Reviews

Atwood, Craig D., *The Theology of the Czech Brethren from Hus to Comenius*, University Park, Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009; cloth; pp. 480; 26 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. US$80.00; ISBN 9780271035321.

The Theology of the Czech Brethren from Hus to Comenius offers an exploration of the interaction between community, ritual, and belief. It spans the fourteenth century up to the Moravians of the eighteenth century, and develops significant arguments concerning the evolution of the key Czech doctrine of the separation of church and state. While the broad contours of the Czech Reformation will be familiar to English readers of Reformation history, there is comparatively little English language scholarship on the Brethren, the third and smallest of the three Hussite churches (behind the Utraquist and Táborite communities). Craig Atwood clearly illustrates key features of the Brethren, notably their insistence on the unity of life, but also their openness to the world and their concomitant emphasis on reconciliation in the midst of persecution.

The book participates directly in a major historiographical debate over the origins of the Moravian Church (the modern *Brüdergemeine* in Germany). The Moravian Church's own historiography traces its origins to the Hussites, with a point of continuity revolving around the moment in the 1730s when Bishop Daniel Ernst Jablonsky laid hands on Nicholas von Zinzendorf as a bishop of the *Unitas Fratrum*. Von Zinzendorf occupies a major place in the modern historiography of the Moravian Church, and he is associated with the time of the 'Hidden Seed', which Moravian historians claim as a period of continuity between the old Church of the Hussites and the Moravian Church. Atwood confounds this received wisdom and normative history by re-orienting the history of the Church before the 'Hidden Seed' and the Zinzendorf period, so that the Brethren between Hus and Comenius can be interpreted as a church in its own right, rather than as a predecessor to the Moravian Church of the eighteenth century.

Atwood places the message of the Brethren in an unexpectedly broad, but nonetheless refreshing, setting. Assessing the world after 1992, a moment in time when Cold War tensions decline, Atwood, a product of a Moravian theological seminary, asserts that the chief messages of the Brethren of faith, hope, and love seem more pertinent than ever.

While the book is superbly researched and the scholarship is scrupulous,

at times Atwood's clear personal affection for the Brethren and his strong Christian faith is the dominating feature of his analysis. Neither affection nor faith should in any way be considered an impediment to producing a scholarly text, and Atwood's scholarship is of the highest standard. But it does lead Atwood to advance an interpretation of the Brethren's later impact and global significance that draws several long bows. Thus the Brethren were 'a voice of reason and toleration in a violent age' and left an 'inspiring' legacy (p. 409). He makes significant claims for their impact on the world after the Early Modern period. According to Atwood, the Brethren also stand at the foundation of major developments in modern Christianity. He does not really delineate what features of modern Christianity can be attributed to the Brethren, and his book concludes on this note of slight exaggeration and unbalanced analysis.

However, his analysis of the distinctive layers of Czech theology is a strong aspect of this study, and so too is his analysis of the distinctions between church and state that inform much Czech theology. He presents strong evidence which makes clear the rejection of the doctrine of justification by faith, and the emphasis instead placed on good works. He also explains with clarity the causes of the Brethren's separation from the state church, attributing it to a crisis of faith, in which the Brethren perceived that the state church was not practicing what they preached.

In the end, Atwood's purpose in revising normative foundation stories of the Moravian Church is only partly successful. This is because Atwood is engaging with a historiographical debate that has been conducted largely in languages other than English. As a result, Atwood spends some time establishing what Moravian historians and theologians have said about their foundation stories. While this material is necessary to sketch out a debate that would be otherwise unknown to English readers, it can mean that at times Atwood's revisionist voice is competing a little too much with those he seeks to overturn. Nonetheless, this is thoughtful and lively work.

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Bailey, Lisa, Lindsay **Diggelmann**, and Kim M. **Phillips**, eds, *Old Worlds, New Worlds: European Cultural Encounters, c. 1000–c. 1750* (Late Medieval and Early Modern Studies, 18), Turnhout, Brepols, 2009; hardback; pp. x, 217; 16 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. €60.00; ISBN 9782503531328.

This volume of essays exalts in diversity without seeking simplistic synthesis, perhaps an inevitable outcome when nine scholars examine 'a range of moments of contact between Europe and the rest of the world from around 1000 down to around 1750' (p. 1). The editors do not shy away from their multifarious task, and further diversify the proceedings by pointing to the etymology of the word 'encounter', which in the fourteenth century referred to hostile and violent clashes, before its evolution over two centuries to the more neutral sense of meeting. What emerges from these pages is a rich and tangible sense of the diversity of travel undertaken by medieval and Early Modern crusaders, colonizers, diplomats, explorers and missionaries, and an accompanying sense of how race, ethnicity and nationhood were emerging constructs for which little consensus could be found.

The focus on encounter as opposed to the more tested (and tired) scholarly terrain of 'discovery' is a welcome one. The volume enables the reciprocity of cultural influence and exchange to be exemplified by, not only the western European encounters with Native Americans, but also Armenians, Australians, Chinese, Cypriots, Mongolians, Sicilians, and Tahitians. Perhaps the most outstanding achievement here is that all the contributors do collectively, as claimed in the introduction, 'displace 1492 as an originatory moment in histories of European encounters' with other worlds (p. 1). There is a shift in paradigms at work here, chronologically as well as geographically. Thanks to an avoidance of the boundary typically drawn between medieval and Early Modern, a realm has been opened up in which the approaches of scholars in the one field can inform the other.

The first three essays are case studies of how encounters often result in the assertion of an 'other' that leads to the consolidation of cultural identity. Lindsay Diggelmann examines Anglo-Norman writings about Greeks encountered in Sicily and Cyprus during the Third Crusade in the twelfth century. Diggelmann's focus on places and sources which are often treated as peripheral provides the context for the negative stereotypes imposed problematically on the Greeks by the Anglo-Normans. Likewise, Christopher MacEvitt is sensitive to how Armenian identity was asserted *vis-à-vis* the

Byzantines, and he discusses the remarkable flexibility of the tale of eleventh-century Armenian King Gagik, whose story was continually adapted in order to suit a range of Armenian cultural experiences including exile. Kim M. Phillips examines the trope of exoticism as manifest in the writings of the European ambassadors, missionaries and merchants who travelled to Mongolia, China, India and Burma between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries.

Encounters between Europe and the Americas, especially during the sixteenth century, are likely to be more familiar as topics of historical investigation, but four essays in the volume do manage to bring fresh perspectives to bear. Heather Dalton takes as her subject the sixteenth-century explorer Roger Barlow, author of the first text in English to detail a personal experience of the 'New World', and surprisingly unknown to many Early Modern scholars. There is much to recommend about Daniel Brunstetter's essay, easily the best in the volume, as he discusses with great lucidity new attitudes to the 'New World' formulated by the Spanish philosopher Sepulveda and the French essayist Montaigne. By contrasting their divergent views on 'Amerindians', Brunstetter reminds us that philosophical debate as to what constituted humanity was an important outcome of the encounter with the 'New World'. Moving from the philosophical to the cultural, Karen Jillings analyses European attitudes toward the product of tobacco, giving insight into how it shifted from being feared to being desired. Finally, Mark S. Dawson extends the scope of encounter from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, analysing how, far from being overthrown by 'New World' encounters, pre-existing physiognomic categories reliant on humoral theory proved oddly resilient.

In essays by Nicholas Keene and Mercedes Maroto Camino, Australia and Tahiti are the final realms explored. Here, wonderfully curious lines of enquiry are opened up, both through Keane's discussion of a defrocked Franciscan monk who published an imagined account of an hermaphrodite shipwrecked off the coast of Australia, and Camino's analysis of eighteenth-century maps of Tahiti. Both essays cover original terrain, and both remind us of the need to consider a variety of evidence from outside of the standard historical sources.

Given the enormously broad chronological and geographical scope at hand, what can be said about this volume as a whole? Overall, it is the fertility of the theme of encounter that is palpable. From the Atlantic to the Pacific, the categories of race, culture, humanity and nation, are all examined here. While any reconciliation of these disparate topics may seem impossible, the strengths of this publication do include a challenging of the divide between medieval

and Early Modern, an expansion of what the term 'New World' entails, and a remarkable effort toward inter-disciplinarity that is to be commended and encouraged.

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Barratt, Alexandra, *Anne Bulkeley and her Book: Fashioning Female Piety in Early Tudor England* (Texts and Transitions, 2), Turnhout, Brepols, 2009; hardback; pp. xii, 276; 6 b/w & 4 colour illustrations; R.R.P. €70.00; ISBN 9782503520711.

The subject of this study, British Library, Harley MS 494, is a collection of 33 devotional texts in English and Latin, including prayers and brief prose treatises, which was compiled during the volatile period between 1532 and 1535. In November 1534, the Act of Supremacy signaled the break with Rome and in the following June Thomas Cromwell ordered the erasure of all mention of the Pope from service and prayer books. The response to the reforms was swift; in the preface to his 1535 edition of the *Goodly prymer*, William Marshall scathingly referred to some devotions in traditional books of hours as 'popish, painted, and pestilent prayers'.

Harley MS 494 is a fascinating document of the devotional preoccupations within a particular milieu during this period. Professor Barratt has transcribed and edited the entire 113 folio manuscript and also provides a thorough analysis of its patronage, sources, devotional and political context and *raison d'être*. This is no small task, as the diverse sources and structure of the manuscript are complex and far from transparent. It would appear that the manuscript was first owned by and (as Barratt argues) compiled specifically for Anne Bulkeley, a well-to-do laywoman with courtly connections, her mother being the first cousin of Elizabeth Woodville, the wife of Edward IV. The manuscript may then have been bequeathed to Anne's daughter, another Anne, who became a Fontevrault nun at Amesbury Abbey in Wiltshire.

At first the manuscript, which is a modest book on paper, appears to be a miscellany, a collection of disparate and unordered texts. No less than eighteen scribes have contributed, and there are several texts identified by Barratt as 'fillers' between the main items. However, she makes a case for the internal logic of the manuscript, arguing that it is more correctly described as an

anthology with a cohesion and unity of purpose, albeit not one that is highly ordered. Several texts point to the Brigittine provenance of Syon Abbey. The principal scribe, Robert Taylor, was Clerk of Works at Syon Abbey during the early sixteenth century, and included are texts by English Brigittines Richard Whitford and William Bonde as well as Bridget of Sweden and continental women visionaries known at Syon. Certain prayers, such as the passion devotion to the Five Wounds, were also characteristic of Syon.

Large and powerful, Syon Abbey exerted influence at court and, although she was not a religious, Anne Bulkeley the elder can be positioned within the broader Syon 'texual community'. Indeed, Barratt suggests that the manuscript was made specifically for Anne Bulkeley's devotional requirements, and that the compiler and Anne's 'spiritual director' was possibly the Syon monk Richard Whitford. This might distinguish the collection from a *preces privatae* or book of prayers collected by an owner for private use. It is unlikely that the discursive Brigittine prose treatises and several obscure contemporary texts would have been accessible to Anne to collect herself, without the intervention of an educated controller.

The omissions in the anthology are as revealing as the inclusions. Issues that could be construed as controversial are avoided, evidence that a compiler sensitive to prevailing debates was responsible for the work. In keeping with the official condemnation of aspects of traditional religion, no suffrages to the saints are included, and very few prayers directed to individual saints. Similarly there are no prayers with indulgences attached, but several Marian prayers, which were not yet subject to attack. The manuscript is unillustrated, possibly also a response to an increasingly negative attitude to images. Also strangely absent, given the pronounced Brigittine orientation of the anthology, are passages from Bridget's visionary revelations. Barratt attributes this to the compiler's deliberate distancing from the Elizabeth Barton affair. Barton, a Benedictine visionary and occasional visitor to Syon Abbey, was hanged for treason in 1534.

Why was this anthology necessary when nearly all the texts were already available in other forms? Barratt suggests that it was compiled for the sake of convenience. The first text, an English translation of an elevation prayer, suggests that Anne took the pocket-size book with her to Mass. Other aspects are harder to explain. Ten items in the manuscript derive from the primer, which was already pocket size and, as Barratt points out, most women of Anne's social standing would have owned at least one copy of the numerous sixteenth-century editions of fine printed illustrated primers or books of hours.

The prayer to the Virgin 'O intemerata' was a standard inclusion in the primer. It also appears twice in Harley MS 434; once in English, which makes sense if Anne's Latin was limited, but also in Latin, which might seem superfluous.

Barratt's analysis of Harley MS 434 is sometimes necessarily speculative but she is always judicious in her claims, and her study of this devotional anthology tells us much about the nature of women's piety during a critical period in Early Modern England.

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Blythe, James M., *The Life and Works of Tolomeo Fiadoni (Ptolemy of Lucca)* (Disputatio, 16), Turnhout, Brepols, 2009; cloth; pp. xviii, 276; 2 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. €60.00; ISBN 9782503529233.

Blythe, James M., *The Worldview and Thought of Tolomeo Fiadoni (Ptolemy of Lucca)* (Disputatio, 22), Turnhout, Brepols, 2009; cloth; pp. xviii, 276; 1 b/w illustration; R.R.P. €60.00; ISBN 9782503529264.

Prior to the publication of James Blythe's 1997 English translation of *De regimine principum*, Ptolemy of Lucca had been regarded, even by experts in medieval intellectual history, as marginal. The translation succeeded in attracting scholarly interest to the Dominican thinker. Blythe's new publications, which epitomize his comprehensive exploration of Ptolemy's life, work and thought, are likely to enhance our interest in him further. The two volumes are not published together under the same 'umbrella' title; however, they are indeed two parts of a single research project, and must be read as such. Blythe is not merely a pioneer in the study of the hitherto neglected Dominican; he has nearly succeeded in producing the definitive account. The inclusion of the name 'Tolomeo Fiadoni', probably unknown to most, in the titles eloquently illustrates Blythe's determination to make the historical record as accurate as possible; this, he claims, is the true name of the Dominican known commonly as 'Ptolemy of Lucca'.

'Volume one' – *Life and Works* – offers a biographical account of Tolomeo, followed by an introductory survey of all his works, including little-known theological and historical writings such as *De operibus sex dierum* and *Historia*

ecclesiastica nova. The volume concludes with an extensive chronology of Tolomeo's life, transcriptions of three significant documents relating to his public life, and even a few corrections to Blythe's 1997 translation of *De regimine principum* (a testimony to Blythe's intellectual sincerity). All together, this book will prove an indispensable guide to the study, not only of Tolomeo himself, but also of the religious and political worlds of northern Italy at the turn of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

The 'second volume' – *Worldview and Thought* – is packed with highly detailed examinations of all aspects of Tolomeo's thought, ranging from cosmology and theology to anthropology and Christian history. The chapter on women, gender and the family, in particular, offers an interesting insight into the Dominican's uniquely positive (though, at times, ambivalent) assessment of feminine qualities. Although five out of ten chapters are devoted to political thought (in which Blythe is admittedly more interested), his goal was, as is clear from the title, not to portray Tolomeo as a political thinker, but to reconstruct his thought world in its entirety and situate Tolomeo's political ideas within it.

This is not to suggest, however, that Blythe has imposed an artificially coherent system on Tolomeo's thought world; far from it, Blythe carefully identifies a number of tensions and ambivalences in Tolomeo's corpus. Yet Blythe's meticulous attention to detail based on exhaustive research has not compromised the clear presentation of the main 'threads' of Tolomeo's thought.

From Blythe's analysis, two themes emerge. One is that Tolomeo's worldview – his understanding of the universe and history – did not change much, whereas his political views evolved over time. The other is that Tolomeo strove but was unable to reconcile Aristotelianism and Augustinianism. Perhaps the *point d'appui* of the book is the chapter on 'God's Plan for History'. In this, Tolomeo's struggle with three mutually conflicting authorities – the Bible, Aristotle and Augustine – is vividly demonstrated. The chapter also provides us with a historico-theological framework within which what Tolomeo conceptualized as 'political' was peripheral; the divine and universal lordship of God, to which all human government must be subject, was at the heart of his worldview. Thus, as Blythe convincingly shows, Tolomeo probably wanted to be considered an ecclesiastical historian, not a political thinker.

Nonetheless, we remember him today primarily as a political thinker. Recent scholarship has a residual interest in his 'republicanism', but Blythe rejects anachronistic readings of him as a Renaissance republican by showing, for example, a hierocratic aspect to his thought. On the other hand, Blythe also

observes some innovations; for instance, Tolomeo was the first medieval thinker who employed an Aristotelian methodology for the analysis of civil political ideas and institutions. He also attempted to accommodate Augustinian political ideas, despite his manifest departure from, and distortion of, Augustine's critique of the Roman Empire. Recent scholarship on medieval political thought (see, for example, Cary J. Nederman and Matthew Kempshall) has undermined the traditional 'Aristotelian revolution' thesis significantly, but in Tolomeo Blythe discerns a 'transformation of political thought' whose catalyst was Aristotle's *Politics*.

While the two volumes are presented as a highly specialized work of medieval intellectual history, the author also quietly questions the ways in which intellectual historians operate today. The two books demonstrate what Blythe considers to be an appropriate way to produce 'rounded portraits of the writers being studies of their times and cultural milieus' (*Life and Works*, p. 15). He attacks any sort of 'presentist' approach when he writes that 'we tend to ignore aspects of the writers we analyse that do not have significance for us' (p. 11) and that 'scholars tend to rip isolated passages from their contexts and from various works within their area of interest and assemble them to suit their thesis' (p. 15). Exactly whose scholarship Blythe has in mind in this context is not clear, as he does not cite or discuss any historical or methodological work.

I wish Blythe had offered a theoretical account explaining how to 'try to understand how Tolomeo actually thought'. My impression is that Blythe's approach has an affinity with John Dunn's, which is under-appreciated in comparison to those of other Cambridge contextualists such as Quentin Skinner and J. G. A. Pocock. This failure to provide a methodological framework means that Blythe's historist pursuit of a 'rounded' portrayal based on exhaustive and comprehensive research remains defenseless and acutely vulnerable to questions regarding the contemporary relevance of such a work.

This is not to diminish the scholarly value of these remarkable volumes, however. Anyone who studies medieval intellectual history, in particular those who are interested in the relationship between Augustinianism and Aristotelianism or the medieval origins of Renaissance republicanism, cannot afford to miss these works of exemplary historical scholarship.

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Cohn, Samuel K. Jr, *Cultures of Plague: Medical Thinking at the End of the Renaissance*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009; hardback; pp. 360; 16 b/w illustrations, 1 map; R.R.P. £65.00; ISBN 9780199574025.

Samuel K. Cohn's *Cultures of Plague* applies a modern epidemiological method to Early Modern accounts of the bubonic plague in Italy and draws some surprising conclusions about how the plague was seen and managed. Cohn argues against the prevailing view that writings about the plague changed little from the period of the Black Death in the middle of the fourteenth century to the end of the sixteenth century. He focuses his argument on the plague of 1575–78 to demonstrate that these writings were based on what the writers saw and experienced. His public health approach also denies that plague writings were couched in the intellectual traditions of antiquity (Aristotle and Galen) and modified by Arab writers of the early and middle medieval period. Although Cohn's survey is restricted to the plague in Italy, it creates a lively account of life during an outbreak of plague and carefully traces the steps taken by physicians, clerics and public officials to trace the course of the disease in their community and their attempts to contain it.

