

## Short notices

**Armstrong**, Lawrin, *The Idea of a Moral Economy: Gerard of Siena on Usury, Restitution, and Prescription* (Toronto Studies in Medieval Law), Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2016; cloth; pp. 344; R.R.P. CA\$75.00; ISBN 9781442643222.

This is a valuable transcription of the scarce manuscripts of Gerard of Siena's contributions to theological and legal debate about usury with a very acceptable straightforward, if not always totally precise, and intelligible translation of the original Latin. The structure of the volume makes the medieval approach to argument and its basic, unchallenged theories of natural law, positive law, canon and civil law clear. Given the massive historiography on medieval ideas about what we call (but they did not) the economy, original material added must be judged on the extent to which it adds to our understanding of both the medieval approach and its underlying beliefs. This work does both.

Produced in the period of economic instability after the 2008 collapse it is also unexpectedly part of a current academic discussion on the problems of material inequality in which medieval ideas on the priority of the common good rather than private profit have developed an immediate relevance.

Its brief introduction, which sets the context in which Gerard wrote and the works of those with whom he debated and who later maintained his argument, would serve as an excellent start for undergraduates confronting the issues and the period for the first time. The author establishes the confrontation of the ideas of the period and their opposition to modern theories, pointing out where the medieval imperative for social and political rights and their view of debt and the fictitious nature of 'money exchange' differ from current economic assumptions.

Armstrong suggests that a reassessment of some of the arguments may provide a new perspective on present entrenched neoliberal orthodoxy about markets. To bring together in this way intellectual history and economic history is an admirable proposal and this translation a good point to start.

SYBIL M. JACK, *The University of Sydney*

**Diesenberger**, Maximilian, Rob **Meens**, and Els **Rose**, eds, *The Prague Sacramentary: Culture, Religion, and Politics in Late Eighth-Century Bavaria* (Cultural Encounters in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, 21), Turnhout, Brepols, 2016, cloth; pp.xii, 261; 18 b/w illustrations, 5 tables; R.R.P. €80.00; ISBN 9782503549200.

An important medieval manuscript, the Prague Sacramentary offers scholars as many answers as the questions it poses. Editors Maximilian Diesenberger, Rob Meens, and Els Rose contextualize the rarity of any 'liturgical manuscript of the early Middle Ages [...] with such precisely datable information' (p. 7) and introduce the 'Prague, Archiv Pražského hradu, MS O. 83 and dated to the final decade of the eighth century' (p. 1). The challenges of a text containing 'much more than the prayers for Mass' (p. 1) are considered in three parts: 'A Book and its Users' (Part I), 'A Mirror of Religious Culture' (Part II), and 'Breaking and Building Identities' (Part III). Nine analyses, the fruit of 'an adventure undertaken by an international group of scholars with different disciplinary backgrounds in a two-day workshop organised in Prague in November 2008', are in English, with the exception of Elvira Glaser's 'Die althochdeutsche Glossierung des Prager Sakramentars' (The Old High German Glossary for the Prague Sacramentary) in German, and Philippe Depreux's 'La prière pour les rois et le *status regni* dans le sacramentaire de Prague et l'attention portée par Charlemagne au salut de la communauté politique' ('The Prayer for Kings and the *Status Regni* in the Sacramentary of Prague and the Attention Paid by Charlemagne to the Salvation of the Political Community') in French. Els Rose's 'The Sanctoral Cycle of the Prague Sacramentary' frames the nearly 'eighty Masses for saints [...] preceding vigils, and Masses for the octave (the eighth day after the feast proper)' by using traditions Dold and Eisenhöfer believe the Prague Sacramentary follows: 'Eighth-Century Gelasian Sacramentaries, the *Gelasianum Vetus*, and the Gregorian Tradition' (p. 98). Rose's 'Tables' compare the manuscripts' sanctoral cycle, apostles, feasts of Peter and Paul, and 'the contestation *Qui sancti spiritus tui dono succensus* in the Prague Sacramentary and the Gothic Missal', and Rose's detailed comparison concludes 'it is an eclectic composition, making use of the main contemporary sacramentaries' (as noted above), while disagreeing with Hammer and Dold and Eisenhöfer's view of St Martin and the cult centre in Tours, rather choosing to explain his commemoration in the Masses, and identifies the 'evidence of exchange between Prague and Frankish Gaul' regarding Martin (p. 121). Richard Corradini's 'De *Creatione Mundi* in the Prague Sacramentary' raises the predicament: a 'palaeographical conclusion opens up a number of questions and problems concerning this particular text', which Corradini sees as 'not possible to deal exhaustively with the manifold theological programmes and ideas expressed in this text', and which is exacerbated by 'a lack of Latin skills

