

Katherine and other saints but also for its method and its extensive bibliography. Many of the footnotes contain interesting information and are a fascinating read in and of themselves.

—M. Wendy Hennequin, *University of Connecticut*

Lupack, Alan, ed. *New Directions in Arthurian Studies*. (Arthurian Studies 51.) Cambridge, England: D. S. Brewer, 2002. Pp. 168.

A collection of essays from the Camelot 2000 conference, *New Directions in Arthurian Studies* takes Arthurian studies in its widest sense chronologically and generically: half of the collection discusses medieval works, while the other half moves from Tennyson to modern texts and films. Three essays in the volume discuss past, current, and future trends in medieval Arthurian studies and call for more research in particular areas. The first, Norris J. Lacy's "Arthurian Research in a New Century: Prospects and Projects," lauds the publication of new editions, translations, reference works, recent criticism, and the potential for hypermedia editions, but calls for a widening of the canon and more study of Celtic, Dutch, Norse/Icelandic, Italian, and Hispanic Arthurian material. Lacy sees as valuable new trends the current interest in manuscript studies, in art, in feminist theory, modern Arthuriana, and the work on lesser known romances and the Celtic tradition.

Bonnie Wheeler's very valuable "The Project of Arthurian Studies: *Quondam et Futurus*" suggests in its "*Futurus*" section fascinating critical approaches to Arthurian literature. Noting the "narrative absence" of Arthur in Arthurian literature, Wheeler believes that psychoanalytic and gender analyses will generate an exploration of father fixation and obsession with authority, and of the texts as "narratives of suppression and eruption—narratives of absence" (126), and she calls for further work in gender studies and masculinities. Wheeler also suggests that New Historicism will yield valuable scholarship in the areas of historical studies of magic, the crusades, pilgrimage, noble work and play, literature and law, the economics of social class, the history of the emotions, the function of nostalgia, medieval devotional theories and practices, and the use of anthropological, linguistic, and postcolonial analyses to interrogate what Wheeler terms "Arthurian Aryanism"—the metanarrative of Aryan myth in Arthurian studies, including the "inexplicit assumptions regarding race, nationalism and the politics of identity" that are informed by Aryan myth (130).

The third essay assessing scholarship is Blanch and Wasserman's "Judging Camelot," which recaps the history of critics' assessments of Arthur's court in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. Wasserman in particular asserts that British critics' views of the court tend to be positive, while American views after the mid-1960s tend to be negative. Attributing these opposing critical stances to the differences between British and American experiences, Wasserman calls for greater critical awareness of the contexts in which we read. Wasserman points to two specific new contexts important to *Sir Gawain* studies: Thomas

Hahn's new edition, *Sir Gawain, Eleven Romances and Tales* (1995) and recent consideration of the SGGK manuscript context.

Of the remaining essays in the medieval section of *New Directions*, two examine Malory. P.J.C. Field asserts that Malory's book has appealed to audiences because it "presents a great variety of events and characters in a meaningful pattern" (31), and Derek Brewer sees *Le Morte Darthur* as unified by and focusing on the desire for honor, with conflict stemming from both the desire for honor and the concomitant paradoxes inherent in the concept of honor.

Sian Echard demonstrates in the very informative "*Hic est Arthur*" that whereas Arthurian studies today marginalize Latin texts, Latin carried both textual and stylistic authority in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, an authority which lent it credence as a branch of the learned rhetorical arts, while the vernacular was associated with the oral tradition and with foolish tales or deceitful lies.

The second half of *New Directions* deals with post-medieval Arthurian literature. David Staines' excellent "Tennyson's Guinevere and Her *Idylls of the King*" is the only essay in the volume to offer a feminist reading. Staines finds Guinevere to be the center of the *Idylls*, controlling pattern, structure, and meaning. For example, while Vivien is bad, evil, sensual, and Enid is good and simplistically obedient, Guinevere is both sensual and intellectual and is conscious of these two opposed and struggling aspects of her nature. Furthermore, all the later idylls depend on Guinevere: she establishes Arthur's identity, and her sin is the basis of later actions. Staines also cleverly suggests Guinevere's centrality by first defining the idyll or "epyllion" as centering on discovery and as "concerned with change or becoming" (85) and then later showing that Guinevere changes because she comes to a realization about Arthur: "Guinevere becomes a character of growth and development; from her human level, she rises to a new understanding of the height to which a mortal may ascend" (91-92). Staines' essay, with its wealth of insights on Guinevere's role and function, both encourages the medievalist to further explore the *Idylls* and also suggests ways to approach the text that will work in the classroom.

