

Reviews

Adams, Tracy, *The Life and Afterlife of Isabeau of Bavaria* (Rethinking Theory) Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010; cloth; pp. xxvi, 338; 1 b/w illustration; R.R.P. US\$55.00; ISBN 9780801896255.

Despite its title, *The Life and Afterlife of Isabeau of Bavaria* is not a standard biography of one particular Queen of France, Isabeau of Bavaria (1371–1435). Instead it is a book about the making and unmaking of historical reputations, about the methodology of writing about lives long since passed and about how a critical approach to contemporary historical sources and historiography can alter significantly preconceived, negative views held about female rulers.

As Tracy Adams herself admits, at first she had assumed that Isabeau's historical reputation – as someone who was cupidinous, dissolute, greedy, quarrelsome, fractious, obese, and an unnatural mother – was factual. A further investigation of the available sources revealed, however, that there was no documentation to support these charges and that these accusations could be put down to tried and true misogynist stereotypes. A small body of recent research on Isabeau had also found no evidence to sustain the charges against the queen, but the general negative historical view of her has held sway. Thus, the goal of Adams's book is to examine why the 'black legend' of Isabeau of Bavaria has had such a strong and lasting resonance.

The book begins with an account of the key events in Isabeau's life. Her father was the Duke of Bavaria, Stephen III, and her mother was Taddea Visconti. Her marriage to Charles VI gave her the title of Queen of France. Chapter 1 documents her periods of regency, which occurred because her husband was frequently mentally ill. Isabeau was at the centre of French politics during her lifetime, including in the Armagnac–Burgundian feud – during which Isabeau frequently changed sides – that occupied much of her political energy. Involvement in feuds and frequently changing sides was the norm in fifteenth-century France, Adams informs us, and the constant changing of alliances was evidence of her skill as a political player. Yet it was her involvement in this feud and her regular changing of sides that was one reason for her later reputation amongst historians as someone who was politically incompetent.

In the second chapter, Adams discusses Isabeau's afterlife amongst historians from her death through to the few revisionist defenders. She establishes the wafer-thin evidence, misinterpretations, and biases towards this 'foreign' queen by historians of France, with her life becoming almost an archetype of the 'bad' queen. She was also compared to the often-misunderstood Marie-Antoinette – also portrayed as a 'foreign corrupt and dissolute queen' by her many detractors. It was common for queens and other powerful women to be portrayed negatively by contemporaries, and by later historians of medieval and early modern Europe as 'foreign' and it would have been useful if the hatred of the foreign Isabeau had been placed in this context.

The crux of Adams's argument begins in Chapter 3, where she asserts that Isabeau adopted the role that her contemporaries expected of her as a mediator queen, which Fradenburg and others have argued was the role expected of queens in medieval Europe. Refracted through this lens, Adams argues, Isabeau's life can be viewed in a totally different way. Her contemporary historical reputation was in fact a positive one – unusual for a 'foreign' female ruler in medieval and early modern Europe. Many of the accusations that historians have levied at her – of poor political judgement, licentiousness, and a lack of maternal feeling – can, when closely examined, be put down to a misreading or misunderstanding of the historical context of documents or indeed of Isabeau's use of her mediating role to manipulate the varied and dangerous political situations in which she found herself. Her apparent carefree attitude to her son being held hostage was, in fact, a deliberate strategy, believed to be the best way to ensure his safe return. Isabeau's betrayal of her last surviving son at the Treaty of Troyes was an action that rated her much opprobrium amongst later historians. When refracted through the lens of the mediator queen, the action can be seen as an attempt to bring a long-running feud to an end, after the realization that there was no other way to deal with the situation. As Adams's last chapter shows, it was Isabeau's astuteness that enabled her frequently ill husband to confidently grant her the powers to act as regent and she was in reality a loving mother to her children.

The inclusion of Adams's book in the series 'Rethinking Theory' is apt because the book is as much about rethinking how we analyse the historical reputations of the people we study as it is about Isabeau. Apart from those who are interested in how and why powerful often 'foreign' women are represented negatively in medieval and early modern Europe and the assumptions that lie behind that view, this book is of use to all historians who want to rethink critically the basic tenets of how we approach our subjects

and the various ways in which we analyse, interpret, and criticize their actions and make or unmake their historical reputations.

Natalie Tomas
School of Philosophical, Historical, and International Studies
Monash University

Anstey, Peter R. *John Locke and Natural Philosophy*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011; hardback; pp. xii, 252; R.R.P. £35.00; ISBN 9780199589777.

This book emerges from Peter Anstey's collaboration with Lawrence Principe in editing Locke's writings on natural philosophy and medicine for the Clarendon edition of Locke's *Works*. It is both a commentary on those writings and an exploration of their relationship with Locke's best-known work, *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*. In addition to Locke's published works, Anstey draws extensively on Locke's notes and his voluminous correspondence with other luminaries of the Scientific Revolution, most notably Boyle and Newton but also lesser known figures such as Sydenham, Stillingfleet, and Molyneux. Much of this material has not been previously examined and indeed the authorship of some surviving works, in particular Locke's reviews of others' works, remains undetermined.

In his introduction, Anstey explains that, in the seventeenth century, philosophy was commonly divided into moral and natural philosophy, the latter of which was further subdivided into experimental or speculative methodologies. Descartes was regarded as the foremost exponent of the speculative school which developed systems based on first principles. Bacon, followed by Boyle, championed the experimental school, which aimed to construct natural histories based on experiment and observation. Locke followed Bacon and Boyle but from the 1690s was also influenced by Newton, whose *Principia* introduced a mathematical approach, which ultimately became dominant. Locke himself was a physician, and medical concerns continued to influence his philosophical interests.

Anstey's study seeks to establish four theses. Firstly, that Locke was committed to experimental natural philosophy and sceptical of the epistemic status of speculative systems. Secondly, that he believed a demonstrative science was unobtainable and hence the development of Baconian natural histories was the most effective method for the advancement of knowledge. Thirdly, that Locke, like Boyle and Hooke, practised speculative natural philosophy and that, like Boyle, he favoured the corpuscularian hypothesis (that matter consisted of small sub-microscopic particles) and mercurialist

transmutational chymistry (derived from Paracelsus, Van Helmont, and the alchemical tradition as opposed to the Galenic theory of the humours). Finally, that Locke was influenced by the mathematical experimental method of Newton, which led him to change his views in the 1690s.

Chapter 1 examines Locke's aims in writing the *Essay concerning Human Understanding* and concludes that his preference for the experimental over the speculative approach stemmed from pessimism about obtaining direct epistemic access to the real nature or essence of things. This view is further developed in the next chapter where the problem of corpuscular pessimism is seen to underlie Locke's endorsement of the natural historical method, that is the accumulation of observations concerning a particular matter. Chapter 2 goes into greater detail about Locke's debt to Bacon, his relationship with Boyle, and his own attempts at natural philosophy, ranging from experiments for Boyle on the pressure of gases in mines to attempts at epidemiology to test the miasma theory of disease.

Anstey next looks at Locke's attitudes to hypotheses and analogy. He concludes they were considerably less favourable than is generally believed, and hence Locke should not be regarded as a precursor of modern scientific practice in this respect. Locke endorsed Newton's demolition of Descartes's vortex theory of planetary motion, grappled with competing theories on the biblical Deluge, and criticized Bernoulli's theory of cohesion. Although Locke's analytic skills were excellent, he was no mathematician. He was able to accommodate Newton's mathematical method with his existing views on the status of mathematics and of demonstrative reasoning generally but realized that Newton's use of foundational principles – principles that were actually justified by facts – challenged the natural history model of Baconian experimental philosophy.

Boyle had inspired Locke's study of chymistry and Locke was one of three physicians to whom Boyle left his papers on the subject. Although Locke followed Boyle in his pursuit of the Sophic Mercury, he kept his distance from speculative theories and his interest in chymistry, as indeed his extensive botanical investigations (later used by Linnaeus), remained closely tied to his medical interests. Generation was clearly such an interest and Locke followed the prevailing seminal principle, including its extension to pathogenic agents and minerals. He was naturally led to a consideration of the nature of species, where he opposed essentialism in favour of a relativized conventionalism.

Anstey ends his examination of Locke's natural philosophy by concluding that the *Essay concerning Human Understanding* 'is a genuine attempt at a natural history of the understanding; a natural history both of the genealogy of our ideas in general ... and of our ideas about the particular sorts of substances

that are to be found in nature ... It is a work of experimental philosophy in its own right' (pp. 224–45). Anstey has produced a meticulous work of philosophical scholarship that should be of great interest to serious students of the history of science and indeed to anyone interested in the fundamental concepts structuring our understanding of the natural world.

Lola Sharon Davidson
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
University of Technology Sydney

Barber, Malcolm and Keith **Bate**, trans., *Letters from the East: Crusaders, Pilgrims and Settlers in the 12th–13th Centuries* (Crusade Texts in Translation, 18), Farnham, Ashgate, 2010; cloth; pp. x, 188; 2 maps; R.R.P. £55.00; ISBN 9780754663560.

This is a book of texts rather than a textbook in the modern sense of an elementary introduction to a subject. Although reading through the letters with the aid of the chronology and maps provided will give some idea of the course of the numerous crusades launched between 1098 and 1306, the more background knowledge of the crusading centuries readers can bring to the letters the more they will get out of them. To this end, there is a useful Introduction which deals with the formal aspects of the medieval letter and its customary five parts, the role of the letter as public bulletin rather than conveyor of private information or emotion, and some of the matters that they canvass.

The great strength of the collection is its scope. It includes not just letters from a wide range of Christians but also some from Eastern inhabitants of longer standing, both real and imagined. Thus we find letters from the Mongol leaders Hulegu Il-Khan and Ghazan Il-Khan of Persia (Letters 72, 81). There is also one from Rashid al-Din, leader of the Syrian Assassins aka the Old Man of the Mountain (Letter 52) (though this was actually a forgery, probably written in the East). The letter which purported to be from the legendary Prester John (Letter 33) was apparently a piece of propaganda concocted to support Frederick Barbarossa in his struggle against the papacy. As might be expected, a large proportion of the letters comes from officials of the military orders settled in the East, the Templars and Hospitallers. Interestingly the attitudes of the writers do not suggest a clash of civilizations, Christian versus Islamic. Several writers reserve their worst aspersions for what they think of as heretical Christian sects, such as the Armenians, Syrians, and Jacobites, but more especially the Orthodox Greeks of the Byzantine Empire. Unfortunately

the editors could find no letters to include from women who accompanied the crusading armies or were settled in the East.

How much annotation to provide is always a difficult problem and depends on the proposed audience. While the footnotes usually identify people and places mentioned in the text, the reader who wants to know a bit more will need to go elsewhere. If undergraduates are seen as the principal audience for these translations, more extensive notes might have been in order. For instance, in Letter 66 from Richard Earl of Cornwall we read that ‘Two brothers in discord in the lap of their mother whom they are supposed to protect have become too rich and arrogant’ (p. 137). For those unfamiliar with the history of the new knighthood, an explanation that this passage refers to the Hospitallers and Templars as protectors of Mother Church would have been helpful.

Likewise, in Letter 64 the death of the Head of the Dominicans in the Holy Land is reported but his name is not given. Without knowing his identity it is difficult to discover the manner of his death, which was apparently followed by miracles. Was it death in battle or some more direct form of martyrdom? And what of his two companions? The translation does not make it clear whether they accompanied him at his death or in death, though the original text points to the latter. A more literal translation would read: ‘His companions, brother Gerald the clerk and brother Ivan the conversus, died with him’.

The translations seem generally accurate and idiomatic, always remembering that many of these missives were written in a formal, not to say portentous idiom which the translator needs to reproduce. Of course there are inevitably some quibbles. In the Letter of Hulegu mentioned above there is a puzzling passage describing the gift sent by Louis IX to Guyuk. The translation reads ‘... you took the trouble to send as a sign of particular friendship ... your chapel in a special cloth (*refocilationem*) with a dedication to the divine name’ (p. 158). The picture conjured up by these words recalls medieval representations of patrons holding in their hands a model of the church they have founded. In this particular case the model church seems to be associated with a cloth perhaps embroidered with the divine name.

However, when we go back to Paul Meyvaert’s original article from which the text of the letter is drawn (*Viator*, 9 (1980), 245–59) it becomes clear that the reference is to a chapel made of cloth; further research indicates that it was actually a tent made in the form of a chapel. I have found no instances of the word *refocilatio* used to mean ‘a cloth’, special or otherwise. If taken in its usual sense of ‘refreshment’ the lines would state that the tent–chapel, dedicated to the divine name, was sent to Guyuk ‘to strengthen

him spiritually'. Nevertheless, such minor aberrations hardly detract from an otherwise fascinating and accessible contribution to the growing body of literature on the crusades.

Sabina Flanagan
School of History and Politics
The University of Adelaide

Bork, Robert, William W. **Clark**, and Abby **McGehee**, eds, *New Approaches to Medieval Architecture* (AVISTA Studies in the History of Medieval Technology, Science and Art, 8) Farnham, Ashgate, 2011; hardback; pp. 258; 66 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £65.00; ISBN 9781409422280.

Over the last three decades, the writing of architectural history has expanded not only to include social history but also to embrace new technologies and their potential to change our understandings of historical architecture and, indeed, our visual perceptions of these buildings. A more nuanced historiography has emerged, moving beyond the modernist analysis of style, to include workshop practices, patronage, and the functions that these structures performed in society. This collection consists of sixteen essays originally presented at AVISTA-sponsored conference sessions between 2007 and 2009 and ably and succinctly represents several of these trends. AVISTA itself was founded in 1984 by a group of scholars, including Jean Gimpel, all interested in the connections between art, science, and technology, and has consistently been at the centre of discussions about interpretation and interdisciplinarity. The book is divided into four sections: a reassessment of the master narratives of medieval architecture; patronage and institutional contexts; geometry and workshop practices; and the role of new technologies.

For me, one of the most thought-provoking lines of enquiry is that of examining a building diachronically. To study a building at its point of origin, recreating the original designs of the builders and the initial objectives of its patrons can ignore its later significance. It could be argued that to study the construction of the work is to study its prehistory. While its emergence out of a particular cultural and social context is important, a building's life beyond this is also of interest. Nicola Camerlenghi, in his essay 'The *Longue Durée* and the Life of Buildings', argues a fourth dimensional approach to the examination of a building. In it he uses such useful examples as Hagia Sophia and the impact of this building's changing roles as it moved from church to mosque to museum. He also includes the example of Old St Peter's and New St Peter's: both buildings are of great importance historically, both occupied

the same site, and both are expressive of quite different cultural values. Camerlenghi makes the important point that, for medieval buildings, it is as much later perceptions of their relevance or their adaption to changing needs that are of tangible significance for their survival, remodelling, or demolition.

Stephen Murray's 'Back to Beauvais (2009)' looks at the ongoing problems in the stability of this notorious cathedral, the insights gained from recent investigations, and the impact of public perceptions on its preservation. Other essays in this section include one by Vasileios Marinis, who, using Byzantine examples from after the ninth century, challenges two common assumptions about churches. He argues that the assumptions that they firstly were primarily built to accommodate liturgy and that there was an explicit connection between architectural form and liturgical practice, and secondly that the original use of a space takes precedence and overshadows later usage, are misleading. He also cautions the reader against extrapolating universal principles from conclusions drawn from such studies as Thomas F. Matthew's *The Early Churches of Constantinople* (Pennsylvania State University Press, 1971) that focused on buildings from a specific region or era.

The second section focuses on patronage and institutional and architectural contexts. William Clark and Thomas Waldeman have collaborated to disentangle the chronology of Saint-Denis under Abbot Suger, drawing on charters, building archaeology, and manuscripts produced in the Abbey to produce a new timeline. Michael Reeves meanwhile challenges the reputation for innovation given to Henry III's Great Halls, pointing to the influence of the Great Halls found in bishops' palaces.

Villard de Honnecourt – who has been an inspiration for AVISTA since its founding – is the subject of two studies in this collection. Carl Barnes looks at discussions about the identity of this enigmatic figure, through examination of the evidence provided by his famous sketchbook. Once again dismissing his identification as an architect, closer attention to the drawings of Cambrai and Reims leads Barnes to the theory that de Honnecourt may have acted as a lay agent for the bishop or chapter at Cambrai. In an essay in the geometry section of this collection, Robert Bork looks at iconic images by de Honnecourt, in particular his elevation of Laon Cathedral's towers. Bork argues that they indicate that de Honnecourt may have drawn on information from the workshop at Laon.

In the final two sections, the discussion becomes more technical, which is appropriate given the obvious practical elements found in the engineering of construction. Although this is important, Nigel Hiscock is well known for exploring the symbolic use of geometry in the design of Gothic buildings, reviving an approach found in such important early twentieth-century writers

as Otto von Simson. The final section includes discussions such as Vivian Paul and her collaborators' use of ground-penetrating radar to uncover the early history of Valmagne, while Harry Titus uses photogrammetric surveying to map the vaults at Auxerre Cathedral, and the different solutions produced. Laser-based scanning was also used to help date the use of flying buttresses at Notre Dame in Paris, and to help in the reconstruction of the evolution of Southwell Minster. Michael Davis, in the final essay, explores the implications and challenges of new visual technologies for architectural history.

I found this a fascinating collection covering such an array of approaches that it is bound to appeal to a wide range of interests in architectural history. It challenges in very productive ways our assumptions about architectural history, provoking further research questions for the study of buildings.

Judith Collard
The University of Otago

Breen, Katharine, *Imagining an English Reading Public, 1150–1400* (Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature, 79), Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2010; hardback; pp. 300, 13 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £55.00, AU\$190.00; ISBN 9780521199223.

Central to Katharine Breen's study is an examination of medieval theories of *habitus* and its relationship to language and Christian virtue. Her focus on this topic reflects the influence of the sociologist Bourdieu, and the term is used by her in a broad, general sense to signify the set of acquired patterns of thought, behaviour, and taste that result from internalizing culture or objective social structures. Her investigation is primarily concerned, however, with medieval conceptions of *habitus*, particularly the acquisition of Latin grammar as a process which formed one's moral being. Medieval theories of *habitus*, she argues, 'overlap and richly complicate Bourdieu's understanding', and one of the aims of her multi-directional study is to reconnect Bourdieu's *habitus* to its medieval origins by offering 'a historically specific account of *habitus* [chiefly based on Sulpicius Severus, Isidore of Seville, and Thomas Aquinas] as a governing concept that can and should inform modern uses of the term' (p. 8).

Whereas for Bourdieu *habitus* is primarily negative and unconscious, and hence difficult to change, medieval philosophers and theologians, though in agreement that many of its operations are subterranean, regarded *habitus* as a conscious tool for reforming fallen human nature in the direction of prelapsarian perfection. In contrast to the acquisition of fluency in the vernacular, generally regarded as devoid of grammar and passively ingested

like mother's milk, the rules of Latin had to be learnt until fluency became second nature as the student became simultaneously regulated by the language he studied and the discipline of the (generally monastic) classroom in which he studied it.