Cohn's argument begins with a list of plague writers who dismiss the advice of ancient authorities because they have not seen or experienced the plague as these contemporary authorities had. It was from this position of experience that these authorities could report and recommend various remedies. This examination of writers demonstrates that, from the late fourteenth century, there was an understanding that plague was caused by contagion – through touching, breathing or sight. This assumption was made because the physicians noted that, if one member of a household became ill with plague, it was likely that all members of the household would become ill. Although later plague writings returned to the ancients to describe causes, it was the plague of 1575–78 that produced a remarkably modern view of plague and saw the implementation of public health measures to combat the disease.

In Chapter 2, Cohn examines how plague writers described the signs and symptoms of plague from the Black Death to the plague of 1575–78. He argues that there was no attempt to make a systematic catalogue of the signs and symptoms, especially accounts of skin swellings, described in plague writings. Cohn also makes the point that accounts of the plague from the early twentieth century describe a variety of signs and symptoms that do not always include skin swellings. When returning to Early Modern plague

writings, Cohn investigates how signs and symptoms are described throughout Italy. He examines different words describing similar skin swellings and how these skin swellings could be catalogued as predictors of the prognosis. For Cohn, these writings demonstrate that, if the bubonic plague is the same disease as described in early twentieth-century accounts, the course of the disease has actually changed in the intervening centuries. This assertion adds further weight to his claim that Early Modern physicians wrote from their own observations and experience, rather than relying on writings from antiquity.

In the following two chapters, Cohn closely examines plague writings from across Italy, beginning with the writings of the Sicilian physician, Giovanni Filippo Ingrassia. These writings are compared with writings from Milan, Padua, Venice, and Verona to show how similar each account is, again demonstrating that the writers were recording their own observations and experiences. The fifth chapter looks at verse responses to the plague and its demise, noting how public officials were praised for their efforts in containing the disease through their public health measures.

The last three chapters describe how the observations and the lived experiences of plague writers led to many public health measures which were designed to contain the spread of the disease in urban areas. This is the crux of Cohn's argument; without direct observation and experience, many public health measures would not have been instituted. It is also unreasonable to assume, therefore, that plague writings did not change between the time of the Black Death and the end of the sixteenth century. In this light, the history of the plague and the responses of physicians, clerics and officials is a dynamic process leading to a public health consciousness that remains recognizable today.

Cohn's *Cultures of Plague* will be of interest to both the generalist reader looking for an overview of the plague in the Early Modern period as well as the more specialist reader looking for explanations of specific texts discussed within the book. Cohn carefully explains his argument and examines his sources with great care. Furthermore, he writes in a very readable style as he presents a picture of life lived in the shadow of the plague in Renaissance Italy. His book will have a broad appeal to any reader interested in the history of medicine in the Early Modern era.

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Crawford, Patricia, *Parents of Poor Children in England, 1580-1800*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010; hardback, pp. 376; 23 b/w illustrations, R.R.P. £35.00; ISBN 9780199204809.

Patricia (Trish) Crawford was a feminist historian renowned for her groundbreaking work which placed women as individuals, and more recently the roles of mothers and fathers, firmly within the Early Modern English historiographical mainstream. Her intellectual legacy, generosity and collaborative spirit imbue the pages of this volume. In it, she expands the feminist project to examine how poor women and men negotiated and experienced the roles of parenting within the context of the dynamic institution of the family in England between 1580 and 1800. Another dimension of the experience of poor mothers and fathers, also examined here, is their subjection to the civic paternity of those of higher status who administered the Poor Laws and distributed poor relief.

The introduction ranges widely and nimbly steps out of the traditional studies of the Poor Laws and their administration, and the experiences of the poor, into the fertile new ground of poor parents. Crawford unpicks the historiography that encompasses aspects of the plight of the poor, and identifies why poverty and poor families have slipped through the cracks of existing studies of the family. She also discusses the subtle, but very real, distinctions between the 'poor' and the 'labouring poor', and the difference between 'absolute and relative poverty', as well as the fear of poverty (p. 6).

Pivotal to this book is the key concept of patriarchy, 'a slippery concept with multiple meanings' worth further 'discussion and clarification ... because it is a fundamental term for seventeenth-century political theory as well as for individuals and families' (p. 15). Against this backdrop, the key structural arguments in the book are that factors of class and gender matter when reclaiming the histories of poor parents, and that there is an important connection between fatherhood in the family, and public or 'Civic Fatherhood' in Early Modern England and the colonies.

Civic fathers held no affection for those poor fathers, mothers and children whom they selected for poor relief and charity. This was at odds with many of those poor mothers and fathers who did hold a deep emotional connection with their children. The implication of civic paternity was far-reaching for 'the authority of these public fathers was applied not only to the poor in England, but to the indigenous inhabitants of Britain's empire' (p. 29). As

Crawford demonstrates, the 'policies of the North American colonists and their promoters' in their attempts at 'subjugating, Christianizing, and "civilizing" the native population' had their roots in the colonizing programme implemented in sixteenth-century Ireland (p. 234).

The sources utilized in this analysis are as broad as they are diverse, ranging from manuscript to print (including sermons, treatises and popular ballads) and illustrations (woodcuts and paintings), and they are all 'read against the grain' (p. 23). Crawford uses records where 'the voices of the poor' were 'mediated by their social superiors', such as the administration of poor relief, charities, bastardy depositions and apprenticeships records, as well as the petitions made by the poor seeking relief, admission papers to the London Foundling Hospital and charity schools (p. 24). Criminal and church court records are also gleaned for every morsel of evidence about the successes and failures of the poor as parents.

The provocative chapters 'Mothers of "the Bastard Child"' and '"Fathers" of Illegitimate Children' provide contextual accounts and qualitative case studies of the struggles and stark lives of loving, reluctant or murderous single mothers, fathers and married or cohabiting parents including step-parents. The experiences are diverse because of the unequal gendered roles of poor parents. For women, they ranged from abandonment, infanticide and execution, even suicide, to cohabitation, marriage, trans-generational care or secret adoptions.

While men fathered children in the sexual economy, they could be absent in a child's life and also in law when a child was declared a bastard and thus *filius nullius*. On the other hand, some poor fathers (either single or married/cohabiting) did try to provide for their children. The gritty analysis in the next two chapters 'Bringing up a Child' and 'Severe Poverty' reveals the brutality of poverty. Ultimately 'poor families lacked resources' for the most basic of needs – shelter, sustenance, and clothing – and as a result 'were the most vulnerable to failures of health, and to mortality' (p. 113).

'Civic Fathers of the Poor' sets out a bleak picture of the imposition of the ideological stance of the better sorts who, through the implementation of the Poor Laws, Foundling Hospitals and charities, sifted the deserving poor mothers, fathers and children from their undeserving poor counterparts. Any perceived failure by the poor in parenting resulted in children being removed into an institutional setting to receive an appropriate form of parenting. Although much harder to reclaim in the Early Modern context, what emerges is the divergent reality of family life experiences, and the intimate close-quarter

roles of poor fathers and/or mothers with their children compared with the isolated parental roles of the wealthy élite.

Crawford has brought us a good way along the new road she created, but as she realized, in quoting Keith Snell, 'there is "still a long way to go for the family history of the poor"' (p. 13). The searching questions she asks will be picked up by her colleagues, and the next generation of scholars she has influenced. Trish Crawford saw the potential trajectories of this field ahead of her, but knew that for Early Modern England it would fall to others to advance this research in her absence.

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Davis, Kathleen and Nadia **Altschul**, eds, *Medievalisms in the Postcolonial World: The Idea of 'the Middle Ages' Outside Europe* (Rethinking Theory), Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009; hardback; pp. 456; 4 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. US$70.00; ISBN 9780801893209.

Medievalisms in the Postcolonial World: The Idea of 'the Middle Ages' Outside Europe is a wide-ranging investigation of intersections and mutually-challenging encounters between medievalism and postcolonialism. Part of the *Rethinking Theory* series, edited by Stephen G. Nichols and Victor E. Taylor, it brings together a group of scholars working in diverse research areas whose joint endeavours move away from a Eurocentric focus in thinking about medievalism. The essays take as their starting point the common evocation of medievalism in the service of European nationalism and then present various challenges and thought-provoking ways of conceiving medievalism and postcolonial histories.

A great strength of the book is its structure. It is divided into four parts with the themes of 'Locations of History and Theory', 'Repositioning Orientalism', 'Nation and Foundations' and 'Geography and Temporality'. Each part consists of three chapters and a response by a fourth scholar, either a medievalist or a postcolonial theorist. The effect of this is to create an engaged and interactive dialogue between the contributors to the volume, an attribute which is often missing from other essay collections addressing a theme. The respondents perform the role of well-informed and insightful chairpersons for a panel at a conference, reflecting on the essays, drawing out connections between them and sometimes challenging arguments made by the essays.

The editors raise a range of relevant questions. What medievalisms arise in the cultural spaces outside Europe, particularly for colonies and former colonies which did not have their own 'Middle Ages' and where the idea of 'medieval' was received as part of European colononization? What happens to the idea of the medieval and what work does it do when considered from perspectives outside Europe? The cultural contexts in which the essay collection asks these questions is extensive in its range, including: Latin America, India, West Africa, Australia, Japan, South Africa, the United States and the Caribbean.

Whereas medievalism has been often thought of as 'a spatiotemporal baseline for many dominant narratives' (p. 1), many of the essays present material and ideas that alter simplistic ideas of the service to which medievalism has been put. Louise D'Arcens, for example, explores how Australian historian and pacifist George Arnold Wood (1865–1928), in his public lectures on St Francis of Assisi, engaged aspects of the European Middle Ages for the purposes of anti-military and anti-imperial protest. As D'Arcens observes, it is widely accepted that modern conceptions of medieval chivalry were central to the ethics, ideology and iconography of British imperial military engagement and that 'in the performative and literary culture of colonial Australia, a martial vision of the medieval period was frequently evoked in the service of apologias not just for wars fought in the service of empire but more generally for everyday colonial dirty work: trade, occupation of land and indigenous dispossession, and the pedagogic dissemination of British ideology' (p. 80). Her research, however, presents a lesser-known counter-history to this narrative; Wood's objection to the Boer War (1899–1902) was framed through his interpretation of St Francis.

Another theme which emerges from the various essays is the elasticity of the concept of medievalism, the diverse angles from which it has been approached and its multiple temporal layers. Haruko Momma's essay examines medievalism in the work of Natsume Soseki (1867-1916), one of Japan's most critically acclaimed novelists. Soseki's early publications include several short stories set in medieval Britain, an intriguing site of intersection between medievalism, colonialism and Orientalism. Soseki mixed medieval and postmedieval Arthurian sources, drawing from both Thomas Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur* and Tennyson's *Lancelot and Elaine* and *Lady of Shalott*. Momma points out that Soseki did not simply present his medieval world as an exotic space of otherness for his readers but complicated the representation by giving his protagonists black hair and black eyes, an illustration of which,

by Goyo Hashiguchi, provides an apt cover image for the volume. Momma observes that in Soseki's fiction, 'medieval and Early Modern Britain is less a politicized space than a landscape filled with dreamlike images' (p. 149). Momma places Soseki's medievalism in the context of his reported experiences of racism in London, out of which he recognized the effects of psychological colonization.

Overall the volume presents many new perspectives, research initiatives and challenging questions. It achieves its aim of bringing medievalists and postcolonial scholars into a dialogue on the intersections of their fields and the potential of future conversations. It constitutes a valuable addition to the fields of both medievalism and postcolonial scholarship and will be of interest to scholars in many fields.

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Denbo, Michael, ed., *New Ways of Looking at Old Texts, IV: Papers of the Renaissance English Text Society, 2002–2006* (Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 345), Tempe, AZ, Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies with Renaissance English Text Society, 2008; cloth; pp. xii, 388; 51 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. US$59.00, £36.00; ISBN 9780866983938.

Unlike previous volumes organized by RETS panels, this latest is organized (less well) by theme: 'John Foxe: *The Acts and Monuments*'; 'Manuscript Studies'; 'Print Studies'; and 'Editing the Renaissance Text'. There are illustrations, a list at the back of the RETS panels and papers printed in this volume, and an adequate index.

Of the five papers in section one, on Foxe and *The Acts*, Susan Wabuda's 'From Manuscript to Codex to E-Book: The Interactive Foxe' calls attention to the discoveries to be made from side-by-side online access to Foxe editions. Margaret Aston's 'Saints, Martyrs, Murderers: Text and Context of Foxe's Images' shows how the single-column woodcuts in the second edition were also used as illustrations to popular ballads on the punishment of female murderers. Aston asks whether 'the printers who used this imagery [were] deliberately exploiting a pool of Protestant image-associations for their own commercial ends' (p. 37), or whether these two uses of the illustrations were

unlinked in the minds of contemporary viewers. John N. King explores the use of banderoles and 'drop-in typesettings' in the illustrations in the four large editions in his 'Text and Image in Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*', his results both fine-tuning and questioning earlier thinking on the intended audience level (literate and/or illiterate) of the work. In 'Watching Women in *The Acts and Monuments*' Deborah G. Burks thought-provokingly examines how conventional depictions of women are manipulated in support of the Protestant agenda.

Section two, 'Manuscript Studies', with thirteen papers, includes several on miscellanies and commonplace books and several on the roles of women – as owners, authors or subjects of literary works. Arthur G. Marotti's is a masterly study of the late-Elizabethan compilation, BL MS Harley 7392 (2), and Raymond G. Siemens' a useful discussion of his two projects: the early Tudor songbook, BL Add. MS 31922, edited by traditional methods, and the Devonshire manuscript, BL Add. MS 17492, by electronic means. Michael Denbo's study of three seventeenth-century manuscript verse miscellanies underlines their individual physical differences (unlike the stability imposed by printing); Victoria E. Burke's study (through the Perdita project) of ten women's verse miscellany manuscripts expands this topic. Two contributions on Mary Wroth, Margaret J. Arnold's on a newly-discovered holograph letter (University of Kansas, Kenneth Spencer Research Library, MS Crawford 177) and Susan Lauffer O'Hara's on the 'stage rubrics' in Wroth's Folger manuscript of *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*, advance knowledge of this writer. Kristen L. Olsen's textual history study of the poetic miscellany, *Le tombeau de Marguerite de Valois*, reveals the link between the literary and political communities therein created; Jane Couchman's essay on Louise de Coligny's little-known album in the Koninklijke Biblioteek offers a perceptive glimpse of the shifts in poetic taste during the compilation period, 1570s to early 1600s. Sharon Cadman Seelig looks attentively at three women's diaries, discussing how best to describe their contents and how editors have treated them; Erin A. Sadlack investigates carefully the understudied area of women's petitionary letters, their purposes and styles, during Elizabeth's reign.

The five papers grouped under 'Print Studies' include Susan Felch's on the publication history (late 1540s to 1582) of Elizabeth Tyrwhit's *Morning and Evening Prayers*, which provides insights into the history of devotional reform in sixteenth-century England. Rebecca Laroche looks at women's signatures in 'medical texts' (p. 270), but herbals dominate, most interestingly

in the gift of a herbal by Lady Franklin, head of a large household, to her unmarried sister, Anne Purefoy. Zachary Letter examines the meanings carried by blackletter typeface, via topics such as antiquity, authority, 'Englishness', availability and cost of kinds of type. Douglas A. Brooks muses on the cluster of images associated with procreation, offspring and paternity, and how they can be, or have been, appropriated to the printing process.

The historical context of the 32 letters written by Lydia DuGard to her cousin Samuel, 1665 to 1672, is the subject of Nancy Taylor's essay, the first of three in 'Editing the Renaissance Text'. The editor's viewpoint is more prominent in Thomas G. Olsen's 'The Commonplace Book of Sir John Strangways', but Kathryn Walls' paper on William Baspoole's *The Pilgreme* is by far the most informed on editing issues, expertly demonstrating that Baspoole's work is not a mere copy of Deguileville's *Le Pèlerinage*, but is in fact a polemical departure from it.

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Dockray-Miller, Mary, *Saints Edith and Æthelthryth: Princesses, Miracle Workers, and their Late Medieval Audience: The Wilton Chronicle and the Wilton Life of St Æthelthryth* (Medieval Women: Texts and Contexts, 25), Turnhout, Brepols, 2009; hardback; pp. x, 476; 1 b/w illustration; R.R.P. €80.00; ISBN 9782503528366.

This edition and translation of two Middle English poems in Wiltshire dialect, rarely examined since they were last edited in the 1880s, makes accessible two texts which have much to contribute to the study of late medieval women's religious communities and their literary culture. The *Wilton Chronicle* and the text that Mary Dockray-Miller has christened *The Wilton Life of St Æthelthryth* are in the same hand, and now form the conclusion to a composite manuscript, British Library, MS Cotton Faustina B.III. Between the two texts is an entry in Latin, also in the same hand, which purports to list the sources consulted by the author of the *Chronicle*, as well as the 'founders' (or benefactors) of the Wilton nunnery. The list of founders includes the name of every king of England from Ecgberht to Henry V, hence the scholarly consensus that the manuscript is datable to c. 1420. Both texts, as Dockray-Miller remarks, are late medieval examples of Anglo-Saxonism, defined by Frantzen and Niles

as 'the process through which a self-conscious national and racial identity first came into being among the early peoples of the region that we now call England and how ... that identity was transformed into an originary myth available to a wide variety of political and social interests' (p. 13).

The *Wilton Chronicle*, almost 5,000 lines long, consists primarily of an account of the life and posthumous miracles of St Edith of Wilton (d. 984). The hagiographical narrative is preceded by an account of the kings of Wessex from Ecgberht (r. 802–39), celebrated here as the first king of England because he united under his rule four of the six other kingdoms existing at that time, up to Edgar (r. 959–75), the father of St Edith. This account includes mention of a number of royal benefactions to Wilton.

Most notably, it relates that Ecgberht founded the first community of nuns at Wilton at the request of his widowed sister, who became its first prioress. It also relates that Alfred the Great subsequently re-founded Wilton as an abbey, at the request of his daughter and daughter-in-law, for the sake of Alfred's infant granddaughter, who was buried at Wilton. It seems unlikely that these stories represent ancient traditions handed down at Wilton, orally or otherwise, since the author's stated purpose in relating them is to make known to his audience the names of the benefactors for whom they should pray. He might, as he claims, have derived them from the now lost *De fundatione monasteriorum in Anglia* of Henry Crump (*fl. c*. 1376–1401). But there is no surviving documentation of any religious community at Wilton pre-dating the 930s, and a recent study of the abbey's early history regards the *Chronicle* as transparently unreliable (Foot, *Veiled Women*, Ashgate, 2000, II.229–30).

