her own person, as well as works associated with worship and with entertaining. These included reliquaries, funeral sculptures, chalices and patens, and domestic objects such as ivory carved mirrors, cups, and rings. Other elements of queenly activity are also recorded, such as the various acts of patronage that were an important aspect of royalty. Thus, various acts of gift-giving are covered in Proctor-Tiffany's study. For example, Clémence led a retinue of royal women in a night-time procession to the abbey of Saint-Magloire to mark the translation of the saint to a new reliquary. As part of these events she, and four other women, also offered textiles and goldsmiths' works to the church. In addition to such ritualized activities she gave gifts to a wide range of people in Paris and around Europe. While many were members of her extended family, they also included more humble members of her household. The book includes a useful map that gives some indication of where these objects travelled.

This study highlights how a careful and intelligent reading of such documents as inventories and wills can be so useful for opening up areas that could easily be overlooked. Clémence de Hongrie may have been one of the more obscure queens of France but the survival of these documents has provided us with an insight into her career and a wardrobe that might otherwise be overlooked. Mariah Proctor-Tiffany must be commended for bringing these documents to the attention of the English-speaking world and for drawing out so much insightful material from them.

JUDITH COLLARD, *University of Otago*

**Reid, Lindsay Ann, *Shakespeare's Ovid and the Spectre of the Medieval* (Studies in Renaissance Literature), Cambridge, D. S. Brewer, 2018; hardback; pp. 284; 12 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9781843845188.**

*Shakespeare's Ovid and the Spectre of the Medieval* follows a recent critical trend studying how medieval literature shaped early modern texts. Lindsay Ann Reid adds to the growing scholarship, arguing that Shakespeare's Ovidian allusions originate from medieval retellings of mythological texts. Her thesis challenges popular misconceptions that Shakespeare engaged directly with Ovid.

Reid focuses on Geoffrey Chaucer and John Gower as Shakespeare's main medieval Ovidian influences. Central to Reid's argument is how the early modern period viewed the popular medieval scribes. In her analysis of *Chaucer's Ghost* (1672), Reid discovers in the text's medieval retelling of Ovid's fables not only Chaucer's work but Gower's. The reference, on *Chaucer's Ghost's* title page, to medieval writers as ancient enables Reid to argue convincingly that, to the early modern reader, Chaucer's and Gower's adaptations of Ovid became an Ovidian fusion of mythological antiquity.

As Reid's study unfolds, she reveals that the most influential critical readings of Shakespeare build on the misconstrued importance of early modern England's 'humanist educational system' intersecting with the Greek and Latin Ovid (p. 41). She broaches the question of Shakespeare's authorship with T. W. Baldwin's assertion—in his famous work *William Shakespeare's Small Latine & Lesse Greeke* (University of Illinois Press, 1944)—that Shakespeare did not know much Greek or Latin. Therefore, credibly, Shakespeare did not need to read the classics directly.

Reid tests her thesis on unequivocal Ovidian moments in Shakespeare's Elizabethan texts. In *The Taming of the Shrew's* induction, the erotic Ovidian images entertaining Christopher Sly are read by Reid through ekphrastic poetry. She then links Shakespeare's ekphrasis with Chaucer's dream vision *The Book of the Duchess*. Despite numerous mentions to dreams in Sly's induction, Reid notes the subject has rarely been examined. With *Taming's* ekphrastic Ovidian imagery and semantic leaning towards dreams, Reid argues that the Chaucerian dreamer and his vision of Ovidian images is the Ovid that influenced Shakespeare.

*The Two Gentlemen of Verona* provides another incontestable Ovidian allusion to *Heroides* 10 through the tale of Ariadne. The critical problem of associating Shakespeare's play directly to Ovid's letters means disregarding a literary history of spin-doctoring Ariadne's tale. The story of Ovid's lovesick Ariadne who has been mysteriously abandoned by her lover Theseus and pines for his return is transformed by Gower and Chaucer. Reid notes that the additional medieval narrative explaining Ariadne's abandonment starts a tradition for a traitorous Theseus and a wicked Phaedra who steals her sister's lover. In Act 4, Scene 4 of *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Julia-as-Sebastian's understanding of 'to passion like Ariadne' (p. 76) is further complicated through Shakespeare using the word 'passion' to mean both deep feeling and grieving. Therefore, Julia with medieval Ariadne-like passion still longs for her inconstant lover, while grieving tearfully over his despicable behaviour.

In Shakespeare's poem *Lucrece* and play *Romeo and Juliet*, Reid persuasively links Philomela from Book 6 of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* to the alba or dawn-song in *Amores* 1. 13. The link is found in Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* and Gower's *Confessio Amantis*, literary works that undermine the appalling rape and mutilation of Philomela, and ignore her violent revenge on her husband Tereus. The medieval retelling of Philomela's tale begins a tradition where female rape is romanticized as the male lover's burning passion for his beloved. The female victim apostrophizes to the night her fear of dawn revealing her shame in what Reid terms an 'inverse alba' (p. 125). In an emotive paragraph, Reid catalogues a horrific medieval Ovidian romance tradition. Under the cover of the night, insatiable female beauty is unwittingly claimed by the male lover's heroic passions.

The last chapter challenges existing scholarship that Ovid's Narcissus from the *Metamorphoses* directly influenced Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*. Reid uncovers how Gower changes Ovid's myth so that Narcissus falls in love with his reflection that he believes to be a young woman. Reid then discovers how early modern texts create a bawdy Gowerian Narcissus who falls in love with his cross-dressed reflection. With Olivia and Viola-as-Cesario, Reid shows how early modern cross-dressed Shakespearean actors invoke the playful confusion of a cross-dressed Narcissistic reflection.

