

## Reviews

**Abram**, Christopher, *Myths of the Pagan North: The Gods of the Norsemen*, London, Continuum, 2011; hardback; pp. 272; 10 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £20.00; ISBN 9781847252470.

With *Myths of the Pagan North*, Abram has produced an erudite and thoroughly absorbing cultural history of the construction and appropriation of Norse myth through the medieval period. The book moves beyond the actual myths themselves to examine, through case studies and detailed interpretation, their evolution as a cultural phenomenon from roughly 850 to 1350.

In the opening chapter, he provides a solid introduction to the source of Norse myth – the variety of evidence through archaeological, runic inscriptions, and picture stones, and the mass of written evidence both by members of Norse-speaking peoples and those who watched, observed, and at times, attempted to convert them. In some ways, the sheer lack of clear evidence and the obvious limitations of all the types of evidence provided could be seen as a quick ending-point for any further investigation, but Abram uses this lack of clarity instead as a strength.

It is this consideration of myth as a powerful locus for cultural investigation that Abram uses to drive ongoing questions. Many of these questions he cannot answer, but they remain in the reader's mind and illuminate broader approaches to historical and cultural discourse. Certainly this approach is not exactly new – cultural history is a field which has been going for a long while now – but Abram writes in a clear and insightful way to examine the cultural potency of myth, deliberately and purposefully bringing readers along even as the possibility of finding actual 'answers' to the 'original' or 'true' version of a myth, its interpretation, surrounding ritual, and evolution become all the more indistinct and unreachable.

Early on, Abram also uses as a case study the mythic tale of Thor and his battle with the world serpent, providing a concrete example of how a single story appears over time in a variety of sources and a variety of permutations. This ability to hang his ideas and insights on to specific examples is prevalent throughout the book and very useful for the reader. The subject matter may not quite be popular history, but rather than dwell on the surface of the familiar myths, Abram explores their contexts and in doing so, highlights their impact rather than their meaning.

Turning from an overview of the evidence base, he examines the uses of ritual and religion as entwined aspects of myth, locating the Norse Gods across practice and paradigms in early Germanic cultures. Abram builds his key thesis in this second chapter by refusing to separate out myth from its historical or ritualized cult context and refusing to accept, in the more traditional 'mythic narrative' which would have him searching for the ultimate truth behind the stories, the pure 'ur-version' at the well in the roots of the world tree.

Having established his cultural context and the theoretical framework in which his book is operating, Abrams turns more closely to the use of myth across history: four specific historical periods to be precise.

He first explores the 'golden age' of Norse myth (850–1050), again using concrete examples to allow the reader to grapple with the vigorous wordplay and similes embedded in court poetry; typically references to the gods present them as exemplars or metaphors for great acts undertaken by great men. Again this locates the myth within specific ritualized practices, indicating the cultural currency embedded in the myths and the vague boundaries of their appeal. Abram uses the court poetry to also investigate one of the 'standards' of Norse myth – the concept of Valhalla and its use as a site of validation for fallen kings, reinvigorating even those kings who died in battle (and thereby had to have lost the battle, generally) with Odin's approval.

Successive eras are examined through the spotlight of how the myths were used and appropriated across a period of religious conflict (Norway, 950–1000), woven into conversation narratives of the early Christian establishment (Norway and Iceland, 980–1000), and then flourished as a form of nostalgic cultural appreciation in a thoroughly Christian period (Denmark and Iceland, 1150–1350).

By keeping the focus on their cultural potency, and the specific contexts of each locale and period, Abram heightens the reality of 'myths' – how they were told, used, and constructed. As Abram frequently notes, this approach does not pay much service to the Lévi-Strauss school of thinking – but this historical exploration of myth offers many benefits to scholars and general readers.

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**Adrian**, John M., *Local Negotiations of English Nationhood, 1570–1680* (Early Modern Literature in History), Houndmills, Palgrave Macmillan, 2011; hardback; pp. 248; 5 b/w illustrations; R.R.P £50.00; ISBN 9780230277717.

This study is designed to qualify and complement, rather than dismantle those tracing a linear trajectory of developing nationhood in England from the sixteenth century. It is a valuable corrective. It begins with an overview of the factors involved in expressions of local identity, such as dialect, topography, customs, games, and their variable relationships with the national, arguing that along with the development of nationhood, a changing continuity of local identity provided a counterpoint; indeed, nationhood made the sense of the local self-conscious. Thus map-making, among other geographical writings discussed, gave a picture of the nation by describing localities; if travel broadened the mind, returning home could affirm a preference for the familiar. More significantly, Adrian suggests that a number of works conventionally assigned to the project of nation building, principally had a localizing focus. Further, what often mattered about place was the body of specific values for which it might stand, sometimes in opposition to, or as an escape from the national. Hence, in a weak sense, at least, evocation of the local had an ideological resonance.

In the bulk of the book, Adrian turns to a number of authors to flesh out these themes. In Chapter 2, he discusses William Lambarde's chorography, the *Perambulation of Kent* (1570) as a response to the centralizing impact of the Tudor revolution in government. In Chapter 3, he argues that Michael Drayton appropriated chorography in the idiom of Lambarde to create localizing mythologies in critical counterpoint to Jacobean court culture. Chapter 4 treats Herbert's *Country Parson* as a rejection of the imposition of Laudian church uniformity to the detriment of a local religious practice. Chapter 5 discusses the contrasting reactions of Izaak Walton and Lucy Hutchinson to the disasters of civil war; the royalist Walton focusing on the river, specifically the Lea, in telling proximity to London; the parliamentarian Hutchinson defending her husband as a man of Nottingham, his selfless service to his region, emblematic of a national interest. Chapter 6 discusses what Adrian suggests must seem counter-intuitive, the relevance of empire for understanding the country house poem. There is a succinct conclusion and a select (patchy) bibliography.

The understanding of dialect seems rudimentary, and more might have been made of pastoral; but there is both thematic coherence and a chronological spread sufficient to flesh out and support the case initially made. The whole

is so courteous that the implicit critical edge is almost blunted. It is also unpretentious and clearly written, sufficient for the few infelicities to stand out rather sharply (over-use of the ambiguous 'site', misuse of 'disinterest') and trying (twice) not 'to oversimplify' (pp. 17, 42). Specialists in all the authors treated are likely to find value here, and the argument is suggestive of further lines of enquiry. What, for example, can one make of praises of locality in Latin? Hobbes's *De mirabilibus pecci, Carmen* is partially in the idiom of Drayton's treatment of the Peak district in *Poly-Olbion*, but how does the shift to the trans-national language of the educated cast light on the local/national dichotomy? Such a question, however, draws attention to the terms in which the study is conducted.

The defining the bi-conditionality of the study is oversimplified, and historiographically questionable. The assumed project of nation building, drawing substantially on Richard Helgerson's important work, needed more critical attention. Michael Braddick has ably demonstrated in analysing a directly analogous, even overlapping narrative, state building, that end result does not entitle us to infer cohering strategy towards it. There is also no proper discussion here of the possible differences between nationalism, in any case, a nineteenth-century coinage projected onto the material, and patriotism, an eighteenth-century one (not even indexed). The result is to lose a crucial aspect of discussion, the variable ways in which nation as a marker of identity differed from country. To hazard a generalization, if anything nation tended to be used as a collective noun for a people, whereas country or county (the terms could be synonyms) specified the localities central to this book. The manifestly important concern with dynasty maintenance and reactions against it, are similarly swept into the nation-building endeavour. The local is also treated in too monolithic a fashion and this blurs the differing notions of peripheral versus central, and specific rather than generalized or imagined. Again, with respect to empire, Adrian is concerned with geographical expansion and the acquisition of empire, but the older, perhaps dominant meaning for the period under discussion referred to territorial independence, and it is this, collocated with confessional commitments, that did most to fuel what has been reclassified as nation building. The lack of discrimination with regard to the conceptual polarities governing the argument stops a helpfully informing book from becoming a very good one.

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**Barrie**, David G. and Susan **Broomhall**, eds, *A History of Police and Masculinities, 1700–2010*, New York, Routledge, 2011; paperback; pp. 303; 4 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £29.99; ISBN 9780415696616.

This edited collection on how masculine ideologies have shaped, and were shaped by, policing both culturally and institutionally, is a joy to read. Chronologically, the contributions range from the eighteenth to the twenty-first century, taking Britain, Europe, America, and Australia into consideration. When read cover to cover, the consistencies and differences in masculine ideologies within a policing framework clearly come across, though the coherency and cogency of the first few chapters is not sustained to the last three. While the volume works well as a whole, with each chapter clearly having similar theoretical priorities, the chapters also stand well alone. The footnotes and bibliography are comprehensive, making the collection ideal for both scholarly and student readers of both gender and criminal justice history.

The collection argues that conceptions of masculinity were, and are, central to how policing systems were created and maintained. If, as editors David Barrie and Susan Broomhall state in the Introduction, gender is made the central focal point when analysing policing history, the ‘conceptualizations of “old” and “new” police models cannot be sustained’ (p. 6). They note that there is strong evidence against criminological scholarship that makes the British Metropolitan model the defining feature of policing; instead, Barrie and Broomhall propose that systems evolved not only in relation to each other, but also in relation to indigenous social and gender norms. Given the central tenet that men were seen to be responsible for social order and coherence, this translated not only to how policing systems were created and maintained, but also to how the men within those systems behaved, and were perceived by the public. Thus, Australian, American, British, French, and Italian systems were all shaped not only with the awareness of each other but also within their own native societal and cultural contexts. Policing in Australia, for example, was informed by both its frontier status and its British history.

As the editors note, a consistent theme – both chronologically and geographically – for the men engaged in policing was the need for physical and emotional control. Concurrent research on men in governing positions in the early modern period has shown that control over one’s body and emotions was seen as necessary for a man with responsibility over his social subordinates. While the volume’s contributions demonstrate the importance of this control over mind and body within a policing framework, they also show the varied nature of how it was expressed among men. It differed

along lines of class (Broomhall and Barrie), race (Gerda W. Ray), and even geographical location (Dean Wilson).

A number of articles warrant special mention. In his contribution, Wilson, discussing masculinities in colonial Melbourne from 1853 until the early twentieth century, finds that physicality was essential for men – both as a representation of social civility and of colonial power. The restrictive nature of this type of masculinity is clear from his examples of how the policeman's body was regulated – through dress, free time, and even sleeping and meal times. David Garrioch shows how masculine ideals in the Paris police of the eighteenth century were formed through perceptions of the king. His research illustrates that perceptions of the king changed how the police then acted amongst themselves and towards the public – as the king was perceived in a less paternal light, so, too, did the men of the Parisian police force act in a less paternal manner.

Broomhall and Barrie's article is of note for its close and nuanced analysis of periodicals detailing court events in the early part of the nineteenth century in Glasgow and Edinburgh. Their research not only confirms that a sense of the paternal seemed to be an intrinsic aspect of men in positions of power, but they also note that the relationship with the public determined how they were viewed as men. That is, an officer dealing with gangs was seen as more manly than one who dealt with domestic disputes or prostitution. This symbiotic relationship is also discussed by Francis Dodsworth, who finds that the police officer's masculine identity was created both as being a part of the public he was policing, yet being apart at the same time.

As the study of masculinities slowly makes inroads into areas of history heretofore viewed with either a traditional political focus or, more recently, a specifically female-orientated approach, a collection such as *A History of Police and Masculinities, 1700–2010* is a welcome addition to gender scholarship.

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**Bell**, Kimberly K. and Julie Nelson **Couch**, eds, *The Texts and Contexts of Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc. 108: The Shaping of English Vernacular Narrative* (Medieval and Renaissance Authors and Texts, 6), Leiden, Brill, 2010; hardback; pp. 368; R.R.P. €130.00; ISBN 9789004192065.

This volume is the culmination of several projects that started at the Thirty-eighth International Congress on Medieval Studies held in Kalamazoo in 2003. There was a three-step research agenda set out for the project,

implemented over three years, which included conference sessions, articles, and finally this book. Edited by Kimberly K. Bell and Julie Nelson Couch, the collection comprises thirteen chapters and an Epilogue that derive from the shared interest of the editors and contributors in reading *Havelok the Dane* in its original manuscript context.

The name of the manuscript comes from its owner William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury (1633–45) and Chancellor of Oxford University (1629–41) who had acquired it by 1633. The manuscript was subsequently donated, along with a large collection of other manuscripts, to Oxford's Bodleian Library in 1635. Bodleian, MS Laud Misc. 108 is of particular interest as it contains a collection of seminal medieval English texts that range from religious to secular genres. The manuscript is well known for containing the *South English Legendary* (*SEL*), i.e., the Middle English set of saints' lives, in a version that is significantly different from the standard version in both content and organization. The manuscript is also remarkable for containing the two earliest extant Middle English romances, namely, the earliest known version of *King Horn* and the only complete copy of *Havelok the Dane*.

The source material is looked at from three main perspectives: physical, contextual, and critical. Technically, the collection is usefully divided into two parts: Part I, 'The Manuscript and its Provenance' concentrates on the codicological and historical aspects of the manuscript, while Part II, 'The Manuscript and its Texts', offers other literary considerations relevant to a contextualized interpretation of the texts found in the manuscript.

Among the most interesting articles, Andrew Lynch discusses the coexistence of the two genres of 'saint's life' and 'romance' in the manuscript. Lynch notes that mixing of genres in manuscripts was commonplace and argues that *Horn* and *Havelok* differ significantly from each other when it comes to content, style, and discursive emphases. He concludes that despite a remarkable resemblance between them, it is unlikely that *Horn* and *Havelok* would have been read as saints' lives, at least not in the typical form of the *SEL*.

In his contribution, A. S. G. Edwards discusses the contents, construction, and circulation of the manuscript, describing, for instance, the decoration of the texts in light of paleographical and dialectal criteria; his technical knowledge is impressive. Another contributor, Thomas R. Liszka, attempts to determine the date of origin of the *SEL*, *Havelok the Dane*, and *King Horn*, compiling a meticulous chronological list of other scholars' findings on the matter and juxtaposing the results with his own.

Christina M. Fitzgerald's article tackles the intriguing issue of the ownership of the manuscript before it came into Archbishop Laud's collection

in 1633. Her consideration of different scenarios leads her to propose two possible candidates: Henry Perveys, a well-to-do London draper and William Rotheley, of uncertain occupation. Both men had connections with the famous and affluent Eyre family. While Fitzgerald concentrates too heavily on the examination of the mercantile society from which both men came, this essay reads very well.

To conclude, I was genuinely impressed with this insightful and thorough publication. It offers a comprehensive examination of a manuscript that is crucial to the understanding of early Middle English culture, and has been produced by a group of scholars who amply demonstrate their extensive knowledge of the field. *The Texts and Contexts of Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc. 108* should be essential reading for anyone interested in this late thirteenth-century vernacular manuscript.

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**Broomhall**, Susan and Jennifer **Spinks**, *Early Modern Women in the Low Countries: Feminizing Sources and Interpretations of the Past*, Farnham, Ashgate, 2011; hardback, pp. x, 247; 39 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £65.00, ISBN 9780754667421.

As its title suggests, the aim of the book is to feminize sources to contribute to a better interpretation of the experiences of early modern women in the Low Countries. However, authors Susan Broomhall and Jennifer Spinks travel beyond the usual sources and methods that define historical analysis and redefine the very concept of sources. Sources are not just textual or visual, but also exist as objects and locations.

The first chapter examines the use of ego-documents in the form of memoirs and letters produced by the women of the Burgundian and Habsburg Netherlands. The authors show how these documents can enhance visual and material interpretations of women whose portraits and images appear in museum exhibitions and art catalogues. Written texts have been neglected in museological settings due to the challenges of displaying such texts. More recently exhibitions have combined portraits with documents that relate to the paintings, giving identity to the documents and enriching the portrait's own identity.

Chapter 2 discusses the way in which visual sources are used to make realistic interpretations of women's working conditions, using the example of van Swanenburg's series of paintings *The Old and New Trades* (c. 1594–c.

1612). Scholars have previously analysed these paintings as evidence of contemporary textile trade practice, and the images containing women have been used in some feminist texts. Broomhall and Spinks point out that the way in which the women of the paintings are portrayed ‘remains unexamined and unintegrated in any substantial way’. They argue that the paintings are both realistic and symbolic, and show the extent of female workforce participation in early modern Leiden.

The focus of Chapter 3 is on the house of Orange–Nassau. The images and stories about men of the dynasty have eclipsed the contribution of the women. Although the women of Orange–Nassau have produced texts and objects that reveal their emotions and characters, these have not been used in tourist, heritage, or academic narratives as have those of the men. The use of objects such as dolls’ houses as sources to investigate early modern women’s identities is the topic of Chapter 4. Scholars have previously discussed these objects in terms of historical and social narratives but the authors show that they can also be considered in cultural and gender analysis. Real houses, as sources, are analysed in Chapter 5. Taking the houses of Rembrandt in Amsterdam and Rubens in Antwerp, Broomhall and Spinks examine the ways in which the women who were personally connected to these artists are portrayed. They found that women were encountered differently in each environment with the Rembrandt house offering a domestic experience whereas the Rubens house gave greater value to the role of his elite female patrons.

It was Chapter 6, ‘Sources and Settings’, that I found the most stimulating. The authors take us on a tour of locations and heritage sites as sources, and describe the ways in which women are included and presented to the public in these environments. There are specific cases where women are seen as being associated with locations, the most obvious being religious buildings. In other cases, almshouses and hospices are named after women as benefactresses. When one starts looking, women appear to be well represented, but there is little detailed information about these women provided for their tourist audience. At the conclusion of this chapter, Broomhall and Spinks call for more interaction between scholars, curators, and other stakeholders to develop a richer interpretation of the history of women.

The final chapter, ‘Purchasing the Past: Gender and the Consumption of Heritage’, in the words of the authors, is ‘more speculative in mode’ and ‘thus seeks to further debate in this area’. The chapter begins with a discussion about the presentation of early modern women in the gift shop and what meaning souvenir objects convey. It ends with a short discussion about how many objects made by women were ephemeral and so little accounted for

in curatorial collections, meaning that women's experience behind these objects is not interpreted. If more value were placed on these objects then a more nuanced construction of women's own experiences and perceptions of themselves would be available for both scholarly and tourist consumption. While I found this chapter a little confusing, if it does as the authors suggest, and furthers debate, this can only add to our engagement with the experience of early modern women.

This book takes the early modern women of the Low Countries out of the interpretative folders into which they have typically been placed by both scholars and curators. It then shakes them up in a diverse selection of sources, to show how they can be located into new narratives that give us a richer understanding of their identities. Feminists, historians, and curators alike should read this book: it breaks new ground in women's history.

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**Broomhall**, Susan and **Jacqueline Van Gent**, eds, *Governing Masculinities in the Early Modern Period: Regulating Selves and Others* (Women and Gender in the Early Modern World), Farnham, Ashgate, 2011; hardback; pp. 342; 19 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £65.00; ISBN 9781409432388.

In *Governing Masculinities in the Early Modern Period: Regulating Selves and Others*, Susan Broomhall and Jacqueline Van Gent bring together four distinct sets of essays all questioning how male governance was constructed in early modern Europe. The collection is arranged chronologically, beginning in the fourteenth century and ending in the nineteenth. A number of key themes emerge: the importance of governing one's own body before being allowed to govern another person's, the importance of governing one's own household before being considered worthy of public office, the ways in which men negotiated and renegotiated these societal expectations to achieve authority over others, and the ongoing shifts in what was considered authoritatively masculine across different social groups, time periods, and countries.

The ambitiously large chronological and geographical scope of the collection allows the editors and authors to make a number of fruitful comparisons between different historical time periods and contexts. Although this approach might appear overly broad, the use of complementary

and detailed case studies allows key themes to be explored in depth from a number of different perspectives.

The editors' desire to create links between times and places is tested in the first set of essays which look at the idea of 'civic manliness' across three centuries and four countries. Although this approach could run the risk of making vague or forced connections, it actually does the opposite in demonstrating ongoing and broadly accepted understandings of masculine authority. Chapters by Stephanie Tarbin and Jennifer Spinks complement each other as they explore the links between controlling one's own body (particularly in relation to sexual desire and greed) and earning the right to govern others. Essays by Rosa Salzberg and Lisa Keane Elliott provide an alternative view of masculinity by highlighting how men were able to negotiate new structures, such as guilds and institutions, to assert their right to govern.

In the second set, the focus shifts from the male body and the creation of new men and institutions, to an examination of aristocratic men who were unable, or unwilling, to establish their masculinity through the traditional model of household control. Both Peter Sherlock and Susie Protschky use case studies (in England and the Dutch Colonial world respectively) to showcase military achievement as an alternative way for men to assert their right to govern. Sherlock's essay also links in with the first essay of this section by Jared van Duinen. Whereas Sherlock stresses militant masculinity as something exclusively masculine and closed to the female aristocracy (unlike money, social standing, and birth right), van Duinen stresses the role of women in creating and supporting positions of patriarchal authority.

The third set of essays continues to explore many of the previous themes (particularly those concerning sexuality and the male body) but also introduces a new element through their focus on alternative constructions of masculinity. The authors deny that there was a universal claim to masculine authority through gender, social standing, or wealth, and grapple with how this authority is obtained and retained on the margins of society. Elizabeth Kent's article in particular revisits the concept of obtaining (or losing) authority over bodies through controlling (or failing to control) one's own body. Van Gent and Giovanni Tarantino, on the other hand, both use case studies to illustrate how men attempted to impose their authority on societies outside their own worlds and experiences.

The collection ends with three essays that examine masculine power struggles in France, England, and Scotland during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Robert Weston traces the delicate relationships between male physicians and male patients. He shows how power was

not simply dictated by social status or advanced knowledge but, rather, was being constantly negotiated. Joanne McEwan's essay shifts this focus slightly and discusses how men's authority over their wives was also being redefined during the eighteenth century. She depicts a world in which men were uncomfortable with what degree of authority was considered manly. Finally, Broomhall and David Barrie end with a thought-provoking essay on the construction of a new, physical manhood with the construction of the Scottish police force. This essay asks how to legally control and govern men who were unable to control their bodies or temperaments. All four of the authors in this section argue for newly emerging ideas of masculinity that were defined by action rather than birth.

This collection brings together thirteen essays which, when read as a whole, provide important insights into constructions of masculinity in early modern Europe. The real success of this collection is the way in which it manages to provide an overarching image of masculine governance in the early modern world through the use of detailed case studies. This collection is a valuable resource for further studies into masculinity in early modern Europe.

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**Brown**, Alison, *Medicean and Savonarolan Florence: The Interplay of Politics, Humanism, and Religion* (Europa Sacra, 5), Turnhout, Brepols, 2010; hardback; pp. xxx, 325; 4 b/w tables; R.R.P. €70.00; ISBN 9782503528519.

*Medicean and Savonarolan Florence* is the second published collection of Alison Brown's essays. It picks up where the previous volume *The Medici in Florence* (Olschki, 1992) left off, both conceptually and chronologically. This volume gathers together twelve articles and book chapters published between 1994 and 2010. As the title suggests, the essays all focus on the last two decades of the fifteenth century: the final years of Medici domination and the turbulence that followed the *coup d'état* of November 1494 which ended the family's regime in Florence. This period of political flux – a crucial moment in the long, slow transformation of the city on the Arno from a civic republic into a principality – Brown notes, remains contested territory in Florentine historiography. 'No single paradigm', she observes, has yet achieved consensus for describing these decades (p. xxi).

Brown does not attempt to offer any such comprehensive, encompassing vision. Instead she adopts John Najemy's concept of 'the dialogue of power' in Florentine politics: the idea that power in Renaissance Florence existed in dialogic relationships, always contested and negotiated rather than simply exercised. It is a concept particularly suited to the protean political landscape of the 1480s and 1490s. Brown traces and uncovers the operation of this dialogue largely outside of the formal sphere of office holding, in private correspondence, diaries, and printed or manuscript treatises. Such sources are crucial for the analysis of Florentine political culture because the official records of the government rarely provide anything that resembles dialogue or debate. Brown is a skilful and careful reader of such sources: teasing out nuances and building perceptive arguments from her analysis.

Although the book consists of self-contained essays and (as a result) has no over-arching thesis, two clear contentions emerge from the volume. The first, that the events of November–December 1494 constituted a real revolution in Florentine politics. Brown eschews the predominant opinion that events in the 1490s represented little more than a rearranging of the deck chairs on the ship of state, instead maintaining that 'the Savonarolan republic turned out to be a period of innovation and change' (p. xxiv). The second argument is that one of the key changes of this period was the emergence of the sort of hard-nosed, pragmatic political values and decision-making that commonly bear the label 'Machiavellian'. She identifies such practices first among the Medicean secretaries of the late Laurentian period and then among a strategic coalition of moderates in the Savonarolan years.

The various essays are arranged into three parts. The first, addressing the late Medicean period, deals with individuals. The chapters here focus on the attitudes and lives of the Medici secretaries, on the ill-fated and much-maligned Piero di Lorenzo de' Medici (who, Brown suggests, was less to blame than his father for provoking the resentments that exploded in November 1494), and on voices of opposition to Medici rule prior to the revolution. The second part shifts focus to institutions and groups and considers the events of the 1494 revolution, its antecedents, and its effects. Brown analyses the changes that occurred in Florence, the significant place that access to remunerated offices had in provoking resentment toward the Medici and fostering political conflict in the 1490s, the nature of exile as a political punishment in these years, and the factional divisions of the Savonarolan republic. The final section extends its chronological gaze both back into the earlier fifteenth century and forward into the sixteenth, with a focus on ideas. The first two essays consider Florentine use of the language of liberty and of empire in a broad perspective stretching from the early fifteenth century to the beginning of the Medici

principate in 1532. The final two chapters consider the intersections between religion, politics, and learning in Giovanni Pico's controversial *Conclusiones Nongentae* and in reactions toward Savonarola and his message.

Alison Brown is one of the most perceptive and thoughtful observers of Renaissance Florentine political culture working today and she has always produced some of her most insightful work in the short form of essays. Many readers will be familiar with some if not all of the essays reproduced in *Medicean and Savonarolan Florence*, but most of them are worth sustained attention and multiple readings. As an added bonus, three of the chapters include additional material excised from their initial publication and the footnotes to all the essays now include the original text of quoted archival sources. Moreover, collected together, organized thematically, and framed by a reflective Introduction, new connections and continuities between the pieces emerge. The end result is a coherent, multi-faceted, and carefully constructed image of a complex period in Florentine history.

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**Cambers**, Andrew, *Godly Reading: Print, Manuscript and Puritanism in England, 1580–1720* (Cambridge Studies in Early Modern British History), Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2011; cloth; pp. 318; 14 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £60.00, US\$99.00; ISBN 9780521764896.

With *Godly Reading: Print, Manuscript and Puritanism in England, 1580–1720*, Andrew Cambers aims to examine 'the intersection of the culture of puritanism and the history of reading in the long seventeenth century' (p. 1). In pursuing this aim, he enters two very large fields of study – the history of reading and that of Puritanism in England. The organization of Cambers's densely researched study is primarily spatial: that is, he examines the places and spaces where reading occurred, and analyses the people in those spaces as well as what they did there. This shifts the focus of analysis away from individual interaction with books and words, and introduces the Puritan communities that surrounded those engaged in reading. One of his conclusions is a plea for the value of historicizing the continuities in reading of devotional material over a long time period, and the importance of this practice for sustaining cultural and religious identities.

After an introductory chapter defining the terms of his analysis and outlining the vast historiographies he is working within, Cambers then moves

spatially from the most private spaces for devotional reading outwards to the most public. His second chapter is on the domestic spaces for pious reading, starting with the closet or most private of spaces, then the bedchamber and the study. Much of his evidence is from diaries and life writings and he finds that the praxis of reading was dependent on different situations and times of the day, as well as the spaces in which people engaged in reading. Cambers concludes that contrary to common assumptions about the solitary and individual nature of Puritan devotional reading even in the seemingly private spaces of study and bedchamber, reading was often shared and communal.

Chapter 3 focuses on family devotional reading practices, again through the varied spaces within households where reading occurred – the hall, parlour, and kitchen – as well as out of doors. Cambers acknowledges that there was a significant strand of piety that relied on private individual reading, however, his analysis foregrounds the importance of oral and shared devotional reading in households. The next chapter focuses on the space where reading and books are most closely associated, namely, the library. Early modern libraries were, as Cambers reminds us, ‘places of knowledge and cultural exchange. They were places to read and to talk and to discuss’ (p. 119). In this context, Cambers examines the personal libraries of individuals, especially Puritan clergy, and considers how these collections of books were used to stimulate and educate as well as strengthen social ties within godly communities. He then moves on to discuss parish, town, school, and college libraries and their links with godly communities. He argues that libraries were not only spaces where information and devotions could be shared; they were also vehicles for confirming social and religious identity through the sharing and discussion of books and ideas.

His final two substantive chapters examine the public spaces of churches, coffee houses, bookshops, and finally prisons. Here the importance of collective reading was much easier to discern. Cambers emphasizes the interaction between speech, manuscript, and print in the culture of Puritanism within these public spaces. His chapter on reading in the prison environment allows Cambers to extend his discussion to the importance of reading in the construction of martyrdom and how devotional reading was vital to the way that Puritan identities were recorded. In this section, he discusses the complexity of the sources he uses, as they tend to be ‘factional, political or polemical’ (p. 217).

His conclusions demonstrate that collective, communal reading was important to these godly communities because it publicly displayed their piety and differentiated them from society at large. The material that these people read also demonstrated their commitment to their godly identity.

There is much that is valuable about both Cambers's arguments and the depth of his research in this book. The density of the material and the perhaps inevitable overlaps between chapters do at times mean that clarity is sacrificed. There are also times when the distinctive Puritanism of the reading praxis that Cambers analyses is not completely clear. However, his book is a welcome addition to the scholarship of reading, Puritanism, and early modern religious culture.

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**Cawsey, Kathy**, *Twentieth-Century Chaucer Criticism: Reading Audiences*, Farnham, Ashgate, 2011; hardback; pp. 198; R.R.P. £55.00; ISBN 9781409404781.

