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Daniel E. O'Sullivan and Laurie Shepard, ed., *Shaping Courtliness in Medieval France: Essays in Honor of Matilda Tomaryn Bruckner*. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2013. 312 pp. \$99.00 U.S. (cl). ISBN 978-1-84384-335-1.

Review by Stephen G. Nichols, The Johns Hopkins University.

In an era when academic presses insist on disguising *Festschriften* (if they publish them at all) as anything but what they are, D. S. Brewer should be applauded for honoring the genre with so robust an example. Indeed, the volume demonstrates how coherent the breed can be when orchestrated effectively. “Shaping Courtliness” and “Matilda Bruckner,” the first and last words of the title, encapsulate the conceptual structure of this book. In their excellent introduction, the editors take their cue from Bruckner’s second book, *Shaping Romance: Interpretation, Truth, and Closure in 12th-Century French Fictions* (1993), to characterize her critical *modus operandi* as seeking “to discuss ‘shaping’ not ‘shaped’ fictions, and to posit meanings in ways that always invite further thoughts and investigation” (p. 2). They further parse the structuring—shaping?—potential of the terms by announcing that contributors to the volume were invited to consider two questions, the first encompassing historical context, “How have discourses both within and outside the court shaped the notion of courtliness, of *courtoisie*?”, and the second, the context of her scholarship, “How have Bruckner’s many contributions over the last four decades...helped us to probe deeper and understand [courtly literature] better?” (p. 4)

Responses to these questions by the eighteen contributors were then divided among four section headings as seen in the List of Essays below. The titles indicate an effort, unusual in such enterprises, to hew closely to the theme of the volume, which concludes with a poetic evocation of the Occitan culture of the Midi when troubadours would conclude songs to their *Domna* (Lady) with a final stanza or two called an *envoi*, in which they exhorted the *jonglar* faithfully to recite the poem to the mistress. Sarah White composed the *envoi* for this volume, a graceful, blank verse apostrophe to the book as *jonglar*, evoking Bruckner’s work and person, concluding: “Finally, deliver / a gift we have the nerve / to give her — our work, our best / *dreyt nien* — / nothing our friend / does not deserve.”

While the trajectory of the volume is designed to move from the historical “real” to fantasies of otherness, tidy categories are difficult to maintain in multi-authored volumes. That is certainly the case with the unruly first chapter by Peter Haidu in whose hands “courtliness,” like the illustration of Maxwell’s *Demon* in Pyncheon’s *The Crying of Lot 49*, becomes a lexical particle shooting off in all directions. It requires the rest of the book to round up the pieces and herd them into a semblance of what Matilda Bruckner understands by “courtliness” in her writings.

Intimations of entropy appear in the opening sentence: “The advent of ‘the courtly’ marks a turning point in European literary history... Yet... something about it isn’t quite kosher” (p. 25). He cites Walter Map’s twelfth-century *De nugis curialium* (*Courtier’s Trifles*) who famously began his work on royal courts by modifying Augustine’s dictum about not knowing what time was to say that while he knew he was *at court*, God alone knows what royal courts *are*. Walter knows enough, however, to compare them to Hell, which offers a clue to where Haidu is headed. He updates Map by transposing the latter’s metaphysical conflation court/Hell into a metonymic equation of court with the materialism

of political power generally. Since he makes no effort to conceal his intense animosity toward political power of any sort, medieval courts are condemned as precursors of modern power structures.

And, for Haidu, that's the point: the materiality of centralized power is universal and thus transhistorical. It makes no difference whether a structure that generates and diffuses such power is contemporary, medieval, or classical. They're all oppressive. Lest one have any doubt as to Haidu's intent to "destructure"—to maintain the volume's lexical register—benign conceptions of "courtliness," one has only to ponder the following dicta: "Similarly, *curia/cour* marks a political occasion eventually transformed into institution and building: Versailles, Matignon, the White House...Heeding Freud's equation of money, gold, and excretion, courts are august institutions that ritualize courtyard crap" (p. 32).