In the afterword, Reid queries the investigation of Ovid's Latin works purportedly signed by Shakespeare. She reveals how it has become unthinkable for postmodern critics to assume that Shakespeare did not engage with Ovid directly.

*Shakespeare's Ovid and the Spectre of the Medieval* is a courageous book rectifying the influential oversights by celebrated critics of a canonical writer. With thorough research and probing insights, Reid corrects a distorted understanding of the culture and traditions informing early modern literature, and of Shakespeare himself.

FRANK SWANNACK, *University of Salford*

**Rubenstein, Jay**, *Nebuchadnezzar's Dream: The Crusades, Apocalyptic Prophecy, and the End of History*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2019; cloth; pp. xxi, 280; 16 colour plates; R.R.P. £19.99; ISBN: 9780190274207.

The American historian Jay Rubenstein delivers here his most recent contribution in the field of apocalyptic thought and the ideology of the crusades from the end of the eleventh to the thirteenth century, after *Armies of Heaven: The First Crusade and the Quest for Apocalypse* (Basic Books, 2011), and *The First Crusade: a Brief History with Documents* (Bedford/St Martin's, 2015). The book follows a chronological path, examining perceptions of the crusades, and more precisely the collapse of the First Crusade's ideals. Its main thesis is that apocalyptic thought and prophetic speculation played a decisive role in the motivations of the crusades' protagonists—a role underestimated in modern historiography, according to the author.

The book comprises twelve chapters distributed into four parts. Part 1 examines the prophetic interpretation of the First Crusade by contemporary observers, especially the crusader Bohemond of Antioch (first chapter) and, after him, Lambert of Saint-Omer (Chapters 2 to 5). Rubenstein argues that in the *Liber Floridus* Lambert proposes a vision of history in which the First Crusade and the capture of Jerusalem mark a 'transformative moment in salvation history' (p. 33) that may have been perceived as the opening act of the Last Days. This historical conceptualization would have been shaped by the interpretation of the visions of Daniel: to some crusaders, such as Bohemond, the 1099 conquest of Jerusalem fulfilled the prophecy; the crusade was the rock destroying the statue of Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Daniel 2). Part 2 studies the relationship between this apocalyptic mind-set and the behaviours of the crusaders. It concludes that despite a penitential discourse sustained by the eschatological tension, soldiers failed to embody the ideals of the crusade. But it is above all the failure of the Second Crusade (1146–49) and a growing disillusionment that explain the necessity to revise the prophecy. Part 3 analyses texts from 1144 to 1187—the period leading to the loss of Jerusalem—in order to assess how the place given to the crusades in the history of salvation evolved. Chapter 8 concentrates on Bernard of Clairvaux, showing how he used eschatological tension in his sermons and letters to encourage participation in the Second Crusade; Chapter 9 is centred on *The Two Cities* of Otto of Freising (d. 1158), a universal chronicle in which the German bishop does not describe the Second Crusade in which he nevertheless took part. Relying on Augustine's theology of history, Otto's eschatological material might have come from his reading of the *Liber Floridus* (p. 138). As Rubenstein underlines, in Otto's system the Last Days had begun because of the Investiture Controversy, not because of the events in the east (p. 130); the monk is more concerned with the theological and moral threats embodied by the Antichrist than with apocalyptic speculations linked to the crusade. Chapter 10 studies the writings of Geiroh of Reichersberg, a German theologian contemporary to Otto; of Hildegard of Bingen;

and of Ralph the Black, an English cleric. In their writings the crusades do not play a significant role in salvation history: these authors are more preoccupied with threats internal to the Church—heresy, schism, and simony. As Rubenstein puts it, to them ‘Apocalypse begins at home’ (p. 153). Finally, Part 4 analyses the re-evaluation of the place of the crusade in apocalyptic thought following the loss of Jerusalem in 1187. After examining the uses of its apocalyptic meaning and its possible causes (the sins of the Christians or of the Frankish settlers, the delay of many knights’ departure to the Holy City, etc.), Rubenstein centres on the writings of Joachim of Fiore.

The conclusion discusses two main questions: the actual impact of apocalyptic thought on the crusaders and their motives; and the lessons to be learned from parallels with twenty-first-century uses of apocalyptic discourses.

In order to enable comparisons, several tables sum up the authors’ visions of history. People and historical context are generally well introduced, preventing the reader unfamiliar with the history of the crusades from feeling disoriented. In the same fashion, Rubenstein diligently introduces key ideas related to prophetic and apocalyptic thought and its sources, such as the visions of Daniel or Augustine’s theology of history. Nevertheless, it is regrettable that the presentation of the main apocalyptic texts studied remains too brief, lacking attention to the historiographical debates regarding their dating, authorship, and interpretation. In addition, a more complete bibliography, comprising for instance references to the manuscript and textual transmission of those texts, would have been welcome, in particular for the *Revelations* of Pseudo-Methodius or the *Letter* of Adso of Montier-en-Der. In that regard, a complementary reading could be Gian Luca Potestà’s *L’ultimo messia, Profezia e sovranità nel Medioevo* (Il Mulino, 2014).

As the author reminds us in conclusion, the apocalyptic interpretation of the crusades is one (powerful) strand of thought among others. While the reader may not agree with all elements of this challenging thesis, it nonetheless remains a stimulating study from one of the best specialists of the crusade ideology.