Any university library will bear testimony to the wide corpus of scholarly criticism on the works of Geoffrey Chaucer. In an effort to bring some structure to the variety of approaches employed, Kathy Cawsey investigates the impact of audiences perceived, actual, and imagined on the critical stance of the scholar. Cawsey maintains that it is a critic's assumption of Chaucer's audience that dictates the thrust of the argument and she hopes that by analysing audiences she is providing a framework of investigation that can be transferred 'to authors and criticism beyond Chaucerian Studies' (p. x). Her approach is designed to avoid the summaries of previous tomes and instead provide analysis conceived around the audience for the unseasoned Chaucerian scholar. Cawsey is clearly convinced by the validity of her approach, but her repeated statement, in the Introduction, of the importance of conceiving the audience, comes across as a little self-conscious. This, however, does not detract from the coherent writing in the body of the text.

Cawsey divides her attention between six major critics of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries: George Lyman Kittredge, C. S. Lewis, E. Talbot Donaldson, D. W. Robertson, Carolyn Dinshaw, and Lee Patterson devoting a chapter to each. Each chapter has an appellation that frames the chapter and alludes to the audience Cawsey defines as variously dramatic, psychological, gendered, and the like. There is evidence of extensive research with detailed and easy-to-read footnotes for the student and early career researcher. The writing is intelligent and clear with pertinent transitions from chapter to chapter. Each chapter can stand alone as an analysis of the individual critic but the writing is such that a reader would be hard pressed to put the book down after one chapter. One minor complaint is the absence

of Alastair Minnis from the corpus of work examined. As a major contributor to the subject, his absence from the bibliography is noteworthy.

Cawsey picks George Lyman Kittredge as a starting point as Kittredge marks the transition from the age of scholars to that of scholars *and* critics. Cawsey suggests that his book *Chaucer and His Poetry* influenced Chaucerian studies for most of the twentieth century. The thrust of Kittredge's criticism is, firstly, that the author is always right and, secondly, that Chaucer's audience was 'like a theatrical audience, watching characters in a play' (p. 24). Kittredge assumes a universal audience who agrees with him and has remained unchanged from the original medieval reader to the modern scholar and critic. The conclusion of the chapter neatly sets up the interaction of C. S. Lewis with Kittredge's ideas. Chapter 2, 'C. S. Lewis: The Psychological Reader', characterizes a monolithic medieval audience. Lewis believes in travelling to the medieval mindset to fully appreciate the medieval literature. Cawsey helps us understand the medieval mind that Lewis envisages by outlining four key aspects: his understanding of courtly love; his rejection of irony as a ruling mode in Chaucer; his theory of allegory; and his emphasis on the psychology of medieval works (pp. 42–43). Cawsey argues that Lewis maintained that the medieval audience was essentially a psychological one as they had intellects stimulated in this direction by their familiarity with the mode of allegory.

Chapters 3 and 4 focus, respectively, on the careful reader of E. Talbot Donaldson and the allegorical reader of D. W. Robertson. These chapters interrelate as Donaldson and Robertson were contemporaries and responded to each other's work. The central discussion point is that Donaldson relies on a close reading of the text, rejecting anything outside of it, while Robertson developed the theory of patristic exegetical criticism. The last two critics discussed, Carolyn Dinshaw – chosen for her landmark feminist study of *Chaucer's Sexual Politics* – and Lee Patterson – chosen as an example of a critic with a complicated relationship with New Historicism – insist on a multiplicity of audiences with diverse interpretation. For Dinshaw, reading like a man or like a woman takes on ideological significance. Cawsey points out that 'Dinshaw's work runs the risk of preserving the same essentialism that she objects to in the patriarchal system' (p. 115). Patterson views his audience as subjective readers and tries to rehabilitate New Historicism for medievalists. Both he and Dinshaw are categorized as politically motivated. For them, Chaucer's audience possessed three main characteristics: heterogeneity, subjectivity, and specificity.

Cawsey situates each critic within and against the broader picture of the critical field. She suggests that critics choose works to analyse that suit

their personal theories and ignore the more troublesome texts. Cawsey notes inevitably in each chapter that the critic's view of the audience limits their interpretations. Each chapter is quite easily read in isolation although the chronological flow is quite brilliant, making this text a welcome addition that helps unpick the scholarly corpus surrounding the works of Chaucer.

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**Clark**, James G., Frank T. **Coulson**, and Kathryn L. **McKinley**, eds, *Ovid in the Middle Ages*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2011; hardback; pp. 384; 21 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £65.00; ISBN 9781107002050.

In the Middle Ages, the poet Publius Ovidius Naso (43BCE–17CE) was the classical author *par excellence*. His works, in particular the *Metamorphoses*, were widely read, imitated, glossed, translated, and moralized, and were immensely influential in the monasteries, pulpits, secular schools, and courts of Europe. This excellent collection of essays offers a detailed introduction to the reception and transmission of Ovid from the fall of the Roman Empire to the late fifteenth century.

The distinguished authors give overviews of different aspects of Ovid's influence from several perspectives, including literary criticism, classics, historiography, art history, and queer and gender studies. The different iterations of Ovid's works are discussed in some detail and while most of the contributions are focused on France and England, Ovid's impact in Byzantium, Spain, and Italy is also covered. The Ovid that emerges from these essays, protean and 'incurably plural', enjoyed a wide appeal for a diverse audience.

The school tradition in France from 1180 to 1400 is discussed by Frank T. Coulson in his account of Latin commentaries on the *Metamorphosis* and the development of an allegorical mode of reading. These include the early literal Orléans tradition and the very influential thirteenth century anonymous Vulgate commentary. The commentaries are characterized by a multiplicity of approaches for different audiences, who it seems, read Ovid's text carefully and in detail.

The *Metamorphoses* was translated into French and moralized as the *Ovide moralisé* in the early fourteenth century, possibly at the request of Clémence of Hungary. In the *Ovide moralisé*, which is the subject of the chapter by Ana Pairet, each fable is paraphrased, glossed, and read as a moral exemplum or

spiritual allegory. This vernacular version was best known at the French court and the weighty volumes, which were six times the length of the Latin original, were also the most extensively illustrated of all manuscripts of Ovid's works. In addition to pointing out the difficulties in establishing the anonymous translator's sources, the author refers to Ovid's innate malleability and the multiplicity of interpretations revealed in the hermeneutic process. The vast illustrative programmes of the *Ovide moralisé* are further described by Carla Lord in her survey of imagery of the manuscripts of the *Metamorphoses* and its commentaries. Ovid's amatory works, in particular the *Heroides* and *Ars amatoria* were also translated into French, and as Marilyn Desmond argues in her contribution, their erotic discourse contributed to the emergence of an essentially hetero-erotic ethic in medieval literary cultures.

Ovid's works were just as enthusiastically received in England. In his discussion of late medieval monastic use of Ovid, James G. Clark shows that, contrary to accepted views, the monasteries did not abandon the classics after 1200. Recent research has shown that Ovid's works may in fact have grown in importance. Certainly, monks appear to have been the first English scholars to have shown an interest in Bersuire's 1340 Latin moralization of the *Metamorphoses*, the *Ovidium moralizatus*, as a source of exempla for their sermons. Siegfried Wenzel analyses the popularity of Ovid in sermons by both mendicant and monastic orders in late medieval England, noting that his works could give 'delight even in the most prosaic of rhetorical enterprises'. The stories of the gods and heroes served the general purpose of 'proof' texts or exempla, and it seems, were intended primarily for a learned audience. That Ovid's impact in England was marked is also demonstrated in the works of Chaucer and Gower, as Kathryn L. McKinley shows. She discusses four Ovidian texts including Gower's *Confessio amantis* and Chaucer's *Legend of Good Women*. Both authors drew on a range of available texts, including Latin school texts and moralized versions, although Gower seems to have preferred moralized narratives (for example, he identifies the legend of Pyramus and Thisbe under the sin of Wrath), and Chaucer tended to translate directly from the Latin.

Other contributors deal with the reception of Ovid outside England and France. The translation of the *Metamorphoses* and the *Heroides* into classical Greek in the thirteenth century by Maximus Planoudes is discussed by Elizabeth Fisher; Robert Black describes Ovid's fortunes in medieval Italy, where he influenced Dante most of all, but also Petrarch and Boccaccio, as well as the school grammar curriculum. Warren Ginsberg's chapter argues that Dante used the multi-faceted Ovid to service his own self-fashioning as an author by suppressing the erotic and exilic texts. Vicente Cristóbal

discusses Ovid's reception in medieval Spain, and shows that Ovid's love and mythographic texts found their fullest expression in the huge corpus of works of Alfonso the Wise.

This important, well-edited book not only offers a full overview of existing scholarship but also provides many new insights into the medieval reception and transmission of Ovid, 'the shape-shifting poet'.

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**Cox**, Virginia, *The Prodigious Muse: Women's Writing in Counter-Reformation Italy*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011; hardback; pp. 472; R.R.P. US\$60.00; ISBN 9781421400327 (available through Footprint Books).

Virginia Cox's *The Prodigious Muse: Women's Writing in Counter-Reformation Italy* is an important contribution to a field about which too little is now written and, conversely, in which women were a strong contemporary presence. As Cox notes, 'The half-century from 1580 to 1630 saw the publication of more than sixty single-authored works by Italian women' (p. xi), with the Counter-Reformation a moment of great 'confidence and assertiveness' (p. xiv), but also one in which social and cultural norms continued in 'maleness'.

Chapter 1 is an investigation of the Counter-Reformation contexts of Italian women writers. It sets up textual production and tradition in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and illustrates how women writers were inspired by, and responded to, them. One of the changes Cox identifies is the importance of publication: while earlier 'respectable' elite women circulated manuscripts and avoided publication, post-Tridentine women writers actively pursued it. More problematic in terms of circulation are the works of cloistered women, emphatically patrolled after Trent. Considering scholars' conclusions on the invisibility of convent writers, Cox argues – not entirely persuasively – rather for their increasing relevance in the new spiritual landscape, despite the paucity of their publications.

Chapter 2's focus is religious and secular lyric verse. Cox considers well-known poets (Laura Battiferra, Isabella Andreini) but the chapter's strength is its presentation of lesser-known complex works, such as Luchesia Sbarra's sequence on the death of her infant son, adopting a traditionally male-authored mode from its usual 'domestic and familial context' (p. 79) to a Petrarchan model allowing for the hyperboles of grief. In her remarkable 1628 *Rime*, Francesca Turina offers her autobiography and meditations on motherhood and grand-motherhood (but of sons and grandsons – Turina's daughter is

absent). One criticism here, which may be extended to the volume in general, is that there is not more direct quotation from the works themselves: some are given in the notes (relegated, however, to a final section), while some are given in reference only. For such unique and dramatic examples as these, it would be useful to hear more of the contemporary voice.

Secular drama – particularly a comparative analysis of pastorals – takes up Chapter 3. The mode, still a novel choice for women, offered authors such as Barbara Torelli, Andreini, Maddalena Campiglia, and Valeria Miani significant possibilities and was, Cox argues, suitable in subject and tone. Yet pastoral drama was not all modesty, with the leading figure of the nymph commonly standing in for the poet and allowing for a striking degree of self-assertion. One example: Andreini rewrites a scene from Tasso's *Aminta*, in which a satyr strips the nymph Silvia, ties her up, and threatens rape. In *Mirtilla's* redux, the satyr is physically humiliated, a novel departure from the male tradition and one that seems to derive from Andreini's knowledge of physical farce in the *Commedia dell'Arte*.

Chapter 4 divides sacred narrative into three categories: works employing the Gospels to tell Christ's story; hagiographical writings; and the sole surviving female-authored work in this period inspired by the Old Testament, Maddalena Salvetti's 1611 *David perseguitato*. Cox argues here for the formative involvement of women in developing new religious narratives (e.g., *lagrime* poems) and repositioning archetypes. This was a genre in which women were relatively uncontroversial – with the subject matter and appropriate exemplars – and, as a transforming mode as yet undetermined by male experts, it offered a relative plasticity. Cox's analysis of Turina's description of Christ's infancy is strong, particularly her emphasis on his physicality (pp. 140–41); striking, too, is Lucrezia Marinella's 1624 *De' gesti heroici e della vita meravigliosa della serafica S[anta] Caterina da Siena*, which expands the role of Catherine's mother to develop dialogue and characterization, creating an 'emotional core' (p. 156) that almost displaces the traditional centrality of Catherine's relationship with Christ.

Chapter 5's discussion of secular narrative is particularly convincing where it argues for women's adaptation of it to the struggles of Christian Europe, most notably the rise of the Turk but also a persistent concern with Byzantium. In this respect, Marinella's *L' Enrico, overo Bisanzio acquistato* (1635) is the most developed, with the historical and spiritual scope afforded it by the Fourth Crusade. For Venice these events facilitated an immense political and material gain, yet Marinella downplays the city's martial glory, and even the conflict's potential for triumphalism, to privilege the less encomiastic tale of two couples whose lives are subsumed in the action.

The final chapter considers discursive prose: ‘treatises, dialogues, “meditations,” volumes of letters, and polemical tracts’ (p. 213). Cox brings such disparate texts together by considering their common rhetoric. Her lucid discussion of women’s authority here considers the legitimacy of women instructing men: strategies employed by female writers encompassed addressing one’s text specifically to women, and claiming divine inspiration. More complex is Isabella Cervoni’s 1598 *Orazione ... al santissimo ... Papa Clemente ottavo sopra l’impresa di Ferrara*, a 28-page oration counselling the pope on the Ferrarese succession! It demonstrates the breadth of Cervoni’s political theory, and does not shy away from a general exhortation to Europe’s rulers.

Approximately half the volume is critical material: an appendix setting out Italian women writers, extensive notes, a thorough bibliography, and the index. The appendix does reveal an unspoken boundary, with its focus on the published output of the female elite. Other traditional divisions – e.g., considering one genre to the exclusion of others – are, however, clearly disturbed, and the bibliography offers indications of where to find discussions of less traditionally ‘successful’ female writers. The entire work and individual chapters – such as those on contexts and on pastoral drama, both suited to the classroom – are available for institutional access at Project MUSE, which is a welcome innovation.

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**Crouch**, David and Kathleen **Thompson**, eds, *Normandy and its Neighbours, 900–1250: Essays for David Bates* (Medieval Texts and Cultures of Northern Europe, 14), Turnhout, Brepols, 2011; hardback; pp. xxiv, 310; 3 b/w illustrations, 1 b/w table, 2 b/w line art; R.R.P. €80.00; ISBN 9782503520629.

While chairing a session on Norman history at the 2011 Leeds International Medieval Congress, Professor David Bates noted in a tone of self-deprecating bemusement that he ‘seem[ed] to have entered the canon now’. He was referring to his enormously influential *Normandy before 1066*, which first appeared in 1982 and opened up new avenues into the pre-Conquest period, especially for Anglophone scholars, by focusing on the emergence of the Norman duchy in the tenth and early eleventh centuries. Since the appearance of that landmark work, Bates’s contribution to Anglo-Norman history has continued to be substantial and is duly celebrated in this excellent *festschrift*. His influence is attested not only by the high quality of the essays

collected here but also by the profile of the contributors, most of whom are themselves very well-known scholars of distinguished reputation. Bates is generally considered the leading currently active authority on William the Conqueror, as demonstrated by several biographies and by his monumental collection of the Conqueror's charters (*Regesta regum Anglo-Normannorum: The Acta of William I, 1066–1087*, Oxford University Press, 1998). He is also celebrated for his collegiality and his efforts in encouraging collaboration, especially between academics and students across national boundaries. In this regard his work with French (particularly Norman) scholars might be expected, but he has also fostered continuing links with Anglo-Normanists as far afield as Japan.

What is apparent from these diverse offerings, throughout the collection but perhaps most notably in Part III ('Social and Legal History') is just how lively and current much of the work in the field of Anglo-Norman studies remains. A range of factors continues to be open to debate and even well accepted assumptions are challenged at every turn. This applies, for example, to the field of family and gender studies, where Elisabeth van Houts revisits the commonly held view that the Conquest led to substantial intermarriage between the Norman and Anglo-Saxon populations. On the basis of an admittedly limited and conservative 'first ever catalogue' (p. 238) of such unions, van Houts concludes that marriage remained surprisingly endogamous in England before 1100; in other words, Saxons tended to marry Saxons while Normans (or, more correctly, newly arrived inhabitants from various parts of France) tended to marry Normans.

Familiar shibboleths are equally endangered in John Hudson's article on a small but important point of legal history. The application of differing sets of laws on a personal or 'racial' basis has been widely accepted. After the rebellion of 1075 against William, Norman ringleaders received lesser punishments while Earl Waltheof, less involved but Saxon, was executed. Hudson questions the usual interpretation of these events, based on the testimony of the important but somewhat later (c. 1125) chronicler Orderic Vitalis, and points to neglected evidence which suggests a much less tidy conclusion about differing legal systems.

While these articles belong to the final section of the book, the previous two sections offer equally interesting insights into 'Normandy and the Norman Dynasty' (Part I) and 'The Writing of History' (Part II). Several authors (Judith Green, Kathleen Thompson) assess what there is to know about female members of the early Norman ruling family. John Gillingham extends the focus into the Angevin period, suggesting that the exceptionally large number of meetings between the Capetian and Angevin monarchs

between 1154 and 1204 was largely a function of the personalities involved. Matthew Strickland offers an assessment of the important but relatively overlooked battle of Brémule, in which the Conqueror's son Henry I defeated his French counterpart Louis VI in the Franco-Norman border zone in 1119. Part II presents three essays on source material by three eminent scholars: Pauline Stafford on the 'D' version of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle; Pierre Bauduin (one of two contributors to the volume who writes in French) on Hugh of Fleury's Chronicle; and David Crouch on the brief but fascinating *Roman des Franceis*. Crouch, one of the co-editors, offers a full transcription and translation of this text, which dates from the last quarter of the twelfth century. It provides useful and amusing insights into the sort of anti-French 'racial rhetoric' (p. 175) that was a clear aspect of the construction of an Anglo-Norman identity, a topic which has exercised scholars at great length.

I cannot end without mentioning the delightful article by Nicholas Vincent that closes the collection. While introducing his study of thirteenth-century perceptions of the impact of the Conquest, Vincent takes the opportunity to compare David Bates to the inimitable John Horace Round. This is a playful but effective tribute, for one can hardly imagine two scholars whose personal reputations are more clearly contrasted. Whereas Round, an acerbic combatant in the scholarly conflicts of a century ago, was 'the nastiest of polemicists, his clipped moustaches the twitching antennae of his pugnaciousness', Bates is by contrast 'the gentlest of peacemakers' (p. 271). This alone is testimony to the regard in which Professor Bates is held by his friends and colleagues, and in itself is ample justification for this fine volume.

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**Curta**, Florin, ed., *Neglected Barbarians* (Studies in the Early Middle Ages, 32), Turnhout, Brepols, 2011; hardback; pp. xx, 656; 152 b/w, 35 colour illustrations; R.R.P. €135.00; ISBN 9782503531250.

This volume could properly be re-titled *Previously Neglected Barbarians*. The collection of essays contained herein goes a considerable way to redressing any neglect that lesser-studied barbarians have suffered at the hands of scholars. The barbarian groups, regions, periods, and themes covered are many and broad: from Lithuania to Libya, and Huns to Herules. Papers from archaeological, historical, and numismatic perspectives make for challenging interdisciplinary reading. The copious illustrations are not simply decorative,

but provide crucial evidence for individual arguments about cultural similarities and differences across space.

Audronė Bliujienė's chapter on Lithuanian amber ornaments of the Aesti demonstrates how archaeology can be used to chart 'barbarian' trade, and identify possible 'homelands'. It also serves to bring a wealth of archaeological literature to the attention of an Anglophone audience, a feature common to many of the chapters in this collection. Wojciech Nowakowski explores the archaeology of the appearance and disappearance of the Olsztyn group in Poland with reference to interpretive debates about the connectedness between material culture and migration. This piece is an example of how chapters in this volume contribute not only contextual information about the forgotten barbarians, but pose methodological frameworks for further study.

Bartłomiej Szmoniewski highlights another theme of many contributors: the way that the histories of 'barbarians' have been co-opted into nationalist historiographies, and the problems for modern scholars of equating archaeological cultural remains with historical peoples. Identifying with precision such archaeological cultures is the subject of Igor O. Gavritukhin and Michel Kazanski's chapter, and they draw attention to the continued role of seriation in comparing archaeological assemblages. Margit Nagy's analysis of a Hun-age burial uses similar approaches to contextualize a particular site. This also draws particular attention to a feature of this volume, which is the revelation of data that earlier archaeological excavators had often not published, especially in cases where excavation was rescue-driven.

An excavation of a grave in Budapest where a barbarian woman had been buried in the remains of a Roman fort is the subject of Ágnes B. Tóth's chapter. The cemetery theme continues with Radu Harhoiu's research into the disappearance of the Gepids. Anna Kharalambieva's chapter again addresses Gepids, but shifts the focus, synthesizing the archaeological and historical evidence to situate these barbarians within a broader historical sweep. Of particular note is the reliance on museum artefacts originally treasure-hunted and now co-opted into scholarly analysis. Once again, the subject of Jaroslav Jiřík's chapter brings history and archaeology together, centring on interactions between barbarians and Roman in Bohemia. It raises again the methodological quandary of linking cultural continuities or changes with historical peoples; this theme is also addressed in Roland Steinacher's discussion, which follows, of the Herules. Steinacher discusses the tension between a 'people' and a 'polity', and ultimately concludes that the Herules can be seen as a people, although at the same time he dismisses a long-held migration mythology that he attributes to German nationalism.

In an extremely detailed survey of the archaeological, numismatic, and historical evidence for Slavic peoples in Greece, editor Florin Curta concludes that there was not a Slavic conquest of Greece. Curta notes that excavated coin 'hordes' were not evidence for reactions to invasion, but were for the payment of Roman soldiers, highlighting the continuation of a functional imperial presence in the region. In contrast, Santiago Castellanos argues that in northern Spain barbarians can be seen to have integrated with proximate imperial structures, first Roman, then Visigothic. This, a product of social stratification, is in contrast to the stereotypes of tribal simplicity still current in some discussion of antique and late antique barbarians. Political relations between Sueves, Visigoths, Romans, and Byzantines are the subject of Fernando López Sanchez's study of Suevic coinage, further exploring the forgotten barbarians of the Iberian past.

While certainly not forgotten in the same sense as other groups treated in this volume, Guido M. Berndt's contribution addressing Vandals is a welcome addition. Surveying shifts in the Vandal identity, Berndt argues against seeing the Vandals as a 'race', but as an identity constructed by disparate groups roaming together. The construction of an African barbarian identity is the subject of Phillipp von Rummel's chapter, in which he considers the tribe of Frexes. It is a fascinating account of Romanized peoples, pushed by external factors into adopting separatist identities and engaging in activities traditionally labelled as barbaric. Finally, Peter Heather's Afterword is not so much a summation, as a wider discussion about the historiography of barbarians.

At 656 pages this volume is not a quick read, but it will prove interesting and valuable to barbarian enthusiasts.

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**Dartmann**, Christoph, Thomas **Scharff**, and Christoph Friedrich **Weber**, eds, *Zwischen Pragmatik und Performanz: Dimensionen mittelalterlicher Schriftkultur* (Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy, 18), Turnhout, Brepols, 2011; hardback; pp. viii, 489; 18 b/w illustrations, 1 b/w line art; R.R.P. €90.00; ISBN 9782503541372.

The seventieth birthday of history scholar Hagen Keller coincided with the presentation in Münster in 2007 of some two-year-long research projects on the interaction of written and symbolic communication in medieval culture. This book is a compilation of the papers from this colloquium to

commemorate Keller's birthday and his impact on this field of study. It includes several additions to the papers that were presented, encompassing history, legitimacy, political environment, and cultural and social symbolism in communication from the Carolingian era to the later Middle Ages.

Christoph Dartmann's Introduction does much to frame the scope of the sixteen articles that cover many dimensions of medieval written culture, as the title of the book describes, from the symbolic to the strictly practical. He poses the example of Mozart's operas, *Così fan Tutti* and *Le nozze di Figaro*, to illustrate long traditions of literacy, power, and control. A central theme in these papers is the communication process of symbolic power, and the influence of Keller's recent work on the public ritual of granting charters by a sovereign in the Ottonian Holy Roman Empire is represented especially in the articles of Gerd Althoff, Thomas Scharff, and Michael Jucker. This sphere is expanded chronologically to encompass the broader Middle Ages, and geographically to France and Saxon England. A major accomplishment of this collection of articles is that it is itself both a product and a continuation of the effect of scholarship on the study of history, namely the influence and practice of medieval written culture and communication.

Although there are no sub-sections to categorize these papers, the articles are arranged in the book chronologically, and the majority of the articles can be seen as pertaining to the themes of the presentation sessions. The session on political communication in medieval France is represented in this volume by François Bougard's article on the communication of power in sovereign acts, oaths, and decrees of Charles the Bald, Berengar I, and Hugh of Provence. Bougard identifies political motives for the references between Byzantine and Carolingian sovereigns, and makes a case for a '*mise-en-situation*' approach to the study of such documents. At the end of the book, two more articles return the focus to France. Martin Kintzinger's article treats the book collection initiative of Charles V in fourteenth-century France, and Petra Schulte's article looks at the tapestry of Charles V, *Los Honores* of 1522, and its implications to written text and political and sovereign power.

The theme of literacy, writing, and memory as tools of power furthers the concept of constructing and gaining legitimacy in the medieval political landscape. It is framed by Janet Nelson's article, 'Writing Power', that makes a convincing case for the interdisciplinary study of how power was constructed, manipulated, and connected to ideas. She draws together the habits and actions of scribes of charters and charter witnesses from Italy to France to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, considering propaganda campaigns, ecclesiastical rights and property, forgery, and the context of transmission of laws and charters.

Chris Wickham's article on twelfth-century Roman justice compares the modernizing influences of Roman reforms and power-play between the papacy and the curia from the tenth to the twelfth centuries, challenging the idea that traditional Roman political institutions were undermined by foreign influences, and posing the idea of an 'overarching metanarrative' approach to the study of Roman legal documentation.

Walter Pohl's article examines the forward-thinking chroniclers in the relation of the founding of the monastery of Montecassino by St Benedict and the impact of the written word. Twelfth-century chroniclers are shown to reconstruct the monastery's past by overlooking the more recent sacking of the monastery by Saracens in 883, and the fire of 896, including the martyrdom of the abbot Bethari, in favour of earlier history emphasizing the noble family line of St Benedict, bringing legitimacy and honour to the monastery. The topic of legitimacy and the issue of authenticity are further examined by way of Roman law and judicial process in the articles by Brigitte Miriam Bedos-Rezak and Massimo Vallerani. Another aspect of authenticity is explored in Roger Salbonier's use of carbon dating in the study of letters of state.

The focus moves to the Italian commune with the articles by Christoph Friedrich Weber on written examples from the Italian Staufen era, and Giuliano Milani on painting as a visual register, focusing on a painting from the commune of Brescia by Broletto, and looking at the interrelation of ritual and document, and representation and affirmation. Enrico Artifoni expands upon his colloquium paper with his article about political communication and rhetoric, and poses that it need not be seen as conflict. The aspect of pragmatism in the written word is examined in depth in the article by Michael Jucker, citing examples from late medieval protocol in political meetings.

Forgery, property, law, legitimacy, and sovereignty form the lines of convergence for this panorama of research on medieval written communication and political representation. This collection is an asset to historical studies, and will also be of great benefit to the broader fields of medieval, political, and manuscript studies for which it opens new avenues.

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**Das**, Nandini, *Renaissance Romance: The Transformation of English Prose Fiction, 1570–1620*, Farnham, Ashgate, 2011; hardback; pp. xii, 242; 3 b/w figures; R.R.P. £49.50; ISBN 9781409410133.

I must confess to some fond moments of *À la recherche du temps perdu* in reading this book, since my own postgraduate research and thesis was on Elizabethan romance. It brought back long hours reading such works as Heliodorus's *The Æthiopian Historie* in its sixteenth-century translation, Montemayor's *Diana*, and (in black letter gothic script which almost made me blind) *Amadis de Gaul*, alongside more familiar ones like Sidney's two versions of *Arcadia*, Spenser's poetic *The Faerie Queene*, works by Greene, Lyly, and others less celebrated. I only wonder now how I found the time, especially since not many of these works found a place proportional to their bulk in the main body of my thesis.

In those days there was virtually nothing of much worth published on this particular area, despite the theoretical contributions of Erich Auerbach, Northrop Frye, and Wilson Knight which had awakened interest in romance in general. The neglect of English romances in prose puzzled me because it was clear that the genre was amongst Shakespeare's favourite reading, alongside Ovid, Virgil, and chronicle history, and that every single work by him showed strong traces of its influence. The reason, which quickly occurred to me, was implicated in literary politics which at that time gave visibility and obvious priority to certain kinds of works inspired by courtly humanism, while dismissing romances, apart from those written by illustrious courtiers, as 'merely popular'. In addition, the vast bulk of examples were 'lost' and to all intents outside literary history altogether.

Things have changed to reflect a newfound recognition of the importance of romance, mainly through growing feminist interests in female readership and writers. We have had several major studies, pre-eminently Helen Cooper's wonderful *The English Romance in Time: Transforming Motifs from Geoffrey of Monmouth to the Death of Shakespeare* (1999) and Paul Salzman writing on prose fiction in general, but also more specific studies on areas like chivalry in romance (Alex Davis, 2003), women (Helen Hackett, 2000), narrative strategies (Constance Relihan, 1994 and 1996), and even intriguing topics like espionage in romance (R. W. Maslen, 1997).

Nandini Das's book is a worthy contributor to the field, and it has the distinction of covering the whole, diverse field of prose romance in the period 1570–1620. It has a running theme of 'generational difference', establishing that in most romances there is a wise elder and several hotheaded young knights in need of sage instruction. While this is almost certainly not the primary reason for the genre's popularity, yet it does supply an 'improving' element that could placate those contemporaries who criticized the often

tillating, emotionally heightened, and apparently escapist stories for their lack of overt, morally educative function. Generational discrimination also introduced a strong class awareness into the fictions since, as Das points out, it was the same courtly aristocrats ‘who financed, directed and participated in the staging of romance-inspired tournaments and festivals [who] often were also the main patrons and dedicatees of the narrative texts in question’ (p. 37).

They had something to gain from maintaining the cultural and ideological centrality of their position underpinning the fictions. Aristocratic youth could be seen profitably spending time in travel, martial exploits, and even sowing the occasional wild oats in love affairs, so long as they came to heed the advice and example of their elders by marrying a woman equivalent in status, and growing into senior statesmen themselves.

