

Short Notices

Brown, Michelle P., *The Lindisfarne Gospels and the Early Medieval World*, London, British Library, 2011; pp. 184; 100 colour and b/w illustrations; hardback; R.R.P. £25.00; ISBN 9780712358019.

The volume known as the Lindisfarne Gospels (British Library, Cotton MS Nero D.iv), one of the greatest and best-known treasures of the British Library, needs little if any introduction. It is famous for its remarkable decoration and illumination, especially the intricate ‘carpet-pages’, ‘Incipit’ pages, and portraits of the four Evangelists, which are astonishing works of art in their own right. Images from the manuscript have been reproduced numerous times, and two full facsimiles have been published. The most elaborately decorated pages are now available for viewing on the British Library’s web site. And yet there is much that is still unknown or unclear about the origin and history of the Lindisfarne Gospels. Scholars continue to debate where and when this manuscript was made, and by whom.

Michelle Brown brings a wealth of knowledge about the Lindisfarne Gospels to this new volume, including her experience as a former Curator of Illuminated Manuscripts for the British Library. Extensively illustrated, this looks at first glance like a coffee-table book, but it is much more than that. After an initial introduction to the historical context, Brown examines the Lindisfarne Gospels from every possible angle: its history, the Gospel texts it contains (Latin and Old English), the scripts and the art, and the techniques used to make such an elaborate book. Sections intended for a scholarly audience are distinguished from those aimed at a more general audience by a differently coloured typeface – an approach that works surprisingly well. Brown gives a clear and thorough account of the intricacies of the scholarly debates around the Gospels, with extensive references and detailed discussion. She incorporates her own contributions to these debates and sets out her own conclusions clearly and persuasively: ‘the book was made by a single artist-scribe – probably Bishop Eadfrith – on Holy Island around 715–20.’

Scholars will no doubt continue to debate the origins and history of the Lindisfarne Gospels for years to come. In the meantime, Michelle Brown has produced an exceptional book that combines an excellent summary of the scholarly debates with an attractive and detailed overview of this extraordinary manuscript.

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Burke, Peter, *A Social History of Knowledge II: From the 'Encyclopédie' to Wikipedia*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2012; paperback; pp. vii, 359; 17 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £17.99; ISBN 9780745650432.

The first volume of Peter Burke's *A Social History of Knowledge*, published in 2000, covered the period from Gutenberg to Diderot (c. 1450 to 1750). It was a relatively brief overview (200 pages) arranged around several major themes: institutions involved in maintaining and disseminating knowledge; patterns of geographical distribution; readers and books; the classification of knowledge (through libraries, encyclopaedias, and curricula); and its ownership and control. It also noted some of the problems of definition and scope inherent in the title, through an introductory discussion drawing on the sociology of Durkheim and Weber and the postmodern perspectives of Foucault and Bourdieu. Burke used a definition of knowledge that focused on the 'dominant forms of knowledge, particularly the knowledge possessed by European intellectuals'. But he also noted the plurality of 'knowledges' during this period and offered some thoughts on the relationship between 'academic' knowledge and practical and oral forms of knowledge.

The second volume brings the story up to the present, beginning from Diderot's *Encyclopédie* and finishing with Wikipedia. It retains a similar focus – 'western academic knowledge' – but refers more explicitly and frequently to 'knowledges' in the plural. Once again, the approach is mainly thematic; Burke looks at methods of gathering, analysing, disseminating, and employing knowledge across this period and ends by looking at the subject from geographical, sociological, and chronological perspectives. Two particularly interesting chapters examine the phenomena of 'losing' and 'dividing' knowledges, designed to get away from the idea of the cumulative growth of a single body of knowledge.

In all, this is an effective overview and orientation to the subject, with pointers to the key issues and developments. The emphasis on methods of communicating, storing, and controlling knowledge (rather than on the knowledge itself) is particularly valuable. Burke does his best to avoid the 'the common assumption of continuous progress' (p. 7) and to minimise the inherent chronological perspective of the title. But the limitations of the definition of 'knowledge' employed are more evident than they were in the first volume, and the acknowledgement of postmodernist pluralities in the first volume seems to have been lost.

Although noticeably longer than the first volume, this second volume is still a high-level synthesis based on secondary sources. Burke covers an enormous amount of ground, but at times does little more than note significant people and events. An alternative might have been to identify and discuss a small number of representative people and institutions in more detail, rather than trying to cover everything. Developments since 1990 – which have

frequently been touted as the most significant since the invention of printing – are dealt with in ten pages at the end of the book, with only occasional references to them in the thematic chapters. While the Web and Wikipedia are discussed briefly, there is no treatment of contemporary phenomena like social media and ubiquitous computing.