GAELE BOSSEMAN, *Université Toulouse Jean Jaurès*

**Sävborg, Daniel, Karen Bek-Pedersen**, eds, *Supernatural Encounters in Old Norse Literature and Tradition* (Borders, Boundaries, Landscapes, 1), Turnhout, Brepols, 2018; hardback; pp. viii, 266; 6 b/w illustrations, 2 b/w tables; R.R.P. €75.00; ISBN 9782503575315.

This volume, drawn from papers presented at the third conference of the Old Norse Folklorists Network hosted in Tartu in 2014, brings together a number of leading researchers of the ‘supernatural’ in Old Norse literature. The collection, according to the editors, aims to shine a light on liminal encounters in lesser-known texts and, perhaps more importantly, on texts traditionally categorized among the more ‘realistic genres’ (pp. 5–6).

Ármann Jakobsson certainly adheres to this brief in an opening chapter on *Bergþúa þáttur*, a scantily studied *þáttur* that is often considered to fall within the

*Íslendingasögur* tradition. Interestingly, however, he begins his contribution with a terminological discussion eschewing the word ‘supernatural’ as one implying abstraction from human experience, preferring ‘paranormal.’ In the introduction, the editors themselves note that ‘supernatural’ has unhelpful connotations of Christian duality, though yield to convention in using the term in the volume title (pp. 6–7). In truth, while Ármann’s linguistic justification for the use of ‘paranormal’ is logical, the modern implications of that term make it too a problematic one (I shall use the term ‘liminal encounters’ in this review). Setting aside the non sequitur opening to the chapter, Ármann’s analysis of *Bergþúá þátr* is compelling. He focuses on the human aspect of the liminal encounter, taking little interest in the otherworldly creature lurking at the back of the cave, being more concerned with how the *þátr*’s hero and his servant experience their encounter. Taking this approach allows Ármann to speculate on authorial intent and reception, concluding that the audience was invited to identify with the Christian hero of the tale.

Chapters 3–6 deal with *Guðmundar saga biskups*, hardly an obscure text, though, as a narrative likely intended to serve as a saint’s life, one in which a liminal encounter with seal-headed woman (Selkolla) may be unexpected. This event is narrated in a passage of *Guðmundar saga* known as *Selkollu þátr*, and is the focus of chapters by Bengt af Klintberg, Margaret Cormack, and Mart Kuldepp. That all discuss Selkolla provides these contributions a remarkable thematic coherence. However, the complementary nature of the chapters does not mean they are necessarily in conversation with one another and, indeed, their thematic similarities introduce an element of redundancy to the volume. All three authors retell *Selkollu þátr*, with Cormack even providing the entire episode in translation (pp. 76–79). Cross-referencing within these chapters would seem to have been a logical editorial approach (indeed, this is a critique that can be applied to the volume as a whole). Nonetheless, though they could have been better integrated, each chapter offers new insights and deserves its place in the book. Klintberg identifies examples of ‘seal women’ in more recent folklore, locating *Selkollu þátr* within wider Scandinavian tradition and arguing for the utility of folklore studies to the parsing of Old Norse literature. Cormack identifies the strong moralistic messages of *Selkollu þátr* as a medieval composition—a caution against both leaving babies unbaptized and engaging in transgressive sex—before tracing the motif’s adoption and adaptation in later folklore. In turn, Kuldepp considers *Selkolluvisur*, a mid-fourteenth-century *dróttvæt* poem retelling the Selkolla story, inserted after *Selkollu þátr* in two extant manuscripts. He reads the poem as both evidence that skaldic poetry could still be imbued with meaning in the late Middle Ages and that, in that context, Icelandic folklore with apparent pre-Christians elements could be repurposed to Christian aims. The final chapter on *Guðmundar saga*, provided by Marteinn Helgi Sigurðsson, turns to a comparative analysis between the liminal encounters of *Guðmundar saga* and *Grettis saga*. Marteinn does not posit the existence of direct intertextuality

between Guðmund and Grettir, but in noting the similarities between the two men as outcasts and folk heroes, he speculates a connection between the regional traditions that surrounded them.

Space dictates that I cannot review every contribution, and I must necessarily pass over chapters on folk customs and the Scandinavian *Jól* by Bettina Sommer; monstrosity, marginalization, and the Icelandic world-view by Arngrímur Vídalín; legislation relating to trolls by Jan Ragnar Hagland; the association between dwarves (and other liminal creatures) and landscape by Miriam Mayburd; the literary repurposing of myth preserved in oral tradition by Eldar Heide; and the transmission and marginalization of the female voice in *Illuga saga Gríðarfóstra* by Phillip Lavender. The fascinating and varied research currently being undertaken at the intersection of Old Norse literature and folklore that these represent is, unfortunately, ill-served by an index limited to personal names—a curious approach that rather diminishes the utility of the volume for researchers.

There is much here of interest, both to folklorists and to scholars of Old Norse literature. This book does not just demonstrate fruitful collaboration between historical, literary, and folklore research, but argues for just such collaboration to be ongoing, in the process opening new avenues for research.

MATTHEW FIRTH, *Flinders University*

**Teeuwen, Mariken, and Irene Van Renswoude**, eds, *The Annotated Book in the Early Middle Ages: Practices of Reading and Writing* (Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy, 38), Turnhout, Brepols, 2017; hardback; pp. xii, 783; 41 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. €140.00; ISBN 9782503569482.