Fortunately, Das does not put all her eggs in this edifying but hardly compelling basket, but relates it to other motifs and romance purposes. She also traces significant changes in the genre over a fifty-year period, moving from the ‘wandering knights’ of courtly romance and chivalry exemplified in Sidney’s *Arcadia*, ‘errant scholars’ peopling Lyly’s *Euphues* and its sequel, emphasizing virtuous action through learning. Through her acuteness to changing approaches, Das finds Robert Greene’s romances, such as *Pandosto*, more original than other critics regard them. Usually dismissed as derivative potboilers written with an eye to popular fashion, they are seen here as more interestingly original, bringing many of the aristocratic, romance conventions into an urban middle class environment. The resultant ‘real world’ cultural anxieties draw into some consistency Greene’s otherwise diverse *oeuvre*, linking straightforward romances like *Pandosto*, his rogue pamphlets, and his picaresque ‘repentance’. It is not difficult to see the embryo of the novel emerging.

In developments traced by Das after Greene’s works, ‘deviant women’ are depicted by other writers targeting female readers, in works sometimes written by women themselves. Mary Wroth’s *Urania* is seen entering, ‘albeit tentatively, a complex, new and highly nuanced negotiation of female subjectivity’ (p. 184) partly compromised by association with narratives traditionally regarded as potentially corrupting, thereby infusing the genre with interesting tensions between female desire and duty. By this stage, although the days of monsters and marvels may have been numbered, romance was setting its sails into new seas that led towards the novel and the kinds of popular romances we know today.

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**Dickens**, Andrea Janelle, *The Female Mystic: Great Women Thinkers of the Middle Ages* (International Library of Historical Studies, 60), London, I. B. Tauris, 2009; paperback; pp. viii, 248; R.R.P. £17.99; ISBN 9781845116415.

According to the back cover of this book, Andrea Janelle Dickens's study is directed at both the undergraduate student and the general reader. The book succeeds in meeting the needs of these two audiences. In its twelve short chapters it provides introductory surveys of twelve medieval women. Each of the chapters contains information such as the basic details of the woman's life and the text(s) through which she is known, a good number of quotations and extracts from the text(s) in question (in modern English translation), and identification of characteristic elements of that woman's spirituality. The chapters usually contain some explicit discussion of scholarly debates (on both mysticism in general and on the individual women) that readers may or may not wish to pursue.

The twelve women under investigation are all quite different. They are: Richeldis of Faverches, the eleventh-century founder of the English shrine at Walsingham; Hildegard of Bingen from the twelfth century; Christina of St Trond (Christina the Astonishing) from the decades either side of 1200; Hadewijch of Brabant, Mechtild of Magdeburg, and Mechtild of Hackeborn of the thirteenth century; Angela of Foligno and Marguerite Porete of the late thirteenth/early fourteenth centuries; Julian of Norwich, who wrote in the late fourteenth century; Catherine of Siena, the shorter-lived contemporary of Julian of Norwich; Margery Kempe, who was particularly active in the early fifteenth century; and, skipping a century and taking us from the medieval to the beginnings of the early modern period, Teresa of Avila, who lived from 1515–82. Most of these women were themselves writers (which could involve dictating to a scribe), while some of them were the subjects of writings by others.

The choice of women positions this book well as a text for classroom use. Apart from Richeldis (an English woman about whom little information is available, being known to us only via a ballad composed 400 years after her death), all the women are already part of the canon of women studied in university courses on medieval religious women. But, despite the popularity of these women in scholarship and, to a lesser extent in general studies on Christian religious writings and mysticism, it still remains difficult to find, between the covers of one book, a good basic scholarly introduction. For this reason alone, the current book serves a very useful purpose. While each chapter identifies key aspects of each woman's spirituality, there is also attention to the wider ecclesiastical and social contexts which influenced the women and which they, on some occasions, in turn influenced.

Each chapter is essentially a stand-alone study, but similarities and differences between various women are noted where relevant, and there are also some general themes that emerge throughout the book. Dickens regularly notes the ways in which the ideas of Augustine, Bernard of Clairvaux, and William of St-Thierry appear in some of the women's writings. One might think that it is not unusual for these authoritative writers to have influenced other medieval writers (such influence is certainly not unusual when we examine male writers), but this fact is useful support for one of Dickens's overall arguments, namely, that (some) medieval women were theologically knowledgeable and theologically creative, just as their better-known male contemporaries were. To this extent, the book challenges those who would say that the male scholastic world had a monopoly on medieval theology.

In the Conclusion, Dickens notes that the three topics of love, space and place (including pilgrimage and movement), and authority (both the presence and the lack of it) have occurred regularly in the preceding discussions. The extent to which many of these women identified love as a key element (often *the* key element) of the Christian message and promise comes through particularly clearly.

There were some aspects of the book that might have been changed. While the endnotes indicate the book's pleasing attention to extracts and quotations from the primary sources, some readers might hope for more references in the way of secondary scholarship; I can think of some secondary scholars whose contributions I would have liked to see included. The importance of language (i.e., do the texts about these women exist in Latin or the vernacular) was discussed in the Introduction and at various points (e.g., there are some thoughtful comments about the role of Julian of Norwich as an English-language innovator) but might have been articulated even more consistently as an explicit theme, given the prevalence of this topic in recent scholarship. The endnotes could have profited from an extra proofread, while the index could have been more comprehensive (the index lacks references to beghards or cataphatic theology, for instance). But, overall, this book succeeds well in its dual, and difficult, task of providing guidance for both the student and the general reader, something that is not easy given the multiple texts of varying genres that exist for some of the women. The book provides a particularly good flavour of the ideas of (and writings by or about) the women in question, with well-chosen extracts from the relevant primary sources. I will certainly add this book to the reading list for my students.

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**Dugan, Holly**, *The Ephemeral History of Perfume: Scent and Sense in Early Modern England*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011; hardback; pp. xi, 259; 15 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. US\$65.00; ISBN 9781421402345.

According to Holly Dugan, early modern England is an ‘undiscovered country in the history of olfaction’ (p. 3). Despite a surge of interest in how pre-modern people sensed their worlds, how a basic physiological capacity is shaped by any culture’s understanding of perception, its preferential valuation of the five senses and their conditioning, to say nothing for the array of stimuli found within a particular environment, smell remains understudied because it is evanescent. Given the prevailing assumption that Tudor–Stuart England’s panoply of smells must, all the same, have been singularly noisome, Dugan focuses on ‘perfume’, the production and consumption of artificial scents. She traces why these scents functioned as socio-cultural cues and how they were invested with meaning by poetry, drama, and literature.

The first two chapters examine scents as markers of communion or command. In sixteenth-century England, the burning of frankincense was intended literally to inspire devotion. To inhale was to approach the divine and, at the same time, to purge minds of earthly thoughts. One might expect reformers to have protested that holy smoke was as much an idol as a statue or relic, yet its dissipation was gradual. Like the mystery plays in which exotic spices played a part in dramatizing faith, its scent lingered. Dugan argues that people’s encounters with these aromatics in the global marketplace, and its embarrassment of riches, were equally important for perfume’s desacralizing.

So too was Henry VIII’s royal supremacy. Shedding new light on that quintessential Tudor emblem, Dugan reveals how the distillation of damask rose gave the monarch a signature fragrance, which projected a majestic presence, particularly at court masques, as well as a sovereign absence when worn by his amours. Keeping in mind the belief that air quality had a profound influence on bodily welfare, the beautiful must have found the regal savour as invigorating as the royal touch was refreshing to the scrofulous.

Airborne ‘disease’ had a different meaning within the humoral paradigm, as the central pair of chapters demonstrates with reference to travel literature and plague tracts. Breathing was vital but also functioned as a barometer of one’s surroundings. However, to inhale was to risk smelling invisible substances with essential qualities that would disrupt or poison native humoral balances. Alien though it was, the first colonists had their noses to the Virginian ground. Before tobacco became a lucrative panacea, their hope was to root out sassafras. That colonists were prepared to encounter a harmful contagion rather than therapeutic balm was perhaps because of

their familiarity with this osmotic Catch-22. During epidemics, olfactory assessments of one's own health and the salubriousness of one's surroundings were necessary yet angst-ridden. Smelling rosemary from miasma, snorting plague rather than prophylactic, took only a fickle breeze.

Perfumes could mask corruption, even arouse the fleshly decadence that the plague was sent to scourge. A defining ingredient in luxury leather goods and genteel housewifery, proprietary contests over ambergris show animal-based perfumes became big business as well as morally ambiguous. From the later seventeenth century, Dugan traces a shift in favour of botanicals, like jasmine, as gardens were transformed from spaces of spiritual or material profit to allegedly natural places for wholesome sensuality.

This path-breaking work concentrates on the socio-cultural uplands, with only an occasional whiff from below. If the role of gender and sexuality receive some attention, social status – and with it, plebeian experience, are largely absent. The six chapters are like the gilt chambers of a pomander, each bearing a rich fragrance. In a book about perfumes, and their literary distillation, we cannot expect extended discussion of the reeking mess of humble life courtesy of popular print, such as ballad garlands, or street talk, as recorded in court depositions. Nonetheless, it would be interesting to know more about how these scents were situated in the wider smell-scape. Could people detect a piquant grocer, or a printer's inky apprentice, courtesy of an occupational bouquet, despite their having shifted apparel before visiting the theatre? Was there another dimension to cosmetics, and to passing for somebody one was not?

Elites re-odourized environments with perfume, but questions remain about these practices too. If potpourri turned bedchambers into bowers of bliss what was the larger purpose – did couples consider that a properly scented space would better the chances of conceiving a suitably beautiful child? Given the dominant view that the brain itself was the olfactory organ, but also critical to the concoction of paternal seed and maternal gestation, was nasal prophylaxis practised in bed as on plague-ridden streets? Perfumes might be designed, yet there is a tendency here to treat their smelling as an autonomic response. Should we speak of olfactory manners, and how were noses trained? If we want to write a historical, thick description of smell, in what circumstances was olfaction a deliberate gesture; when did a whiff become a sniff?

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**Escalona**, Julio and Andrew **Reynolds**, *Scale and Scale Change in the Early Middle Ages: Exploring Landscape, Local Society, and the World Beyond* (The Medieval Countryside, 6), Turnhout, Brepols, 2011; hardback; pp. xi, 316; 33 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. €80.00; ISBN 9782503532394.

Despite the excellence of much of this volume, its title is somewhat misleading. It fails to alert the would-be purchaser that the work deals exclusively with post-Roman Europe, often with reference to the changes in scale that occurred with the end of the Empire. This of course results in the large parts of Europe that were not incorporated into the Roman Empire being excluded. Furthermore, after a theoretical chapter, six of the nine chapters focus on the Iberian Peninsula.

The volume is the result of a research project during which each chapter of the book was presented to the other participants as a seminar paper, resulting in a level of uniformity not always found in edited collections. For example, many of the papers deal with the social construction of scale. Following an Introduction, the useful theoretical chapter by Julio Escalona establishes different approaches to investigating scale and scale change, and the accompanying theoretical issues. Perhaps the most important of these is that issues of scale are often fundamental to scholarship on the Middle Ages but they are usually taken for granted.

‘Part I: Territories, Landscape, and Settlement’ commences with a chapter on ‘Early Medieval Rural Societies in North-Western Spain’ by Alfonso Vigil-Escalera and Juan Antonio Quirós Castillo in which they establish that, contrary to previous scholarship, early churches in the region were built in existing villages rather than villages later forming around churches. Andrew Reynolds then presents four case studies relating to scale change in the English landscape in the Roman and medieval periods. He argues that archaeologists working on the Roman period are often looking at different things from those working on the early medieval period, who in turn are not looking for the same things as those working on the following period, which makes drawing comparisons between these periods very difficult. A long chapter by Margarita Fernández Mier returns to early medieval North-Western Spain to examine changing scales of local power, arguing that different economic, social, and administrative mechanisms co-existed and functioned at different scales. Her willingness to use a retrospective reading of later documents may be considered problematic by some scholars.

Alexandra Chavarria Arnau’s chapter opens ‘Part II: Local Society and the World Beyond’. She compares changes in scale in the late Roman and early medieval period in the Italian countryside and argues that the late antique

aristocracy remained but became militarized, and that local churches were not randomly sited but instead the ecclesiastical network was planned. In 'On Suretyship in Tenth-Century Northern Iberia', Wendy Davies draws on her earlier work on Brittany for comparisons. She examines personal sureties and argues that they operated on two scales: a small local scale where people would travel short distances (up to six or seven kilometres in Eastern Brittany) to act as a surety in agreements between two other parties, and on a much wider scale amongst the aristocracy where the distance travelled could reach one hundred kilometres. Part II concludes with a chapter by Escalona and Francisco Reyes on changes in scale that occurred when the County of Castile expanded in the ninth and tenth centuries. The authors demonstrate that the changes operated on three different scales, and they identify a bottom-up process by which local elites became part of the countywide aristocracy.

'Part III: Large-Scale Systems in Local and Regional Perspective' commences with Santiago Castellanos's chapter on the adaptation of the late Roman tax system by Visigoth kings. He argues that both systems operated on two levels, state and local. Taxation in Visigoth Iberia is also the focus of the chapter by Iñaki Martín Viso. He examines gold coinage in the Duero plateau in the sixth and seventh centuries and concludes that the distribution of mints points to political fragmentation, taxes were often collected in kind rather than coin, gold coins were used for propaganda purposes, and that taxation in the area was largely symbolic. The volume concludes with 'Exchange, Coinage, and the Economy of Early Medieval England' by Grenville Astill. He examines exchange and coinage and how they may relate to changes in socio-economic structures, arguing that they reflect the changing role of the aristocracy.

The volume succeeds in showing how useful considerations of scale and scale change are in the study of the early medieval period, providing a number of detailed case studies that could be duplicated for study of other regions. The book will also be of interest to those interested in early medieval Western Europe, particularly post-Roman Iberia.

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**Garzoni**, Tomaso, *The Hospital of Incurable Madness: L'Hospedale de' pazzi incurabili (1586)* (Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 352; Arizona Studies in the Middle Ages and Renaissance, 26), intro. Monica Calabritto, trans. Daniela Pastina and John W. Crayton, Tempe, AZ, Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2009; cloth; pp. viii, 251; R.R.P. US\$52.00, £40.00; ISBN 9782503528953.

This translation with notes of an important sixteenth-century Italian literary text on madness will be an eye-opener, not least for Anglophone historians, for whom Robert Burton's all-encompassing *Anatomy of Melancholy* might seem like the last word on late Renaissance attitudes to unreason. But observers on early modern madness spoke in many tongues and, as Garzoni's *Hospedale* well illustrates, with more or less sympathetic voices. Not that Burton's was by any means a univocal text. In his aptly titled, *The Worlds of Renaissance Melancholy* (Cambridge University Press, 2006), Angus Gowland has tracked the continental medical sources of the *Anatomy*, all the while revealing a vein of subversive humanism in Burton's work which runs counter to the discourse of learned medicine (in which that melancholy author was nevertheless supremely well-versed). In the second chapter of his *Hospedale*, on frenzied and delirious madmen, Garzoni conscientiously quotes French physician, Jean Fernel, but ultimately opts for a more popular definition of 'frenzy': 'Because I don't wish to speak about madness the way physicians do, but rather according to the plain talk of the people' (quoted by Monica Calabritto at p. 17). But if Garzoni's is, like Burton's and Erasmus's, a world gone universally mad, the Italian author distances himself from his insane subjects – not as lay medical healer, not even as spiritual physician, but as the amused, sometimes contemptuous, viewer of a wondrous baroque spectacle of human degradation. The consolations of philosophy, let alone medicine, are rarely invoked.

For the mad in Garzoni's hospital are, as the title indicates, incapable of cure (in spite of the hopeful prayers to pagan gods with which the individual chapters, or 'discourses', conclude). At the same time, the author gives us little clue as to how to interpret these psychic afflictions within the post-Tridentine Catholic framework in which he himself operated as a Regular Lateran Canon. As Calabritto points out in her Introduction, the mad are simply constructed as condign objects of moral judgement for their deviance from the rules of conduct set for Catholic Reformation society – although, it should be pointed out that many of them suffer and deviate through no particular fault of their own, but from birth, or as a result of some unfortunate accident. Interestingly, Garzoni's works were proscribed by that arch-enforcer of Tridentine morality, the Jesuit Antonio Possevino in his *Bibliotheca Selecta*.

Were they too earthy, too bleak, too riotous in their ransacking of both lay and learned literary sources? Calabritto teases apart Garzoni's genres, from the medical (a relatively circumscribed presence in the *Hospedale*, it seems) to the encyclopaedic to the novelistic, from *facezie* to commonplaces, to *imprese*, to Renaissance memory theatres.

All bar one of Garzoni's discourses (there are thirty-one in total) are devoted to madmen, and these are sorted into some rather miscellaneous – to modern ears – categories, e.g., 'The Melancholic and the Savage', 'The Jerks and the Giddies', 'The Clumsy and Fatuous', 'The Spiteful and Tarot Types', 'The Over-the-Top and Triple-refined', 'the Heteroclitcs, the Odd, the Lame-Brained, and the Done-for'. Needless to say, the guidance of expert translators proves indispensable here for eliciting linguistic nuances and unpacking cultural references, even for those who read Italian. The excellent footnotes punctually report classical and early modern sources and explain Garzoni's 'jokes'. Garzoni's final chapter is a grab bag devoted to Madness in Women: '... These are the cells assigned to madwomen. It is no small privilege to have the opportunity to see them at your ease, since, as a rule, they are rarely shown, and to few people, because of the modesty of their sex, since, as you can see, they are mostly naked' (p. 189). Garzoni is in fact no more chivalrous in dealing with the female sex than with the male. Calabritto devotes a very helpful, though longish, section of her Introduction to 'Gendered madness in and out of *L'hospedale*' (pp. 21–32).

The volume includes the paratext of the first Venice edition; that is, prefatory poems by physicians, Teodoro Angelucci and Guido Casoni, and Garzoni's verse response to Angelucci, praising folly. Calabritto argues that the fact Garzoni expresses a more positive view of madness in this poem does not mean that it was intended as a 'paradoxical encomium' (a popular Renaissance genre). Be that as it may, we are introduced to a world in Garzoni's *Hospedale* which is about as far away from modern notions, and protocols in the treatment, of 'mental' illness as is possible to imagine; so that it is difficult for us to judge whether it was intended primarily to inspire laughter, fear, or even loathing for its subject (see Garzoni's anti-semitic reworking of a medical case history from Donato Antonio Altomare, discussed by Calabritto at pp. 15–16). For this very reason Garzoni's curious work is bound to stimulate further thought and discussion among students of early modern (representations of) insanity and intellectual deficiency. We should be grateful to the three experienced scholars who have made it relatively accessible to us.

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**Gavitt, Philip**, *Gender, Honor, and Charity in Late Renaissance Florence*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2011; hardback; pp. x, 280; 9 tables; R.R.P. £55.00; ISBN 9781107002944.

This book builds on Philip Gavitt's earlier work on the famous founding hospital of Florence, the *Ospedale degli Innocenti* (Hospital of the Innocents) and its mission to receive foundlings and orphans during its early years in the fifteenth century. The author suggests that extending his research into the sixteenth century revealed that the institution shared with other charitable institutions – in Florence and its environs – and with other cities in Italy, a concern for the limited choices open to female foundlings once they reached marriageable age. Dowry inflation and a rigid patrilineal inheritance system meant that girls, and sometimes boys, were left in the care of charitable institutions rather than their families. To Gavitt, this suggests that lineage ideology and the development of an aristocratic status culture in sixteenth-century Florence better explains the need to house such a large number of foundlings – particularly females – rather than a more usually assumed, all-encompassing Mediterranean gender ideology, which deemed that women were subordinate to men across all time periods. However, as contemporary understandings of gender and attitudes to women were directly linked to a preference for male heirs and a reluctance to consider partible inheritance, gender ideology and lineage ideology were linked and interdependent. This means that gender ideology could influence lineage ideology and perhaps Gavitt could have considered this issue more fully in his discussion.

Gavitt argues that charitable institutions were part of a broader societal emphasis on discipline, state building, and confessionalization in Catholic Europe and it was these concerns that drove Cosimo de' Medici to reform charitable and conventual institutions as part of his efforts to consolidate his power within his realm. Vincenzo Borghini, the superintendent of the *Innocenti* in the mid-sixteenth century is a key focus of this book. He attempted to impose monastic discipline and inculcate confessionalized piety into the charges under his care. Throughout his tenure, Borghini tied the fortunes of the *Innocenti* as an institution to the state building of the Medici dukes. Equally important, he met a need to house (sometimes temporarily and sometimes for life) the surplus children of aristocratic families who were concerned to preserve primogeniture.

The second and third chapters provide a very sophisticated analysis of the link between gender, lineage ideology, and the development of an aristocratic status culture in Florence that drew more on the aristocratic humanist ideology of the courts than republics. The desire to preserve

patrilineal inheritance for the eldest son meant that girls within families were often the victims of dowry inflation and sent to convents or various charitable institutions, as a means of preserving their honour and reputation. If they were poor, residence at the *Innocenti* protected these vulnerable children from prostitution and a dishonourable life on the streets.

Girls predominated at the *Innocenti*, but admissions of boys equalled those of girls in years of famine and war crises. Boys also thus faced danger, when their families could no longer support them. Sometimes they were stepchildren and their stepfathers wishing to protect their own children's inheritance sent them to the *Innocenti*, where they would be taught a trade, or go into the priesthood. Some of the foundlings stayed into adulthood – running the tapestry workshops that contributed so much to the grand-ducal economy, or were involved in the administration of the *Innocenti* itself.

Female foundlings left at the *Innocenti* sometimes worked within the hospital, or were sent out as domestic servants to earn money for their own dowry. Some girls married and some entered convents. But the number of girls that the *Innocenti* had to care for was an increasing headache for Borghini. Many of the foundlings remained in institutions for life and as the numbers swelled, girls over the age of 36 were sent to the widows' asylum, the *Orbatello*. Gavitt vividly describes the rigid daily routines of the *Innocenti*, with its conventual cycle of prayer services to mark the day as well as the rhythms of work and the inculcation of monastic discipline.

Gavitt acknowledges in a chapter on 'unruly nuns' that the issues of dowry inflation and concerns over inheritance were not peculiar to Florence and argues that in Florence and throughout Italy, families endeavoured to maintain contact with their cloistered members while nuns and members of other conventual institutions valued families as a source of patronage. The pope's preference for completely enclosed institutions put pressure on the Medici dukes to provide assistance to these fully enclosed women.

Gavitt has ably demonstrated that charitable and other conventual institutions were an important part of state-building strategies in Florence and an intrinsic part of Florentine life and culture. His book provides an important window into key aspects of Florentine gender and family history and how charitable institutions, such as the *Innocenti*, could be used as a mechanism to preserve patrilineal inheritance systems by seeking to preserve the honour and reputation of the mainly female children that families could not support.

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**Gerber**, Matthew, *Bastards: Politics, Family, and Law in Early Modern France*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2012; hardback; pp. x, 288; R.R.P. £45.00; ISBN 9780199755370.

There is no necessary reason for defining a family as a group of people closely related by blood solely legitimated by the vows of monogamous marriage. Cultures with different *mores* have existed and can do so. When, for whatever social reasons, compulsory exclusion of extramarital children from the family is accepted as not merely the norm but as a structure to protect legitimate members of the family from any other rights or claims and when adoption was rare if not impossible, it has a distinctive political outcome. It creates a perilous situation for those who were located outside the bonds of wedlock. A mind-set that stigmatizes illegitimacy moreover, once established, is peculiarly hard to dislodge and becomes tied up with the religious and political structures that direct the fate of nations.

Professor Gerber, drawing on an impressive array of neglected archival material, some of which is summarized in useful appendices, has found a new and illuminating way of examining the effects of this social 'given' on the life of both individual and community in France. The position of illegitimates there, as he briefly demonstrates, was more liberal than that of their counterparts in the Holy Roman Empire where in many states bastards could not hold public office or even be a full-time member of a guild. It was, nevertheless, still restrictive. One other aspect that he might have investigated was the ability of an illegitimate child itself to marry where parental consent (in secular law) was required. Indeed, as Gerber is not considering marriage as a sacrament but as a civil union under state-based laws, he has little to say about the ecclesiastical courts, which gives the work a one-sided slant.

Gerber is particularly concerned with the ways in which lawyers in secular courts manipulated the rules about the legal disabilities of those termed bastards. Their right to inherit and even the ability of either parent to pass money or estates to them by will were matters that demanded considerable finesse. Gerber's presentation makes effective use of key examples to clarify how the system worked in different courts and what effect legal rulings had on the development and modification of attitudes and behaviour in the community.

The most remarkable revelation in this work is the number of different laws that governed the treatment of illegitimate children, their different origins, and the very varied results that could be produced in consequence of their application. Gerber demonstrates that bastardry was not a simple matter and was differently viewed in different courts, in different parts of the

country, and at different times. The possible intervention of the monarch by the issuance of a *lettre de cachet* adds to the slippery mess.

Gerber shows that changing legal attitudes and practices did not necessarily mean that the position of the bastard improved. Some reform-minded lawyers, as they sought to snatch jurisdiction from the ecclesiastical courts, actually sought to make the rules stricter so that the power and property of the upper classes were kept unsullied. As the lot of the extramarital child slowly and unevenly improved – at least the lot of a child not abandoned as a foundling, ‘a child of the state’ whose parents would not acknowledge it – people slowly and often reluctantly recognized the folly of attributing to the child the sins of the parents.

Paradoxes abounded. In 1697, Louis XIV was prepared to tax bastards and their descendants to fund his wars but also sought to enable his own various male bastards to claim the throne. The issue was a contentious one throughout the early modern period, and, as the Enlightenment philosophers became involved in the debate about the nature of the bastard, the widespread belief that they were debased, degenerate, and somehow inferior stock was modified by ideas drawn from natural law. Gerber points out that this was not pure altruism: the cost to the central government of foundling children, sent to Paris by frugal magistrates from all over the kingdom, made it necessary to find ways to ensure that parents supported their children whatever their legitimacy.

The Code Civil in 1804 finally codified and unified the practices across the state and defined the nature of family. It was clearly at this point man-made law, endorsing social expectations, and neither religious nor natural. The Code undermined the idea that the bastard was inherently likely to be criminal although it did not lift all the disabilities of the extramarital child.

Gerber ends his study on an up beat that is perhaps the only minor criticism one might make of the study. If the history of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is examined neither philosophical argument nor modification of the law shifted the attitudes of the ordinary French people very much. The structure of society was not so easily re-modelled. It would be enlightening, if Gerber intends further work on the subject, if he concentrated on one or two of the areas with distinctive practices and examined how far and in what ways society there differed.

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**Gillespie**, Alexandra and Daniel **Wakelin**, eds, *The Production of Books in England 1350–1500* (Cambridge Studies in Palaeography and Codicology, 14), Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2011; hardback; pp. xx, 375; 43 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9780521889797.

This useful and beautiful book is intended as a supplement to, rather than a replacement for, the great 1989 Griffiths–Pearsall collection *Book Production and Publishing in Britain 1375–1475*, and it succeeds admirably. Its major strength is its provision of expert advice on methodologies that often perplex the outsider. What were medieval English books made of? Orietta da Rold’s ‘Materials’ tells us. How can we penetrate the complexities of dialectology? There is no better place than Simon Horobin’s chapter ‘Mapping the Words’ to find out. The other topics include scribal practices, *ordinatio*, decorating the page, compiling the book, bookbinding, commercial organization, vernacular literary manuscripts, non-commercial book production, censorship, books beyond England, and English books and the continent.

While each chapter dutifully surveys the major critical issues, most contributors show how their topic opens windows onto later medieval English culture and society. Da Rold’s chapter concludes with a compelling treatment of the distribution of paper stocks in the Winchester Malory, which suggests ‘that the scribes were working with loose tales, coming from separate manuscripts’, a claim of no little consequence for the interpretation of *Le Morte Darthur* (p. 32). For Daniel Wakelin, the variety of letter forms in which even a single scribe’s hand might be found is an index into the ‘the social world in which writing unfolded’ (p. 45). Deep into Jean-Pascal Pouzet’s treatment of non-commercial book production, one finds a fascinating theorization of ‘the creative importance of *otium*’, manifested in Hoccleve’s characterization of the ‘trauailous stilnesse’ of the Privy Seal (pp. 234, 237). And Alexandra Gillespie’s ‘Bookbinding’ polemically argues ‘that binding research should not be the preserve of specialists, and that this is an ideal moment to make new connections between binding and the broader history of the book’ (p. 158). These are just some of the exciting, large-scale claims hidden beneath the rather anodyne, and thus misleading, chapter titles.

Indeed, one theme cautiously developed is the danger of granting too much heuristic force to any of the topics signalled in those titles. Fiona Somerset’s study of censorship pushes this to the limit in its interrogation of ‘censorship’ as a definable critical category. Alteration such as erasure ‘can be a form of secondary censorship in response to the threat of censure’, she notes, ‘but more generally it is a form of reader response (or authorial

reconsideration) with a wider range of possible causes' (p. 257). Two chapters later David Rundle, having catalogued continental scribes' stints in England, provides the 'salutary reminder that the provenance of a manuscript can be more complex than hasty assumptions suggest' (p. 284), echoing Simon Horobin's point about 'just how misleading' certain dialectal data sets can appear (p. 76).

Not all is negative, of course. Throughout the collection enterprising readers will find concrete suggestions for further research. Da Rold points to the variation in parchment types and in inks in manuscripts of the *Canterbury Tales* (p. 21); Gillespie, to the archival records that might reveal more about later medieval binders, including women, who otherwise are few and far between herein (p. 159); Somerset, to the need for 'many more stories about shifts in book production in the fifteenth century and their causes' (p. 252); and Wendy Scase, in the volume's afterword, to the question of why it was 'that bureaucratic infrastructure, material and personnel met the needs of vernacular book production' (p. 297).