It seems highly probable that the author of the *Chronicle* also composed the *Life of St Æthelthryth*, given the stanzaic and dialectal similarities. It is less evident that the *Life* was specifically composed for the Wilton community (the term potentially includes lay boarders, etc., as well as professed nuns). St Æthelthryth (d. 679), whose cult was widespread throughout England in the late Middle Ages, was famous as an East Anglian princess who founded Ely, and the authorial addresses which identify the primary audience of the *Chronicle* as the Wilton community are lacking in the *Life.* It is therefore worth noticing the specific import of the history of Wessex kings that precedes the hagiographical narrative in the *Life*.

Ecgberht's unification of four of the six Anglo-Saxon kingdoms under the rule of Wessex, mentioned in the *Chronicle*'s historical preamble, is narrated in the *Life* at greater length, and followed by an account of the conquest of

Northumbria and East Anglia by successive descendants of Alfred. In effect, St Æthelthryth is appropriated for Wilton as a national, English saint through the nation-building successes of the Wessex monarchy, from which the successors of William the Conqueror claimed descent, and to which Wilton is given a uniquely close and enduring relationship by the author. Originating with its foundation by the first king of England, according to the dubiously historical preamble to the *Chronicle*, this relationship is traced in the hagiographical narrative of St Edith from the reign of her father Edgar through to the reign of Henry I, and further extended through successive kings to Henry V in the Latin list of founders. Much more could be made of the ways that the author chooses to promote Wilton and its patron saint within the context of the developing nationalism of Henry V's reign and the king's promotion of English saints after his victory at Agincourt (1415).

Dockray-Miller's brief introduction includes historical background to the lives of Saints Æthelthryth and Edith, and touches on some of the broader topics upon which the texts have bearing. More comparative study of sources and analogues is needed before conclusions can be drawn about the author's polemical intentions and the literary tastes he caters to. There are occasional inaccuracies in the translations, but non-specialists will welcome Dockray-Miller's assistance in reading these orthographically difficult but rewarding texts.

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Eckstein, Nicholas A. and Nicholas **Terpstra**, eds, *Sociability and its Discontents: Civil Society, Social Capital, and their Alternatives in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Early European Research, 1) Turnhout, Brepols, 2009; hardback; pp. vii, 326; 3 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. €65.00; ISBN 9782503524733.

Sociability and its Discontents is the first volume in the Brepols series Early European Research, which intends to include works that examine how key elements of late medieval and Early Modern European society can shape and challenge modern Western societies. The contributors to this volume examine critically the extent to which contemporary notions of civil society and social capital – key concepts in Western democratic societies according

to the American sociologist Robert Putnam – owe their origins to the political systems and ideologies of the independent city-state republics of Northern Italy during the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

The volume takes as its key point of reference Robert Putnam's study of Italian regional governments during the 1970s, *Making Democracy Work* (1993). Chapter 5 of that study argues that the reason the Northern regions of Italy at the time had strong social and political institutions with an active, engaged and co-operative citizenry – evidence of a robust civil society equipped with much social capital – was because Northern Italian regions had a tradition of republican forms of government that fostered strong social and political institutions, while the South of Italy, which had monarchical roots, was socially and politically dysfunctional. The contributors to the volume engage with Putnam's overall thesis critically, with some reference to his more popular book *Bowling Alone* (2000), which focuses on the supposed decline since the 1960s in America of sociability, reciprocity, co-operation and trust in people outside the family. However, as the editors of the volume argue, their goal is not simply to engage with Putnam's thesis but also to use his ideas 'as the spur to further analysis of how social capital and civil society functioned in the Renaissance and early modern periods' (p. 8).

Not unsurprisingly, most of the contributors to this volume are historians of late medieval and Renaissance Italy, though medieval England is the subject of one study (Scott), as are sixteenth-century Ghent in Belgium (Van Bruaene) and eighteenth-century Paris (Garrioch). The collection begins with four essays that focus on how civil and social disorder can indeed foster social capital and civil society. To Putnam, rebellion, legal disputes, scandal and vertical patron-client relationships were all inimical to social capital, as they seemed to foster division and disunity. However, as the essays in this section demonstrate, the opposite often held true.

The second section on 'Networks in Operation', re-frames Putnam's analysis of medieval and Renaissance Italy by analysing distinct social networks in Florence and Rome. This is underpinned by an understanding of Italian social relationships informed by many studies that have emphasized the significance of kin, friends and neighbours, as well as the importance of the relationships within and between communities of interest, such as the artisan and religious communities discussed by Nicholas Eckstein and Hugh Hudson.

Putnam's idealized view of the family as an institution which constantly provided mutual support to its members, creating 'thick trust', is strongly

disputed in Caroline Castiglione's study of Anna Colonna Barberini's struggle with her marital family, in seventeenth-century Rome, to be recognized as part of that family. Castiglione argues that Putnam ignores gender and the fact that the patrimonial structure of Italian families could make life very, very difficult for the women who married into them, even if their capacity to act as 'weak ties' between families could work to extend the networks of both families.

The next section 'Unexpected Civility' consists of four studies which challenge Putnam's key assertion that Southern Italy lacked both social capital and civil society because of its monarchical, feudal and despotic structures. The essays are historiographical rather than empirical in focus and convincingly demonstrate that Southern Italy had both social capital and civil society within monarchical states, and that a re-feudalized Northern Italy was socially cohesive, with absolute rulers successfully fostering social cohesion through integrating their aristocracies into court life.

In discussing alternatives to Putnam's thesis in the final section, the authors challenge the idea that social institutions such as confraternities necessarily can be considered beacons of social cohesion. Indeed, rulers of all political persuasions, who sought to control their activities, often regarded such organizations with suspicion. Nicholas Terpstra's essay on Bologna's civic institutions makes the point that this city, which was part of the absolutist Papal State, managed to have strong and enduring social institutions and maintain its independence even while under papal rule. The strength of civic government in Early Modern Europe, the authors in this final section suggest, may have had more to do with a communitarian ethos than the existence of strong, self-governing democratic institutions that Putnam identifies in a few independent, city-state republics in Northern Italy.

This is an excellent collection of essays. Through its critique and nuancing of Putnam's historical analysis of sociability, social capital and civil society, it adds to an important modern social policy debate.

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Fletcher, Alan J., *Late Medieval Popular Preaching in Britain and Ireland: Texts, Studies, and Interpretations* (Sermo, 5), Turnhout, Brepols, 2009; hardback; pp. xvii, 339; 3 b/w illustrations, 5 b/w tables; R.R.P. €75.00; ISBN 9782503523910.

In *Late Medieval Popular Preaching in Britain and Ireland*, Professor Alan Fletcher continues to extend his scholarship on matters relating to lay devotion and practice. In this book, he aims to demonstrate the extent to which preaching was an essential force that influenced many facets of cultural production in thirteenth- to fifteenth-century Britain and Ireland. He sets out to meet his goal by providing the reader with an anthology of diverse sermons in terms of geographical, authorial and temporal provenance. The common denominator of each of the featured sermons is their intended lay audience. In selecting sermons designed for delivery *ad populum*, Fletcher hopes his book might also appeal to students 'whose interests in medieval sermons may only be incidental' (p. 4).

Fletcher has divided his book into nine principal chapters. In Chapter 1 he outlines and champions his methodology, contending that there is a need for more specific rather than general analyses of the subject matter, acknowledging the existing sermon scholarship of Owst, Wenzel, Spencer and others. Fletcher's choice of texts is judicious and incisive. He has selected lesser-known sermons but illustrates how they have influenced other elements of British and Insular medieval society. Furthermore, Fletcher endeavours to offer a range of texts from across England and Ireland, duly noting the dearth of Scottish, Welsh and Cornish sermons. Equally, his focus is firmly on orthodox preaching, thus excluding sermons from the reformist wing of the late medieval Church.

In Chapter 2, 'A Codicological Typology', Fletcher introduces and briefly describes his selection of sermon manuscripts, which were 'designed for different late medieval orthodox interest groups' (p. 14). Here Fletcher offers some interesting background information on aspects of manuscript production, ownership and use, on which he further expands in each subsequent and relevant chapter.

Chapters 3 to 6 each feature a single sermon from the Franciscan, Benedictine, Augustinian and secular canons respectively. These four chapters follow a similar structure: provision of some introductory information regarding each sermon's provenance, authorship and extant status; a consideration of

the manuscript's composition (scribe, folio, size, language); a careful analysis of the sermon; and the edited sermon. For any student unfamiliar with Latin or Middle English these editions could prove frustrating, but this should not detract from the scholarly discussion Fletcher has provided in each chapter. For instance, in Chapter 3, Fletcher features Oxford MS Bodley 26, a thirteenth-century manuscript, probably Franciscan, selecting from it a macaronic (mixed language) sermon for discussion. What Fletcher carefully elucidates is that the introduction of English into sermons occurred much earlier than previously considered and that this practice was also occurring in extra-clerical sources: epistolary, legal prose and grammatical texts. He claims that rather than provide evidence of 'clerical Latin in decline' (p. 66), this usage demonstrates how sermon authors used dual languages as a means to claim authority.

In Chapter 7, Fletcher features four sermons derived from one of the *moralitates* of Robert Holcot: The Castle of Prudence. He demonstrates how the English sermon was less structured than the prescribed Latin form of the *artes praedicandi*. Chapter 8 moves to Ireland and focuses on insular Latin and English preaching traditions. Here, Fletcher changes his format, featuring several sermon manuscripts instead of one. He concludes that preaching was principally undertaken by the mendicants.

The final analytical chapter features the mutual relationship between the sermon and the lyric of vernacular popular literature, focusing on the lyric's function within the sermon. As Fletcher recognizes, the goal of preaching was to guide a person through life towards heaven, and thus the delivery of the sermon was paramount. The use of lyric was one way in which a preacher's performance and message could leave an imprint on the recipient.

This book is a welcome addition to the field of sermon studies and is testimony to Fletcher's own expertise, deep knowledge and ability to disseminate information. The strengths of his work lie in his choice of sermons and his insightful examination of them. For new and existing students of sermon studies, those who have a general interest in manuscripts and even those with a broad interest in aspects of late medieval English and Irish society, this book has something to offer. Fletcher presents a careful and measured analysis of his selected texts, demonstrating the diversity and spread of sermon literature and most notably how preachers and their sermons engaged with their audience.

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Forman, Valerie, *Tragicomic Redemptions: Global Economics and the Early Modern English Stage*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008; cloth; pp. 296; R.R.P. US$59.95; ISBN 9780812240962.

In early seventeenth-century England, international trade was deemed economically detrimental. This applied particularly when English traders *invested* in foreign goods for resale, a practice that was interpreted as 'an unredeemable loss' which would deplete the nation of 'coin and bullion', rather than as conducive to subsequent profit (p. 3). Indeed, the concept of investment as a commercial principle was only formulated during this century: 'coined in 1613 in the correspondence of the English East India Company', the word that formerly described 'religious or regal endowment' came to describe 'the outlay of money in the *expectation* of a profit' (p. 5).

With a firm grounding in economic history, Valerie Forman traces a fascinating connection between evolving views about international trade, the religious discourse of Christian redemption – manifested in St Anselm's 'paradox of the *felix culpa*' (p. 15), with which Thomas Mun's advocacy of foreign investment as an ongoing process of 'recirculation and re-employment' (p. 155) raised important analogies – and the evolution of the period's most popular dramatic genre: tragicomedy.

Forman details the progression from romantic comedies, in which 'comedic obstacles' are 'overcome', to 'hybrid' plays such as *Twelfth Night*, which highlight 'the potential for loss' (p. 48), and then to 'true' tragicomedies, where losses are made good, and where the analogy with the theory of redemptive investment is often emphasized through commercial themes and international settings. As Forman demonstrates, the latter plays 'employ the dialectics of tragicomedy and the economic undercurrents of religious redemption to explore the perceived need for foreign exchanges and to rewrite the perils of such expansions as sources of profit and accumulation, which in turn are reabsorbed into the tragicomic theater' (p. 109).

She begins with a discussion of three late Elizabethan plays, *Twelfth Night*, *The Merchant of Venice* and *The Jew of Malta*, plays suggestive of economic 'stasis and insularity'. She then proceeds to *The Winter's Tale*, in which Leontes' surviving child is 'aptly named Perdita, after her position of loss, abandonment, and ruin' (p. 92), and which tellingly figures the redemption of the king's willful, initial *loss* of his family through the gold left with the child, which both re-establishes her identity and grows into a fortune in the

shepherd's hands, hence, also providing a princely dowry for Perdita.

Part II focuses on Eastern settings, which reflected concerns raised by trade in the Levant and in the East Indies. The common incidence of captivity and ransom demands, as well as the (propagandistic) celebration of a contrast between English forms of establishing 'free' foreign trade 'without colonial possession', and Dutch 'coercion', feature in Fletcher's *The Island Princess* (*c*. 1619–21) – 'the first English play to be set in the East Indies' (p. 121) – and in Massinger's *The Renegado* (1623/4), described as intended to 'showcase the inventiveness of [Thomas Mun's] balance of trade theory', while also intriguingly addressing moral anxieties about the potential inequity of making '*too much* profit' (p. 148; emphasis mine).

The book's epilogue focuses on Webster's *The Devil's Law-Case* (*c*. 1617–19), a play which Forman sees in terms of 'the failure of tragicomedy to work' (p. 188). She cites as an allegory of the motif of economic redemption a situation in which two suitors fight a duel over the sister of the protagonist, who, stabbing the one he did not favour to finish him off, inadvertently saves his life by causing the putrefying blood to flow out. It is arguably possible to see Webster's play as something other than a failed, accidentally farcical late-tragicomedy, however. Firstly, *The Devil's Law-Case* actually *preceded* the tragicomedies by Fletcher and Massinger discussed, and there is also Webster's predilection for gore spectacle and shock-tactics – not to mention his proven capacity for satire and parody in the Jacobean poet's war, towards which the play's suggestively city-comedic title also points. This would suggest Webster's facetious, parodic treatment of the tragicomic motif of redemption, rather than an actual failure.

Forman's study, nevertheless, is far greater than any single detail about a specific play. Her study's overall thesis that the rise, in the course of the Jacobean period, of a new and distinctly modern economic theory – and of the internationalist commercial practice which it helped to establish – informed by the discourse of Christian redemption, and reflected in the development of the most popular dramatic genre of the day, tragicomedy, with its defining theme of loss resulting in gain, makes this a groundbreaking, well-argued study.

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Fotheringham, Richard, Christa **Jansohn**, and R. S. **White**, eds, *Shakespeare's World/World Shakespeares: The Selected Proceedings of the International Shakespeare Association World Congress, Brisbane 2006*, Newark, Delaware, University of Delaware Press, 2008; hardback; pp. 436; 30 b/w photographs; R.R.P. US$69.50; ISBN 9780874139891.

This rich collection of 27 papers is book-ended by a prologue and epilogue which demonstrate the depth and diversity of work on Shakespeare presented at the International Shakespeare Association Conference in Brisbane in 2006. The majority of essays come from practising academics, reflecting the participants at the conference, but the opening 'prologue' by Anwar Ibrahim, former Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, reminds us that Shakespeare has many lives beyond the academic community which sometimes thinks it owns him.

Ibrahim's essay is in some ways quite confronting, as it charts his engagements with Shakespeare in the six-year period of his incarceration. Confronting because it suggests that 'the West has defined itself in opposition to the East' (p. 21), a statement that is gaining greater currency and understanding, with significant implications for Early Modern studies, as Ania Loomba notes in her essay. At the same time, Shakespeare is described as the 'most universal genius that ever lived,' a statement which comes from a rather more traditional framework. Confronting too because of his criticism that, from his perspective, academics have not necessarily given the life to Shakespeare that others, experiencing Shakespeare from less structured or formal engagements, might have done. In this sense, his paper contains inherent criticisms of the 'frigid perspective of academia' (p. 23). The paper is a formal record of a moving account of one such personal engagement, and in some ways sets the tone for the range of events that made up the conference.

It is impossible to comment here on all the papers, but they truly reflect the internationalization of Shakespeare and the diverse forms that that internationalization has taken, from inclusion of participants from more than 30 countries, to detailed accounts of performance of the plays in specific locations and times. There are two papers on Shakespeare in Korea (Dong-Wook Kim, Hyon-U Lee), one on Japanese contexts (Yoshiko Kawachi) and one on Shakespeare in the Jewish Cultural Association during the Third Reich (Zoltán Márkus), just for example. New dimensions of Shakespearian study are evident in a number of papers on different aspects of space: Ruth Morse's exploration of the ethics of landscape, Lisa Hopkin's discussion of mines and caves, and Michael Hattaway's discussion of perspective are particularly illuminating.

Overwhelmingly, the essays deal with Shakespeare's drama, and perhaps it is disappointing that there is little on poetry.

The variety and range of the written material is augmented by the inclusion of 30 black and white photographs and illustrations which range from stills of specific theatrical productions or films of Shakespeare's plays to sketches on perspective. They add to and illuminate the written material, and round out the sense of Shakespeare as a historical and international phenomenon. The diversity of written and visual material attests to the multiple dimensions in which the work of Shakespeare is now understood.

An interesting tension that recurs throughout the collection and across a number of essays is the sense that there is 'an authentic Shakespeare', consisting of the original language, and a modernized or adapted Shakespeare, altered for different contexts and different kinds of audiences. Paul J. C. M. Franssen particularly addresses this tension in relation to producing Shakespeare's works for children, arguing that some of the issues here are specific to what he describes as 'bardic' cultures (p. 162), an Anglo-Saxon habit which is not universal and constitutes different kinds of possibilities in different nations. His argument that the absence of an historical and national veneration for the Bard leads to an absence of a 'moralistic and monological trend in adaptations for children' (p. 163) is very suggestive.

The structure of the collection is rather uneven, with the four main sections (Shakespeare's World; Children's Shakespeare; Cinema: A New Shakespeare; and World Shakespeare Today) not equally represented, the final section, unsurprisingly given the theme of the conference itself, being the largest with thirteen essays. Yet if a collection can capture the energy and feeling of the live event, then this one does so well, with appendices that list all participants, seminar leaders and contributors, and the collection also recalls the idiosyncratic compere and actor Bill Brown. (Who that was there could forget his repeated invocation to turn off that revered and troublesome twenty-first century companion, the mobile phone?) More seriously, Jill L. Levinson's foreword also records the debt of scholars to Lloyd Davis, in both international and Australian contexts, to whom this volume also acts as a memorial.

This collection represents a good deal of hard work, organization and selflessness on the parts of editors and organizers and stands as a lasting record of the event, as well as being a significant collection of essays in its own right.

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Greenstadt, Amy, *Rape and the Rise of the Author: Gendering Intention in Early Modern England* (Women and Gender in the Early Modern World), Aldershot, Ashgate, 2009; hardback; pp. 204; R.R.P. £55.00; ISBN 9780754662747.

As Amy Greenstadt explains, Augustinian views of sexual purity were defined by the individual's 'will', or intention (p. 2), whereby 'chastity', as 'a disposition of the will rather than a physical attribute', was unaffected by such circumstances as rape (pp. 5-6). Attitudes were not so straightforward, however, since women were accused of willingly or wilfully courting danger. As Greenstadt notes, 'Tertullian was not alone in depicting the "public exposure" of a virgin as an erotic gesture that made women responsible for their own sexual violation' (p. 20).