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Clay, John-Henry, *In the Shadow of Death: Saint Boniface and the Conversion of Hesia, 721–54* (Cultural Encounters in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, 11), Turnhout, Brepols, 2010; hardback; pp. xix, 487; 41 b/w illustrations, 21 maps; R.R.P. €105.00; ISBN 9782503531618.

According to John-Henry Clay, the Wessex-born St Boniface, long known as ‘the apostle of the Germans’, is ‘one of the most intensely studied figures of the early Middle Ages’ (p. 403). So why should an account of just thirty-three years of his missionary campaign in an area equivalent to the pre-Reformation archidiaconate of Fritzlar require a 487-page book?

Clay distinguishes his own work from previous scholarship on Boniface by its interdisciplinary nature. He describes himself as ‘a historian of anthropological bent’ but firmly places his work within the pale of ‘landscape studies’ (pp. 39–40). However, his chief methodological novelty consists in using the rich deposit of North Hessian archaeological research to explore how the mission was carried out at a regional level or, as we might say, on the ground. Nor is it just the physical landscape of hills, groves, and springs with names suggesting pagan cultic worship that Clay examines, for he projects upon it various metaphorical landscapes: ‘the landscapes of politics, of shifting boundaries of settlement and control, of movement and trade, of ecclesiastical governance and religious devotion’ (p. 5).

Before reaching this point in Chapters 7 and 8, entitled ‘Representing the Mission’ and ‘Experiencing the Mission’, a great deal of preliminary territory must be traversed: namely ‘Introduction’, ‘Historiography’, ‘West Saxon Origins’, ‘Hesia on the Eve of the Bonifatian Mission’, and ‘Chronology of the Bonifatian Mission in Hesia’. The thoroughness with which preliminary debates on such matters as pastoral care in the early Anglo-Saxon period and the interpretation of furnished inhumations arranged in large cemeteries are canvassed doubtless reflects the book’s origin as a PhD thesis. Many readers might have been prepared to take on trust conclusions reached here only after extensive argumentation, so as to arrive more directly at Clay’s original contributions to the subject of the mission to Hesia.

For all the interesting byways that the author traverses, it is not clear how history viewed through landscape differs from what historians have long been doing. R. H. Tawney spoke of the need for the historian to have a stout pair of boots, and even this review shows that topographical metaphors pervade everyday speech. Furthermore, what we might think of as traditional historical discourse is easily subsumed into the landscape project by metaphorical means.

One of the most interesting sections of the book is Clay's analysis of the terms and expressions used in correspondence about the mission (pp. 238–77 and App. 1 and 2). This kind of literary analysis would appear to be on quite a different plane from the discussion of the physical landscape until we recall (though surprisingly Clay does not) that many such tropes are what E. R. Curtius would have called *topoi*. So perhaps everything can be connected to 'landscape' if broadly enough conceived. Readers must make up their own minds about how novel and well-grounded such an approach may be.

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Dolan, Frances E., *True Relations: Reading, Literature, and Evidence in Seventeenth-Century England*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013; cloth; pp. 344; 10 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. US\$59.95, £39.00; ISBN 9780812244854.

Frances Dolan's *True Relations: Reading, Literature, and Evidence in Seventeenth-Century England* is a textual journey into the meaning of 'true relations', which refers, in simple terms, to the credible reportage of happenings often backed up with well-intentioned documentation attesting to one account's worthiness over any other 'true relation'. Dolan is keenly interested in debates surrounding interpretations of textual evidence and how such debates provide a framework for achieving a new historical understanding of 'evidence', particularly during the seventeenth century.

The book is made up of six chapters, divided into two sections. 'Crises of Evidence', the first section, introduces the reader to early modern crises of evidence, such as Anne Gunter's bewitching and theories surrounding the Great London Fire of 1666. It provides an interesting examination of competing and consenting standards of evidence. Section I focuses on the use of, and dependence upon, evidentiary material, the validity, authenticity, and completeness of which would be judged inadequate by contemporary standards. For example, Dolan analyses the importance placed on political and confessional affiliations in evidentiary debates about the London Fire.

The second section of the book – ‘Genres of Evidence’ – explores the reading of texts as ‘genre’, though here Dolan refers to genre in the sense that ‘texts can be grouped according to the expectations they invite from and the demands they impose on their readers’ (p. 23) rather than being inclusive of a specific set of writing norms. Chapter 4 is especially interesting for its analysis of evidentiary depositions and the entrenched habit of labelling such depositions as ‘fictions’. It highlights Dolan’s central argument that relational texts raise many more questions than they seek to answer: there is no definitive way for readers to assess the true value and veracity of true relations.