A welcome antidote to one of the few qualms I had about *The Production of Books in England 1350–1500* appears in Stephen Partridge's chapter 'Designing the Page', which concludes: 'The methods of textual criticism may have much to offer book history's consideration of page design' (p. 103). It is no surprise that codicology and book history must rely on extant materials; but too often these chapters do not wonder about the production and transmission of now-lost books as well. Textual studies should be more fully incorporated into the field of medieval English book history. It does not help that so many contributors use the term 'copy-text', which has a particular technical force in textual studies, as a synonym for 'exemplar'. The only other slight disappointment to me was Linne Mooney's chapter on the production of vernacular literary manuscripts, not because the material is in any way below par, but because it alone shows signs of being rushed through production (e.g., notes 35–37 are given as '*ibid.*' when their referent is in note 31), and catalogues earlier discoveries rather than pointing into new directions.

Still, one would not want to be without Mooney's contribution, just as no serious scholar of English book history – or indeed of medieval English culture, if I might indulge in a moment's optimism – will want to be without Gillespie and Wakelin's collection. This is a major accomplishment, and a testament to the editors' skills and the contributors' knowledge and discipline.

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**Goodey, C. F.**, *A History of Intelligence and 'Intellectual Disability': The Shaping of Psychology in Early Modern Europe*, Farnham, Ashgate, 2011; hardback; pp. x, 382; R.R.P. £35.00; ISBN 9781409420217.

C. F. Goodey brings to *A History of Intelligence and 'Intellectual Disability'* over twenty years of experience researching and working in the field of 'intellectual disability'. Recognizing that a modern concept such as 'intelligence' must be by its very nature historically contingent, he sets out to chart its course, and that of its by-product, intellectual disability, from its origins in late medieval Europe to its manifestation in the 'psy' disciplines that one recognizes today.

Goodey begins his study with a reflection on 'problematical intellects in ancient Greece'. While philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle have been used throughout the medieval, early modern, and modern periods to bolster arguments for an ahistorical, universal understanding of intellectual disability, Goodey argues convincingly that 'in the history of modern psychological concepts, Plato and Aristotle are not ancestors but outsiders, barbarians even' (p. 16). Not only was Aristotle misquoted when he was credited with the phrase 'man is a rational animal', an Aristotelian epistemology simply would not permit of such a claim (pp. 34–36).

Having debunked any claims that a modern concept of intelligence might have to universality, Goodey proceeds to explore its operations within society. He does this with a series of detailed discussions about socio-economic structures, power, and status in early modern Europe. In particular, he explores the relationships between ideas of, and claims to, honour and grace, arguing that honour and grace have historically served in place of intelligence when determining who belonged to the 'in-group' and who to the 'out-group' of society. Further, specialists in honour and grace determined specific criteria by which one could be measured and included or excluded accordingly. 'If honour and intelligence are similar in their relationship to social mobility', Goodey claims, 'so too are they in their forms of assessment. Heraldic devices bear a functional resemblance to psychometric scores' (p. 106).

Goodey's discussions on this topic are intriguing, but his assertion that intelligence comprises *the* modern channel by which 'status bids' for membership of the in-group might be made strikes this reader as rather a sweeping claim. Certainly, it can be argued that intelligence tests aim to measure what is valued by contemporary society (particularly capitalist, neo-liberal regimes in which individuals are shaped to be entrepreneurial, and in which thought becomes a form of labour) rather than some innate 'thing' (pp. 41–45), but this may not be enough to elevate intelligence to the dizzying heights that Goodey claims modern Western societies have done. There is a

wealth of literature that might have been drawn on here, and one feels that other modes of 'status bidding', such as the giving and receiving of gifts or the amassing of wealth, not always tied to intelligence, ought to at least have been acknowledged.

In the final parts of this book, Goodey examines the ever-increasing focus on the measurement of concepts that might be identified with intelligence, and on the identification of intellectual disability (in, for example, fools, 'special' people, and changelings), arguing that a form of early modern positivism remains alive and well in today's 'psy' disciplines. Commenting on modern psychiatry's use of objects such as DNA strings to support its diagnoses, Goodey observes that psychiatry 'presents itself as an exact science because it deals with things that really are there to be measured' (p. 216). However, as he also points out, the same can be said of phrenology. The fact that something is there to be measured does not mean that it has the cause and effect that one would like it to.

Goodey ends his study with an extended discussion of John Locke's *Essay concerning Human Understanding*. He identifies Locke as the immediate forerunner to modern 'psy' disciplines, thereby linking these to medieval misappropriations of Plato and Aristotle, notions of the self and of autonomy rooted in one's relationship to God, and to Lockean arguments of the non-human status of changelings, with whom Goodey identifies modern intellectually disabled persons.

This is an impressive study that embraces an incredible array of primary sources and evinces a deep understanding of the periods and societies under investigation. Unfortunately, one cannot help but feel that Goodey misses several opportunities to bolster his arguments by reference to literature outside the mainstream of psychological and psychiatric scholarship. The formation of subject positions by particular historical arrangements of power and knowledge, for example, is a well-worn path in Foucauldian scholarship, a body of work that is not even mentioned, let alone engaged with, in this volume. Nevertheless, the book achieves Goodey's aim of beginning to till the earth on a 'greenfield site' (p. 12), and it will prove a valuable reference for anyone with an interest in modern notions of intelligence and intellectual disability.

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**Haskell**, Yasmin, ed., *Diseases of the Imagination and Imaginary Disease in the Early Modern Period* (Early European Research, 2), Turnhout, Brepols, 2012; hardback; pp. xxvi, 424; 10 b/w illustrations, 1 b/w table; R.R.P. €95.00; ISBN 9782503527963.

Editor Yasmin Haskell has brilliantly and coherently brought together papers that seem to me for the most part to deal with diseases of the imagination (indicated by symptoms of illness such as delusions) rather than imaginary disease (a term which appears to be applicable to what we now call hypochondria). It would have been convenient to have a clear definition of the two categories, although the book is very much worth reading anyway. The quality of the essays is remarkably high, and – unusually – uniformly so, with enormous learning and power of reasoning persistently in evidence, along with excellent and jargon-free English. I found it a real pleasure to read so much outstanding, interesting, and well-presented work.

The book does not deal with easy material, lucid though the commentators are. What is required of the reader is a willingness to think like our forbears in order to comprehend them. Their understanding of disease was itself largely imaginative, as they worked on the basis of ancient theories (those of Hippocrates and Galen) rather than evidence found through exploring bodies. For example, the poet Tasso (1544–1595) elaborately corresponded, as a patient, with famous Italian physicians, who willingly supplied professional help, but without examining him physically. Most of what early modern doctors thought happened in the body we now know to be largely fanciful, leading to the conclusion that they themselves constructed, when diagnosing others, diseases produced by their own imagination. I do not mean that the symptoms noted by patient or doctor were invariably unreal, but that the diagnosis was often wildly incorrect, by modern standards.

Basically, doctors or theologians concerned with disease believed that any illness could be imputed to one of two causes: either unsound functioning of the four humours in the body (blood, phlegm, cholera, and black bile), or demonic possession. At times the two causes were held to co-exist. These two presumed sources of disease function prominently in chapter after chapter.

To give a very extreme idea of the fantasies of patients, in which doctors often also believed, I shall say something about a fascinating chapter on vampires: ‘Vampires as Creatures of the Imagination’, by Koen Vermeir (pp. 341–73). It appears that originally vampires were particularly strongly believed in outside most western European countries, with Russia an important source. But insane belief (showing diseased functioning of the imagination) can spread quickly, and with a remarkable logic of its own. One

Des Noyers wrote in 1693 that in Poland and Rusland there were ‘corpses filled with blood’. To cite Vermeir: ‘[Des Noyers] mentions that these dead bodies eat their shrouds, but he stresses in particular that they suck blood. Local people believe that a demon leaves the corpse between noon and midnight and harasses the kin and acquaintances of the deceased person. The demon crushes them, presents them with the image of the deceased person and sucks their blood. It then carries back the blood and deposits it in the corpse for storage, often in such quantities that it flows through all the orifices of the dead body. The victims become weaker and weaker until they die, and the demon does not stop until the whole family has been wiped out. The local remedy is to behead the suspect corpse, to open its heart and let the large quantities of blood flow out. To protect themselves, the villagers collect the blood, mingle it with flour, knead the dough and make bread from it. The victims eat this bread in order to save them from such a terrible vexation’ (pp. 349–50).

We can see from such a passage that belief in vampires as real creatures developed relatively late during the early modern period, which has the advantage of showing us the extreme length to which a disease of the imagination could at that time go, and also of making us understand that something so astonishing would lead to its opposite, i.e., total rejection of the belief. The vampire craze could not, and did not, last indefinitely. It died out after Empress Maria Theresa put an end to it in 1755 (p. 371). Thus the end of this form of collective insanity came during the time of the Enlightenment, the eighteenth-century rationalist movement which to a significant extent reduced the intense use of the imagination which people had until that time displayed. No doubt the increasing importance and incidence of scientific discovery based on actual physical evidence, and the resulting growth of a scientific mindset among many, must be held to a large extent responsible for the marked change that occurred. Although in various ways the imagination remained an important faculty, it no longer occupied as dominant a place as it had done during the Renaissance. It continued to play a significant role in the arts, in entertainment, and in psychiatry as practised by Freud, who had no doubt about its dominant place in much psychiatric disease; but widespread belief in spirits, witches, vampires, etc., diminished sharply after the seventeenth century, and notably in educated urban environments.

In a book as good as this it would be invidious to single out special chapters, and I shall not do so, except to suggest that, independent of the matter of quality, it seemed to me that chapters on very *specific* matters, notably on group behaviour, for example, were particularly effective and revealing, such as Sharon Strocchia’s on melancholic nuns, or Judith Bonzol’s on children.

Dale Shuger's on Spain, too, was extremely interesting, as attitudes there were found to be far more prosaic and down to earth than in countries that seemed to study the imaginatively diseased with intense fervour.

I would express only one – minor – disappointment. This is a historical book, describing how diseases of the imagination were perceived and treated in the early modern period. Approaching its subject cautiously, the book leaves one with the impression that no-one, in diagnosis, looked further than afflictions caused by the four humours and/or demonic possession. However, I would have expected at least some exploration of the possibility that there were, for example, dramatists capable of thinking of proto-Freudian explanations. I must declare an interest here, as I have myself worked in that area. But, leaving my own essays to one side, surely it is likely that, for instance, the content of Ophelia's 'mad' songs about the sexual seduction and betrayal of a maid can appropriately be regarded as revealing Shakespeare's interest in repression and the unconscious?

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**Holmberg**, Eva Johanna, *Jews in the Early Modern English Imagination: A Scattered Nation* (Transculturalisms, 1400–1700), Farnham, Ashgate, 2012; hardback; pp. 186; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9781409411918.

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Jews were viewed by the English as outsiders, a group that was to be feared, despised, or pitied. Eva Holmberg's new book, *Jews in the Early Modern English Imagination: A Scattered Nation*, explores the ways in which early modern English people imagined the Jews. Unlike previous studies, which have relied on English plays as their main sources, Holmberg prefers to focus on English (and translated) travel writings and tracts. This allows her to demonstrate how English people in England were given access to the Jewish world through the travels of their countrymen. She does not focus on just the positive or negative interpretations but, instead, prefers to investigate the entire spectrum of English understandings of the Jews. Although Holmberg constantly reminds the reader that the English viewed Jewish people as being punished for their failure to accept Christ, she goes beyond this simple interpretation and leaves the reader with an impression of the many varied English attitudes.

Holmberg begins by locating the Jews both geographically and topographically. She establishes that Jews were viewed as a 'wandering nation', one that could be found in all corners of the globe (except England).

Despite their supposedly nomadic nature, Jews were depicted in travel writings as city-dwellers. Through mapping the early modern city, Holmberg is able to show how the Jews' geographical position related to their culturally established position as a marginalized group. Holmberg focuses on early modern depictions of the Jewish home, the Ghetto, and the Synagogue. After examining a number of English travel writings, Holmberg argues that the Ghetto was portrayed as both a space for the containment of Jews but, also, as a safe space for them. Similarly, she shows how the Jewish home was viewed as a 'fort'. Her examination of depictions of Synagogues shows them, not surprisingly, as centres of Jewish life. However, Holmberg argues that these buildings were seen as vessels for showcasing Jewish life and customs rather than as bastions of anti-Christian sentiment. In this way, Holmberg suggests that English travellers did not simply dismiss or abhor Jewish communities but showed an active interest in their daily lives and activities. One wonders, however, what the Jews thought of these English people who seemed so fascinated by them.

This English interest in Jewish life is explored further in the next chapter, which focuses on English responses to Jewish religious customs. Holmberg begins by suggesting that English writers simplified the many different facets of Jewish religion and presented a homogeneous interpretation to their readers. She then returns to her discussion of the Synagogue (a place often visited by English travellers) and presents it not just as a marker of a Jewish presence but, also, as a place of spectacle rather than a house of worship. In imagining the Jews, Holmberg argues that the English viewed them as actors upon a stage. She analyses a number of travel texts that portray Jewish rituals as overwhelming ceremonies that involved shouting, gesturing, jumping, dancing, elaborate costumes, and huge crowds. She also discusses circumcision and suggests that it too was described as a performance. Holmberg also argues that the performative or ceremonial nature of these practices, allowed English writers to make sense of confusing Jewish rituals by comparing them to more familiar ideas of Catholic practice. In this way, Holmberg demonstrates how English authors used their own experiences of the world to make sense of Jewish customs and practices.

In the final chapter, Holmberg moves away from describing the external world of the Jews and turns to the more intimate descriptions of their bodies and souls. After examining contemporary travel writings, Holmberg concludes that there was a surprising lack of uniformity in English descriptions of the Jewish body. She also disagrees with previous scholarship and argues that English people were less concerned with the idea of the Jews as a poisonous, polluted people who would physically infiltrate England and were actually

far more worried about the possible spread of Jewish morality and religion. This chapter juxtaposes English fears about Jewish religion with their own curiosity about Jewish daily life. Holmberg demonstrates how descriptions of Jewish men menstruating could be found alongside an Englishman having 'moist eyes' when farewelling a Jewish companion he had met on his travels. Here we see the demonization of a race rather than of individuals.

Ultimately, Holmberg's book leaves the impression that, although the English may have feared or despised the Jews, they also yearned to learn more about them and to understand them. The reader is left with a nuanced portrayal of relations between the English and the Jews that is not easily categorized. Through its close engagement with contemporary travel writings and its constant contrasting of differing views, this book forces the reader to question English attitudes toward the Jews.

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**Hunt**, Tony, ed., *'Chere alme': Texts of Anglo-Norman Piety*, trans. Jane Bliss, intro. Henrietta Leyser (The French of England Translation, Occasional Publication, 1), Tempe, AZ, Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2010; hardback; pp. xii, 445; R.R.P. US\$60.00, £45.00; ISBN 9780866984331.

This book serves several purposes: it is an anthology of Anglo-Norman religious texts; a useful introduction to the place of Anglo-Norman didactic literature within the context of early English culture; and it could also function as a self-tutor. It therefore deserves a wide audience among not only specialists in Middle English and Old French, but also students with enquiring minds who are willing to 'think outside the square'.

An ability to read Anglo-Norman, as well as Medieval Latin, texts is starting to look almost essential for those working in medieval English historical and literary studies. Dean and Boulton's *Anglo-Norman Literature: A Guide to Texts and Manuscripts*, which appeared in 1999, helped tame the jungle of Anglo-Norman texts and clear the way for more research in the area, while Jocelyn Wogan-Browne's 2001 monograph *Saints' Lives and Women's Literary Culture* showed the importance of Anglo-Norman hagiography in the context of medieval texts written by and for women. More recently, the varied essays in *Language and Culture in Medieval England: The French of England c. 1100–c. 1500* (2009) showcased the growing number of scholars recruited to the collective enterprise, and the widening scope of Anglo-Norman studies. Finally, the

availability of the online *Anglo-Norman Dictionary* has been of immense benefit for all those who find a need to work with Anglo-Norman texts. But few graduate schools can offer papers in Anglo-Norman, and students, often with little background nowadays in any language other than English, very often have to teach themselves – up to now an intimidating prospect. The Anglo-Norman Text Series is designed primarily for Romance philologists, so how is one to convince a graduate student that Anglo-Norman is not only an important and useful tool but is also, though it looks strange and off-putting at first blush, quite approachable for those with even a little knowledge of Latin and/or Modern French?

The book under review would be a good start. It contains fourteen Anglo-Norman texts, all of them previously unedited (telling in itself: one would be hard put to compile an anthology of fourteen previously unknown Middle English texts of any stature or interest). They are manageably brief, and each comes with a short introduction and modernized paragraphing and punctuation. There is no Glossary, but instead a facing-page close Modern English translation. The texts have been edited by Tony Hunt and several were foreshadowed more than ten years earlier in Dean and Boulton as ‘forthcoming in *Anglo-Norman Piety*’: this book, at last, is the fulfilment of that promise.

The anthology has six sections: ‘The Tenets of the Faith’, ‘Marian Texts’, ‘The Passion’, ‘Private Prayers’, ‘Vices and Confession’, and ‘Virtues and Rewards’. The three outer sections consist of didactic texts reflecting the 1215 Lateran Council syllabus of religious instruction. They include a commentary on the Lord’s Prayer, a treatise on the Seven Deadly Sins, and a formula for confession, and lead up to treatments of various virtues and Purgatory. The three inner sections represent devotional writing: the Marian texts comprise an apocryphal account of the Virgin’s childhood, an enumeration of her Thirteen Joys, and a narrative of her Assumption, while the section on Christ’s Passion consists of a Marian lament which derives from the popular Latin text *Quis dabit*, and ‘The Minstrel’s Passion’, a verse narrative that covers the events from Maundy Thursday to Easter Sunday. There is more devotional material in the Private Prayers section. Simply listing the topics should make it clear how much later Middle English devotional and didactic texts, in prose and verse, must have owed to Anglo-Norman as well as Latin models.

Henrietta Leyser’s General Introduction, which is closely tied to the texts in the anthology, focuses on Anglo-Norman’s role in the production of pastoral literature. She gives a new twist to standard accounts of the impact of the Norman Conquest on the languages of England. Without neglecting the role of Latin, hers is not so much a story of the displacement of Anglo-

Saxon language and literature by Norman French triumphalism, as of the invaders' realization of the relative poverty of their own vernacular tradition. Somewhat later, the Lateran Council of 1215 provided an added impetus for the production of a body of didactic literature to rival that available in Late Old English.

Finally, Jane Bliss's translations are designed to be studied alongside the originals. However, they will also no doubt be used in their own right. Taken together with the General Introduction, they could provide a capsule introduction to the French of England.

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**Jamroziak**, Emilia, *Survival and Success on Medieval Borders: Cistercian Houses in Medieval Scotland and Pomerania from the Twelfth to the Late Fourteenth Century* (Medieval Texts and Cultures of Northern Europe, 24), Turnhout, Brepols, 2011; cloth; pp. 215; 2 b/w tables, 5 b/w line art; R.R.P. €95.00; ISBN 9782503533070.

Emilia Jamroziak's splendidly researched monograph, presents case studies of six medieval Cistercian houses in the borderlands, Pomerania–Neumark, and Scotland–Northern England, synthesizes a wealth of recent Polish and German scholarship, and orders into a fluent narrative a mass of complex archival material that offers the reader fresh insights into the dynamics of the Cistercian Order, particularly as it developed in East and Central Europe and in 'Germania Slavica' – Eastern and Western Pomerania and Neumark.

Houses in the Scottish network are the royal foundation, Melrose Abbey and Dundrennan – both from the mother house Rievaulx (Yorkshire) – and Holm Cultram, a daughter house of Melrose just across the border in an area of Cumbria won from England. The Neumark–Western Pomeranian network comprises Kołbacz (Kolbatz) Abbey – from the motherhouse Esrum (Denmark) – and Kołbacz's filials, Marienwalde (Bierzwnik) and Himmelstädt (Mironice) in the duchy of Szczecin (Stettin). There is no record of any contact between these two networks.

Jamroziak starts with an extensive Introduction, her longest chapter. It covers concepts of border and frontier in medieval historiography, political background relevant to the two regions, a critical survey of the older literature on monastic colonization. She then provides a description of extant written sources and of the current archaeological state of each site. She

crisply summarizes and debunks the polemics and nationalistic biases that have characterized much of the earlier historiography.

Courting patrons, creating lasting connections, and the protocols surrounding hospitality and burials, all matters taken up in the first chapter ('Foundations and Founders') are connected one way or another with topics covered in the second ('Making and Keeping Benefactors and Friends'), namely, lay and cross-border networks, confraternities, friendships, spiritual services, and the burial of benefactors. Weaving her way effortlessly through this welter of detail, Jamroziak makes insightful comparisons and highlights contrasts between her chosen monasteries: Melrose's stable and committed royal patrons, Kołbacz's 'predatory manner towards its founder's kin'; Holm Cultram and Marienwalde Abbeys, both symbols of territorial control; Kołbacz's large community of *conversi* with accommodation akin to a fashionable castle hall, Melrose's small number of lay brothers locally recruited with families in the area. For all houses, the fundamental reality, irrespective of their endowments, was that patron loyalty could never be taken for granted. As Jamroziak makes clear, the nature of their networks largely shaped the fortunes of Cistercian houses. The future for a house like Himmelstädt, which failed to secure a sufficiently extensive network of benefactors at its establishment, would be precarious at best.

Information derived from monastic chronicles, particularly regarding the nature and extent of houses' lines of communication and, by deduction, their 'knowledge horizon', forms the central topic of Chapter 3. Inevitably Jamroziak's coverage is slanted towards Kołbacz and Melrose since these are the only houses for which chronicles survive. Entries in Kołbacz's chronicle convey a sense of siege mentality with numerous entries on attacks sustained by the abbey and on its property. Engagement with other houses of the Order was apparently not a significant focus of its strategies and consequently Kołbacz's 'knowledge horizon' was decidedly limited. In the Melrose chronicle, on the other hand, references to other houses and their personnel abound. Information is derived from a wide variety of sources: from visitors, abbots' travels to the General Chapter, and from mortuary rolls that circulated between houses for the purpose of collaborative commemorations. In short, Melrose was an outward-looking, well-connected member of the Cistercian family.

Jamroziak's study concludes with richly detailed chapters on the role of bishops and Cistercians-as-bishops (Chapter 4), and the vicissitudes and physical threats faced by the six monasteries and the strategies they adopted to defend themselves (Chapter 5). In some respects they read like different sides of the same coin: in the world of ecclesiastical politics, bishops, both

secular and Cistercian, wield their power with a ruthlessness not dissimilar from the power-play of dukes, margraves, and knights hospitallers in the acquisitive and combative world of feudal politics. The aggressive behaviour of Kolbacz Abbey and its filial, Marienwalde towards the Cistercian women's house of Owińska is a particularly memorable vignette.

All Jamroziak's chosen houses are male; women's houses are mentioned only in passing and these occasional references are all the more provocative for their scarcity. The omission may be due to there being no comparable establishments in Scotland to balance coverage of women's houses in Pomerania. One is left to surmise how, on a broader scale, the vicissitudes confronting women's houses in this region differed from those with which the men's houses had to cope. The geographical region that Jamroziak's study embraces accommodated, in fact, no less than nine women's houses, all established during the period 1193–1296.

*Survival and Success on Medieval Borders* is a valuable addition to the University of Hull's 'Medieval Texts and Cultures of Northern Europe Series' and an admirable companion to Jamroziak's earlier study of Rievaulx Abbey (2005).

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**Kambasković-Sawers, Danijela**, *Constructing Sonnet Sequences in the Late Middle Ages and Renaissance: A Study of Six Poets*, Lewiston, NY, Edwin Mellen Press, 2010; hardback; pp. xxvi, 392; 2 colour plates; R.R.P. US\$149.95, £99.95; ISBN 9780773437661.

This book undoubtedly meets the single criterion that the Edwin Mellen Press says it applies to its publications: 'So Mellen's ONLY concern is what new idea an author intends "to contribute to scholarship"' (see <http://www.mellenpress.com/newsteps.cfm>). The new idea in *Constructing Sonnet Sequences* consists in establishing the 'ambiguous, polyvalent characterisation of the first-person voice' (p. 289) in sonnet sequences by Petrarch, Sidney, Spenser, Drayton, Daniel, and Shakespeare. The book argues that this 'splintered identification' produces the reader's involvement with the characters and his or her perception of the sequences as integral works. The analyses and arguments put forward ultimately support the presence of 'novelistic thinking' in the sonnets, as a prelude to the historical development of the novel as a dominant literary form.

*Constructing Sonnet Sequences* draws on an impressive depth of scholarship, ranging across medieval and Renaissance literature, and including substantial forays into the Roman poets, especially Ovid, and further back to the Bible and Plato. Comparisons between Dante's *La Vita Nuova* and Petrarch's *Il Canzoniere* testify to Kambasković-Sawers's understanding of European cultural origins, as does a lengthy bibliography and a helpful index of subjects and authors. In addition, the arguments adumbrated in the Introduction and applied in analysis show a wide acquaintance with contemporary theory, including narratology, reader response, Bakhtinian, and feminist theory. Notions of the 'subtext', and 'self-fictionalisation', alternatively named 'characterisation' or 'autopoetics', are frequent reference points.

Some features of the book may nevertheless limit its value for students and readers of Renaissance poetry. The first concerns the treatment of the sonnet sequences and their genesis. The second concerns readability.

That the representative sonnet sequences selected for analysis contain sub-textual or broken stories that are possibly autobiographical has long been recognized. Innovation in the present argument therefore hinges on identifying the fluctuating characterization of the speakers and addressees in the sequences as 'novelistic'. This is a difficult project given the complex identities that Renaissance writers like Sidney, Spenser, and Shakespeare produce in their other poetry, prose, and/or plays, without any predictive knowledge of the novel form. In other words, an alternative theory, grounded in the period of writing, and unrelated to the novel genre, is available to explain many of the literary phenomena that the book describes.

Some of the specific connections drawn with earlier literature are similarly problematic, in that the references in the poems seem to be either general cultural reflections or more readily relatable to contemporary works, sometimes by the same author. For example, in support of the true observation that 'Shakespeare's self-reflexive idolatries use complex imagery', the argument quotes from Sonnet 121: 'No, I am that I am, and they that level | At my abuses, reckon up their own', and comments: 'At times the speaker describes himself in the words God used to describe himself to Moses' (p. 265). However, Edmund in *King Lear* expresses similar defiance in similar terms: 'I should have been that I am had the maidenliest star in the firmament twinkled on my bastardising' (1. 2. 130–32), so here we are probably dealing with an ensconced cultural memory if not an artefact of the language itself.

Similarly, it is a struggle to understand how Socrates' words to Agathon quoted from the *Symposium* 196c illuminate Shakespeare's Sonnet 33, 'where the gazing speaker appears in a judging role and rebukes the addressee for an offence even as he allows for it' (p. 211). Again, the language of contemporary

criticism betrays its incongruity, when the immortality in poetry promised to the young man in the closing couplet to Sonnet 18: 'Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?', is described as 'never leav[ing] the focus of the social gaze' (p. 210). To be fair, these examples occur within an engaging argument that traces the changing power differential between speaker and addressee in Shakespeare's sonnets.

Secondly, concerning readability, I confess that in this book I miss the respect that critics traditionally pay to each sonnet's integrity as a lyric participating in an ongoing emotional drama. The author's practice of supporting analyses with quotes is creditable, even essential, but the extraction and juxtaposition of lines from different sonnets out of their contexts destroy the wholeness that is a major source of a sonnet-reader's delight. This practice also militates subliminally against the arguments for an ongoing novelistic narrative.

The Edwin Mellen Press rigorously peer-reviews the books it publishes, but 'refuses to write, rewrite, or revise any author's text' (<http://www.mellenpress.com/newsteps.cfm>). However, my view is that literary scholars would have benefited if this erudite and interesting study had been reshaped for access as a book rather than as a thesis. The inventiveness and stimulation of the overall argument become obvious at points of clarification, such as the introduction and conclusion, but the excess of subtle, often paradoxical, supporting ideas and of complicated allusions in the chapters makes for challenging reading.

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**Kelleher**, Marie A., *The Measure of Women, Law and Female Identity in the Crown of Aragon*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010; hardback; pp. 217; R.R.P. US\$55.00, £36.00; ISBN 9780812242560.

Mary Kelleher's book deals with the place and social status of women, reflected in court records from various courts in the kingdom of Aragon, from the beginning of the thirteenth century to the end of the fourteenth, in cases where women were either plaintiffs or defendants. During that period, Aragon was ruled, successively, by seven different kings, and with each reign the kingdom's domain expanded. This expansion saw an increasing involvement in the international system of the Mediterranean and the expansion of trade. An atmosphere that allowed for the exchange of ideas was created, and scholars and students were drawn to Aragon.

During the Later Middle Ages, the north Mediterranean saw important developments in Law. This included a transformation of the legal culture through the reintroduction and academic study of Roman and canon law. Kelleher sees a flourishing within the studied culture of Law in Aragon in that period. In her opinion, the fourteenth century was critical to the development of Aragon's legal system, as the changes did not remain academic or theoretical, but came into practice immediately and intensively. Aragonians, men and women alike, were eager to use the opportunity to rebuild the social fabric and made increasing use of the legal system.

Through an examination of unedited court records, Kelleher attempts to demonstrate that, in the context of both Roman and canon law codes and community expectation, women actively participated in the formation of the legal culture, and in doing so pushed against the boundaries of their lives.

As both Roman and canon law made their ways into the legal systems of Aragon, the attitude of Roman law towards women took root there. There was a solidification of the perception of women as simple-minded creatures who had limited capacity to take care of their own affairs. They were also viewed as fragile, making it an obligation to care for them within the general Christian duty towards the weak and poor. This attitude led to an irresolvable collision when courts were required, in order to protect a woman's rights, to grant her autonomy in the management of her property or custody over her children. Often women were forced to go to court due to being perceived as light-minded yet fragile. These women were typically under the control of their male relatives who did not work in their best interests.

It was usually for matrimonial causes that women needed legal aid. The definition of that concept was very wide and covered all the facets of marriage in a woman's life. It included women whose husbands abused them, kept a public relationship with other women, wasted their dowries, or mismanaged the family's funds, widows seeking financial autonomy, often so they could support their underage children over whom they were seeking guardianship, women who were adulterous or accused as such by various elements in their community, and even unmarried women, who were always under close social scrutiny. These situations created endless nuances of social and legal definitions.