Barbara Tapa Lupack's "King Arthur and Black American Culture" takes Arthurian studies in a new direction, for it discusses black writers on whom Arthurian heroic ideals made an impact and also instances where these ideals and legends were taken up by black culture. In "Arthur? Arthur? Arthur?—Where Exactly is the Cinematic Arthur to Be Found?" Kevin J. Harty finds the spirit of Arthur not in screen adaptations of Arthurian literature, but instead in George Romero's biker movie, *Knightriders*, M. Night Shyamalan's *The Sixth Sense*, and the Disney Channel's *Four Diamonds*. These films make meaningful use of Arthurian material. Raymond H. Thompson's "Enemies of the Arthurian Dream" discusses the three kinds of enemies or threats to Arthur in modern novels, where Arthur is the leader of civilized society: first, the external threat to society, which is often supernatural and seeks to control; second, society's internal threat—the "disaffected elements within Arthur's

realm;” and third, the “disruptive influences within the individual characters themselves” (101). Finally, Peter H. Goodrich discusses the transformations that Merlin has undergone—all of which stem from “his origins as mad, prophetic, and poetic ‘Alterior’ or Other—a possessed and semi-divine mind apart from normal modes of human consciousness” (154).

One of the virtues of *New Directions* is its chronological, generic, and new racial inclusiveness; it will a helpful teaching resource, particularly for teaching surveys of Arthurian literature that include Tennyson, modern novels, and film, and its bibliographies are thorough. On the other hand, the collection is not inclusive internationally, and it offers little on feminism or gender in medieval studies.

—Janet Knepper, Clarion University

Mazzoni, Cristina, ed. and John Cirignano, trans. *Angela of Foligno’s Memorial*. (Library of Medieval Women.) Woodbridge and Rochester: D. S. Brewer, 1999. Pp. xi + 132.

This contribution to the rapidly expanding Library of Medieval Women series continues that series’ dedication to producing short, cheap, and academically reliable introductions and translations to sources by and about medieval women. The book follows the standard path of this series: first introductory material, second an excerpted primary source translation, and third an interpretive essay, all within a brief compass of 132 pages.

Angela of Foligno was born in Umbria in 1248, not far from St. Francis’s center of Assisi, and she died in 1309. Over the years the Franciscans would play a large role in her life. Indeed, it is thanks to a Franciscan friar that we know so much about Angela today, since it was this anonymous friar (known only as Brother A) who acted as scribe for Angela’s *Memorial* and indeed encouraged Angela to recount her story in the first place. Angela was for many years a wife and mother, but the death of her family encouraged her in her quest for poverty, and she eventually joined the Third Order of Saint Francis. Having confessed to a Franciscan friar she then embarked on a series of spiritual steps that lasted several years. From Brother A’s perspective, the twentieth step was the most important, and he restructured the chronology of Angela’s spiritual journey in order to highlight this step. This restructuring makes it difficult for us to untangle the order of events in Angela’s life, and here the introductory essay provides useful biographical clarifications. In 1291 Angela was on her way to Assisi when she was visited by the Holy Spirit. When she arrived in Assisi she saw God with the eyes of her body and mind, and God spoke words of consolation to her. When this vision departed, Angela collapsed in pain and began shrieking at the withdrawal of the divine love. It was this physical shrieking and somatic spiritual expression that prompted Brother A’s interest. Embarrassed and frightened at this public scene which was dangerously close to the screams of the demonically possessed, Brother A (in his own words) “began to compel her, in every way that I could” to explain why she had screamed so frantically. Hence, Angela certainly did not initiate the textual