The value of *True Relations: Reading, Literature, and Evidence in Seventeenth-Century England* is that it attempts to provide an analysis of the gaps found between fact and fiction in legal depositions, plays (as genre), and advice literature – it expertly connects past debates about text as historical evidence to contemporary understandings of seventeenth-century texts as evidence. The book also introduces new concepts to debates surrounding historical evidence, such as the need to include church court depositions and advice literature as genre.

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Fulk, R. D. and Stefan **Jurasinski**, eds, *The Old English Canons of Theodore* (Early English Text Society, Supplementary Series, 25), Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012; hardback; pp. lxxii, 102; 1 b/w illustration; R.R.P. £40.00; ISBN 9780199668182.

This welcome addition to the EETS series offers all three versions of the Old English translation of the Latin collections of Theodore’s penitentials, compiled by Eoda in the early eighth century.

The text itself occupies a mere fifteen pages of the volume, allowing plenty of space for contextual analysis. This includes a comprehensive Introduction to the text, with exhaustive descriptions of each manuscript, including key differences between the versions, and analyses of the language, sources, and background. This section includes highly original research and analysis of the manuscripts, enabling the editors to make assertions about the origins of the recension on which the manuscripts were based. Though much of this material is highly specialised, the Introduction allows readers to scan the relevant sections for information they may need. In this way, the book is easy to navigate but readers would benefit from a short index.

This careful study lays the foundations for future research, especially concerning the history and sources behind this compilation text. The editors conclude that the text was not simply conceived as a translation of Theodoran

material, but represented an attempt at reshaping earlier penitential material to suit a different context, hinting at a possible Alfredian context for the translation. Fifty-seven pages of commentary – contextualising each item, and often providing the Latin source – follow the text, and a comparison with one of the four related penitential texts is included in the appendices that follow.

The content of the penitential itself provides unusual insight into issues that affected the daily lives of the Anglo-Saxons, and what was considered acceptable moral behaviour. The scholarly value of this edition lies in the accompanying commentary, which brings the penitential practices of Anglo-Saxon England into a broader medieval European context. Scholars focusing on continental Europe who might otherwise overlook this volume will nevertheless find it a valuable resource. The subject matter of the text and extensive glossary also make the edition an excellent candidate for translation in the classroom.

R. D. Fulk and Stefan Jurasinski won the prize for best edition at the biennial meeting of the International Society of Anglo-Saxonists in July 2013. Their original research and contribution to the field of Anglo-Saxon studies and early medieval penitential literature make this prize well deserved.

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Garcia-Oliver, Ferran, *The Valley of the Six Mosques: Work and Life in Medieval Vallidigna* (Medieval Countryside, 8), Turnhout, Brepols, 2012; hardback; pp. xx, 331; 5 b/w line art; R.R.P. €90.00; ISBN 9782503531304.

This book concerns a valley in Spain; principally, it was occupied by Muslim peasants, and ruled by a Cistercian monastery. It is an extraordinarily detailed study of medieval peasant life. Ferran Garcia-Oliver is sensitive to the particularities of this Muslim peasant culture and its various relationships with Christian neighbours, lords, the kingdom, and the wider Islamic Ummah. These relationships provide fascinating insights into inter-religious interactions and understandings at an everyday and sub-elite level. Even more interestingly, the book covers a period of the later Middle Ages when it would be easy to assume that Christian conquest had largely obliterated Islam in conquered territories.

Garcia-Oliver's picture of mosques becoming churches at the close of the Middle Ages – with minaret towers continuing to stand for generations until gravity and time, or wider programmes of restoration and refurbishment, saw their disappearance from the landscape – is a poetic description of a

long process. In fact the whole book, despite being an English translation and slightly revised version of the original Spanish edition, is beautifully written. It is also deeply analytical. The widespread peasant recourse to violence for challenges to honour or masculinity is a good example of how the occupants of this valley are treated with an approach which is close to anthropological.

This research reveals, not a story of lordly oppression or religious bigotry, but rather one of almost timeless persistence. Garcia-Oliver is at pains to highlight precisely how 'the peasants' culture identified itself with the mountains and the forests' (p. 42). It is a study that unpicks the rhythms of the agricultural cycles, and which engages with intra-communal cooperation and competition. Peasants vying with each other for land, jockeying for social position, worrying about their old age and descendants, and counting their animals, and watching their crops, all populate the pages of this book. In this respect it is a snapshot of the *longue durée* of Iberian peasantry. We are also introduced to particularly Iberian novelties like silk and rice. We see the economic life of the peasantry in considerable detail. Networks of debt and credit, the lack of legal tender, and widespread peasant mobility will be familiar to specialists concerned with other valleys and other peasants.

This is a magnificent study, and one could almost believe that, for a time, Garcia-Oliver lived in the Valley of the Six Mosques.

