Charles V is very attractive, it is at least a generation too early for the events and entertainments framing the discussion.

However, the final chapter – chapter 8, ‘On drama’s trail’ – demonstrates the effectiveness of and possibilities allowed by Sponsler’s scholarship on Lydgate. She first brings in a wealth of evidence surrounding the so-called Mumming of the Seven Philosophers from Trinity College Library MS R.3.19, a moralistic dramatic work in the ‘king of Christmas’/‘winter king’ tradition. This leads on to a compelling and well-argued case for Lydgate’s authorship of the mumming. Minor quibbles aside, The Queen’s Dumbshows is a timely and important addition to scholarship on medieval drama, on Lydgate’s poetics, and in particular, on the history of pre-modern performance.

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Karen Elaine Smyth’s book aims to demonstrate the ways in which developments in the understanding and measuring of time inform the literature of late medieval England. While Smyth entertains a broad range of literatures in passing (including Chaucer), the majority of the study is devoted to the poetry of John Lydgate and Thomas Hoccleve: Smyth uses these poets’ works as case studies in demonstrating convergent narrative expressions of time. Her stated focus is on addressing ‘how alternative registers of time operate within different societal groups, between the works of two writers, between different texts by the same author and even within a text’ (p. 10). Smyth also aims for a broader impact in her research: she encourages not only a critical reassessment of the works of Lydgate and Hoccleve, but also a reconsideration of the boundary between understandings of time perceived as ‘medieval’ and as ‘modern’ – and of the ‘modernity’ and ‘alterity’ of late medieval expressions of time.

Smyth’s first chapter is devoted to an overview of what she terms ‘cultural narratives of time’ in the medieval period. The chapter is divided into eight sections, and it covers – for instance – technological advances in the measuring of time, the significance of the chronometer, and time regulation, leading into a more prolonged discussion of ‘literary imaginings of time’. Smyth entertains in this overview not only the work of Lydgate and Hoccleve, but also the Paston letters, Chaucer’s works, and religious texts that use time structurally or thematically, such as Henry Suso’s Horologium sapientiae. The remaining chapters of Smyth’s study are devoted to the work of Lydgate and Hoccleve. Chapters 2–4 consider Lydgate’s Troy Book, Fall of Princes, and Siege of Thebes, respectively; and they entertain a range of subjects, including the use of time-markers as ‘narrative framing devices’, the relationship between temporal specificity and political commentary in the mirror-for-princes genre, and the thematic roles of astronomical time-referents, the ages of man, and references to eternity.
Chapters 5 and 6 focus on Hoccleve’s *Regiment of Princes* and *Series*. Smyth focuses primarily on Hoccleve’s use of framing material in his texts (the dialogue with the old man in the first section of the *Regiment*, the ‘proem’ or prologue to the *Regiment* proper, and the first two sections of the *Series*). Using her discussion of Lydgate as a point of comparison, Smyth notes that, in the *Regiment*, Hoccleve is less concerned with using specific time-markers (with possible implications for the political context in which Hoccleve was writing); and that, in the *Series*, Hoccleve’s structuring principles are overidden by ‘temporal unruliness’ – a state that permeates the text, and that has implications for Hoccleve’s own return to a state of health and productivity within the poem.

Smyth makes interesting observations throughout this study; and the book calls attention to the complex interrelationships between time and literary creation in these two fifteenth-century authors. The chapters devoted to detailed consideration of the two authors’ poems prove most fruitful in elucidating the web of temporal references (and intermeshings) at hand. At times, however, the readings come across as selective – so, for instance, chapter 5 argues that the *Regiment* proper largely eschews specific time-referents, without considering the very timely (and very pointed) end towards which the text travels: Hoccleve’s closing meditation on the ongoing war with France, and his culminating suggestion that Prince Henry marry a member of the French royalty to secure peace between England and France. Smyth’s prose can also be hard to follow, due to cumbersome syntax; and the manuscript would have benefitted from more extensive editing and proofreading. Nevertheless, the study should open up, and inform, future considerations of the role of time in these expansive – and often complicated – works.

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As the title of this new monograph on Malory indicates, the geographical, chronological, and linguistic scope it proposes is impressive. Working across five languages and areas and using a comparative approach, Miriam Edlich-Muth examines Thomas Malory’s *Morte Darthur* alongside four Arthurian collections, two from the fourteenth century (the Italian *Tavola Ritonda* and the Dutch verse *Lancelot Compilation*), and two from the fifteenth (Ulrich Fuetrer’s German verse *Buch der Abenteuer* and Micheau Gonnot’s French *Arthuriad*). However, only the *Tavola* and the *Buch* seem to receive any sustained attention, with the Dutch and French anthologies being referred to sporadically throughout the text. The author’s declared aim is to make the four ‘lesser known collections more accessible to Anglophone readers and [enable] a clearer understanding of the