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Review by: Bruce R. O'Brien
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pographical errors, the final note is missing.) The select bibliography is actually a very comprehensive list of works devoted not only to René's life and works but also to the historical and literary context of the *Livre du cuer.*

In outlining their principles of translation, Gibbs and Karczewska emphasize their intention to preserve not only the content of René's work but also its formal and stylistic features. To that end they have chosen to render the Middle French work into archaic English, "to recreate the text in its remove from modern ways of seeing and writing" (p. l). This choice is undoubtedly a valid one, and the bulk of the translation is a readable and culturally authentic version of the original. Occasionally, however, the attempt to create aesthetic distance results in awkward turns of phrase: "Si s'en vindrent tous trois ensamble a l'ermite pour prendre congié de luy" is rendered as "They came all three together to the hermit to leave of him" (127.8–9). "Icy sommes venuz de toute nostre entente / Le Cueur, Largesse et moy, vous prier qu'il vous plaise / Nous passer bien a coup, sans qu'en riens vous desplaise" becomes "Heart, Largesse, and I have made all effort / To come here to pray it so please you to / Carry us at once across, and in no way displease you" (130.4–6). I found only one glaring mistranslation, namely, a failure to recognize the temporal meaning of *avoir:* "Il est vray que n'a pas gramment / Cest amoureux, qui loyaulment / Et de bon cueur ama sa dame, / Dont en voyez les corps sans ame; / Si l'aloit par ung soir la veoir" becomes the unintelligible "It is true this lover / Possessed little who loyally / And with good heart loved his lady, / Whose bodies you see lifeless; / So he was going one evening to see her" (222.3–7). Generally speaking, however, Gibbs and Karczewska have produced an accurate and lucid English version of René's text. Particularly admirable are their careful translations of the highly detailed and often arcane descriptive passages.

The bilingual edition is preceded by four introductory essays. A brief but thorough history of the author's life relates the complex trajectory of René's political misfortunes and cultural accomplishments. The description of Vienna 2597 is devoted primarily to a detailed summary of the narrative. "Literary Achievement" situates the *Livre du cuer* in the tradition of medieval heart imagery and provides insightful analysis of the book's intricate narrative framework. Finally, Per Nykrog's contribution, "Literary Tradition," traces the history of medieval erotic narrative from the trouvères to Charles d'Orléans. Although Gibbs and Karczewska have not given us an exhaustive critical edition, they have produced a handsome and serviceable volume that will expand the readership of a long-neglected princely poet.

Catherine M. Jones, University of Georgia

David Roffe, *Domesday: The Inquest and the Book.* Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000. Pp. xix, 282; tables. $45.

Domesday scholarship has become in the past century increasingly foreign territory for most medieval historians. They know where it is, and can recommend its highlights, but they rarely visit, and almost never stay. There is good reason for this; Domesday scholars' fixations and methods, heroes and villains, are all intensified exponentially by the special nature of their texts: Domesday Book (both Great Domesday Book [GDB] and Little Domesday Book [LDB]) and the thirty-one documents referred to as its "satellites." David Roffe is a native of this territory; few scholars, past or present, have had his level of familiarity with these difficult texts. In *Domesday: The Inquest and the Book* Roffe has taken what was a relatively simple core of William I's kingdomwide inquest, initiated in a council and recorded several years later in a two-volume book, and made it undeniably more complex and controversial. This complexity offers a solution that is learned, challenging, and just may be right about some of the most enduring puzzles of Domesday. Roffe

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argues that Domesday Book was not the goal of the inquest launched by William I in 1085; and thus if we try to use the book as a transparent guide to the intentions behind the inquest, we will fail. From this vantage point, Roffe attempts to refute previous explanations of the creation, form, and purpose of the book. Neither J. H. Round nor V. H. Galbraith was all right or all wrong; nor are we to accept without serious qualification attempts to accommodate both views (S. Harvey) or offer new interpretations (N. Higham), though again, all provide a piece of the solution. Unlike Round's affection for the satellite known as the *Inquisitio Comitatus Cantabrigiensis,* which he thought solved the puzzle of Domesday, and Galbraith's for the *Exon Domesday,* Roffe has no favorites; instead of finding in one a key to the final product (and thus to the inquest), Roffe finds in all evidence for the whole complex process.

The key to Roffe's revision is his removal of the "articles of inquiry" from the debate over the purpose of the inquest. These "articles," appearing as a prologue in a satellite known as the *Inquisitio Eliensis,* have been understood as a description of the tasks of the royal commissioners. Roffe argues that because these articles accord, not with the unabbreviated sources that come earliest, but with GDB, which came last, the text of the articles "provides no compelling evidence for the early stages of the inquest" and "is perhaps best interpreted as a template for the abbreviation of the Northern folios" (p. 116). Free of the teleological tyranny of these articles, the various schedules and satellites float free of GDB to assume new orbits. Roffe carefully charts these new orbits, showing how, for example, the *Inquisitio Comitatus Cantabrigiensis* constitutes a compilation from seigneurial presentments and geld records and how the *Exon Domesday* is an ad hoc "product of the process of inbreviation" rather than a compilation of sources associated with the inquest (p. 173).