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Hilton, Phillip, *Bitter Honey: Recuperating the Medical and Scientific Context of Bernard Mandeville*, Bern, Peter Lang, 2010; paperback; pp. 229; R.R.P. SFR66.00; €55.00; US\$71.95; ISBN 97830343046441.

Bernard Mandeville (1670–1733) was a Dutch philosopher, political economist, and satirist who spent his working life in England and is known for his commentary on early eighteenth-century British society. His most famous work is *The Fable of the Bees*, which offended not only his academic peers but also most of British society. His philosophy was considered false and degenerate. In general, he propagated the view that so-called Christian virtues were detrimental to the commercial and intellectual progress of the state, whereas vices (particularly excessive ones) motivated society to actively develop means to cater and satisfy those vices, which in turn stimulated the economy. For Mandeville, private vices were public benefits.

Bitter Honey, however, reveals another, somewhat contradictory, aspect of Mandeville's work. In it, Philip Hilton examines the *Treatise of the Hypochondriack and Hysterick Diseases* (1730), a satire in the form of a series of dialogues between a doctor and two patients who are suffering mental

and discursive inconsistency (depression). In this case, the egotism found within the medical profession, which is the main feature of the *Treatise*, is not a vice that generates public benefit. On the contrary, while egotism was an accepted vice of physicians, it was not valorised by Mandeville, who instead condemned it. Hilton examines the scientific and medical context of the treatise, its autobiographical content, the treatise as a literary artefact, its contemporary political and ethical implications, and its legacy.

Mandeville's satire remains sharp despite the inconsistency in his philosophy. He had an ironic detachment from the world that was ideal for his speculative performances, and successfully combined satire, natural science, and art to convince the reader to accept his worldview. According to Hilton, 'The *Treatise* is a monument to a consciousness adapted to a mercatorial order by way of satire, irony and cynicism, and is an artefact of an early attempt to educate readers in accommodating themselves to a culture that is incorrigibly utilitarian or instrumentalist' (p. 175). The *Treatise* is a significant work in its own right, and an important Baconian contribution to medicine and science. *Bitter Honey* highlights this significance and places the *Treatise* firmly within the canon of scientific and medical literature. Hilton's study on this unknown work of Mandeville's is an important contribution to the history of ideas of the eighteenth century.

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Hudson, Anne, ed., *Two Revisions of Rolle's English Psalter Commentary and the Related Canticles, Vol. 1* (Early English Text Society, Original Series, 340), Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012; hardback; pp. ccv, 390; 4 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. £65.00; ISBN 9780199669202.

Anne Hudson has long been established as a leading authority in the field of later medieval texts and the interpretation of English religious controversy. Her erudite contributions in the recovery and editing of manuscripts has changed the way scholars approach the study of religion and her impact upon textual criticism cannot be overstated. Her attention to detail, archival sources, and a close study of manuscripts is once again reflected admirably in this volume. Since no critical edition of Richard Rolle's original English Psalter exists, Hudson focuses on the revised editions and presents the Latin text, English translation, and English commentary. This is achieved through a thorough codicological examination of the manuscripts. An intensive linguistic analysis follows, with numerous helpful allusions to Lollard literature, and Hudson observes that Rolle's translation is more accurate than the Wycliffite Bible. Challenges abound. The revised version was not made from Rolle's

autograph but from a scribal version. The second version is not fully edited in this volume and it is assumed that the first version is Lollard, though Hudson points out this does not mean the commentaries provide a full account of Wycliffite belief. However, she argues there is sufficient evidence to see Lollard sympathies, though these writers do not represent a unified Lollardy.

The examination of the ideology of the texts compels the reader to wonder to what extent the ideas were replicated in other late medieval heresies. Importantly, we encounter new evidence indicating that material taken from Rolle shows Lollard antecedents before Wyclif. The textual difficulties are myriad and exacerbated by the presence of multiple revisers. The question of authorship remains unresolved. Richard Wyche and William Thorpe have been suggested and while the arguments seem compelling they strain the evidence. One must also ponder the purpose of the revised commentary. For whom was it prepared? How was it used? Medieval Psalters were most often used in monastic communities; Hudson rules out that possibility for the Rolle revisions. A lay liturgical function seems unlikely. Useful comparisons cannot be drawn to the *Opus arduum*. Several extant manuscripts suggest a public function but where, how, and for whom? Hudson suggests the puzzle is unanswerable and perhaps its intended usage was deliberately concealed, like so much Lollard literature.

Exacting, academic, and unimpeachably scholarly, one can only anticipate volumes two and three of this edition.

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Kempshall, Matthew, *Rhetoric and the Writing of History, 400–1500* (Historical Approaches), Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2012; paperback; pp. 627; R.R.P. £19.99; ISBN 9780719070310 (review copy provided by Footprint Books).