In Greenstadt's view, the literary theme of rape, and the discourse of rape and wider notions of feminine gendering, underpinned Early Modern authorial anxieties. While it is hardly novel to note the prominence of the rape motif in Elizabethan literature, Greenstadt's study sheds new light upon the authorial figure itself – traditionally gendered masculine – arguing that the anxious author was a *feminized* analogue of the rape *victim*. Indeed, in a further parallel between books and women, Greenstadt stresses that accusations of immodesty levelled at women were also applied to books, and, hence, to authors. Further, aside from the 'inscrutability' of 'intention', the text could, autonomously – like a woman inadvertently attracting danger – render the author vulnerable. Thus, Greenstadt cites William Prynne's unsuccessful defence of his *Histriomastix* (1633) – which would cost him his ears – since, though 'the court acknowledged' Prynne's claim that 'he had noe ill intencioun', it still found him liable for the interpretations of others, since 'Prynne could not "accompany his book"' (p. 7).

Authorial anxiety is also the focus of Greenstadt's reading of *The Rape of Lucrece*. She argues that, while Shakespeare's work and his authorial persona are perhaps conflated with the heroic Lucrece's action to 'publish' her 'will', the male characters' patriarchal appropriation of her death will rewrite her actions. By analogy, Shakespeare was expressing 'the limitations of identifying the published work with the vulnerable and subordinated … female body' (p. 26). Indeed, the repeated word 'publish' is itself appropriated by the men, who prepare 'To show her bleeding body thorough Rome / And so to publish Tarquin's foul offence' (l. 1851; p. 79).

Arguably, the book's highlight is Chapter 3, which is devoted to Milton's *Comus* (1637) and the *Aeropagitica* (1644). They are read in relation to Milton's account of himself as a young man who upheld chastity as a quintessentially masculine virtue, founded upon austerity, in contrast to the drinking and whoring in which other students at Cambridge indulged – since Milton viewed such self-indulgence as essentially effeminate – though his attitudes, significantly, saw him nicknamed 'The Lady' (p. 90). Paradoxically, this most austere – and, clearly, misogynistic – author, thus created an ideal of authorial chastity, which is also associated with the heroine of *Comus*, 'the lady', who is actually threatened with rape, and whose name, revealingly, recalls Milton's own nickname (p. 85). As Greenstadt further observes, 'The fact that *Comus* can *also* be read as a story of a young woman under threat may bespeak the continuing efficacy of female chastity for a developing notion of authorship – even for Milton' (p. 129).

It was this, according to Greenstadt, which provided women writers entry 'into a pre-existing discursive field from which they were largely excluded' (p. 130) – which leads to her closing chapter, on Margaret Cavendish's *Assaulted and Pursued Chastity* (1656). Firstly, Greenstadt discusses Cavendish's romance, in which the heroine shoots a would-be rapist, while a subsequent heroine, actively 'ravishing', shoots a head-priest and is adored by natives as a sun-god (p. 131). Secondly, Greenstadt examines Cavendish's self-construction in her preface to *Poems and Fancies* (1653), in which she refuted accusations of immodesty, while elsewhere Cavendish contrasted herself favourably with classically educated male writers, whom she accused of stealing ideas. In *Poems and Fancies*, Cavendish also protests 'that men monopolize authorship in order to legitimate and maintain their power over the female sex', against which she posits an ideal of feminine chastity founded on creative independence of 'fancy' as a 'domestic activity' (p. 138).

Arguably dubious, or forced, however, is Greenstadt's connection between Cavendish's 'literary career' – namely her assertion of 'absolute autonomy and creative freedom', even at the cost of 'little real cultural authority' – and a sweeping allusion to modern-day 'sexual violence', whereby, Greenstadt argues, 'courts of both law and popular opinion assume that women are capable of the kind of unlimited ingenuity and resourcefulness displayed by the heroine of Cavendish's romance' (p. 161). Also unsatisfying is the book's abrupt conclusion – or lack thereof – as the final chapter's ending can hardly tie up the book's many strands, and Greenstadt's otherwise insightful readings

of a series of works spanning some seven decades in Early Modern English letters.

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Hanson, Craig Ashley, *The English Virtuoso: Art, Medicine, and Antiquarianism in the Age of Empiricism*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2009; cloth; pp. xvii, 316; 62 b/w illustrations, 10 colour plates; R.R.P. US$50.00; ISBN 9780226315874.

This book proposes to tackle a problem of fundamental importance to the understanding of the epistemological shifts registered in seventeenth-century England. The personae of the practitioners of Early Modern experimentalism are key. Craig Hanson's plan here consists of drawing a map of the meeting points between the discourses of seventeenth-century medicine and those of artistic representations and antiquarian curiosity, two significant discourses with which medicine came into direct contact, and based on which the portrait of the Early Modern 'virtuoso' was established.

Hanson's argument is multifaceted, and because of this not always clearly aligned to its main purpose. The book works very well as a periodization of the phenomenon of virtuosic culture in England, sketching it in three distinct stages. The preparatory stage, characteristic of the first half of the seventeenth century, is depicted by Hanson in connection with Lord Arundel and his circle of enthusiastic collectors. This initial phase ends with the beheading of Charles I, whose death provides both a chronological and symbolical rupture within an established way of dealing with social, political and cultural distinctions. 'The regicide,' Hanson argues, 'entailed not only the violent repression of the Stuart dynasty but also an attack on the larger court culture it had nurtured' (p. 58). At this moment in the history of virtuosi, one may distinguish the 'medical virtuosity' of John Evelyn, whose 'inability to conceptualize his medical pursuits' Hanson sees as characteristic of the history of seventeenth-century virtuosic culture at large (p. 62).

The next distinctive period coincides with the Interregnum and Restoration, when the most important events are the establishment and consolidation of the Royal Society and the emergence of the important figures gravitating around this new corporate knowledge-making structure. Hanson focuses in

this period mainly on the work of John Evelyn, with a brief digression on the contribution of Christopher Wren. The chronological perspective on the phenomenon ends with satirical responses, from, for instance, the likes of William Hogarth, when, following the reception of *Don Quixote* in England, the former respectability of the virtuoso diminished.

It is important to mention that Hanson draws the entire lineage of English virtuosi from Thomas Howard, second Earl of Arundel (1585–1646). In an effort to consolidate these origins, almost every figure mentioned in the book is in some way linked back to Lord Arundel. This is made relevant by a statement in the first chapter of the book: 'The importance of Arundel's circle was not that it defined the essence of the English virtuoso but that it provided models for subsequent generations as they refashioned their own intellectual landscape' (p. 56).

There are problems, it must be said, with the organization of this book. The most significant of them has to do with Hanson's tendency to individualize the figures he is dealing with, to such an extent that the sections of the book dedicated to Arundel or Aglionby, Haydocke or Evelyn, read almost like hagiographies, linked to the scope of the project only superficially. The problem at this level is that the personages analysed in these disparate sections are not sufficiently linked together to allow the reader to conclude that their features were indeed characteristic of a distinct 'class' of virtuosi. Statements made in these hagiographies work well in themselves, but they need more collation in order to be applicable to the seventeenth-century virtuoso as a concept.

The same thing happens when it comes to the history of the reception of *Don Quixote* in England. Once again, the weight accorded the topic seems excessive, and as a consequence the entire part feels as though it had been taken from a different work. However, *The English Virtuoso* is a book worth reading, as it points out, even if sometimes only in passing, several aspects of importance to the history of this socio-cultural category, such as the reliance of virtuosi on patronage, the attempts at creating a national identity based on acquisitions of exotic or curious material, and the importance of visual representation as a common ground between art, medicine, and antiquarianism.

We retain, by way of conclusion, one portrait of the virtuoso, as it results from a statement made by Hanson in relation to William Salmon's (1644–1713) *Polygraphice,* a work which he reads as 'a compendium of everything' (p. 109): 'Mixing basic art instruction, explanations of techniques and media,

medical advice, and hermetic wisdom', a work of such significance as Salmon's treatise 'underscores the degree to which early modern art and medicine took shape within the same market environment' (p. 121).

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Heyworth, Gregory, *Desiring Bodies: Ovidian Romance and the Cult of Form*, Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press, 2009, pp. xvii, 357; paperback; R.R.P. US$38.00; ISBN 9780268031060.

There is much to savour in this excellent volume. With laudable elegance and lexical sophistication, Gregory Heyworth's unique, comparative study soars with ease across the landscape of cultural history in order to bring forth the 'monolithic' Ovidian influence on romance form in a selection of noteworthy medieval and Renaissance authors.

Offering a cultural history whose principal thesis asserts 'an anxiety of flux and metamorphosis in social and generic forms as an existential condition of romance' (p. x), Heyworth's richly textured monograph reconsiders the Ovidian structural principles of *corpus* and *forma*, derived from the opening line of the *Metamorphoses*: 'My mind is bent to tell of forms changed into new bodies' (I.i). Placing under close textual scrutiny a variety of literary sources which may be identified as the genre of romance derived from the Ovidian amatory model, Heyworth's exposition encapsulates six centuries of literary output from Chaucer to Milton (1170 to 1670). This weighty canonical span examines the *Lais* of Marie de France; Chrétien de Troyes' *Cligès* and *Perceval*; Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, the *Rime sparse* by Petrarch; Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*; and Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

With exceptional agility, Heyworth's volume captures the powerful resonance of the Latin poet's voice through the ages, asserting the primacy of Ovid as an author 'whose literary corpus is indelibly inscribed in the bedrock of European culture' (p. 1). This assertion is most particularly evidenced in the meticulous discussion of metamorphic principles in a body of literature, commencing in the Middle Ages, that was itself in a state of fluidity and innovative linguistic and structural development, influenced by the socio-economic and political imperatives of the day.

The emergence of the rising mercantile class witnessed the erosion of the

feudal notion of the three orders of society, which posited a tripartite functional division based on agricultural labour, the military life and the religious life of prayer. Heyworth's diachronic study envisages mutability of form as an all-pervasive process in the output of the *magister amoris* and confidently traces its uncanny influence. Thus Part I of the volume, 'The Sociology of Romance', addresses socio-political and economic culture in romance, while Part II, 'Romance Form and Formality', offers a detailed study of poetic *exempla*, i.e., the notion of form through the dialectic of the completed work.

Heyworth's commentary in Part I firstly explores Ovidian metatexts in the work of Marie de France, encapsulating the thematics of mutability in texts that explore, for example, medieval initiation rituals, the medieval love-hunt or tales of lycanthropy. Through the work of Chrétien de Troyes, Heyworth identifies the changing face of the ethos of chivalry, while in the *Canterbury Tales* he evokes the social tensions and chimerical hybridity informing Chaucer's creative impulse. Heyworth's elucidation of 'Ovidian socio-political paradigms' (p. 160), draws the reader deeply into the recesses of romance narrative in order to highlight 'how romance worries the complex unities of social form in metaphors of the body' (p. 179).

The theme of hybridization continues in Part II, in which Petrarch, Shakespeare and Milton are discussed in terms of the influence of the Ovidian corporeal metaphor as a metapoetic device. In the discussion of Petrarch's fashioning of an elegiac romance in the *Rime sparse*, the absent relationship of the poet with Laura's body is seen as substituted by the 'highly wrought weft' of the book about her. At the same time, Heyworth deftly weaves Orphic correlations into the mix, thereby underscoring the erotic pathos and insufficiency of the lover-poet's quest. More powerfully still, in the chapter entitled 'Playing for Time', in which Heyworth offers a lively analysis of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, there is a persuasive alignment of diverse motifs, for example, the influence of temporal modes and disjunctions, the story of Phäethon, the vocative strategy of falconry and the use of wordplay drawn from the myth of Echo and Narcissus. Finally, what Heyworth refers to as Milton's infringement of 'Christian decorum' in his epic *Paradise Lost* reveals an inventive spirit that crosses over the boundaries of pagan mythologizing and salvific doctrine to craft an 'esoteric dance of subtext' (p. 269).

The nexus between Ovid's metamorphic trajectory and the history of culture has rarely been so lucidly explored. *Desiring Bodies: Ovidian Romance and the Cult of Form* is an exceptional work that challenges the reader's

perceptions of major literary works through the lens of Ovid's aesthetic and metamorphic schema.

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Holbrook, Peter, *Shakespeare's Individualism*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2010; hardback; pp. x, 246; R.R.P. £55.00; ISBN 9780521760676.

One reading of literary history could be reductively summarized as assuming that celebrations of liberty and dissidence started in 1789 with the French Revolution and were subsequently confirmed in Romanticism. Writers who quoted Shakespeare on behalf of such values were merely appropriating some of his more eccentric and uncharacteristic expressions taken out of context, since his own works were viewed as generally conformist. Peter Holbrook, in his weighty but succinct and eloquent book, challenges both aspects of this conservative narrative. He trawls through Shakespeare's works to find emphatically that assertions of selfhood, freedom and individualism are not exceptions in the plays and Sonnets, but so frequently expressed as to be the norm, and that in this sense it was Shakespeare who inaugurated and sanctioned libertarianism in Western philosophy and culture. He does so, Holbrook argues, by repeatedly asserting that self-realization is a positive good: 'I am that I am' in sonnet 121 is a sentiment repeated by many of his most memorable characters.

Polonius' 'to thine own self be true' thus becomes in this book a signature of Shakespeare's writing and, although Holbrook acknowledges the untrustworthy wiliness of the speaker in context, he presents a reading that suggests the phrase could be one that the protagonist Hamlet pre-eminently lives by, and not only Hamlet but all the tragic heroes in their different ways. Similarly in the comedies young lovers must of necessity follow their inner desires even to the point of breaking laws, offending greybeards and disrupting society. Any 'impediment in the current' (*Measure for Measure*) must be removed when it hinders 'violent and unruly' impulsiveness stemming from 'prompture of the blood' and a desire for freedom.

Of course the moral status of evil characters becomes problematical under this view, in exactly the way Nietzsche's ideas are seen as dangerous, Max

Stirner's 'ego-anarchism' even more so. If 'being oneself' and following one's 'master plan' involves actions that are positively harmful to others, where does the dramatist stand? John Keats gave part of an answer in a letter to Richard Woodhouse (27 October 1818) writing of the 'poetical Character' that:

> It has no character – it enjoys light and shade; it lives in gusto, be it foul or fair, high or low, rich or poor, mean or elevated – It has as much delight in conceiving an Iago as an Imogen. What shocks the virtuous philosopher, delights the camelion Poet. It does no harm from its relish of the dark side of things any more than from its taste for the bright one; because they both end in speculation …

The artist delights in energy and vitality and he cannot be held morally accountable for the actions of his imaginative creations, themselves pure 'speculation' about the nature of good and evil themselves. Keats has in mind Shakespeare, his paragon of 'negative capability', and Holbrook's Shakespeare is no less than Keats' a writer who unflinchingly holds that the act of self-creation (Richard III's 'I am myself alone') carries the likelihood of outcomes that not only a conventional world would condemn as evil. As a corollary, the unlikely character of the Friar in *Romeo and Juliet* enunciates the principle that what is vice in one situation can be virtue in another:

> For nought so vile that on the earth doth live
> But to the earth some special good doth give.

However, the memorable inscriptions of evil in Shakespeare's plays, such as Tarquin's rape of Lucrece, continue to worry Holbrook and draw his attention to the end of the book, since a possibility exists of a kind of 'false consciousness' of one's destiny. Evil characters may not be choosing freedom in good faith but instead are enslaved to a dogma and the 'mind-forg'd manacles' explored by Blake.

Not surprisingly, most references are, at the earlier end of the historical spectrum, to Montaigne with his unnervingly frank interrogations of his own 'self', and at the other end to an amoral Nietzsche who rejects all universal norms and conventional moral codes in favour of spontaneous self-realization. Holbrook also enlists 'libertarian' witnesses along the way, some of whom one would expect to find, like Blake, Hazlitt, Mill, Emerson, Kierkegaard and Gide, and others more unexpected such as Shakespeareans like Symons,

Furnivall and Bradley. Standing apart from these and casting his icy, reproving eyes on them, is T. S. Eliot, fastidious of Dionysus and the body, committed to the Apollonian, rational mind, and archly critical even of Shakespeare – but none the less ironically himself following the inner law or 'master-plan' of his own character and living himself according to the credo of Parolles: 'Simply the thing I am / Shall make me live'. Even an exception proves the rule.

The direction of the argument leads inevitably towards *Antony and Cleopatra* where full-blooded commitment to impulsiveness becomes a positive act of self-creation. These characters face the heady heights and worldly failures suggested by Dryden's retitling, 'All for Love'. The play's spirit of 'make love, not war' was what gave the play a brief *über*-celebrity in the 1960s.

What may be most culturally interesting about Peter Holbrook's book is that it should appear now, in 2010. In many ways it is either a belated resurrection or a late flowering of values expressed most vibrantly by a youthful culture in the 1960s. The wary scepticism of a whole generation of critics prevailing from about 1980 until recently, focusing on ways in which both individuals and texts are never autonomous but instead are 'tongue-tied by authority' and constructed from conditions of 'cultural economy', gender and factional politics (book after wearisome book 'proved' that 'Shakespeare' was in cahoots with monarchical power and authority in his day), is bypassed with an exuberant celebration of pluralism, liberty and emotional openness. In this book, chimes are played as on bells on the words which drove educational reforms during the 1960s and which from the 1980s onwards have dismayed or been mocked by many wedded to self-fulfilling pedagogical 'outcomes': words like 'freedom, individuality, self-realization, authenticity'. Perhaps curiously, however, Holbrook, at least once in passing, locates the rot setting in during the 1960s (p. 57) and elsewhere he expresses ambivalence towards the legacy of the 'baby boomers'.

I somehow never foresaw this happening in 2010, and am not sure whether such a forceful re-statement of such a position will prove historically significant as the blush of a new dawn or if it is the flickering embers of an old fire before it finally dies out. But there is enough evidence adduced to suggest the former, and that a whole tradition of unruly and dissident European thought is once again alive and kicking, and I for one welcome this.

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Iversen, Gunilla and Nicolas **Bell**, eds, *Sapientia et Eloquentia: Meaning and Function in Liturgical Poetry, Music, Drama, and Biblical Commentary in the Middle Ages* (Disputatio, 11), Turnhout, Brepols, 2009; hardback; pp. xiv, 558; 16 b/w illustrations, 3 b/w tables; R.R.P. €100; ISBN 9782503520575.

In this volume, Gunilla Iversen and Nicolas Bell offer their readers a selection of medieval liturgical 'functional poetry', along with commentaries and glosses on poetic genres which fall into the liturgical and didactic spheres within 'monastic' and 'prescholastic' culture respectively. The phrase 'liturgical poetry' highlights the fact that the new poetic forms, i.e. hymns, sequences and tropes, were fundamentally Christian. The volume seeks to show how medieval authors and musicians found new ways of using old material.

What makes it such a valuable contribution to the study of medieval poetry and music is the use of specific manuscript sources in a series of case studies. These (there are nine in total) are interwoven with Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback's two philosophical studies ('On St Augustine – Time, Music, and Theology' and '*Sancta Sonatina*: Reflections on Sound and Meaning'), which are aimed at stimulating reflections on the other contributions. The case studies themselves are organized into three sections: the first examines selected ninth-century texts which exhibit new and influential literary forms; the second encompasses the analysis of related material from the twelfth century; and the third considers thirteenth-century commentaries describing early sequence texts.

