

Santa Maria Incoronata, a rich collection created in the middle of the fifteenth century, and Antonella Mazzon investigates the presence of Isolani's *Vita* of the blessed Veronica in monastic libraries at the end of the sixteenth century. By analyzing the diachronic stratification of the Ambrosian Sanctorale, above all during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Giordano Monzio Compagnoni shows how the liturgy and worship of saints were conservative and not influenced by the novelties of Humanism and the Renaissance.

The third part of the volume deals with the biography and cult of Veronica da Binasco. Alessandra Bartolomei Romagnoli analyzes the mystic diaries compiled by Benedetta of Vimerate, comparing it with Isolani's *Vita*, an official document written in Latin. Benedetta's *fabula mistica* is also examined by Pierantonio Piatti, who places it in the context of the recently founded congregation of the "Annunziate di Lombardia," emphasizing the symbolic value of Veronica as a quattrocento prophetess and holy patron of the model of "open" monasteries. Adriana Valerio deals with Veronica's experience of God and highlights the performative aspect of her visions, which are a kind of *sacra rappresentazione* that allows participation in concrete terms in the life of Jesus. Veronica's mystical experience, characterized by an affective *Christiformitas*, is also explored by Isabella Gagliardi, who indicates its main source in the writings of Augustinian Simon of Cascia. To the relationships between Veronica and the Franciscan order, instead, is devoted the paper of Alberto M. Cuomo, whereas Elena M. Gagliardi provides some interesting information about the experience of Santa Marta through the analysis of the unpublished manuscripts of Giovanni Pietro Puricelli.

The final part of the book is about traditions of iconography related to Veronica, read in the context of both mystic iconography and the art produced at Santa Marta between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries. Martine Boiteux focuses on the figurative language of mystic reports, comparing it to the iconography of various female saints and to the political strategy of power in the modern age. Urte Krass provides an overview of the pictorial representations of Veronica, comparing them to the representation of other female saints. Elisabetta Mocchetti analyzes the theological iconology of the fresco *Mystic Wine Press* ("Il torchio mistico") in the church of Santa Marta, whereas Cristina Quattrini reconstructs the history of art and patronage in the monastery under Abess Arcangela Panigarola (1468–1525).

As Zarri points out in her conclusions, this volume provides valuable insight on Veronica of Binasco by placing her experience in the context of the spiritual flowering of Santa Marta, an independent monastery that only in the modern era developed a close relation with Augustinian Observance. This line of inquiry offers a methodological model for future research, because it allows to place a humble visionary from Binasco at the heart of many historiographical topics crucial to current scholarship: the resulting portrait is that of an intriguing woman hitherto underestimated and largely unknown. *Angeliche visioni* is a very rich and interdisciplinary collection of essays, accompanied by iconographical tables and completed by a very useful apparatus of manuscript indexes.

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JANE BEAL, *The Signifying Power of "Pearl": Medieval Literary and Cultural Contexts for the Transformation of Genre*. (Routledge Studies in Medieval Literature and Culture 5.) New York and London: Routledge, 2017. Pp. xxvi, 179; 4 black-and-white figures. \$140. ISBN: 978-1-138-67807-1. doi:10.1086/701892

This monograph offers a range of readings of the northwest Midlands dream-vision *Pearl*. It interrogates this complex and beautiful poem from many angles, providing a series of in-

terpretations as part of what the author describes as “a bejewelled net of ideas” (10). The study casts its attentions very wide, but its weave is perhaps too loose to be totally effective.

Chapter 1 reads *Pearl* as an elegy, but departs from most modern criticism, not only to embrace an autobiographical interpretation but to resuscitate Mother Angela Carson’s suggestion that the Pearl-maiden was not the Dreamer’s daughter but a lover, perhaps imported “oute of Oryent” (*Pearl* 3). While Jane Beal claims that *Pearl* scholars have neglected Carson’s argument for decades, that’s not true: it has been read, found wanting, and rightly set aside. Beal casts the Dreamer as a distressed lover, motivated by jealousy, but one who reawakens as a friend of his pearl’s chosen Bridegroom. Part of the chapter presents analyses of the four illustrations that precede the poem in the manuscript. The points raised here range from the provocative—where and to what the figures’ hands point—to the wildly conjectural. Sometimes a fish is just a fish.

Chapter 2, on allegorical meanings, offers *Pearl*-as-Orpheus myth, a connection which Beal says is implicit (44), despite the Thracian singer never being hinted at in *Pearl*: “[Orpheus and Eurydice] are not mentioned directly in the poem. Instead their presence in the poet’s memory, creating parallels in his poem, remains implied rather than overt” (54). (By this logic, just about any literary reference could be “implied” in *Pearl*.) The chapter includes one of the book’s most startling claims: the beloved died not in August but during the pre-Lenten period of Septuagesima (57). Beal bases this assertion on the fact that the Parable of the Vineyard, so central to the lessons of *Pearl*, is also the Sarum-rite Gospel reading for Septuagesima Sunday. Based on her own personal, serendipitous discovery (5) of a practice of “burying” the alleluia (to be “dug up” at Easter), Beal posits that the poem’s pearl can also be seen as the buried alleluia (58–60).