Kelleher leads us through women's struggles in the entangled web of the growing legal system of Aragon, showing the skills they needed to demonstrate in order to deal with the contrasting attitudes towards them. One fascinating topic that arises is the women's need to navigate the different, but parallel legal systems, so as to use them to their best advantage. The dilemmas they faced, included seeking legal aid versus reaching an arrangement within the

extended family, appearing in court personally or sending a delegate, and to which legal authority within the complex system a woman should turn for aid. The author does not ignore non-Christian groups of women, the Jews and the Muslims, and points to how their religious alignment made them much more vulnerable.

Kelleher's fascinating book is impressive for the multi-dimensional, complex vision of the world it presents. The women, arguing their cases to the courts, are brought vividly to life in Kelleher's hands and the dry legal documents of Aragon's courts reveal a rich tapestry of life. The turbulent legal milieu that is the setting for this book is exposed to us, the courts appearing as arenas where the lives of the women of thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Aragon come into a lively expression.

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**Kelly**, Philippa and L. E. **Semler**, eds, *Word and Self Estranged in English Texts, 1550–1660*, Farnham, Ashgate, 2010; hardback; pp. 231; 10 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £55.00; ISBN 9781409400370.

The topic of this anthology of essays is 'the break between selfhood and its means of expression' in the early modern period (p. 1). The approaches to this theme are diverse, to the point that some essays neither mention it, nor are obviously related to it, but the reader is left stimulated by new questions about the interplay between past and present and with a strong sense of the strangeness of early modern texts.

Among the essays which do clearly contribute to a treatment of the relations of word and sense, and of word and self is Susannah Macready's piece on the early modern debate over sign language for the deaf: do the deaf have language at all? Is sign language a language? Is it sufficiently a language to provide evidence of conversion? Then there is R. S. White's essay on *Twelfth Night*. It is a rich meditation on the importance of listening in dialogue, in life as well as in Shakespeare. Mental illness is another kind of estrangement of self and language. In her essay, Christine Couche collects the evidence that in presenting Lady Macbeth's emotions and attitudes Shakespeare is drawing on an understanding of what we now know as postnatal depression. In his essay, L. E. Semler presents a fascinating attempt to match the current appearance of the ruins of Persepolis with their depiction in the various editions of the travel book by Thomas Herbert. As it happens, the attempt largely fails, leaving us with all sorts of intriguing questions, and less confident than ever that we understand early modern texts at all.

Lawrence Warner argues that the pre-Reformation story of the meeting and eventual marriage of Thomas Becket's parents is a source for the seduction of Desdemona through Othello's exotic stories. Clearly there are parallels between the two cross-faith and cross-cultural couples. Frustratingly, however, there is no actual reference to the Becket story in the play. Nevertheless, Warner's point that early modernists need to look beyond their immediate period is well taken.

Alison V. Scott suggests that Cleopatra in *Antony and Cleopatra* is a serpent-woman, related to the classical Dipsas, but a 'redeeming' version. Scott describes a fluid and variable collection of images and tropes. Its coherence through time is hard to demonstrate. Did Shakespeare's treatment have any consequences for the tradition, for instance, or is it just one more variation on the theme? Ronald Bedford provides an overview of uses of irony and of the terminology for irony from classical times. Useful distinctions are at play here: between the term irony and irony the event, and between the terminology available to writers in any one era and their practice. In the most abstract and methodologically reflexive essay in the collection, Bob Hodge urges early modernists to regard the boundaries between disciplines, regions, and periods as prompts to consider and experiment rather than as established and fixed entities. It is a stimulating and stylish essay.

Other essays are more distantly related to the topic. Jean E. Howard provides a cogent discussion of the 'social' and 'worldly' Shakespeare text which emerges in her classroom, a text which is remote from the traditional quest for an 'authentic' Shakespeare. I enjoyed Kirsten Tranter's argument that Psalm 137 is an important source for Izaak Walton's *The Compleat Angler*. She makes good use of the link to emphasize the 'brooding, resentful and revenge-driven' aspect of Walton's piscatory idyll (p. 195). Julian Lamb's essay turns on the nice irony that Johnson's dictionary aimed to stabilize the language by excluding foreign loan words and the terminology of the trades and professions, which he felt were transitory, while seventeenth-century dictionaries focused on exactly these 'hard' words and implicitly adopted a Wittgensteinian definition of meaning as language in use.

William Walker analyses the metrical patterns in *Paradise Lost* 6. 29–37, seeking to show how patterns of stress, enjambment, and verse paragraphing help create the unusual sense of authority he detects in this passage. Alan Salter's essay on Harvey's scientific method dwells on Harvey's faith in touch rather than sight in his experiments. He pictures Harvey working with nature in a relationship of mutual respect, as opposed to practising 'interrogation by instrument and violence as the necessary means of extracting her secrets' (p. 63).

This is not the book to go to for a systematic treatment of the putative early modern estrangement between the word and the self. But it shows imaginative and rigorous work going on among Australian early modernists, who are the bulk of the contributors, and scholars of the specific topics and texts treated here will do well to consult the essays that relate to their areas.

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**Kostroun**, Daniella, *Feminism, Absolutism, and Jansenism: Louis XIV and the Port-Royal Nuns*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2011; hardback; pp. xiii, 273; R.R.P. £55.00; ISBN 9781107000452.

This is a book about words – ambiguous words, weasel words, brilliantly parodied in Blaise Pascal’s *Provincial Letters* – words that underlay one of the most bitter and obscure religious struggles in seventeenth-century France, a struggle that was never what it seemed and that, in the end, gave no one the victory. Royal demands for unreserved acceptance of an imposed formulary – demands that curiously parallel similar demands in Britain at the same time – raised issues of conscience and obedience that underlay much of the intellectual and political development of the country in the hundred years before the Revolution and provided the legitimation for resistance to absolute authority. The theological issues had a long history. They had come up since the early Fathers in various forms and were, effectively, logically insoluble. Whether the fortunately dead Cornelius Jansen had ever promulgated the heresies attributed to him was an issue of fact that created a separate problem.

But why did a convent of nuns, a modestly well-endowed convent but only one among hundreds in France, become the flashpoint of the struggle? Much has already been written on this subject and Daniella Kostroun’s purpose is not to reassess some of the more classical claims. Readers will look in vain for any discussion of the leadership role in reform the convent may have had in the early part of the century or the importance of the *petites écoles* in the later period. They may also find few references to the religious inspiration of the nuns and the distinction between their reformed Rule and the more participatory life of Orders who undertook care for the wider community under the inspiration of St Vincent de Paul.

Kostroun, after a brief genuflection towards the sociological context of the rising *noblesse de robe*, is primarily concerned to explain how, without making claim to theological understanding, the women who led the convent, from Angélique and Agnes Arnauld onwards, could present themselves as true

and orthodox servants of God and the Church ‘using the figurative language of pious example’ (p. 244). In true Biblical tradition, any setback could be accepted as a discipline sent by God to try their faith.

Luckily, the material available is enormous and she painstakingly recounts the way in which, with some assistance from prominent men like Antoine Arnauld, they were able to exploit the feminine positions acceptable during the period to maintain their own independence. Kostroun also demonstrates their ability to use all the loopholes and special considerations available to stall Louis XIV’s attempts to close them down. It provides excellent evidence – if more is needed – that bureaucratic complexity was alive and well four hundred years ago.

The tedious and complex diplomatic and international context that influenced Louis’s tortuous path are set out with considerable clarity, as are his struggles with his own bishops both Gallican and Ultramontane. The nuns, as they pick their way through this field full of calthrops, call on patrons like the queen of Poland for moral and practical assistance, smuggle written material out of the convent, and keep detailed journals as evidence of their lives and difficulties.

Some of the most telling passages are those that show how different nuns, faced with a one-on-one meeting with Péréfixe, Archbishop of Paris, their ultimate superior, handled his mixture of blandishments and threats and maintained their position of equality before God. In general, Kostroun concentrates on the leaders of the community – and although the triennial election of abbess was a key point in their programme it is noticeable that re-election was the common practice – and the exhortations they delivered to those beneath them suggests that the congregation did not always share their commitment.

In her conclusion, Kostroun argues that these women are part of a feminist movement in seventeenth-century France. Using the language of agency and discourse and following Barbara Diefendorf, she proposes a more instrumental role for them and stresses the importance of the internal life of the convent itself. There are perhaps two problems with this, one historical and the other interpretative. Historically, it is the survival of evidence that enables seventeenth-century researchers to establish the foundation on which to construct the inner life of the convent, but the absence of such material in earlier centuries does not really permit us to assume that convents in the Middle Ages lacked a similar life. As a matter of interpretation, it seems that if any action in which a woman asserted herself may be added to the history of feminism even where the cultural structure of society is not challenged, feminism is deprived of any distinctive meaning. Surely this destroys the very

nature of the idea itself and brings us back to ambiguous words that do not clarify what they seem to assert.

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**L'Estrange**, Elizabeth and Alison **More**, eds, *Representing Medieval Genders and Sexualities in Europe: Construction, Transformation, and Subversion, 600–1530*, Farnham, Ashgate, 2011; hardback; pp. 218; 20 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9781409409878.

There is still a tendency for edited collections purporting to deal with gender or sexuality, to actually be concerned primarily with women, sometimes to the complete exclusion of men. While seven of the ten chapters in *Representing Medieval Genders and Sexualities in Europe* do deal specifically with women, there are three chapters focusing on masculinity – welcome indeed. The aim of the collection is to look at how gender identities were forged, subverted, and transmuted, using sources as varied as hagiography, art, literature, and epistles.

In their introductory chapter, editors Elizabeth L'Estrange and Alison More note their wish to highlight some of the ways in which women's and gender studies have developed as a discipline, 'particularly in relation to those areas of scholarship that are intrinsic to the contributions to this volume, such as masculinity studies, religious studies, literature and art history' (p. 2). Initially this approach seems to differentiate masculinities as a separate field to gender studies, but the three chapters that take a masculine focus do use it as an inherent part of gender investigation. Not only that, but the editors go on to make the very pertinent observation that 'neither the masculine gender role nor its associated characteristics are exclusive to men' (p. 3). This approach has been noted in modern psychological and sociological work on gender and sexuality as well, and has much to give historical research in these areas. It is encouraging to see this spelled out so clearly here.

The articles with a focus on masculinity are worth noting in detail. In her contribution, Cassandra Rhodes discusses how different masculine ideals were at play with Anglo-Saxon male virgins in two prose hagiographic works from the seventh and tenth centuries. She contextualizes her research within work on female saints, noting two conflicting masculine aspects, the secular, virile military masculinity and the spiritual, chaste religious male ideal. Alison More's essay illustrates how gendered imagery was used as a symbolic language to discuss the journey of religious conversion. She argues

that biological sex became an aspect of human nature to be transcended, regardless of whether one was male or female. Fiona S. Dunlop's study confirms what concurrent research on early modern masculinity has already shown – namely, that there was a rise in an ideal of masculine identity that valued self-control and self-governance over anything else in elite men. Her work shows that the transition from a martial masculinity to a more cerebral, intellectual gender identity was not necessarily a smooth, unconscious process, but had to be learned and, at times, carefully negotiated.

Elizabeth L'Estrange's analysis of fifteenth-century Tuscan *deschi da parto* – 'large, round wooden trays' (p. 126), gifts that marked the birth of a child – is an insightful look at how historical artefacts can show implicit gender dynamics not usually found in written sources. She reads the depictions on the *deschi*, as well as their very existence and use, as illustrating the conflicted relationship women had with childbirth. It was a dangerous event, but, if successful, could also be a very positive fulfilment of the female role. At the same time, L'Estrange sees women being able to subvert dominant gender hierarchies by noting the power that giving birth to a healthy son could bring, a subversion she sees literally illustrated in the art of the *deschi*.

The book's index and well-populated bibliography will make it of use to undergraduate students starting to discover the range of approaches available for the study of gender in the medieval period. Each chapter stands well on its own and, given the range of temporal, geographical, and theoretical approaches, will be a helpful addition to the libraries of students and scholars alike. Its use of varied theoretical approaches will appeal to disciplines not instantly associated with gender – religious history and literature, to name two. One last point bears mentioning and that is the beautifully presented dust jacket. The colour reproduction of the painting *Scenes from the Life of Saint Irene* on the dark green background makes the volume as handsome as it is edifying.

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**Lake**, Justin, ed. and trans., *Histories, Volume I. Books 1–2: Richer of Saint-Rémi* (Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library), Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2011; hardback; pp. 448; R.R.P. US\$29.95, £19.95, €21.00; ISBN 9780674060036.

**Lake**, Justin, ed. and trans., *Histories, Volume II. Books 3–4: Richer of Saint-Rémi* (Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library), Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2011; hardback; pp. 496; R.R.P. US\$29.95, £19.95, €21.00; ISBN 9780674061590.

Richer de Saint Rémi's *Histories*, which cover the period 888–98 and are much concerned with, and dedicated to, Gerbert (who afterwards became Pope Sylvester II), provide a wonderful resource for those times. They are principally concerned to cover the political and military history of what is generally called West Francia, but they also give an extensive account of Gerbert's work. Like other early histories, Richer's work has its own embellishments and inaccuracies, but such things do not prevent us reading, enjoying, and learning from many medieval writers, for example, Geoffrey of Monmouth.

It is somewhat amazing that the *Histories* have not previously been available in English though there have been three versions in French and one in German. The Latin text, which survives in a single manuscript, Bamberg, Staatsbibliothek MS Hist. 5, has been available in print since 1839, but Lake has sensibly used Hoffmann's edition from 2000, which has become definitive. Lake has limited notes on the Latin and these principally correct the readings, and he also refers the scholar to Hoffmann's notes (I, p. xxiii).

The present translation of the *Histories* is, quite simply, a good read and will be welcomed by students. Its mellifluous prose is printed *en face* with the Latin and scholars will appreciate this presentation, because Lake's style is decidedly prolix beside Richer's terse Latin. The very prolixity makes it more readable: for example, relative pronouns referring back some distance in the Latin are replaced by the (often proper) nouns to which they refer. It should also be remembered that, even in the twelfth century, there were keen debates as to whether a translation should aim at being word for word or more literary and primarily convey the meaning. Lake opts for the latter, which is not surprising given that his 2008 Harvard PhD thesis was titled 'Rhetorical and narrative studies on the *Historiae* of Richer of Saint-Rémi'.

The result is something like an iced cake rather than a wax seal impression. The icing on a cake disguises the cracks and imperfections in favour of a smooth surface; a wax seal impression faithfully translates all the sharp concavities into convexities. Bachrach's appraisal, in *The Medieval Review*, complains

about the handling of military terminology while somewhat surprisingly praising Lake's treatment of technical passages, meaning in particular those on mathematics and astronomy. This is just a symptom of the fact that Lake, like many modern scholars, does not have the knowledge of the wide range of sciences (*scientiae*) that medieval writers often had. It is unfortunate that he seems not to have consulted experts or friends to fill the gaps. The result is that, apart from the problems with military terminology, his translation of Richer on other *scientiae* such as music theory, mathematics, and astronomy can be unsatisfying. To give but one example, *rationabiliter distinguens*, which is used in describing the intervals on the monochord, becomes 'breaking down ... into their constituent sounds' thereby losing the Pythagorean relationship between musical intervals and numerical ratios (note 57 partly assuages this.) In Book 3, Chapter 52, which is praised by Bachrach, Lake explains in his note 63 what Richer just said in the previous chapter. Again this is symptomatic: notes on classical texts (Sallust, Cicero, Caesar, Livy) are all in place, but notes on other *scientiae* oscillate between excess and deficiency, especially in the treatment of Gerbert's science. For example, Bubnov's Latin collection of Gerbert's works is the only significant reference for mathematics – an area where many readers will need help.

The referencing within the two volumes is somewhat idiosyncratic. There is a useful index at the end of Volume II, but it cites book and chapter (and not volume or page), yet there is no list of chapter headings. (It must be admitted that the chapters are usually short, so any particular chapter is relatively easy to find.) The endnotes are divided into those referring to the Latin text and those to the translation. The page-and-a-half bibliography (I, pp. 421–22 and repeated in II, pp. 475–76) is manifestly inadequate and some works referred to are awkwardly and only listed under 'Abbreviations', which appear in four different places.

On the other hand the production of the book is beautiful (apart from a jarringly anachronistic use of title case in English chapter headings) with a delightful binding hidden under elegant dust jackets.

The translation, as I have noted, will not please all scholars, but what Lake has achieved is a literary work that is an immensely useful contribution, especially because, for the very first time, it makes Richer's *Histories* accessible, indeed extremely accessible, to any modern English-speaking reader.

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**Lake**, Peter and Michael **Questier**, *The Trials of Margaret Clitherow: Persecution, Martyrdom and the Politics of Sanctity in Elizabethan England*, London, Continuum, 2011; paperback; pp. 244; 23 colour illustrations; R.R.P. £19.99; ISBN 9781441104366.

This book is not so much a biography of Margaret Clitherow, the Elizabethan Catholic martyr (and now saint), but rather tells the story of her trial and execution in order to illuminate aspects of the experiences of Catholics, lay and clerical and male and female, under the Elizabethan state. Clitherow, the wife of a butcher from York's Shambles, was put to death by the state by the especially horrible method of *peine forte et dure*. In other words, she was crushed to death.

Peter Lake and Michael Questier have produced an extensive number of texts on Elizabethan religion, both singly and as joint authors. In their latest work, they take Clitherow and situate her in a broader context of not only recusancy in the north of England, but of widespread arguments within the Catholic community in Elizabethan England about how recusants could respond to demands of obedience from the state and the strikingly divergent conclusions Catholic clergy reached about reconciling their faith with the state.

Yet neither the story of Margaret Clitherow nor the arguments within the Catholic community are especially new to scholarship. There are limitations to the text, in that, apart from some records from her trial, the only way to access Clitherow's life is through the hagiographic texts written about her by Elizabethan Catholic clergy. It is on these sources that Lake and Questier must rely, and at times they seem surprisingly happy to take their word for certain points.

Questions of balance also appear at times. Most notably, Archbishop Matthew Hutton is described in this text as 'the odious and crawling' Dean of York. This is how Elizabethan Catholics thought of him, but at the moment of this description Lake and Questier give no sense that they distance themselves historically or academically from this judgement, and simply let it stand without comment.

Clitherow herself disappears from view for much of the latter half of the text. This may be because, once the admittedly horrible story of her execution has been told, there is not much more that can be said about her that is especially significant or even interesting. Lake and Questier do draw out some issues of interest. One of these is the tensions within the Clitherow household itself, which fractured along religious lines as Clitherow's husband was a Protestant; not only was he married to a Catholic, she also brought

Catholic priests into his home. Lake and Questier discuss the factors of interest in these domestic relations, and the manner in which Clitherow's faith impacted on her role as wife and mother, her interactions with her husband, and the levels of obedience she was prepared to show him.

But the text has a much broader canvas than the butcher's shop in York, as the latter part of the book discusses the wider world of Elizabethan Catholicism and the politics of religion that fractured this community. In particular, they explore the controversial literature produced by John Mush, Henry Garnet, and Thomas Bell, and their very public disagreements with each other about obedience and what came to be called 'Church Papistry', a derogatory term referring to Catholics who, far from seeking martyrdom, were prepared to conform outwardly to the oaths of obedience and the religious observances demanded by Elizabeth's government.

Given this line of argument, it is perhaps inevitable that they conclude their study with a discussion of the so-called 'Archpriest Controversy', a major and very public flashpoint of argument between Catholic clergy about different lines of authority. Yet much has already been written about the Archpriest Controversy, and nothing new is offered here, beyond seeing it as playing out in the aftermath of Clitherow's execution. Where the text does come to life is the way Lake and Questier interpret the multiple levels of existence, from the shop, up to the involvement of the Earl of Huntingdon, in not only Clitherow's fate but the way that Protestants themselves differed about how to treat Clitherow and other members of the Catholic community.

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**Law, John E. and Bernadette Paton**, eds, *Communes and Despots in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*, Farnham, Ashgate, 2010; hardback; pp. xvii, 354; 31 illustrations, 6 maps; R.R.P. £55.00; ISBN 9780754665083.

The work of the late Philip Jones is well known to historians of medieval Italy, particularly those whose focus lies in political and economic realms. *Communes and Despots in Medieval and Renaissance Italy* demonstrates how Jones's careful analyses of government and civic institutions continue to resonate amongst his peers. This volume of essays takes a seminal thesis proposed by Jones as its starting point: namely, that republican and despotic governance in late medieval Italy were not so diametrically opposed as had previously been accepted by historians. Given that Jones first published his claim in an article of 1965, one cannot help but agree with the editors' claim that 'the challenge offered by Jones's article has never been fully answered enough' (p. xvii).

As a detailed collective contemplation by twenty scholars on communes and despots, and the extents and limits of considering them as distinctive entities, the essays cover a broad geographical and chronological scope that is not restricted to the political – essays on art, culture, and patronage are included. It is testimony to Jones's perceptive and rigorous scholarship that such a range of scholars have found much to contemplate in his thesis, more than a generation later.

The volume is subdivided according to the following headings: 'Power and Restraint', 'Political Thought: Theory and Practice', 'Communes and Despots: Some Case Studies', 'The Case of the Medici', and 'Culture, Art, Patronage'. It is in the latter section that the most innovative work is to be found. Peter Denley's discussion of the extent to which republican or despotic government was reflected in the burgeoning Italian universities is excellent, as is George Holmes's thoughtful analysis of the patronage of Bellini's painting *Feast of the Gods*, which he characterizes as 'the result of a republican reluctantly accepting a commission from a despot' (p. 293). Clearly, cultural interaction exemplifies how fluid categories of government were: communes and despots, for all their supposed differences, were hardly clear cut and distinctive, again pointing to the importance of Jones's thesis.

The 'Case Studies' section is especially thought provoking, and will surely initiate much debate and discussion amongst the current generation of socio-political historians. Included are essays on the following sites (in order of inclusion): Cremona, Mantua, Milan, Lucca, Naples, and Genoa. There are no easy conclusions to be drawn from this array of material, apart from showing that the flux between order and violence, liberty and despotism, highlight how the lines between republicanism and despotism cannot be easily drawn. No volume on these themes would be complete without some discussion of the Medici and Florence, and four contributions here focus on various hitherto unexamined aspects of the family's rule. A highlight in this section is the essay by Catherine Kovesi, in which negative characterizations of Alfonsina Orsini de Medici as a despot are revised in light of new research on Alfonsina's involvement in the drainage of Lake Fucecchio, revisionism that is executed with careful attention to contemporary sources, maps, and visuals. All the contributors are to be applauded for the rigor and thoroughness that they bring to these challenging, and in some instances, obscure case studies.

It is surprising that no biographies for the contributors have been included, and a concluding essay by the editors would have encouraged further reflection on this important theme and perhaps given greater cohesion to the proceedings. However, what is entirely commendable is that the editors have chosen to reprint the inspired source for this debate – Jones's original 1965

article – as the first essay in the volume. Entitled ‘Communes and Despots: The City State in Medieval Italy’, Jones’s essay still seems fresh and vigorous in its argumentation, and it is not surprising that subsequent historians continue to find its thesis worthy of investigation. *Communes and Despots in Medieval and Renaissance Italy* exemplifies how the work of a seminal scholar continues to inspire, but equally significant is the challenge it poses to traditional interpretations of a steady move to an enlightened ‘Renaissance State’.

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**Lönnroth**, Lars, *The Academy of Odin: Selected Papers on Old Norse Literature* (The Viking Collection, 19), Odense, University Press of Southern Denmark, 2011; cloth; pp. 426; 5 b/w, 2 colour illustrations; R.R.P. DKK300.00; ISBN 9788776745899.

Professor Lars Lönnroth has been working and publishing in the field of Old Norse literature for almost fifty years, and has always been influential and provocative. This volume collects seventeen of his previously published essays, selected by Lönnroth himself, from different stages of his long and broad-ranging career. They represent the diverse areas in which he has worked: Sagas of Icelanders to kings’ sagas, eddic poetry to reception studies, and, in the longest single contribution to the volume, the 78-page ‘The Riddles of the Rök Stone: A Structural Approach’ (1977), runology. The book is divided into five sections: ‘Origins’, ‘Saga Rhetoric’, ‘Structure and Ideology’, ‘Edda and Saga as Oral Performance’, and ‘Reception and Adaptation’, with articles organized thematically rather than chronologically. As the preface explains, each essay is reprinted largely in its original form, and usefully, the page numbering and divisions of the originals are given in the margins. A postscript following each article provides an update on relevant scholarly investigation since its publication, but, given the always stimulating and sometimes controversial nature of Lönnroth’s contributions, it is a shame these postscripts are not longer and fuller.

Re-reading some of Lönnroth’s earlier works, one is reminded how pioneering and different they were in their day, and one realizes just how many of his methodologies and ideas have now become tenets of the field or have contributed much to its advancement. His essay ‘Rhetorical Persuasion in the Sagas’, from 1969, for example, still holds as a model for reading the sagas, while his insistence upon looking to clerical and learned circles for the authorship and sponsorship of early Icelandic writing has moderated

the temptation to view the medieval Icelandic saga writer as ‘an artistic layman, inventing and creating, pen in hand, all by himself in some remote farmhouse’ (p. 20). Questions of patronage and authorship still vex scholars and Lönnroth has continued to shape answers to them. Through the inclusion of a later article on a similar theme, ‘Sponsors, Writers and Readers of Early Norse Literature’ (1990–91), it is fascinating to see how he refined and developed his thinking. Though juxtaposing older material with newer rather than revising or prioritizing more recent articles means that some material is inevitably repeated, seems dated, or even contradicts ideas presented elsewhere in the volume, it compensates for the brevity of the postscripts, for Lönnroth is incisive and interesting in summarizing the work of others and clearly relishes the debate.

While Lönnroth is willing to revise his ideas, some things are invariable throughout the collection: his distinctive, lucid voice (‘few things can make us more certain that a character is a raving maniac than a discreet hint from the narrator that he was “somewhat difficult to deal with when things did not go his way”’ (p. 87)); his knowledge of the wider medieval contexts of and influences on Old Norse literature; the dexterity with which he engages with relevant theories and criticism; the steady drive of his arguments; his groundedness in textual evidence and close readings; his attention to detail. For example, ‘Ideology and Structure in *Heimskringla*’, in fact first published in the first series of *Parergon* in 1976, contains a reading full of subtlety and complexity of a passage termed the *Friðgerðarsaga* episode, as it is portrayed in Snorri Sturluson’s *Heimskringla* compared with the version of the slightly earlier *Legendary saga of Óláfr the Saint*. We see how Snorri’s narrative ‘quite clearly appeals to anti-royalist and anti-Norwegian sentiments in the audience’, yet ultimately ‘steer[s] the audience . . . to a more appreciative view of feudal kingship’ (p. 158). The dreams and literary craftsmanship of Sverrir Sigurðarson of Norway (reigned 1177–1202), ‘contested king and renegade priest’, are brought vividly to life in ‘Sverrir’s Dreams’ (2006), while the ‘euphonic’ effects of saga prose, often neglected in broader discussions of theme, are illustrated with care and attention (p. 85). Equally able to turn his hand to reception studies, the title of the volume comes from Lönnroth’s fascinating 1988 study ‘The Academy of Odin: Grundtvig’s Political Instrumentalization of Old Norse Mythology’, which examines the (mis) appropriation of Norse myth by the folk movement in Danish high school education in the nineteenth and early twentieth century and is followed by an essay treating Gothic and Romantic revivals of Norse myth and the search for the ‘Nordic Sublime’.

The volume also provides an extensive bibliography, including a further twenty-five of Lönnroth's own works, not counting Swedish or otherwise different versions of the articles reproduced here. Clearly, some difficult decisions had to be made about what to include and what to leave out, and some may feel these decisions could have been made differently. Nonetheless, the volume works as a collection of important pieces, as a single location to chart some of the major developments in the field of Old Norse studies, and as a celebration of the career of a distinguished, stimulating, and learned scholar.

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**Mack**, Peter, *Reading and Rhetoric in Montaigne and Shakespeare* (The WISH List), London, Bloomsbury, 2010; hardback; pp. 192; R.R.P. £45.00; ISBN 9781849660617.

Peter Mack's book is the first publication of the Warwick Interdisciplinary Studies in the Humanities (WISH) List, a series aiming to promote interdisciplinary academic work. The seemingly disparate subjects of French philosophy and English playwriting provide the basis for Mack's comparative study of Michel de Montaigne and William Shakespeare. In the Introduction that is also Chapter 1, Mack explains how, in his attempt to ascertain the extent of Montaigne's influence on Shakespeare's work, he discovers that Montaigne and Shakespeare use the same sources in similar ways. Both writers were attentive readers of the classics who practised what is known today as research. Mack's argument that Montaigne and Shakespeare studied past writers for information pertinent to their own work appears so obvious that its importance is easily overlooked.

Therefore, in Chapter 2, Mack reconstructs Montaigne's reading habits through the French writer's quotations and annotated books from his own personal library. Montaigne continually reread, made notes, and copied excerpts from his favourite writers who included Plutarch, Seneca, Ovid, Virgil, Lucretius, Horace, Catullus, and Caesar. The influence from these authors stimulated Montaigne's own thinking as he wrote his *Essais*. Mack then argues that Montaigne deliberately studied texts that might provide material for his own writing. Rather than being a casual reader as popularly thought, Montaigne was a hard-working intellectual.

As his thinking developed, Montaigne constantly revised his texts in later editions. In Chapter 3, Mack argues that Montaigne's style of thought is 'derived

from Renaissance rhetorical training' (p. 42). He argues that Montaigne took small blocks of quotations or what Mack terms 'material fragments' in order to extend his ideas (p. 61). Mack contends that Montaigne's rhetorical training adapted his logical thinking to look for connections in other texts and, by adding his own new material, create a new structure.

Chapter 4 begins with Mack's first detailed study of Shakespeare. He analyses *Coriolanus*, *Hamlet*, *As You Like It*, *The Winter's Tale*, *The Tempest*, *Twelfth Night*, *Othello*, and *Richard III* for how Shakespeare adapted his sources. In particular, Mack finds in *Hamlet* a striking similarity to Montaigne's writing strategies. Hamlet's second soliloquy becomes an inward debate in which he assesses both sides of the argument. Mack maintains that this internal questioning 'clearly resembles Montaigne's portrayals of the mind in motion and of the changeability of human character' (p. 82). While the chief similarity between the writers is their fondness for logical contradictions and paradoxes, later in the chapter, Mack finds a strong contrast in how the writers depict acts of atrocity: Montaigne uses images of torture to encourage his readers to be more compassionate; Shakespeare's characters, such as those in *Titus Andronicus*, Mack argues, are never deterred from using violence no matter the consequences.