Rhetoric and the Writing of History, 400–1500 has its origins in a series of lectures given by author Matthew Kempshall to undergraduate historians at Oxford University. As in a successful lecture or public oration, Kempshall starts with a useful summary of his material, and then describes it fully in a very scholarly manner, and he concludes with a back-looking survey of the lecture's subject matter. However, the lecture format seems to have led him into using too much repeated material, equal to fifty pages or more of the book.

This substantial work is divided into five chapters offering a comprehensive coverage of the subject: History and Historiography; Rhetoric and History; Invention and Narrative; Verisimilitude together with Truth; and

Historiography and History. Kempshall covers such topics as Chronography, Deliberative Rhetoric, Annals and Chronicles, and the ‘Renaissance’, and includes an impressive Bibliography.

Perhaps inevitably, given the scope of the project, there are a number of oversights. At the end of the first millennium AD, by far the most popular works of all to be found in the major scriptoria of Northern Europe were those by Pope Gregory the Great, well ahead of those by Augustine, Jerome, or Boethius. Only the Bible was more often included in monastic libraries. Gregory’s two most popular works were his *Registrum Epistolarum* and his *Moralia in Job*, most of which was composed in Constantinople, with considerable help from his dear friend, Leander of Seville. Both Gregory and Leander were well trained in rhetoric and law. Kempshall makes half a dozen references to Gregory’s *Moralia*, but he has almost totally ignored his highly rhetorical letters, composed by a pope who owed much to Cicero and Quintilian, as well as Martianus Capella.

The book provides an impressive coverage of the medieval authors, some of them almost unknown, although King Alfred’s Anglo-Saxon version of Paulus Orosius’s *Historiarum adversus Paganos libri vii* is not mentioned, despite Kempshall’s very lengthy treatment of that Spanish writer, covering sixteen pages (compared with just five pages for Eusebius and only three for Boethius).

Kempshall helpfully includes many quotations taken from the Classical authors, and he rightly points out the special popularity of Sallust. While he provides English translations for all of these passages, many have been taken from the Loeb series, some of which are very dated (originally appearing in 1912, 1920, 1922, 1929, 1949, and 1954 and so on) and recommended these days only for struggling first-year students. Far more accurate and much more modern translations have since appeared for all of these authors. A page or two with lists of all of his Classical quotations, inserted before the index, would have been a valuable addition.

When covering Sallust’s account of Catiline’s conspiracy, Kempshall might well have referred to the very rhetorical speeches of Cicero, with which he destroyed the conspiracy, just as he destroyed Clodia in his brilliant defence of Caelius, with plenty of dramatic irony. However, Kempshall’s very full coverage of Sallust’s *Catiline* and *Jugurtha*, in Rome and in North Africa, was well managed, as was his treatment of Quintilian’s *Institutio Oratoria*.

Despite a few faults, this substantial book is likely to become a major work on history, historiography, and rhetoric during the medieval period.

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Lawrence-Mathers, Anne, *The True History of Merlin the Magician*, New Haven, CT, Yale University Press, 2012; cloth; pp. 256; 10 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. US\$40.00, AU\$49.95; ISBN 9780300144895.

The mythical Merlin has been a feature of Arthurian literature for many centuries. In *The True History of Merlin the Magician*, Anne Lawrence-Mathers reflects on Merlin's history as an historical figure. Any Internet or popular history bookshelf search for King Arthur and his associates leads to an abundance of web sites and books claiming the discovery of the real identities of fictional Arthurian characters, usually based upon rather unconvincing evidence. Despite the implication of its title, this volume is not yet another popular history book claiming a legendary figure was a real person. Rather, Lawrence-Mathers considers the image of Merlin as seen by twelfth-century scholars. She also explores the meaning of Merlin's magic, suggesting the magician held an important role in linking the ancient pagan religions with Christian beliefs.

Lawrence-Mathers has consulted a wide range of medieval texts, both manuscripts and printed material, for her research, and the volume commences with a discussion of these sources. Naturally, this concentrates on Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae*, in which Merlin is first described as an historical person. While the *Historia* was essentially a combination of fact and fiction, with events from reputable chronicles interspersed with fictional accounts and exaggerations, to the people of the Middle Ages it was real. As Lawrence-Mathers explains, this led to further medieval works, such as the thirteenth-century volume, *Speculum Historiale (Mirror of History)*, in which Merlin was confirmed as an historical personality.

Of particular interest is the frequent discussion of the link between Merlin and the supernatural. Lawrence-Mathers shows that somehow, medieval texts transformed Merlin the magician – often portrayed as half-demon – into a legitimate prophet, accepted by the Church, not only in Britain but also in Europe, creating an interesting contradiction. Furthermore, the book describes Merlin as a link between the old and the new, essentially creating a bond between the Celtic pagan and medieval Christian worlds. Also interesting is Merlin's impact on the political landscape: Lawrence-Mathers demonstrates that Merlin provided guidance and insight, with medieval texts linking his prophecies to the politics of the day. It was not until the eighteenth century that Merlin became fictional, and the reasons behind this are discussed throughout the book.