It is unsurprising, then, that he goes on to assess courts as nothing but "parlements," places of endless talk. "Everything at court—outside an occasional murder before or behind the arras—consists of linguistic exchanges..." (p. 34). A reader might logically assume, then, that if they only generate hot air, courts must be fairly benign. But then we learn that at Christmas court in 1085, William I and his nobles "got down to brass tacks" and devised the Domesday survey that reveals their "insensate greed" dedicated to the "extraction of surplus value...by a class structure" characterized by "self-reproductive violence" (pp. 41-42).

Not much has changed since 1085, seemingly, since William and his nobles have counterparts driven by the "murderously totalizing greed that accompanies the *contemporary* collapse of late-capitalist civilization in its proto-fascist aftermath. "The last thing we need is *this* reality, its deification of profitable efficiency, the financial profits of dehumanization, and its utter corruption of the academy" (p. 43). It appears that "desublimating the courtly" (Haidu's sub-title) is a way of demonstrating and deploring its continued presence, all of which leaves one in some uncertainty—given the section heading "Shaping Real and Fictive Courts"—as to where Haidu's essay belongs.

With Donald Maddox's essay, Haidu's notional parlement yields to the historical Parlement of Paris in the mid-thirteenth century. Taking his cue from Matilda Bruckner's use of "the Case" or "open form," from André Jolles's *Einfache Formen*, in her *Narrative Invention in 12th-Century Romance*, Maddox applies the term to real cases in the new Appellate Court of the Parlement of Paris inaugurated under Saint Louis. The records of these cases, known as *Olim*, from the formulaic first word that points back to the case here appealed, do not of course actually constitute *literary* structures, properly speaking. While recognizing this fact, Maddox nevertheless feels they may be read as examples of writing illustrative of Jollesian concepts from which the scholar may extrapolate information about social conflicts, contemporary political issues, and cultural matters more generally. In keeping with a number of the articles in this volume, Maddox chooses cases that involve the human body, particularly dead ones. The choice is ingenious and instructive—amply vindicating his novel approach—not only in revealing the importance attached to possession of deceased beings as a prelude to appropriate burial, but also revealing deep mistrust and tensions between ecclesiastical, royal, and local jurisdictions. This insight established, Maddox cites *Olim* illustrative of similar disputes regarding the possession of living bodies, particularly for penal purposes. Reading these pages, one has a new, deeper understanding of the plaintive opening stanzas of Villon's *Testament*.

Incarceration also figures in Michel-André Bossy's article. Charles d'Orléans, Villon's older contemporary, was taken prisoner at Agincourt in 1415 and held for ransom in London for twenty-five years. British Library Royal Manuscript 16 F ii tells at least part of this story while serving as a "mirror of princes," a genre instructing future kings in the arts of love and governance (in this case, Prince Arthur, Henry VII's eldest son). Divided into two unequal parts, the first and larger was devoted to 169 poems by Charles with accompanying miniature paintings, while the second contained prose pieces on love and princely governance. Bossy shows how the miniatures, portraying key moments in Charles

d'Orléans life, provide clues to the political poems discussing steps he took toward reconciliation with his cousin, Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy. The poems thus provide insight into Charles's release soon after. Bossy's insights into the "manuscript intentionality" of Royal 16 F ii are exemplary in showing how historical context and courtly codes join to provide shape and meaning to a seemingly inchoate codex.

Kristin Burr's, "*Meraugis de Portlesgues* and the Limits of Courtliness;" introduces the second section of the volume, "Shaping Courtly Narrative." The article pits the heroine, Lidoine, of Raoul de Houdenc's unusual romance against the inept eponymous hero. Rational, as well as a paragon of courtly conduct, Lidoine represents a standard *Meraugis* seeks to emulate. But, as Burr spiritedly demonstrates, far from seeking to establish social codes—seen as necessary, but insufficient—the romance argues in favor of a more profound moral compass for its characters. Her reading suggests a metaphysics of action for which philosophical anthropology, rather than courtly codes, should guide the heroes and heroines of Romance.