Originally, therefore, the *habitus* of Christian virtue designated the inner and outer perfections of the cloistered religious, inextricably combining the meanings 'settled disposition' and 'monastic clothing'. Reformers concerned with laypeople's access to salvation sought to define other gateways to the *habitus* of Christian virtue that challenged the privileged role of Latin. Breen traces the history of the English word 'habit' from its first attestation in the *Ancrene Wisse*, whose author pries apart the outer and inner meanings hitherto regarded as virtually inseparable, through to 1370–1400. The expansion of meaning to include the clothing and ethical dispositions of laypersons in that period, earlier unthinkable because it implies the possibility of vernacular *habitus*, coincided with what Breen describes as 'a crisis point' of controversies surrounding the adaptation of Latinate *habitus* for lay audiences.

Collectively, Breen argues, efforts to develop a vernacular *habitus* provided 'the crucial conceptual framework that underlies the development of an English reading public' (p. 5). She also contends that the 'translation' of *habitus* into vernacular terms, rather than the translation of textual content, is central to late fourteenth-century controversies over the production of vernacular texts, and that it is 'the foundational practice that supports complex vernacular writing' (p. 6). Her declared aim is not to contribute to historicist study of an English reading public, but to investigate authors' projections and manipulations of their audiences – the ways in which they imaged, created, and sought to control the readership of their texts, and the strategies they deployed to shape their reception.

Breen examines only two examples of works engaged in creating alternatives to Latinate *habitus* prior to the fourteenth century, and of these only the *Orrmulum* can properly be described as vernacular. Matthew Paris's establishment of map-reading conventions in the itinerary maps added to one of his Latin chronicles represents a visual analogue to a literary writer's deployment of strategies for controlling the reception of his work, but to blur the essential distinction between literal and metaphorical by terming this kind of non-linguistic communication 'extreme vernacular' (p. 12) merely edges us closer to the already imminent risk of universal adoption of the Humpty-Dumpty principle of language use. Two examples seem scarcely sufficient to establish the twelfth- and thirteenth-century existence of a phenomenon which, Breen claims, provided 'the crucial conceptual framework that underlies the development of an English reading public'. And

the restricted circulation of both works (particularly the *Ormmulum*) makes it hard to believe, in the absence of comparable examples, that they exerted any influence on the development of a vernacular reading public, whether real or imagined.

As a reader whose academic *habitus* is of a more historicist bent than Breen's, I find her book thought-provoking and interesting, but not essential reading in terms of my particular interest in the development of an English reading public. Regarded, however, as a study of medieval *habitus* which creates a reading context for the two works Breen explores in her closing chapters, the C text of *Piers Plowman* and Chaucer's *Treatise on the Astrolabe*, her somewhat misleadingly titled *Imagining an English Reading Public, 1150–1400*, is an excellent book. Deeply considered and extensively researched, it illuminates *Piers Plowman* and Chaucer's *Treatise* in new ways by locating them within a complex understanding of the use of the vernacular in late fourteenth-century England.

Stephanie Hollis
 Department of English
 The University of Auckland

Capodiecì, Luisa, *Medicæa Medæa: Art, astres et pouvoir à la Cour de Catherine de Médicis* (Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance, 484), Geneva, Librairie Droz, 2011; pp. 728; 122 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. US\$130.00; ISBN 9782600014045.

This is an erudite work that struggles to contain the many varied strains of scholarship that it explores in the service of its central argument. Luisa Capodiecì's aim is to study astrological images, by which she means works with an explicitly talismanic quality and intent to effect, possessing a virtue that come from the stars. Her focus is to examine where these images occur in the figurative arts and to analyse precisely what they were intended to achieve. She makes clear that her focus is *la magie savante*, not demonology or popular witchcraft. Capodiecì studies the epistemological traditions in which the programme of the images (as well as their talismanic effects, if any) is based.

Where Frances Yates's work sought to prove that magical meanings did pervade the culture and arts under the later Valois, Capodiecì sets out to isolate specific instances and to determine what their meanings were. If the work of Yates serves as one springboard for the study, so too does that of her supervisor, Philippe Morel. His 2008 *Mélissa: magie, astres et démons dans l'art italien de la Renaissance* which analysed Italian Renaissance paintings with

magical or talismanic significance offers a contemporary culture to which Capodiecici can compare Valois France.

Capodiecici's project spans from the arrival of Catherine de Medici in France in 1547, to 1581 with the *Balet comique de la Royne*, which, she argues, is the final demonstration of Catherine's power before her death in 1589. A driving question for Capodiecici is to determine what role Catherine played in this field. However, readers expecting Catherine to be the heart of the study will be disappointed. Many of the works analysed are not directly related, or attributed, to Catherine, who is the explicit focus of only the book's first section. Here, Capodiecici recaps the long tradition of her reputation of a practitioner of the 'dark arts', a discussion that surprisingly does not consider whether Catherine's gender might be a factor in the negative interpretations of her use of astrology.

Other chapters explore items that have only speculative (and typically seventeenth- and eighteenth-century) attributions to Catherine. These include a manuscript merging classical, Greek, and Hebrew ideas about the power of angels, a bracelet combining features of an amulet and talisman, and books held in the Royal Library. Even acknowledging the uncertainty of their connection to Catherine, Capodiecici concludes that their purposes were largely acceptable practices, protective rather than malefic, and within mainstream platonic and hermetic traditions. Capodiecici then explores the capacity of *impresa* to be magical objects in the sense that they encapsulated the soul of their subject in word and image, and allowed humans to access divine truths. This leads to an examination of Henri II and Catherine's choice of symbols (the moon, Juno, candles, butterflies, and Prudence among them). Catherine's rainbow imagery, for example, may have represented a bridge between divine and terrestrial spheres, but Capodiecici suggests again that contemporary functions of such images appear conventional rather than as talismanic.

The second section commences with a detailed examination of philosophical and theological principles behind the potentialities of astrological images. Capodiecici then studies the decorative programme in the Ulysses Gallery at Fontainebleau. Her highly detailed description of the various components of the ceiling's design (no longer extant), and of the multiple interpretations of the figure of Ulysses in contemporary texts, leads to the conclusion that it was not a talismanic image. Likewise, analysis of the astrological intent of the ceiling in the Pavilion des Poëles suggests that its significance is largely horoscopic, reflecting expectations about the king's destiny as a great ruler. This contributes to Capodiecici's building argument that the Valois did not present evidence of any sophisticated use of astral magic that warrants the dark reputation Catherine de Medici gained.

Capodiecici further studies the role of images of prodigious signs such as comets and stars, as well as horoscopic references, on medals and tokens linked to the Valois kings. These demonstrate that in general such images – not surprisingly – were incorporated into a programme of propaganda designed to prop up the weak reputation of the final Valois kings. Capodiecici also explores whether there were potential relationships between the painting and ceremonial work of Antoine Caron intended to serve a magical purpose. However, Catherine's choice of symbols (including the sybil, Artemesia, and the fountain) and their applications, it seems, serve to emphasize rather more concrete aims, such as Catherine's importance in the fulfilment of her children's prophetic destiny, than any deeper supernatural role.

Finally, Capodiecici turns to an analysis of festivals and other ceremonial events, including analysis of imagery, clothing, dances, and music. Her study of royal entries traces the use of the Graeco-Roman pantheon as metaphors for the relationship between the king and his people, and charts historicized, then more biblical, emphases under successive monarchs. Here she poses the provocative question of whether the entire royal entry was in itself a ritual of evocation–invocation, designed to provide celestial benefits to the people, but the answer, she suggests, is no. An analysis of royal attire in such ceremonies confirms that these were all designed with largely encomiastic, rather than magical, purpose in mind. Other ceremonial occasions analysed include the courtly festival at Bayonne in 1565, the wedding of Anne de Joyeuse and Marguerite de Vaudémont, the *balet de Vendosme*, and finally the *Balet comique* of 1581. In essence, Capodiecici cannot discern a complex cosmology behind these but rather a fairly clear message; the Valois line was solid, dependable, and would be the salvation of France.

This review by no means covers all of the many objects of Capodiecici's wide-ranging study, and much less the intimate detail in which she analyses each. The conclusion is refreshingly clear, particularly because Capodiecici allows her own voice to come to the fore, and to provide a much-needed summary to the wealth of information here. Chapters and sections could certainly have used such clarity, and perhaps it would have helped to identify more strongly the main arguments (as well as side tracks which might have been condensed or simply referenced to the original thesis from which the book stems).

Capodiecici's conclusion is that the Valois' use of astrological images was widespread, took many decorative and symbolic forms, and was complex in the sense that it offered multiple interpretations, but it was not necessarily always an intellectually sophisticated or coherent programme, and certainly not one that was directed towards a operational, supernatural goal. In its

own way, the work is an attempt to rehabilitate the reputation of Catherine de Medici by demonstrating how much French interest in astrology predated Catherine and held (unlike in the contemporary Italian states) a largely eulogistic or encyclopaedic value. It is a pity then that, by linking these elements to her in the title, no doubt playing to reader assumptions, the work continues to make that very connection.

Susan Broomhall
School of Humanities (History)
The University of Western Australia

Cummings, Brian, ed., *The Book of Common Prayer: The Texts of 1549, 1559, and 1662*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011; hardback; pp. 896; 4 b/w facsimile title pages; R.R.P. £16.99; ISBN 9780199207176.

The year 2012 marks the 350th anniversary of the 1662 version of the *Book of Common Prayer*, the prayer book which comprises the daily offices, the Communion service, and the Ordinal of the Church of England. Brian Cummings's edition of three different incarnations of the *Book of Common Prayer*, including the 1662 text, is therefore a timely publication. Produced in time for, and because of, this major anniversary, Cummings's text presents in sequence the earliest version of the prayer book, produced during the reign of King Edward VI in 1549, a revised version introduced by Queen Elizabeth I in 1559, and the 1662 version, brought into existence after the Restoration of King Charles II in 1660 and the Savoy Conference of 1661.

Arguably the 1662 version is the textual incarnation of the *Book of Common Prayer* most familiar today, both to adherents of the Anglican Church and to a wider culture beyond. Its familiarity stems on one level from the continued use of the offices for morning and evening prayer as the basis for Matins and Evensong in Cathedrals; these are the services that are the chief point of contact with the Anglican Church for many tourists and visitors. More broadly, the idioms of its language and certain key phrases ('earth to earth, ashes to ashes') continue to be familiar in modern English.

Thus as the *Book of Common Prayer* enters the 350th year of the 1662 edition, it is possible to think of that version as familiar and by now time honoured and hallowed by centuries of unchanged language and theology. Cummings's collection is therefore a valuable reminder that a book celebrated for the eloquence of its language and the stability of worship which it engendered has in fact charted an uneven passage through history.

By placing the 1549 and 1559 texts in the same collection as the familiar 1662 version, Cummings is able to illustrate the textual transformations that

the *Book of Common Prayer* experienced over more than one hundred years of development, but also that what exactly comprised the prayer book was by no means a fixed matter. While the daily offices and the Communion are standard elements of all three versions, other aspects of the text have been unstable and subject to shifts in emphasis due to external political pressure. Thus the 1662 version manifests itself as a royalist text, containing services commemorating the martyrdom of King Charles I and celebrating the restoration of King Charles II. It also contains a service of thanksgiving for deliverance from the 1605 Gunpowder Plot. The 1549 and 1559 differ in the services they promote, the level of ritual and gesture they permit, and the sources of their theology. The prayer book, far from being a work characterized by familiarity or stability, comes across in this collection as a volatile text. As Cummings makes clear, the idea of an immutable *Book of Common Prayer* is difficult to sustain.

While the bulk of this text is the reproduction of the three different textual versions, Cummings has also provided an Introduction in which he makes a number of stimulating observations about the history and influence of the prayer book. One is that for a book which is now enshrined as a classic of English literature, its original reception is striking for the depth and vehemence of the reactions it provoked and the capacity it carried to offend. It also served as an engine of change during the Reformation, driving forward reform of doctrine and liturgy.

The book's capacity to offend was deep-seated. The 1549 version – the first incarnation of the text and the one overseen by Archbishop Thomas Cranmer – was revolutionary in offering services entirely in English and in its approach to the doctrine of Transubstantiation. Cummings also makes clear that a strong irony runs through the history of the reception of the prayer book. For Catholics, the prayer book, in all its different editions, was an unsatisfactory and watered down version of the Sarum rite, the dominant liturgical form of late medieval England. For more ardent Protestants, the prayer book was as good as going to mass since its rubrics and offices contained much that was carried over from the Catholic missal. Extensive textual analysis uncovers the extent to which Archbishop Cranmer left the theology and language of the prayer book delicately poised, perhaps accounting for the deep dissatisfaction it provoked.

This book is an exemplary text. Although it is not a facsimile edition, the reproduction of the three different prayer books is immaculate, and the introductory commentary is original and thought provoking. Finally Cummings provides a useful bibliography and glossary. Oxford University

Press has produced a worthy text to mark and interpret this significant anniversary.

Marcus Harmes
University of Southern Queensland

Davis, Alex, *Renaissance Historical Fiction: Sidney, Deloney, Nashe, Woodbridge and Rochester*, D. S. Brewer, 2011; hardback; pp. 264; 5 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £50.00; ISBN 9781843842682.

Alex Davis tackles a hitherto neglected subject which he labels ‘Renaissance historical fiction’: a general term rather than one denoting a new genre (p. 8). He argues that the historical settings constructed in Sir Philip Sidney’s *The Countess of Pembroke’s Arcadia* (1593), Thomas Deloney’s *Jack of Newbury* (1619), *Thomas of Reading* (1612), and *The Gentle Craft* (1637), and Thomas Nashe’s *The Unfortunate Traveller* (1594) are integral to a complex understanding of these works. In the Introduction, Davis discusses Erwin Panofsky’s influential *Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art* (1960) that defines the Renaissance as being a period with a sense of history. Therefore, the Renaissance was able to distinguish itself from the historical ‘Other’.

However, Davis outlines an alternative approach to understanding how the Renaissance viewed history. He argues ‘for a doubled strangeness or alterity in Renaissance historical fiction’, or an awareness that the Renaissance is part of the ‘history’ it defines itself against (p. 27). Davis illustrates his thesis with an extract from the third book of Sidney’s revised *Arcadia*, which uses historical knowledge to confuse and trouble its readers who identify more with the evil aunt Cecropia than with the pious Pamela. In contrast to Panofsky’s separation of past from Renaissance present, Davis contends that Renaissance historical fiction has ‘the desire to make the past productive in the present’ (p. 31). His formal close readings of Elizabethan prose fiction show how these texts use the Renaissance’s method of recording history to discursive effect.

In order to demonstrate that Renaissance historical fiction is not simply confined to Sidney, Deloney, and Nashe, Davis uses Chapter 1 to demonstrate the Elizabethan fascination with history in an additional seven historical fictions. A prime example is Thomas Lodge’s *The Life and Death of William Longbeard* (1593) that uses Robert Fabyan’s *Chronicle or Concordance of Histories* as ‘authoritative historical fact’ (p. 44). The text also acknowledges that a single dominant history is not a definitive account of the past, but plays with the notion of numerous histories. In Robert Greene’s *Ciceronis Amor* (1589), Davis analyses the text’s strategies for representing realistic historical detail. He argues that the humanist practice of translating classical

works from Latin to English and back again, and its fascination with letters are themes that shape *Ciceronis Amor*. Greene's text achieves a stylistic historical accuracy through its repeated engagement with Ciceronian Latin. Another noteworthy analysis is of John Lyly's *Euphues and His England* (1580), where Davis examines an historical fiction contained within the main narrative. The text's historical moment describes 'a disreputable past' that undermines the narrative's panegyric of Elizabethan England (p. 78).

Chapter 2 is devoted to Sidney's new *Arcadia* set in ancient Greece, an historical setting that is popularly thought to be little more than a thinly disguised Elizabethan political allegory. Davis argues that Sidney's ostensible pastoral romance can be classed as historical fiction. He identifies in the text 'deliberate anachronisms', such as a coach crash in ancient Greece (p. 104). These anachronisms at different social and cultural levels form layers of history Davis terms 'coordinated' chronology (p. 119). The effect is that the *Arcadia* does not construct a realistic ancient Greece, but represents a cornucopia of historical styles for its readers to discern.

Chapter 3 argues that Deloney's work can be given the generic label 'early modern historical culture', or texts that use historical knowledge to create further significance (p. 145). Yet Davis discovers that Deloney's representations of different pasts all convey the same meaning. The implication is that the Renaissance desire to make the past useful might also destroy its importance as historical knowledge. Davis ends his book, in Chapter 4, with Nashe's *The Unfortunate Traveller*. He identifies how Nashe's critics focused on imposing a cohesive structure upon the Elizabethan writer's patchwork narrative. Davis, however, argues that Nashe satirizes the Renaissance's preoccupation to make history profitable. Nashe, Davis claims, views his own historical writing as being in 'a parasitic relationship to the existing genres of historical writing in sixteenth-century England' (p. 192). Underlying these concerns, Davis shows Nashe's anxiety about the usefulness of his own historical writing.

Davis provides an insightful study that deserves to be a landmark text in future work on Renaissance historical fiction. He discovers complexity in works whose historicity has either been dismissed or largely undervalued. Davis's lucid formal analysis and ingenious insights pave the way for deeper theoretical work as his findings of doubleness, repetition, and inversion are all hallmarks of psychoanalysis. His humorous quips also add to the reading pleasure of a book that is essential for every student and scholar of Renaissance literature.

Frank Swannack
School of Humanities, Languages, and Social Sciences
University of Salford

Fein, Susanna and David **Raybin**, eds, *Chaucer: Contemporary Approaches*, University Park, Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009; cloth; pp. 280; 3 illustrations; R.R.P. US\$65.00; ISBN 9780271035673.

In the Preface to his recent collection of essays, the *Yale Companion to Chaucer*, Seth Lerer notes 'there is no dearth of Companions to Chaucer': Chaucer has become indeed 'something of an industry'. Susanna Fein and David Raybin, editors of *Chaucer: Contemporary Approaches*, promote this general enterprise extravagantly as a 'renaissance of new collections ... attesting to an *esprit* in the scholarly community'. Inevitably, however, they face the same question Lerer imagines: 'Why ... produce another assembly of essays?'

The first problem of a Companion's editor, then, becomes its orientation. Fein and Raybin claim to address the specialist less than an undetermined audience of 'thoughtful readers'. Their collection is sponsored by *Chaucer Review*; it will present, therefore, a modern scholarly history and invite its readers 'to engage with present Chaucerian discussion points of most contention, innovation, and promise'. And these essays too will serve as a 'blueprint for Chaucer studies in the future'.