Not surprisingly, while Lawrence-Mathers goes to great lengths to stress that the fictional Merlin of myth, rather than history, is the subject of other books and not a focus of her own, she still acknowledges his legendary status. The book includes a chapter dedicated to Merlin's place in Arthurian romance, which might seem to contradict her aims. However, this is only a

small part of the book, and it could be argued that in order to balance the idea of Merlin as an historical figure, there must also be adequate discussion of the mythological figure.

The True History of Merlin the Magician leaves the reader with the impression that Merlin was just as important a figure as King Arthur or his knights. When I started reading, I was sceptical that Lawrence-Mathers would be truly successful in demonstrating the contemporary belief that Merlin was an historical figure without diverting into the realm of pseudo-history. However, I was pleasantly surprised, and ultimately the book succeeds in meeting its difficult aims. Written to a very high academic standard, *The True History of Merlin the Magician* may not be easily accessible to the general reader; it is recommended for readers with strong academic interests in Merlin, Arthur, or medieval texts and their history.

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Mulder-Bakker, Anneke B., ed., *Living Saints of the Thirteenth Century: The Lives of Yvette, anchoress of Huy; Juliana of Cornillon, author of the Corpus Christi Feast; and Margaret the lame, anchoress of Magdeburg* (Medieval Women: Texts and Contexts, 20), Turnhout, Brepols, 2012; hardback; pp. ix, 416; R.R.P. €95.00; ISBN 9782503520773.

The Brepols series 'Medieval Women: Texts and Contexts' has provided a variety of edited and translated sources relating to the lives of medieval saints and holy women. *Living Saints of the Thirteenth Century* makes another contribution to this splendid enterprise. Anneke Mulder-Bakker, well known for her scholarship in medieval texts by and about medieval women, has here brought together translations of three Lives of holy laywomen written during the thirteenth century.

Jo Ann McNamara made the translation of the first text – *The Life of Yvette, anchoress of Huy* by Hugh of Floreffe – for Peregrina Press in 1999. Mulder-Bakker has included this translation unchanged, adding only recognition of more recent scholarship to the references. The second text is *The Life of Juliana of Cornillon*, the translation of which, also previously published by Peregrina Press in 1998, has been revised to incorporate insights gleaned from Jean-Pierre Delville's 1999 edition of the *Vie de Sainte Julienne de Cornillon*. Barbara Newman has updated its introduction. Likewise, the translation of the third text, *The Life of Margaret the lame*, by Friar Johannes (originally published by Peregrina Press in 2001) has been revised and updated by Gertrud Jaron Lewis and Tilman Lewis.

Where the book makes its impact is in the Introduction. Mulder-Bakker makes two key points in relation to the *Lives* of the medieval holy women and men of the Southern Low Countries in the thirteenth century: firstly, that a significant proportion of them were lay; and secondly, that the *Lives* were written about them as living exemplars of a holy life rather than as dead candidates for canonisation. Of the twenty-seven known surviving *Lives* written about holy women and men in the period, nine are based on the lives of laywomen, and two on lives of laymen. (A full list of the surviving *Lives* is provided on pp. 43–45.) The generic term *mulieres religiosae*, often used to encapsulate the various forms of informal religious expression of women who lived outside the cloister, is disassembled in Mulder-Bakker's analysis to remind us of the differing life choices made by these holy women. Holy virgins, beguines, widows, matrons, and anchoresses undertook various sorts of religious vocations outside the cloister, participating in spiritual networks in the distinctive urban conditions of the twelfth to thirteenth centuries.

The early works of James of Vitry, who perceived the 'sanctifying agency' of holy women for their urban communities (p. 1), and recorded their exemplary experiences, provided inspiration for other clerical writers who sought to represent other women's holy lives. The *Lives* were based in a variety of sources; some of the women recorded their own experiences, or female and male confidantes reported them, to be then captured by the authors of the surviving *Lives*. All these texts were composed, not as many saints' *Lives* were written, for the purposes of canonisation, but to provide audiences with models of a 'new saintliness' (p. 33). The reader will seek in vain for posthumous miracles in these *Lives*: it is the everyday experiential holiness of heroic women and men living in their secular communities that show the possibilities for saintliness for ordinary laity.

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Rennie, Kriston R., *Law and Practice in the Age of Reform: The Legatine Work of Hugh of Die (1073–1106)* (Medieval Church Studies, 17), Turnhout, Brepols, 2010; hardback; pp. xiii, 246; 3 b/w tables; R.R.P. €60.00; ISBN 9782503531908.