This edited collection of papers is focused on studying the practice of annotation in medieval manuscripts, with examples ranging from late antiquity to the thirteenth century. It comes as the result of a conference held in The Hague in 2015 but additionally displays a wealth of research led by a team of Dutch scholars involved in the project ‘Marginal Scholarship: The Practice of Learning in the Early Middle Ages (c. 800–c. 1000)’ under the supervision of Mariken Teeuwen. The main purpose of the project was to decentre the gaze from the text to its edges, the marginalia, in order to consider ‘the responses of the readers to text’ (p. 2) and to study the intellectual work at stake behind them.

The book gathers twenty-five contributions by specialists from all over the world, nearly all written in English, and divided into four parts: ‘Scholars and Their Books: Practices and Methods of Annotating’; ‘Textual Scholarship by Means of Annotation’; ‘Private Study and Classroom Reading’; ‘Annotating Orthodox and Heterodox Knowledge’. With the aim of offering an overall approach despite the disparity of case-studies, the editors diligently included general indices and a list of illustrations that allow readers to navigate between contributions. The introduction provides a general overview and explains the coherence of the sections; it also supplies a brief historiographical survey, complemented by an initial contribution by Mariken Teeuwen. She presents the database that her team built (<<https://>

database.marginalscholarship.nl>), consisting of a searchable interface that gathers observations on annotated manuscripts as a tool for systematic research. In contrast, several contributions show how the detailed study of one manuscript (chapters by Giorgia Vocino, Luciana Cuppo) or one author (chapters by Giacomo Vignodelli, Warren Pez ) may allow us to identify a milieu of production and investigate characteristic practices of intellectual history.

The first part illustrates the diversity of the forms of marginalia, which encompass notes, letters, or symbols (Evina Steinov), whereas the three last sections introduce the reader to the variety of their functions or uses. The second part is dedicated to annotations used for text-criticism or editorial purpose. Thanks to marginalia, medieval scholars could correct or supplement texts, indicating for instance their sources (notably through stenographic notes, as studied by Martin Hellmann) or textual variants, a practice that, with its roots in late antiquity (Franck Cinato), was the object of erudite renewal under the Carolingians (Markus Schiegg). This practice created upgraded editions or critical editions (Erik Kwakkel, Alberto Cevolini). Attention to the text transmission is also illustrated by the care with which copyists preserved some lacunae in texts, scrupulously following their models (Justin Stover). The third part deals with annotations assisting study and reading tasks, notably for schooling purposes (Anna Grotans, Ad Van Els), although in some cases the tangle of notes and paratextual additions indicates an evolution of their functions throughout the life of the manuscript (Silvia Ottaviano) and eventually challenges the traditional definition of a classical schoolbook (Paulina Taraskin). Finally, the fourth part gathers contributions examining annotations to theological texts, such as signs of censure (Irene Van Renswoude), critical notes on patristic texts (Janneke Raajmakers, Pierre Chambert-Protat), reading aids (Jesse Keskiaho), or ‘visual paratexts’, that is, images and elements of *mise en page* (Patrizia Carmassi). Margins can also be the site of or summarize exegetical and patristic traditions as in annotated Bibles (Cinzia Grifoni).

The diversity of case-studies presented in this volume highlights the continuity of the practice of annotation in the Middle Ages as well as the diversity of its media: all kinds of texts could receive notes or reading marks. If in general they manifest a practical and intellectual use, in some cases the function of marginalia remains uncertain, as for instance the addition of single letters in interlinear space (Andreas Nievergelt), or of glosses that tend to slow down the reading (Sin ad O’Sullivan).

The investigation of marginalia and annotated manuscripts has a long history—one needs only to be reminded of the works of E. A. Lowe, Bernhard Bischoff, Louis Holtz, or, more recently, those by John Contreni or Adolfo Tura; in that respect, one main point of the volume is also to reflect back on the transformations caused by the advent of the Digital Age to the field of manuscript studies.

The epilogue of the book, by David Ganz, aims to provide an overarching perspective, through his own experience, on the amount of ground covered. This impressive and remarkable volume constitutes a compendium that cannot be ignored by scholars working on marginalia, but it offers more generally some very interesting perspectives on the field of cultural studies, in particular on the evolution of books' uses and of their audiences across time. The case studies presented shed light on intellectual life in the early Middle Ages by showing how medieval scholars received, studied, discussed, or reshaped texts, while annotations or paratexts are in some instances the only indications left of such activities. They are precious indicators of the multiple readings and functions of texts, of the subsequent uses made of them, and particularly of individual and collective practices of reading and learning (Micol Long, Cinzia Grifoni).

GAELE BOSSEMAN, *Université Toulouse Jean Jaurès*

**Van Onacker**, Eline, *Village Elites and Social Structures in the Late Medieval Campine Region* (The Medieval Countryside, 17), Turnhout, Brepols, 2017; hardback; pp. xli, 320; 7 b/w illustrations, 3 maps, 57 graphs, 68 b/w tables; R.R.P. €100.00; ISBN 9782503554594.

**Hoppenbrouwers**, Peter, *Village Community and Conflict in Late Medieval Drenthe* (The Medieval Countryside, 20), Turnhout, Brepols, 2018; hardback; pp. xvii, 384; 14 b/w illustrations, 4 maps, 9 b/w tables; R.R.P. €100.00; ISBN 9782503575391.

These monographs concern two of the Low Countries' three notable sandy inland districts: Eline Van Onacker examines Belgium's Campine region; Peter Hoppenbrouwers considers Drenthe, in the Netherlands. These regions shared characteristic features and differed from other rural areas, so the volumes complement each other.