Many of the authors approach the medieval manuscripts they examine from different and innovative angles. A case in point is the Antiphoner of Charles the Bald (BnF lat. 17436), which, as a well-known ninth-century manuscript, is usually analysed from a liturgical and historical viewpoint. Here, Marie-Noël Colette considers it from a musicological and poetic perspective as an early source of sequences.

The nine case studies can be briefly summarized as follows: The first two focus on novel musical and poetic creations in ninth-century liturgy. In '*Psallite regi nostro, psallite*', Gunila Iversen analyses different variations and functions of '*Alleluia*' in singing, and the emergence of *maiestas domini* in ninth-century poetry. Colette's first paper (mentioned above), '*The place and Function of Music in a Liturgical Context: The Earliest Witness of Sequences and* Versus ad sequentias *in the Antiphoner of Charles the Bald and Other Early Sources*' refers to the earliest witnesses of sequences and *versus ad sequentias*.

Next, Alexander Andrée's 'From *Propheta plangens* to *Rethor divines*: Toward an Understanding of the Rhetorical Hermeneutics of Gilbert the Universal in his Gloss on Lamentations' addresses the procedure of transforming an old text into a new form by giving it a new time and setting. Nils Holger Petersen's article 'Biblical Reception, Representational Ritual, and the Question of "Liturgical Drama"' approaches the text known today as *Sponsus* in a new devotional and theological context. 'From *Jubilus* to Learned Exegesis: New Liturgical Poetry in Twelfth-Century Nevers', Iversen's second paper, examines new liturgical poetry from the twelfth century, relying on the texts in the Nevers manuscript.

Colette's second paper, 'A Witness to Poetic and Musical Invention in the Twelfth Century: The Troper-Proser of Nevers (BnF n.a.lat. 3126)' analyses Abelard's verse *Epithalamica* which was used as a sequence in the Easter liturgy for the Paraclete, and other new compositions found in twelfth-century Nevers and Aquitania. In 'Letters, Liturgy, and Identity: The Use of *Epithalamica* at the Paraclete', William T. Flynn looks at *Epithalamica* in more detail, considering the liturgical and institutional context for which the text was written, in light of Abelard and Heloise's insights. The next paper, 'Readings and Interpretations of Boethius's *De institutione musica* in the Later Middle Ages', contributed by Nicolas Bell, is devoted to analysing various reinterpretations and uses of the flagship text by Boethius as it was voiced in the later centuries. Erika Kihlman, in her article 'Understanding a Text: Presentation and Edition of a Sequence Commentary in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Auct. F. 6. 8', takes up sequence commentaries in medieval Latin literature as a way of exploring the Middle Ages. She presents an edition of a thirteenth-century commentary on three early sequences, *Alma chorus domini, Alle celeste* and *Ad celebres rex*.

Iversen and Bell have compiled a remarkable collection of essays on medieval perceptions of meaning, form and function in various genres of liturgical poetry, as well as in dramatic devotions chiefly from the ninth to twelfth centuries. What is more, they have successfully investigated the commentary literature dating to the period between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries, in terms of the medieval interpretations of liturgical and biblical poetry that the commentaries encompass. Overall, the book offers a valuable exploration of the transition from the old monastic tradition into a new scholastic one in the twelfth century.

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Katajala-Peltomaa, Sari, *Gender, Miracles and Daily Life: The Evidence of Fourteenth-Century Canonization Processes* (Studies in the History of Daily Life [800-1600]), Turnhout, Brepols, 2009; hardback; pp. viii, 312; 1 b/w illustration; R.R.P. €70.00; ISBN 9782503529585.

This is a tightly focused study of a particular time (the fourteenth century), two particular places (Hereford and Tolentino) and a particular issue (how the miraculous interacted with gender and daily life). While a great deal has been written over many decades on the place of the miraculous and supernatural in the daily lives of medieval people, this book is distinctive for its clear methodology, focusing on the English saint, Thomas of Cantilupe from Hereford and the Italian saint, Nicholas of Tolentino. Out of this focus comes an exploration of the ways in which three major aspects of the medieval world, gender, the miraculous and daily life, interacted with each other. It is on this survey of the interaction of the three that Sari Katajala-Peltomaa stakes her claim for the originality of her analysis.

One of the book's chief points of argument, that cults of saints were a central part of medieval religious belief, is nothing new. However, the dual focus on England and Spain allows conclusions to be drawn about the different approaches of the clergy and canon lawyers who investigated each case: the Italian clergy generally permitting more miracles to go forward for official investigation (301 Italian miracles, as opposed to approximately 40 miracles for the English case). The Italians also tended to be less discriminating in their selection of miracles. The English miracles were tightly organized around the key issue of recoveries from death. By contrast, Nicholas of Tolentino was credited with a wide variety of miracles, often related to curing different types of illness. The English clergy were more discriminating in other ways, requiring and interviewing multiple witnesses for each miracle. By contrast, the Italian miracles took place in small-scale domestic settings, with only a couple of witnesses per miracle.

Katajala-Peltomaa writes authoritatively on the canon law requirements that regulated the attribution of the miraculous. Out of her discussion of the ecclesiastical contexts for investigating the miracles, she develops material significant to the major theme of the book, gender. Again, her focus on both England and Italy allows some significant conclusions to be drawn. While the English required more witnesses to authenticate the miracle, they also interrogated fewer women than the Italians. For the canonization hearing of

St Thomas Cantilupe, 44 of the 205 witnesses were women. By contrast, in the Tolentino case, nearly half the witnesses (171 out of 365) were women.

Although gender is the principal theme of this book, much of the content on this theme is unoriginal. Space is given over to descriptions of the clerical stereotypes that undercut the validity of female testimony, such as popular perceptions of garrulous women, susceptible to frequent changes in mind. In a text likeliest to appeal to a specialist reader, evidence for clerical misogyny will come as no surprise, although Katajala-Peltomaa does stress when it could be moderated. For example she gives attention to the *apostola apostolorum*, Mary Magdalene, as a positive illustration of female testimony of the supernatural. However, Katajala-Peltomaa concludes that generally misogyny prevailed and the model of the silent Virgin Mary was the likeliest to shape expectations of female testimony. These conclusions, while not especially original, make sense of the evidence Katajala-Peltomaa cites for the avoidance of female testimony. Many women who could have given testimony, even those for instance who had known Cantilupe, or for whom he had served as confessor, were not interviewed about his life. In the Tolentino case, only one significant witness was a woman, Angelischa, but she already carried a reputation as a notably holy woman. When the opportunity existed to interview a wide-range of witnesses, generally men were chosen over women.

Katajala-Peltomaa adroitly weaves together the themes of gender, the miraculous and daily life and the three strands are mutually illuminating and meaningfully interactive. For example, there is valuable discussion of the role of the miraculous in shaping, creating or consolidating a person's position of social responsibility. The gendered attitudes of daily life informed clerical responses to both male and female testimony and the same attitudes directly participated in the canonization cases, particularly in selection of witnesses.

The book is also methodologically cohesive; the decision to build case studies out of the cases in Hereford and Tolentino works effectively, there being enough differences in the progression of each case to make for rewarding comparison. While the evidence comes from fairly standardized procedures for investigating the miraculous, the selection of her evidence makes clear sense.

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Knutsen, Gunnar W., *Servants of Satan and Masters of Demons: The Spanish Inquisition's Trials for Superstition, Valencia and Barcelona, 1478-1700* (Late Medieval and Early Modern Studies, 17), Turnhout, Brepols, 2010; hardback; pp. xviii, 228; 5 b/w illustrations, 3 b/w tables, 1 b/w line drawing; R.R.P. €60.00; ISBN 9782503528618.

This book is a comparative study examining the differences between the magical and demonological cultures of Valencia and Catalonia. Gunnar W. Knutsen builds on the work of Gustav Henningsen and Jaime Contreras who first catalogued the *relaciones de causas*, one of the main bodies of archival evidence for the trials undertaken by the Spanish Inquisition. Like Henningsen and Contreras, Knutsen focuses his study on the years 1478 to 1700, that is, from the time of the Inquisition's founding until a modification in reporting protocol changed the nature of the archive. However, one of the fundamentally important contributions of this book is the incorporation of a series of previously uncatalogued Valencian *relaciones,* or case reports, and secular case records as well as a smaller number of additional *relaciones* from Barcelona. It also brings to the English corpus the fruit of additional regional studies of witchcraft trials undertaken in secular courts, previously only available in Spanish. By bringing this material together, Knutsen successfully demonstrates both the value of, and need for, further investigation into different Spanish regions.

The reader who is less familiar with Spanish witchcraft will appreciate the first portion of the book, which provides an accessible collation of background material relating to both the Inquisition itself and to relevant aspects of Spanish history. In the second half of the book, the author presents an insightful analysis that addresses the nature of the Valencian archives and how this material both challenges and supports various aspects of the established scholarship. Knutsen focuses his comparison of the two regions on two main issues. Firstly, he addresses the differences in the balance of power between the Inquisition and the secular courts of each region. Secondly, he examines the influence of elements of *Morisco* tradition and culture (that is the influence of Spanish Muslim communities who were forced to convert in the sixteenth century) on Valencian magical traditions (p. 41).

Knutsen's investigation into the power and influence of the Inquisitorial bodies in the two regions, while largely reinforcing current scholarship,

nevertheless enhances our understanding of the dynamic between the religious and secular courts in a number of ways. The new body of detailed Valencian *relaciones* allows Knutsen to gauge the influence of numerous factors on a group of Inquisitors who, unlike the much-studied Inquisitors in Barcelona, were successfully able exert their authority over cases involving witchcraft, superstition and sorcery. The Valencian Inquisition effectively took control of cases raised in secular courts both earlier and more frequently than the Inquisition in Barcelona. Knutsen is also able to comment on the dynamics between the members of the Inquisition in Barcelona and those in Valencia, demonstrating that the Inquisitors were themselves aware of these inconsistent levels of effectiveness. His sensitive reading of the cases as they relate to the Inquisitorial approach to, and use of, confessions facilitates Knutsen's innovative investigation of the magical culture of Valencia.

Knutsen shows that there were a number of confessions made in Valencia which did not result in convictions, despite having many characteristics of those which inspired witch-hunts in Barcelona and other areas. Rather than focusing his attention on the traditional question of what made Barcelona susceptible to witch-panics, access to Valencian materials has enabled Knutsen to ask the question: why were there no trials for witchcraft in Valencia? In doing so, he lays open before us the rich and intriguing tapestry of Valencian magical culture.

Here, Knutsen challenges the traditional view that the mere presence of *Morisco* populations negated the need for witch-trials by providing an alternative group of social scapegoats. Instead he presents a richer and more complex view of the relationship between Muslim, *Morisco* and Christian cultures in Valencia, presenting evidence which suggests that the influence of *Morisco* magical traditions on Valencian culture gave rise to a localized tradition which was fundamentally incompatible with the more common Christian demonological theory. By comparing the unsuccessful trials for witchcraft with successful trials for sorcery, Knutsen demonstrates that in Valencia the notion of sorcerers, people who used magic to control demons, was predominant. In this environment, he argues, a demonological tradition, founded on the notion of a pact, which represented the witch's subservience to the Devil, struggled to gain influence. Knutsen shows how this competing tradition helps explain why Inquisitors in Valencia were less likely to convict or start witch-hunts even when faced with some of the major elements of witchcraft cases.

Despite some patches of fairly detailed and gruelling statistical analysis, the reader reaps the benefits of perseverance in both the important insights gleaned from this work and the sometimes touching, sometimes dramatic but always detailed retellings of the very personal stories which bring the actors to life and make this study enthralling reading.

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Langermann, Y. Tzvi, ed., *Avicenna and his Legacy: A Golden Age of Science and Philosophy* (Cultural Encounters in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages), Turnhout, Brepols, 2009; hardback; pp. 381; R.R.P. €80.00; ISBN 9782503527536.

Avicenna and his Legacy: A Golden Age of Science and Philosophy represents a significant advance in our understanding of the significance of Avicenna (Abū Alī Avicenna, 980–1037). Avicenna was one of the principal philosophers in the medieval Hellenistic Islamic tradition. His philosophical theories were a rationalistic account of the nature of Being and God, in which the corporeal world, spirit and logical thought, including dialectic, rhetoric, and poetry, were systematically arranged. This volume examines Avicenna's impact, and that of his followers and critics, on Muslim and Jewish thinking.

The first paper by Ahmed H al-Rahim casts light on the disciples of Avicenna and the transmission of his philosophy. This paper not only assists in placing the subsequent papers into a temporal context but also demonstrates that Avicenna influenced contemporary philosophers as well as his pupils. The inclusion of his philosophy in the works of contemporary philosophers facilitated its broader transmission and acceptance.

The following four papers, by Frank Griffel, M. Afifi Al-Akiti, Binyamin Abrahamov, and Anna Akasoy, consider aspects of the work of Abu Hāmid al-Ghazālī (1058–1111), a significant philosopher who made a close study of Avicenna. In a methodical paper, Heidrun Eichner examines the Avicennan distinction between 'essence' and 'existence' through Ibn Kammuna's (d. 1284) work on existence in *al-Jadid fi l-hikma*. Nahyan Fancy analyses Ibn al-Nafis' (d. 1288) stance on the issue of the human soul touching the divine, which conflicted with Avicenna's. David B. Burrell continues with the theme of 'existence' from the perspective of the influential seventeenth-century Muslim scholar Mulla Sadra, who was also critical of Avicenna. Robert

Wisnovsky turns to Avicenna's stance on Aristotelian logic. Sari Nusseibeh considers Providence through a complex and interesting web of ideas. Leigh N. Chipman provides a critical commentary and translation of sections of the foremost commentaries on Avicenna's *al-Qānūn fi al-Tibb* written by Qutb al-Din al-Shīrāzī. F. Jamil Ragep examines Avicenna's impact on a work on astronomy by al-Juzjānī. Robert Morrison analyses the relationship between astronomy and philosophy through the work of Nizām al-Din al-Nisāburī (d. 1330). Steven Harvey considers Avicenna's influence on Jewish thinkers. The final paper by Paul B. Fenton reflects upon the perceived writings of the great Jewish philosopher Maimonides on metempsychosis, the transmigration of the soul, a theory that was rejected by Avicenna.

The collection of papers is diverse, of exceptional quality and covers Avicenna's work on astronomy, medicine, logic and philosophy. This volume presents a comprehensive study of his influences and his legacy, mainly focusing on the early medieval period. However, there is an important omission from the discussion. Avicenna was a significant mathematician of his time. His most important work in this field is his encyclopaedic work, the *Kitab al-Shifa'* (*The Book of Healing*) and unfortunately this work is not mentioned in this volume. Also the followers and critics, and the legacy of Avicenna mentioned in this volume are all from the 'Golden Age of Science and Philosophy' of the Jewish and Muslim tradition, yet Avicenna also had a significant legacy in Western scholarship of the Renaissance.

Avicenna's *al-Qānūn fi al-Tibb* (*The Law of Medicine*) challenged the established medical text of Galen. Although *Al-Qānūn fi al-Tibb* was translated into Latin in the twelfth century, it did not make an impact on Western scholarship until the fifteenth century. However, the impact was a significant one and at the end of the fifteenth century there were fifteen Latin editions and *Al-Qānūn fi al-Tibb* had gained pre-eminence in the medical literature of the Renaissance, replacing the works of Galen. The legacy of the 'Golden Age of Science and Philosophy' of Western scholarship is totally ignored in this volume. In other words, the legacy of Avicenna is much greater than the volume implies. Perhaps it would have been advisable in the title and the introduction to state what the volume covered and what it omitted. The title is ambiguous, and the extent of his true legacy could have been at least outlined in the Foreword to put the papers into context.

Nevertheless, within its context, the volume is an important contribution to early medieval scholarship. It highlights the legacy of Avicenna in the Jewish

and Muslim traditions, which are relatively unknown in Western scholarship. This interesting volume should generate further interest in Avicenna who was a true polymath of his time, and whose legacy to later generations is significant.

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Lipton, Emma, *Affections of the Mind: The Politics of Sacramental Marriage in Late Medieval English Literature*, Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press, 2007; paperback; pp. x, 246; R.R.P. US$32.00; ISBN 9780268034054.

'Affections of the mind', in this book's title, comes from St Augustine's discussion of the marriage of Mary and Joseph, while 'sacramental marriage' is used for one particular theory of marriage prevalent during the Middle Ages. The 'late medieval English literature' discussed includes Chaucer's *Franklin's Tale*, Gower's *Traitié pour Essampler les Amantz Marietz*, the Mary and Joseph plays in the N-Town Cycle and *The Book of Margery Kempe*, all of which, Emma Lipton claims, use this sacramental view of marriage to construct a middle-class ideology. She goes on to argue for an intrinsic connection between such literary representations and the construction of a class identity.

Not everyone will be happy with a substructure which distinguishes marriage as a sacrament, based on love, from other views of marriage, such as the 'doctrine' of the marriage debt or the view that the husband should rule over the wife. In the West, marriage was indisputably regarded as a sacrament from at least the thirteenth century, and is regularly included as such in the catechetical material produced in response to the Lateran Council of 1215, but this did not necessarily exclude other 'emphases'. A simple 'love or sex ... partnership or rulership' (p. 3) dichotomy is just too simple, especially when its principal representative turns out to be C. S. Lewis's 75-year-old *Allegory of Love*! However, if the reader is prepared to suspend belief at this early stage, Lipton offers an interesting theory about the connection of sacramental marriage with the rise of lay values and the self-legitimation of a 'middle strata' of merchants and small landowners just below the level of the gentry.

It is not surprising, then, given the narrator's social status, that the first text presented in this light is *The Franklin's Tale*, but this is the least rewarding

of the four readings. Lipton sees as the key to the tale the Franklin's status as 'civil servant'. But this anachronistic term occludes an important fact: modern civil servants are full-time employees of the state with no other source of income but the Franklin (in his various roles as MP, sheriff and so on) would have been only part-time. And the stress on the Franklin's representing 'a new civic identity and growth of government' (p. 46) completely ignores Chaucer's implied satire of his indolence, self-indulgence and social insecurity. In the event, Lipton's reading is not very different from previous efforts, though with some odd emphases, such as asserting that Arveragus keeps his and his wife's love secret, and stressing 'the violence of his threat to Dorigen' (p. 38). True, he tells her to keep silent on pain of death, but he also says *he* would rather die than his wife fail to keep her word to Aurelius.

The chapter on Gower's ballad sequence is much more convincing. Lipton argues that Gower transforms the conventional emphasis on sexual rectitude in marriage as a female responsibility. He makes 'marriage a male rather than female concern' and thus promotes 'lay authority'; his stories retell the lives of heroes who become adulterers and come to bad ends (p. 52). It is less clear how Gower 'makes marriage central to masculine identity' (p. 65), specifically of 'men of the upper middle strata ... who are neither aristocratic nor clerical' (p. 82) like himself. But this engaging discussion of a little-known text provokes a desire to know it better.