Both Philip the Good and transformation lie at the core of Joan Grimbert's "The Art of 'Transmutation' in the Burgundian Prose *Cligès* (1454): Bringing the Siege of Windsor Castle to Life for the Court of Philip the Good." If Ovid's *Metamorphoses*—changing beings into another shape or form—play a large thematic role in Old French literature, Grimbert's contribution highlights how, in the thirteenth century, the form of romance itself underwent transmutation from poetry to prose in order to preserve its veracity (poetry having been equated with fiction or even falsehood in the public imagination). Updating form for a new socio-cultural context was, she argues, "one way to understand how courtliness is reshaped in late-medieval romance" (p. 96). The article compares the fifteenth-century prose rendition of Chrétien de Troyes's *Cligès* with its original. As a result, the reader has an excellent glimpse into the changes in cultural preoccupations of late medieval readers when compared with their twelfth-century counterparts. The prose author, for example, was less interested in love intrigues in the siege of Windsor Castle episode than in the battle scenes.

David Hult's offering is both a gracious tribute to Matilda Bruckner, and a model of philology's effectiveness as an instrument of critical analysis. Noting Bruckner's observations on "the obsessive recourse to doubling and the oscillation between images of unity and duality, coupling and separation" (p. 107) in *Shaping Romance*, Hult turns to Thomas's twelfth-century *Roman de Tristan*. Hult notes that this romance, long considered a paradigm of courtly love, has recently undergone re-evaluation aimed at critiquing its courtly status. Central to the reassessment are analyses of Tristan's long, inner monologue when, exiled from Mark's court and thus from proximity to Yseut la blonde, the object of his love, he debates the pros and cons of marrying a surrogate, Yseut *aux blanches mains*. This happens to be a passage that Matilda Bruckner was one of the first to analyze as problematic for courtly love. Building on her work, Hult revisits the monologue and commentary by the narrator "to show, through a careful analysis of Thomas's terminology, that there is a type of continuity that runs through the passage, a continuity anchored, ultimately, in the key concept of *raison*" (p. 109). To "make sense" of the passage, scholars have long proposed a variety of emendations that serve mainly, as Hult brilliantly shows, to buttress their own hypotheses. By contrast, he takes the text as written, arguing that it is "a brilliant example of Thomas's ambiguity and twisting of perspective, of ideas, and of words throughout this passage—a twisting that is itself complicated by the rational view projected on the text by the editor/translator" (p. 111).

Paradoxically, by dint of studying the actual language of the monologue and by demonstrating the crucial role of such abstract terms as *raison*, *verur* ("truth"), and psychological faculties—"memory, reflection, self-recognition" (p. 121)—Hult reveals a medieval, as opposed to modern, emotional coefficient. That sensation, a staple of troubadour love lyric, was associated with the heart. Hult's insights are succinct and enlightening reassessments of medieval "courtliness."

With Virginie Greene's "Humanimals: The Future of Courtliness in the *Conte du Papegau*," we return to the critical stance adopted by a number of articles in this volume. That is the attempt to redefine medieval representation in terms of current critical modes, in this case, animal studies, the subject of a colloquium Bruckner organized several years ago. Greene chooses to explore the liminal space of human/animal existence in the Middle Ages as a response to a longstanding consensus that the *Conte du Papegau* lacks depth. This romance, she avers, is not about depth, but rather demands reading "skin deep and going along with the grain of the story, perceived as a surface without depth, but with many pleats and wrinkles" (p. 125). She does so by exploring the conjunction between skin (superficiality) and game (lack of seriousness) in the *Papegau* "through two instances of 'as if' play in the story: the court, as if it were a cage, and the knight, as if it were an animal species" (p. 126).