Chaucer: Contemporary Approaches does have a certain advantage over its competitors – its economy. Its eleven essays are impressively concise accounts of current thinking on issues that place Chaucer's achievement. They seem more angled, more provisional than most performances in this scholarly genre. My reservations about the volume have less to do with the essays than with its general perspective, represented in the list of topics the contributors were asked to discuss, which seems to have been shaped by the tradition laid down in the Rowlands and Boitani/Mann collections. Modern scholarship here mostly stays within established frames, while re-conceiving the character of issues addressed, typically emphasizing the problematic.

So Chaucer's relation to France and Italy gets discussed in a sequence that actually challenges the traditional history of Chaucer's influences as he heads towards Englishness; Italy (Robert Edwards) means a 'transformative encounter', but never fully comprehended, and the gaps and failures are telling; France (Ardis Butterfield) is not just French sources, but a deep experience of a language that is both native – English, in fact – and not fully possessed, since in some sense it comes from elsewhere. The dream poems (A. C. Spearing) lose their familiar purchase in French sources that underwrite an apparent visionary status, leading instead to emphasis on the fractured experience of dreaming itself. Chaucer's fabliaux get submerged in a larger question, humour (Laura Kendrick). The gain is immediate since it takes analysis beyond formalism to the psychic moves performed by humour

when it employs incongruities, social reversals, and the kind of refocusing that Bakhtin notes: ‘everything that makes us laugh is close at hand.’ Critical attention to perspective shifts does much to explain the comic force of many textual moments, notably ‘The General Prologue’.

The only text that actually gets designated as a topic for discussion – unlike practice in most other Companions – is the dream poem. Other texts do get discussed in exemplary applications of arguments made by these writers about Chaucer’s practice, as when Karla Taylor analyses discursive collisions in *The Reeve’s Tale* in order to demonstrate how language studies can serve literary interests. Taylor makes a fine point, but also engages with a larger issue, the study of language as also ‘the study of culture’. In this respect, her essay joins others in emphasizing the contextual, the social, the grounds of production, rather than the debatable poetic text itself. In some cases, this shift does indeed seem strictly ‘contemporary’, as when Simon Horobin details the gains in reading the Chaucer text as a manuscript production, while placing Chaucer in a larger field, the study of textual transmission, ‘reading circles’, and the irregular development of an emerging literate society.

Mostly, in fact, the social here becomes the object of ‘contention’ and the means by which Chaucer is problematized. Seth Lerer’s study of Chaucer’s reception, shifting emphasis from literary homage towards ‘the common reader’, stresses the recent emergence of reception as ‘sociology of authorship’, citing Victor Kahn: ‘the aim of literary studies should be not the interpretation of individual texts, but the study of interpretation: and thus of the production and reception of texts in different historical periods.’ Perhaps.

It is hard not to lament the passing of the text, however, if this is as characteristic of Chaucer studies as these essays collectively suggest. Yet the most egregious instance of the evacuation of the Chaucerian text from scholarly discussion is also the collection’s most perversely stimulating contribution, Stephen Justice’s essay on literary history, which mentions Chaucer only in its concluding paragraphs where he becomes the ‘cult of Chaucer’, perhaps a tool in the Lancastrian cultural armoury. Justice is interested in literary history in its conflicted relationship with New Historicism; it is hard not to take his essay as sustained reflection on a master approach that incorporates all the other ‘approaches’ taken here. At the very least, these essays may be said to display New Historicism’s distinguishing concern with the ‘complex worldliness’ of the literary text. I still miss the text, which seems consigned to life elsewhere – perhaps in the classroom, among the students who surprise A. C. Spearing with their appreciation of the ‘freedom of invention’ displayed in the fractured dream poems.

For all of the power and attractiveness of individual essays in *Chaucer: Contemporary Approaches*, it must be said that, with the exception of Justice's last words, they do tend to speak in the same voice and with the same academic priorities. It is a pity, perhaps, that these essayists did not speak amongst themselves. Perhaps that asks too much, but, lacking such engagement, the 'effervescent conversations' promised us by the editors seem more like business as usual. Much, finally, is missing from this collection: visual culture, spatiality, emotion, psychoanalysis, the life of things, for instance. It is some measure of its success, however, that it provokes thoughts of other lines of enquiry.

Roger Nicholson
The University of Auckland

Garner, Lori Ann, *Structuring Spaces: Oral Poetics and Architecture in Early Medieval England*, Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press, 2011; paperback; pp. xvi, 367; 32 figures; R.R.P. US\$45.00; ISBN 9780268029807.

In *Structuring Spaces: Oral Poetics and Architecture in Early Medieval England*, Lori Ann Garner comprehensively demonstrates that the architecture and the poetry of the Anglo-Saxons drew from a single body of traditional encoded symbols and images. Furthermore, the architectural poetics developed in early medieval England endured under Norman rule. Garner shows that when an audience is confronted with 'foreign verbal images' they will attempt to determine a meaning by turning to images already familiar from their own experience and to phraseology previously encountered in poetic contexts. From surviving Anglo-Saxon texts, Garner reveals how architecture and language reinforce one another and that there was a shared language of architectural form which was used to transmit meaning.

Her first example of this is the use of the building materials of timber and stone in *Beowulf*. From the archaeological record, Garner argues that timber was a preferred building material of the Anglo-Saxons and with improvements in their building techniques it remained the preferred material. It was suitable to build a royal hall of an admirable height, such as Heorot. Grendel approaches Heorot, the high house, while Grendel's lair was built of stone and was low and underneath the water. Similar associations are made with the stone dragon's lair and the wooden funeral pyre of *Beowulf*. The two materials are encoded with images of heroic deeds and venerability: they 'are key components in the architectural world of Old England poetry and serve to symbolize the world of *Beowulf* in its totality' (p. 64).

Building with timber and stone was within the experience of the Anglo-Saxons, however, the poets often used architectural descriptions from other sources to convey spaces with which they were less familiar. The Anglo-Saxons borrowed from other architectural experiences but created new structures and poems of their own. In the Old English *Andreas*, a prison is described as grated building, darkened and narrow house. A structure of confinement, tumult, and darkness helps to anticipate the heroic action that is about to happen. But this type of prison is likely to have come from a Latin source, for it is not a prison that the Anglo-Saxons would have known; prior to Edward I it is thought that prisoners were confined outside in a yard. Whether describing prisons, Hell, temples, or pavilions far removed from their experience, the Anglo-Saxon poet used similar architectural descriptions from traditional points of reference to convey their own notion of built space.

When using narratives from other sources, the Anglo-Saxon poet had a tendency to reduce the number of elements but increase the detail of these elements. Architectural metaphors are frequently retained and expanded to reflect the Anglo-Saxon world. Architecture, for instance, had a prominent place in the large body of Anglo-Saxon riddles which are seen as attempting to explore and understand natural phenomena. Garner surveys Anglo-Saxon riddles and architectural metaphors revealing that even though many of these texts are derived from classical and/or biblical sources they are clearly grounded in Anglo-Saxon oral poetics and material culture. She then turns to poems such as the *The Ruin*, *The Wanderer*, *The Wife's Lament*, and *Beowulf* that construct a memory using architectural metaphor.

The last two chapters examine the continuation of this tradition into post-Conquest England. Works such as *Lazamon's Brut* looks back at the age of timber halls and the social code that they epitomized with some nostalgia. The dominant, stone Norman castle displaced the timber halls of the Anglo-Saxons. The changes in literature were gradual but with many hundreds of French words entering the spoken English language the written language changed as well. The different social orders of the Anglo-Saxons and the Anglo-Normans found expression in the architectural transition of this period. As an early post-Conquest text the *Brut* retains traditional architectural imagery and language, but the castle's structure is a purely military one, while the hall conveyed ideals of loyalty to king, family, and heroic deeds. In the final chapter, Garner considers the poems *King Horn*, *Havelok the Dane*, *Sir Orfeo*, and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. These four poems continue in the Anglo-Saxon poetic tradition and they display Anglo-Saxon poetics through architectural description.

Structuring Spaces is an extremely scholarly book, it is well written with an extensive bibliography. The 32 black and white photographs have reproduced very clearly and demonstrate Garner's ideas very well. Above all it is an engaging book that is well worth the read.

Tessa Morrison
School of Architecture and Built Environment
The University of Newcastle

Hardwick, Paul, *English Medieval Misericords: The Margins of Meaning* (Boydell Studies in Medieval Art and Architecture), Woodbridge and Rochester, Boydell, 2011; hardback; pp. 198; 32 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £45.00; ISBN 9781843836599.

The demands of the medieval liturgy meant that clergy and religious spent many hours in the choir stalls. This book explores the world of images that decorated the misericords, which, while generally not seen by the laity, were visible to the members of the choir. According to Professor Hardwick, misericord carvings were neither 'sites of profane exuberance' (p. 2) nor 'books for the unlearned', but were intended to speak to an educated audience at multiple levels, through symbolism and allegory. In this book, he argues that the bewildering variety of images, most of which are not overtly religious, can only properly be understood when situated within the context of the 'doctrinal and devotional culture' of late medieval England, using late medieval Christianity as the 'primary lens' (p. 2) through which to view them.

The work is not a complete survey of surviving misericord carvings in England, but provides an informative and entertaining overview of the non-foliolate images, and offers an insight into their meaning. The cultural context of the images is explored, with a particular emphasis on literary works, especially Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, although art, drama, sermons, Lollard texts, and even popular sayings are also invoked. In each of the book's six chapters, the author explores a theme and examines one or two carvings more closely by way of 'case study'. The thematic distinctions are loose, due partly to the wide range of scenes depicted in misericords, but also because, in a society in which symbolism assigned spiritual meanings to temporal things and moral lessons could be drawn from romance, the 'sacred' and 'profane' could not always be distinguished.

The first chapter covers depictions of 'everyday activities' including work, leisure, scenes of domesticity, agriculture and hunting, taverns, music and entertainment, as well as fools and proverbs about folly like 'shoeing the goose'. Only one surviving carving depicts the activity of ploughing, which

Hardwick explains was an allegory for preaching. He attributes this scarcity to the ploughman's removal from orthodox discourse following Lollard appropriation of the figure as a representative of lay spiritual authority.

Chapter 2 explores the question of patronage, audience, and images relating to devotional themes. Particularly interesting is the discussion of heraldic devices in choir stalls, the presence of which suggests that the people who commissioned or occupied the stalls paid close attention to the details of decoration. The case study of an image – which Hardwick interprets as an ape–physician and a priest elevating the Host, representing the silencing of doctrinal debate after the fourteenth century – is intriguing but less satisfying.

'Influence and Invention', the third chapter, looks at the sources to which carvers turned for inspiration. The central argument involves the potential for symbols to be misinterpreted by carvers who frequently worked from memory, resulting in changes to both image and meaning. In the case study, a 'fool who thinks he is wise', flanked by geese in Beverley Minster, is presented as a misinterpretation of a lost image of a fool flanked by a pelican and a griffin, a warning to preachers to avoid heterodoxy. While the general argument about the potential for misinterpretation is convincing, the case study remains a hypothesis in the absence of any surviving evidence of such a source.

Chapter 4 reveals that, while images like the mermaid and the 'warning to gossips' are to be found, depictions of women on misericords are relatively scarce. This, together with the presence of some surprisingly lewd images, is explained against a background of clerical misogyny, and anxieties regarding the threat posed to clerical authority by lay people, particularly women. The author seems, at times, to characterize the late medieval laity rather too broadly in terms of anticlericalism, Lollardy, and reform, and to present the relationship between clergy and laity as one of general mutual opposition and mistrust.

Chapter 5 deals with symbolism and allegory in the world of animals, with considerable space devoted to the fox, the cock, and the ape, and their possible meanings for the audience. The final chapter, 'Monsters at the Margins', is dedicated to the Wildman or 'Wodehouse', and hybrids like the wyvern, and examines the misericords of Limerick Cathedral. The link to England is retained through exploring monstrous creatures as inhabitants of 'marginal' places (p. 136), and the medieval English perception of Ireland as a marginal place, and one in which English influence was felt.

A Gazetteer for the 'armchair misericordian' (p. 157) is provided, together with a simple map. The thirty-two black and white photographs are helpful for following the discussion, although some are a little too

small. Apart from its obvious relevance to those interested in misericords or medieval church decoration, this book is also a useful reference tool for those in other disciplines less interested in the misericords themselves than in tracing visual representations of symbols, moral allegories, or proverbial sayings in late medieval England.

Ailish McKeown
Department of English
The University of Sydney

Hasler, Antony J., *Court Poetry in Late Medieval England and Scotland: Allegories of Authority* (Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature, 80), Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2011; hardback; pp. 268; R.R.P. £55.00; ISBN 9780521809573.

This is a careful study that attempts to set the literary construction of late medieval Scottish and English court poetry in the context of European humanism. It is concerned with the poems as written and circulated, that is, with the text and not the possible performance. However, the issue of performance raises a number of questions: What made a poet a court poet? What was their intended role at court or in society in domestic or international relationships? Did they have patrons and what form did that patronage take? When were the poems performed and with what accompaniment? Was there, perhaps, music associated with them? How were they presented to the monarch? Antony Hasler is not directly concerned with these questions, but with the way in which poets (whom literary scholars have long identified as court poets) struggled with their own positions and ideas of authority. The subject's position – the common body in the ordinary landscape – relates with difficulty to the symbolic royal body that yet reflects the many bodies of his subjects.

Hasler wishes to discover, in the allegories the poets employ, something more than the results of the political moment. We therefore get only the indirect reflection of the hypocrisy and cynicism, intrigue and instability of the court rather than the specific ironic context that might take on a deeper and more precise meaning for students of the Court.

He is primarily concerned with vernacular poetry although he touches on the neo-Latin poetry that was produced by the official court poets Henry VII introduced to his court as he reshaped it to be that of a Renaissance prince. This ceremonial verse, which was regularly produced down to the end of the eighteenth century, deserves a more careful consideration if he is successfully to argue that it influenced the form and style of the vernacular

and the vernacular poets' perception and problems with the issue of their own position and role.

Without refuting it, Hasler notes D. R. Carlson's suggestion that, while vernacular poetry was circulated and published, ceremonial Latin poetry was possibly not even read by its single audience, the king. Politically this is unlikely. Neo-Latin poetry was part of the interchange between princes and prelates. The itinerant poet Johannes Michael Nagonius made his living producing panegyric poems – with implicit promises – that were carried as diplomatic gifts from one patron to another. Bernard André and Giovanni Gigli's formal Latin works, *epithalamium*, *genaethlicon*, political paeans, and historical *encomia* which Hasler briefly discusses were commanded for a similar market. This was not the immediate market for writers like Dunbar or Skelton. But, by the time George Buchanan was writing in the 1530s and after, Renaissance Latin poetry was flourishing at all the courts of Europe.

In his conclusion, Hasler suggests that the vernacular poets were 'motivated by a bid to counterpoint the neo-Latin writing ... with an erotic language of secrecy that imports significant revisions in its imaginings of the authority to which it subscribes' (p.168). Was this how they hoped to outflank the Latin professionals? Was their audience sufficiently educated to identify and appreciate these hidden meanings?

The poets Hasler studies differed from one another in various ways. Although they were not court poets '*en titre*', they had other court appointments or, in Scotland, a prominent position at court resulting from their birth. Gavin Douglas, a bishop and a politician, as third son of the earl of Angus was perhaps the best born; Sir David Lyndsay of the Mount for decades a courtier to James IV and V became Lyon King of Arms. William Dunbar, Franciscan and royal pensioner, probably related to the great family of Dunbar, was the nearest to an official as he writes both semi-official panegyrics and petitions. In England, John Skelton had been tutor to the young Henry VIII, and Stephen Hawes, a groom of the chamber to Henry VII. Alexander Barclay's link was more obscure, through the Field of the Cloth of Gold. As members of the monarch's household they were, as they acknowledge, his to command in all things. Their personal 'authority' is therefore constantly under threat. Distinguishing work written at command from poems that sprang more directly from the poet's own inspiration is another matter. Were those that came from *translatio* like Barclay's *Ship of Fools* done without being commissioned? To what extent were demands for new vernacular versions of classical texts like the *Aeneid* a form of rewriting intended to shape the past to the present?

Hasler confines himself to the poetry's literary and allegorical signification, only touching on such issues as the debate over Skelton's satires' immediate political purpose. The image of authority he extracts is almost wholly secular, despite the religious discontents of the period that were deeply affected by authority. In offering an interpretation, he avoids the literal reading, which might be more intelligible to the historian, who in Hawes's *Pastime* would first pick up all the obvious symbols of Henry VII – his greyhounds, for example and other points that might define the context. In many ways, this work is itself a counterpoint to one similarly titled but different in its approach, Jon Robinson's *Court, Politics, Culture, and Literature in England and Scotland*. Alas, Hasler does not consider how the two studies might cross-fertilize to the benefit of literary and historical understanding.

Sybil M. Jack
Department of History
The University of Sydney

Heller, Jennifer, *The Mother's Legacy in Early Modern England* (Women and Gender in the Early Modern World), Farnham, Ashgate, 2011; hardback; pp. 244; R.R.P. £55.00; ISBN 9781409411086.

Jennifer Heller's study of the mother's legacy in early modern England explores how and why the dying mother's devout counsel to her children emerged as a popular sub-genre within the advice tradition in late sixteenth-century England, and flourished in phases throughout the seventeenth. Using printed and manuscript sources produced between 1575 and 1672, Heller elucidates the mother's legacy as an important, mutable, and intensely personal genre that offered women a culturally sanctioned means of responding to complex and rapidly changing religious, political, and social institutions. Heller's close reading of some twenty legacies from this period, by women of varying social backgrounds and religious persuasions, demonstrates how mothers sought to shape their children's beliefs and behaviours in ways that reflected the larger cultural context, historical events, and social trends during this period of momentous religious and political transformation.

Heller begins her study by exploring the intellectual background of English women in general and legacy writers in particular. Becoming good and pious wives and mothers was the ultimate aim of education for women in Protestant England, but legacy writers, it seems, benefited from more substantial learning. However, their legacies show little evidence of their classical education, stressing instead piety and spirituality as qualities to

strive for. Readers expected women to offer spiritual guidance as devout and virtuous wives and mothers, and not as classically educated women.

Heller argues that legacy writers drew upon the idealized figure of the mother to establish their authority as advice givers. In contrast to male legacy writers, women adopted a humble stance, denigrating their writing as unworthy, while, at the same time, insisting that their maternal authority heightened the obligation of their children to heed their advice. The suffering of childbirth, religious and maternal responsibilities, womanly emotion, and the susceptibility of children to sin and corruption were all evoked in the legacies to engender a maternal, spiritual authority that could not be ignored.

The different types of advice offered to sons and daughters are explored in Chapter 3. Mothers kindly advised their daughters to follow the prescribed gender roles of chastity and godly obedience, directing them to overcome their natural weaknesses of pride and vanity. They empathized with their daughters and stressed the importance of the woman's role in the family as helpmeet. Sons were counselled to overcome anger, impetuosity, and profligacy, and urged to adopt the feminine virtues of patience and self-restraint in order to preserve and increase the family estate. They were also directed to treat their wives with honour and respect, and to serve as exemplary and godly examples within their households. In this way, Heller argues, women used their writing to mediate in matters of religion and politics.