Montaigne's and Shakespeare's use of history is the focus of Chapter 5. It begins with Mack examining Plutarch and Tacitus, the most important historians to Montaigne in his *De l'utile et de l'honneste*. Montaigne uses history to compose a moral argument in order to establish if violence is necessary by considering the outcomes. History dictates the structure and theme to some of the French writer's most memorable essays. The two main historic sources Shakespeare used are well known. However, Mack further clarifies that Shakespeare consulted the 1587 second edition of Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland* with added material by Francis Thynne, Abraham Fleming, and John Stow, and Thomas North's translation of Plutarch's *Lives*. In *Julius Caesar*, Mack discovers that what appear to be additions to history – such as 'dramatizing Portia's concern to be taken into her husband Brutus's confidence' – are copied straight from Plutarch (p. 122). Another interesting point is that Shakespeare's Brutus is a more ambiguously moral figure than Montaigne's hero-worshipped Roman figure. However, Mack finds that both writers are fascinated with the exploits of ordinary people.

Chapter 6 is more like an addition rounding up themes under the general heading of ethical issues. Death, repentance, sex and marriage, fathers and children, human sufficiency and the animals, justice, and Utopia are given the Montaigne and Shakespeare comparative treatment. In the Conclusion,

Mack reflects on a key difference between the two writers. Shakespeare is adept at representing a wide range of views, while Montaigne is restricted to individual complexity.

Mack's main strength is undoubtedly Montaigne. Therefore, the book's interdisciplinary angle is not as well developed as it should be. It is simply reduced to a basic compare and contrast exercise where Shakespeare's and Montaigne's interests overlap. Yet it is an essential book for students and academics interested in how Montaigne thinks, and how he practised research.

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**MacKay**, Ellen, *Persecution, Plague, and Fire: Fugitive Histories of the Stage in Early Modern England*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2010; hardback; pp. 242; 9 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. US\$40.00; ISBN 9780226500195.

*Persecution, Plague, and Fire: Fugitive Histories of the Stage in Early Modern England* examines the long history of disaster in the English Renaissance playhouse. Ellen MacKay argues that the various disasters that afflicted the English theatre during this period were no accident but were an anticipated end to a practice built on disappearance and destruction. She reveals how the Elizabethan playwrights added plague and punishment to their preoccupation with 'soundrie slaughters and mayheminges of the Quenes subject' caused by 'engynes, weapons, and powers used in plays' (p. 11).

The catastrophes that led to the demise of English Renaissance theatre were persecution, particularly by the Puritans, plague which decimated the theatres' audience, and fire that destroyed the theatres' buildings. Each disaster seemed to offer a metaphor that gestured towards a decline in the influence and effectiveness of the theatre. Fire was the most absolute of the theatres' practices of obliteration and the number of theatrical fires – such as those that destroyed the Paris Garden, the Globe, the Fortune, and Whitehall in the Renaissance and Restoration – suggests that theatre buildings were particularly vulnerable. But these structures were never built for longevity and were under constant change and repair.

There is very little documentation that surrounds the early theatre and MacKay does not add to it but instead builds her argument on well-known material, from theatre scholars such as E. K. Chambers and A. M. Naglar, and from collected anecdotes, such as that related in a letter from the English courtier Philip Gawdy to his father in 1587. From Gawdy's anecdote – a

mother and baby in the audience were shot and killed by an actor on stage whose gun was loaded with live ammunition – she claims that although there is no such thing as theatre history before Richard Flecknoe's *Short Treatise of the English Stage* in 1664 'it is certainly not the case that there was no such *think* as theatre history in the age of Marlowe, Shakespeare, Jonson and their cohort' (p. 3), the 'golden age' of early modern theatre. Gawdy's anecdote reveals the long-standing tendency for stoppage and loss; it also was a fulfilment of the early modern England's anti-theatrical prejudices of the time.

The end of the 'golden age' came with the eventual closure of the theatres by Oliver Cromwell in 1642, the ultimate anti-theatrical act. Seven years after these closures, William Prynne lamented the removal of the players from the theatres claiming that the wicked and tyrannical army of Cromwell had acted inhumanly, cruelly, roughly, and in a barbarous manner.

MacKay points to the difference 'between the unresolved nature of the theatre that comes down to us and the history made of it' (p. 196). Both pro- and anti-theatre critics agreed that the theatre could not remove guilt or impress faith; it could not make judgements for either man or God. The re-enactment of crimes on stage could prompt an impulsive confession or some acknowledgement of their offence from anyone in the audience who witnessed their own crime. Although in *Hamlet* the play-within-a-play established the evidence of Claudius's guilt, MacKay suggests that by using a play-within-a-play, Shakespeare was challenging the effectiveness of such a device for detection, and that he was undermining the moral claims of the theatre. The foisting of this role of judgemental advocate onto the theatre only led it further down the path of disaster.

*Persecution, Plague, and Fire* is an immensely interesting book but it has problems. First, it is by no means an easy read. The language can be dense and unnecessarily complex, making it difficult to follow. In many cases the analysis does not stand up to close scrutiny, particularly '*think* as theatre history' which appears to rely on the anecdotes rather than the facts that stimulated or created the anecdotes. Finally, there is no doubt that material relating to the early modern theatre is rare, but the exclusion of Philip Henslowe's diary – one of the most valuable sources of information for the theatrical history of the period – does seem an odd omission. Nevertheless, the material she has utilized is compelling and provocative. MacKay's hypothesis is interesting and boldly argued and it makes a unique contribution to scholarship. *Persecution, Plague, and Fire* is well worth reading.

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**Marsh**, Christopher, *Music and Society in Early Modern England* (Cambridge Studies in Early Modern British History), Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2010; hardback; pp. 624; 58 b/w illustrations, audio CD; R.R.P. £65.00; ISBN 9780521898324.

Innovation in a research publication is something that is all too rare. Christopher Marsh's *Music and Society in Early Modern England* is one such text, and one of a number of recent texts that has challenged traditional scholarship. Marsh moves the reader and listener beyond the traditional silent depictions of the early modern world by demonstrating not only how music can be heard, but also why it is important for us to hear it. Marsh analyses the place of music in early modern England and gives us an ample volume with copies of images, as well as a CD of musical examples performed by the Dufay Collective and the bell ringers of St Bartholomew the Great in London. Marsh's work typifies the bounty to be found in interdisciplinary scholarship by ably demonstrating why scholars must shake off the shackles of the single, narrow disciplinary furrow. This work is a testament to Marsh's ongoing research, scholarship, musicianship, and musical performances over many years: it could not have been written by a musicologist nor would it have been written by most historians. *Music and Society* hinges on the centrality of the performative aspects of music to aspects of early modern life, and analyses music's role in its many and varied forms in the households, inns, and open spaces of parish society.

Through a detailed critique of the diverse surviving evidence of early modern music – its words, sounds, performances, and depictions – Marsh charts the political, religious, national, sectarian, and secular functions of music in early modern society. Here is the music of everyday life, instead of the music of just the church or court. Marsh highlights the longevity of tunes and texts in early modern society, demonstrating, through musical biographies of specific compositions, how these sounds stayed in the minds and memories of players and audiences. The vitality of music lies in its ongoing ability to be made audible through the mouths of singers or the active fingers of instrumentalists. What is clear is that the households of early modern England could be alive with the sounds of bawdy ballads or pious psalms, and that early modern sociability – be it driven by sacred or secular motivations – found expression in musical performances. For example, 'The London Tavern' scene (c. 1690–1700) by Egbert Van Heemslерck that appears on the dust cover pays tribute to this vibrant and noisy early modern reality for the women, men, and children depicted.

Marsh is able to cover the significance of music in early modern society by tackling the key features that unite the vast archive that he has consulted, and much of which he has also performed. He analyses the popular beliefs governing the power of music in the early modern world in order to set the context for the significance of music in everyday life. He then analyses music as a viable occupation within society. Here our focus is firmly on the majority of the early modern population that inhabited the inns, taverns, churchyards, streets, and fields of urban and rural parishes. We are able to sense the toe-tapping reality of early modern society, and experience a sense of the dancing bodies to be found both indoors and out. Marsh also voices the pleasure, as well as disdain, that early modern contemporaries recorded about music and their musical experiences. Personal musical tastes survive in the copious ballads, ongoing traditional musical rituals, and the sounding bells that governed both life and death. Early modern music is the political and pious litmus test of parish society. Post-Reformation religious tensions in England constantly reworked the nature and moral purpose of music in society. Sectarian allegiances were sounded by the types of music performed within urban and rural households and parishes. Holding out against music's power were those households that demonstrated their dislike through their intentional and resolute performances of silence.

In the final sections of his book, Marsh picks up the importance of bells ringing within early modern society, drawing once more on the importance of different sounds to regulate life and commemorate death. *Music and Society* models the importance of tackling new directions in early modern research. This work boldly demonstrates how new and innovative research trajectories are to be found when conventional discipline boundaries are crossed. Marsh has nimbly recast the early modern world as the vibrant sonic entity it must always have been, for 'beneath it all, individuals of all sorts made their way in the world to the accompaniment of music' (p. 525). As Marsh concludes, 'this was true both of those who adored music and of those who abhorred it'.

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**Matthews**, David, ed., *In Strange Countries: Middle English Literature and its Afterlife: Essays in Memory of J. J. Anderson* (Manchester Medieval Literature and Culture), Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2011; cloth; pp. xii, 171; R.R.P. £55.00, US\$80.00; ISBN 9780791084508.

When I was an honours student at the University of Adelaide in the later 1960s, a carbon copy of J. J. Anderson's PhD thesis – an edition of *Patience* – was on the bookshelves of the room shared by honours students. This was an intriguing discovery for those of us studying *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* since we knew little about this, the *Gawain*-poet's shortest poem, and no printed edition was available. If I begin with this personal note it is because the book under review seems to invite it. To a degree not always achieved by such volumes, this book in memory of J. J. Anderson is both a collection of fine scholarly essays and also an intensely personal tribute to a much-admired scholar. The essays are on a set of interconnected subjects but the book also traces a network of interconnected scholars and scholarship.

Two of the chapters are personal recollections of Anderson. The late and much-lamented Ralph Elliott, whose recent death gave us a special occasion to remember his fostering of so many other scholars, and who shared Anderson's lifelong passion for the works of the *Gawain*-poet, concentrates on that aspect of Anderson's work. He not only refers to supervising Anderson's PhD, but also pays tribute to his own teacher, James Parker Oakden at the University of St Andrews, and the influence of Oakden's *Alliterative Poetry in Middle English* on his later interest in *Sir Gawain* and its topography. In his chapter, Alan Shelston offers a more general but personal picture of Anderson as colleague and friend but also mentions the success of his doctoral and masters students, a further developing network of scholars.

Instances of scholarly interaction and mentorship are not confined to these two essays. Gillian Rudd in her 'subtle re-reading', as the Introduction aptly describes it, of the Green Knight as 'both an obvious and an uneasy figure or figuration of nature', begins by recalling a remark of Anderson, while Peter Meredith in a fascinating account of the last celebration of the procession commemorating Bishop (Saint) Blase (who was said to be the inventor of the wool-comb) in Bradford in 1825, not only refers to the time when Anderson and he were together in Adelaide in the early 1960s but also traces their shared trajectory through medieval drama to interest in various kinds of civic entertainment.

The essays in this book are not only about Middle English literature but also, as the subtitle suggests, its 'afterlife'. In one sense, all the chapters on medieval texts are concerned with their critical 'afterlife', but the notion of

afterlife particularly pertains to Peter Meredith's chapter, to Stephen Knight's illuminating comparison of the continuing traditions of Robin Hood and Arthur and how, starting from such apparently opposed positions, outlaw and king, 'for all this difference, the two traditions can approach each other', and to Rosamund Allen's revealing comparison of 'how *Lazamon* and Tennyson deal with the problem of combat'. *Lazamon's Brut* is also the subject of an equally revealing comparison in Carole Weinberg's chapter, but this time backwards to Wace rather than forwards to Tennyson. Somewhat closer to Anderson's core interests in the *Gawain*-poet and medieval drama are Susan Powell's discussion of the assumption of the Virgin in *Pearl* and the *Festial* and Alexandra F. Johnston's treatment of Nicholas Love and plays of Christ's passion, both reminding us of the value of using specific medieval texts which might be considered minor to throw light on the assumptions and beliefs behind some of the major texts of the period. Finally Kalpen Trivedi offers a persuasive argument for seeing a group of manuscripts of the *Pore Caitiff* with 'Lollard' elements as emanating from the period of Wycliffite activity before Lollardy was formally identified, labelled, and attacked by the church.

This excellent collection of essays both celebrates and demonstrates the network of scholarship that has given us a continually renewed understanding of medieval texts and their afterlife. It is expertly edited by David Matthews with an Introduction by him and Anke Bernau that offers its own valuable insights. The presence of so many connections with the Australian and New Zealander scholarly worlds, through Anderson himself, a New Zealander, and through Australians (including the editor) or those who have lived in Australia, is both an extra element of interest for readers in those countries and a reminder, if one is needed, of how much those two countries have been part of an international network of scholarship in medieval English literature.

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**McDonough**, Christopher J., ed., trans., *The Arundel Lyrics. The Poems of Hugh Primas* (Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library, 2), Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2010; hardback; pp. 336; R.R.P. \$29.95, £19.95, €21.00; ISBN 9780674055575.

The author of the *Arundel Lyrics* offers some of the most evocative Latin love poems of the twelfth century. Hugh Primas was one of its most gifted and biting satirists. In this nicely produced volume, Christopher McDonough offers elegant English translations (in prose) and annotations to poems of

which he presented a critical edition in *The Oxford Poems of Hugh Primas. And the Arundel Lyrics* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1984). All these poems deserve to be widely known.

The first sixteen love poems of the Arundel Lyrics, often attributed to Peter of Blois, begin by celebrating the favour of Venus towards lovers. Many of them evoke similar sentiments to the *Carmina burana*, as in no. 2 (p. 11): *Ha! Dulci morbi languero, quo sic beate pereō!* (Ah! I am faint from a sweet disease from which I thus happily die!). The translation cannot avoid creating what might seem excessively mannered verse of Latin that is always concise, with rhyme impossible to render in English, as in no. 4 (p. 23): *Certant nivi, micant lene | pectus, mentum, colla, gene* (Her breast, chin, neck, and cheeks vie with snow, and glow gently). The translations are bold and elegant, without being literal, as in no. 8 (p. 41): *Vota blando stimulat lenimine | pubes, que vix pullulate in virgine | tenui lanugine* (Her pubic hair, barely sprouting with fine down in her girlish state, rouses my desires with its sweet solace).

Yet these very sensual poems, celebrating the delights and anguish of love, are then followed by others (nos. 17–23) that celebrate religious themes with similar verbal dexterity. There are also poems vigorously critical of worldliness in the clerical order, like no. 25: ‘Among the herd of bishops there is scarcely anyone worthy of the rank except the one man.’ It turns out that this bishop ‘is completely devoted to Venus and follows the course of no other planet’. At the same time, the poet can offer eulogy, or celebrate Venus. Perhaps the most fascinating aspect of these Arundel lyrics, not fully discussed in the Introduction, is the way they are organized as if to demonstrate that their poet can turn himself to every possible situation.

McDonough gives more attention in his Introduction to Hugh Primas, who composed longer verses, with vivid humour about the experience of gambling and feasting. This is verse that needs an English translation to communicate the earthiness of its humour, such as about the cloak he was given (no. 2, p. 147): ‘Scum of bishops, dregs of the clergy, filthy scrofula, who gave me a cloak without down in midwinter!’ There is a vivid account of a painted whore coming out of a brothel, on whom everything is lavished, with language that might belong to a popular novel: ‘And when she groans and whines, she makes her opening smaller by drawing it tight. If it was wide open, a mule would only just succeed in filling it’ (no. 8, p. 165).

The Latin is not always easy, but McDonough’s translations communicate vim and vigour. For anyone wanting to explore themes of sexuality, paganism, and satire in the twelfth century, these poems of Primas are rich material. There is a portrait of the effects of promotion on a monk (no. 16, p. 191): ‘Now the monk has come to the bishopric, pallid and thin through fasting, but

soon, grinding his teeth incessantly, he gulps down hunks of six large fish, and devouring a huge pike at dinner, he grows plump and fat within two years, like pigs deprived of food.' Such satire makes one think that, when he praises Alberic for not allowing pagan authors to be studied in the schools at Reims (no. 18, p. 203), he is demonstrating a gift for eulogy that perhaps was never meant to be taken seriously. McDonough is to be congratulated for bringing these lively poems to a wider audience. His annotations are informative and his Introduction helpful for presenting the undoubted literary interest of these poems.

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**Mews**, Constant J. and John N. **Crossley**, eds, *Communities of Learning: Networks and the Shaping of Intellectual Identity in Europe, 1100–1500* (Europa Sacra, 9), Turnhout, Brepols, 2011; hardback; pp. viii, 368; 1 b/w illustration, 1 b/w line art; R.R.P. €80.00; ISBN 9782503532332.

This volume takes its starting point as the observation that all learning happens within some communal network of intellectual exchange. It features fifteen articles that explore various aspects of schooling, the transmission of ideas, and book culture in twelfth- to seventeenth- century Europe, covering many perspectives and contexts, such as interfaith dialogue in twelfth-century Toledo, Greek–Latin interaction at the Council of Florence, and the exchanges between Avicenna and Gundissalinus and fifteenth-century German abbesses. The Introduction establishes a clear theoretical framework from which to interpret the various contributions, most of which were originally papers given at a conference at Monash University.

The first three chapters explore various interrelationships and translation efforts among Muslims, Jews, and Christians in twelfth-century Spain, and demonstrate just how rich the intellectual interaction was among scholars, poets, and theologians. Charles Burnett's contribution shows evidence for an enthusiastic interchange of religious knowledge, and for Christian appropriation of specific Greek and Muslim texts of science and philosophy including works on medicine, astrology, geometry, and the like. Alexander Fidora continues this theme by discussing the joint translation of *De anima* completed by the Jew Abraham Ibn Daud and the Christian Gundissalinus. Fidora shows how the development of a common philosophical approach allowed for significant studies in comparative religion, and for the peaceful evaluation of religions based on philosophical reasoning. Amos Bertolacci

then discusses the influence of Avicenna on later Christian philosophy and theology.

Letters form an important genre that clarify relationships and expose world-views. Cary Nederman's creative contribution shows how, in his writings to his close friends, John of Salisbury exemplifies his Ciceronian theory of the virtuous friend. Nederman also explains how John's correspondence may be considered as a disembodied learning network and evidence for a virtual learning community. Constant Mews charts the development of the University of Paris and various aspects of its diversity such as the system of nation-based colleges and the differing evaluations of Averroes and Aristotle. He presents convincing evidence for the multi-vocal nature of the university that corrects the simplified notion of a unified academic authority.

Two contributions focus on the work of Johannes De Grocheio and his creative approach to music theory. John Crossley and Carol Williams discuss the many influences on Grocheio, and the expectations he had of his students' prior knowledge. This tells us much about medieval learning, and is an excellent pair to the contribution by Catherine Jeffreys that analyses the work of Grocheio, Guy of St Denis, and Peter of Auvergne. Jeffreys discerns connections and discontinuities and overturns current thinking by demonstrating that much of the creativity in music theory occurred outside the Paris Faculty of Arts.

Earl Richards contrasts the development of Marian devotion in France and Spain, in particular the significance of vernacular influences such as anti-Semitism and ribald humour. His analysis shows clearly that ecclesiastical and vernacular authors were in dialogue, and he contributes to further breaking down the common notion of a medieval, isolated, elite culture.

Aristotelian language and thought became central to medieval culture, and Mary Sullivan examines how Ptolemy of Lucca and Dante used Aristotle's political language but for quite different purposes. Both cite the Greek philosopher frequently in developing their political visions, and Sullivan's analysis shows that Aristotelian language provided a shared vocabulary even among those who disagreed.

Karen Green's article on Christine De Pizan and Julie Hotchin's on German abbesses both indicate that some women were not as intellectually isolated as previously thought. Both authors trace the networks of relationships and intellectual influences, including the sources of their libraries, which surrounded their subjects. The work by Hotchins is especially extensive and expands our knowledge of convent educational practices.

Peter Howard approaches learning in Florence through the significance of preaching, the role of preaching *exempla*, and the interaction between

many different civic and ecclesial communities. His examples of tax law and exchange rates show evidence of the clergy being deeply engaged in city life. Frankie Nowicki's article on the Council of Florence discusses the problems of cultural miscommunication and the importance of art and ritual. Other contributions by Willemien Otten and Jason Taliadoros, on Creation and Peter of Blois respectively, round out the volume and add to the sense that this is an intriguing collage of approaches.

A reader expecting to learn about the theory of educative community may be disappointed, because the collection rather offers a series of snapshots, with each essay analysing one aspect of either learning or intellectual community. Each one provides valuable insights into the mechanics of the transmission of ideas, the importance of relational links, and the formation of modern intellectual culture. This is a fascinating collection for an academic audience and brings many interesting additions to our knowledge of medieval learning.

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**Miller**, Naomi J. and Naomi **Yavneh**, eds, *Gender and Early Modern Constructions of Childhood* (Women and Gender in the Early Modern World), Farnham, Ashgate, 2011; hardback; pp. 264; 26 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £55.00; ISBN 9781409429975.

Editors Naomi J. Miller and Naomi Yavneh introduce their essay collection by challenging the myth that early modern parents did not love their children. Evidence found in books from the period describe children as a 'precious commodity' (p. 4). However, rather than viewing children as objects, Miller and Yavneh's interests lie 'in considering children as subjects with lived experience that is gendered' (p. 7). The essays they have chosen are interdisciplinary and are categorized by the 'central themes of loss and celebration, education and social training, growing up, and growing old' (p. 7). The editors are keen to stipulate that through early modern art, history, and literature the experiences of children also give a profound insight into understanding adults.

Part I consists of four essays beginning with Patricia Phillippy's striking examination of childhood death through plaques and effigies. She analyses the texts reflecting on a child's life and the importance of where the monuments were originally displayed. The energy and emotion invested in these funeral ornaments emphasize how highly early modern parents thought of their children.

Carole Levin's contribution analyses Thomas Hill's *The Pleasant Art of the Interpretation of Dreams* (1576). In particular, she describes from the book parents' dreams about their children and vice versa. Following Levin, Yavneh's fascinating essay investigates the implications of why the Venetian artist Paolo Veronese painted numerous versions of the 'Finding of Moses' (c. 1580). She argues that the biblical story of a child abandoned by a riverside and its consequent upbringing in Egypt has correlations with Venice. The Italian city prided itself with looking after abandoned babies. In the first part's final offering, Katherine R. Larson reconstructs the games played by girls, a difficult task because such play was mainly reserved for boys. In an engrossing and varied exploration, Larson discovers that gender boundaries were often crossed as girls played boys' games.

Part II begins with Marie Rutkoski's discussion of French paediatrics. She examines François Rabelais's *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, Michel de Montaigne's 'Of a Monstrous Child', and Ambrose Paré's *Oeuvres* for representations of childhood development. Her analysis of Rabelais's mocking of early modern childcare practices is of particular note.

Jane Couchman examines Louise de Coligny's letters to observe the relationships she had with children she looked after. Her absorbing essay uncovers how Louise brought up children lovingly and as strict Christians. In a similar essay to Couchman's, Sara Mendelson examines the letters of Anne Dormer, an aristocratic English woman, whose life is dominated by her abusive, patriarchal husband, Robert Dormer. Curiously, their son Jack is a difficult child. Anne's family believe he has inherited his father's 'undesirable traits' (p. 121). From her case study, Mendelson concludes that children are not viewed as individuals, but as their parents' possessions.

Kathryn M. Moncrief examines Miranda's tutelage by Prospero in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. She investigates whether staging a daughter's schooling affects the widespread household practice. Her essay effortlessly compares Miranda's education to early modern texts on childhood schooling. Caroline Bicks discovers English girls performing on an early modern stage at Mary Ward's convent schools. Bicks also investigates Ward's own childhood to understand how her performing girls might uplift a Catholic audience.

Carole Collier Frick begins Part III by analysing codpieces in sixteenth-century Europe. In a thought-provoking and entertaining essay, she challenges the argument that young boys were masculinized by codpieces. In contrast to Frick, Diane Purkiss explores Andrew Marvell's poetry for representations of girlhood. She argues convincingly that, for Marvell, a female infant represents a pastoral world of innocence away from the masculine world of war and politics.

Emilie L. Bergmann finds allegories of childhood in Cervantes's work. She finds in his childhood characters heroism and independence. Julia Marciari Alexander looks at the portraits of Charles I's family and children. The essay displays plenty of interesting portraits to enhance Bergmann's argument that they are not simply 'pretty objects', but windows into childhood experiences (p. 221). The final essay by Gregory M. Colón Semenza explores second childishness in Shakespeare's elderly male characters. His focus is inevitably on *King Lear*, but he does give a fascinating analysis of the play's opening scene to investigate Gloucester's and Lear's paternal favouritism.

Overall Miller and Yavneh have put together a commendable collection. The majority of the wide-ranging and often surprising essays offer fresh insightful research. It is a must for students and scholars alike who wish to be brought up to date on the often misunderstood experiences of early modern children.

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**Milner**, Matthew, *The Senses and the English Reformation* (St Andrews Studies in Reformation History), Farnham, Ashgate, 2011; hardback; pp. xiv, 407; R.R.P. £70.00; ISBN 9780754666424.

It has been standard fare to portray the English reformers as severe characters. Supposedly, they stripped away the riches of medieval Christianity and enforced sensory deprivation on the Church. In place of complexity, worshippers in the Protestant churches were impoverished, aurally sensing the Word but little else. Matthew Milner's contribution to the prestigious St Andrew's Studies in Reformation History series is designed to challenge such notions. The result is a rich picture – and a satisfying one – of important continuities in the engagement of senses in Tudor religion.

The study comprises two balanced halves. One explores the pre-Reformation era (c. 1400–c. 1530) and the second, the Reformation century itself (c. 1520–c. 1600). Within each of these halves, Milner plots a similar course. Thus Chapter 1 represents a lucid account of medieval sensory theories, while Chapter 2 sketches how these theories were expressed in religious life. Chapters 3 and 4 then illustrate this material by expounding the sensual complexity of the 'provision' of liturgy in the midst of pre-Reformation English life, followed by a study of the sensory aspects of the actual liturgies offered.

In Chapters 5 to 8, equivalent ground is traversed for the Reformation period. Chapters 5 and 6 consider sixteenth-century sensory theory, followed

by its expression in religious life. Chapters 7 and 8 then trace this through first the Henrician and Edwardian reforms, and then the ‘tumultuous’ developments of the Elizabethan church.

Milner argues for continuity rather than discontinuity. Philosophically, Aristotelian sensory theory remained dominant on both sides of the Reformation crisis. There were stress lines in sixteenth-century sensing, but these were not new. They were developments from an earlier trajectory.

At the heart of the Reformation was a controversy over authority and of course this generated issues in sensing. Both conservatives and reformers saw their opponents as having yielded themselves to false authority. Both sides claimed that their opponents had fallen under the spell of sensory delusion.

More specifically, Milner shows that the Reformation did not produce a radically intellectualized and a-sensual religion, any more than previously religion had been without sensual caution. In fact, Milner’s extraordinary wealth of material shows that leaders on both side of the Reformation divide were committed to engaging senses carefully.

Of course, principles such as *sola scriptura* and *sola fide* did bring profound change to English religion. Justification by faith released senses from the centre of knowing. Milner shows how knowing became internalized and this removal from the external was reinforced to some extent by the sensory inaccessibilities of the doctrine of predestination. These new interiorities in English Christianity gave reassurance in the face of anxieties over the senses. But then they also led to careful consideration in ‘making sure there were godly thynges to sense’ (p. 242).

There is a tendency for scholars to consider that their own topic is a vital one for the future of their discipline. In this case, Milner suggests that the senses are critical for understanding the setting and issues in Tudor history. Thus, ‘The senses were ... not only a topic of discussion in reform, they were a defining mode of early-modern English socio-political and cultural contention’ (p. 221).

Milner generally, however, makes good on what is promised. First, the study of the senses in Tudor religion does provide a rich account of the period. By examining the five major senses (sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch) regularly through the work, Milner creates a vivid account, and takes us into the stench and grit of the period. Second, in each cycle of the work, Milner offers an enormous breadth of material, made remarkably accessible through the sensory framework. The greatest strength of this study is Milner’s accomplishment in offering this astonishing range of data. The present reviewer was encouraged to find that in his own area of expertise (Calvin and sixteenth-century Calvinism) Milner offered very credible readings.

The weakest moments unfortunately are at the seams. It is in Milner's transitions, such as the introductions to the book and to each chapter, that his writing style becomes more complex and even opaque. Nevertheless, this is a matter of style, and the substance, once grasped, is intelligent and convincing.

We live in an age when the senses are embraced with gusto. To have a portrait of Tudor religion analysed and portrayed to our own (imaginative) sensory organs is a wonderful thing indeed.

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**Minear**, Erin, *Reverberating Song in Shakespeare and Milton: Language, Memory, and Musical Representation*, Farnham, Ashgate, 2011; hardback; pp. 296; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9781409435457.

*Reverberating Song in Shakespeare and Milton: Language, Memory, and Musical Representation* offers a close critical look at the role of sound and music in the works of two of the greatest writers of the English Renaissance, William Shakespeare and John Milton. While the study of music in the early modern period and in the works of Shakespeare and Milton is a well-trodden path and an ongoing discussion by many scholars, Erin Minear's careful and fascinating analysis casts refreshing new light onto what are now long familiar works, passages, and examples of music. In *Reverberating Song*, Minear offers a complex analysis of music in Shakespeare and Milton in its various forms, be it theme, motif, aural imagery, or remnant of staging practices. Minear argues that both Shakespeare and Milton 'reproduce not the specific formal or sonic properties of music, but its effects' (p. 2), and explores the infiltration of language in their work by 'music and musical memories' (p. 4). Minear is particularly interested in how Milton responded to Shakespeare's writing, and traces Milton's response to Shakespeare's conception of music and memory, and his eventual diversion from it. Minear's work is framed by both textual and historical criticism, offering close readings of a variety of works by Shakespeare and Milton, as well as thorough examination of the culture and history of music in the early modern period.