Greene derives the notion of "as if" and "subjunctive universe" from Adam Seligman *et al.*'s *Ritual and its Consequences*, where "ritual is viewed as the opposite of sincerity 'through creating an order that is self-consciously distinct from other possible worlds'" (p. 126).^[1] That humans regularly negotiate different worlds provides insight into courtliness, for Greene, which she characterizes as "the imaginary space of social rituals for medieval culture." (126) Among the different worlds portrayed by the *Conte du Papegau* are the overlapping territories of humans and animals. This shared space produces a category of "humanimity," lurking "in the tendency to naturalize one's persona when one wishes to appear like a force of nature" (p. 136). Greene sees in the spectrum of knight/animal associations in fifteenth-century Arthurian romance proof of the continuing force of Matilda Bruckner's insight into romance narrative's ability to renew itself and to influence secular society.

Logan Whalen's "A Matter of Life or Death: Fecundity and Sterility in Marie de France's *Guigemar*" juxtaposes productive and destructive imagery in Marie de France's lay, *Guigemar*. Unlike the other contributions, this one does not seek to raise larger conceptual questions beyond thematic exegesis of the poem, nor does it conspicuously engage the considerable legacy of Bruckner's *oeuvre*. That is curious since two of her previous articles addressed topics in Marie de France—naming and doubling—that connect her lays to troubadour and romance literature. ^[2]

The last of the articles in the second section, Evelyn B. Vitz's "*Le Roman de la Rose*: Performed in Court," also bears a tenuous claim to the segment's thematic, "shaping romance." Although written with verve and disarming conviction, Vitz's assertion that the *Romance of the Rose* formed part of the repertory of dramatic performance at court rests on no historical evidence. She relies, rather, on her own experience directing performances of the *Rose* in her classes at NYU. This allows Vitz to postulate "the possibility—indeed the strong likelihood—that the first part of the *Rose* gave rise to court performances of a truly spectacular nature, including mime and acting, costumes, props, music, and dance" (p. 152). Rightly pointing to the highly visual nature of the poetry, especially in Guillaume de Lorris's first section, where ekphrasis and hypotyposis render nature, dances, and the oneiric characters intensely vivid, Vitz cites manuscript paintings inspired by the verse as evidence for her performance hypothesis. "Medieval people...apparently wanted to see the story shown before their physical eyes. If they wanted to see the stories performed in their manuscripts, why should we expect them not to have wanted to see it also performed aloud—live!—and we know that most works of this period were intended to be performed aloud" (p. 160). Yes, we do have evidence of works performed at this time, but that's the point: we have no evidence of the *Rose*'s being performed, but lots of evidence of the manuscripts being read and the illuminations admired. Admittedly, Vitz raises an intriguing prospect here, but it does seem to be a case of "shaping romance" very belatedly.

Section Three begins with two chapters that directly engage Matilda Bruckner's work on *trobairitz*, or women troubadours. Elizabeth Poe's "Lombarda's Mirrors: Reflections on PC 288, 1 as a Response to PC 54, 1" shows how *tenso*s, or debate poems, between two poets—here a *trobairitz* and a troubadour—raised issues pertinent to regional politics at a critical juncture of the Albigenian crusade. Poe frames her study by posing five questions extrapolated from the debate between Lady Lombarda and Bernart

Arnaut. The questions elucidate the historical context, the poetic context, and the psychological grounding of the poems. Poe's study takes us into the workshop of Occitan poetics, offering enlightenment as to the originality, linguistic brilliance, and intellectual subtlety of the troubadours.

