the Beowulf poet ‘imaginatively refashioned’ (p. 50) the deaths of two rivals for the English throne after Cnut’s death, Alfred atheling and Harold Harefoot. Chapter 2 proposes that Grendel’s attacks on Heorot reflect the eleventh-century Danish invasions of England. Chapters 3 and 4 explore links between various accounts of Cnut’s two queens, Ælfgifu of Northampton and Emma of Normandy, and Grendel’s mother and Wealhtheow respectively, as well suggesting that illustrations in the Harley Psalter lie behind the poem’s depiction of royal banquets.

There are three main problems with Damico’s central thesis that Beowulf is an eleventh-century poem: first, there is in fact a considerable body of evidence – linguistic, metrical, paleographical, and cultural – pointing to the poem’s origins before the Viking Age, as demonstrated by the 2014 volume of essays edited by Leonard Neidorf; secondly, many of the texts which Damico posits as sources, such as MS C of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle or the Encomium Emmae Reginae, might just as easily have been influenced by Beowulf or works resembling it; and thirdly, her reading of the poem is highly selective, almost entirely overlooking the final third save for a brief discussion of the dragon-fight in the Conclusion.

Kenneth Sisam’s argument that Beowulf, together with its companion-pieces, was copied into the Nowell Codex primarily because of the compiler’s interest in monsters – rather than for any perceived relevance to contemporary politics – remains one of the more widely accepted theories about the poem’s transmission. While some of the parallels highlighted by Damico are certainly tantalizing, few readers will be persuaded by the argument advanced here that Beowulf (or at least the section corresponding to Scribe A’s stint) was composed in the mid-eleventh century as an elaborate political allegory centred on the power struggle which followed Cnut’s death. But Damico nonetheless provides a fresh and valuable re-examination of the richness of Anglo-Danish literature and court culture in the early to mid-eleventh century, bringing Beowulf into conversation with a wealth of insular and continental Latin and Old Norse texts. As such, this entertaining and lively book raises important questions about how Beowulf might have been read in the decades following its final copying.

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A single glossator and scribe, Aldred, is identified in autograph colophons to two Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, the great Lindisfarne Gospels and the Durham Ritual
Book (alias Collectar). His hand appears also in a gloss to Bede’s commentary on Proverbs. Aldred explicitly recognized the exceptional ecclesiastical and artistic value of the Lindisfarne Gospels codex in which he worked, although he calls himself *indignus* and *miserissimus* against his predecessors. Both the importance and the interest of his Old English text are now accentuated by major unresolved questions concerning his work.

This collection represents a workshop held in 2012. The subtitle identifies three fields of research and discussion around the Lindisfarne Gloss; most of the papers in the volume, however, are linguistic in focus. Studies grouped as ‘The gloss in context’ in Part I are dominated by textual comparanda and only the first two papers (Brown and Roberts) engage directly and substantially with the topics of context and author respectively. In Part II, ‘The language of the gloss’, five papers analyse data of morphosyntactic character, concerning nouns and noun phrases, verbal inflexion, and phrasal verbs. The sixth paper in this section, by Cuesta, is quite a severe critique of Skeat’s 1871–87 comparative edition of the glosses as a source of reliable linguistic data.

Two broader themes may be held to run throughout the whole collection, recurring in Part II and frequently reappearing in the other sections. One is the importance of the multiple – typically double – glosses of words in the Latin text. In Part III, ‘Glossing practice’, Bolze explores largely aspectual implications of alternative forms of the basic stative verbs *beon* and *wesan*, Pons-Sanz discusses the phenomenon from a lexical perspective, and Jolly focuses on the Durham Collectar, illustrating Aldred’s approach there in terms of active process rather than the implied preconditions. Cole (in Part II) and Kotake in the final essay in the book consider variation and inconsistency in the Gloss in terms of possible multiple ‘authorship’: specifically, the incorporation of earlier glosses in what Aldred wrote. A crucial point of reference is the gloss known as Rushworth², written by one Owun, besides the intriguing possibility that the gloss to John might incorporate parts of a translation of that Gospel which Bede was working on late in his life. A thorough comparative analysis of the Lindisfarne and Rushworth Glosses might not resolve the question of the relationship between these often identical texts, but it should clarify what can be held to be peculiar to Aldred.

Altogether this is a welcome publication, containing useful analyses, and insights of high scholarly value: it abundantly confirms the attention the Lindisfarne Gloss deserves. Despite careful editorial efforts to insert cross-references between the papers, however, the majority of the contributions appear primarily as stand-alone, single-issue probes of the data. Perhaps more than anything else, a high priority should be a comprehensive reflection on the source and its potential, with a more thorough appraisal of the social, ecclesiastical, and cultural conditions of Northumbria north of the Tees in the third quarter of
the tenth century, and a fundamental review of the critical agenda for historical linguistic analysis of both this and its related texts. This is nonetheless a valuable start, not least in that it identifies significant and substantial topics ready and waiting for further research.

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This volume was written, the author states in his foreword, ‘for students new to the enterprise’ as a ‘practical handbook for beginners … that might show what is at stake in the process of editing a text and what steps one might take to address the attendant difficulties’ (p. vii). Accordingly, after brief preliminary reflections on the nature of editions and their potentially differing relationships to the manuscript witnesses of their texts, the author expounds the process of editing via five chapters devoted in turn to (1) Collecting the witnesses; (2) Finding a copy-text and transcribing it; (3) Comparing the witnesses, or collation; (4) The examination of the variants; and (5) Annotation. The discussion is supplemented by a specimen edition, collation, and translation of Richard Rolle, ‘Super canticum’ 4; and by extended descriptions of five of the relevant manuscripts for which adequate published accounts were lacking.

Meeting a real need, such a guide will be most welcome. The material is logically ordered and clearly explained, the exposition throughout being linked to the specific case of Rolle’s ‘Super Canticum’, passages and trial exercises from which are continually laid before the reader for contemplation and practice. That said, the present writer (and his current cohort of palaeography students) identified three general demerits. First, though not a long book, it is not a short book either, and is, in places, rather discursive for a genuinely ‘practical handbook for beginners’: the real debutants would have preferred something pithier, with more signposts (in effect, sub-headings) to help them locate more easily the treatment of the particular issue they were encountering at a given time. Second, although generally engagingly, intermittently rather informally, written (alternating – sometimes in a single sentence – between impersonal and personal forms: ‘One can – and the extra size will help to eliminate obscurities of your penmanship, as you write in variations – use full sheets of A4, for example’, p. 40), the discussion occasionally becomes rather challenging for the beginner at whom it is purportedly aimed: ‘In a number of dispersed examples, individual scribes prove committed to more correct grammar-school Latin than