

be anachronistic, given the high regard in which Grosseteste and his contemporaries held the virtue of intellectual humility.

Ginther's references to Grosseteste as a failed pastor (pp. 163, 191) contrast with earlier appraisals of him. Scholars such as Southern, D. A. Callus, and John Robson have seen in Grosseteste's resignation of benefices a response to the challenge presented by mendicant preachers concerned with the care of souls. Grosseteste has been admired as the rare pluralist who gave up lucrative positions in response to criticism that he was cheating his flocks. W. A. Pantin praised Grosseteste's resignation from multiple posts with pastoral responsibilities (the care of souls). More recently, Leonard Boyle has persuaded us to take seriously the sense of inadequacy expressed in Grosseteste's letter to his friend Adam Marsh: "Hinc enim urgebat me impotentia agendi curam prout oportuit." Nonetheless, Boyle, too, quotes Grosseteste's description of his resignation as "taking the hard way out" of a problem with a plurality of benefices: Grosseteste feels himself justified in the course he has taken, and he rejoices in having made himself poor and having given up temporal things for the sake of obedience.

Though he characterizes Grosseteste as a failed pastor, Ginther clearly admires his pastoral theology. Emerging from Ginther's discussion of Grosseteste's ecclesiology is a corporatist conception of the church that puts heavy responsibility on pastors. Pastors are held responsible when members of their flocks disobey divine commandments. In hearing confessions, pastors must perform a delicate balancing act, helping their flocks both to avoid excess confidence and to escape despair by understanding the greatness of God's mercy and justice. Grosseteste sees the doctrine of divine foreknowledge as engendering despair and predestination as encouraging excessive confidence (p. 169). Much of this chapter is based on Ginther's reading of Grosseteste on the Psalms.

Ginther's interest in Grosseteste's exegesis is both welcome and overdue. McEvoy is right to recommend this book for "the fresh look at every aspect of Grosseteste's theological teaching activity" it offers.

REGA WOOD, Stanford University

FERNANDO GÓMEZ REDONDO, *Historia de la prosa medieval castellana*, 3: *Los orígenes del humanismo: El marco cultural de Enrique III y Juan II*. (Crítica y Estudios Literarios.) Madrid: Cátedra, 2002. Paper. Pp. v, 2071–3472. €24.90.

Fernando Gómez Redondo has undertaken the herculean task of rewriting the history of Spanish medieval prose—one could even say of rewriting Spanish medieval prose itself. Even without Foucault at hand, Gómez Redondo's work would be archaeological. By ordering this immense archive, he designs the frame in which the rules of these texts function. He has divided the colossal materials into cycles matching the reigns of the Castilian kings, from Alfonso VIII in the twelfth century to the Catholic Monarchs in the early sixteenth. By doing so, he establishes an implicit link between the development of Castilian prose and various monarchic cultural projects; he explicitly acknowledges the close relationship between the prose products and an ideology that he calls, from the beginning of his work, *regalism*, which could be translated into a general notion of the monarchical political models arising in thirteenth-century Europe. Gómez Redondo's *regalism* is, thus, his *motor historiae* as well as the turning point of medieval prose.

This is the third volume of what will eventually be a four-volume work. The fourth volume will, thankfully, contain the indexes, tables, and bibliography, which will be indispensable for navigating this astounding ocean. The full, four-volume set will deserve a review article that takes into account the many details impossible to discuss in the narrow limits of this review.

In the present volume the author analyzes the prose texts produced during the reigns of Enrique III (1390–1406) and Juan II (1406–54), a crucial period for Castilian literature, during which “public sphere” writing was constituted and developed. For the period of Enrique III, Gómez Redondo begins by defining the idea of regalism upheld by the monarchic cultural projects, then examines historiography, translations, and travel narratives. When he comes to the period of Juan II, Gómez Redondo again explores the transformation of regalism and the court environment, then analyzes the historiographical products related to both the king himself and the Castilian nobles. From there onward, the author uses the metaphor of the *ordines litterarum* to explore the following main fields: noble cultural projects; monarchic cultural projects related to science, religion, and laws; religious and doctrinal prose in general; “sentimental fiction”; chivalric literature; allegorical fiction; and, finally, travel narratives. Gómez Redondo comments on every title falling into the above categories. Although the equation author-work still leads the main historical narrative, some authors (e.g., Pero López de Ayala and Diego de Valera) are treated in more than one chapter, so it can be difficult to track them throughout the book.

The reader will thus find (although not easily, until the fourth volume appears) an extremely rich account of hundreds of prose works from this period, complete with full bibliographical references, secondary literature (confined, for now, to the footnotes), and discussions of authorship, dates, and major historical figures. More importantly, Gómez Redondo not only provides this information but does so through three approaches. First, he engages in close reading, analyzing the literary devices, exploring the work’s rhetoric, and attempting to locate it in what he considers its literary tradition by identifying the “school,” aim, and scope of the text. Second, he offers many structural and thematic insights, since he considers the structural design of each work to be the result of a highly developed intellectual process. Third, he provides interpretations, often related to the political issues that he believes to surround the text. Copious quotations support his close readings and interpretations; the footnotes, likewise, do not merely contain bibliography but themselves constitute a thorough glossing apparatus, complete with citations from the analyzed texts and the secondary literature. Gómez Redondo’s management of the texts is, quite simply, astonishing.

Gómez Redondo has not simply reproduced a sort of master narrative of these prose texts. Each chapter, on the contrary, is a complete thesis on the particular text; the book is, thus, not merely a juxtaposition of data, dates, and figures but a highly structured and organic approach to this segment of written culture. One might wonder whether his selection of the prose texts constitutes a rather nonorganic, arbitrary object of study: Why prose and not poetry? Why prose and not more specifically delineated genres? Or, more generally, why an external literary form and not a particular set of ideas? Although this book does not address those specific questions, some reasons for his decisions are found in the opening chapters of the first volume. The author is unconcerned, nevertheless, with these sorts of issues: his primary aims are to read a large number of texts and to set order among them. We can question this order and its justifications, along with many of his theses.

All readers will discover new and enlightening ideas about the text or set of texts they are working on; Gómez Redondo’s book contains thorough research on each of them. Though one might regret the lack of concern for theoretical issues, the dozens of ideas, either developed or *in muce*, will generate much discussion, debate, and insight, both textual and theoretical. This is not a final book; it is, on the contrary, a starting one, a book that will push readers of all types to challenge their received ideas about a myriad of texts and that will provide a seedbed for new research.