This argument is given more detailed consideration in Heller's discussion of the intercessions of legacy writers in the religious life of seventeenth-century England. Encouraged by James I's conciliatory stance on religion in the early years of his reign, women writers urged their children to promote Church reform, while advocating religious tolerance and harmony. In their legacies, women of diverse religious persuasions commented on the controversial issues of the day, such as the observation of the Sabbath, oath taking, the preaching ministry, and the role of the sacraments. In the legacies written during the reign of Charles I, the Interregnum, and Restoration, Heller found that legacy writers from eminent families sought to enhance their family's social status by advocating political obedience and loyalty, while urging children to adhere to their principles and exercise religious tolerance. During this time of prodigious and traumatic social and religious change, legacy writers expressed their faith in the healing power of the Church to restore England to a reconciled and harmonious society.

The final chapter examines gendered experiences of dying. Women endured the perils and pain of childbirth, and the death of children, coped with the difficulties of widowhood, and tended to the sick and dying as charitable duties. This entitled them, in their view, to help their readers

prepare for death with prayer and meditation, and to seek forgiveness from God. Mothers instructed their children on the power of faith to overcome adversity, pain, and suffering. Drawing on traditions of *danse macabre* and *ars moriendi*, legacy writers offered comfort and support to their readers as they approached death.

In *The Mother's Legacy* Heller makes a good argument for the usefulness of genre studies as an analytical method into both history and literature of the early modern period. She particularly highlights the popularity of the dying mother's legacy within a tradition that regarded women writers with suspicion. Effectively illustrating how legacy writers transcended their immediate purpose of enhancing family status and advising children on matters of religion and spirituality, Heller contends that women were convinced their words could shape Church policy and practice. This, she says, gave the mother's voice a unique authority in early modern England.

Judith Bonzol
Department of History
The University of Sydney

Höfele, Andreas, *Stage, Stake and Scaffold: Humans and Animals in Shakespeare's Theatre*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011; hardback; pp. 336; 12 b/w illustrations; R.R.P £30.00; ISBN 9780199567645.

London of the 1600s was a melting pot of violence, brutality, and spectacle. The impaled heads of traitors atop of the entranceways of London Bridge greeted all those who crossed the Thames. Southwark, the home of theatres such as the Globe and the Rose, was a wild and raucous haven for drunks, prostitutes, thieves, and gamblers, and also the location of several blood sport arenas, where spectators paid to see cockfighting or snarling, bloodthirsty dogs attack chained bears.

This noisy, crowded, bawdy, and bustling environment certainly influenced William Shakespeare and in *Stage, Stake and Scaffold: Humans and Animals in Shakespeare's Theatre*, Andreas Höfele examines these related spectacles in the context of his work. Höfele traces the ways in which the bear-baiting arena, the scaffold of public execution, and the theatre were in a sense intimately related: all three occupied marginal spaces in the city; all three shared an architectural similarity (a 'performance space' surrounded by spectators); and all three were points of intersection of animality, cruelty, and punishment. *Stage, Stake and Scaffold* aims to analyse how this intersection of theatre, bear-garden, and scaffold generated a powerful exchange of images and a transfer of animal features into Shakespeare's characters.

That Shakespeare thematized animals thoroughly in his plays is well established. Yet critical commentary on animals in Shakespeare has focused largely on imagery, and not on how they reflect the way in which early modern Europeans conceived of the human being in relation to other species. Höfele presents a compelling case that the ‘conflicted nature of human nature’ found in Shakespeare’s work derives from complex doubleness: ‘the fundamental sense of difference *and* a fundamental sense of similarity between humans and animals’ (p. xi). The Gloucesters in both *King Lear* and *Macbeth* compare themselves to staked bears (p. 208 and p. 63 respectively), the killing of Coriolanus is tantamount to the play’s ‘final baiting scene’ (p. 114), and Caliban is ‘Both human and animal but fully at home in neither category’ (p. 246).

To cover all the examples of animal imagery found in Shakespeare’s entire body of writing would be impossible in just one book. One of the strengths of *Stage, Stake and Scaffold* is its structure – the book is set out into seven sections, an introduction and six chapters. Each chapter is devoted to a single play (except Chapter 4, which tackles two) and also examines a variety of non-Shakespeare textual sources, such as works by Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, Michel de Montaigne, John Foxe, Thomas Cromwell, Francis Bacon, and René Descartes. These authors are essential for any examination of the relationship of the human and animal in early modern times.

However, I found *Stage, Stake and Scaffold* most engaging when Höfele directly addresses Shakespeare’s plays. These include six tragedies and a romance: *Macbeth*, *Richard III*, *Coriolanus*, *Titus Andronicus*, *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, and *The Tempest*. Within each chapter other relevant works by Shakespeare are discussed in some detail, though I must admit I was surprised and a little disappointed by the near absence of any critical analysis of *The Winter’s Tale* – a play I thought would be essential in any discussion of the interrelation between bear-gardens, early modern stage spaces, and Shakespeare.

Each chapter of *Stage, Stake and Scaffold* offers engaging, close readings of each of these plays, tying the play to a larger theme. For example, Chapter 4 offers a tantalizing discussion of the cannibal–animal in relation to the Shakespearean revenge tragedies *Titus Andronicus* and *Hamlet*. *Stage, Stake and Scaffold* is incredibly well researched, the variety and scope of critical materials cited is impressive, and the footnotes are a fascinating accompaniment to Höfele’s analysis. The text is clearly written and *Stage, Stake and Scaffold* features a number of well-chosen examples of artwork (such as the Frans Snyder painting *The Bear-Hunt*, a section of which is reproduced as the cover art for the book), reproductions from maps and early modern books which complement the in-text analysis. A standard bibliography, which

is conveniently divided into two sections (pre-1700 works and post-1700 works), as well as a cumulative index of references, and list of illustrations is included.

Stage, Stake and Scaffold is an excellent part of the growing field of animal studies within the broader study of Shakespeare's work. Höfele's work has much to offer for scholars interested in Shakespeare's works, staging practices, and the culture of spectacle and violence that informs Renaissance dramatic literature and history.

Marina Gerzic
School of Social and Cultural Studies
The University of Western Australia

Hogan, Patrick Colm, *What Literature Teaches Us about Emotion* (Studies in Emotion and Social Interaction), Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2011; hardback; pp. 352; 6 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £55.00; ISBN 9781107002883.

As good books should, this one provokes a sense of engagement and stimulates dialogue with its reader, and the question it poses in the title is a profound one.

Studies of emotion have been conducted in various disciplines, most notably psychology, philosophy, literature, and more recently history. Each discipline has its own understandings, specialist language, methodologies, and landmark scholarly reference points. The result is that the various approaches do not necessarily take account of others, to the extent that their primary subject of attention – emotion and emotions – seems eerily different in each.

Patrick Hogan seeks to bridge at least two of these areas, literature and cognitive psychology, arguing that the latter rarely uses literature as part of its field of data, while literary scholars pay too little attention to scientific findings about cognition and the role of neurone activity that drives human feelings. The result may not fully satisfy either camp – students of literature may find themselves alienated by unfamiliar terms from neuroscience while psychologists may be more interested in the normative rather than the isolated aberrancies produced by imaginative writers. But it is a brave and valuable attempt.

What will be contentious for some is the trans-historical and trans-cultural approach that is inherent in adopting a perspective developed through psychological methodology. The author defends his choices as part of an undoubtedly laudable attempt to find common ground between disciplines and between different cultures and ages. He shows similar patterns concerning

love are found in the fragments of Sappho's poems, poems by the Chinese Li Ch'ing-Chao who wrote 900 years ago, and Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. Processes of attachment and 'mood repair' in grief appear as autobiography in the Japanese Kobayashi Issa and then are indirectly enacted through *Hamlet*. Chinese jokes are set alongside *The Comedy of Errors*. These accounts, invariably perceptive as literary criticism, are set alongside a conceptual model based on recent findings about emotions by neuroscientists. The results are enlightening, and they come from an expert in pattern recognition in diverse sources, since Hogan has written extremely interesting books on *The Mind and Its Stories: Narrative Universals and Human Emotions* (2003) and *Affective Narratology: The Emotional Structure of Stories* (2011).

Although his consistent litmus test is Shakespeare, Hogan mounts a strong case that emotions *are* indeed, broadly speaking, expressed through 'narrative universals' and thus comparable across ages, cultures, and nations. Meanwhile, psychology can offer some illuminating reasons why, in terms of the mind's workings. The comparative approach set up in the early chapters continues since we find guilt, shame, and jealousy located in *Macbeth*, *Othello*, Wole Soyinka's *The Strong Breed*, and *Kagekiyo*; attachment and ethical feelings in *Measure for Measure* and the works of Rabindranath Tagore; and compassion and pity in *The Tempest* and its modern imitation *Une Tempête*. The inescapable conclusion to the way the material is presented is that emotions are expressed through narratives repeated through history.

This is a comforting and reassuring position to take in a world that is tragically divided, suggesting as it does that emotions bind together human beings, no matter where or when they have lived. Moreover, the theme is developed in a persuasively friendly and personal style, by turns moving and homely, as the writer speaks from personal experience as well as expertise. Indeed, the best parts of the book substantiate observations with an appealing commonsense that has the virtue of breaking down disciplinary boundaries between literature and psychology with clarity.

Some will be left unsatisfied and will want to push a little further into those very differences which can be as significant as the similarities, and perhaps more subtly expressive of unique emotional states. For example, if it is surprising to find how similar works can be even when divided by many centuries, it is just as teasing to query how two novels which could not be more opposite in emotional temperature can have been published so close together in one country, namely *War and Peace* (1869) and *The Idiot* (1866). The vast differences lie not only at the level of genre, stories, or subject matter, but emotional terrain and authorial temperament. Similarly, *Moby Dick* (1851) came just four years before *Leaves of Grass* (1855), both

again from the same country. None of these is even mentioned in the book, since they seem not to fit into the emotional categories adopted here and found also in necessarily synchronic, experimental psychology. The works may be distinctive and incomparable ‘one-offs’ but they are amongst the most searching anatomies of powerful emotions ever written. Just as mysterious, to take the favoured example of Shakespeare, what common emotional ground can be located between two works written by the same writer in (possibly) the same year, *Twelfth Night* and *Hamlet*? In this case, the dramatist’s respective choice of genre is important, but even so, one would expect more common ‘emotional’ ground than we get. Some readers may wish to reach beyond emotions that are held in common, and instead explore the strange and unique kinds of emotions, however variegated and troubling they may be, which seem at least a part of the appeal of individual works of literature. Where Hogan leans towards the light of shared understandings, others will prefer the lattices of light and shade. Cultural critics will debate whether differences are more significant than similarities, while literary historians will prefer to analyse chains of textual transmission (and consequential change) by which emotional expressiveness has come down to us.

But this is ungrateful. Patrick Hogan’s erudite and lively book leaves such questions open for others to pursue, while itself bringing into fruitful dialogue disparate fields of analysis not often brought together. This is a refreshingly ambitious book in the sheer magnitude of the task of talking about emotions in literature by using findings from science and history, and seeing literature as a valid and invaluable source for psychological exploration. Hogan lucidly cuts through complexities to important issues. Even if more answers to the question ‘What does literature teach us about emotions?’ may lie beyond its parameters, this book does a valuable service in asking it.

R. S. White

*English and Cultural Studies / Centre for the History of Emotions
The University of Western Australia*

Hyland, Peter, *Disguise on the Early Modern English Stage* (Studies in Performance and Early Modern Drama), Farnham, Ashgate, 2011; hardback; pp. 180; R.R.P. £55.00; ISBN 9780754641520.

Disguise features in many early modern plays, more so in fact than in any body of drama before or since. Peter Hyland’s book explores the significance of disguise plots and devices in plays from *Clyomon and Clamydes* in the 1570s to James Shirley’s *The Sisters* in 1642. He argues that we have lost the full meaning of disguise because ‘it is part of a lost tradition of spectacular

performance that depended on specific kinds of acting skills that offered not depth and concentration, but frenzied versatility and complex staging' (p 14). Much of his detailed analysis is based on lesser-known plays that have been critically marginalized because their popularity rested on 'the dynamics of live performance'. Shakespeare is treated as but one among many, since his plays do not reveal the diversity and vitality of disguise; yet Hyland does offer illuminating discussions, especially of *Twelfth Night* and *King Lear*.

The book contributes to the recent realignment in performance criticism towards expanding the base of study, from analysing productions of Shakespeare to appreciating the vitality of less 'literary', less well-known early modern plays that work far better in performance than on the page. There is also renewed attention to company repertories, performance conventions, and audience response. Hyland's book complements the studies of others like Scott McMillin and Sally-Beth MacLean, Jeremy Lopez, Roslyn Knutson, Andrew Gurr, and Charles Whitney.

Hyland distinguishes carefully between disguise and the other elements that have often been equated with it such as role-playing, deception, and doubling. Disguise is essentially a change in physical appearance, something the audience can actually *see* and probably also *hear*, involving clothing, cosmetics, prosthetics, posture, gesture, movement, and voice. He has a keen sense of the practicalities of disguising, suggesting that changes were most often achieved simply, especially at a time when formal clothing was elaborate and a matter of pins, hooks, wires, and laces rather than zip fasteners and velcro. Hence the transformation from boy to woman may often have been managed by removing a cap and loosening the hair.

For Hyland, the popularity of disguise was associated with theatrical pleasures: the 'simple fun' of watching the quick-change artist; the marvelling at the virtuoso player and his multiple disguises; the satisfactions of identification, complicity, and suspense; and the transgressive delights of crossing the boundaries of class or gender or morality. Disguise, he comments, is 'fundamentally a comic device' allied to inversion and confusion; it is seldom found in tragedies, except in revenge tragedy where it produces disturbing, ambiguous effects. Used in history plays disguise tends to drown any 'factual' content in entertaining fictions; in tragicomedy it is prone to sentimental and sensational extremes.

Disguise brought pleasure to playgoers, but it also aroused anxieties. The meta-theatrical nature of disguise was one of its attractions, but the seventeenth century saw an increasing number of plays such as Jonson's that dramatized through disguise the dangers of theatrical illusion. In a wide-ranging discussion, Hyland considers the aesthetic, social, personal, and

moral implications of disguise for its early modern audiences. The use of clothing, for instance, to effect disguise entailed challenges to sumptuary legislation, official homilies, anti-theatrical scolding, audience expectations, and centuries of moral and religious commentary.

Disguise might be ‘playful and liberating, reflecting a human need to escape the constrictions of self’, but its widespread use ‘registered a fissure in early modern culture, an anxiety about the identity and stability of the self’ (p. 111). Hyland contends, moreover, that the device of the ‘girl page’ or transvestite disguise should not be discussed solely in terms of the sexual politics of performance but rather be seen in the context of wider concerns about identity and representation.

Hyland notes that ‘any disguise can be read in multiple and sometimes antithetical ways’. More generally, its use ‘allowed the spectators to embrace conflicting responses, to experience the possibility of mutability in a culture in which there was so much pressure to remain fixed’ (p. 129). On the other hand, the ‘liberating possibilities’ of disguise for characters (especially female ones) usually ended with the removal of the disguise, with the implication that ultimately there is ‘an acceptance of the limits of theatrical power’ (p. 141).

Hyland concedes that some of his conclusions, given the nature of the evidence, are speculative, but the book’s mixture of practical and theoretical approaches is largely persuasive. At times, the argument is rather leisurely and, too often, he repeats points about examples he has made in earlier analyses. And, on a question of detail, he claims that in *The Jew of Malta* Barabas fails to poison Ithamore and his confederates despite their deaths being announced in the following scene.

Hyland’s book contributes, nevertheless, to ‘a serious and sustained exploration and mapping of those plays that have been relegated to the margins’ (p. 14). In doing so, he reinforces the value of attending to the theatrical as much as to the literary elements in the plays and adds to our understanding of early modern drama.

Ruth Lunney
School of Humanities and Social Science
University of Newcastle, NSW

Kershaw, Paul, *Peaceful Kings: Peace, Power and the Early Medieval Political Imagination*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011; hardback; pp. 336; R.R.P. £65.00; ISBN 9780198208709.

Paul Kershaw's fairly sprawling analysis attempts to seek out and illuminate the uses of peace in the construction of kingship and regal authority across the early medieval West, cementing the relationship between the ruler and the ruled through the promise of stability and surety with the king acting as both peacemaker and peacekeeper. He opens with an Introduction that highlights specific narrative and analytical arcs and frames the scope of his study, using episodes from the Carolingian division of the 800s and *Beowulf* to make real some of the particular tropes he wishes to identify.

Although Kershaw's book is finely researched and well written, some of the assumptions regarding audience knowledge and its structure are already apparent in the Introduction, which splits itself into various subheadings, each subsection forming a particular site of analysis, focused on a given text, a given year, a given example of kingship and its construction, but with little connective tissue between each example and the next. In that sense, the Introduction is not as strong as it could have been; the examples overwhelm the reader with a lack of context and little concrete consideration of the theoretical framework Kershaw is attempting to create.

Each chapter deals with a particular context, again split up by subheading and subsection, and again, this assortment of separate textual and historical analyses adds up to less than the sum of its parts. This is not to say that the individual analysis is not good, or that the examples are anything other than interesting. But in the first chapter alone, Kershaw jumps from Bede's depiction of Edwin as a Solomonic king, to the obliteration of pagan associations between rule and peace with the Christianization of Rome's ceremonial geography, to the adoption of those Roman ideals in some scant form through Augustinian awareness and potential rejection of them, and the shaping of the Vulgate and associated commentary, to liturgical associations between peace and rule in prayers and the state of peaceful kingship outside the *Pax Romana*. The separate subsections each have an interesting idea or two, a useful point to note, and are clear in their detailed use of text and commentary. But the ride is a roller coaster one, through each subsection, and it is not entirely clear what the overall narrative or conceptual framework is. Kershaw's approach seems to be to hope he can throw 'peace' at the edifice of kingship enough times and make it stick – and certainly it sticks and stays there, but what is the larger point? What is the meaning of it all?

The subsequent chapters each draw on a particular narrative arc: traditions of kingship after the fall of the Roman Empire in the West, constructions of the wise, peacekeeping ruler in the age of Charlemagne, those leaders explicitly compared to Solomon in terms of the peace and the stability they brought, and the adoption of these tropes by the various courts and regal circles of Anglo-Saxon England. The book has its origins in a PhD thesis, and this perhaps hints at some of the epigrammatic nature of its approach to evidence – the book as given reads like a wonderful assemblage of specific examples of the association between peace and ‘kingship’ in the early medieval West. Considering the historical trajectory of a heap of post-Roman kingdoms, besieged by internal strife, kin disputes, the encroaching existential concern posed by Islam, and the ways in which Christianity and the Papacy situated themselves in the post-Roman world, the association of kingship with a desire to see good kingship as involving peace and stability is perhaps not inconceivable. Indeed, in some ways this association reads as common sense, and as a given, based on the wealth of particular examples which Kershaw picks through.