Lipton then discusses the three Mary plays from the N-Town Cycle: 'Joachim and Anna', 'The Marriage of Mary and Joseph' and 'The Trial of Mary and Joseph'. She acknowledges that the plays have different sources and may be found in the same manuscript only by chance, but she reads all three as presenting a 'reformist' (but not heretical) agenda, linked to their fifteenth-century East Anglian context. She sees them as shifting marriage out of the Church into the home and consequently 'reinforcing the values of lay piety and questioning clerical authority' (p. 90).

This focus on 'civic and bourgeois constituencies' (p. 128) continues in Lipton's consideration of *The Book of Margery Kempe*. More interesting, perhaps, is her discussion of the language of Margery's mysticism, and its use of a bourgeois model of marriage based on love to describe her relationship with Christ and, specifically, their spiritual marriage (though it is a little hard to see how any of the other 'models' of marriage Lipton describes could have been recruited for such a purpose).

In conclusion, Lipton presents a strong case that in late medieval England particular writers used representations of marriage to 'establish and legitimize their own place in society' (p. 160). In other words, marriage was then, as now, political.

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Mackley, J. S., *The Legend of St Brendan: A Comparative Study of the Latin and Anglo-Norman Versions* (The Northern World, 39), Leiden, Brill, 2008; hardback; pp. xiv, 354; R.R.P. €99.00, US$147.00; ISBN 9789004166622.

The stories of St Brendan, the sea-faring monk, delighted and entertained audiences throughout medieval Europe with versions of his adventures appearing at great distances from his native Ireland. It is not hard to see why, with tales of floating islands, giant fish, and lands populated only by sheep, punctuating long sea voyages that went far beyond the boundaries of the known world. There has been vigorous historical and literary interest in these stories from scholars of early Irish history and literature, as well as further afield. A new study focusing on two of the many versions of St Brendan's legends is thus welcome in an interesting but by no means overcrowded field.

J. S. Mackley's study juxtaposes the ninth-century Latin *Navagatio Sancti Brendani abbatis* and the twelfth-century Anglo-Norman *Voyage of St Brendan* and analyses them both through the lens of the theories of Tzvetan Todorov (*The Fantastic: A structural approach to a literary genre* [1973]). Mackley argues, following Todorov, that in order for audiences to follow the purpose of the texts the narratives need to be structured in a way that allows them to proceed from known realistic story elements towards a point of 'hesitation' when faced with unreal, fantastic elements. 'By reaching this "hesitation" the audience are potentially receptive to the didactic message presented in the two versions' (p. 3). His study then follows the structure of the texts themselves with detailed examination of each episode and where it fits in the model of fantastic/uncanny that he has developed.

There are four substantive chapters in this study. The first traverses familiar ground in detailing the Brendan story and the main hagiographical sources before moving on to discuss the manuscript sources for the two versions. The

next three chapters then follow the 'fantastic/uncanny' model by detailing the known or familiar elements at the beginning of the texts (Chapter 2), then the 'marvellous' elements (Chapter 3), ending with the didactic message that is at the core of both texts, the path to salvation (Chapter 4). There are also two appendices, the first a detailed manuscript stemma of both texts and the second a translation of the Anglo-Norman *Voyage of St Brendan*.

There are many fascinating details in this analysis, with its very detailed reading of each episode in each text. The analysis of the journeying from mundane through uncanny to the marvellous and the divine reveals the theological depths within these seemingly fantastical stories. Unfortunately, the structure of the analysis where each episode of the two texts is directly compared allows for a great deal of repetition, and Mackley has fallen into this trap rather frequently. There are many examples of this: the episode of the Paradise of the Birds in the *Navagatio,* for instance, is described fully and then followed by a similarly detailed description of it from the *Voyage*. The impression of repetitiveness is further exacerbated by transitions between chapters and sections of chapters that repeatedly summarize what has just been spelled out in exhaustive detail.

Perhaps more challenging is the rather shallow historical context within which the literary analysis is situated. The discrepancy in dating Brendan's birth from the Irish annals is quite usual for early Irish events, and probably does not need the rather laborious footnote to explain it (p. 43, n. 126). The discussion on hagiography begins somewhat disconcertingly with a definition from a dictionary of literary terms (p. 22, n. 34), and then moves on to Delehaye's seminal *The Legends of the Saints*, without reference to the recent scholarship on Irish hagiography by Elva Johnstone, Máire Herbert and others.

However, these are relatively minor lapses. A more substantial difficulty with the contextual arguments is exemplified in the discussion of claustrophobia as a mild form of the 'uncanny'. I found this analysis to be particularly unconvincing. The almost throwaway line 'punishment was harsh in the Middle Ages and … prior to the Magna Carta, one could be imprisoned without trial, confinement was certainly something to be feared' is so broad a statement that it borders on flippant, and does not encourage faith in the ensuing analysis of the importance of the smallness of coracle in the journeying of the monks.

These and other difficulties with the book probably reflect its too swift transition from doctoral thesis to monograph. In the apparatus, there are

many unexplained references that are irritating to disentangle. While 'VB' is explained as *Vita Brendani* in the list of Abbreviations, for instance, the references to the various versions, numbered VB 1–7 are buried rather inconsistently in footnotes on pages 45–49, and even then not fully explained. While this again does not really affect the literary analysis that is at the centre of the book, it does detract from following the contextual discussion.

The addition of the translation of the Anglo-Norman *Voyage*, the extensive bibliography and the careful, if repetitious, analysis of each episode make this a useful if not profound addition to the scholarship of the legends of St Brendan.

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McInerny, Ralph, *Dante and the Blessed Virgin*, Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press, 2010, pp. xvii, 164; hardback; R.R.P. US$30.00; ISBN 9780268035174.

'The Blessed Virgin Mary is the key to Dante' – thus begins the reader's journey into this beautifully structured and compelling volume by the late Professor Ralph McInerny. Under his skilful guidance, the world of Dante's creative output is lucidly explored in order to make comprehensible the Florentine poet's 'layered approach' to 'human life and its destiny' (p. 29). Intended primarily for a Catholic audience, McInerny's in-depth monograph nevertheless offers perspectives that are appealing to a wide variety of readers.

The book is divided into four chapters, beginning with 'A New Life Begins', which consists of a brief overview of the *Vita Nuova* and Beatrice's role as 'a figure both of Christ and of Mary' (p. 10). Chapter 2 is entitled 'In the Midst of My Days' and examines the first *cantica* and Dante's initial foray into Hell as a means of exploring 'the natural as presupposed by the supernatural' (p. 29). This is followed by 'The Seven Storey Mountain', wherein the author illuminates our understanding of the moral lessons of Dante's *Purgatorio*, e.g., 'every human act is disordered when it is not proportioned to its proper end' (p. 85), and elucidates the weighty significance of Mary's virtues, all of which underscore the pilgrim's journey along the cornices of the sunlit mountain. In the final chapter, 'Queen of Heaven', the uniqueness of the Blessed Virgin's role and her centrality in the *Commedia* are convincingly portrayed.

McInerny's sustained control of his material is superb, whether he is providing a humorous account (such as the well known gag about academics and their horror of sharing rooms) or guiding us through the salient points in Dante's *oeuvre*. The distinctive blend of scholarly rigour with an engaging conversational style never falters. At times synthetic, 'There are angels and angels' (p. 60), while at other times personal, 'Dantisti, as a group, seem to me to be a very special breed of scholar' (p. xi), McInerny musters an array of literary characters, including Jay Gatsby and Huckleberry Finn, to add verve to his explication of the influence on Dante of the ancient Greek philosophers and great doctors of the Church, including for example, Plato, Aristotle, St Bernard and St Thomas Aquinas. In doing so, the author renders explicit Dante's intention in his fictional work from many and diverse perspectives, whether theological, philosophical, exegetical, historical or literary.

'We become involved in stories because their characters are in some way ourselves', states McInerny (p. 21), and his moments of personal insight are deftly interwoven with judicious exegetical commentary, for example, on Aquinas' moral philosophy, Christ's Sermon on the Mount and its relationship with the practice of natural wisdom, or St Augustine's encapsulation of original sin as a means to regain heaven through his exclamation, *O felix culpa*. Amidst edifying discussions about desire in contest with reason, the reader is reminded of the original meaning of the word soul – breath, wind – and of the resonance of Psalm 38 that declares 'every man is but a breath' (p. 78).

It is refreshing to see excerpts from Dante's works (in Italian) being supported in English by the translations of Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Dorothy Sayers. Coterminous with the inclusion of such noteworthy translations, McInerny considers anew well-known Dantean passages and the interpretative tools of a long commentary tradition. His prose style is captivating when, for example, he describes Dante's first reaction to Beatrice in the *Vita Nuova* as 'seismic' (p. 4) or depicts Mary's extraordinary situation as that of '[a] simple little girl [who] is to become the Mother of God and thereby first among all creatures in the supernatural order' (p. 61). These arresting moments infuse the text with a supreme vitality. No less remarkable are the scholarly considerations of other aspects of the *Commedia,* such as Dante-poet's solution of presenting spectral bodies in the afterlife that emphasize his own mortal weight and solidity; or Dante-character's turning away from Beatrice, for which he is severely chided by her in the *Purgatorio*, as a demonstration that the fictional protagonist has turned away from the promise and means

of eternal salvation.

However, it is the discussion about the Virgin Mary and the mysteries of faith, the principal thesis on which all else turns, which informs the volume and underlies its profound coherence and metaphysical resonance. The glorious power and paradox of the Blessed Virgin's role as the 'mediatrix of grace' (p. 135) is articulated with clarity and conviction, as McInerny accompanies the reader through the celestial spheres of the *Paradiso* to Dante's final daring artifice of expressing the inexpressible by means of a divine vision.

An epilogue to the volume, containing the searing and intimate revelation of Pascal's mystical words in his Memorial, provides a fitting close to this exceptional and delightful book.

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Nederman, Cary J., *Lineages of European Political Thought: Explorations along the Medieval/Modern Divide from John of Salisbury to Hegel*, Washington, Catholic University of America Press, 2009; paperback; pp. xxiv, 375; R.R.P. US$39.95; ISBN 9780813215815.

Cary J. Nederman is one of the leading political theorists of the Middle Ages and Renaissance, whose work on John of Salisbury and Machiavelli, among others, has helped to define the modern understanding of the medieval political mind. This collection of essays, many of them revised and updated versions of book chapters and journal articles published over the last twenty years, is a distillation of Nederman's most recent thinking about medieval political theory and what it might teach us about modern political structures.

The essays are arranged in five sections, whose titles impose some internal coherence on disparate material. In the first part, 'Historiographies of the Early European Tradition: Continuity and Change', Nederman dissects, with forensic skill, the work of modern and contemporary theorists who argue for a more or less unbroken continuity between medieval and modern political thinking. Starting with Walter Ullmann, Nederman moves on to Quentin Skinner and the 'neo-Figgisites', including Brian Tierney, Francis Oakley and Antony Black, pulling at the seams of their arguments to expose what he sees as flaws in the fabric of their logic.

In his 'Introduction', Nederman calls for 'balance' and asks us to 'split

the difference' between the two polarities of continuity and change, arguing that, while there clearly is a significant divide between the Middle Ages and modernity, the past inevitably influences future generations in ways that signify a kind of intellectual continuity (p. xx). Yet, without directly showing his own hand, he tends to favour the argument, 'captured by Marcia Colish in her splendid set of reflections' (p. xvii) and expounded by John Pocock 'in his magisterial opus' (p. xviii), that there are in fact manifest discontinuities and ruptures between medieval and modern political thought. His robust critique of the work of the 'continuity' school, including a lengthy essay on Skinner, reveals his profound disagreement with many of its methodologies and conclusions.

Nederman returns to this adversarial approach in the last section of the book, 'Modern Receptions of Medieval Ideas', where case studies of individual writers from the fifteenth to nineteenth centuries – John Fortescue, Machiavelli, Henry de Bracton, Hegel – are used to demonstrate that early thinkers were acknowledging the contribution of the Middle Ages to the formation of modern political structures long before the likes of Joseph Strayer, Ullmann, Skinner and the rest. Although Nederman regularly cites the work of his competitors and does not dismiss it all out of hand, it is hard to avoid a sense that old scores are being settled here.

The central sections of the book are perhaps the most satisfying, displaying Nederman's extensive knowledge and expertise to best effect while regularly revisiting the book's central concern with the connections between medieval and modern ideas. In Part 2, 'Dissenting Voices and the Limits of Power', a number of medieval concepts and practices are analysed: liberty, the king's will (representing the will of God), political representation, and the function of 'mirrors of princes' as a weapon against popular revolt. Nederman's ability to identify all aspects of an issue and its context never fails to impress. Regarding political representation, for example, Nederman argues persuasively that, despite a discourse of representation circulating in the Middle Ages, there was no clearly developed theory of representation to sustain it. He goes on to develop his own illuminating model of what he terms 'spiritual representation' and 'practical representation' (p. 102) as characteristic of medieval practice.

Part 3, 'Republican Self-Governance and Universal Empire', immerses us in one of the most interesting and contested areas of medieval political theory, the competing claims of republic and empire. Referring particularly to the work of Brunetto Latini and Marsiglio of Padua, Nederman demonstrates conclusively

that a binary oppostion between these two concepts is not an adequate model for the late medieval debates about imperial rule. In Part 4, 'The Virtues of Necessity: Economic Principles of Politics', individual studies of Nicole Oresme and Christine de Pizan are used to illustrate some of the ambiguities of the medieval attitude to money, tempered by both practicality and morality. It was Christine de Pizan who, according to Nederman, recognized explicitly the connection between political and economic power, insisting that, to sustain his rule, a king or prince had to understand the sources of his kingdom's wealth and manage its economic resources.

Much of the material in this book is challenging and embedded in long-standing scholarly arguments which are perhaps less engaging for the reader than for Nederman himself. But as a synthesis of major concepts in medieval political theory, and modern responses to them, this book is invaluable.

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Nederman, Cary J., Nancy **Van Deusen**, and E. Ann **Matter**, eds, *Mind Matters: Studies of Medieval and Early Modern Intellectual History in Honour of Marcia Colish* (Disputatio, 21), Turnhout, Brepols, 2010; hardback; pp. x, 308; R.R.P. €60.00; ISBN 9782503527567.

In this volume, the editors have brought together thirteen essays from a number of different disciplines, each of which draws on the driving interest that has guided Marcia Colish's career: the transmission, development, and appropriation of classical ideas throughout the Middle Ages and into the sixteenth century. Despite the diverse concerns of the essays, from epistemological (William J. Courtenay), to philological (Mary Sirridge), theological (M. B. Pranger), and social (Cary J. Nederman), each contribution finds its place in relation to Colish's work, and each finds its complement elsewhere in the book. In practical terms, every study included in the volume addresses 'utterly basic topics of far-reaching importance' (p. 4) for its respective audience – primarily scholars of late medieval European thought.

The rope that is threaded throughout this volume so effectively is the constant reminder of the pervasive influence of classical and early Christian ideas in medieval thought. Ambrose, Aristotle, Augustine, Plato, Pythagoras, and, in late antiquity, Gregory the Great, Isidore of Seville, and Priscian

constantly raise their heads, reminding the reader of their ongoing legacy. This focus on the transmission of ideas allows one to draw connections between the different essays. Courtenay's consideration of twelfth-century schools of thought, partly through the lens of Peter Abelard and his students, thus relates easily to Willemien Otten's exploration of Abelard's teaching practices as a means for transforming human speech into redeemed speech. Likewise, Nancy Van Deusen's treatment of Chalcidius' translation of the Greek word *hyle* in the fourth century links to Grover A. Zinn's discussion of the Latin *materia* at the turn of the twelfth century.

All these essays have repercussions for how one ought to read medieval texts. Questions concerning schools of thought, the meaning and use of particular words, and understandings of good and evil, for example, all bear directly on how the authors of these texts understood and interacted with the world around them. As Courtenay and Arjo Vanderjagt point out, much modern scholarship concerning the period still displays anachronistic understandings of its subject. By investigating the motivations and ideas underpinning medieval texts, the collected essays in this volume challenge these anachronistic readings and encourage modern scholars to consider their subjects from a more nuanced point of view. That, I would argue, is the main strength of this collection. A brief discussion of two of the essays will provide an idea of what is in store for the interested reader.

Gary Macy's contribution, 'Fake Fathers: Pseudonymous Sources and Forgeries as the Foundation for Canonical Teaching on Women in the Middle Ages', provides an interesting contrast to the rest of this volume. In the spirit of Anthony Grafton's *Forgers and Critics* (Princeton, 1990), Macy explores the impact that spurious works had on late medieval, Early Modern and even modern thought through Gratian's *Decretum*, a corpus of canon law compiled in the twelfth century. Through incisive and illuminating consideration of various passages in the *Decretum* and its sources, Macy shows how opinions of the church fathers were appropriated, misconstrued and blatantly distorted. The ultimate effect was the exacerbation of misogynistic attitudes in the church and 'the gradual exclusion of and growing subservience of women within religious life in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries'. Macy summarizes: 'The transmission of inauthentic tradition through forgery and misidentification is as much a part of the story of the appropriation (and misappropriation) of classical sources as is the transmission of the authentic tradition' (p. 170).

Nederman's discussion concerns 'avarice as a princely virtue' in the

generations of scholars preceding Poggio Bracciolini and Niccolò Machiavelli. Nederman explores the work of Nicole Oresme and Christine de Pizan to show that writers in the fourteenth century, though perhaps not blatantly extolling avarice as a virtue, certainly believed in the benefits of accumulating material wealth, especially for the commonweal. Thus, activities, such as free trade, that encouraged such accumulation for both rulers and subjects ought to be encouraged, and those that discouraged it, through, for instance activities such as currency debasement, ought to be discouraged. By comparing these views with Poggio's and Machiavelli's, Nederman argues that the latter 'were making not a radical break with the medieval past but an intellectual move very much in line with preceding trends of European social and political thought' (p. 273). He reminds us of the dangers of paying too much credence to one historical figure or another at the expense of considering the society of which they were a product.

In sum, this is a collection of interesting, informative and ultimately practical essays that would complement the bookshelf of many scholars of medieval history.

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Nevile, Jennifer, ed., *Dance, Spectacle and the Body Politick*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2008; paperback; pp. 392; 33 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. US$24.95; ISBN 9780253219855.

This volume of fifteen essays offers a variety of perspectives on the history of late medieval and, especially, Early Modern dance. Most readers are likely find in it both pleasure and frustration, as the contributions seem intended for varying levels of expertise, detail, and generality, and range from overviews of wide swathes of culture and historical time to discussions of particular dance genres, even to detailed analyses of individual pieces. Both specialist and non-specialists will find the volume useful and worth perusal, but may wish to dip into it for the pieces that suit their needs rather than read it continuously through.