*Reverberating Song* is set out in nine sections: an Introduction, seven chapters, and a Conclusion. Each chapter is devoted to different works by Shakespeare and Milton: one of the strengths of Minear's work is the breadth and variety of work discussed. Chapters 2 to 4 deal with a number of Shakespeare's plays, mainly his comedies (such as *Twelfth Night*) including problem plays and romances (*The Merchant of Venice* and *The Tempest*), and

tragedies (*Othello*, *Titus Andronicus*, and *Hamlet*). The histories are also briefly represented with some discussion of plays such as *Henry IV* (Parts 1 and 2) and *Henry VIII*. Chapters 5 to 7, and the Conclusion, touch on Milton's dramas (*Samson Agonistes*), masques (*Masque Presented at Ludlow Castle*), treatises (*On Education*), and various other poetic works (such as *L'Allegro*, *Lycidas*, and *Paradise Lost*). To cover all the examples of musical imagery found in Shakespeare's and Milton's writings would be impossible in just one book, but the examples Minear has chosen successfully demonstrate the similarities and differences in Shakespeare and Milton's writings.

As a scholar who deals primarily with the study of Shakespeare, I found *Reverberating Song* most engaging when Minear directly addresses Shakespeare's plays. I was particularly drawn to Minear's analysis of music and memory in Shakespeare's poetic language and imagery, whether in snatches of old long-forgotten songs (p. 10), music already heard that lingers in characters' thoughts (p. 9) and that generates associative memory (see in particular Minear's analysis of sonic echoes in Chapter 2), or stands in for other things (see Chapter 3, in particular Minear's description of music as 'ghostly manifestation', pp. 92–94).

The later chapters on Milton's work were also a fascinating read. I was struck by Minear's analysis of the density of allusions to Shakespeare in the descriptions of music in the *Masque Presented at Ludlow Castle* (see Chapter 6). As Minear notes, in the *Masque*, Milton imitates a Shakespearean soundscape: its 'eerie noises of the wood' (p. 203), recollect Shakespeare's own use of aural imagery in the magical woodland setting of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

*Reverberating Song* is incredibly well researched, and the variety and scope of critical materials cited is impressive. The footnotes are a fascinating accompaniment to Minear's analysis, although at times I found their frequency a distraction to my reading of the main text. A difficulty that seems too often associated with writing about music is the lack of actual examples, whether in print, such as lyrics and sheet music, or accompanying audio files (i.e., on compact disc) from the musical works referred to in the writing. I therefore found Minear's inclusion of lyrics from songs referred to in her analysis (see for example, pp. 64 and 110), a helpful addition to the text.

Minear's book *Reverberating Song* has much to offer scholars interested in the work of Shakespeare and Milton, and in the broader study of the culture of music that informs Renaissance literature and history.

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**Moncrief**, Kathryn M. and Kathryn R. **McPherson**, eds, *Performing Pedagogy in Early Modern England: Gender, Instruction, and Performance* (Studies in Performance and Early Modern Drama), Farnham, Ashgate, 2011; cloth; pp. xvi, 248; 10 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £55.00; ISBN 9780754669418.

*Performing Pedagogy in Early Modern England: Gender, Instruction, and Performance*, edited by Kathryn M. Moncrief and Kathryn R. McPherson, presents an engaging look at education in the early modern period, with an emphasis on gender construction and representations of pedagogy in period drama. A sequel to their first collection of essays, *Performing Maternity in Early Modern England* (Ashgate, 2007), this volume offers a range of essays that examine educational culture and modes of pedagogy as they are revealed through various texts and discourses from the early modern period. Specific topics include women's foreign language acquisition and translation of humanist learning, mothers' roles in educating their children, violent sport as a precursor of military training, and political activism with regard to pedagogical institutions, among others. The volume is organized into four thematic sections which complement each other nicely: 'Humanism and its Discontents', 'Manifestations of Manhood', 'Decoding Domesticity', and 'Pedagogy Performed'. Almost all of the essays focus on one or more literary works and what they reveal with regard to educational practices in Elizabethan England (Chris Laoutaris's very interesting account of Lady Elizabeth Russell's political activism and verbal acumen is perhaps somewhat out of place among the other text-centred essays). Dramatic texts take centre stage (Marlowe's *Dido Queene of Carthage*, Jane Lumley's *The Tragedie of Iphigeneia*, Nicholas Breton's *The Miseries of Mavillia*, Thomas Middleton's *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside*, Elizabeth Cary's *The Tragedie of Mariam*, and Shakespeare's *Love's Labor's Lost*, *Taming of the Shrew*, and *Hamlet* form the principal works under examination), but instruction books, sermons, religious translations, and catechisms also make their way into the discussion.

With a gendered approach prevalent throughout the volume, the majority of essays focus on girls' education or women's contribution to pedagogy. Literacy was spreading rapidly in the early modern period, especially among women, and philosophies of pedagogy sought to contain women's education within boundaries appropriate for their gender. A discussion of normative gender roles and the acceptance or defiance of such by various sectors of society forms a major thread throughout the book. In real and dramatic situations, we find daughters reacting to their fathers' instruction, women becoming tutors in the affairs of love, and female translators defending

themselves in court. Thankfully, most of the essays manage to engage the age-old *querelle des femmes* with lively relevance, and it is refreshing to find that constructions of masculinity as well as femininity come under scrutiny in this book. The expected tropes of body and embodied performance are present here, but sometimes with unexpected perspectives, as in Jim Casey's "Honest payneful pastimes": Pain, Play and Pedagogy in Early Modern England' or David Orvis's "Lustful Jove and his adulterous child": Classical *Paidierastia* as Same-Sex Marriage in Marlowe's *Dido Queene of Carthage*'; other chapters examine the spiritual, emotional, and intellectual side of education. Critical theories including gender, literary, and cultural criticism are at a minimum in this volume, with only a few passing references to Butler and Bourdieu (among others), but one gets the sense that such theories provide the underlying methodology for the majority of the essays. In more abundance are references to contemporary treatises, with Juan de Vives and Richard Mulcaster featuring most frequently.

*Performing Pedagogy* is integrally concerned with performance, of dramatic parts upon the stage and of gender and social roles in everyday life. As such it challenges the idea of specific sites of education, and argues that 'early modern educational practice was itself performative' (p. 7). Particularly new to the field is the proposal that the early modern stage was an important pedagogical site, particularly in the teaching (or defying) of gender roles. Through an examination of various sites of study – home, classroom, church, and stage – with an emphasis on how each environment is reproduced in dramatic texts, the book fulfils its objectives. Moncrief and McPherson write: 'the essays in the collection question the extent to which education itself, an activity rooted in study and pursued in the home, classroom, and the church, led to, mirrored, and was perhaps even transformed by moments of instruction on stage. They investigate how instructional models at work in the early modern period might be allied to the experience of hearing or acting in a play' (pp. 1–2). In doing so, the essays in *Performing Pedagogy in Early Modern England* remind us just how much we can learn about a society through the dramatic texts it produced.

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**Mostert**, Marco and P. S. **Barnwell**, eds, *Medieval Legal Process: Physical, Spoken and Written Performance in the Middle Ages* (Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy, 22), Turnhout, Brepols, 2011; hardback; pp. ix, 299; 5 b/w illustrations, 5 b/w tables; R.R.P. €85.00; ISBN 9782503541747.

Merely to write something down is not to give the product any standing or authenticity in the eyes of the people or the law. How written material came to have its unique position in society is a complex subject and one too frequently neglected. These articles, from different standpoints, are directed towards looking at written material not just for the direct information it provides but also as a phenomenon important in the more distinctly oral social structures of the past. They are for the most part written by the acknowledged authorities in each area. Nothing has made me more acutely aware of my language deficiencies as this volume of essays. As the rare appearance in English of such studies, usually written in European languages, the collection underlines the loss, to historical debate in areas of English mono-lingualism, of the professional analysis of the contribution that diplomatic and codicology can make to our understanding of past, and present, cultures.

Those first introduced to the perils of uncritical acceptance of written material by consideration of ‘forged’ Anglo-Saxon charters were mainly concerned with establishing the purpose of a forgery but largely failed to put the production of a charter into its contemporary context – what gave a document its authenticity anyway? Recent European scholarship has shown that far more than this can be learned from a document’s formulary and the manner in which it was given its undeniable authority. This book contains fifteen articles of different length and weight. Most compelling – indeed a piece that should be compulsory study for all students – is that of Hagen Keller. Its translation into English provides a magisterial interpretation of the circumstances surrounding the issue of a charter and the ritual of its authentication.

The articles cover a wide spread of areas, mainly in Northern Europe from Scotland to Poland and Hungary, and investigate topics as critical as the nature of literacy. Since Rosamund McKitterick’s studies of the use of literacy – the ability to read and write Latin – in the Frankish kingdoms, scholarly attention has extended to the ways in which people who could not read and write nevertheless participated in practices that involved written material. Georges Declercq’s article considers performance in legal matters and the role of touching as a form of acceptance and authentication thus shedding light into the difficult area of the lost communication of an oral

society. Michael H. Gelting examines what Danish charters can reveal about the interplay between oral and literate culture when the written word was subordinate to oral testimony. It should cause those of us who see the development of English common law as the dominant element in the growth of jurisprudence to rethink our approach. The earliest written laws raise the question addressed by Stephan Brink: did they incorporate any of the earlier oral laws and if so how can those relics be identified?

As Anna Adamska shows in her beguilingly entitled 'Founding a monastery over dinner' the legal complications between oral requirements, secular and canon law can be extremely confusing particularly on the borders of several different states and territories but is also revealing of the different attitudes of secular and religious authorities to the written record in a period of social and economic transition. In countries like Hungary where written records are absent, Janos M. Bak shows how the gestures and forms associated with legal practices can in some part be recovered. What becomes clear is that beneath many local differences and specificities there are common features that provided a European-wide matrix. What all the studies show is the importance of the public participation in the formal presentation and acceptance of matters relating to property and obedience in the high Middle Ages.

This collection with its prosaic title in fact casts light on subjects apparently far removed from legal process. The social attitudes and beliefs revealed in a number of the articles are often hardly intelligible to a modern mind but these were the rules by which people had to live and which involved their passions and emotions, even if they are hard to decipher. It is a collection in which students of all sorts will find unexpected enlightenment.

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**Newstok**, Scott L. and Ayanna **Thompson**, eds, *Weyward Macbeth: Intersections of Race and Performance* (Signs of Race), New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010; paperback; pp. 308; 12 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. US\$28.95, £18.99; ISBN 9780230616424.

This is a substantial collection, consisting of twenty-six articles and an Appendix. The articles are relatively short and include few footnotes, but they pack a great deal of information into their allotted spaces. Together, they are essential to anyone seeking to understand the importance of *Macbeth* to the history of race relations in America, especially black–white relations.

Although the collection's title indicates that it addresses race in general, the majority of the articles focus on African–American performance histories and adaptations. I cannot do justice to such a large number of articles in a brief review. By singling out some articles, I do not mean to denigrate others, but simply to indicate the highlights in this extensive collection.

Ayanna Thompson's introductory article delineates the scope of the collection and explains the title's source, stemming from the First Folio's description of the witches as 'weyward' rather than 'weird', as most subsequent editors have had it. Thompson notes that *Macbeth* is not a play that 'readily announces itself as already weywardly racialized' (p. 6), and argues that 'weyward' is 'precisely the correct word for *Macbeth*'s role in American racial formations' (p. 4). Celia R. Daileader's piece reminds us of Thomas Middleton's revising influence on *Macbeth*, in particular his interpolation of the Hecate scene. Middleton's influence, she argues convincingly, resulted in the ambivalence that gives rise to a 'legacy of "racialized" interpretation' (p. 12), and she provides a foundation in early modern textual criticism for the articles that follow.

These two essays are followed by a series of subsections. The first, 'Early American Intersections', features five articles that explore the resonances and meanings of *Macbeth* in the antebellum period. Of these, I found most interesting the ones that focus on the tyrant Macbeth's paradoxical appeal to African–American performers and public figures. John C. Briggs, for example, shows how Frederick Douglass regarded Macbeth as a figure enslaved by evil; for Douglass, Macbeth frees himself when he accepts his death and asserts his own freedom from the witches (pp. 38, 40). Nick Moschovakis explains how African–American writers, as well as those who wrote about African–Americans, could allude to *Macbeth* in ways that might express ambivalence or even solidarity with the title character (p. 66). I would also single out Joyce Green MacDonald's excellent piece on minstrel show parodies of the play for her nuanced analysis of how blackface could express white working-class anxieties about social changes that threatened to marginalize them.

The next two sections, 'Federal Theatre Project(s)' and 'Further Stages', include both scholarly articles and pieces by filmmakers, actors, and directors about specific productions of *Macbeth*. Notable here are Marguerite Rippey's and Scott L. Newstok's articles on the ambivalent legacy of Orson Welles's famous 'Voodoo Macbeth'. While both acknowledge Welles's role in giving work to black actors during the Depression, they also attempt to strip away some of the mystique adhering to a production that, as Rippey puts it, used Shakespeare to 'legitimize primitivism' (p. 89). In two subsequent essays, Alexander C. Y. Huang and Anita Maynard-Losh draw attention to,

respectively, the history of ‘Asian-style’ stagings of *Macbeth* (p. 121), and to Maynard-Losh’s Alaskan production that set the play within the context of Southern Alaska’s indigenous people, the Tlingit. Maynard-Losh relates how she collaborated with Tlingit tribe members to translate large chunks of the play into Tlingit, using linguistic difference to make a larger point about the play’s depiction of alienation.

In the following section, ‘Music’, Douglas Lanier’s piece offers an intriguing counter-argument to those who have critiqued Duke Ellington’s musical pieces based on Shakespearean characters, especially ‘Lady Mac’. Todd Landon Barnes’s essay on hip hop appropriations of Shakespeare argues forcefully that erasing the boundary between high and low culture does little to challenge the dynamic by which difference is elided and property rights reasserted in the name of progressivism.

The penultimate section, ‘Screen’, features articles on whiteness and colour-blind casting. I found Courtney Lehmann’s complex exploration of Nina Menke’s film *The Bloody Child* especially intriguing. As Lehmann shows, Menke uses a range of techniques and approaches to make whiteness strange and indeed inhuman. In the final section, Peter Erickson’s excellent article uses three African–American plays to illustrate how, although we like to think that classic texts can always be transformed by appropriation, in fact such texts may well resist appropriation and remain out of reach for progressive politics.

Richard Burt’s Epilogue notes that the history of race and *Macbeth* in particular – and Shakespeare in general – illustrates how often progression and regression ‘occur simultaneously in the same instance’ (p. 237). This collection provides ample evidence of this truth, and underscores how important it is for us to recognize Shakespeare’s ambivalent legacy at work in America’s race relations today.

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**Perry**, Lucy and Alexander **Schwarz**, eds, *Behaving like Fools: Voice, Gesture, and Laughter in Texts, Manuscripts, and Early Books* (International Medieval Research, 17), Turnhout, Brepols, 2011; hardback; pp. xii, 301; 28 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. €80.00; ISBN 9782503531571.

The first part of the title of this book, rather than the subtitle, is a clearer guide to its contents, for it comprises a collection of essays that take as their subject the medieval and early modern fool. Editors Lucy Perry and

Alexander Schwarz both offer papers of their own, as well as their joint Introduction, and the other contributors are: Guillemette Bolens, Susanna Niiranen, Cordula Böcking-Politis, Siegrid Schmidt, Peter Glasner, Françoise Le Saux, Rosamund Allen, Stefan Bießenecker, Tanja-Isabel Habicht, Patrizia Mazzadi, and Neil Thomas. (There are unfortunately no author biographies, often an interesting and useful inclusion in a multi-authored collection such as this). As the editors explain (p. xi), the idea for the volume arose from the 2006 International Medieval Congress at Leeds, themed ‘Emotion and Gesture’, and a glance at the programme for that conference reveals that several of the papers were presented in earlier form there. A couple of the contributions betray their conference-paper origins more readily than others, but on the whole the transition to book chapters (with the addition of further essays) has been successful.

The great strength of the book is its clear unifying theme. It is a fascinating exploration of fool figures of all shapes and sizes, natural and unnatural, fictional and historical, from c. 1200 to c. 1600, in a number of European countries and a range of literary texts. The particular functions of literary fools, and their adaptation over time and place, can thus be easily, and rewardingly, compared. While, of necessity, there is some repetition of theories and definitions between essays, their foci are remarkably varied, to the great benefit of the volume.

Bolens’s essay is one of the more theory-based, and she examines the fool in relation to language and its interpretation. ‘The fool figure’, she concludes, ‘is crucial in that he incarnates and performs language’s power to transgress its own intrinsic limitations’ (p. 46). In a lively exploration of the life and portrayal of Peire Vidal, the renowned twelfth-century Occitan troubadour and ‘the only one to be described as a “fool” or “madman”’ in contemporary sources (p. 47), Niiranen compares the role of fool with that of troubadour, demonstrating how Peire’s successful combination of the two into an ‘extended role of medieval entertainer’ (p. 64) helped ensure the survival of his work. Böcking-Politis analyses the significance of Constantinople as a location in *Der Pfaffe Amis*, explaining that the historical context (one lost in later remodellings of the work, which therefore omit mention of the Eastern capital) provides ‘a more serious subtext’ (p. 66) for the foolish and humorous aspects of the text (p. 79).

Schmidt aims to read word and image together in his analysis of Sebastian Brant’s *Ship of Fools*, and the twenty-four black-and-white illustrations of its charming woodcuts – many attributed to Albrecht Dürer – are a highlight. Schmidt offers his own analysis, but perhaps his most significant revelation is his reproduction of the table of contents from the first edition of Brant’s

work, omitted in all later editions until 2005, in which ‘the titles of the poems have nothing to do with the letter under which they come’ (p. 106). The work’s own deliberate mocking of structure rather makes fools out of all those who have struggled to perceive one.

Schwarz sets up a ‘fools’ contest’ (p. 109) between Till Eulenspiegel, of Germanic tradition, and Nasreddin Hodja, of Middle Eastern. Although Schwarz throws plenty of theories into the ring, his quirky structure works best where he lets the texts speak for themselves: I thoroughly enjoyed his adaptations of various anecdotes about each character. Glasner also looks at *Schwänke* or collections of anecdotes, this time about the jester Claus Narr (c. 1430–1515), explaining that the ‘aesthetic peculiarity’ (p. 131) of their didactic presentation by Wolfgang Büttner accounts for their ‘[i]nk into oblivion’ since the eighteenth century (p. 129). Le Saux considers propaganda and double readings in Wace, while Allen engages with the problem of appreciating medieval humour in her analysis of *Brut*, concluding that ‘[Lawman] surely has a sense of humour, which isolates lack of Christian principle by exaggeration and disproportion’ (p. 191). Biebenecker offers, as his title suggests, ‘A Small History of Laughter’, while Mazzadi and Thomas examine aspects of madness in Tristan texts. Perry closes the volume with an investigation of how the paradoxes and subversions inherent in the foolish behaviour of both eponymous characters of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* confront the conventions of romance and its heroes and interrogate the meaning of truth.

Diverse yet tightly united by their theme, together the essays in this volume offer a rich and entertaining exploration of the multifaceted figure of the medieval and early modern literary fool.

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**Poulsen**, Bjørn and Søren Michael **Sindbæk**, eds, *Settlement and Lordship in Viking and Early Medieval Scandinavia* (The Medieval Countryside, 9), Turnhout, Brepols, 2012; hardback; pp. xvii, 337; 20 b/w illustrations, 7 b/w tables, 16 b/w line art; R.R.P. €95.00; ISBN 9782503531311.

*Settlement and Lordship in Viking and Early Medieval Scandinavia* covers and further develops the research presentations of Aarhus University’s 2008 Interdisciplinary Conference on ‘Land and Lordship: Settlement and Social Power in Viking and Early Scandinavia’. Editors Bjørn Poulsen and

Søren Sindbæk are recognizable as current academic leaders in the fields of medieval Scandinavian and Viking history and archaeology, enabling the volume to bring these two disciplines together extremely successfully. Like many areas of medieval study, much needs to be done to breathe new life into academic research rather than relying on the scholarship from last century, and volumes like *Settlement and Lordship in Viking and Early Medieval Scandinavia* are one of the most effective ways of achieving this goal.

Poulsen and Sindbæk clearly recognize the problems many medievalists experience when comparing settlement and lordship in early medieval Scandinavia with the rest of Europe. They ascertain that lordship in the north was very different from other parts of Europe, a view supported by the research presented in the book. The chapters of the book are grouped into four thematic sections, 'Changing Aristocracies', 'Settlement and Social Development', 'Magnates and Manors', and 'Lords, Slaves and Tenants', and this division works well. The Scandinavian sources, both literary and archaeological are carefully considered within each chapter. Moreover, these sources are assessed across the concepts of aristocracy, social ties, landholding, and the development of a unique cultural landscape.

Sometimes the authors of individual chapters disagree with existing scholarship, but this is a positive point. Accessing such recent research naturally means that there is fresh debate about what the evidence actually represents. An obvious example is found within Judith Jesch's chapter, 'Runic Inscriptions and the Vocabulary of Land'. Within this chapter, it is refreshing to see discussion on the definition of *thegn* within Scandinavian society. Jesch asserts that in many cases the word *drengr* has been used misleadingly, believing it to refer to 'an established landowner', rather than the more traditional 'position of agent for the monarchy'. This is but one example found within the volume where a disagreement within traditional scholarship has been examined, with new conclusions drawn from the available evidence.

An interesting choice for inclusion in the volume is the chapter by Johnny Jakobsen, 'High Medieval Magnate Farms in North-West Sjælland, Denmark: Analyses of Magnate Farms in an East Danish Region, c. 1100–1400'. It is the method rather than the contents that make this chapter stand out, with the author applying a quantitative approach to the study of the development of settlements within eastern Denmark. Jakobsen urges the reader to consider that while such an approach is sometimes unpopular with medievalists, it works for scholars who want to investigate the geographical relationship between magnate farms and parishes.

Janken Myrdal's chapter is another stand out. 'Milking and Grinding, Digging and Herding: Slaves and Farmwork 1000–1300' considers the

work performed by slaves, while also touching on the same tasks, which had previously been performed by slaves, after the early fourteenth-century abolition of slavery. Myrdal argues that the elite needed slaves for the operation of their farms and estates, but as he indicates, neither the written nor the archaeological sources can completely answer all the questions one could ask about medieval Scandinavian slavery, so it is an area of continuing debate. However, Myrdal presents a useful starting point from which to develop a better understanding of the roles of slaves in the farms, primarily using the saga literature and written laws. He concludes with the comment that during 1000–1300, the division of labour was in a state of flux, while simultaneously the actual tasks needed did not change.

Each chapter could easily have its own dedicated review. It is not possible to highlight more than a few, so I have concentrated on the main points and the most interesting aspects of the book. My only complaint is that an index, which would be invaluable when using the book for future reference, has not been included. This volume will be of interest to anyone interested in current debates in Viking Age or medieval Scandinavia, no matter what the background or academic discipline of the reader.

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**Ranković**, Slavica, Leidulf **Melve**, and Else **Mundal**, eds, *Along the Oral-Written Continuum: Types of Texts, Relations and their Implications* (Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy, 20), Turnhout, Brepols, 2010; hardback; pp. vi, 484; 34 b/w illustrations, 17 b/w tables, 3 b/w line art; R.R.P. €105.00; ISBN 9782503534077.

The objective of this volume of essays, edited by Slavica Ranković, Leidulf Melve, and Else Mundal, is to explore how texts from the medieval era are spread across an oral-to-written continuum. The volume argues that it is impossible to classify texts as being from either the oral or the written tradition but that various aspects of texts fall somewhere on a continuum between these two axes. To make this point, the essays are divided into three sections, each making a significant contribution to an understanding of this concept.

The first part attempts to conceptualize the continuum and contains three essays. The first essay by John Miles Foley explores the features of three different types of texts, oral, written, and electronic. This inquiry finds that the oral and electronic texts have more in common with each other and

the written text stands alone. Ranković's contribution identifies how oral texts, and literary texts derived from the oral tradition, have many similar features when they are plotted on the continuum as a model for viewing the relationship between the oral and the written mediums. Finally Leidulf Melve's essay examines the 'textualisation' of society and its impact upon the reporting of events from the Investiture Contest in the eleventh century, through the Becket controversy, to the English Baronial Rebellion in the thirteenth century.

Having developed an understanding of what the oral-written continuum means in the medieval text and how it can be measured or analysed, the next part of the volume, *Oral Texts and Textual Performance: Verbal Art along the Continuum*, explores features of orality found in texts. Each essay presents a case study of a particular text or writers, generally from Scandinavia. The first three essays examine how events or persons are memorialized through various genres, such as skaldic poetry (Judith Jesch), memorial discourse (Joseph Harris), and Rune stones (Kristel Zilmer), emphasizing how all three genres have made use of features from both traditions. Next Else Mundal looks at the influence of oral performance on written texts and Judy Quinn takes the motif of 'drinking in' fluid as a metaphor for the transfer of knowledge in the poetic Edda. Another discussion of the Edda by Vésteinn Ólason concludes that it is impossible to say that these poems were composed exclusively in the oral context but were a result of a long-lasting interplay between the two traditions. Other genres examined to identify how the oral tradition remains visible in the written text in the second part of the volume include the poetic curse in an essay by Bernt Øyvind Thorvaldsen, the Legend of St Hallvard by Aslaug Ommundsen, fragments found in the *Cena Cypriani* and *Summarium Bible* by Lucie Doležalova, and prologues found in Old Icelandic prose literature by Jürg Glauser.

The final part of the volume moves away from Scandinavian literature to consider the oral-written continuum in administrative writing. Anna Adamska looks at how chronicles about the Bohemian King Venceslas and the Polish duke, Przemysl in the thirteenth century approached documents. An examination of these sources discusses the difference between a duke who was literate and who would get up during the night to read and a king who was illiterate and had documents read to him. The next essay by Theodore M. Anderson looks at how Charlemagne instituted a programme to ensure that language was written correctly. The last five essays examine the development of literacy in administrative writing in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Frisia in order to uncover how literacy grew throughout all sections of society.

This volume presents a comprehensive survey of how the oral and written traditions are presented in medieval texts. Although most essays are concerned with texts from Scandinavia, there are individual essays exploring these issues in other European contexts. This volume would be of most interest to researchers and postgraduate students interested in how oral and written traditions interact in medieval texts. However, the first three chapters in Part I offer an interesting description of how the oral-written continuum can be conceptualized and how both these traditions can be measured in texts. From this point of view, this volume would have a wide appeal to both students and researchers from the many disciplines such as history or linguistics that explore research methodologies. All essays are well written but can be occasionally quite dense due to the subject matter and process of argumentation. Ultimately, this volume makes a significant contribution to our understanding that oral and written traditions should not be seen as separate identities but are in fact two poles on a continuum and that most medieval texts contain elements of both traditions.

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**Richardson**, Todd M., *Pieter Bruegel the Elder: Art Discourse in the Sixteenth-Century Netherlands* (Visual Culture in Early Modernity), Farnham, Ashgate, 2011; hardback; pp. 268; 8 colour, 86 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £65.00; ISBN 9780754668169.

As Todd Richardson points out in his preface, the paintings of Pieter Bruegel the Elder have been the subject of continuous research since Karel van Mander first included him in his account of Dutch and Flemish painters in 1604. His works have been fruitfully mined for evidence of popular cultural activities, children's games, political commentary, religious ideas, and artistic innovation, as well as the use of humour. Richardson's new book, *Pieter Bruegel the Elder: Art Discourse in the Sixteenth-Century Netherlands*, joins a recent plethora of publications on this fascinating artist.

In this book, Richardson examines several works by Bruegel, all dating from the last years of Bruegel's life. While these works do focus on what we now identify as genre scenes, they are distinctive in their unusual depictions of peasant life, both in their scale and in the monumentality he gives to these figures. They challenge our preconceptions of such imagery. Richardson is interested in the 'visual interaction between artists', and argues that Bruegel's works, while being generally identified with a regional, vernacular style, in fact

reflect a knowledge of broader international trends in art making, including Italian ideas and motifs. In some ways, the most ambitious elements of this project is Richardson's interest in the responses these works provoked and how pictorial strategies chosen challenged the viewer's 'analytical capacities'.

In the first chapter, Richardson looks at contemporary writings by Lucas De Heere and Abraham Ortelius, locating their ideas within interests running concurrently through wider artistic debates. These included discussions about art and nature and the cultivation of a vernacular language and poetry that responded to classical models. This exploration provides a more nuanced understanding of these writings, and suggests an alternative understanding of the visual arts, recognizing the adaptation of Italianate forms for a Netherlandish visual mode.

In the second chapter, Richardson also considers the placement of these works in the homes of Bruegel's patrons. He looks at the collectors Jean Noirot and Nichlaes Jongelinck. Both were wealthy merchants and information for the former's collection comes from bankruptcy documents. We know, for example, that he hung four of Bruegel's works – one of which was the *Peasant Wedding Banquet* – together with the Noirot family portraits in the back dining room. Jongelinck hung Bruegel's paintings of the *Secrets of the Seasons* and Frans Floris's more classically influenced work, the cycle of the *Labours of Hercules* together, along with scenes of the *Judgement of Paris* and the three cardinal virtues. Both collectors reflect the growing trend amongst the middle classes to include more expensive art works in the public spaces of their homes, particularly the dining room, emulating the cultural elite. No incongruity was seen in mixing peasant scenes with classically inspired works. Richardson suggests that this trend also followed the fashion for enlightening table conversation, after the model provided by such books as Erasmus's *Convivia*, and such classical models as Plato and Plutarch.