This research is welcome. As Hoppenbrouwers, a graduate of the 1970s, remarks, with the decline of neo-Marxist history 'peasant societies and village communities are out of favour as objects of historical research' (p. 1). Van Onacker, of a more recent generation, adopts a revisionist perspective, arguing that researchers have privileged rural regions that suit their interests and prejudices, favouring those where medieval communities transformed swiftly into modern, industrialized ones, neglecting those that behaved otherwise. Both works make regular comparison with the situation in Flanders, France, Germany, or England. Whereas Hoppenbrouwers cites copious instances from everyday life, Van Onacker's volume abounds in graphs, tables, and diagrams.

Both authors allude to the limitations of their sources. The records of rural communities can be erratically preserved, while, notwithstanding comparable natural environments, these regions' social structures varied. Consequently, the differential creation and survival of source material has permitted different things

to be investigated. While Hoppenbrouwers makes good use of the judgements of the *Etstoel* (Drenthe's highest judicial and political body), the conflicts he examines occurred in villages whose local records have not survived. For the different aspects of her study, Van Onacker draws on information from different Campine villages, since none has the full set of records to suit her purposes—something that renders extrapolation risky, considering she notes significant variability between villages in some respects. Similar variation between regions means Drenthe and the Campine are not directly analogous: the absence of a regional council such as Drenthe's *Etstoel* brought about the Campine social structure that Van Onacker describes. Nevertheless, the two regions evidently have strong resemblances, including the persistence of a substantial common wasteland, which by the later Middle Ages had vanished elsewhere in the Netherlands. The works are thus productively read together.

Hoppenbrouwers's is the first English-language study of Drenthe. Two introductory chapters precede three devoted to specific categories of community conflict. Chapter 2 describes the legal system within which disputes played out; Chapter 1 is a compendious, eighty-four-page survey of everything else of an introductory nature: the study of medieval villages; Drenthe's history and historiography; the source materials consulted; the region's landscape, demography, and territorial divisions; its rural society and peasants; the landholdings of lordships, ecclesiastical or secular; and, finally, a comparison with property relations in 1630. For readers previously unacquainted with Drenthe this is a great deal to assimilate. The chapter is accordingly heavy-going, although, for the same reason, potentially an invaluable resource.

Succeeding chapters are comparably detailed but become progressively easier as the contents of earlier ones are internalized. With the last three the work comes into its own. Chapter 3 concerns disputes regarding village boundaries, the use of a village's commons, or the maintenance of bridges, ditches, and the like, either between neighbouring villages or between the village community and one of its members. Hoppenbrouwers concludes that these were sparked less by population growth than by burgeoning state formation, which demanded greater systematization, for purposes such as taxation.

Chapter 4 concerns feuding. Although murder and other felonies went to trial automatically, other offences, including accidental killing, were 'cases of vengeance': the victim's kinsfolk might demand the right of blood feud; they might apprehend culprits for trial, or kill them on the spot; alternatively, if offenders confessed and offered redress, negotiation might ensue, ending in compensation for the victims and a fine for breaching the peace. Chapter 5 considers disagreements arising from intergenerational transfer of property, ranging from the endowment of brides to bequests and inheritance.

Its comprehensiveness makes the study a good foundation for future research, whether on Drenthe itself or for purposes of comparison. In Chapter 4, for instance, Hoppenbrouwers provides sufficient detail to suggest more may have been

happening than he allows for. He demonstrates decisively that kin-group feuding was not exclusive to urban and aristocratic milieus, attributing its decline over the fifteenth century to mentality shifts that promoted individual over collective responsibility, and to state formation, which prioritized centrally administered justice and punishment, restricting opportunities for ‘cases of vengeance’.

This account, though, generates questions as to whether Drenthe’s judicial processes, which maximized the number of stakeholders with an interest in a case, used incentives and deterrents to achieve social control in a world where authorities had limited ability to oversee or compel. In cases of theft, only a third of stolen goods returned to the owner: one third went to the court, another to the village community. Murderers’ impounded possessions were similarly divided. Court and community thus had an interest in convicting criminals, potentially offsetting the capacity for influence or family ties to frustrate justice in a close-knit community.

In ‘cases of vengeance’ the offender paid a fine, shared among the lord’s representative, the village where the incident had occurred, and the accuser who had instigated the case. Did this discourage the sheltering or exoneration of guilty persons? Hoppenbrouwers expresses surprise victims’ kin rarely chose revenge over reconciliation. However (especially considering Van Onacker’s account of the plight of widows), kinsfolk had an interest in accepting compensation. In several other respects, this more inclusive form of justice—which involved kinsfolk and also others—seems calculated to guard against undesirable outcomes, from vendetta to the miscarriage of justice or escape of offenders. Although Hoppenbrouwers reasons along one line, his study’s exhaustive nature permits readers to entertain other possibilities, rendering the work capable of stimulating further research.

Although Van Onacker’s account of Campine rural life has correspondences with Hoppenbrouwers’s work, she explores social cohesion, not conflict, seeking to explain the continuity of the area’s social structures from medieval times to the nineteenth century. She argues that, lacking regional administrative bodies, local lords, powerful tenant farmers, or dominant *coqs du village*, villages’ leading inhabitants were ‘independent peasants’, who owned slightly more land than their fellows, allowing them to subsist comfortably. This ‘broad oligarchy’, which comprised the wealthiest thirty per cent of the community, ran villages.