Jennifer Nevile, an expert on Renaissance Italian dance at the University of New South Wales, has edited the volume, and herself contributed to it three full essays on her field, along with a substantial introductory chapter and introductions to each of the sections. She has also provided a useful set of

reference tools, including a list of dance treatises and manuscripts, an extensive bibliography and a glossary of dance terms. She has divided the collection into six sections, with her Introduction as Part One, on 'Dance at Court and in the City', 'Dance and the Public Theater', 'Choreographic Structure and Music', 'Dance and the State' and 'Dance, Society, and the Cosmos'. The order of these sections is most likely arbitrary, as no particular development seems evident. Indeed, some amount of overlap is evident across sections, for instance between those in Parts Two and Five, or Parts Four and Six. One might see this mild repetitiveness as lending some cohesion to the volume, yet it also has the effect of drawing the partitions in question; in the courtly and absolutist political cultures of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century France, for instance, the distinction between 'dance at court' and 'dance and the state' is difficult to draw. Nor does the logic of the volume proceed from general discussion to particular example, since the last section is the most 'cosmic' and wide-ranging, even including an essay by Graham Pont on 'Plato's Philosophy of Dance' that is very general in its discussion and seems to fall quite outside the announced ambit of the collection.

Not all the dance cultures or traditions of Europe, or even Western Europe, are equally represented, nor is the time span indicated by the title. The one essay on medieval dance, Karen Silen's sketch of 'Dance in Late Thirteenth-Century Paris', which ends up suggesting that we know comparatively little about the topic, is balanced by a plurality of essays on later French and Italian dance. Two essays on eighteenth-century theatrical dance represent England; German and Spanish dance barely appears. Though one ought not to fault the collection for not covering even more ground than it already has, the tension between the main focus on the courtly dance leaders of Western Europe, France and Italy, in the period of their heyday, say 1450 to 1700, and the volume's wider ambitions (the Introduction is entitled 'Dance in Europe 1250–1750) leads to some conceptual and organizational problems.

Popular dance traditions, always hardest to recover, are rather thin in the discussion. The omission of traditions of English dance before the early eighteenth century is especially notable, since popular dance was already incorporated into the English public theatre in the late sixteenth century through the 'jig' memorably associated with the career of Will Kemp. Indeed, the existence of Kemp and his peers around 1600 gives the lie to Nevile's claim that it was not 'until the final century of the period dealt with in this volume that dance entered the realm of the public, commercial theatre' (p.

115). There is good evidence that aristocratic dance was represented on English public stages already in the sixteenth century, and certainly by the time of the dancing masters working alongside Jonson and Jones (mentioned only once), court masque and even antimasque dances were to be found on the public stage as part of a rich and ongoing conversation between elite and popular forms that is not much discussed in this volume.

The volume oscillates rather between general views and very minute analyses, some of which, fascinating in detail, will be quite hard to follow for the non-specialist. The illustrations of notated choreography from the later period which appear in several essays, beautiful as they are, are quite impenetrable to the lay eye as schemata of gesture and motion. Likewise, the inclusion of both a detailed, professional-grade manuscript list and a glossary of dance terms suggests the divided constituency the volume attempts to address. There are bridges across the rift: Ken Pierce's essay on 'Choreographic Structure in Baroque Dance' is a model of informed and informative lucidity for both novice and expert and highly to be recommended; Alessandro Arcangeli's 'Moral Views on Dance' provides a useful historical taxonomy of discourses on dance; and Nevile's three contributions on Italian dance draw cogent links between dance and various aspects of politics, philosophy and other contemporary arts. Overall, the book never generates either real momentum or a coherent focus, such as on the political or the philosophical or the technical aspects of dance, remaining somewhat diffuse in design and dependent on the choices and expertises of its contributors. Despite this somewhat scattershot quality, however, its various intended readerships are likely to find the book both useful and informative.

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Osherow, Michele, *Biblical Women's Voices in Early Modern England* (Women and Gender in the Early Modern World), Aldershot, Ashgate, 2009; cloth; pp. x, 189; 11 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £50.00; ISBN 9780754666745.

Michele Osherow has written a fascinating book on the ways in which the words of biblical women challenged Early Modern injunctions for female silence. Osherow argues that Old Testament narratives featuring women offered rhetorical models for both male and female writers who wanted to assert

the power of female speech and, thus, contradict the traditional association between women's virtue and their silence. Such an argument allows Osherow to examine an extensive range of Early Modern texts in her engaging and well-written monograph.

In her first chapter, Osherow analyses the connections between Miriam and Mary Sidney evident in Sidney's translations of the Psalms. As Osherow shows, the parallels between Miriam's status as sister to Moses, and Sidney's status as sister to Philip Sidney, allows Sidney to pay tribute to her dead brother and claim authority for herself. Miriam's praise of the Lord, in what Osherow describes as 'the first example of a biblical psalm' (p. 15), justifies Sidney's own translation activity. However, Miriam's well-known punishment for resisting her brother's authority – she is stricken with leprosy, shamed and silenced – makes her a less-than-ideal figure of female speech, a problem Sidney circumvents by presenting herself as more humble than Miriam. Unlike Miriam, then, Sidney successfully performs humility in her translations and dedications, avoids shame and claims authority in a way that other Early Modern women writers praised and emulated.

Osherow's second chapter turns to the story of Hannah, who successfully petitioned God for a son and dedicated that son, Samuel, to service at the Temple. Osherow argues that Hannah's story modelled a redefinition of prayer as a private negotiation between the self and God that appealed strongly to English Protestants. Preachers such as John Donne drew a connection between Hannah's humiliation at her childlessness and the ideal, humble position of Protestant ministers. And while Hannah's silent prayers were also used to reinforce calls for female silence, her song of thanksgiving was used to justify female speech by a range of women writers, including Margaret Fell and Elizabeth Brooke Joceline.

In Chapter 3, Osherow discusses Deborah as a definitive example of female authority. Elizabeth I's accession produced numerous invocations of Deborah as a model of female power, and the first section of this chapter focuses especially on the queen's coronation pageant to illustrate how Deborah's status as a prophetess of Israel allows the pageant to praise England, as well as the queen. But as Osherow goes on to explain, the pageant also silences Deborah, thus removing one of the most important aspects of Deborah's story. The second section of the chapter shows how Deborah's speech is both praised and critiqued by writers such as Thomas Heyworth and William Shakespeare. In the final sections of the chapter, Osherow examines Deborah's role as exemplar

to writers such as Rachel Speght and Ester Sowernam in their anti-misogynist writings, and Amelia Lanyer, who uses Deborah to justify praise not only of God, but also of other women.

I found Chapter 4 the most interesting in the book. In this chapter, Osherow focuses on David, surely an anomaly in a book devoted to biblical *women's* voices. But no. Osherow convincingly suggests that Early Modern representations of David associated him with traits that were gendered feminine, such as weakness, obedience and lust. Osherow argues against the common critical assumption that 'the use of prominent male figures to represent Early Modern women consistently aims to transfer *masculinity* onto female subjects' (p. 112, italics in original). Instead, Osherow claims, women who represented themselves – or who were represented – as David engaged in a kind of rhetorical cross-dressing, in which David became feminized. This claim is borne out by Osherow's examples, which include John Aylmer's description of Elizabeth in his *An Harborowe for Faithfull and True Subjects*, Rachel Speght's *A Mouzell for Melastomus* and Mary Lee, Lady Chudleigh's *The Female Advocate*. The latter half of this chapter also incorporates numerous feminized representations of David in sculpture and painting by artists such as Caravaggio and Donatello, which visually support Osherow's argument.

In a brief epilogue, Osherow considers the role of Judith as a heroic poet whose popularity in this period suggests the appeal of strong women's voices. Without downplaying the restrictions facing Early Modern women, Osherow demonstrates the power of biblical women's voices for those who asserted a woman's right to speak and publish in the English Renaissance era. I strongly recommend this accessible and engaging study.

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Petrarca, Francesco, *Res Seniles, Libri I–IV*, ed. Silvia Rizzo, with the collaboration of Monica Berté (Collana del VII Centenario della Nascita di Francesco Petrarca (2004), Comitato Nazionale), Florence, Casa Editrice Le Lettere, 2006; paperback; pp. 343; R.R.P. €28.00; ISBN 8871669568.

Petrarca, Francesco, *Res Seniles, Libri V–VIII*, ed. Silvia Rizzo, with the collaboration of Monica Berté (Collana del VII Centenario della Nascita di Francesco Petrarca (2004), Comitato Nazionale), Florence, Casa Editrice Le Lettere, 2009; paperback; pp. 384; R.R.P. €35.00; ISBN 886087260X.

As a latecomer to the world of the humanists I never cease to be astounded by the number and calibre of their Latin works yet to receive modern critical editions. The *Res Seniles*, the letters of Petrarch's last years, are a case in point. Ten years ago you would have had to go to a sixteenth-century edition or make do with an English translation (*Letters of Old Age*, trans. Aldo S. Bernardo, Saul Levin, and Reta A. Bernardo, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992). Only in the last decade, marking the seven-hundredth anniversary of Petrarch's birth (birthdays were significant for Petrarch), have there appeared two modern editions with facing translations and brief notes: the four-volume 'Les Belles Lettres' edition of E. Nota *et al.* (Paris, 2002-2004) and the two volumes here under review.

It is safe to say that Rizzo and Berté's is the first reliable critical edition and a work of impeccable scholarship. The newly constituted Latin text is based on six manuscripts, selected from twenty, and the *editio princeps* (Venice, 1501). One of the six, never used before, spent a period in Australia in the possession of L. J. Fitzhardinge, part of whose collection is now in the National Library of Australia. The twenty 'canonical' manuscripts present the collection put together by Petrarch, but not finished as he would have wished, before his death in 1374. For some letters there are also a pre-revised tradition and/or an intermediate tradition (Vol. 1, pp. 14–23). It is fortunate that the intermediate version of *Sen*. 6.8 exists since it allows us to see Petrarch making use in the revised version of his new acquisition of Leonzio Pilato's Latin translation of Homer. The copy of this was finally received from Boccaccio in early 1366 (*Sen*. 6.2). Contrary to what is often thought, it was Boccaccio, not Petrarch, who instigated this translation (note to *Sen*. 3.6.21).

There are so many interesting aspects of these letters that it is hard to choose between them. The recipients of the letters cover a broad spectrum from intimate friends to *condottieri*, cardinals, the Pope, Urban V and the Emperor Charles IV (Vol. 1, p. 12 with n. 14). Boccaccio receives the most. Particularly striking is *Sen*. 1.5, in which Petrarch urges Boccaccio not to give up literary pursuits and give away his books, as he has been warned to do in the death-bed prediction of a certain Peter, famed as a saintly man.

In *Sen*. 2.3, to Francesco Bruni, just appointed apostolic secretary to Urban V, Petrarch is advising him how to become a good writer through labour, application and striving for the new, when he breaks off, in the dead of night, to watch, from his window in the Palazzo Molin dalle due torri on the Riva degli Schiavoni in Venice, the departure for the east of an enormous merchant ship. The experience is immediately incorporated into the letter in which it is not, after all, so very out of place. *Sen*. 4.5 gives important insight into Petrarch's understanding of the *Aeneid*. *Sen*. 5.1 contains a fine description of the city of Pavia and 5.5 and 5.6 a moving account of Petrarch's travails with his young secretary, whom he had treated as if he were his own son, and whose desire to move on he took as a betrayal. Giovanni Malpaghini eventually taught rhetoric at the Florentine *Studio*, his students including such important figures as Poggio and Guarino of Verona. In 8.6 Petrarch tells Donato Albanzoni of the impact on his own life of reading Augustine's *Confessions* and urges his friend to obtain a copy.

Despite the last paragraph I am not advocating dipping. In fact, the great thing is that it is no longer necessary to approach the *Seniles* in piecemeal fashion. It is most rewarding to read the letters straight through, as their author intended, either in his lively and accessible Latin, or in Rizzo's elegant translation, the product at once of deep learning and refined stylistic sensibility.

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Rowland, Richard, *Thomas Heywood's Theatre, 1599–1639: Locations, Translations, and Conflict* (Studies in Performance and Early Modern Drama), Aldershot, Ashgate, 2010; hardback; pp. xiii, 379; R.R.P. £65.00; ISBN 9780754669258.

Richard Rowland's *Thomas Heywood's Theatre, 1599-1639: Locations, Translations, and Conflict* is a vital and comprehensive re-evaluation of Thomas Heywood's position in Early Modern theatre history. From the outset, it establishes grand claims about Heywood's status as a theatrical and artistic innovator. More importantly, it substantiates these assertions persuasively through a detailed and eloquent examination of Heywood's career spanning the theatrical, court and civic cultures of Elizabethan, Jacobean and Caroline England.

The book is divided into three sections which reflect the titular emphasis on location, translation and conflict and which map the historical trajectory of Heywood's career. In the first section, Rowland explores Heywood's handling of urban, rural and domestic landscapes in his Elizabethan and Jacobean plays. Evaluating the juxtaposition of familiar landmarks and unfamiliar actions in Parts one and two of *Edward IV* and the manipulation of urban spaces in *If You Know Not Me You Know No Bodie*, especially Part two, he claims that Heywood was the first dramatist to exploit the opportunities presented by John Stow's *Survey of London* to recreate the spaces of the metropolis on the stages of Early Modern London. In doing so, Rowland claims, Heywood initiated the Early Modern tradition in which familiar London settings functioned as geographical and theatrical spaces to address the concerns of the city's inhabitants.

Rowland follows this with an examination of domestic and rural settings in *How a Man May Choose a Good Wife from a Bad* and *A Woman Killed with Kindness* that evince Heywood's unconventional manipulation of the burgeoning genre of domestic tragedy. He further attends to Heywood's careful deployment of location and of generic conventions through an examination of the playwright's distinct practices as a translator in Part II of the study. Contending that Heywood brought new comic energy to the theatrical dynamics of his classical sources, this section offers fascinating analyses of *The Captives, The English Traveller*, and *Loves Mistris* and their respective explorations of the ethics of trade and international relations, the purposes of playing and Caroline court culture between 1624 and 1634. Finally, Rowland turns to Heywood's civic pageants of the 1630s in Part III to argue that he

reinvented genre in this context to deploy further the spaces of the city as a means of foregrounding the conflicts which preoccupied the citizens of London. Instead of engaging with all of Heywood's theatrical works, which would, Rowland points out in his introduction, prevent doing justice to any, this study provides a series of close readings of these selected texts in relation to a range of social, literary and historical contexts to persuasively convey Heywood's politicized manipulation of genre, setting and performance context throughout his varied career.

Performance is a pervasive theme of this monograph. Acknowledging that the 'book of the play' alone cannot provide a reliable guide to any drama, Rowland argues that the 'difficulty of establishing the relationship between text and performance is perhaps more acute with Heywood than it is with any of his contemporaries' (p. 3). Identifying the three main reasons for this as the limited modern performance tradition of Heywood's plays, the lack of knowledge about his playhouses (even in comparison to other Early Modern performance contexts) and the absence of a reliable complete edition of Heywood's work, Rowland offers detailed case studies of a number of these plays in performance. Through an analysis of a 2005 performance of *The Rape of Lucrece* in the introductory chapter, Rowland establishes his argument that the abrupt tonal shifts and disturbing subject matter of Heywood's plays can only be fully explored through performance. He builds on this throughout the study by moving fluently between Early Modern theatre history and recent productions. His analysis of *Loves Mistris*, for instance, considers the particular dynamics of Queen Henrietta's Men and the potential differences between performances at the Cockpit theatre and Denmark House in 1634. The geographical particularities of *A Woman Killed with Kindness* are considered in relation to both the Early Modern stage and three modern productions of the play to indicate the ways in which performance imbues particular aspects of the text with new significance and more fully realizes the implications of the play's questions about household governance, friendship, marriage, sexuality and the role of religion in relation to each of these. Rowland thus offers a stimulating and original reading of one of Heywood's few plays to have a modern performance tradition and gestures towards the potential for further exploration of Heywood's innovative role in Early Modern theatre history via staging.

Nonetheless, while Rowland argues for the advantages of engaging with Heywood's plays through performance, this excellent monograph is evidence

of the importance of continuing scholarly work on this neglected playwright. It makes a substantial contribution to knowledge about Heywood and his drama as well as to Early Modern attitudes to geographical and domestic spaces, trade and translation. Above all, it offers an exceptional insight into changing theatrical cultures in England between 1599 and 1639 through this case study of a playwright with a broad career in terms of genre, performance contexts and history.

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Skinner, Patricia, ed., *Challenging the Boundaries of Medieval History: The Legacy of Timothy Reuter*, Turnhout, Brepols, 2009; hardback; pp. viii, 208; R.R.P. €55.00; ISBN 9782503523590.

In recent years there has been a growing awareness of the importance of medieval German history and culture amongst English-speaking scholars. While scholars like Karl Leyser, Henry Mayr-Harting and John Gillingham, who did considerable work on Ottonian history, were never completely ignored, the work of Timothy Reuter brought to the fore not only the importance of comparative history but also the wealth of historiography found in German scholarship that had been overlooked by 'anglolexic' historians. Reuter worked in both England and Germany, at Exeter and at Southampton, as well as at the Munich-based *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*. Therefore he was well placed to act as a bridge between German and English scholarship. His death in 2002 was a real loss to this medieval cross-cultural research.

This book provides us with an indication of the importance of Reuter's work and the respect with which he was regarded in Britain in particular. It is a collection reflecting the range of themes and areas which recurred in his research, as an editor of texts, as an interpreter and as a participant in challenging debates that questioned historical assumptions about secular power and institutions, and their interactions with the Church.

The book has an impressive array of contributors: the foreword is by Henry Mayr-Harting, and the texts of the first two Reuter lectures by Chris Wickham and Janet Nelson are included. Both lectures set the tone for the collection, being thought-provoking interrogations of critical themes inherent in Reuter's work. Wickham, writing about the problems of doing comparative

history, makes the seemingly obvious, but often overlooked, point, that if comparative studies are not done this can lead to the assumption 'that one type of historical development is normal … and that every other is a deviation'. Things do happen differently in different places. These differences frame the preoccupations of historians interested in exploring their particular Grand Narratives of nationhood. Thus the 'feudal revolution' debate, so important to French scholars in the 1990s, has no resonance in Germany, while 711, the year of the Arab Conquest of Spain, which marks the beginning of the Middle Ages in Spanish scholarship, creates a specific local paradigm through which history is there interpreted. Janet Nelson's lecture on 'Charlemagne and the Paradoxes of Power' also draws on an important issue raised in Reuter's work, in particular his lectures and essays on 'Plunder and Tribute in the Carolingian Empire', where he explored the role of controlled violence and the profits derived from it in state power. She also highlights the importance of exploring differing perspectives in understanding history in Reuter's work, such as the German view of the Becket dispute.

The remaining seven essays come from a commemorative conference held at Southampton in 2004. These can be grouped into three areas: histories of secular power, histories of the Church and its secular benefactors, and technical issues around scholarly editions of medieval texts. Lena Wahlgren-Smith writes a fascinating essay on different approaches to editing a medieval text, in her case the letters of Nicholas of Clairvaux, providing a salutary check for those of us who have grown dependent on modern editions. Martina Hartmann recounts Timothy Reuter's uncompleted work on an edition of Wibald of Stavelot's letter collection for the MGH. Julia Barrow queries our understanding of the meaning of 'reform' when examining the tenth-century Benedictine reshaping of the English Church, carefully analysing the language found in such documents as the *Regularis Concordia*. Ryan Lavelle explores the different understandings of rebellion, comparing the case of the Ætheling Æthelwold in 899-902 with contemporary Ottonian uprisings, while Patricia Skinner examines the disparate treatments of the career of Archbishop Daibert of Pisa, who became Patriarch of Jerusalem.