The ways in which Kershaw does not seem to go beyond that to present a coherent and connected analysis of what each example means are perhaps reflective of its thesis origins: the book reads more like an attempt to convince the reader that there was a clear association between rulership and peacemaking (which as indicated above, may be considered common sense for this period and its war-weary populace) rather than an attempt to draw out what particular nuances, categorizations, or uses there were for peace, other than a Solomonic framing. Like a decent thesis, it presents a solid argument for the existence of a particular narrative but does not tease that narrative out. Instead I think the reader will be left wanting more, potentially undertaking research of their own, or seeing what Kershaw has to say next. Unfortunately, the book should stand more on its own.

David James Griffiths
Canberra, ACT

Koopmans, Rachel, *Wonderful to Relate: Miracle Stories and Miracle Collecting in High Medieval England* (Middle Ages), Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011; cloth; pp. x, 337; 13 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. US\$65.00, £42.50; ISBN 9780812242799.

It is necessary to note at the outset that Rachel Koopmans uses ‘miracle collections’ to mean both groups of posthumous miracles included in *vitae* and separate booklets of *miraculae*. She also uses ‘miracle collections’,

'*vitae*', and 'hagiography' as interchangeable terms, which can be misleading and confusing.

Koopmans discerns two phases in the development of a 'craze' for miracle collecting in England. The first of these (1080–1140) was part of 'a pan-European movement' to commit orally transmitted stories to writing. As 'new thinking about the written record' spread, English monks began to think the miracles of saints needed to be written. In the second phase (1140–1200) miracle collections were longer, less rhetorically elaborate, more inclined to include miracles reported by the laity, and consequently more concerned with the stories' veracity.

'The creation of miracle collections [i.e., *vitae*] is usually thought to have been driven by the local pressures of cults and the immediate political needs of monastic communities' (p. 2). Koopmans's argument in effect aims to deprive high medieval English *vitae* of their contemporary sociopolitical significance. Miracle collecting in her view was a literary phenomenon. 'The collections of this period [1080–1140] should be read within the context of the growing concern for preserving oral information in general and a fad for miracle collecting in particular' (p. 6). Her emphasis on 'new thinking about the written record' as a motivating force, however, does not mean that she regards written texts as having influenced the formation and development of cults, or as giving them authority. In her view, oral narratives were what made and maintained cults. As part of a literary phenomenon, it seems, miracle collectors merely exerted literary influence on one another: 'We must be careful not to read the miracles frozen in textual collections as having had more impact than they actually had' (p. 5).

Koopmans's chapter on the miracle collection in Lantfred's *vita* of Swithin (970s) accordingly dismisses studies which read his work in the context of Bishop Athelwold's monastic reform, on the grounds that Lantfred's preface does not explicitly mention Athelwold's reform. Lantfred does explicitly state that he is writing at the request of the Winchester monks, but Koopmans dismisses this too, on the grounds that it must have been Lantfred who wanted Swithin's miracles recorded, because Anglo-Saxon monks did not share his interest in recording miracles. 'It had been over 150 years since an Anglo-Saxon monk had produced a miracle collection' (p. 58), and 'it would be a full century before another writer – a foreigner, again – would think it important to preserve miracle stories of English saints in texts' (p. 59).

It is difficult to take issue with this without knowing how Koopmans defines a miracle collection. A number of *vitae* written in England survive from the period 800–1080 (substantially more than Koopmans indicates). The inclusion of posthumous miracles is a standard feature of these, although

the number varies. In addition, a significant amount of hagiography composed in England during this period has been lost. Koopmans mentions two pre-conquest collections of miracles known to us only through a later recension, but states: ‘neither of these ... appears to have been very substantial’ (p. 47). How many posthumous miracles make a collection? What, short of Lantfred’s thirty-four chapters or a separate booklet of *miraculæ*, constitutes ‘a significant interest’ in miracle collecting?

These questions recur in the chapter on Goscelin (1080s), whose interest in posthumous miracles, numerically speaking, seems no greater than many of his predecessors. This, coupled with Lantfred’s undoubtedly significant interest already in the 970s, which Koopmans attributes to his familiarity with the ‘distinguished tradition of miracle collecting’ at Fleury and other continental centres, casts doubt on her claim that a new attitude to the recording of miracles began to spread in the 1080s, ‘sparked off’ in England by Goscelin. Whether or not English hagiography c. 800–1080 reflected the continental ‘tradition of miracle collecting’ – given the fragmentary survival of the corpus – needs a more careful and comprehensive study than Koopmans offers.

Consistently, Koopmans also rejects readings of Goscelin’s work which regard him as attempting to gain the support of the Norman regime for the religious communities who (as he explicitly states) asked him to commemorate their saints. She argues that Goscelin does not explicitly mention the conquest, and that his early *vitae* cannot have had a propagandist intention because the small number of extant copies proves they had limited circulation. Failure to mention the war in the immediate aftermath of Hastings is a phenomenon well known to scholars of the period, and the only supporters Wilton and Sherborne really needed were the two bishops to whom, respectively, Goscelin dedicated his *vitae* of their patron saints. I have not space to tackle here the vexed question of Archbishop Lanfranc’s attitude to English saints and its bearing on this argument. Perhaps the conclusion to be drawn is that the less one knows about the sociopolitical contexts in which high medieval English hagiography was written, the easier it is to read it as a largely irrelevant literary phenomenon.

Stephanie Hollis
Department of English
The University of Auckland

Krafl, Pavel, ed., *Regesta Bohemiae et Moraviae aetatis Venceslai IV (1378 dec.–1419 aug. 16.)*, Tomus VII *Fontes Archivi terrae Moraviae Brunae*, Prague, Institutum historicum Academiae scientiarum Rei publicae Bohemicae, 2010; cloth; pp. 495; ISBN 9788072861729.

Krafl, Pavel, Petra **Mutlová**, and Dana **Stehlíková**, eds, *Řeholní kanovníci sv. Augustina v Lanškrouně. Dějiny a diplomatář kláštera / The Canons Regular of St Augustine in Lanškroun: History and Diplomatarium of the Monastery* (Opera Institutu historici Praegae, B/7), Prague, Historický ústav, 2010; cloth; pp. 399; 16 b/w illustrations, 38 colour plates; ISBN 9788072861767.

‘A useless, dilatory, ill-esteemed dissolver and unworthy disposer of the Holy Roman Empire’ – the verdict of history has been damning on Václav IV (Wenceslaus) and his reign, the period covered by these two handsome volumes. But no matter how tumultuous the world outside, the work of notaries employed in the great bureaucracies of church and state rarely slackened; quite the contrary. Putting in order and making available the wealth of archival documents that survive from the four decades of Václav’s reign has kept Czech scholars busy for more years than the documents themselves cover.

Through most of the past century the history of the Czech Church and its institutions has not been a particularly lively area of research (the Hussite revolution excepted), unlike that of Poland and Hungary, countries whose history, religious history especially, was closely intertwined with that of Bohemia–Moravia. Scholars of Czech ecclesiastical history had to rely largely on information gleaned from monumental registers of archival documents pertaining to diplomatic history, undertakings commenced in the mid-nineteenth century: the *Codex diplomaticus et epistolaris Regni Bohemie*, the *Codex diplomaticus et epistolaris Moraviae*, and the *Regesta diplomatica nec non epistolaria Bohemiae et Moraviae* (RBM). The RBM commenced in 1855; by 1892 it had produced four volumes covering the period 600–1346. Thereafter the pace slowed. Two fascicles of Volume VI (1355–57) appeared in the late 1920s while the remaining ten fascicles of Volumes V–VII, covering less than two decades (1346–63) of the reign of Václav’s father, Charles IV, appeared at irregular intervals from 1958 to 2004.

For the period 1378–1419, Václav IV’s reign, the RBM adopted a different taxonomy (and modified title): *Regesta Bohemiae et Moraviae aetatis Venceslai IV (1378 dec.–1419 aug. 16.)*. The RBMV assigns a volume to each archival institution or to a group of archives all of a similar type; within

each volume entries are ordered chronologically. To date, volumes have been devoted to the archives of the Prague Metropolitan Chapter (seven fascicles, published 1967–81), to the Vyšehrad Collegiate Chapter (1969), to the State Regional Archive in Třeboň (1977), to the Provincial Archive in Opava comprising the Olomouc bishopric and cathedral chapter (1989), and to the National Archives (2006–07). The volume to hand, the seventh in the series (hereafter RBMV-7), is devoted to material from the Moravian Archive in Brno.

As the editor Pavel Krafl makes clear, only instruments and letters extant as original and medieval copies are included; similarly, only documents pertaining directly to matters concerned with Czech history and affairs are gathered into RBMV-7. The Moravian Archive yields 701 instruments and letters from a total of thirty-nine funds and collections. In view of the above tight restrictions on what can be included, all the more valuable are the summary outlines of the character of each fund and collection, and the location of repositories of material which falls outside the criteria for inclusion.

RBMV-7 is equipped with a preface in Czech and an extended version in English together with an invaluable ten-page bibliography. The register itself maintains the high standard in diplomatics seen in Krafl's earlier volume on the synods and statutes of the diocese of Olomouc. Heading each entry is the allocated serial number and date and place of issue (as exact as possible). Documents in Latin are provided with an abstract in Latin, those in medieval Czech and German with résumés in modern Czech and German. All variants of a place name are listed. Any information about seals, notary annotations, and about the notary himself is included. Then follows the archive shelf mark, location of any copies, information about facsimiles and current editions, and relevant secondary literature.

A particularly valuable feature of RBMV-7 is its detailed index of people and places, comprising almost one third of the volume. Perhaps it is asking too much, but an *index rerum* like the one Krafl provides in his study of the Lanškroun Augustinians would have facilitated searches for entries pertaining to entities such as religious orders, amongst other things. As it happens, the first and last entries in RBMV-7 plus a handful scattered through the volume relate to the Carthusians, an order that enjoyed a brief-lived burst of popularity in Czech lands during the fourteenth century. Charterhouses were established in each of the country's three dioceses: Prague (1342), Brno, Moravia (1375), and Tržek, Litomyšl (1378).

Over the past fifteen years, Pavel Krafl has published extensively in Czech and Polish on the Augustinian canons regular and on their confraternities. His

book on the Lanškroun monastery, co-authored with Petra Mutlová and Dana Stehlíková, synthesizes his earlier work in an extended essay (63-page Czech version; 15-page English précis) that precedes an edition of the monastery's diplomatarium: 53 Latin documents transcribed in full covering the period 1371–1412. The majority of them are found in the Moravian Archive in Brno and are included in RBMV-7.

The documents shed light, *inter alia*, on that most interesting of pre-Reformation phenomena, confraternities whose prime purpose was the provision of suffrages, perpetual commemorations for the repose of the souls of departed brothers ('pro fratribus defunctis domorum suarum suffragia in missis, psalmis et orationibus facere'). Reciprocal agreements between foundations to pray for each other's dead served in particular to augment the number of memorial masses said for each soul; this was the most desirable way of enhancing the overall efficacy of suffrages. The canons regular of Lanškroun established confraternities not only with filials of their order and and its Czech motherhouse in Roudnice but also with other orders, notably, with the three charterhouses mentioned above.

The Canons Regular of St Augustine were a populous order, at least in their late medieval manifestation in East-Central Europe. But it is the very nature of the order's appeal – communities which coalesced around shared religious precepts rather than being bound to a form of life by a Rule like the traditional monastic orders – that makes it hard to draw into focus the extent of their influence and contribution. Thanks to Krafl's exhaustive archival work in Czech and Polish archives we now have a surer grasp of their role in propagating the type of affective spirituality known as *devotio moderna*, a predilection that the Augustinian Canons shared with the Carthusians – which might account for the existence of confraternities between these orders.

These two impressive volumes by Pavel Krafl, *Řeholní kanovníci* a natural outgrowth of his work on RBMV-7, nicely illustrate the complementarity of well-honed skills in archival research and diplomatics. Their appearance is certainly to be welcomed, as is the level of support provided by the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic.

Robert Curry
 Medieval and Early Modern Centre
 The University of Sydney

Leach, Elizabeth Eva, *Guillaume de Machaut: Secretary, Poet, Musician*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2011; cloth; pp. 367; 33 b/w illustrations, 20 music examples; R.R.P. US\$59.95; ISBN 9780801449338.

Celebration in 1977 of the 600th anniversary of Guillaume de Machaut's death created a flurry of scholarly activity, which has quietly continued in the form of literary and musicological studies, editions and translations of texts, a comprehensive research guide, sound recordings, and online access to manuscripts and texts, but not until now a study encompassing all facets of the creative artist. Elizabeth Eva Leach has undertaken a holistic and interdisciplinary study, showing how Machaut's music and poetry interact.

Leach establishes that very little documented evidence exists about Machaut as an historical figure. A few facts about his itinerant life as a court officer and about his ecclesiastical benefices are gleaned from self-presentation in his narrative works. It is, however, remarkable that, aware of the importance of his status as an author, he preserved his oeuvre of about four hundred poems in an orderly collection, in the codex Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, fr. 1584, copied in the 1370s, and containing almost his total output of verse and music and two portraits of the poet himself.

Leach places her study in a frame of re-membering/remembrance to replace the dismembering Machaut's work has suffered in the hands of scholars. As the historiographical survey in Chapter 2 shows, he has been recognized from the early twentieth century as a successor of the troubadours and *trouvères*. The combination of lyric and narrative forms with a first-person protagonist, and the notation and tonal aspects of his music have attracted particular attention. As a musicologist, Leach contends that the music, the more challenging part of Machaut's work, is central. Returning to the manuscripts, she will 'integrate musical readings and music's reading of lyrics into thematic discussion of Machaut's work in the round' (p. 78).

Chapter 3, 'Creation: Machaut Making', begins with discussion of the corpus manuscript, the poetic inspiration of Nature and Love, and Boethius's influence on Machaut's thought. The necessary elements for successful creation are joy and *sentement*, 'emotional authenticity' (pp. 102, 123–28). Examples of texts, with translation, musical notation, and sometimes reproduction of a manuscript page form the basis of detailed discussion here and in subsequent chapters. Pairs of examples allow Leach to illustrate the important factor of adjacency in her interpretation.

Chapter 4, 'Hope: Loving', focuses on the essential tenet of Machaut's courtly doctrine, that the lover–poet be governed, not by Desire, but by

reassuring Hope that leads ultimately to the lady's granting of *merci*. Thus self-sufficient, the lover is distinguishable from the self-absorbed Boethius and the lover-dreamer of the *Roman de la Rose*.

Fortune, a negative force the poet combats by means of composition, is represented with traditional features. Her disruptive and deceitful behaviour finds expression in the music. A parallel is suggested between the opening stanza of the *Complainte* 'Tieus rit au main ...' and *Boeces, de Consolacion*, Book II, meter i (pp. 225–26). Music, text, and the fascinating illustration of Fortune cranking her wheel, from Paris, BnF, MS fr. 1586, f. 30^v (p. 222), interact very effectively.

The final chapter treats the poetic theme of death and Machaut's own death. Guillaume's *balade* 'Plourés, dames, plourés vostre servant', plays on the ambivalence of death caused by rejection in love and actual death (pp. 265–74). Although the *balade* is sad, Leach describes the music as 'rather merry' unless performed very slowly (p. 270). She rightly quashes any modern contentions that Machaut's religious works, notably motets and the polyphonic mass, are out of place in the work of a medieval secular court poet. Deschamps's double *balade* commemorating the poet, and his own *balade* 'Je pren congié' (pp. 304–12) precede an outline of Machaut's influence and authority in music and poetry.

Translations of the French texts are generally exact. Occasionally a different word or nuance might fit: in reference to the lover's heart, 'S'en frit ...' means 'seethes, trembles' (p. 150, v. 12); in the passage from *Boeces, de Consolacion* (p. 226), 'senz frein' means 'without restraint, unchecked' and 'soi montrer' 'to show herself, to be visible'. I spotted only one real error: omission of the negative in translation of 'Car Fortune qui onques n'est seüre' (p. 199, *balade* 23, 3.2).

A Glossary of Musical Terms, an extensive Bibliography, an Index, and an Index of Machaut's Lyrics, by genre, complete the book. Careful organization with many cross-references and fully documented notes accompany the clear, vigorous exposition. Other scholars' work, for example that of Jacqueline Cerquiglini-Toulet, Sylvia Huot, and Douglas Kelly, is duly acknowledged. Lawrence Earp's *Guillaume de Machaut: A Guide to Research* (1995) is an indispensable tool. As a literary reader, I greatly appreciate Leach's efforts to make the interpretation of the music accessible to non-musicologists. In an integrated study of music, texts, and manuscripts, she has greatly extended the significance and understanding of Machaut, the first French *poète*.

Glynnis M. Cropp
School of Linguistics and International Languages
Massey University

Medieval Manuscripts, Their Makers and Users: A Special Issue of 'Viator' in Honor of Richard and Mary Rouse (Palaeography, Manuscript Studies & Book History (Outside a Series)), Turnhout, Brepols, 2011; hardback; pp. vi, 321; 88 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. €90.00; ISBN 9782503538945.

The word 'auto-defenestration' – itself a bastard Greek–Latin neologism, but one as intriguing as 'metempsychosis' used to be – begins this fascinating book. For Richard and Mary Rouse 'rien de ce qui touche aux manuscrits n'est étranger' (Dolbeau, p. 114), and all students of manuscripts remain indebted in particular to their seminal work: Richard H. Rouse and Mary A. Rouse, *Manuscripts and their Makers: Commercial Book Producers in Medieval Paris, 1200–1500* (2 vols, Brepols, 1999). The variety of matters that arise out of the study of manuscripts, or even of a specific manuscript, is enormous, and this is reflected in this collection of essays from a conference in their honour held at UCLA. Many of us use manuscripts from a particular period but, for the Rouses, all manuscripts are grist to their mill. So this celebratory volume brings together papers concerning many different periods and a considerable variety of interests. Topics range from early (North) African manuscripts to annotations (vastly amusing and intriguing in Susan L'Engle's article) to manuscript book collections.

Manuscripts are treasures. Unfortunately, in this capitalist age, these treasures are generally measured in dollars: tens of thousands even for a single leaf. Fortunately, images of more and more of these manuscripts can be viewed via the Web, though it has to be admitted that looking at the artefact can be a very different experience from looking at images on the Web.

The real value of manuscripts, or even just their texts, lies in what they tell us about our past, and how we can face the future. Peter Kidd's article is salutary in guiding us on how to deal with dismembered manuscripts – manuscripts that have literally been torn apart and whose pieces now reside in alien hands: 'If a dealer can sell items without going to the trouble and expense of including them in a catalog, he will generally do so' (p. 284). Yet Kidd remains hopeful of finding everything from the particular manuscript he has studied. Sometimes that happens, as in the case of *The Hours of Catherine of Cleves* (eds Rob Drückers and Ruud Priem, Museum Het Valkhof, Nijmegen, 2009) which was rescued from two, should one say, rebound volumes.