However, independent peasants were neither so qualitatively different from their neighbours that their interests diverged significantly nor powerful enough to dominate them. As a result, though overrepresented as village office-holders and able to steer communal decision-making, often to suit themselves, in matters such as poor relief and the use of common land, they were never exclusively dominant. To secure social stability, consideration was displayed towards poorer neighbours, to whose ranks they might easily return. Thus, though these members of the village elite, wealthier than their neighbours, furnished the bulk of the tax officials who set the contributions paid by each household, they paid disproportionately more

tax themselves than equity required (the opposite of the situation in Flanders). The consequence was a resilient, unchallenged social structure that persisted essentially unchanged till the potato famine of the 1840s.

Van Onacker's monograph is more smoothly written than Hoppenbrouwers's and features somewhat better production values. Conversely, the research has a heavier emphasis on quantitative data, reflecting the sources used, citing few concrete instances from community life. This gives the work a faintly abstract quality, something compounded by its more overt engagement with methodology, which results in frequent references to neo-institutionalist approaches, Gini Indexes, and the like.

Nonetheless, if Hoppenbrouwers's comprehensive detail and numerous examples provide a good grounding in Drenthe's rural history, Van Onacker achieves something comparable for her region in a different way. Her work is firmly located within the historiographical tradition, connected too to scholarship in non-historical disciplines; her research questions and findings are clearly signposted; she draws attention to areas where further research would be desirable. Her volume appeared before that of Hoppenbrouwers but she cites other publications of his, as well as earlier research on Drenthe. On a few occasions her diagrams seem inadequately explained or her findings may possibly not quite justify her conclusions but her use of quantitative data is typically impressive, her arguments sophisticated and persuasive.

Characteristically, she justifies her research in historiographical terms: the Campine region has potential as a 'laboratory for subaltern history' (p. 286), with lessons for modern subaltern societies, given the post-Piketty era's interest in historic social inequality; historians' neglect of rural regions that exhibited continuity instead of change, owing to their interest in explaining the Great Divergence, has rendered existing scholarship one-sided. Medieval Campine villages, however (and, by analogy, Drenthe too), represented, if not the future, 'a side-street with its own logic, its own reason, and its own attractions' (p. 286).

This claim for regional studies of areas that behaved differently from the mass appears vindicated by her own and Hoppenbrouwers's findings. He shows, for instance, that kinship feuding was ingrained in rural peasant society, despite beliefs it was a thing of aristocratic or urban settings. She demonstrates that associations and confraternities were prevalent in Campine villages, despite suggestions they evolved in urban milieux to compensate for the breakdown of kinship ties. Plainly, such studies can add to existing understandings. An investigation of the Low Countries' third sandy, inland region, the Veluwe, may be indicated.

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**Vernon**, Matthew X., *The Black Middle Ages: Race and the Construction of the Middle Ages* (The New Middle Ages), Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2018; hardback; pp. xiii, 266; R.R.P. US\$74.99; ISBN 9783319910888.

Matthew Vernon's book investigates the connexions between medievalism, racial identity, and the struggle of African American literature to articulate a sense of belonging that speaks to the lived experience and desires of its writers and readers. His book comprises a set of nuanced and ambitious arguments, derived from intense scholarly engagements; a short review in no way does justice to its scope or, especially, its stakes. Readers should not be deterred by the title with its big-ticket buzzwords and overweening reach. Vernon is an unflinching analyst and a judicious interlocutor. This is also a much bigger book than it appears to be and each chapter deserves a more spacious exposition.

Vernon's study begins by pointing to the innovation it makes in drawing together medieval and African American studies. What can these two fields have to say to each other? In response, the book draws on traditional literary history, the political analysis of national formation, sociologies of reading, institutional histories, and theoretical meditation held together by forensic close reading. These critical modalities are mobilized for a heterogeneous set of written and experiential texts.

The opening chapter excavates the genealogy of American claims to medieval heritage beginning with Thomas Jefferson's rapturous embrace of *adventus Saxonum*, through the politics of recovery after the Civil War to the development of American exceptionalism and, as Vernon argues, the necessary subjugation of 'the Negro' to establish white supremacy. Subverting this construction of the nation, Vernon positions the works of Frederick Douglass, W. E. B. Dubois, and a struggle over conceptualizing the past not as irretrievable but as a repository of medievalisms to contest the narratives of white hegemony through relationships of 'surrogated kinship' (p. 29). Chapter 2 surveys debates initiated by African American intellectuals, published in and circulated by *The African-American Magazine* (1859–62) and, later, the *African Methodist Episcopal Church Review* (*AME Church Review*). This lateral move into non-fictional texts, media discourse, and intellectual formations allows Vernon to explicate the cultural institutions that supported the project of building a powerful and public presence by making African American history and experience visible in the medievalism of the national narrative.

Chapter 3 is a devastating account of the failure of the genre of romance to deliver as an historical form, as a social allegory, or as a visionary future. Reacting to the pernicious popularity of Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* as a history of race, Vernon reads Mark Twain's conflicted desire to expose the vileness of racism against Twain's own failure of nerve to name its specificities, such as lynching in *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*. Charles Chesnut's *The House Behind the Cedars*, also referencing *Ivanhoe*, emerges as a 'deviant romance'

(p. 132) and makes for hard reading: its narrative driver of miscegenation still provokes both pathos and shock. ‘History, Genealogy, and Gerald of Wales: Medieval Theories of Ethnicity and their Afterlives’ (Chapter 4) is another lateral move. Taking his lead from Paul Gilroy, Vernon develops a shrewd meditation on the category of ethnicity that is foundational in the history of race theory, again exposing conflicted anxieties clandestine in the text—this time Gerald of Wales on the history of the Irish—and thus dismantling rightful claims to racial subjugation.

