

to the notes 'in a different font' was not carried though, on the grounds that 'this would be pedantic and not of much interest to potential readers' (p. xv). Indeed.

All of this bittiness should be shrugged off, and the inner core of the volume enjoyed for the masterpiece of scholarship it is. In discussion authenticated by intimate knowledge of an impressive array of manuscripts, Ward traces the trajectory of classical rhetoric from the fourth-century commentary on the *De inventione* by Victorinus, Augustine's teacher, to the thirteenth century, when Aristotle's teaching on rhetoric became known, and, Ward avers, interest in classical rhetorical theory generally declined, except in Italy. The *De inventione* and *Rhetorica ad Herennium* were the subjects of a considerable corpus of commentary, with Quintilian's *Institutes* receiving 'only fitful attention' (p. 457). But the narrow range of teaching texts is underpinned by what were, in Ward's view, the deep cultural principles underlying the art of rhetoric, which 'was always grounded as much in philosophical, logical, thought and general intellectual attitudes, as it was a response to the needs of society' (p. 458). Those needs of society were very real also. Rhetorical theory continued to appeal because 'medieval people ... continued to be confronted by situations that required persuasion at a non-technical level', whether the crisis requiring the services of good communication was 'between king and his adviser, between opposed political parties, personal enemies, communal factions, educationalists with conflicting views, bearers of Christian truth, their opponents, and the bulk of mankind' (pp. 458f.). Rhetoric, then, was never out of season.

This is persuasively expressed, as is Ward's concern that 'the demise of the classical rhetorical ideal' may mark a dangerous 'lack of communication between individuals, disciplines, and, above all, classes', thus becoming 'the modern form of civic *stasis* that will eventually destroy the tranquility and values of western civilisation' (pp. 461f.). An ardent belief in classical rhetoric as the repository of civilized values, the advocate of a 'free exchange of ideas' and belief in 'the social relevance of knowledge' (p. 461), shines through all the minuscule detail of this meticulous study, giving it heart and life.

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Marjorie Curry Woods, *Weeping for Dido: The Classics in the Medieval Classroom*, E. H. Gombrich Lecture Series (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019). xxi + 200 pp. ISBN 978-0-691-17080-0. \$39.95/£34.00.

The aim of this engaging book is to take a broad transhistoric look at notations made in the manuscripts of three Latin books commonly taught to medieval

schoolboys (the *Aeneid*, the *Achilleid*, and the *Ilias Latina*). Marjorie Curry Woods focuses on three facets of medieval teaching, namely gender, performance, and especially emotion. The latter is crucial for learning a foreign language: a learner who is emotionally involved with the material they are reading and hearing will retain it better. These schooltexts are read alongside their medieval commentaries and general rhetorical handbooks to illustrate the ways in which pupils were taught to recite texts and express the feelings of the characters contained therein. Woods ingeniously lays out the commentary material, which appears like a bewildering mass of text in the original manuscripts, making it comprehensible and yet also asking her reader to engage in the kinds of mental gymnastics medieval schoolboys might have engaged in as they heard their teachers explicating the text. Squiggly brackets, pointy fingers, and interlinear and marginal comments bring out moments of heightened feeling in the texts and enabled better comprehension and better recitation. The book is a feat of erudition and toil worn lightly.

In chapter 1 Woods takes as her departure point Augustine's emotional reaction to reading the *Aeneid*, especially Dido's death. She demonstrates how strong emotions displayed by characters such as Dido generate 'emotional arousal' in readers and listeners. This arousal 'enhances memory' and, according to the author, was deliberately exploited by teachers who were aware of its potential for retention, as can be seen from glosses highlighting these passages. Thus, such glosses reveal an understanding of the connection between memory and strong emotion. Woods importantly observes that the commentaries' emphasis on every single word creates a sustained effect on the student, even if it seems mind-numbing and myopic to the modern reader. Chapter 2 tackles the *Achilleid* and the *Ilias Latina* – both taught widely in medieval schools and containing material about Achilles and the Trojan War that, in narrative terms, forms the background to the first half of the *Aeneid*. Woods illustrates how medieval commentators use the *Achilleid* as a Bildungsroman by focusing on Achilles' mentors and character development from feral boy via pretending to be a girl to grown man/warrior. In her discussion of the *Ilias Latina* (based on mostly later/fifteenth-century manuscripts), a text which she explains is ideal for an audience of boys given the almost all-male cast and a good deal of fighting (but isn't that essentializing?), Woods shows that commentators here tend to emphasize elementary aspects of the characters, such as their names, origins, etc. In the third chapter the author turns her attention to ways in which boys learn to recite and express themselves through emotionally loaded speeches delivered by men and, especially, women: the commentaries provide cues for the kinds of gestures required for a convincing impersonation and performance, e.g. agitated movements or catching of the breath. Compellingly, Woods argues that a potentially difficult scene when read alone (e.g. sexual violence in the

Achilleid) can be turned into a parodic scene in the classroom, as hammed up deliveries allow pupils to diffuse the emotionally difficulties of the text.

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TINA CHRONOPOULOS

Britton Elliott Brooks, *Restoring Creation: The Natural World in the Anglo-Saxon Saints' Lives of Cuthbert and Guthlac* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2019). viii + 315 pp. ISBN 978-1-84384-530-0. £60.00.

Medieval saints lend themselves well to environmental enquiry. This is particularly true of those in the eremitic tradition because their seclusions not only often involve miraculous interactions with non-human creatures, but also engage the wild spaces into which these ascetics withdraw. Britton Elliott Brooks's *Restoring Creation: The Natural World in the Anglo-Saxon Saints' Lives of Cuthbert and Guthlac* is not the first 'ecological' study on Cuthbert and Guthlac (see e.g. Susan Crane, *Animal Encounters*), but it is the first to give book-length attention to these early medieval saints in this context.

At the heart of Brooks's monograph are detailed examinations of the exegetical foci in six Anglo-Saxon hagiographies which form the respective five chapters: the anonymous *Vita Sancti Cuthberti*, Bede's metrical *Vita Sancti Cuthberti*, Bede's prose *Vita Sancti Cuthberti*, Felix's *Vita Sancti Guthlaci*, the *Old English Prose Life of Guthlac*, and *Guthlac A* (the last two are both the subject of chapter 5). Brooks shows through deft linguistic analysis how the authors craft intertextual narratives that augment their sources to produce distinctive versions that aim to elevate their saints 'in very specific locations in the English landscape' (p. 4). It is this specificity – the 'highly physical depiction[s] of landscape' (p. 16) – that gives the study its environmental focus, though Brooks is always careful to root his discussions in theological contexts. On Northumbrian islands (Cuthbert) and in the East Anglian fens (Guthlac), both saints enact temporary restorations of Creation through monastic behaviours – returns to pre-lapsarian harmonies between human and non-human. This, as the title makes clear, is the central theme of the book and Brooks aims to show how these restorations are grounded in 'experientially familiar' (p. 18) landscapes.

Chapter 1 explores how Cuthbert achieves restoration through monastic obedience. His discipline models how the world may be transformed, and his actions in named locations establish sites for future lay pilgrimage. Chapter 2 also focuses on obedience, but is specifically concerned with compliance to the Divine Office as part of Bede's agenda to fashion Cuthbert into a saint of 'universal relevance' (p. 16). In chapter 3, Brooks develops his discussion of Bede's Cuthbert, but explores how the author is focused on conveying the saint's