The breadth of this collection – a challenge to any reviewer – means that most readers will only digest selected articles. Nevertheless, many insights emerge: the importance of travel by water and the machinations of patrons and authors, not to mention scribes and illuminators, are just some of the outcomes of studying manuscripts. As an extreme example, an 'awkward

k may be imitated from printer's type' (Doyle, p. 201) reverses the usual understanding of print as imitating script rather than the reverse.

The names of certain special people inevitably recur: the Rouses, of course, and M. R. James and N. Ker to mention but two. On the other hand the articles are of very different qualities. Anne Hudson has convoluted prose but no significant new conclusions; Doyle's article is not very illuminating. Yet Ralph Hanna's piece on Dan Michel's library, Patricia Stirnemann's on the seemingly inexhaustible treasures of Richard de Fournival's collections, and François Dolbeau's work on a Dominican library catalogue alert us to the importance of past collections in understanding the spirit of those times, while Margaret Lamont's article shows how genealogies, especially ancient genealogies, serve multiple purposes, some political. Civic foundations are based on lots of myths. Correspondingly there are many manuscripts about such events and Carrie E. Beneš shows how even this prolixity can be illuminating.

It is a great pity that Christopher Baswell, who convened the conference from which these papers come, was ill and therefore unable to edit the volume. This explains various infelicities such as the tortuous syntax in the sentence: 'The scope of this large manuscript is unparalleled amongst other surviving ... books; but the puzzles that an attempt to answer my questions from it have revealed are not unusual.' Further, although this is a special issue of a periodical *Viator*, it would have been very helpful to have an index. Despite such failings, in the reviewer's view there is much to delight and absorb. The Rouses have contributed enormously to the study of manuscripts *per se* and through their work we are so much the richer. This volume well reflects their contributions.

John N. Crossley
Faculty of Information Technology
Monash University

Mews, Constant J. and Claire **Renkin**, eds, *Interpreting Francis and Clare of Assisi: From the Middle Ages to the Present*, Melbourne, Broughton Publishing, 2010; paperback; pp. xvi, 416; 39 colour illustrations; R.R.P. AU\$89.95; ISBN 9780980663464.

This cross-disciplinary collection stems from a conference at the Yarra Theological Union in November 2009, one of several events held worldwide to celebrate the eighth centenary of the founding of the Franciscan Order. Meticulously and imaginatively printed and presented, the volume reaffirms the art of making fine books. The essays, together with a splendid gathering

of coloured plates, trace the impact of Franciscan ideas from their beginnings into the contemporary world, encompassing countries as diverse as Italy, England, France, Ireland, Bohemia, Egypt, and Australia. The book reasserts Francis and Clare's message of strenuous self-giving and simple living as a powerful response to twenty-first-century conflicts and disasters.

Like Christianity as a whole, Franciscan history embodies the paradox of a movement built on love for and identification with the poor, which has deviated too readily into oppression, hypocrisy, and corruption. This collection counters the research effort that has been put into medieval and Renaissance anti-fraternal satire by recalling the challenge that Franciscan ideals in their purity have always posed to capitalist values. In seeking, in imitation of the founders, to implant *caritas* as the leading aspiration for the active and contemplative lives of individuals, Franciscan traditions are potentially more radical than any left-wing ideology.

Accordingly, several essays in this collection focus on Franciscans' confrontations with economic determinism and papal authority. Drawing on Francis's and Clare's authenticated writings and other early sources, Jacques Dalarun delineates each saint's basic iconoclasm: '[Francis] overcomes the divisions of social, cultural and sexual categories by subverting them, turning them topsy-turvy. [Clare] ignores them, haughtily. In each individual, beginning with Francis, she sees immediately the transparency of Christ' (p. 11).

A study by Michael Cusato delves into the early friars' relationship to money, reviled as *turpe lucrum*, *stercus*, and *serpens*. Francis responded to the Gospel teachings on money's power to corrupt and on poverty as the path to perfection at the historical moment when coin and credit first infiltrated European economic life. The fierce renunciation of money in his first Rule, the *Regula non bullata* (1208–21), recognized 'a terrible and devastating social reality' – 'Money ... as it was experienced by the common folk of central Italy, including Assisi, was an instrument of exploitation used by the powerful to gain profit for themselves at the expense of the rest of the population, most especially the daily labourer, the vulnerable and the poor' (pp. 21–22). Not much has changed!

Other essays explore historical tensions, many of them creative, within and beyond early Franciscan thought and institutions. Of these, Anne M. Scott's study traces the paradox of Lady Poverty as the greatest evil yet a liberating Christian virtue in selected medieval literary works. Peta Hills examines Clare's new concept of religious life in her *Forma Vitae* (1253), as enclosed, yet with permeable boundaries for working with the poor. She quotes the Clarissan view, astonishing to many, that poverty is simultaneously

privilege and freedom (p. 115). Essays by Julie Ann Smith and Robert Curry explore inner uncertainties and outer conflicts generated by the Clarissan sisters' renunciation of property. Janice Pinder's analysis of French verse translations of Thomas of Celano's *Vita Prima* exemplifies the role of Franciscan idealism in popular culture.

Another group of essays, keyed to the coloured plates, offers new insights into the visual arts. They include Judith Collard's exposition of Franciscan images in English manuscripts of Matthew Paris's *Chronica Maiora* and *Liber Additamentorum*; Hugh Hudson's description of Friar Pietro Teutonico's reliquary diptych in the National Gallery of Victoria; and Claire Renkin's account of Magdalena Steimerin's German translation of Celano's *Vita* of Clare, in a manuscript colourfully illuminated by Sibylla von Bondorf. These studies culminate in Ursula Betka and Margaret Pont's examination of thirteenth-century Franciscan paintings in Assisi, used as an explanatory context for Arthur Boyd's St Francis tapestries. Designed in 1974, the tapestries were first displayed collectively during the conference, at Newman College in the University of Melbourne.

A final set of essays focuses on post-medieval attempts to live and transmit Franciscan ideals. Maurice Carmody traces themes of reform and division in the Order, which led to its translation, *via* Ireland, to the founding in 1880 of a convent in Sydney, while James Fitzgerald and Dianne Reilly discuss the part played by Franciscan priest, Patrick Bonaventure Geoghegan, in the civic life of early Melbourne. Josephine Rush reports the work of Franciscan sisters as inter-faith peacemakers at St Clare's College in Cairo between 2005 and 2009. Ted Witham's essay describes the flourishing of Franciscan values among Australian Anglican tertiaries. Finally, Brieger O'Hare narrates the founding in 2004 by Poor Clares of a monastery in Faughart, Dundalk, Ireland, inspired by desert, Celtic, and Franciscan eremitical traditions, and embracing the Franciscan values of prayer and poverty.

In sum, this smorgasbord of Franciscan and Clarissan learning in literature, politics, the visual arts, history, theology, and spirituality has much to offer to contemporary readers.

Cheryl Taylor
School of Arts and Social Sciences
James Cook University, Townsville

Modigliani, Anna, Patricia **Osmond**, Marianne **Pade**, and Johann **Ramminger**, eds, *Pomponio Leto tra identità locale e cultura internazionale: atti Del Convegno Internazionale, Teggiano, 3–5 Ottobre 2008* (RR Inedita Saggi, 48), Rome, Roma nel Rinascimento, 2011; paperback; pp. xii, 296; 11 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. €33.00; ISBN 8885913520.

The incredibly influential Roman humanist Pomponio Leto (1428–1498) continues to exercise the fascination that made students flock to his lectures at ‘impossible hours’ (p. 3). One of these, Marco Antonio Altieri, even made testamentary provision for a pagan-style banquet every year on the anniversary of his own death, in celebration of himself and his teachers Leto and Platina. In the hundred years that have passed since the publication of Vladimir Zabughin’s indispensable but always provisional *Giulio Pomponio Leto: saggio critico* (2 vols, Rome, 1909–12), many new discoveries have been made, yet myriad questions remain to be answered. It is one of the attractive features of this volume that its contributors are alive to such new opportunities for further research.

In his stimulating ‘prolusione’, Massimo Miglio sets out some of these puzzles in a survey of the spheres in which Leto lived or exercised his influence. The details of his biography are elusive: Anna Modigliani’s article considers his name, Arturo Didier his early years; for later interest in the biography see Johann Ramminger’s and Annalisa Esposito’s contributions. The dates and destinations of his travels – certainly to Germany, and to ‘Scythia’ – remain a matter of discussion, but his experiences in Eastern Europe (Poland, Southern Russia, the Black Sea?) are famously reflected in notes in his commentaries on classical texts, especially on Varro’s *De lingua Latina*, Virgil’s *Georgics*, and Valerius Flaccus’ *Argonautica*. On this topic, see Maria Accame’s ‘Note scite nei commenti di Pomponio Leto’.

Pomponio Leto impinges on many aspects of the culture, society, and politics of Rome in the second half of the fifteenth century (see the vivid but somewhat exaggerated account of Anthony F. D’Elia, *A Sudden Terror: The Plot to Murder the Pope in Renaissance Rome* (2009)). Moreover, as Miglio says, he lived in Rome at a time when it was becoming, and was ‘il referente culturale d’Europa’ (p. 2). Hence his fame spread beyond the Roman *Studium* and the Italian humanist networks to Northern Europe via the students he attracted (e.g., Conrad Celtis) and his surprisingly few published works. Leaving aside the texts he edited for the early printing trade, the most significant of these works are *Romanae historiae compendium* (Venice, 1499), *De Romanorum magistratibus, sacerdotiis, iurisperitis et legibus* (Rome, 1474), *De antiquitatibus urbis Romae libellus* or *De Romanae urbis vetustate* (Rome 1510), all in his *Opera* (1510, 1515, and 1521). Aspects of their contents and *fortuna*, and antiquarian

interests more broadly, are discussed by Francesca Niutta, Angelo Mazzocco, Patricia Osmond, Federico Rausa, and Ramminger.

The bulk of Pomponio's work, however, lies barely read in manuscript 'commentaries' or in manuscript notes in the margins of early printed books, and examples of this material continue to come to light. Discussions by Accame, Fabio Stok, Marianne Pade, Giancarlo Abbamonte, and Osmond demonstrate the inherent difficulties, as well as the gains to be made by close analysis of these notes. Another theme that runs through the collection is Pomponio's relationship with his contemporaries (such as Perotti in both Stok and Pade) and continuing presence in matters of controversy (see Lucia Gualdo Rosa on the two Senecas, and Federico Rausa's contribution, 'Pomponio Leto, Pirro Ligorio').

This volume, like earlier ones on Pomponio Leto in the same series published by the admirable group 'Roma nel Rinascimento' (*Antiquaria a Roma: intorno a Pomponio Leto e Paolo II* (2003), *Pomponio Leto e la prima Accademia romana* (2005)), is indispensable for specialists in Roman culture of the fifteenth century and classicists interested in the Renaissance origins of their discipline.

Frances Muecke
Department of Classics and Ancient History
The University of Sydney

Noble, Louise, *Medicinal Cannibalism in Early Modern English Literature and Culture* (Early Modern Cultural Studies), Houndmills, Palgrave Macmillan, 2011; hardback; pp. 256; R.R.P. US\$85.00; ISBN 9780230110274.

Many are likely to conceive of a topic such as cannibalism as the study of an alien past – a barbaric practice of a bygone era. Indeed, even replacing the more sensational term 'medicinal cannibalism' with the clinically dry 'corpse pharmacology' does little to lessen the aversion to these practices, especially knowing exactly what the practice entails.

As implied in the title, this book explores the tradition of 'corpse pharmacology', that is the medicinal use and ingestion of specially prepared body parts and excretions in early modern England and the fascination that these practices engendered in the literary culture of the time. Louise Noble approaches the study in a way that, from the outset, draws insightful analogies between the often legally questionable early modern trade in 'recycled medical corpse matter' (p. 2) and current trade (both the legal and illegal) in

medical cadavers, biological material, and organs central to today's 'medical economy' (p. 2; see also Chapter 1).

In her exploration of the natural philosophy and metaphysics that supported the belief in the efficacy of the corpse-based remedies (*mumia*), Noble craftily and smoothly links the discussion of medicalized corpses to both historical and modern religious, political, and cultural implications of such practices. Through these lenses, she offers enlightening insights into the social and cultural functions of cannibalism, including the polemic tensions between Protestant utilizers of medicinal *mumia* and the Catholic Eucharist rituals, and contemporary debates over the extent of the legal rights people are (or are not) allowed to exercise over their bodies today.

This leads to one of the surprising and innovative aspects of this study. Noble uses the themes identified in the early modern context in conjunction with Jonathan Gil Harris's theory of the temporality of matter and the bioethical studies of Nancy Scheper-Hughes, to create signposts for future discussions relating to the navigation of today's moralizing debates over the medical appropriation of corpses and human tissue. In the modern context, the author primarily focuses on ethical questions surrounding organ transplants – a practice that has been likened to a form of cannibalism – and particularly controversial incidents such as the state-mandated harvesting programmes that were reported to have occurred in Chinese prisons in 2005.

Despite such a weighty agenda, Noble intentionally takes an important cue from the early modern medical authors, and refrains from oversensationalizing the topic, a wise decision given the nature of the material with which the reader is often confronted. Yet methodologically, Noble goes beyond the sterilized context of the recipe books and pharmacopeia with interesting effect. She successfully uses these and other traditional historical sources (such as trial records) to contextualize her study and ground her arguments.

Much of the work, however, focuses on examples of medicinal cannibalism in literary texts. Through the cultural creations of such impressive figures as Shakespeare, Jonson, Spenser, and Nashe, Noble explores the social and cultural reactions to and anxieties about the use of *mumia*. The author very convincingly relates these fictional constructs to the interplay between the medical practices and 'processes of social disenfranchisement, judicial violence, scientific experimentation, and religious reform' (p. 13). These theories and interpretations are then supported well with a reassuring balance of non-medical writings of philosophical heavyweights such as Da Vinci (p. 17) and Montaigne (p. 61).

In balancing the use of fiction, philosophy, and historical records, Noble's work bears out Marshall Sahlins's notion that 'cannibalism is always "symbolic" even when it is "real"' (p. 8). Indeed, it is this notion that helps Noble overcome what was undoubtedly the biggest conceptual hurdle for the work: establishing a convincing analogy between early modern discussions of the usage of *mumia* and modern medical practices that make use of harvested human materials.

Unfortunately, the author seems very hesitant to offer any substantial arguments regarding what, in the end, the early modern analogy might actually offer the modern bioethicist. The reader's disappointment in this regard is heightened, not by the weakness of the case, but by the success with which Noble establishes the potential relationships between these early modern practices and modern concerns. To great effect throughout the work, she regularly compares and contrasts the historical and early modern fictional accounts with reports of modern cases of cannibalism and organ trade, and contemporary fictional depictions such as the infamous 'Scott Tenorman Must Die' episode of the adult cartoon series *South Park* (p. 39). In this way, the author used the analogy of early modern medicinal cannibalism to the modern organ trade to highlight both the differences and similarities of the past and present. Yet, ultimately, a stronger sense of how the ideas suggested by the analysis might be drawn together would have been a more fulfilling conclusion to an otherwise enlightening and inspiring book.

Julie Davies
School of Historical and Philosophical Studies
The University of Melbourne

Phillips, Kim M. and Barry Reay, *Sex before Sexuality: A Premodern History*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2011; paperback, pp. 200; 14 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £16.99; ISBN 9780745625232.

With *Sex before Sexuality: A Premodern History*, Kim M. Phillips and Barry Reay take on the complex topic of sexualities in history. They note that the modern practice of seeing sexual behaviour as a defining aspect of personal identity is something that is at odds with what is found in historical sources, yet is commonly seen in much historical research.

While their aim to address this issue is admirable, the reality falls short in a few key areas. The lack of a clear methodological approach is frustrating, as the reader never forms a clear understanding of how the authors are approaching their sources. While their claim that modern sexual terms are detrimental to historical research is valid, the lack of an alternative

proposition for reading primary sources is vexing. The frequent reiteration that commonly used terms such as heterosexuality are inappropriate in a historical context is problematic when no alternative is offered. Beginning with the Introduction, the thorough but extensive use of endnotes also becomes somewhat frustrating, as nearly every second sentence has a note attached.

Another thorny problem, still in evidence here – especially in the chapter ‘Before Heterosexuality’ – is the claim to be representative of both the medieval and the early modern periods, while relying predominantly on, the presumably more abundant, early modern sources. This highlights the difficulties associated with using a term such as ‘premodern’: unless a strong methodological approach is attached, it becomes a throwaway term in its broadness and inclusivity.

The third chapter deals with male–male sexuality, with a significant proportion of the discussion given over to sodomy. The points raised are well supported by primary evidence, but again the methodology being used could have been more clearly articulated. While the authors initially note that ‘sodomy’ in the medieval period had no precise definition – stating that sodomy covered a range of inappropriate sexual acts and was not limited only to men – they then, unfortunately, revert to using it to describe only male–male acts.

In the next chapter, Phillips and Reay move on to sexuality between women. While the previously mentioned uncertainty regarding terms and methodology persists, a wide range of sources are investigated. Small inconsistencies such as referring to someone by their surname for several paragraphs but then abruptly switching to their given name, and unclear use of quotations detract from comfortable reading. Despite this, the impressive scope of the research is evident.

The title of the fifth chapter, ‘Before Pornography’, speaks for itself and the authors’ viewpoint. While Phillips and Reay claim that no clear case for the existence of pornography in ‘premodern’ times can be made, their argument would have been more convincing if their key term had been more precisely defined. The attempt is there to make a case for resisting the urge to use modern concepts on historical sources, yet the complexity of both modern, and possible historical, pornography is not treated with enough depth to be satisfying.

In the last chapter, ‘Epilogue: Sex at Sea?’, the authors restrict their focus to the impact of sea-faring on concepts of sexuality. They highlight not only the disparity between western European and New World perceptions of sex,

but also the difference between modern and historical perceptions, opening up many lines of future inquiry.

While students may find the complex technical apparatus frustrating, historians will be drawn to the extensive sources used: *Sex before Sexuality* illustrates how complex historical sexualities are and the use of sources as varied as letters, court records, and poetry, show how much can be gleaned from the most unlikely areas.

It is clear that the authors have done considerable research, and I found the relatively consistent integration of medieval sources and the inclusion of art being two of the most positive aspects of the book. For me, *Sex before Sexuality* poses many intriguing questions; I would have liked, however, a few more answers.

Deborah Seiler
The University of Western Australia

Quinn, Judy and Emily Lethbridge, eds, *Creating the Medieval Saga: Versions, Variability and Editorial Interpretations of Old Norse Saga Literature* (The Viking Collection, 18), Copenhagen, University Press of Southern Denmark, 2010; cloth; pp. 337; 11 b/w figures; R.R.P. DKK375.00; ISBN 9788776745325.