Chapter 5 returns to literary texts—Dryden, Dante, Chaucer, and Gloria Naylor—to elaborate an idea of the vernacular that has resonated through preceding chapters. Vernon immediately sees the potency of a vernacular allied with translation in Naylor’s enlisting of Dante and Chaucer. He follows her determination ‘to refute the dominant narrative of literary genealogy and to make the larger political argument about the existence of a pluralistic, polyvocal community’ (p. 215). But he also calibrates Naylor’s revolutionary *translatio studii* by putting it into dialogue with Henry Louis Gates Jr and Langston Hughes. Polemic is no easy fix here.

In a brilliant coda, Vernon takes a deep breath and draws the subtle and impassioned forces of his argument together to reveal what is going on in Quentin Tarantino’s 2012 film *Django Unchained*. Tracking the film’s generic tropes of the Western, Southern Gothic, and the medieval myth of Siegfried the Dragon-slayer, Vernon characterizes its ‘primary intervention as a demotic representation of black bodies within foundational narratives, [thus asking] viewers to revise where and how they conceive of the nation’s origins’ (p. 255). Medieval myth enables Django to imagine an alternative trajectory for his life by dislodging ‘the space occupied by narratives of white heroism’ (p. 260) through his ‘affective connections and fictional ties to the past’ (p. 260). *Django Unchained* imagines African Americans as fully included in the narrative of American citizenship, thereby returning Vernon’s book to its initial point of intervention.

This is a salutary book, full of insights and deep knowledge; and while it is entirely and rightly concerned with African American history, readers elsewhere know that black lives matter everywhere. This book issues a challenge to Australian readers to re-examine our national story and to imagine a vernacular that speaks of Indigenous sovereignty and inclusive citizenship.

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**Waite**, Gary K., *Jews and Muslims in Seventeenth-Century Discourse: From Religious Enemies to Allies and Friends*, Abingdon and New York, Routledge, 2019; paperback; pp. xiv, 292; R.R.P. £34.99; ISBN 9780815363576.

In this ambitiously-titled work, Gary Waite sets out to understand how Jews and Muslims were perceived in the early modern Dutch Republic. His goal, as outlined in the preface, is to understand and combat modern anti-Semitism and Islamophobia by examining a state that rapidly shifted from religious repression

to active tolerance and diversity, providing a test case for how old prejudices can be rethought (pp. xi–xii). Drawing on approximately 120 printed publications, including pamphlets, chronicles, and news-sheets, as well as manuscript materials, Waite persuasively argues that unusual religious diversity and tolerance in the Dutch Republic, and external pressures from the Spanish Habsburgs, led Dutch writers, particularly nonconformists and spiritualists, to advocate for and pursue productive relationships and alliances with Jews and Muslims. Waite's work focuses heavily on Dutch sources that have remained unexamined in English scholarship, as well as comparisons with better-known English-language sources, and his coverage is much more comprehensive for the period 1568–1648, when the Dutch religious and political environment changed most significantly, and the Habsburg threat most encouraged seeking allies outside Christendom.

Waite's first two chapters juxtapose 'mainstream' Dutch Reformed writings about the Jews in this period, charting a move away from medieval stereotypes to active engagement on an evangelistic and political level, with nonconformist and spiritualist writings, which emphasize piety, love, and forbearance over doctrinal conformity, and begin to imagine new religious identities that might include both Christians and Jews. In the following three chapters, Waite surveys Dutch and English accounts of Muhammad, the Moors and Moriscos of the western Mediterranean, and the Ottoman Turks. Beginning with highly negative and polemical accounts aimed at discrediting Islam and justifying Christianity by denigrating the Prophet, Waite traces a divergence in Dutch and English attitudes as the Dutch increasingly engaged in positive diplomatic and cultural relations with Morocco and then the Ottoman Empire. According to Waite, the year 1648 was a watershed, which reduced both the Spanish and Ottoman threat in Dutch popular discourse. The following period up to 1700 saw 'many more works published about the Turks [...] too many to fairly deal with them all' (p. 165), so Waite instead focuses his final two chapters specifically on millenarianism and messianism. He identifies a pervasive nonconformist movement across both nations that expected imminent conversion of the Jews to Christianity, the second coming and the establishment of Christ's rule on earth. Distinctively, however, he centres his assessment on two Jewish figures, whose supporters and detractors spanned Europe. Waite concludes with three vignettes from 1716, 1653, and 1675, which each illustrate the complicated and fluid attitudes that Dutch and English writers held towards Jews and Muslims.

Waite's most distinctive contribution in this work lies in his presentation, description, and contextual framing of a significant number of Dutch works that have remained unexamined in English historiography, which will prove a boon to future scholars of Judaism and Islam in Europe who are not fluent in early modern Dutch. Scholars wishing to rely on his broader arguments, however, should be aware of Waite's potentially problematic slant against state-sponsored religion and doctrinal precision. Having been through 'a religious phase' as a young man, Waite's struggle 'to break free of that restrictive mindset' (p. xi) has evidently

informed his understanding of Dutch religious toleration, which in his assessment significantly came from spiritualist visions of ‘unity and harmony which disregarded theological precision’ (p. 71) and their willingness to ‘reconsider their perception of [religious minorities] as they reshaped their own faith, reducing the emphasis [...] on the divinity of Christ’ (p. 101) or the Trinity (p. 174). Waite’s list of ‘attitudinal factors’ (p. 25) affecting inclination towards toleration assumes relativism as the norm, requiring active prejudice or superstition to oppose it and freedom from restrictive doctrine to support it. Dutch conformists ‘needed somehow to get around the New Testament’s assertions’ and accept ‘the thought that Jews and Christians could be on equal footing before God’ (p. 174). A second important gap is the almost complete marginalization of Dutch relations with the Barbary corsairs. While likely in part guided by his materials, Waite’s central argument that Dutch engagement with Muslims and Jews was significantly driven by the war with Spain contributes to a marginalization of the very real and well-known threat posed by the corsairs of Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli, who are barely mentioned outside the final two chapters.