In his discussion of the *Peasant Wedding Banquet*, Richardson continues this theme, pointing out the contrasts between the single-minded eating of the peasants attending the feast and the conversation taking place between a monk and the landowner at the end of the table. The variety of figures and activities would have provided ready fodder for dinner conversation. In this chapter and the following three Richardson provides a closer reading of the individual works chosen. For example, in this chapter he considers the device of the table that is displayed diagonally, in a fashion normally reserved for images of the wedding at Cana. Similarly, the treatment of the figures has a monumentality and an audacity of composition that is more expected in *historia*, or in the carefully placed figure studies found in the paintings by such artists as Raphael. Just as Pléiade poetics argued for a classically

nanced vernacular language, here Bruegel has drawn on the lessons gained from Italian art to reframe a vernacular genre painting. Similar discoveries are made with each example.

One oddity about this study, given the welcome use of careful visual analysis, is the absence of some rudimentary information about the scale of the works. In his discussion of the *Peasant and the Nest Robber*, Richardson remarks that the work is noticeably different in size from the previous works he has discussed, yet no sizes are provided, nor does he inform us whether this work is smaller or larger in scale. The book reads like a thesis; there is an excessive repetition of the arguments being made, and a presumption of specialized knowledge. He presumes we know the meaning of *kermis*, and does not define it despite asking what is the nature of a *kermis* in the Introduction. On the whole, though, these are minor flaws in a thoughtful and scholarly book with a welcome exploration of the visual language found in the works of Bruegel.

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**Rollason**, David, Conrad **Leyser**, and Hannah **Williams**, eds, *England and the Continent in the Tenth Century: Studies in Honour of Wilhelm Levison (1876–1947)* (Studies in the Early Middle Ages, 37), Turnhout, Brepols, 2010; hardback; pp. xxvi, 573; R.R.P. €135.00; ISBN 9782503532080.

Wilhelm Levison was already a towering figure of medieval scholarship when he escaped Germany to England in 1939. His forty years working at the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* – the historical enterprise that had leant authority to German nationalism – might then have seemed darkly ironic. However, his knowledge of medieval history informed his Ford Lectures delivered at Oxford in 1943, at a dark moment of European history. Published as *England and the Continent in the Eighth Century* (1946), these lectures reoriented Monumentalist scholarship towards an internationalist European vision. Levison's intellectual legacy reached beyond academia: the re-founding of Europe that began after the war, and the catastrophe that preceded it, demonstrate the implications of interpretations of the past for making the present.

The studies in this volume all include discussion of England and the Continent, though their emphasis varies. The first group of articles explores the ways contacts developed between England and the Continent. Stéphane Lebecq and Alban Gautier study trade routes and *emporia* that developed across

the tenth century, as seaways became safe after a period of disruption. John Isley's study of continental Germanic personal names in England suggests that many foreign churchmen and scholars found a home in England. Andreas Biber looks in the other direction, at Anglo-Saxons who moved to the Reich for various reasons, often as royal brides. Steven Vanderputten examines the close relationships and patronage system between the Archbishops of Canterbury and Flemish monasteries. Richard Gameson details the work of an English master illustrator working around the millennium in manuscripts associated with various continental monasteries. Michael Wood offers new insights into the career and connections of Israel the Grammarian, (probably) an Irish scholar based on the Continent, who spent time at King Æthelstan's court. Francesca Tinti digs into the relationships between England and the papacy at what was a low point of the Roman See. Marco Mostert's essay on Fleury and England – one of the most important relationships of the period – closes this section.

The second group explores aspects of the important theme of kingship and dynasties. All touch on the marriages of Æthelstan's half sisters into the emerging Ottonian imperial house. Veronica Ortenberg asks whether Æthelstan mattered in continental affairs – he did, and the stability of the House of Wessex helped. Sarah Foot's fascinating essay rescues Æthelstan's sisters Eadgyth and Ælfgifu (or Eadgifu) from the passive roles history implies for them, and charts their success in managing familial power in their German marriages. Simon Maclean examines the relationship between monastic reform and royal ideology in England and among the Franks, while David Warner looks at new ideologies of kingship in coronation ceremonies. Janet Nelson's essay compares the new styles of kingship in England and on the continent, as both underwent a phase of stability and consolidation. Closely related to ideas of kingship is the exercise of royal power through law, the subject of the next three essays. Thomas Zotz studies the evidence for Ottonian and West Saxon royal palaces as locations of court and rule. David Pratt's essay on English law in the tenth century notes a shift towards the king as the source of law and legal authority. Charles West examines similar developments in Lotharingia.

The essays in Part IV focus on the organization and culture of the Church. Wendy Davies studies pastoral care in Northern Spain, and notes some similarities and differences between the Spanish Church and the English system of minsters (a contested idea). Stefan Brink examines developments in early ecclesiastical organization in Sweden in the light of archaeological and documentary evidence. The next two essays focus more closely on the English Church and two aspects of its liturgical life. Sarah Hamilton delves into the

vexed question of the purpose and rationale of early English pontificals by examining comparable manuscripts from the Continent. Jesse Billett's essay offers a careful corrective to many assumptions that have plagued the study of the divine office in Anglo-Saxon England, with close attention to manuscript evidence. Brigitte Meijns uncovers the fascination of monarchs with relics, and the political and diplomatic uses they put them to.

It is fitting that the last three essays look to the role of medieval historians. Thomas Noble notes the lack of interest in writing history in tenth-century England, and the interest in church reform that characterizes what was written, beside different interests among German historians. Julia Crick unpicks the role of later forgers in recreating the tenth century in the later Middle Ages. Yann Coz's provocative essay undermines a received truth of Anglo-Saxon scholarship, by arguing that they were less interested in the Roman past than were their continental cousins.

The studies here began as papers at a Durham conference exploring aspects of the 'Age of Iron'. This impressive and well-illustrated collection will remain essential reading for any student of the period.

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**Rooney, Kenneth**, *Mortality and Imagination: The Life of the Dead in Medieval English Literature* (Disputatio, 12), Turnhout, Brepols, 2011; hardback; pp. x, 304; 11 colour illustrations; R.R.P. €100.00; ISBN 9782503524313.

The porous boundaries in the Middle Ages between the dead and the living, and the role of the medieval imagination in configuring the dead in a multiplicity of ways, are the subject of Kenneth Rooney's study. He probes aspects of medieval beliefs and attitudes that remain an alterity for us, despite our increased exposure to violence and death through today's media. Medieval people were confronted regularly by the reality of physical decay, and their perceptions of the more gruesome aspects of mortality appear in both texts and art. This focus on what is thought to happen to the dead body, the literary perspective from which Rooney explores his subject, and the wide range of texts discussed, complement both scholarship with a religious or historical base and literary studies with a narrower focus. Hence his work could serve students and scholars from any discipline with an interest in attitudes to death in the Middle Ages.

Rooney's central thesis is that notions of the macabre began in homiletic rhetoric, and emerged visually in pictorial art, with an ultimate flowering in *transi* tombs and images of the *Danse Macabre* and *The Legend of the Three Living and Three Dead*. This iconography then fed back into literary representations. He starts with a long discussion of the cultural context of macabre thinking and the preoccupation with the decaying corpse, the *transi*. Subsequent chapters move from representations of the inert corpse to those of the revenant, the animated dead body, and the disembodied ghost. Later chapters continue with the analysis of texts that illuminate the imagined experience of being dead, and works in which the personified figure of Death appears.

There are many aspects of this book that deserve appreciation. The book is a vast compendium of information about attitudes to, and beliefs about, death in the Middle Ages and later. Rooney is an excellent storyteller, and takes us through many texts in a beguiling and easy-to-read style, frequently with a gentle humour. A literary historian who has his readers bursting to read the texts he discusses has achieved something that one would hope would render any defects in his work negligible.

However, I found it hard to ignore the book's problems. First, the structure: Rooney repeatedly defines his purpose as dealing with the macabre. But unable to resist the much broader context, he spends many pages digressing. He strains to fit his examples into his argument; for example, is a mention of worms sufficient to define a text as macabre? He strains even harder to identify necrophilia in his texts. I frequently wanted to argue. He has trouble containing his material in the designated chapters, since many of his examples fit under multiple headings. This difficulty seems inevitable given the enormously diverse and inconsistent nature of his material. The scope of his study stretches way beyond its promise of dealing with death in Middle English literature, to include Boccaccio, French texts, many pages on non-English images, multiple discussions of early modern examples, and many other barely relevant digressions into background information or non-macabre examples. Interesting collections of epigraphs before each chapter are presumably intended to show that these attitudes persisted up to the nineteenth century (even Tennyson is quoted); but they do serve to cloud the stated medieval focus of the book. A simple modification of subtitle and more accurate definitions of scope would help the reader's expectations.

Beyond these structural anomalies, Rooney's style presents problems. Apart from his engaging narrative style, the complexity of his discussion is compounded by his penchant for unusual words and secondary or obsolete meanings: *condign*, *intercalate*, *invention* (for 'discovery'), *interruption* (for 'eruption'), and many more. For example, what is a reader to make of

alliterative verse's 'tendency to fashion objects in *hecatombs* of synonyms' (my italics, p. 246)?

More serious are concerns about misquotations, errors in translation, and misleading use of sources. The four-line riddle 'Erthe upon Erthe' contains three clear typographical errors, one omitted word, and *throh* incomprehensibly glossed as 'bonds' (p. 43). And in citing Paul Binski's *Medieval Death: Ritual and Representation* (Ithaca, 1996) on the number of *transi* tombs (Binski, p. 142: about 270 in Northern Europe), Rooney's confusing sentence seems to assert that under 300 are extant in England (p. 45). It is beyond my brief to check all Rooney's quotations, translations, and cited sources; I hope these two examples are egregious.

Finally, for a beautifully produced publication, it is regrettable that this book contains numerous typographical errors, grammatical mistakes, confusing punctuation, and mistakes in the latter. Can these really have been in Rooney's original dissertation? But read it for a general feeling for the medieval mindset and death's multiple ways of manifesting in the Middle Ages, for the many texts recounted and discussed so beguilingly, and for its vast amount of information about pre-modern death.

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**Rousseau, Marie-Hélène**, *Saving the Souls of Medieval London: Perpetual Chantries at St Paul's Cathedral, c. 1200–1548* (Church, Faith and Culture in the Medieval West), Farnham, Ashgate, 2011; hardback; pp. 256; 3 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £65.00; ISBN 9781409405818.

With *Saving the Souls of Medieval London: Perpetual Chantries at St Paul's Cathedral*, Marie-Hélène Rousseau presents a thorough and detailed account of the establishment and operation of the perpetual chantries of St Paul's Cathedral throughout the institution's pre-Reformation history. Don't be misled by the title or the claim that the book 'investigates the chantries and their impact on the life, services and clerical community of the cathedral' (p. 9); this is no social history. What it offers its readers is 'factual' history – essentially an abundance of information and more of a very complex jigsaw puzzle than a sophisticated analysis. The book has its origins in the PhD thesis Rousseau completed in 2003: Rousseau has obviously received excellent training and her outstanding scholarship is clearly demonstrated in her thorough knowledge of the vast array of archival sources and in her ability to draw connections between them all.

Without having read the thesis, it is difficult to know how much adaptation has occurred to convert it into a monograph, but a number of notes refer the reader to the thesis for information evidently not found in the book. Unfortunately, the structure and approach tend to betray the book's origins. While it makes sense for a doctoral project to focus on a defined body of records, the result of focusing exclusively and inwardly on St Paul's is somewhat insular, and there is a level of contextualizing and comparison that is wanting. The material is organized under fairly straightforward headings like 'Founding Chantries' and 'Managing Chantries' that seem intuitively appropriate. Perhaps it is inevitable, but overlaps have occurred, and some of the evidence gets used again with no acknowledgement of the repetition. Sometimes too, the arrangement of information is forced: the section on 'Chaplains' Wills' in the 'Serving Chantries' chapter, for instance, is not really about chaplains serving chantries but rather discusses relationships between the chaplains.

More problematically, the approach does not seem to allow for much more than a cursory coverage of the topic. Rousseau's project is primarily about information gathering and such 'issues' as do occur get glossed over or simply left up in the air. However, for a study that is primarily about presenting facts, it is striking how many times 'presumably', 'may have', and 'probably' appear in the prose and these assumptions – particularly with regard to relationships, emotions, and motivations, as in, for instance: 'The fact that the [chaplains] took part in the construction of the statutes may have increased their sense of belonging to the college and their pride in that sense of belonging' (p. 91) – often seem more like common sense guesses, than serious analyses.

A number of errors have crept in probably at the copy-editing stage. For example, what should be 'masses' has turned into 'es' (p. 43) and in a passage referring to numerous dates, 'On June 1534' and 'on April 1535' appear, where clearly the number of the day has inadvertently been deleted. In general, Rousseau writes plain, but clear and accessible prose, with barely a semi-colon or dash in sight. However, her habit of leaving research questions in the text – such as: 'So how were the chantry chaplains actually chosen?' (p. 38); 'Why did the founders feel the need to establish such systems of supervision?' (p. 41) – seems a little clumsy. It is also unfortunate that much of the information is reported, rather than shown. Even fairly dry, repetitive administrative records can conceal colourful comments and turns of phrase, sometimes surprisingly revealing, and are worth quoting directly with greater frequency.

A map of the Precinct of St Paul's has been included (p. 71). Some of the names of colleges and chantries appear, but the map has been borrowed from John Schofield (another London scholar) and is thus not directly related to the text. It would have been preferable to have the map specially commissioned for the book; I wanted a better sense of how all of the chantries, chapels, and altars mentioned fitted into the space *within* the cathedral building. While the index is somewhat perfunctory – consisting largely of proper names and entries like 'mass', 'ordination', and 'library', alerting the reader not to expect that any 'concepts' will be dealt with – there is an impressively extensive bibliography, reflecting the thorough research that underpins Rousseau's study.

Despite my criticisms, impressive research is what *Saving the Souls of Medieval London* offers and what it successfully delivers. An appendix outlining all the known chantries, and the names, dates, and places associated with them, the chief product of Rousseau's research, is also included and this no doubt will serve as an essential resource, as will the book itself, for all scholars of the religious history of late medieval London.

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**Sullivan**, Karen, *The Inner Lives of Medieval Inquisitors*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2011, cloth; pp. 312; R.R.P. US\$45.00; ISBN 9780226781679.

In this fascinating book, Karen Sullivan, whose previous books include *The Interrogation of Joan of Arc* and *Truth and the Heretic: Crises of Knowledge in Medieval French Literature*, explores the motivations of selected medieval inquisitors as revealed by their words and actions. She reminds us that, however impersonally institutions may wish to present themselves, they are composed of individuals who possess subjectivity and hence the capacity for moral choice. In focusing on the individual inquisitor rather than on the historical development and circumstances of the Inquisition's operation, Sullivan sees herself as countering the impersonal emphasis of recent historians. As a professor of literature rather than of history, Sullivan is concerned with texts and their epistemic structures. She aspires to represent, in her own words, a New Humanism.

Wazo was an eleventh-century bishop of Liège who believed that every effort should be made to convert heretics to the Church. Aquinas was a thirteenth-century Dominican who believed that every effort should be made

to protect the Church from heretics. If we understand love as an emotion that can be manifested both as charity and as zeal, we can see Wazo motivated by a charitable concern for the salvation of the heretic and Aquinas by a zealous concern for the salvation of the faithful. This contrast, between charity and zeal, structures Sullivan's book.

Sullivan begins with Bernard of Clairvaux's zealous pursuit of Paris masters and Cathar heretics. Bernard's famous rhetoric abounds in images of vicious predatory beasts (heretics, Abelard) attacking innocent, defenceless women (the Church). Bernard's flat refusal to listen to any arguments for the defence provided a model for subsequent inquisitors. Bernard was not technically an inquisitor. Dominic Guzman, the founder of the Dominicans, was. Yet Dominic emerges as profoundly desiring the conversion of heretics. It was this, after all, which led him to found the convent at Prouille and to establish his order of humble preaching brothers to lead the erring back to the Church.

Conrad of Marburg would have a hard time inspiring sympathy in anyone's book. It is difficult not to applaud the overdue murder of this sadistic, homicidal maniac. Conrad regarded heretics as followers of the Devil and thought it far better to burn a hundred faithful Catholics than to allow a single heretic to escape. From a penitential perspective, everyone is guilty and guilt can only be expiated through suffering. In torturing and burning the innocent, Conrad was opening for them the path of martyrdom and hence salvation, an argument that was to provide an enduring justification for the Inquisition.

With Peter of Verona, the focus is on the rhetoric of his martyrdom as it was constructed immediately following his death at the hands of an assassin hired by heretics. Himself from a heretical family, Peter was dedicated to converting his former co-religionists, but it was his passive acceptance of death that made him an exemplar of an innocent Church murderously assaulted by its enemies.

In Bernard Gui, we come closest to the impersonal figure of the ideal inquisitor. A tireless administrator, Gui served for seventeen years as inquisitor of a notoriously heretical region and wrote one of the most important inquisitorial manuals. Often perceived as relatively lenient, given the large number of people he failed to burn, he is nevertheless placed by Sullivan in the zealous camp for his indifference to the heretics' welfare and his preoccupation with the performative, hence educational, nature of the inquisitorial process.

Bernard Délicieux was a Franciscan who incited his countrymen to rise up against the (Dominican) inquisitors who were (unjustly?) accusing them

of heresy, defaming their good name, seizing their goods, and torturing and burning their bodies. Unsurprisingly, he died in a papal prison. Bernard emerges as a dedicated revolutionary, ultimately indifferent to the question of heresy.

Sullivan finishes with Nicholas Eymerich, composer of an inquisitorial manual later expanded by Francis Peña. It advocates torture and deceit to extract the necessary and inevitable confession from the accused and never entertains the possibility of innocence. This chapter has illuminating reflections on medieval attitudes to pain, torture, truth, and the self, as well as on the theological background to the manual's dubious moral positions.

Sullivan's conclusion is brief and pointed – pointed directly, though not explicitly, at the West's relationship with the Muslim world. Can we, like the zealots, justify anything to protect ourselves against our attackers? Should we, like the charitable, hope for their conversion even at the risk of danger to ourselves? Or are we, indeed, the actual aggressors?

Sullivan's focus on the individual makes for a lively and readable book. Her exploration of her subjects' beliefs and their epistemic context is intelligent, sensitive, and balanced. This book is essential reading for anyone striving to understand the medieval position on heresy, though it is to be hoped that its audience will extend far further.

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**Summit, Jennifer, *Memory's Library: Medieval Books in Early Modern England*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2008; cloth; pp. x, 343; 8 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. US\$35.00; ISBN 9780226781716.**

The *Act against Superstitious Books and Images* (1550) ordered the public destruction of all medieval service books that had survived the dissolution of the English monasteries during the previous decade. Though a majority of medieval manuscripts were indeed destroyed, some still managed to survive into the post-Reformation period. Jennifer Summit is interested in the fate of these medieval books in early modern England, seen especially in the context of the history of libraries. She focuses on the period between 1431 and 1631, stretching from the collecting activities of Humfrey, Duke of Gloucester, to the equally influential work of Sir Robert Cotton.

Disclaiming 'a general history of libraries' as her goal, she proceeds through close readings of texts written by a number of important figures of this period: John Lydgate, Thomas More, Thomas Starkey, Thomas Elyot,

Matthew Parker, Edmund Spenser, Robert Cotton, William Camden, John Weever, Francis Bacon, and Thomas James. These readings draw out the authors' views about the medieval past, the nature of libraries, the organization of knowledge, and much more. The result is a rich and sophisticated study that deals with a wide range of topics and ideas. It is exhaustively documented, with the notes making up more than a quarter of the text.

This is a challenging book, which addresses a number of significant questions. Ultimately, though, the results are unsatisfactory, in several important ways. To start with the title: though the book begins and ends with the statement that 'memory is a library', and the 'Coda' contains some brief allusions to concepts of memory in cognitive science and computer science, the substance of the book is not really about memory. Where the concept of 'memory' does occur, it is used loosely to refer to a whole series of different types of 'remembering'. 'Memory as a library' tends to be used interchangeably with 'library as memory' – whereas, in reality, they are two very different things that ought to be carefully distinguished.

In her Introduction, Summit draws a contrast between monastic libraries which upheld the authority of the Church of Rome and the major post-Reformation libraries which became 'centers of national memory' (p. 3). This is a surprisingly simplistic statement from an author who, on several occasions, emphasizes her commitment to a more 'nuanced' view of the relationship between the pre- and post-Reformation eras. It begs a whole series of questions about the nature and purposes of medieval libraries, let alone the nature of 'national memory' and the role of libraries in the modern world. At the very least, the statement needs to be explained and discussed more fully.

Summit's assumptions about the nature and history of libraries tend to be over-simplified in other ways too. Medieval libraries and monastic libraries are referred to as if they were one and the same – even though cathedral, college, and school libraries (and even personal libraries) are referred to several times in passing. The extent and contents of post-Reformation libraries are never fully discussed, and the fact that they contained many more printed books than medieval manuscripts is largely glossed over. But this has significant implications for the survival of 'medieval books'. How did the manuscripts fit into the larger context of the post-Reformation library as a whole? Should the survival of medieval manuscripts be distinguished from the survival of medieval texts in printed form? Libraries were only one aspect of the various collecting activities of men like Cotton, as Summit acknowledges. How did their collections of 'curiosities' affect their approach to medieval manuscripts and their understanding of the meaning and significance of those manuscripts?

The methodology adopted for this book produces a series of admirably close and sensitive readings of specific texts. But this is achieved at some cost to the coherence of the overall argument. The themes in More's *Utopia*, Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*, Camden's *Britannia*, and Bacon's *Novum Organum* – to name only a few of the works discussed – are complex and multi-faceted. While they each have *some* connection to libraries and/or the religious controversies of the period, Summit tends to allow the texts themselves to set the agenda for the discussion. So we are given antiquarianism and memorials in Camden, theories of knowledge and of library organization in Bacon, the place of books in an ideal society in More, and Spenser's poetic encounters with libraries. The result reads like a series of loosely linked essays, rather than a systematic analysis of the relationship between medieval manuscripts, libraries, and post-Reformation readers and collectors.

Summit's awareness of recent literature on the nature and purpose of libraries appears to be very limited. Her 'Coda' purports to deal with digital libraries and with the impact of the digital world on the future of the library. A polemical opinion-piece from 1993 is cited – and rightly criticized for its rhetorically simplified view of chained medieval libraries. But most of the truly vast literature, with its sophisticated and 'nuanced' analysis of this complex subject, is ignored. Elsewhere, Summit expresses surprise at the 'degree of plasticity' evident in post-Reformation libraries, and describes it as 'shocking to modern sensibilities' (p. 3). But rigorous selection and selectivity are fundamental principles in twenty-first-century librarianship; even the biggest national libraries only collect a fraction of the world's printed publications. The principles underlying selection may have changed, but contemporary libraries are deliberately selective creations designed to serve specific social and cultural purposes, just as post-Reformation libraries were. The 'universal library' is – and has always been – a myth.

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**Tittler**, Robert, *Portraits, Painters, and Publics in Provincial England, 1540–1640*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012; hardback; pp. 216; 26 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £60.00; ISBN 9780199585601.

Painted portraits capture more than just a representation of the sitter. They reflect the society in which both the subject and the practitioner lived and how they chose to be depicted. They also speak of the transmission of skills and ideas on artistic representation, while providing a source for information on consumption and trade through the materials used and depicted. Although

there is a substantial body of work on court portraiture for the Elizabethan and early Stuart period, regional English portraiture has not received the attention it deserves. Robert Tittler addresses this issue in his most recent publication. He succeeds in contextualizing regional portraiture, setting the groundwork for further scholarship.

The areas Tittler has chosen to focus on are the rich veins of social and cultural experience of the English provinces. By locating portraiture in the context of its own era, Tittler reinforces the notion that for much of the period it was the subject matter of the painting that was valued over its aesthetics, or who carried out the painting. Away from London, and the court, experience of portraiture was dictated more by the skills of the available craftspeople that carried out the work and the demands and knowledge of the client. Through the exploration of archival sources, Tittler demonstrates that portraits appeared in wills and probate inventories of a socially diverse public, widely distributed throughout England. He further surveys provincial painters, examining their training and work practice, and includes discussion of the wide range of craftspeople – not necessarily painters – who may have been creating portraits. Indeed it is interesting to ponder that these practitioners were by necessity turning their hand to jobs as they arose rather than specializing specifically in portraiture. Only a very few, mostly London based, painters were able to specialize in the genre, and for much of the period painters were poorly paid for painting a portrait.

By focusing on the town of Chester, Tittler is able to sketch the careers of a number of lesser-known painters and highlight the importance of the journeyman painter to the master's practice when the workload demanded an extra brush. He also touches on the role that guilds played for the practitioner in a provincial town, along with painters who were members of aristocratic households outside of London. Women painters too are discussed, who may have taken over their husband's business on his death. By considering specific women, Tittler is able to demonstrate the integral role the wife played in the business of a painter.

Tittler's examination of the resources available to a painter, both material and cultural draws, in part, on current technical research into Tudor portraiture, specifically the project *Making Art in Tudor Britain* currently being conducted at the National Portrait Gallery, London, and also other London galleries' analysis of their own collections. This important examination of the materials behind the paintings informs research on trade, consumption of painters' materials, and the circulation of ideas. It is unfortunate that this level of scrutiny has not been carried out on regional vernacular portraiture, and Tittler laments this fact. However, he is able to draw together archival

evidence and a considered visual inspection to provide an evaluation of the pigments and colours used by regional portraitists to suggest the availability of materials. He also reflects on the exposure that the regional painter had to concepts such as the depiction of a three-dimensional subject and the use of pattern books. What he makes clear is the role of heraldry, particularly in regional portraiture, to emphasize the gentility of the sitter. Tittler also posits that native English portraitists reflected a strong heraldic tradition in the characteristics of their work and colour palette. In addition objects and devices within the portraits contribute to what Tittler terms the ‘common vocabulary of the English provincial portrait’ (p. 151).

Tittler’s aim in writing this book was to ‘investigate the formation of a public for portraiture’ for the period, examine the ‘social composition and nature of that public’, and highlight ‘the role of the painters who responded to it’ (p. 9). He has successfully achieved this, adding to the understanding of the execution and the consumption of English portraiture by the regional English public. The book is well illustrated, but I would have liked to see more of the portraits reproduced in colour. Ultimately, I applaud the interdisciplinarity with which Tittler has approached the topic: he has very fruitfully drawn together the work of historians, art historians and materials specialists to produce a rich bounty for future scholarship.

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**Vanderputten**, Steven, ed., *Understanding Monastic Practices of Oral Communication (Western Europe, Tenth-Thirteenth Centuries)* (Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy, 21), Turnhout, Brepols, 2011; hardback; pp. xii, 390; 7 b/w illustrations, 3 b/w tables; R.R.P. €85.00; ISBN 9782503534824.

In the Introduction to this collection of essays, editor Steven Vanderputten proposes that ‘Although traditionally defined as a literate environment, monastic culture depended on a range of communicative media which was just as large, and in some ways more sophisticated in its variety, than that of other sections of society’ (p. 4). Originally the proceedings of a 2008 conference at Ghent university, *Understanding Monastic practices of Oral Communication* delves into the hidden world of non-literary exchanges of information within the monastic orders of eleventh- to thirteenth-century Europe. Within its pages there is much to delight and intrigue medievalists, especially those interested in narrative, monasticism, literacy, and high medieval intellectual culture.

Within many of the essays, a series of common assumptions surrounding the role of the spoken and written word in monastic cultures are critiqued, debunked, or modified. The collection offers a glimpse of a world behind the documentary evidence of monastic life into a world of words, songs, and stories not normally amenable to academic inquiry.

The volume is divided into five sections entitled 'The Politics of Non-Written Communication', 'Traces of Orality in Liturgy, Customs and Material Culture', 'Traces of Orality in the Transmission of Memory', 'Talking Shop: Educating the Monastic Mind' and 'Talking Shop: Voicing the Monastic Mind'. The contents are somewhat raw and unassimilated conference material, albeit excellently edited and presented to best advantage. It has the feeling of a conference to it, with a diverse range of articles in English, French, and German united by a common thread. In a comprehensive and thoughtful Introduction, Vanderputten admits that the volume is part of an ongoing conversation, and hopes that it will not be the last word on the matter (p. 7). In this respect, the volume is a success, for it opens up a topic for interpretation that might otherwise have lacked an outlet.

Certain papers are more clearly representative of the volume theme as a whole than others. In 'Communication at the Abbey of St Gall', Gerd Althoff explores the quotidian monastic politics of speech and silence within the histories of Ekkehard of St Gall. Exposing a world of speech politics, Althoff argues for a distinct gap between monastic rule, concession to non-monastic visitors, and internal feuds and animosities amongst the monks that complicate the serene stereotype of monastic life (p. 22). In her contribution, Diane J. Reilly presents an account of early Cistercianism through documentary analysis which 'suggests that fundamental to the Cistercians' early reform agenda was the education of their new monks on the Scripture and its traditional interpretation, through oral instruction in formal settings' (p. 114), providing a thorough review of the literature in the process.

Edina Bokózy argues for the influence of monastic and popular orality in the construction of hagiography, proposing that the tropes deployed in *vitae* were powerfully influenced by generations of storytelling. In his article, Geoffrey Koziol explores the role of Carolingian history in the monastic politics of early Capetian monasticism, arguing as a case study that 'Charles the Simple himself told the canons of Saint-Corneille about his family history', transforming the monastery into a memorial of his sense of dynasty and history (pp. 180–81). Albrecht Classen offers an insight into evidence of 'powerful messages contained in the famous tapestries created in the Cistercian women's convent in Weinhausen near Celle', arguing that the visual culture of the nuns represents a non-verbal strategy for convent

members to reach out and communicate with their sisters (p. 243). Although many more studies flesh out this volume, these exemplars give a sense of the metanarrative, the exploration of 'the complex reality of the ways in which monks and nuns communicated both with each other and with the outside world' (p. 5).

If I were to level one major criticism at this volume, it would not be at the content, but at the manner in which the content is collated. The volume appears to have been largely inspired by the panel themes of the conference from which it is derived, and I cannot help but feel that a restructuring of papers for the specific conceits of the text could have helped the volume to hang together more effectively. This aside, the constituent articles of this edited volume provide a sound introduction to a wide range of perspectives on non-written monastic communication. *Understanding Monastic Practices of Oral Communication* lives up to the promise of its editor, adding an exciting, new consideration to any study of monastic culture, and providing a range of exploratory work that profitably shares the findings of its seed conference in a pleasant-to-read publication.

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