This book gives an insight into Gregory VII's use of legates to promote, advance, and enforce the papal reform agenda. Kriston Rennie analyses the involvement of Hugh of Die, who was a key figure of the Church reform of the eleventh century as Bishop of Die (1073–81) and later Archbishop of Lyon (1081–1106). During Gregory VII's pontificate, the institution of the legate became one of the most influential mechanisms of papal administration and

reform. Its frequent use enabled the evolution of the relationship between the central government of the Church and the dispersed outposts of the Church across Latin Christendom. Rennie's examination of Hugh's legatine councils details the scope of Hugh's activity and the institutionalisation of the office of legate and the growth of its powers. The area of reform in France targeted by the papacy was extensive: simony, lay investiture, and nicolaitism. The enthusiasm and force with which Hugh exercised his office, developing its authority by 'trial and error', had the effect of further expanding the limits of legatine power more broadly.

The most significant contribution that Rennie makes is to reveal and describe the ways that legatine authority emerged as the 'parameters of canonical right and wrong behaviour became delineated more clearly' (p. 102). In reconstructing Hugh's career, Rennie outlines how Hugh's tough decisions – which perhaps crossed the boundaries of the law – allowed Gregory VII to act as the mediator and the final umpire who dispensed mercy upon those who accepted his judgement. This close cooperation between the legate and the pope created the impression of an active and engaged papacy. Through the activities of his legates, the pope intervened in local communities and in those issues aimed at delivering reform at the grass roots level. Gregory VII's claim to judicial primacy of Rome was further facilitated by legates such as Hugh of Die and served to centralise the government of the Church.

Rennie's work contributes in a significant way to the understanding of the development of the institution of papal legate. This institution played an effective role in the age of reform, as it drew its authority from popes with strong ideas, who pursued reformist agendas and were convinced of the righteousness of their cause.

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The Mediæval Journal, 1.1 (2011), St Andrews Institute of Mediæval Studies/Turnhout, Brepols, 2011; paperback; pp. xi, 95; 2 colour illustrations, 1 b/w table; R.R.P. €32.50; ISBN 9782503536620.

The Mediæval Journal is a new peer-reviewed publication from Brepols, edited from the University of St Andrews, and intended to be both interdisciplinary and multi-national. According to its web site, the publication has a broad remit, drawing in both 'traditional' disciplines, such as Languages/Literature, History, and Archaeology, and 'less exposed' fields including but not limited to Jewish Studies, Medievalism, Postcolonial Studies, and the History of Medicine and Science (see <<http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/saims/tmj.htm>>).

In this first volume, the journal's editors – Margaret Connolly, Ian Johnson, and James Palmer – observe that 'whereas contemporary medievalists are of necessity interdisciplinary, the journals available to them are, with too few exceptions, generally restricted to single disciplines' (p. ix). The three volumes of *The Mediæval Journal* produced thus far suggest it has the potential to fill this gap in the long term.

Each volume is comprised of four articles and a review section. The first volume features diverse articles which consider the nature of the medieval Church using Weber's ideal type method; examine the context and significance of an inscribed gold strip from the Staffordshire Hoard; and explore the medieval fear of death and its aftermath. It also includes an edition of and commentary on a hitherto unpublished Anglo-Norman *Practica Geometriae*. The two subsequent volumes similarly include articles from a range of disciplines with topics from broad temporal and geographic spans.

Unlike many, *The Mediæval Journal* includes colour plates; in the volume under review here these provide images of the above-mentioned inscribed strip from the Staffordshire Hoard. It also offers a space for editions of short texts. The editors have put together a journal which is not only interdisciplinary in the scope of articles it includes, but also provides a useful outlet for innovative research which does not sit comfortably within traditional boundaries, and which crosses between traditional and developing fields.

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Throop, Susanna A., *Crusading as an Act of Vengeance, 1095–1216*, Farnham, Ashgate, 2011; hardback; pp. 242; R.R.P. £65.00; ISBN 9780754665823.

'Could anything new be said about the crusades?', asked a student of mine recently. This book by Susanna Throop demonstrates that interpretations and understandings of the crusades continue to be relevant and dynamic. Throop presents what she regards as unexplored aspects of crusading by examining examples of the actions that validated medieval Christians' belief that their faith expected them to take violent revenge against Christ's enemies.

