

Brief Notices

Arthurian Literature XIV eds James P. Carley and Felicity Riddy. (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1996). 157 pp. *Arthurian Literature* is an interdisciplinary publication devoted to the scholarly and critical study of all aspects of the Arthurian legend in Europe in the medieval and early modern period. Bibliographical studies of all periods are also welcomed. Contents of this issue: Barbara N. Sargent-Baur, "Alexander and the *Conte du Graal*" (pp. 1-18), which considers the reference to Alexander early in Chrétien's last romance, suggesting that the poem concerns charity and generosity—not self-promoting largesse—and the reference is a slighting one pointed at Gautier's *Alexandreis* as a study of a king engaged only in self-promoting largesse; Fanni Bogdanow, "Robert de Boron's Vision of Arthurian History" (pp. 19-52), which reassesses the contribution of this late twelfth- or early thirteenth-century Burgundian to the development of Arthurian romance (translated from the Portuguese and first appearing in *Revista: University of Sao Paulo*); Louise D. Stephens, "Gerbert and Manessier: The Case for a Connection" (pp. 53-68), which argues that Gerbert did know Manessier and that his *Continuation* is a deliberate interpolation, and suggests that various episodes in his material (the crack in the broken sword, the marriage, the Triboët episode) show additions and corrections to the cycle which must be deliberate; and—the meat of this issue, decorated with ten colour plates, and numerous pen drawings of illustrative shields—Lisa Jefferson, "Tournaments, Heraldry and the Knights of the Round Table: A Fifteenth-Century Armorial with Two Accompanying Texts" (pp. 69-157). The article discusses and edits the recently rediscovered Fogg manuscript, a late fifteenth-century French compilation (probably made for Montjoie, the French royal herald), which includes an heraldic treatise of Clément Prinsault, a treatise on Arthurian tournaments, probably written by Jacques d'Armagnac, and an armorial of 150 knights of the Round Table. (MJT)

Claire le Brun-Gouanvic, ed. *Ystoria sancti Thome de Aquino de Guillaume de Tocco (1323)* Studies and texts 127 (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1996). 296 pp. A critical edition of this Latin text, the most important biographical history surviving about St Thomas Aquinas, with detailed and very useful footnotes and textual notes, appears on pp. 94-271. There are also copious references and indices.

The critical introduction (in French) addresses the role this text played in the move to canonise Aquinas, which achieved its goal on 18 July 1323, but also includes analysis of the sources of Tocco, a study of the manuscript tradition, and consideration of the style of the text. (MJT)

Helen Ruth Andretta. *Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde: A Poet's Response to Ockhamism* Studies in the Humanities Literature—Politics—Society 29 (New York: Peter Lang, 1997). 201 pp. Positing the "representational significance as well as the individual portraits of the characters in *Troilus and Criseyde* (p. 11), Andretta argues that the poem is "the poetically rendered response of Chaucer to Ockhamism, the philosophy that was affecting the scholarly thought of his time" (p. 1). The introduction and conclusion are chapters one and five: the central three are titled, "A Basis for the Philosophy of *Troilus and Criseyde*," "Chaucer's Conception of Character: Truth and Scepticism," and "Images, Words, Discourse: Universal and Particular." (MJT)

Päivi Mehtonen. *Old Concepts and New Poetics: Historia, Argumentum, and Fabula in the Twelfth- and Early Thirteenth-Century Latin Poetics of Fiction* Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum 108 (Helsinki: Societas Scientiarum Fennica, 1996). 172 pp. The book considers the common community of thought on specific matters of poetry and fiction, especially as it developed in late eleventh- and twelfth-century commentaries on rhetoric, encyclopedic texts and other considerations of the classical conceptual schema *fabula—argumentum—historia* as it was reinterpreted in new cultural conditions. Each concept in the schema has a chapter to itself, and the introduction leads into a chapter entitled "*Narratio Poetica* and the emergence of the twelfth-century new poetics." An appendix records the printed Latin applications of the trichotomy. (MJT)

The Index of Middle English Prose, Handlist XII: Smaller Bodleian collections: English miscellaneous, English poetry, English theology, Finch, Latin theology, Lyell, Radcliffe Trust Ralph Hanna III (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1997). 45 folio pages. The gem of these collections, largely manuscripts added to the Bodleian collections in the twentieth century, is the Vernon manuscript, but Hanna makes a good case for manuscripts and texts of parochial instruction. There is a useful summary list of contents, detailed descriptions of the relevant materials in nearly forty manuscripts, and an array of indices macaronic, acephalous, cephalous, and general. From recipes for fishbait and remedies for jaundice to Wycliffite texts to the *Eight Conditions of Maumetrye* to a genealogical chronicle from Adam to Edward IV, this is a book for browsing. (MJT)

Margaret Wade Labarge. *A Medieval Miscellany* (Ottawa: Carleton UP, 1997). 292 pages. The purpose of this collection is to celebrate the long and distinguished career of one of Canada's leading medieval historians. There are nineteen essays grouped thematically in four sections: "The Lives of Medieval Women," "Aspects of Culture: Medieval and Modern," "Highways and Byways of Scholarly Inquiry," and "Medieval Health Care." N.E.S. Griffiths has written not only a brief biographical note but also an introduction for each section to place the individual essays in context. The essays themselves reflect the themes of Labarge's major works and are an excellent representation of the wide-ranging interests and versatility of this well-loved and remarkable scholar. It is particularly noteworthy that the miscellany includes one non-medieval essay, "The Cultural Tradition of Canadian Women," written at the request of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women and appearing as part of the famous report in 1970. (Joanne Norman)

Murray J. Evans. *Rereading Middle English Romance: Manuscript Layout, Decoration, and the Rhetoric of Composite Structure* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's UP, 1995). 203 pages. The title of the book is indeed self-explanatory. This is a detailed study of fifteen Middle English manuscripts containing varying numbers of romances. Computer analysis is used to compare a number of manuscript conventions to determine whether or not these features can indicate patterns of linking or separating texts. The databases are then used to propose a taxonomy of manuscript groupings and to argue that manuscript context should be seriously considered as potential evidence for the medieval reception or interpretation of romance genres or of individual texts identified as "romances." (Joanne Norman)

Terence Scully. *The Vivendier: A Fifteenth-Century French Cookery Manuscript* (Totnes: Prospect Books, 1997). 129 pages. This critical edition with English translation presents an hitherto unpublished manuscript of more than sixty recipes embedded within a miscellany of medical, botanical, household and personal advice. The manuscript was compiled in northeastern France in the middle of the fifteenth century. *The Vivendier* is a short collection but one which has many links with other culinary manuscripts of the period, and Scully is able to locate the manuscript to the region of Artois, Picardy and Hainaut (Burgundy) on the grounds of dialect and usage. The collection contains a rare account of vermicelli, the only pasta recipe found outside Italian sources for this period, and includes a number of 'national' recipes including Norse Pasties, German Meat Broth, Subtle English Soup, Hungarian Soup, and Lombard Custard.