Creating the Medieval Saga is the honed edge of Old Norse philology. Its contributors are among the finest medievalists currently active in the editing of Icelandic saga material, from Margaret Clunies Ross (editor of the sweeping 'Skaldic Poetry of the Scandinavian Middle Ages' project), to M. J. Driscoll of the Arnamagnæan Institute, Copenhagen, and Guðrún Nordal (the Arni Magnusson Institute, Reykjavik), to Judith Jesch (whose work has defined the study of runic inscriptions). The symposium at which these ideas were first presented drew together an impressive depth of Old Norse expertise, and the resulting volume is a stimulating, historically grounded yet forward-looking hoard of ideas for the future of saga editions.

Although technically devoid of sectional division, the volume is, as editor Judy Quinn indicates, arranged in three parts. The first three essays concern 'methodological approaches to editing Old Norse texts' (p. 27), and include Odd Einar Haugen's 'Stitching the text together: Documentary and eclectic editions in Old Norse philology', Karl G. Johansson's 'Texts and editions in the computer age', and Driscoll's 'Thoughts on philology, old and new'. The first part of Haugen's chapter, taken in conjunction with the central section of Quinn's 'Introduction', provides a valuable primer for those unfamiliar with the arcane practices of philology. Haugen delineates (in terms of his

own minting) two primary types of edition: the ‘eclectic’, in which many texts of a work are brought together to construct a hypothetical original; and the ‘documentary’ which focuses more upon individual extant manuscripts. The former approach was typical of nineteenth-century saga editions, while recent work has tended towards the ‘documentary’ under the influence of New Philology. This concern with editorial practices of the past and the interrogation of merits and flaws in both Old and New Philology are central themes of the book, and Haugen – in common with many of the contributors – refuses the easy route of denigration of the old.

Quinn’s second section presents case studies in ‘the preservation and editing’ of individual sagas. Co-editor Emily Lethbridge’s ‘Gísla saga Súrssonar: Textual variation, editorial constructions and critical interpretations’ is a beautifully organized example, displaying an evident depth of research – the product of Lethbridge’s doctoral thesis. Like the preceding chapter by Þórður Ingi Guðjónsson, Lethbridge examines the three major redactions of this famous family saga. Of particular interest is her discussion of the proverb ‘the counsels of women are cold’ (p. 147). Both wording and speaker vary between manuscripts – with important implications for the interpretation of a phrase held to be emblematic of Norse attitudes towards women.

In the following chapter, Jesch examines Orkneyinga saga, a generically conglomerate saga with which she has intimate acquaintance. Rather than adopting a ‘New’ or ‘Old’ philological approach, Jesch takes a leaf out of both books. She examines the changes in emphasis and structure that occurred over many redactions, concluding that a probable initial emphasis on historical compilation gave way in time to a smoother narrative in which earlier historical ‘references’ were substantially excised. The chapter demonstrates well the complexities of the manuscripts upon which many saga editions are based, for there is no complete version of Orkneyinga saga, only early fragments and older, yet still incomplete versions.

In ‘Rewriting history: The fourteenth-century versions of Sturlunga saga’, Nordal explores a quite different genre of saga, the manuscripts of which give variant interpretations of the tumultuous political events of a century earlier. Clunies Ross, like Jesch, has deep knowledge of the saga material she discusses: the ‘Verse and prose in Egils saga Skallagrímssonar’. As those familiar with Clunies Ross’s work might expect, the chapter is admirably detailed and rigorous (complete with tables demonstrating variations between the three major redactions). This is no article for undergraduates, but likely only to be undertaken by those exploring *prosimetrum* saga editions, or with a specific interest in the poetry of Egils saga.

Heslop's article on 'Grettisfærsla and Grettis saga' offers something like light relief from the intricacies of skaldic poetry, focusing instead upon the 'alarmingly obscene' and 'roughly versified rigmarole' that is Grettisfærsla. This poem of c. 400 lines has received almost no scholarly attention since its 1960 rediscovery, quite probably because it defies notions of what saga poetry should be. The potentially intriguing topic is, however, undermined by the lack of quotation from this little-known poem. It seems necessary to have read Grettisfærsla first, and this essay more properly forms a companion piece to the English translation Heslop published in 2006.

The final 'section' explores 'the creation of the medieval saga from different temporal points of view' (p. 35). In 'Pulir as tradition-bearers and prototype saga-tellers', Russell Poole examines the meanings of the rarely attested term, Pulir. Although Poole's study spans centuries and accumulates an impressive range of examples, the essay is weakened by the absence of any clear argument (perhaps because Poole recognizes that conjecture about saga origins is inevitably flimsy at best).

Andrew Wawn finishes the volume with a ground-breaking translation of 'Úlfs saga Uggasonar'. As a first translation and publication of this *fornaldarsaga*, it cannot but be commended. However, I have reservations: firstly, the bulk of the 'introduction' concerns Úlfs saga only peripherally; secondly, the translation is based on a single manuscript – evidently not the earliest extant manuscript – and no explanation is given for the choice. Nor is any variation between manuscripts discussed. Thus Wawn's translation runs contrary to many of the points raised by earlier chapters.

Overall, despite the range in chronological and thematic focus, the conclusions and suggestions that arise from this volume are remarkably consistent. The 'deceptively neat narratives' (p. 14) that earlier editors typically constructed from multiple and fragmentary saga witnesses are exposed as 'editorial creations' (p. 19). The authors consider examples of such editorial intervention while yet accepting a need for saga editions accessible to the non-expert reader. With the future firmly in view, this is not a volume focused on the failings of the past – instead, contributors pose recommendations or suggestions for editorial practices of the future.

Carol Hoggart
Schools of Humanities and English and Cultural Studies
The University of Western Australia

Read, Kirk D., *Birthing Bodies in Early Modern France: Stories of Gender and Reproduction* (Women and Gender in the Early Modern World), Farnham, Ashgate, 2011; hardback; pp. xiii, 205; 14 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £55.00; ISBN 9780754666325.

Like many literary scholars today, Kirk Read has added works of lesser or no special standing to the canonical literary works once deemed to have the literary merit worthy of study. These include the work of Catherine and Madeleine des Roches, Les Serees, and the satirical work *Les Caquets de l'Accouchée* which have hitherto mainly been the preserve of historians and discussed at their basic literal level of sense. Once mainly seen as a commentary on the phenomenon of the 'ruelle' and the literary and factional history of the Court, this written material is now the subject of abstruse literary analysis and the boundaries between historical and literary approaches have been broken down.

This is particularly evident in studies like this one, addressed to aspects of women's lives that were once regarded as private and to the long-running discussion of the involvement of men in the birthing process and their preoccupation with the unclean aspects and yet attractions of the body. Read uses the normal list of obstetric works as set out in bibliographies such as that of Valerie Worth-Stylianou, that are well known and already widely exploited and also the stories of births and birthing that literary sixteenth-century thinkers retained from the classical past.

The materials available for France are rather more substantial than most countries and over the last two decades new scholarly editions of some of the more important sources have made studies such as this one easier. Even so, more weight is being placed on the work of Louise Bourgeois (Boursier) than it can perhaps bear. Read, however, limits himself to presenting her work as a literary *oeuvre* that provides him with some examples of the woman's sense of modesty and reluctance to endure male sight or touch.

He is not, in fact, directly concerned with the practice of childbirth in the period but with the idea of the body, control of the production of offspring, and unnatural events. He focuses his discussion of particular examples against the increasingly critical controversy over how the nature of childbirth was seen by the observer and the observed, the controlled and the controller, the speaker and the audience. He is especially interested in the appropriation of the female body – in fantasy or reality – by a male and vice-versa. The instability of gender identity is critical to his thought.

The chapters in this book, each of which focuses on a specific aspect of the birthing body such as touching and telling, are only loosely linked to a

central argument; they approach it from different texts, different periods and aspects of birth such as hermaphrodites, the birth of monsters, and stories of male parturition. Read's main preoccupation is the aim and ambition of men in their representation of relationships created by the processes of birth and the extent to which their ideal goal might be parthenogenesis. The argument that lack of control over childbearing creates insecurity in their sense of authority and perhaps identity meshes well with Lianne McTavish's arguments, but if this is the conclusion Read was attempting to reach, it needs to be more tightly presented.

He might perhaps examine more closely how far the overt purpose of a text like *Les Serées*, which acknowledges its purpose as bringing together ideas and authorities that were already known to a literary audience, can be shaped to elucidate gendered anxieties of the time. He reads his texts in search of various levels of symbolism, some of which are perhaps counter-intuitive or questionable. He would do well to engage with the long-running debate over when or whether symbolism that would not have been recognized by the authors may reasonably be extracted from a text.

His authors would have recognized the standard fourfold medieval religious divisions that were employed in glossing religious texts but these are not a comfortable fit with Read's approach. His sight varies from such earlier ideas. This may be a new insight but we need to be persuaded that it is reasonable, for example, that whereas Rabelais in his time was criticized as a blasphemer – mocking the religious superstitions of the Church in many of his adaptations of religious myth – Read sees little importance in the religious symbolism, preferring to interpret the birth of Gargantua as a male fantasy of parturition.

Read's search for particular elements such as issues of intersexuality gives the reader only a partial analysis of the texts he uses. In considering the major early modern texts which deal with monsters and hermaphroditism he does not focus on the overall thinking of well-known authors like Pierre Launay (Boaistuau, d. 1566) whose definition of monster included the grossly obese, strange animals, and the merely unfamiliar. Again, Read does not discuss Launay's preoccupation with the religious role and the laws of nature in the manifestation of strange beings and what they symbolized for people on earth in the classical fourfold system. But Launay was not evidently interested in intersexuality. Paré, who was concerned with the practical aspects of those we would call Siamese twins and the reality of hermaphroditism, was concerned only with the possible explanation of sexual misidentification. In many ways, Read's analysis depends heavily on Kathleen Long.

Read's selectivity and reluctance to acknowledge the conventional make it hard to evaluate his metaphorical use of the texts to reveal contemporary attitudes to birthing issues. In his conclusion, Read acknowledges that he sees the past as illuminating the present, and the present as suggesting possible approaches in the past that have been ignored. While all history has long been acknowledged as contemporary history, this may be shifting sands for a fruitful interpretation of these texts.

Sybil M. Jack
Department of History
The University of Sydney

Sanchez, Melissa E., *Erotic Subjects: The Sexuality of Politics in Early Modern English Literature*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011; hardback; pp. 304; R.R.P. £45.00; ISBN 9780199754755.

This excellent study traces the 'continuing importance of erotic fantasy' from Elizabeth's reign to that of Charles II, in a great range of texts, including Protestant hagiographies, Sidney's *Arcadia*, Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, Wroth's *Urania*, Caroline masques, Shakespeare's *Rape of Lucrece*, and Milton's *Paradise Lost*, among others. Melissa E. Sanchez contends that the erotic element was always implicated in politics because, whereas 'early modern authors understand political subjection in sexual terms, their analyses of desire are also analyses of how power works' (p. 4). An ambitious project, *Erotic Subjects* is thoroughly researched and organized; moreover, it encompasses an impressive body of literature.

Chapter 1 establishes important foundations for the study; as Sanchez explains, Mary I – considered a religious tyrant by Protestant survivors and their descendants – presented a dilemma for those who had yielded, 'even under duress', to her religious authority, and to 'political theorists ... problems that would occupy' them 'for the next century' (p. 14). In a key statement, Sanchez elaborates that 'sixteenth- and seventeenth-century literature' provides 'the most thorough analysis available of ... the latent perversity of the erotic politics' she has 'been tracing'. It also offers an 'underappreciated picture of the complexities of early modern political psychology', which took two different forms, based alternatively on Mary I's religious persecution of Protestants – which inspired the literature of 'Foxean martyrdom' – and on 'Petrarchan courtship', with its martyred lover and unattainable mistress. Both traditions 'continued to shape' the ways the English understood 'sovereignty and obedience in the seventeenth century' (p. 25).

Chapter 2 includes discussion of Sidney's prose romance *Arcadia* (c. 1578–86) which aimed at 'political opposition' while 'avoid[ing] the aggressive, even anarchic, possibilities of armed revolt' (p. 36). Thus, Sanchez observes that like Foxe, Sidney privileges the 'heroism' of 'feminine endurance' over that of 'masculine conquest' (p. 39); but, one wonders if Sidney was simply disinterested, or meant to appeal to the female ruler.

Chapter 3 focuses on *The Faerie Queene*, Sanchez arguing that though Spenser, like Sidney, uses sexual assault as an analogy for political tyranny, 'Spenser is less optimistic' than Sidney 'about the possibility of ... principled resistance ... to unjust monarchical demands' (p. 57). Similarly, Sanchez observes that loss of emotional control in Sidney is attributed to the weak, or to the demonic, while in Spenser, the weak or the wicked 'are simply human', which makes it hard 'to distinguish between innocent and depraved desires, blissful harmony and self-destructive enthrallment' (p. 57).

Shakespeare's *The Rape of Lucrece* (Chapter 4), in turn, presents a contrast, in terms of sexual violence, with both Spenser and Sidney. While they treat the assaulted woman in an allegorical manner, the focus of *Lucrece* is not as with Spenser 'the collapse of spiritual resolve', but 'the problem of physical defeat' (p. 8).

A highlight in this study, Sanchez concludes in her discussion of Wroth's *Urania* in Chapter 5 that the *Urania's* implicit 'political martyrdom', which involves the subject's 'submission to the punishment of an unjust ruler, fails ... as effective protest', as it becomes merely a 'form of political masochism' (p. 117). Wroth knew similar marginalization, albeit within the aristocracy, given the crown's growing absolutism, since she belonged to the 'Sidney–Herbert circle' – its views frequently at odds with the monarch's, and openly critical of royal policy. Her position was made more marginal by her gender – something else to address in her writing.

Chapter 6 focuses on the Caroline Masque – and the dissociation between Charles I and his subjects, as he decided 'to rule without parliaments after 1629', thereby abandoning 'the most widely recognized indication that he governed with the consent of the whole realm', and refusing to appeal to the 'people's love' (p. 145) – so that, as Sanchez elaborates, Charles 'abrupt[ly] ... upset ... a narrative of cooperation, which seemed to confirm rumors that Charles would emulate the absolutism of Continental monarchs' (p. 146). In this political context, Sanchez suggests that elements of 'sadism ... abjection ... obsession and delusion, that haunt eros' in Caroline masques, in fact, worked 'against the king's own agenda' (p. 147).

Chapter 7 examines Margaret Cavendish's 'mid-century prose romances', *Assaulted and Pursued Chastity*, and 'The Contract'. Sanchez stresses

that Cavendish was no absolutist, but, rather, advocated individual restraint, and the duty of noble subjects 'to restrain both their own impulses and those of their sovereign', just as her sexually allegorized heroines 'regulate their passions and demand that their would-be lovers do the same' (p. 177).

Lastly, the closing chapter's discussion of 'Republicanism in *Paradise Lost*' is an appropriate choice, since Milton's masterpiece was produced when the Republic had ceased to exist, closing the circle on allegorical fictions of love and reciprocity. In Sanchez's view, the terrible paradox, which subverted English republican rule and hastened the Restoration, had been 'the ease with which the idealization of individual virtue can lead to the destruction of the republican order such virtue is supposed to support' (p. 207).

The five-page conclusion serves little purpose, in what is otherwise an exemplary piece of research – a study, which, in brief, exhibits considerable range, shrewd, perceptive readings, and interpretations of literary-historical textual data, and well-informed and intelligent engagement with current critical debates.

Ivan Cañadas
Hallym University
South Korea

Saunders, Corinne, ed., *A Companion to Medieval Poetry*, Chichester, Wiley-Blackwell, 2010; hardback; pp. xviii, 704; R.R.P. £110.00, €132.00, AU\$250.00, NZ\$285.00; ISBN 9781405159630.

This book belongs to Blackwell's wide-ranging series of companions to literature and culture. The publisher's aim is to 'provide new perspectives and positions on contexts and on canonical and post-canonical texts, orientating the beginning student in new fields of study and providing the experienced undergraduate and new graduate with current and new directions, as pioneered and developed by leading scholars in the field'. This laudable aim is achieved handsomely in this volume which does everything a 'companion' should do. It introduces a wide-ranging corpus of texts, genres, and languages, concentrating on poetry from the seventh to the sixteenth centuries. Contributors include veterans of longstanding reputation alongside newer, but no less incisive and influential scholars and critics: Ralph Hanna, A. V. C. Schmidt, John Scattergood, R. F. Yeager, and Douglas Gray, for example, rub shoulders with Daniel Anlezark, Lawrence Warner, Daniel Wakelin, and Matthew Woodcock.

Medieval poetry, as explored in this volume, is the literature of England (my only quibble with the book being its misleading title). The volume

divides into three sections: Old English Poetry, Middle English Poetry, and Post-Chaucerian and Fifteenth-Century Poetry. Within these divisions, each section has useful chapters on Contexts, dealing respectively with historical contexts, language, and manuscript traditions. The Old and Middle English sections have chapters on Genres and Modes, and the Middle English and Post-Chaucerian sections have chapters on Poets and Poems.

The plan is intelligent. Each chapter can stand alone and is followed by a rich bibliography with suggestions for further reading based on issues raised in the chapter. These reading lists give students a solidly reliable guide through both classic secondary sources and influential modern works, providing a road map that balances the best of traditional against path-breaking up-to-date scholarship. Yet while the chapters are independent of each other, the volume is well integrated, with much salient use of cross-referencing. Nancy Mason Bradbury's chapter on Popular Romance and Corinne Saunders's chapter on *The Canterbury Tales*, for example, consciously illuminate each other. The three chapters dealing with manuscript and book traditions resonate with all the texts under consideration, making it clear that, as Hanna says, the modern editions of medieval texts are the 'hypothetical construction of modern scholars' and cannot hope to 'reproduce any recorded medieval attitude to this text or to texts in general, just as it does not reproduce any single manuscript or reading experience' (p. 202). This insight, spelled out in detail by Jayatilaka, Hanna, and Boffey, opens up exciting new possibilities for studying medieval texts which many of the chapters introduce into their analyses.

I particularly welcomed the sections on genre, always a tricky subject for students of Old and Middle English. To have separate chapters on both popular and Arthurian romance gives the authors the opportunity, which they grasp, of drawing together new approaches from the vast numbers of books and articles written about these genres in recent times. The twelve chapters on genres and modes in Old and Middle English poetry with full references for further study will be invaluable, not only to those embarking on the study of the literature, but to busy tutors and lecturers who are likely to find much of interest and use here. I also enjoyed the ten chapters on 'contexts', clear guides through the historiography related directly to the genesis and production of poetry.