or a highly developed individuality of the scribe' (pp. 124–25). This valuable collaboration of scholars begins with Rosamond McKitterick's detailed illustrations in 'The Work of the Scribes in the Prague Sacramentary', and closes with Stuart Airlie's well-positioned 'Earthly and Heavenly Networks in a World in Flux: Carolingian Family Identities and the Prague Sacramentary'. Airlie begins by considering the historian's interest: '[l]ike Banquo and Macbeth [...] yearned to know which of the seeds of time would blossom, and which would fail' (p. 203). Airlie concludes this volume with a consideration of Bavaria, Pippin, and Charlemagne, and makes an important call for the focused historian to forget the present when entering the past, and its intentions, and thus concluding a thought-provoking selection of essays on this 'idiosyncratic' manuscript.

JEWELL HOMAD JOHNSON, *The University of Sydney*

**Hadley Williams**, Janet, ed., *'Duncane Laideus Testament' and other Comic Poems in Older Scots* (Scottish Text Society, 5th ser., 15), Woodbridge, Boydell, 2016; cloth; pp. 278; 1 b/w illustration; R.R.P. £40.00; ISBN 9781897976388.

The often underestimated task of editing texts is frequently seen as thankless and one where only the private satisfaction of getting something precisely right keeps the editor going. Janet Hadley Williams has nevertheless made it an important part of her scholarship, and as she is a brilliant editor these poems will charm even the reader who looks no further than the edited text and the explanatory notes that make clear the meaning and the possible ambiguity of the choice of Scottish words.

The volume has far more to offer, however. The initial introduction to the texts takes each poem individually and explains the source or sources in which it is found (the 'witness' to the text), and the differences between the versions, the date and the possible authorship as well as the genre. In discussing the genre, Hadley Williams briefly considers others of the type, implicit references to better-known poems, and the overall place of these texts in a tradition going back to Ovid and beyond, material that situates Scottish verse well within the whole contemporary European context. These are poems some of which may have had a wide circulation outside the narrow confines of the court and elite households and their variety suggests a more sophisticated general audience than is usually assumed. Some poems, however, she suggests may have had a restricted audience because they were politically sensitive. She shows convincingly that the poem popularly known as 'MacGregouris testament', written after the execution of the outlaw who is the notional author, with its detailed understanding of family networks, local disputes, and legal issues, was one such.

Hadley Williams's detailed knowledge of the period makes the circumstances in which the texts were produced clear and in doing so she reveals aspects of politics that have been largely ignored. The utility of this work extends well beyond the purely literary.

SYBIL M. JACK, *The University of Sydney*

**Rice**, Nicole R., ed., *Middle English Religious Writing in Practice: Texts, Readers, and Transformations* (Late Medieval and Early Modern Studies, 21), Turnhout, Brepols, 2013; hardback; pp. x, 278; 2 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. €75.00, ISBN 9782503541020.

This collection of eight essays considers various later Middle English devotional texts (mainly prose) and their uses and adaptations during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Part I, 'Continental Religious Women in English Practice', opens with Jennifer N. Brown on the fates, in manuscript and print, of three English translations of texts associated with Catherine of Siena: a letter from the head of the Grande Chartreuse, supporting her canonization, Raymond of Capua's life of the saint, and the *Orchard of Syon*. Michael G. Sargent unravels the complexities of the French and English textual traditions of Marguerite Porete's *Mirouer des simples âmes*, and details the extraordinary story of the text's treatment in the twentieth century. Martha W. Driver considers John Audelay's verse prayer to St Birgitta of Sweden, found in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Douce 302, in its liturgical and devotional contexts.

In Part II, 'Manuscript Compilation and the Adaptation of Religious Practice', Mary Agnes Edsall writes on the fifteenth-century Fyler Manuscript (San Marino, Huntington Library, MS HM 744), belonging to a family of merchants, and its antecedents. Nicole R. Rice describes Cambridge, Jesus College, MS Q. D. 4 and Cambridge, Cambridge University Library, MS li. 4. 9, fifteenth-century clerical collections of pastoralia, both containing copies of *The Abbey of the Holy Ghost* and *The Charter of the Abbey of the Holy Ghost*.

Part III, 'Negotiating Orthodoxy: Revision, Circulation, Annotation', contains Moira Fitzgibbons on the 'interplay' (p. 182) between the early fifteenth-century *Dives and Pauper* and the late fourteenth-century *Pore Caitif*. Stephen Kelly and Ryan Perry write on Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc. 23, an anthology of texts of religious instruction with theologically mixed allegiances, which contains the unique copy of a 'radical' (p. 230) unedited sermon, possibly written for Wycliffite readers, on the nature of the Christian community. Margaret Connolly concludes with an essay on the book ownership and reading in the mid-sixteenth century of two generations of the Roberts family of Middlesex. They owned, and used, at least eight extant books which, Margaret Connolly suggests, were acquired following the dissolution of local monasteries.