She deliberately turns away from what she describes as reconciling Christianity (pacifist ideals) with the reality of crusading (violence). In a seeming contradiction to Jonathan Riley-Smith's proposition that crusading was 'an act of love', Throop examines crusading as an act of vengeance, offering another, but not totally alternative, view. She argues that the notion of Christian love for their neighbour could result in the desire for revenge against non-Christians. Crusaders, Throop suggests, interpreted the biblical

idea of the Lord's vengeance by reference to the reality that surrounded them, and interpreted historical events and their significance in accordance with their religion. Throop challenges the assumption that the notion of crusading as an act of vengeance was principally developed by non-clerical crusade participants, giving way over time to more sophisticated ideas promoted by the Church as it attempted to explain and reconcile earthly violence and the 'love of thy neighbour'.

By arguing that vengeance became a part of crusading because of the religious zeal of its participants, Throop demonstrates that crusading was primarily a religious activity. Vengeance was thus a by-product of religious fanaticism. Throop argues that an examination of the twelfth-century crusade texts of both participants and non-participants demonstrates that crusading was increasingly ideologically linked with vengeance. The origin of the theme of vengeance is found in the interpretations offered by canonists and the Bible, predominantly in the Old Testament and also, significantly, in the New Testament (for example, Romans 13. 4). These antecedents, which established the ideology of crusading as an act of vengeance, show crusading to be an integral part of God's plan for humanity and give crusading redemptive moral qualities notwithstanding its bloody nature. Throop's analysis leaves no doubt that those who sought to control and animate the crusading movement deliberately linked religion and emotion with violence to promote crusading as the means of reforming the Church and expanding Christendom.

This is an important contribution. Its novel approach and new interpretation enriches the studies of crusading and the study of religious violence in general. Throop's work opens the way for further research that would 'integrate the overall historiography of the twelfth-century with our evolving understanding of twelfth-century crusading' (pp. 184–85).

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Tyler, Elizabeth M., ed., *Conceptualizing Multilingualism in England, c. 800–c. 1250* (Studies in the Early Middle Ages, 27), Turnhout, Brepols, 2012; hardback; pp. xi, 368; 1 b/w illustration, 10 b/w tables, 1 b/w line art; R.R.P. €80.00; ISBN 9782503528564.

Elizabeth Tyler's lengthy Introduction explains that her book's 'engagement with the past grows out of a particular linguistic and political present' as it situates 'the study of medieval English multilingualism in the contemporary language politics of England' (p. 1). This includes both within Britain and the European Union, and in the context of the rise of English as a global language. Tyler provides a useful and multifaceted introduction to the volume, necessary for those who may have little understanding of the intricacies

involved in contemporary English language politics. She covers topics such as the symbolic value of multilingualism, linguistic policies and how these relate to contemporary England, modern monolingualism, and medieval multilingualism. Tyler explains that the focus of the volume is specifically on England and is driven by ‘a desire to attend to the relationship between the present and the past of the language politics of England and from a recognition that these present politics are different outside of England’ (p. 2).

There are eighteen contributions to the volume (including the ‘Introduction’). The decision not to group the papers into sub-themes allows them to stand solidly as individual essays. The many disciplines covered, from history, literature, linguistics, and manuscript studies, mean that ‘no one definition of multilingualism has been adopted or imposed’ (p. 10). Rather, the term is taken to mean ‘an ability to use more than one language, even in a limited way, within any sphere of life, from reading Latin psalms to negotiating a purchase from a foreign merchant’ (p. 10).

A wonderful array of topics is covered, ranging from the role of languages and code-switching in texts produced in King Alfred’s court, Abbo of Fleury’s stay in Ramsey (985–87), and the interactions between Old English, Medieval Latin, Old Gallo-Romance, and Greek, to an investigation of the Roman language in twelfth-century English historiography. Others include the translation of technical terms in law-codes, and multilingualism in the Court of King Æthelstan. There is also an essay on how social network theory can help to explain linguistic change in the transition from Old to Middle English. The range of topics covered and the authors’ abilities to look at the textual evidence from the multilingual environments in which they were produced across all of the contributions are striking. The effect has been to provide fresh insights into the social, cultural, and linguistic contexts of medieval England. Given the volume’s title, however, something more might have been said about the insights that can be gained by using modern sociolinguistic models to re-read texts of the past.

The papers originally derive from a conference held in 2006 that aimed to examine multilingualism and linguistic pluralism in medieval English culture from a wide range of perspectives. While the collection succeeds in this, a general picture of multilingualism in medieval England remains elusive for the reader. More could perhaps have been said of languages and their social functions, language contact, vernaculars and their orthographic traditions, bilingualism, translation, dialects, and diglossia. Since ‘the chief contribution of this volume lies in simultaneously bringing together the study of multilingualism with interdisciplinary scholarship’ (p. 12), the lack of cross-references throughout the book, and of an index, the inclusion of which would surely have facilitated interdisciplinarity, is surprising. The essays themselves, nevertheless, are an excellent contribution to scholarship,

and will act as models for further investigations of multilingualism in an historical perspective.

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