For this reviewer, perhaps the most thought-provoking work is David A. Warner's re-reading of Ottonian history and the concept of the *Sonderweg*, which he re-examines in terms of German national history, modern ideas of metahistory, and the modern need to understand why Germany was so different from other nation states. He also examines how gender and the role of women

shifts the understanding of intellectual history to one where women become integral rather than additional, challenging the male-dominated, court-centred warrior culture typical of many earlier histories.

Finally, mention must be made of Björn Weiler's contribution, 'The King as Judge: Henry II and Frederick Barbarossa as seen by their contemporaries'. Weiler, very much in tune with Reuter's comparative approach, here compares how justice and judgement were differently understood and implemented in the Holy Roman Empire and England. His essay also reminds us of the necessity of careful reading of the texts themselves and an awareness of the conventions through which such texts are framed. For example, compared to the more national bent of English chronicles, German narratives are rarely concerned primarily with the ruler's actions, being more regional in their focus.

There are many important and thought-provoking challenges to our assumptions about the construction of medieval history. The essays are framed in such a manner that they will benefit established scholars, and provide useful catalysts for seminar discussion. The collection highlights the impact which Timothy Reuter has had on English-language medieval historiography and is a very fitting memorial to him.

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Van Dijkhuizen, Jan Frans and Karl A. E. **Enenkel**, eds, *The Sense of Suffering: Constructions of Physical Pain in Early Modern Culture* (Intersections, 12), Leiden, Brill, 2008; hardback; pp. xxiv, 504; 67 b/w & 16 colour illustrations; R.R.P. €99.00, US$148.00; ISBN 9789004172470.

Pain is undoubtedly intrinsic to being human, and in the Early Modern period, before the discovery of analgesics and anaesthetics, the experience of it, for everyone, was probably inevitable and occasionally overwhelming. But while the experience of pain might be universal, suffering is rooted in specific historical and cultural contexts, and the responses to pain and the lessons learnt from it vary considerably across time and place. More importantly, pain is not understood simply in terms of individual experience, but serves as a highly malleable metaphor for many other aspects of human existence.

The seventeen essays (and Introduction) in *The Sense of Suffering: Constructions of Physical Pain in Early Modern Culture* – originally presented as papers at the 'Perceptions of Pain in Early Modern Culture' conference held

at the University of Leiden in 2007 – are testimony to the wide variety of Early Modern representations and manifestations of 'pain'. The collection crosses a vast disciplinary terrain and offers the reader an introduction to a veritable treasure trove of texts and examples from across Early Modern Europe. Anita Traninger, for example, reads the pedagogical writings of authors such as Roger Ascham and Erasmus and considers contemporary opinions of the practice of inflicting pain on schoolboys (i.e., beating them) to facilitate the learning of Latin. Frans Willem Korsten offers readings of three plays by Joost van den Vondel, the seventeenth-century Dutch playwright, and Emese Bálant examines the records of a sixteenth-century Hungarian poisoning trial. In perhaps the most satisfying essay of the collection, Jenny Mayhew examines English Protestant godly dying manuals, and drawing connections between body, mind and language, provides some intriguing insights into contemporary understandings of the relationship between pain, suffering and spirituality.

Not surprisingly, the theological basis of Christianity – the suffering, crucified Christ and the inherent, largely bodily, post-lapsarian sinfulness of all Christians – means that pain, in various forms, features heavily in Early Modern religious discourses, and many of the articles included here reflect this. Jetze Touber, for example, examines Antonio Gallonio's Italian treatise on martyrdom of 1591 and its central contention that, for the martyr, the endurance of pain (torture) demonstrates the 'truth' of their faith. The mystical suffering of Teresa of Avila, as represented in images and in Teresa's own writings, is the subject of Maria Berbara's article.

There is a good deal of fascinating material here but, as a whole, this collection is something of a disorganised Cabinet of Curiosities. Pain and suffering manifest themselves in so many different ways, and can be approached by scholars from so many different perspectives that it is impossible to discern a common thread between the articles. Worse still, some of the articles deal with the concept of pain only indirectly. Kristine Steenbergh's article, for instance, is primarily about anger and revenge. Certainly, these emotions can be construed as 'self-destructive', but to construe them as 'painful' seems to stretch the point too far. In another example, Lia van Gemert's paper claims to examine debates about pain in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic. While it does indeed describe contemporary discourses of pain, the 'debates' relate more to the acceptability of torture as a judicial procedure.

The diversity possibly accounts for the editors' decision not to arrange the essays into thematic sections – now conventional in edited collections – but if

the articles were intended to stand individually, then the editors ought to have ensured that each article included was equally as strong. The lengths of the papers are wildly inconsistent, with the shortest covering a mere thirteen pages, while the longest has blown out to 74. The differences in length also perhaps reflect variation in the degree of development each paper has undergone from the conference format; most though, sit comfortably in the middle.

The volume is richly illustrated, but the rationale behind the illustration is somewhat perplexing. A number of the authors are concerned with the representation of painful experiences in contemporary illustration or image, but to prove their case, reproduce a range of images depicting essentially the same thing. Even more mystifying is where images appear twice within a single essay, and where black and white images are duplicated in the colour plate section.

Most troublingly, *The Sense of Suffering* is marred by careless proofreading and it is evident that an English language editor was needed on some of the essays. Those by Touber, Bálant and Karl Enenkel, especially, deserved extra attention and Enenkel's essay, in particular, is riddled with numerous errors and awkward English constructions. We have a 'financiel interest' (p. 105, n. 27), 'a considerable amount of topics' (p. 123), dubious skills appearing 'on the market place' (p. 124), 'people who ly, cheat, gossip, quarrel and shout' (p. 147) and 'the Petrarch Master once and again perceives' (p. 148).

There is much of interest to be found within this collection. However, as a whole, its capacity to enhance our understanding of the experience of pain in the past is limited by its inability to offer a consistent theoretical approach that might be used in further research. In this context, it might have benefited from some tougher editorial decisions at the outset of the project.

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Verbist, Peter, *Duelling with the Past: Medieval Authors and the Problem of the Christian Era (c. 990–1135)* (Studies in the Early Middle Ages, 21), Turnhout, Brepols, 2010; hardback; pp. x, 366; R.R.P. €70.00; ISBN 9782503520735.

The dating of the Christian Era was established in the West through the work of Dionysius Exiguus in the sixth century and the popularisation of his Alexandrian Easter calculations in the eighth and ninth centuries. Yet as early as 725 the Venerable Bede, one of Dionysius' leading promoters, made an 'ironic' comment about the inaccuracy of Dionysius' dating of the Incarnation, and between the tenth and twelfth centuries the reckoning came under outright attack in a series of treatises. Peter Verbist's book is a systematic and challenging study of this debate.

Each chapter is dedicated to one of eight writers who challenged Dionysius' work, including such prominent figures as Abbo of Fleury (d. 1004) and Sigebert of Gembloux (d. 1112). After a brief background to the authors, chapters typically explain the importance of the manuscript traditions of their work, then provide a detailed commentary of it, before rounding off with notes on how this work influenced subsequent writers and how it contributed to a growing sense of intellectual autonomy in the period. In the process, Verbist is able to overturn the traditional views of many works, showing for example the logic of the little-studied tapestry of biblical and chronological extracts which form the bulk of Marianus Scottus' late eleventh-century chronicle.

The problems posed by Dionysius' work, and the solutions proposed in the High Middle Ages, are far from simple. On the whole, everything stemmed from calculations of Easter. Traditions based on the Gospels held that Christ was crucified the day after the full moon of the Jewish Passover on a Thursday and was resurrected on a Sunday. Latin traditions gave the date for this Sunday as 27 March, but Greek traditions preferred 25 March. The problem was that Dionysius' Easter tables, projected back to the first decades of the millennium, did not identify the right combination of lunar and weekday data in any of the years AD in which tradition suggested Christ had died (AD 32, 33 or 34).

Strategies for addressing this problem varied wildly, which for Verbist is part of their charm. Herigar of Lobbes (d. 1007), for example, recalibrated the year AD by adopting the tradition by which the Greeks had dated the incarnation eight years later in AD 9, partly because AD 42 was a better – but not perfect – fit for the Gospel data. Most of the computists here, however,

found different ways to defend the Latin tradition, placing the Passion in AD 12 with the Incarnation in either 21 BC (Abbo and Sigebert) or 22 BC (Marianus, Hezelo and an anonymous author of Limoges). Some did this on the basis of recalculating the age of the world relative to luni-solar cycles; Marianus, for example, put forward an argument that the year of Creation was the 54th year of the cyclical 532-year luni-solar cycle, and that therefore Christ had risen in AM 4,216, the thirteenth year of such a cycle. As this may suggest, the route through these arguments is far from simple, but Verbist's approach is direct and comprehensible throughout.

On less certain ground is Verbist's argument that this debate ties in with the 'discovery of the individual' in the High Middle Ages. What this means in practical terms is that people were prepared to use reason over authority, effectively inaugurating a period of 'intellectual autonomy'. There are a number of problems here. For a start, reason often played a significant role in innovative thought before Abbo of Fleury; one need only consider the works of the Irishmen Dicuil, Dungal or John Scottus Eriugena in the ninth century, let alone Bede, Alcuin, Isidore of Seville and others who wrote even earlier. It is not readily apparent that the computists discussed here really were more 'individualistic' in their intellectual life (or any other way) than these earlier scholars.

The problems grow in the history of *computus* and chronology itself, in which there was little consensus – and more than a little debate – until the ninth century, leaving the assault on the Bedan-Dionysiac paradigm in the tenth century looking less like a 'significant turning point' and more like just 'another turning point'. For sure, some intellectuals in the twelfth century, including some of the ones discussed in this book, unsurprisingly came closer to the ideals of later scholasticism than anyone in the ninth century, but I think Verbist runs the risk of oversimplifying the nature of intellectual discourse before AD 1000.

This aside, Verbist deserves credit for providing an excellent and detailed commentary on a difficult but important subject area. His book is a genuine achievement, and should become the starting point for all serious study of medieval *computus* and chronology in the High Middle Ages.

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Walker, Jonathan and Paul D. **Streufert**, eds, *Early Modern Academic Drama* (Studies in Performance and Early Modern Drama), Aldershot, Ashgate, 2008; hardback; pp. viii, 214; R.R.P. £55.00; ISBN 9780754664642.

Early Modern Academic Drama, edited by Jonathan Walker and Paul Streufert, is a vital re-evaluation of the performance cultures of Early Modern educational institutions. This collection seeks to build on documentary foundations in this field (from Frederick Boas' *University Drama in the Tudor Age* [1914] to the recent research of the *Records of Early English Drama* project) to reposition the field of academic drama, examine how academic plays negotiate political, religious and economic issues and investigate the production of distinct academic and theatrical cultures.

It achieves this by bringing together essays that read specific plays or performances as 'sites of cultural contestation' (p. 2). With examples spanning the period from Elizabethan England to early eighteenth-century America, the content of this collection is wide-ranging in both chronological and geographical terms. It also seeks to open up the definition of academic drama to encompass a consideration of the cultural place of the academy, the technologies of theatre and the educative function of role-playing. As Walker acknowledges in his excellent introduction, the volume cannot engage exhaustively with this vast field. Yet the essays compensate for this through detailed analyses of examples that gesture towards larger trajectories.

The essays are grouped into four interconnected clusters addressing political and religious issues; challenges to the humanist tradition, the relationships between students and their academic environments, and the academic community's relationship with its surrounding culture. Taking Elizabeth I's request that the intellectuals at the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge come to court to perform a comedy in 1592 as her starting point, Linda Shenk explores the shifting relationship between crown and gown during Elizabeth's reign. She links the perception of scholars as entertainers with representations of this figure on the professional stage in the 1590s, in addition to arguing for the political import of university productions at court. Paul Streufert's essay further considers the significance of university drama in sixteenth-century England through a reading of John Christopherson's *Jephthah*, performed at the University of Cambridge c. 1544. This play in Greek, Streufert suggests, blends biblical narrative and classical imagery to provide instruction in linguistic skills, ethical codes and in the formal elements

of classical tragedy while offering a nuanced understanding of contemporary religious identities. The way in which drama functions as a pedagogical tool is a recurrent theme in this volume. By locating academic plays within the contexts of political, religious and economic affairs, the essays illuminate this often-explored issue in original ways.

The gap between humanist ideals and institutional practices is another topic that cuts across this collection and essays by Ursula Potter and Emily Bryan specifically address this. Potter's noteworthy essay proposes that Thomas Ingelend's mid sixteenth-century grammar school play, *The Disobedient Child*, participates in class-inflected debates on the merits of public education over private tutoring and on the production of gendered subjects via schooling, and persuasively argues that this play functions as the grammar school's means of interacting with the community. It is the only essay in the collection on grammar school drama and one of only two that consider educational institutions other than the universities.

Bryan's essay returns to university drama to focus on a production of George Ruggle's *Ignoramus* performed before James I at Cambridge in 1615. Like Potter's essay, Bryan interprets academic drama as providing communities of students, tutors and administrators with the opportunity to reflect on and challenge the humanist educational programme. Bryan's discussion of the play's satirization of the legal profession is located within an excellent consideration of mimesis in university drama and a remarkable analysis of the production history of the play.

Eric Leonidas' essay leads on from Bryan's as it considers the production of *Gesta Grayorum* at the Inns of Court during the Christmas revels of 1594/5. It reads this series of performances as an opportunity for students to put their training to use and to adjust their knowledge through experience. Student experiences are also considered in Sarah Knight's essay on the potential psychological effects of individual study. She argues that college plays, including Thomas Tomkis' *Lingua* (1607), Barten Holyday's *Technogamia* (1617) and the *Parnassus* trilogy, draw on contemporary theatrical trends to explore the individual psychopathologies of scholars through the motif of the humours. Helen Higbee returns to the question of the pedagogical function of drama in her analysis of the depiction of mercantile interests in John Rickett's Cambridge play, *Byrsa Basilica* (c. 1633). She argues that this play, by making familiar the intricacies of business life and the emerging practice of insurance, is evidence of the implementation of curricular changes to serve the interests

of an increasingly middle class student body.

A major strength of this collection is the connections between individual essays which foreground crucial topics but approach them from diverse perspectives. In this respect, the shift to colonial America in the final essay by Odai Johnson may seem surprising. Yet this essay considers early American academic drama in relation to the traditions and debates surrounding university performances in Elizabethan England. It is an apt conclusion as it continues the work of a number of the essays in dissolving the boundaries between academic theatre and other performance contexts. Moreover, it leaves no doubt about the crucial intersections between academic drama and Early Modern political, social, educational and theatrical concerns, which this collection aims to demonstrate.

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Walker, William, *'Paradise Lost' and Republican Tradition from Aristotle to Machiavelli* (Cursor Mundi, 6), Turnhout, Brepols, 2009; cloth; pp. xiv, 332; R.R.P. €70.00; ISBN 9782503528779.

In this densely packed but readable book, William Walker argues against the critical consensus that John Milton's works uniformly support the ancient republican tradition. Rather, Walker traces a shift from the classical republicanism of Milton's earlier political writings to the Christian values of *Paradise Lost*, a work that, Walker argues convincingly, fundamentally breaks with republican tradition.

To make his argument, Walker reviews the development of republican political theory in a range of classical authors, including Aristotle, Cicero, Sallust and Livy. Through close readings of these authors, Walker identifies what he terms a 'family' of characteristics belonging to the classical republican tradition. These characteristics include: a view of human nature as comprised of passion and appetite controlled by reason, which is unique to humans; a focus on virtue as action aimed at living the virtuous life, which can be accomplished only in society; an antiformalist approach to government; the conception of civil liberties as contingent on a society's aims and desires; and finally, the privileging of military and political action in republican historical accounts. Walker argues that, by identifying these characteristics as a family of

associated but not essentially linked traits, it becomes possible to understand how later authors such as Machiavelli and Milton participate in, but also depart from, republican tradition.

After the introduction, each chapter begins with a review of one of the above characteristics as understood by the classical authors and by Machiavelli, and then goes on to explore Milton's views as expressed in *Paradise Lost*. This method is not especially elegant, but it has the virtue of clarity. In Chapter 1, Walker shows how Milton endorses classical views of human nature as morally neutral in a text like *Eikonoklastes*, but in *Paradise Lost* depicts humanity as utterly depraved as the result of the Fall, and rejects classical views of happiness as the ultimate aim of human existence. In Chapter 2, Walker examines the classical idea that the virtuous life can be fully lived only in society, not in isolation – an idea Milton rejects in *Paradise Lost* to emphasize how the virtuous life not only can, but often must, be lived in opposition to society.

In Chapter 3, Walker demonstrates the antiformalism of classical republicanism by showing how republicans often endorsed monarchy as a just form of government. *Paradise Lost* demonstrates, in Walker's analysis, a antiformalist approach very like that taken by the republicans, refusing to condemn any form of government *per se*, but rather presenting all such forms as both useful and as subject to corruption. This is an especially interesting argument, since most recent Milton scholars have tended to read the poem as critical of earthly monarchy. Walker does, however, argue that Milton takes his antiformalism not from the republican tradition, but rather from his rigorously Protestant reading of the Bible that takes 'the spirit as the source of whatever value human works and forms may have' (p. 188).

In Chapter 4, Walker identifies considerable variation in the classical republican approach to civil liberties, and suggests that Milton takes a rationalist approach which emphasizes how civil law can enable liberty, not restrain it. Walker also shows how, in *Paradise Lost* – in notable contrast to the earlier political tracts – Milton considers no civil liberty essential to the fulfilment of human ends, since for him the ultimate goal of human life is salvation, not glory or happiness.

Finally, in Chapter 5, Walker discusses the centrality of history to the classical republican tradition, a centrality that depends on the assumption that humans remain the same throughout time and, thus, can learn from the experiences of the past. Crucially, the tradition also assumes the paramount

value of Roman political and military history – an assumption not shared by Milton in *Paradise Lost*, who places Israel at the heart of human history. Furthermore, Milton regards human history as occurring within a much larger framework of struggle between supernatural forces, which affect and sometimes determine human destiny. Therefore, his epic praises suffering, endurance and faith over the militaristic or political values endorsed by the ancients.

In conclusion, Walker characterizes *Paradise Lost* as 'merely a distant relative in the republican family at best, and a hostile one at that' (p. 301). Walker's analysis, based on close reading, certainly bears out this argument, although at times I found his book overwhelming in its detail. However, I also found it extremely useful for understanding *Paradise Lost* as a Christian poem which challenges humanistic ideas of human dignity and power – a reading that I, like Walker, find 'refreshing' in its difference from modern assertions of self-esteem, self-sufficiency and pride (p. 312).

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