Daniel O'Sullivan's chapter on Marian devotion shifts focus away from the secular to the sacred in troubadour poetry. This understudied facet of Occitan lyric challenges O'Sullivan to demonstrate the traditional failure the complex realignment required when poets substituted the Virgin Mary for the *domna* or secular female love object. We need to think about the transition less as a code switching from secular to sacred than as an evolution to a new poetic modality, one that Dante would take to even greater lengths. O'Sullivan wants to reshape our understanding of the couple in troubadour lyric, to offer a more expansive love dynamics, a more complex range of denotations for love itself. Then, "these songs will be able to return from the margins of scholarly debate to take their rightful place side-by-side within the wider troubadour song tradition" (p. 185). To facilitate such study, O'Sullivan includes a useful appendix of Old Occitan songs in which the Virgin Mary appears by poet, including the incipit for each song along with its Pillet-Carstens number (pp. 198-199).

William Schenck's contribution reverses O'Sullivan's focus by writing of Ermengaude d'Anjou, countess of Brittany (d. 1146), who abandoned the cloister. Ermengaude was not herself a poet, nor a patroness like Marie de Champagne, but the subject of a Latin poem written by the bishop of Rennes, Marbode. Scholars have viewed the example of Ermengaude—as portrayed by Marbode—as proof that "courtliness" fostered respect for women. Since Marbode's poem is "firmly rooted in the culture of the church," Schenck finds prior analogies between ecclesiastical and secular "courtliness" overly simplistic. He seeks to bring perspective to the question by asking: "What is the relationship between this sort of "courtliness" and the development of secular literature at the aristocratic court, whose values could be different from those of the church?" (p. 201) He pursues this question by studying Ermengaude's life which, at the same time, offers insight into how "12th-century aristocratic women could chart a path for themselves through the cultural and political opportunities and constraints that surrounded them" (p. 202).

Like Virginie Greene, Nadia Margolis explores the transposition of twelfth-century romance modalities into the later Middle Ages. In this instance, Margolis contrasts Chrétien de Troyes's refinement of incipient courtly codes with Christine de Pizan's efforts to renew and reshape them as moral philosophy to reform the court of Charles VI and Isabeau de Bavière. The first decades of the fifteenth century were desperate times for the French court, stricken by rivalry, intrigue, and descent into civil war that allowed the English to occupy Paris after Agincourt. Yet reform still seemed possible. With the aid of Jean Gerson, prelate at court and chancellor of the University of Paris, Queen Isabeau, and other civic-minded courtiers, Christine produced an astonishing series of writings that Margolis discusses to show her revision of courtly literary modes from romance to moral treatise. Margolis's study has the salutary effect of reminding us that, from the twelfth century on, the moral and political treatise was just as much a fixture of court culture as romance. Christine's genius was first to meld the two genres and then to insert them boldly into reformist debates. In her writing, the imaginary of courtly romance joins the *Realpolitik* of the French court at a moment of real crisis.

The fourth and final section, devoted to "The Courtly Other," begins with Laine Duggett's segue from Matilda Bruckner's work on hospitality in romance to "The Reception of Outsiders at Court." After rehearsing Bruckner's differentiation of commercial hospitality (monetized) from courtly hospitality (a gift economy), Duggett analyzes the reciprocal advantages the lord and his guest each bring to romance hospitality. Notable in the courtly practice of hospitality is the absence of the least trace of xenophobia. At least in literature, strangers are as welcome as countrymen, Duggett notes, on condition that "he or she contributes to the refinement and consequent prestige of the court" (p. 230).

These conditions established, Duggett offers three case studies of hospitality from twelfth-century romance: Tristan, Chrétien de Troyes's Cligès, and Marie de France's Lanval. For the Tristan, Duggett has to rely on the Old Norse translation, since the extant portions of Bérout's and Thomas's versions lack the arrival of Tristan at King Mark's court in Cornwall. The case may seem inapplicable, since Tristan was Mark's nephew, and thus no stranger. Duggett rightly points out, however, that Tristan arrives incognito, and since Mark has never seen him, he is to all intents and purposes a stranger. And, as the reader knows, Tristan comes from Brittany bearing the gifts of refinement, and as such is the inaugurator of courtly conduct at Mark's court. Tristan's integration there is the more seamless in that the courtly milieux of the Celtic lands (Ireland, Cornwall, Brittany) are similar (p. 232).