This collection provides a useful cross-section of current work in this area, with a welcome emphasis on manuscript studies.

ALEXANDRA BARRATT, *University of Waikato*

**Rigby**, Stephen, ed., with Alastair **Minnis**, *Historians on Chaucer: The 'General Prologue' to the Canterbury Tales*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2014; hardback; pp. 528; R.R.P. £65.00; ISBN 9780199689545.

Interdisciplinarity between literary scholars and historians nowadays comes naturally to medieval studies, and this volume is a useful example of the practicalities of using historical context as an approach to *The Canterbury Tales*, and vice versa.

This is a substantial book, in which is gathered a wide array of chapters by experts in economic, social, political, religious and intellectual history, mapping various historical contexts a reader can bring to the *Tales*. In taking this approach the work is grounding the characterizations of Chaucer's pilgrims in their contemporary social contexts, and offering a practical introduction to the subtleties of influence of the varied structures of power and authority, conflicting religious and political activities and economic tensions in medieval England.

The volume comprises twenty-six chapters in which characterizations, roles and representations of each of the Canterbury pilgrims are explored in a social context. Each character-chapter is written by a different historian, and the order of chapters runs according to the order in which the pilgrims are presented in the 'General Prologue'. Useful from the literary scholar's point of view is the ease with which many of these historians comment on the work of the literary scholars, not necessarily because the historians' views are necessarily more valid or arguable by virtue of their discipline, but because it means that this volume is not afraid to transgress the old boundaries, and such a discursive act of interdisciplinarity reinforces the shared programme, instead of adopting some kind of defensive marking-out of territories.

This is a practical compilation and a sound introduction to late medieval England that will be enjoyed by scholar and non-scholar alike, and a valuable addition to a medieval syllabus, whether in history or English literature.

RODERICK McDONALD, *University of Nottingham*

**Skaarup**, Bjørn Okholm, *Anatomy and Anatomists in Early Modern Spain* (History of Medicine in Context), Farnham, Ashgate, 2015; hardback; pp. 298; 18 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £70.00; ISBN 9781472448262.

Skaarup's declared objective was to 'chart the development of late sixteenth-century anatomy in a particular, and largely ignored, national context and to trace the establishment of this discipline within various institutional

and regional settings' (p. 258). To this end, he has adopted 'a comparative geographical rather than a thematic approach' to the subject of the practices and publications of the principal anatomists in the Iberian Peninsula (p. 258). He has drawn on a range of documentary sources from the sixteenth century to the end of the seventeenth century. This work is a useful and well researched contribution towards making available the flourishing history of medicine in Spain to those who only read English.

The introduction covers the historiography of Skaarup's subject, and, includes a debate on the significance of Vesalius' *De corporis humani fabrica* to Spanish anatomy (pp. 9–29). The body of the text examines the history of anatomy involved in early modern Spain by considering the extent to which anatomy was practised at the principal Spanish universities of the period, Valencia, Salamanca, Valladolid, Alcalá de Henares, Barcelona, and Zaragoza. This geographical spread has been the model for his analysis. The principal anatomists and their publications are dealt with alongside detailed descriptions of how the subject of anatomy and its teaching was administered through statutes and structures within these institutions. Skaarup points out the differences that were consequential to those institutions which were controlled by the Crown and those by local administrations. He then extends the study beyond the universities through the evidence that anatomy was taught, and dissection practised, at the *Hospital del Monasterio de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe* and in a chapter that looks at anatomy in 'New Spain' — Mexico. The penultimate chapter is concerned with the production of anatomical images, many of which relied on those in Vesalius' *De corporis humani fabrica*, some even being direct copies. It is here that he acknowledges the influence of Italian artists in the creation of anatomical images presented in Spanish texts.

Throughout, Skaarup describes the roles played by Spanish anatomists involved in the advancement and decline of anatomical studies across the period of his research. Discussion around the disputes between opposing supporters of Vesalian and Galenical conclusions about human anatomy is a recurring theme. There is little mention of comparative anatomy, although animal dissections and vivisections clearly took place (for example p. 220), an omission which may reflect a lack of archival records. Restricted access to cadavers for dissection was at times a limiting factor in the teaching of anatomy in Spain, as was common in most European medical faculties in the sixteenth century.

Skaarup concludes with a summary of the arguments he has made, followed by an extensive bibliography.

ROBERT WESTON, *The University of Western Australia*