

could exercise their power. The two contributions on literature, by Helen Swift on Martin Le Franc's *Champion des dames* (c.1442) and Antoine Dufour's *Les Vies des femmes célèbres* (1504) and by Jennifer Cavalli on the Letters of Laura Cereta (1469–99) explore gender through language in secular texts. Jennifer Borland's discussion of the twelfth-century Bavarian manuscript of *The Passion of St. Margaret* and Elizabeth L'Estrange's contribution on fifteenth-century Italian *Deschi da parto*, reconsider the construction of gender in sacred and secular visual representation. In the field of masculinity studies, Cassandra Rhodes focuses on male virginity in the lives of Anglo-Saxon saints included in Aldhelm's seventh-century *De virginitate* and Ælfric's tenth-century *Lives of the Saints*, Alison More engages gendered imagery in thirteenth-century hagiographic texts portraying male saints from Liège, and Fiona Dunlop charts the transformation of the construction of manliness in the early Tudor period. In addition to its clarity, and theoretical and historical rigour, this is a highly engaging and exciting collection. [Beatrice Priest]

Anonymous Interpolations in Ælfric's Lives of Saints, ed. Robin Norris, Old English Newsletter Subsidia 35 (Kalamazoo, Mich.: Medieval Institute Publications, 2011). ix + 117 pp. ISBN 978-1-58044-163-6. \$15.00. This collection of essays offers four essays on anonymous saints' lives included with Ælfric's *Sanctorale* in London, British Library, Cotton MS Julius E.vii. Stephen Stallcup's essay on the Alexandrian *Saint Euphrosyne* focuses not on her transvestism, interesting to many previous critics, but on the monastic economy represented in the text. Linda Cantara's essay on *Saint Mary of Egypt* studies textual variants found in the damaged BL, MS Cotton Otho B. x. The *Passion of the Seven Sleepers* is a legend that Ælfric himself had treated with characteristic caution elsewhere; here Eileen Joy explores psychological aspects of the text from a modern perspective. The *Passion of Saint Eustace* in Old English is among the earliest redactions in Europe of this much travelled Indian tale. Robin Norris discusses the emphasis on the theme of *tristitia* as sin in the legend, and the consequent modification of Eustace's emotional life across the narrative. [Daniel Anlezark]

Jacqueline Cerquiglini-Toulet, *A New History of Medieval French Literature*, trans. Sara Preisig, Rethinking Theory (Baltimore, Md: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007). 165 pp. ISBN 978-1-4214-003-8. £34.00. The book translated here by Sara Preisig was originally published as 'Moyen Âge' in *La Littérature française: Dynamique et histoire*, ed. Jean-Yves Tadié (Paris, 2007). Rather than a linear literary history, it considers different topics relevant to medieval French literature, giving a concise overview of the issues involved and illustrating them with reference to a wide range of literary texts. These topics include the 'materiality of writing'; the construction and role of both author and audience; the social and intellectual milieu in which the texts were produced and consumed; the different subjects treated in medieval literature; the range of genres; and the reflections offered by medieval authors on the traditions in which they wrote and on the writing process itself. The book does not aim to provide in-depth knowledge about any particular authors, texts, genres, or topics, but rather to sketch out an overall context that can inform one's reading of any medieval French text. The translation is very readable, but does contain a number of small errors, both in the translation of Old French examples quoted in the text, and in the translation of words or phrases in Cerquiglini-Toulet's own writing. Nonetheless, it offers a useful overview for readers outside the field of French studies who wish to learn something about medieval literary culture.

Ulrich Mölk, *Les Débuts d'une théorie littéraire en France: Anthologie critique* (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2011). 213 pp. ISBN 978-2-8124-0305-7. €29.00. As its title indicates, Ulrich Mölk's *Les Débuts d'une théorie littéraire en France* is an anthology of twelfth- and

thirteenth-century texts in French which relate in some way to literary theory, either implicitly or explicitly. The anthology is organized chronologically within each genre, with units on the *chanson de geste*, the *chanson de croisade*, etc. The volume is essentially a reissue under a new title of Mölk's *Französische Literaturästhetik des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts* (Tübingen, 1969). Roughly 25 per cent of the excerpted texts do not appear in this earlier volume. In the absence of a clear definition of 'literary theory', the reader is left somewhat uncertain as to the exact parameters of Mölk's anthology. The closest he comes to a definition is his statement that poetic theory relates to the artist's self-conception and to his conception of his work, in contradistinction to poetics, which has to do strictly with compositional techniques (p. 11). Broadly speaking, Mölk has selected texts bearing a trace of authorial or scribal subjectivity, as well as texts that comment self-reflexively on their own artistic qualities. Although the title promises a focus on France, Mölk himself notes that many of the most tantalizing passages he includes come from Anglo-Norman England. Meanwhile, looking south, although the troubadours receive airtime in the introduction (pp. 27f.), no Occitan texts are included in the actual anthology. This is a shame, since many of the most meta-reflexive texts relating to poetic theory in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were composed in Occitan. One especially regrets the absence in Mölk's anthology of lyric poetry. Mölk acknowledges the self-reflexive quality of this corpus on several occasions in the introduction, but does not include works such as Conon de Béthune's *Chançon legiere a entendre*. The most helpful items in Mölk's volume are the thorough terminological and thematic indexes, thanks to which the reader can quickly identify texts relating to specific motifs. This is an invaluable tool for anyone working on issues of artistic self-conception, subjectivity, and poetic theory. [Eliza Zingesser]

The Medieval Imagination: Mirabile Dictu. Essays in Honour of Yolande de Ponfarcy Sexton, ed. Phyllis Gaffney and Jean-Michel Picard (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2012). 214 pp. ISBN 978-1-84682-328-2. €55.00. The twelve essays in this volume cover a range of medieval French, Anglo-Norman, Italian, and Irish material. Some focus on specific texts, including among others an edition with translation and commentary of the *Lay de l'espervier*; a study of automata in the *Pelerinage Charlemagne, Floire et Blanchefleur*, and *Mainet*; and analyses of equine imagery in Dante and of the figure of Daedalus in Petrarch's *Canzoniere*. Others take a broader thematic approach, such as the essays on prophecy and sovereignty in medieval Irish historiography, on the depiction of Ireland in medieval French texts, and on the treatment of St Patrick's Purgatory in post-medieval French literature. Overall this is an interesting and very diverse series of reflections, loosely tied together around a thematic of wonder, strangeness, and the marvellous, on medieval literary culture.

Aurelio Roncaglia, *Epica francese medievale*, a cura di Anna Ferrari e Madeleine Tyssens, Storia e Letteratura: Raccolta di Studi e Testi 245 (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2012). 268 pp. ISBN 978-88-8498-247-6. €44.00. It is fitting that, more than ten years after the death of Aurelio Roncaglia (†2001), a small selection of the works of this great scholar should be offered to generations of scholars in a form which is immediately accessible. A few years before, Roncaglia had brought together the essentials for the appearance of this volume, indicating the contents, the title, and the order in which the articles should appear. The material is selected from the field of the epic, one of the two crowning glories of medieval literature (along with the *trobar* of the Occitan troubadours), and within this genre the *Chanson de Roland*, with emphasis on the Oxford manuscript, *O*, the personal predilections of Roncaglia. The selection, made after due reflection, therefore contains some of Roncaglia's best work. The articles represent his emphasis on matters textual, reflected in his early edition of the *Chanson*, semantic, in

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.