Chrétien's example, however, juxtaposes very different social milieux: the imperial court of Greece and King Arthur's court in England. The former is unrivaled in elegant refinement—noted in the dress of Cligès and his retinue—the latter in chivalric prowess. Duggett sees the case of Marie de France's Lanval as an exception to the paradigm of courtly hospitality because the hero is driven away from Arthur's court. Since sexual intrigue, slander, and jealousy are motivating factors for Lanval's expulsion, the case is rather different from the first two (as Duggett half recognizes). The study might have relied less on narrative recapitulation and an anemic analysis of courtly mores had Duggett entertained the ambivalent origins of the term *hostis*, "stranger," "foreigner," "guest," and "enemy." After all, Lanval morphs from one to the other in the queen's perspective where he is the one *in* the other. And, if woman in romance is also *hostis*, then the queen and the *fée* are mirror images of each other and thus mirror Lanval's own ambivalent identity.

In Jane Burn's "Shaping Saladin: Courtly Men Dressed in Silk," we have a subtle, critically rich example of how romance confronts alterity. The knight as other is the knight undressed and dressed, the knight as the "sartorial body formed as much from fabrics as from flesh" (p. 242). One dons (and doffs) courtly identity, and (as the image of Perceval attempting to take the armor from the body of the red knight in Chrétien's *Conte du graal* reminds us) knowing how to adorn the chivalric body is the most material (and personal) lesson of courtliness. The importance of materiality is no less significant for being hidden in plain sight.

Concealment and revelation of the body by silken cloth figure prominently in an early thirteenth-century treatise on chivalry, the anonymous *Ordene de chevalerie*. This treatise lays bare the theoretical link between the chivalric body and the Christian soul. The *Ordene* explains the symbolism of the different colored silk garments knights ceremonially don, where each signals a different Christian virtue, white being the sign of a knight's purity. The symbolic valence of silk raiment also underscores a more troubling aspect of the sartorial body as marker of misogyny and xenophobia. We see the former in a proverb that equates a woman's body adorned with silk to wrapping a dunghill with the same fabric. The same expression serves for a heathen body, as the *Ordene* shows. A French crusader, Hugh of Tabarie, is brought before his captor, Saladin. The latter asks Hugh to knight him, a request Hugh rejects on the grounds that investing a pagan with silk raiment would be akin to wrapping silk around a dunghill: it would still stink. But then Hugh accedes to Saladin's request and begins to invest the Muslim with the symbolic silk garments of knighthood, each signifying a particular Christian virtue the knight must embody.

For Burns, the story poses the question "Who is Saladin?" "Can we determine his identity based on his attire?" (p. 249) and, finally, does the chivalric garb transform him from enemy "other" to chivalric paragon? Whatever the answers for the medieval audience, Jane Burns sees the "fabric of silk [as] provid[ing] a porous material border between [cultures], enabling Hugh and Saladin to cross identities and mix chivalric attributes quite apart from the crusading mission of the Western Christian church" (p. 253).

Nancy Regalado returns to that other porous border between animals and humans in her contribution, “Shaping Courtliness in Richard de Fournival’s *Bestiaire d’amours*, copied in Metz about 1312.” This masterful and fascinating chapter achieves three main goals with admirable succinctness. It begins with a definition of literary courtliness, a necessary definition that should have come much earlier in the volume. Indeed, Nancy Regalado’s contribution would have made a much better first chapter than Haidu’s. Her definition sets the stage for her second concern, which explains how Richard de Fournival transposes the Old French allegorical bestiary into a courtly genre where animal categories and their description furnish allegorical exemplars that engage and contrast with human lovers, not human lovers in the abstract, but Richard himself, who borrows the poetic “I” from troubadour love lyric. By stripping out the universalizing and abstract Christian allegorical glosses found in clerkly bestiaries, Richard recasts the genre to focus on his own experience as poet and as lover, in effect using the lyric mode, if not the form. Regalado leaves no doubt as to his success: “The rich texture, the shifts in diction, and the wit of Richard’s *Bestiaire* come from his weaving together themes of courtly love with a number of non-courtly, non-erotic expressions of love” (p. 261).