Overall, Waite presents an important and wide-ranging look into Dutch views of Jews and Muslims in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Problematic relations with religious dogma aside, Waite’s work will be highly useful for scholars seeking a bibliographical introduction to Dutch religious minorities, a broad comparison between Dutch and English attitudes to religious minorities, or a closer study of nonconformist, spiritualist, and millenarian dialogues.

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**Warren, Michael J.**, *Birds in Medieval English Poetry: Metaphors, Realities, Transformations* (Nature and Environment in the Middle Ages), Cambridge, D. S. Brewer, 2018; hardback; pp. 269; 6 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9781843845089.

Combining ornithological and literary history, this book is an important contribution to environmental history and ecocriticism, unpacking the complex relationships between human and other creatures and their shared environments. As Michael Warren points out, ‘natural and cultural histories overlap’: ornithological knowledge deepens our understanding of birds in medieval and modern culture (pp. 5–6). The five chapters analyse a range of texts chosen to show where ‘metaphor and realities fuse and collide’ (p. 10), allowing Warren to discuss natural and cultural history together. While ‘a full exploration of how and why birds mattered’ (p. 3) cannot be achieved in five case studies, other birds in other texts are mentioned throughout, and the choices and analyses bring out five distinct ‘ways [...] feathered physicality and transformation is embraced [...] as part of poetic strategy’ (p. 23) in England from the tenth to fifteenth centuries. In turn, each chapter illuminates a different aspect of metaphor.

Birds have always been a powerful metaphor for human experience, being both like humans (voice, bipedality) and unlike (flight, feathers). As Warren

notes, medieval thinkers understood metaphor as an interrelation of likeness and unlikeness, making birds as a metaphor a rich study. The book focuses on particular ways birds both resemble and differ from humans, both physically and in social and ecological roles. Adaptability is another characteristic that could usefully have been discussed in a concluding chapter, had scope allowed.

Chapter 1 discusses the flight of seabirds in *The Seafarer* as a metaphor for the pilgrimage of the soul. The argument's originality lies in its construction: Warren shows how the familiar littoral environment and the voices of the seabirds—which recall, but are not, the human voices of the hall—reframe the poem as homecoming, as well as exile (as in the more traditional reading).

Chapter 2 explores how disguise and trickery among birds such as the cuckoo and jay illustrate and interrogate the boundaries of knowledge in the riddles of the Exeter Book. The focus on resemblance and illusion, on what we can and cannot know, drives a discussion of metaphor's uses in medieval pedagogy.

Chapter 3 considers the (human) values attached to different species, embedded in metaphors like the owl's night-sight for spiritual blindness. In *The Owl and the Nightingale*, the problematic nature of such metaphors as both inaccurate and harmful to birds (owls are neither blind nor evil) is debated in the birds' own voices. Warren's analysis prompts us to think critically about medieval observation of animal kinds, and about what such observations can tell us about birds and about human–nonhuman relations.

Throughout, Warren gives the Old English names of species, grounding the reader's understanding in the primary sources and allowing the non-specialist a richer experience. The cultural specificity of onomatopoeic bird names hints at another form of 'in-betweenness' between the metaphorical and the literal (p. 16). The cultural and linguistic moments embedded in such names could also inform studies of sound, accent, and rhyme, as well as of historical semantics, such as Warren's forthcoming work on birds in place-names.

Chapter 4, on Chaucer's *Parliament of Fowls*, explores the limits of language and cross-species translation (*translatio* being the Latin for Greek *metaphora*). Like the poet's struggle to express birds' voices in English, mystical language, allegory, and metaphor attempt the impossible. Warren's book asks, and his choice and analysis of texts attempts to show, 'what [...] we lose, overlook or misrepresent that [...] cannot be transferred' (p. 222).

In Chapter 5, literal transformations in Gower's *Confessio Amantis* enable a discussion of desire and identity across species, recentring the physical in the cultural. This last chapter is for me one of the most striking and successful, as it shows how the metaphor of transformation establishes a more nuanced understanding of the physical and human world.

'In all aspects [...] birds embody, perform and represent [...] transformation', and Warren's book illustrates how 'the full breadth of these transformations [...] are key to the rich set of nuances and tensions' (p. 18), that is, to birds' metaphorical capacity. The book is therefore a useful addition to recent studies of

birds in ancient and medieval literature and culture, as well as to broader works of ecocriticism and historical studies of metaphor in literature and art. Ornithological and ecological discussions are largely contained in the generous footnotes, in dialogue with the literary aspects discussed in the body.

One quibble: the terms Anglo-Saxon and Old English seem to be used more or less interchangeably (perhaps following the sources). Given the current concerns regarding 'Anglo-Saxon', it may be best to clarify the choice in Warren's forthcoming trade book on medieval avian metaphor.

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