

activities of Byzantine women.) There is also, as John Julius Norwich and John Ash have recently discovered, a market for well written narrative history and travelogues about Byzantium. I think it is at these markets that Nicol's book is aimed. For historians of women the book does provide concise prosopographical evidence. It also provides a good, if slightly depressing read. What it does not do is contribute to the work of analysis of Byzantine gender relations advanced in recent years by scholars such as Angeliki Laiou, Catia Galatariatou and Alice-Mary Talbot.

A word about the price of this book. At scarcely 150 pages, \$39.95 is a typically excessive Cambridge University Press price, but one which limits severely the possible audience.

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1. See especially Charles Diehl, *Figures byzantines*, (2 series, Paris: 1906-08; 4th ed. Paris: 1909, 1939)

Mary Clayton and Hugh Magennis, eds. *The Old English Lives of St. Margaret*. (Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England 9). Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1994. Pp. xi, 239. 2 b/w plates.

The story of St. Margaret is in many ways a conventional *passio*: a Christian maiden attracts the sexual notice of a pagan prefect, then defends both faith and chastity against his threats before achieving a glorious death. But Margaret also confronts several of her antagonists more actively, doing physical battle with dragons and demons. The Middle English versions of this legend, appearing in Bodley and Ashmore 43, will likely be more familiar to many scholars than the Old English accounts presented here, which have not recently been available to English readers. Clayton and Magennis thus perform a valuable service to scholars of Old and Middle English alike. They supply thoroughly edited texts of the two surviving Old English passions, which survive in Cotton Tiberius A.iii and Corpus Christi College Cambridge 303, complete with readable facing-page translations and extensive textual notes. In addition, they provide corrected texts of two of the passions' Latin sources, the "Casinensis" version (based on earlier edition in *Bibliotheca Casinensis*) and a version of BHL no. 5303 contained in a late Anglo-Saxon manuscript (here published for the first time). These materials are supplemented with discussion of the evidence for Margaret's cult in Anglo-Saxon England, with information concerning the codicological and linguistic characteristics of the Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, with a full bibliography, and with a particularly comprehensive discussion of the various interrelationships between the Old English and earlier Greek or Latin treatments of the legend. Also useful is the richly detailed analysis of the different themes and concerns of these various versions of the life.

The most controversial aspect of this volume is likely to be the editors' treatment of the Cotton Tiberius text. Because this manuscript was apparently emended by two additional scribes shortly after its initial inscription, Clayton and Magennis have elected to supply one composite text (an edition of the text as it now appears) with all scribal alterations of the original text carefully footnoted and, in an appendix, an additional Master of the Ulm Boccaccio's woodcuts for Heinrich Steinhöwel's German translation

edition of the original text stripped of the second and third scribes' emendations. In this way, they hope to provide modern readers with "the opportunity to see in a dynamic way the successive stages of the evolution of this text in this manuscript" (p.91). An intriguing project, but this being the case, I am uncertain why they have opted to regularize the punctuation, word-division and capitalization of the composite text. Surely "evidence for the reception of the text at a particular time" (p. 90) is obfuscated by such an imposition of modern lexicographical systems. A more diplomatic editorial approach of expanding abbreviations and emending obvious scribal errors while retaining the manuscript's syntactical methods might better have accomplished the goal of representing "two Old English correctors in the process of intelligent interpretation of the A text" (p. 89).

Regarding more practical matters, the volume's usefulness might have been heightened by the addition of several apparati. The rather complicated interrelationships of the Greek and Latin versions of the legend laid out in Chapter Two would be easier to follow if a genealogical table were provided. Extensive cross-references assist the reader who wishes to pursue particular topics through the volume, but a general index would be still more helpful. More consistent translation of passages in languages other than English might prove similarly useful. While such passages are carefully translated when these appear in the body of the prefatory text, those which appear in footnotes are not; nor are two of the three appended texts. These minor reservations aside, the new edition of these undeservedly neglected lives is welcome, and should hold particular interest for feminist scholars.

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Judith Bronfman. Chaucer's "Clerk's Tale:" The Griselda Story Received, Rewritten, Illustrated. New York: Garland, 1994. Pp. xiv, 162.

Judith Bronfman's descriptive bibliography will certainly teach every reader something of interest about the reception and transmission of the tale of Griselda through the past seven centuries. Who would suspect that this story had been retold by Annie Steger Winston in African-American dialect in a short story entitled "A Griselda of the Cabins"? Who among medievalists has studied Gerhard Hauptmann's turn-of-the-century drama Griselda, which adds rape, strangulation, and even poisoned house-cats to the tests of the character's patience?

But if this slender volume has something for everyone, it also tries to accomplish so much in its roughly 100 pages of text that it cannot be helpful to any one reader throughout; indeed, it follows the Griselda story in so many directions that it ultimately gives the lie to its titular focus on Chaucer's tale. The book summarizes the well-known medieval sources and analogues of Chaucer's tale from Italy and France, along with later versions of the Griselda story written in both Europe and the United States. These literary works are supplemented with summaries of and plates from six programs of visual representation, only one of which, William Morris's Kelmscott Chaucer, actually illustrates the English tale. (Among the other illustrative programs reproduced are ink drawings from the unique manuscript of L'Estoire de Griseldis, dated 1395, and the