Of special interest, bearing in mind the burgeoning of scholarship in the history of the book in recent times, are the chapters, alluded to above, by Rohini Jayatilaka: 'Old English Manuscripts and Readers', Ralph Hanna: 'Middle English Manuscripts and Readers', and Julia Boffey: 'Manuscript and Print; Books, Readers and Writers'. These three chapters exemplify what is

original about this ‘Companion’ – attention to cutting-edge scholarship in recently developed fields of research. Equally forward looking is C. Annette Grisé’s chapter, ‘Women and Writing’, as applied to the fifteenth century; and Pamela King writes with authority on Drama, sacred and secular, refreshingly reminding us of the continuously emerging material being unearthed by The Records of Early English Drama project. ‘No longer can we fall back on a secure, co-aeval body of “mystery cycles” and “morality plays”’ (p. 626), writes King, and proceeds to chart a path through new research giving detailed information about performance and texts.

Perhaps most satisfying of all are the chapters on well-known, canonical authors, such as Langland, Gower, Chaucer, Hoccleve, and Lydgate. In these, sure-footed expositions of existing scholarship are woven together with new and striking insights. Warner’s chapter, for instance, is reassuring for students who may be daunted by the prospect of reading the whole poem, *Piers Plowman*. Warner recommends reading the poem in excerpts – the way most of us tackle the poem – as this is how the poem was read and passed on in its early years of transmission. This material is more fully developed in Warner’s 2011 book, *The Lost History of ‘Piers Plowman’*, reviewed elsewhere in this issue. Corinne Saunders presents Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* with a lucidly drawn overview of the whole, before exploring some of the highlights of what she calls Chaucer’s play with genre: romance, love and chivalry, saints’ lives, fabliau and comedy, morality, sin and damnation. Like Warner, she makes the text accessible to the inexperienced, while providing rich stimulus for further study.

It is impossible within the confines of a review article to do justice to every – or, indeed, to any – chapter in this well-thought-out book. As a ‘companion’, it is to be revisited with enjoyment for its many new insights on familiar and well-loved material and its confident handling of new approaches to the study of medieval English poetry.

Anne M. Scott
School of English and Cultural Studies
The University of Western Australia

Sederi: Yearbook of the Spanish and Portuguese Society for English Renaissance Studies, Volume 20, Valladolid, University of Valladolid, 2010; paperback; pp. 195; R.R.P. €30.00 (subscription); ISSN 1135–7789.

Sederi’s 2010 Yearbook presents an impressive offering of articles, which reflect a wide range of interests and critical methodologies, and meets the highest critical standards. Space limits the number I may review, but I

am very impressed with range and standards throughout. English is used consistently for essays, scholarly (philological) notes, and book reviews – *Sederi's* Portuguese and Spanish being reserved for abstracts, though English, and even French, are used in some cases.

This issue's excellent material has been drawn from both Iberian and foreign contributors, including one of exceptional international renown: Professor Andrew Gurr, who adds to his famous publications an impressive article, titled 'Baubles on the Water: Sea Travel in Shakespeare's Time', which presents a convincing case that 'the London playing companies' probably used 'coastal shipping for their travels' to carry personnel and 'expensive costumes and properties', rather than travelling along poor roads (p. 63). Gurr adds that performance records of the Admiral's company, which toured with *Tamburlaine* and *Doctor Faustus* in 1590 and 1591, strongly suggest that the players did not use roads, since town records sometimes show that they played in 'different ports on successive days', with such swiftness, that they might even have used their coastal transport to sleep on as well as for transport of their numbers and their properties' (p. 63).

Another notable article, 'Macbeth and the Passions' "Proper Stuff" by Zenón Luis Martínez discusses 'early modern conceptions and representations of the passions in relation to issues of self-knowledge, in texts ranging from Renaissance psychology to Shakespearean tragedy' (p. 71). Martínez grounds his study on the Christian-humanist work of such philosophers as Valencian-born Juan Luis Vives, and the English Thomas Wright and Sir John Davies, among others. He describes the individual 'Christian humanist' quest for 'self-knowledge', as 'a high ethical aspiration of the rational soul, whose search for truth comprised the elucidation of processes originating in the human mind and body, and conditioning action and behaviour' (p. 74). In these terms, Martínez examines *Macbeth's* place within Shakespeare's *oeuvre*, and in the context of humanist self-knowledge – specifically, how Shakespeare, through the multiple acts of deceit, including self-deception, in *Macbeth*, illustrated how the individual's desire for truth can miscarry. Thus, Martínez underlines that, for Shakespeare – as the play *Macbeth* strongly implies – 'poetry and the theatre', are both 'arts of feigning', which originated in 'the art of the rhetorician ... emphasiz[ing] the many fissures found in the process of self-awareness' (p. 81). *Macbeth's* proud 'belief' in his self-possession, for instance, is consistently undermined, and exposed, by the play's continual focus on the hero's 'loss of temper', as shown by the hero's 'very first encounter with the Weird Sisters' (p. 86).

Another outstanding contribution is R. Scott Fraser's scholarly essay in the 'Notes' section, "'The King has killed his heart": The Death of Falstaff

in *Henry V*', which examines 'references to the heart in both *1* and *2Henry IV* and *Henry V*, as a means of exploring the symbolic relationship between Falstaff and Henry in the latter play' (p. 145). The essay carefully traces the appearance, in Shakespeare's *oeuvre*, of the expression 'heart's ease', connected to expressions involving the heart, and to the figure of Falstaff – though Fraser argues, in fact, that the precise expression also appears in two Falstaff-free plays: *Romeo and Juliet* and *Julius Caesar*. The phrase and related discourse, was, therefore, apparently, attached not to a given character, *per se*, but a professional actor/stage persona, associated with the performer who played him: Will Kemp.

But, of course, through repetition – what Fraser calls 'an iterative process' (p. 146) – Falstaff will have, indeed, have come to be identified with *the heart*, so that, as Fraser underlines, by the rejection scene in *2Henry IV*, Falstaff, about to be coldly and infamously spurned by the king, with the words 'I know thee not, old man', addresses *him* in a way that serves to draw attention precisely to that term: 'My king, my Jove, I speak to thee, my *heart*' (pp. 151–52, emphasis Fraser's).

To turn to the ambiguous quotation in the essay's title – 'The King has killed his heart' which comes from a lamentation by the Hostess in *2Henry IV* – it could refer, as Fraser notes, either to Falstaff, ill in bed after being rejected by the monarch he once thought a friend, or to the king, who has grown hard-hearted.

On the basis of my very satisfying and fruitful reading of this 2010 issue, I would certainly recommend the yearbooks of the *Sederi* Association to any other scholars of Renaissance English literature.

Ivan Cañadas
Hallym University
South Korea

Sellin, Paul R., *Treasure, Treason and the Tower: El Dorado and the Murder of Sir Walter Raleigh*, Farnham, Ashgate, 2011; hardback; pp. 338; 8 colour, 35 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £35.00; ISBN 9781409420255.

The current trend in popular fiction for decoding paintings and hidden letters that rewrite history became an academic reality for Paul R. Sellin. Whilst undertaking research on the 'diplomatic correspondence of Sieur Michel Le Bon' in Sweden, Sellin stumbled upon evidence that George Villiers, the Duke of Buckingham, possessed a document revealing the secret location of Sir Walter Raleigh's gold mine. The implication, as Sellin acknowledges in Chapter 1, is that Raleigh could have been wrongfully beheaded in 1618 'on

charges that the mine was a lie' (p. 2). By consulting the Latin version of a French contract between the King of Sweden and the Duke of Buckingham, Sellin decodes its ambiguity to reveal the 'exact location' of Raleigh's mine (p. 14). The mine's apparent existence leads Sellin to question other claims that Raleigh never travelled to Guyana but stayed in Cornwall. Through a combination of close-reading Raleigh's *Discoverie of Guiana* (1596) and actually recreating the journey described in the narrative, Sellin aims to clear Raleigh's name.

In Chapter 2, Sellin clarifies that the dates in Raleigh's text are based on the Old Style Julian calendar. They are mainly accurate as Raleigh did set sail on a Thursday; a seemingly minor detail, but it has a profound effect on the veracity of Raleigh's travelogue. By mirroring Raleigh's voyage, Sellin is also able to confirm that Raleigh followed the best coastal journey towards the Orinoco Delta. Chapter 3 begins with Sellin reflecting on the conditions Raleigh and his crew endured on their journey. He surmises that they had only twelve hours of daylight in which to accomplish tasks such as anchoring and ship repairs. Furthermore, sailing at night was hazardous along the Orinoco with its 'venomous insects', serpents, and beasts (p. 64). These points register Sellin's admiration for Raleigh's determination to make the voyage a success. In another uncanny moment, following the directions in *Discoverie of Guiana*, Sellin is able to verify the existence of Guyana's mountains exactly where Raleigh had said they appeared on the river.

Sellin begins Chapter 4 by detecting in Le Bon's Latin letter to Axel Oxenstierna a misreading. After decoding the implications, he is able to locate Raleigh's gold mine in a peninsula called Isla Guarguapo. He also discovers, in Chapter 5, that Lawrence Keymis's moveable city, derided by King James I, actually existed. In 1595, the Spanish governor Don Antonio de Berrío founded Santo Tomé de Guyana. Unbelievably, the city was repeatedly moved up and down the Orinoco's southern bank until the 1760s.

Chapter 6 focuses on Raleigh's meeting with the *Cacique* King, Toparimaca, and not as popularly thought Topiawari. In order to strike a deal with Raleigh to be rid of their Spanish oppressors, Toparimaca shows Raleigh visible deposits of gold beneath a layer of turf: the gold mine Raleigh returned for unsuccessfully in 1618. Raleigh then headed a patrol in search of a gold city. Sellin notes the Admiral nearly reached 'El Callao and the famous Caratal gold field, modern Venezuela's true El Dorado' (p. 185). Chapter 7 sees Sellin verifying another improbable fact from Raleigh's *Discoverie of Guiana*. He tracks down the *Salto El Mono*, the great waterfall referred to by the natives. Satisfied that Raleigh is innocent of the charges made against him in 1618, Sellin decides to reopen the Admiral's case.

Chapter 8 has Sellin reassessing the minor errors in Raleigh's text. He concludes they are deliberately misleading so as to prevent the easy discovery of the mine to outsiders. In the final chapter, Sellin describes how Raleigh's good character was defiled and how his trial was farcical. By quoting Raleigh's poetry, Sellin shows the Admiral's realization that the Duke of Buckingham was not coming to his aid.

Overall, *Treasure, Treason and the Tower* is a goldmine in itself. The reassessment of Raleigh's character and travelogue, together with the decoding of forgotten letters, would capture a mass market's imagination. Sellin's book is also a reflection on how much the world has changed since the sixteenth century. The large Orinoco crocodile that threatened Raleigh's men has now nearly been hunted to extinction. Likewise, although they are still plentiful, green anacondas no longer live long enough to grow into the giants that Raleigh described. Supplemented with photographs taken during his journey, Sellin's book is a hybrid text. Ingenious scholarly insights are coupled with a popular historian's narrative implying that Sellin is unsure of which type of reader he is addressing.

Frank Swannack
School of Humanities, Languages, and Social Sciences
University of Salford

Warner, Lawrence, *The Lost History of 'Piers Plowman': The Earliest Transmission of Langland's Work* (Middle Ages), Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011; cloth; pp. xviii, 136; 3 illustrations; R.R.P. US\$49.95, £32.50; ISBN 9780812242751.

This book joins several illustrious predecessors, most notably the editions of *Piers Plowman* by Kane, Donaldson and Russell, and A. V. C. Schmidt, in attempting to unravel the history of the manuscript tradition of *Piers Plowman*. For scholars of the poem, the relationship between the versions extant in manuscripts can only be solved by the same kind of precise and painstaking analysis that has absorbed Lawrence Warner for many years, and has found definitive expression in this slim volume.

Warner does two things well. First, he devotes close attention to manuscripts, and studies the transmission of the poem as it has come down to us in various forms – bound together in folios with other material, on its own, and even in single loose sheets. The text in each manuscript is given careful analysis. Warner has charted the textual similarities and divergences between the various versions of the poem, doing most of the heavy lifting required by those who long to understand the progression from earlier to

later versions, and to find some authority on which to base opinions about the poet and the progression of his thought.

The second excellent feature of this book is the footnoting which is meticulous and seriously necessary. The footnotes are almost a reference work in their own right, for it is here that Warner's critical engagement with longstanding as well as up-to-date scholarship becomes evident. Following the footnote discussions is almost like being present at a lively, ongoing debate. Without such careful footnoting, the argument in the text would be difficult to follow.

The book makes striking claims that will alter critical perceptions of the poem. The thrust of the argument developed throughout the book is that we need to rethink the evidence for the earliest production and transmission of *Piers Plowman*. The first chapter, '*Piers Plowman* before 1400', posits that Langland's own B version 'achieved absolutely minimal circulation, if any at all, before c. 1395, and not very much between then and 1550 either' (p. 6). Warner argues, instead, that *Piers Plowman* A achieved substantial circulation from its very early stages, that C was widely embraced by readers and scribes, and that B remained dormant until long after the C-text had been established. Among his several arguments to prove this point is a carefully developed case against taking John Ball's letters as having been influenced by the poem.

The second chapter, 'Scribal Conflation, Convergent Variation, and the Invention of *Piers Plowman* B', argues that a lost manuscript, Bx, an exemplar of future B manuscripts, was, at an early stage, supplemented by lines and paragraphs of new C material. Careful textual comparison is brought into play to support this idea, and even more in the following chapter: 'The Poison of Possession: B Passus 15'. The fourth chapter, 'The Ending and End, of *Piers Plowman* B', deals with the strong similarities between B and C versions of the two final passus, and claims that the two final *passus* of B (19–20) were originally the final two *passus* of C, added to B much later than has previously been thought. The concluding fifth chapter 'Lollars, Friars, and Fyndynges' reiterates the theme that has been developed through the course of the book, that *Piers Plowman* is a work 'comprising innumerable acts of production and intervention from the 1360s to today' (p. 66).

The book is closely argued and densely illustrated with comparison of texts drawn from many manuscripts. As such, it will be useful to scholars as a handbook. Though it is impossible to grasp and keep in mind all the intricacies of manuscript traditions with stemmata and lemmas, or to hold in memory Warner's careful textual comparisons of passages that have, for years, been crucial in Langland criticism – such as his exposition in Chapter 3

of Passus B 15 – using the volume as a handbook will, I suggest, be important for all future students and critics of *Piers Plowman*.

The book is also exemplary in its methodology as a ‘History of the Book’, rigorous in its attention to detail, cogent in argument ensuing from this attention to detail, and inspiring in its novel conclusions. The book stunned me by its complexity, and thrilled me by the possibilities it lays open for further critical exploration of the poem.

Anne M. Scott
School of English and Cultural Studies
The University of Western Australia

Wogan-Browne, Jocelyn and Thelma S. **Fenster**, trans., *The Life of Saint Alban by Matthew Paris*/ Thomas **O’Donnell** and Margaret **Lamont**, trans., *The Passion of Saint Alban by William of St. Albans*/ *Studies of the Manuscript* by Christopher **Baswell** and Patricia **Quinn** (French of England Translation Series, 2/ Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 342), Tempe, AZ, Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2010; hardback; pp. xvi, 240; 19 colour illustrations; R.R.P. US\$45.00, £28.00; ISBN 9780866983907.

Six scholars have combined to produce an important work on the life of St Alban, the patron saint of the present city of St Albans. The book’s contents are summed up in the preface, and Paris’s version appears with scholarly comments, followed by a version of his life, on pp. 1–131. *The Passion of Saint Alban* covers pages 133–65, and the Dublin manuscript is assessed on pp. 169–207, followed by an appendix with collation maps, on pages 209–12, and sample passages in the original French, on pp. 213–20, each section having a short index.

The book is well bound, with fine quality paper, and an attractive frontispiece. The illumination on it was a good choice, depicting Alban’s martyrdom, painted by Matthew Paris. The bleeding head of Alban rises up from his body as he prays, and a stream of blood pours down from his severed neck. A long sword crosses centre-stage; its owner, the executioner, is blinded. Alban’s soul flies up as a dove, plus halo. A Saracen grasps the bloody cross falling from Alban’s hands. The unusual amount of blood in Paris’s life is noted on pp. 36–39, as shown by Paris in this gory illumination. The comment on p. 27 that Paris had interviewed the physician of Richard Coeur de Lion was of interest; the King had somehow found time in 1190 to establish a Cistercian monastery at Notre-Dame de Bonport, and equip it with an excellent library.

The translation from the French by Jocelyn Wogan-Browne is accurate, and as lively as the original, presenting a dramatic picture of the conversion, the Saracen spy, the angry tyrant, the exchange of ermine and clerical cloaks, the beating of Alban, his six months in prison, the deep river, the converted executioner, and his replacement beheading Alban, surrounded by incongruous Saracen knights. The metamorphosis of these pagans into fierce Saracens, described on pp. 8 and 27–28, is seen as due to Saladin and the bloodthirsty Crusades. The different versions of the basic story of the martyrdoms are well assessed, and the section on the verse form, the syllables, and neat enjambment was well worth including.

Thirteen of the illuminated pages painted by Paris are included. These provide his interesting visualization of the characters, their clothing and ambience, starting with Alban, watching the Christian Amphibalus at prayer, the last ending the manuscript, showing King Offa laying his charter on the left, as bells ring in a bell-tower, although he did not found the Benedictine monastery of St Alban (see p. 130). What is surprising is that Paris first painted his scenes, and then wrote all or most of the script, although the authors suggested quite the opposite on the bottom of Plate 1. The script runs over the picture's frame near its bottom, and the rubric on Plate 11 avoids the lance-head and two trumpets, and the small roof on Plate 12. It was in fact normal for a scribe to draw the areas needed by him, or by a more artistic monk.

A different version of Alban's death, to which Matthew Paris was considerably indebted, appears on pages 139–60. The perceptive introduction by Thomas O'Donnell and Margaret Lamont provides basic information about William (a young monk), the work's date (about 1178), and the revival then of interest in Alban and Amphibalus, mainly due to the translation of their holy remains. Dedicated to Abbot Simon, the work was based on versions in Bede and Geoffrey of Monmouth, and on William's imagination. As noted above, the pagan Britons and Anglo-Saxons, converted so easily by monks sent over by Gregory the Great, had now turned into murderous Saracens. William's teacher, Ralph of Dunstable, had surprisingly agreed to turn his pupil's work into Latin elegiac couplets. Otherwise, the preaching tour of Wales by Amphibalus was considered an anachronism, and many quotations were noted from the Acts of the Apostles.

Finally, Christopher Baswell and Judy Quinn have provided an interesting assessment of the small manuscript in Trinity College, Dublin, with its two *vitae*. With the poor quality of the parchment, and lack of illuminations, to Wogan-Browne it seemed to be a first draft by Paris. Comments on the marginalia, missing illuminations, pigments, and binding are apposite. It

should also be noted that there seem to be no misprints in this work, unusual these days.

John R. C. Martyn
School of Historical and Philosophical Studies
The University of Melbourne