worked to shape those tastes. In all, this book will be greatly welcomed by students and scholars with an interest in medieval romance and its reception, early modern literary cultures, and the history of the book.

S.H.


This is a valuable and original contribution to questions concerning both the composition and interpretation of the *Decameron*, which argues that the fabliaux tradition influenced Boccaccio’s combinatorial practices more than any other genre, helping to shape not only the contents of the *Decameron*, but also the very structure of the work. Brown shows how it is the use of reversal, a key trope both within the fabliaux narrative and within the structure of fabliaux manuscripts, which offers a model for Boccaccio’s practice of shifting responsibility for interpretation onto the reader in the *Decameron*. The fabliaux challenge the relationship between text and audience, actively promoting openness of interpretation and shifting attention away from moral purpose towards the hermeneutic.

The study is divided into four main chapters, which lead from the fabliaux tradition, through individual tales and manuscript collections, to the broader context of medieval story collections, finishing with the *Decameron*. Chapter 1 identifies three different types of reversal which are at play within the fabliaux (chiasmus, narrative reversal, and structural reversal or inversion) and shows how *Le Fablel de la grue* brings together all three types of reversal and prefigures techniques which will be used by Boccaccio. At this stage, references to the *Decameron* are only brief, although for those who are already familiar with Boccaccio’s text it is easy to see how the features being discussed are pertinent. The importance of materiality is introduced with a discussion of *La Grue* in relation to other texts found in the same manuscripts.

Attention to the material context brings with it recognition of the many challenges facing this kind of study, in terms of the quantity of material available, and also the difficulty of drawing generalizations from a highly unstable tradition. With this in mind, chapter 2 considers a single manuscript of possible Italian origin in order to examine how the careful and conscious placement of fabliaux among fables encourages intratextual commentary within the manuscript collection, modelling the way in which the *Decameron* will later deliberately juxtapose different genres. Chapter 3 offers an overview of the full range of
different storytelling collections produced in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, updating Landau’s discussion of Boccaccio’s sources, whilst remaining appropriately cautious about the direction of influence between eastern collections and the organization of western collections. It is only the fabliaux manuscripts, Brown argues, which model the thematic and generic diversity that will come to define Boccaccio’s Decameron, founded on the bringing together of eastern frames and western compilations. The final chapter argues that the lexical and syntactical connections between individual fabliaux and Decameron novelle strongly suggest that Boccaccio had access to fabliaux manuscripts, including the work of Jean de Condé, via the female networks connecting the French court with Naples.

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One of the key pieces in the treasury of Kraków Cathedral is a large golden cross decorated with motifs from Arthurian romance, namely the tale of Erec and Enite: two courtly crowns from the second quarter of the thirteenth century were transformed into a cross some time before 1471, the beginning of Jan Rzeszowski’s episcopacy. He probably played an important role in the donation of the object as a reliquary cross to the cathedral (more precisely, the Chapel of the Holy Cross), later attributed exclusively to Casimir IV Jagiellon. Since then the cross has belonged to the ornamenta of Kraków Cathedral. Today, it still functions as a venerated liturgical object, and it has gained national importance.

Mühlemann’s fundamental study of the cross does justice to the complex history of the extraordinary object, also discussing the transformation from secular to sacred objects more generally. Starting from a comprehensive research report (introduction, pp. 10–19; more detailed: ch. 3), she reconstructs the changing shape and functions of the object by a thorough study of the structure of the cross as well as inventories of the cathedral treasury (chs 1 and 2). The second part of the book (chs 4–6) focuses on the thirteenth-century crowns by reconstructing their original structure, comparing them to other goldworks, and analysing the Erec cycle depicted on one of them. The book closes with an appendix, including a helpful index.

Mühlemann’s well-researched interdisciplinary study has huge merits: from the careful analysis of the goldwork to the research report, which makes research