With the satellites repositioned, Roffe begins his Domesday inquest with the deep discussion of the Christmas court of 1085 and then moves to communal and seigneurial presentments, both of which follow preconquest precedents. That seigneurial presentments occurred before 1066 Roffe can argue because, in his estimation, the honor "in its essentials . . . was a pre-Conquest institution" (p. 45). He suggests that the presentments of the tenants-in-chief were based on geld schedules "supplied to them by officers of the shire or, perhaps more likely, the Domesday commissioners" (p. 146). All told, Roffe calculates that the busy commissioners heard sixty thousand witnesses. Next came the compiling of records for the inquest (not counting preexisting texts) and ones recording oral presentments and the like (chapter 7). The task of compilation is visible in some of these records, and this task was taken up a level of compilation and editing by the writing of LDB, the volume of Domesday Book dealing in great detail with the three counties of East Anglia. Roffe's LDB precedes GDB and becomes its model and starting point for format. Last came GDB. The scribe of GDB—the mastermind behind its form and contents—progressively altered his understanding of the purpose of the book as he wrote. Roffe's arguments here explain, for example, why *clamores* were recorded for only some of the northern counties even though they were—Roffe thinks—provided in all the circuit reports. In the end, what the scribe produced was nothing more revolutionary than a register of tenure "designed to facilitate efficient reference" (p. 87).

Roffe argues that no stage presupposes its successor. New talk and new agendas led to each successive written creation of the inquest, and sometimes agendas changed, as with GDB, in the course of the construction of individual documents. One very important conclusion here injects caution into our use of Domesday statistics for describing societal differences throughout England. Roffe's scribe changed his pattern of abbreviation as he moved from the northern counties southward through (as Roffe charts it) "the East Midlands, the south-east, south-west, and finally the west and central Midlands" (p. 211); thus the changes in the record may no longer be easily taken to reflect "the reality of the un-

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derlying societies" of the counties or regions (ibid.). As Roffe says, "the decisive difference between Leicestershire on the one hand, and Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire on the other, would appear to be when [the accounts of these counties] were written" (p. 212), rather than their actual social structures. Roffe does not deny social differences from county to county; rather, he diminishes and problematizes them. Finally, he redates the composition of Domesday Book itself. He places it somewhere between 1087 and 1100 but leans toward "an earlier date within the period" (p. 244). While the organization of the *inquest* may be, as P. Chaplais argued, credited to William of St. Calais in William I's reign, GDB, Roffe suggests, may very well belong to Ranulf Flambard in the reign of William II.

The level of detail with which Roffe argues his entire case is impressive, but it also means that this study is not for the faint of heart. Roffe makes his readers get down on their hands and knees to examine the composition of the soil before he is willing to share his insights on the landscape. What readers will see is quite remarkable. This review hardly begins exploring the implications of Roffe's radical thesis for what the records of Domesday do and do not tell us. It may change much; it may change little. But like Round for scholars in the first half of the twentieth century and Galbraith for those in the second, Roffe will be a point of departure—in agreement or disagreement—for the next generation of Domesday Book scholars. To have breathed such qualitative life into a subject that has become increasingly quantitative, and to challenge effectively so many fundamental positions, is quite an accomplishment.

Bruce R. O'Brien, Mary Washington College

Barbara H. Rosenwein, *A Short History of the Middle Ages*. Peterborough, Ont.: Broadview Press, 2002. Paper. Pp. 219; color frontispiece, black-and-white and color plates, black-and-white figures, genealogical tables, and black-and-white and color maps. $34.95.

Just as there is no such thing as a "good college," considered in the abstract, so there is no such thing as a "good textbook." There are only colleges and textbooks appropriate for particular groups of students (and particular teachers). Rosenwein's *Short History of the Middle Ages* will be useful primarily in situations where the instructor wishes to provide students with a well-written, up-to-date, and brief overview at the beginning of a course, to be supplemented with primary sources and lectures that are strongly analytical. It is lavishly produced, with well-chosen illustrations, excellent and extensive maps and genealogies, and an attractive page layout that manages to pack a lot in without straining the eyes. It is so short, however, that much is inevitably sacrificed.

Rosenwein makes her choices clear. She has decided to be brief, to be chronological in organization rather than thematic, and to focus on political history. Compared with other textbooks, hers is much less detailed than Brian Tierney and Sidney Painter (*Western Europe in the Middle Ages,* 6th ed., 1999), less analytical than Edward Peters (*Europe and the Middle Ages,* 4th ed., 2002) or even than the competing "short history" by C. Warren Hollister and Judith Bennett (*Medieval History: A Short History,* 9th ed., 2002). Despite its brevity, the book has a quite distinctive character, however. Its excellences are, in my judgment, three.

First, it makes felicitous and learned use of new research, at least in the area of social and political history. Especially for the early and central Middle Ages, we have therefore a picture that younger scholars will not feel they have to disavow or gloss at every turn. "Feudalism" is gone. Perhaps discarded a bit too hastily, in fact, since students will encounter it in economics and political science courses, not to mention courses in early-modern history, and will need to understand what it can mean as an analytical tool. (Ro-

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