The third part of the essay shows how the version of the *Bestiaire d’amours* produced in Metz in the early fourteenth century and preserved in Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Douce 308 sought to shape “the values and practices of courtliness in audiences far removed from the original aristocratic and clerkly milieu where the *Bestiaire d’amours* was first received” (p. 264). She illustrates this point with a fine analysis of the codex that shows a thematic interaction of the *Bestiaire* with other works in the codex, particularly *Les Voeux du paon* (*Vows of the Peacock*) and the *Tournoi de Chauvency* (*Tournament of Chevauncy*). Noting that the owners signed their copy, Regalado continues, “the signature tells us about the value this copy of the *Bestiaire* had for its owners, a status symbol for this upwardly mobile family whose ownership of the *Bestiaire* and the other booklets comprising Douce 308 is recorded on the very pages of the book” (p. 270). This is an exemplary demonstration of the synergy between medieval works, their manuscripts, and their readers. Each has something significant to contribute to our understanding of the sociology of literature in this period.

The final contribution, by Laurie Shepard, concerns the poetic legacy in Italy of King Louis IX’s brother, Charles of Anjou. Charles took the throne of Sicily in 1265 after ousting the Hohenstaufen monarch. Charles’s ascension to the throne, coupled with his military success, unleashed “a political and poetic debate in the Italian *comuni* [regarding] worth, courtly love, and poetic composition” (p. 271). A poet himself, Charles invited Sordello of Mantua to serve him as poet/counsellor. Sordello reciprocated by going beyond the courtly themes of thirteenth-century troubadour verse to develop a poetics of nobility based on virtue and *onor*. Shepard notes that Sordello “describes nobility not as a series of attributes, but as a praxis...that ‘changes the sign profoundly’ and reinterprets the meaning of nobility in terms of the evolving culture” (p. 275).

If nobility were a praxis based on virtue and *onor*, then the practice rather than the birth status of the practitioner would confer authority. Northern Italian cities profited from this “radical rethinking of nobility” to “found governments known as the *Signoria del Popolo*, with citizen representatives performing the functions of government” (p. 275). Authors like Brunetto Latini, Guido Cavalcanti, Guido Guinizelli, and Guittone d’Arezzo spoke in different ways for the movement, and their engagement spawned new literary modes focused on political theory. Shepard deftly sketches a tableau of the principal figures—both political and literary—and the events that mark them. With admirable succinctness, she introduces the volatile issue of papal politics that made the Northern Italian city states such hotbeds of intrigue. And yet, despite the political turbulence, “the strongest Italian poets of the period, Guittone and Guinizelli, debated the fundamental problems of courtliness, that is, of love, virtue, and nobility...” (p. 283).

Retrospectively, one comes away from reading this volume with an appreciation for the essays themselves, of course, but through them with enhanced understanding of the protean legacy of Matilda Bruckner.

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NOTES

[1] Adam B. Seligman, Robert P. Weller, Michael J. Puett, Bennett Simon, *Ritual and its Consequences: An Essay on the Limits of Sincerity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

[2] Matilda T. Bruckner, "Strategies of Naming in Marie de France's Lais: At the Crossroads of Gender and Genre," *Neophilologus* 75 (1991): 31-40; and "Le Fresne's Model for Twinning in the Lais of Marie de France," *MLN* 121, No. 4 (2 September 2006): 946-960.

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