The focus on “avian consolation” in chapter 3 is the most successful approach in the book. Beal suggests that by “[f]ollowing the birds of paradise in *Pearl* . . . readers [can] follow the Dreamer’s emotional progress” (67). She offers a fresh reading of the poem that adds valuable insights about how the poet drew on a broad cross-section of sources—scripture and commentary, Boethius, the *Roman de la Rose*, and Dante—to shape the moral, consoling purpose of his poem. Chapter 4, on anagogy, argues that the poem is revelation throughout, not just during the final tour of the celestial city. Here, as elsewhere in this sprawling study, Beal tries to do too much in too little space—potting affective piety in a paragraph, for instance.

The fifth chapter moves beyond the four levels of exegetical interpretation to look at what Beal terms popular English (“folktale”) genres. This approach, a welcome notion in theory, is problematic in practice in part due to Beal’s choice of these genres. The parable (i.e., the biblical parable), based in scripture and patristic commentary and most readily disseminated through the liturgy, is hardly a demotic genre akin to a folktale. By “fable” Beal means Aesopian beast fable, and here she is on firmer ground. Beal’s application of “fairy-tale” to *Pearl* is anachronistic and ultimately confusing. The argument for the folk-genre extension is founded on Beal’s assertion that the poet, writing in English, aimed at an audience beyond a noble household or court—that he had had goals of bringing the good news that we are all precious pearls of the Prince to all vernacular readers and listeners (9–10). The urge to proselytize that Beal projects onto the poet is found elsewhere in the book, an element that some readers may find unnerving.

The book suffers from a number of inconsistencies, both at the levels of criticism and of presentation. In addition to considerable typos, there are many instances of misquotation from the primary source, including imprecise use of yogh and thorn as they appear in Malcom Andrew and Ronald Waldron’s fifth edition of the *Pearl*, which Beal uses. For example, a quotation of lines 231–40 (25), which has [th] and [g] for manuscript-edition [þ] and [ȝ], respectively. This passage also misquotes line 231, “No gladder gome hethen into Grece,” substituting the

word “Grace”—quite a different reading indeed! In short, the volume is in need of thorough proofreading. More grave is the tendency to misrepresent elements of the poem itself. Beal claims that the *Pearl*-mourner in the garden “is lying on the ground” (12) as he contemplates his loss. There is no textual evidence for this at all. In another instance, she ignores linguistic evidence to offer a wayward interpretation of the lines “To loue þe Lombe his meyny immelle / Iwysse I laȝte a gret delyt” (*Pearl* 1127–28). Andrew and Waldron gloss this as “Indeed I conceived a great desire to praise the Lamb amongst His followers,” but Beal reads *laȝte* as “laughed” and states that the Dreamer here “is laughing aloud as he has not done before in *Pearl*” (77). This is philologically incorrect (cf. Middle English Dictionary, s.v. *lacchen* [v.1], 4b) and critically misleading.

Beal has certainly read broadly in the criticism—perhaps more thoroughly than any other active *Pearl* scholar. She demonstrates a strong command of the major scholarship as well as many minor materials. Her copious notes and bibliography will be a boon to upper-years undergraduate and graduate students entering the harbour of *Pearl* studies.

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MATTHIAS BECHER and HARALD WOLTER-VON DEM KNESEBECK, eds., *Die Königserhebung Friedrichs des Schönen im Jahr 1314: Krönung, Krieg und Kompromiss*. Cologne, Weimar, and Vienna: Böhlau, 2017. Pp. 356; many color plates and 4 black-and-white figures. €52. ISBN: 978-3-412-50546-2.

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Regional historiography in Germany has a deep history of its own. Bavarians celebrated in grand style the seven-hundredth anniversary of the Wittelsbacher Ludwig IV’s royal coronation of 1314. A symposium held at the University of Munich in the fall of 2012 generated a volume of twenty articles edited by Hubertus Seibert, *Ludwig der Bayer (1314–1347): Reich und Herrschaft im Wandel*, whose publication in 2014 aligned with a six-month public exhibition—and handsome catalog of twenty essays edited by Peter Wolf et al., *Ludwig der Bayer: Wir sind Kaiser! Katalog zur Bayerischen Landesausstellung 2014* (2014)—in Regensburg, where a new, popular biography by Martin Clauss, *Ludwig IV. der Bayer: Herzog, König, Kaiser* (2014), also appeared. Civic and church leaders in Bonn, however, felt that Ludwig’s anti-king and cousin, the Habsburg Friedrich III deserved equal time since there had been a double election of 1314, and so they organized a *Krönungsjubiläum* of ticketed events at the Bonn Münster that included an exhibition entitled “Du bist ein König,” a royal banquet, public tours of the coronation ceremony, a coronation concert, and even a reenactment of Friedrich’s royal coronation. To add gravitas to the celebration, a symposium of historians was also convened in Bonn, which produced the present hefty volume of fourteen articles. The *Generalvikariat* of the Cologne archbishopric provided a subvention for the publication of this volume, as its own archbishop, Heinrich II of Virneburg, had crowned Friedrich as *rex Romanorum* in the Bonn Münster seven hundred years ago.

Such charged environments of civic, regional, and clerical pride no doubt proved a delicate context for these dueling symposia, but to their credit the historians hued a line that while advocating for their respective candidate’s historical significance did not become a partisan debate. And to be fair, Friedrich has received short shrift in German historiography much to the advantage of Ludwig, often simply being referred to as “Friedrich the Fair,” as though handsomeness was his only historical legacy, and so this volume seeks to give him more foregrounding in the epic events of the Habsburg-Wittelsbach double election of 1314 and its subsequent