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tioned in the same breath: for example, Fried von Straßbourg and Marguerite of France compares the hermeneutics of Chrétien de Troyes, Novalis and Schlegel.

In Huber's 'Philosophia – Konzepte und Methoden' provides a useful overview of the various ways in which the liberal arts under the auspices of the medieval university are transmitted. These introductory studies prepare the reader for Wachinger's excellent study, which includes a detailed interpretation of the 'Wachinger's ex-...', in which Frauenlob invests the concept of 'Wachinger leads the reader through... on many of the more difficult passages. ...' more accessible to students of medi-

ed by Ruedi Imbach's study of Dante and Petrarch's 'Die Pest, die Philosophie, die Poesie'. Imbach's study of Aristotle, concluding that the philosopher is likely to have been culled from florilegia. Imbach opens with a challenge to the tradition that the world should be read as a hearty, down-to-earth, study of Dante and Petrarch). To test this theory, Imbach studies the *Decameron* in the light of Ockham's theory of the inveterate sinner makes a false last confession. A saint after his death, is seen as a poetic figure. The certainties unveiled by Ockham's philosophy and accident finds its poetic equivalent in the medieval reality described in the Boccaccio story. 'Der Schatten des Kopfes der Kammerzofe. "Heptaméron" der Marguerite de Navarre' ambivalence and uncertainty in particular. Much particular attention is devoted to the way in which the shadows, but not the actual figures, are embraced, Haug also puzzles over many questions: the discrepancy between the unfocused medieval stories and the cloying Neoplatonist treatments; and the absence of any correlation between the characters and the types of story they tell. This is partly on the natural sciences and partly on the intellectual endeavour. C. Stephen Jaeger's study on melancholy and *Arbeitslosigkeit* describes a medieval term for a pathological inclination. Hans-Goerg Kemper shows how the reluctance to rationalism in Germany affected early modern

psychology and eventually contributed to the widespread identification in seventeenth-century Protestant circles of sexual love with demonic possession. Jan-Dirk Müller's study of the Faust books outlines the moralistic contempt expressed not only for the figure of the corruptible scholar but also for scholarly discourse itself. Klaus Mainzer examines the literary forms in which the more prominent cosmologists (Copernicus, Giordano Bruno, Kepler and Galilei) presented their findings to the world.

The book ends with Gerhart von Graevenitz's 'Contextio und conjointure, Gewebe und Arabeske. Über Zusammenhänge mittelalterlicher und romantischer Literaturtheorie', a bold attempt to outline the history of European hermeneutics from Macrobius to the present day by focusing on the variations in usage of two archetypal metaphors: of poetic composition as an act of weaving, and of literary interpretation as the gesture of lifting a veil.

Oxford

ANNETTE VOLFFING

María Rosa Menocal, *The Arabic Role in Medieval Literary History: A Forgotten Heritage* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990). xvii + 178 pp. ISBN 0-8122-1324-6. £15.90.

A warm welcome is proffered to the paperback edition of María Rosa Menocal's well-known if not already notorious study. This book is not a straightforward examination of the European indebtedness to the Arab world. It is, to quote the author's own words, 'based on the premise, and derived from the conviction, that no specific study of any of the theories called "Arabist" can be successful so long as the most general views we have of the medieval period are as hostile to the notions of such influence and interaction as they currently are'. The pressing need, then, is to explore and to explain the observation that 'European scholarship has an a priori view of, and set of assumptions about, its medieval past that is far from conducive to viewing its Semitic components as formative and central.' This objective, to penetrate the ideological prejudices of the past and to clear the ground for a dispassionate reappraisal of the evidence, is admirable. Roger Boase in *The Origin and Meaning of Courty Love: A Critical Study of European Scholarship* (1976) showed what could be achieved by such an approach. *The Arabic Role in Medieval Literary History* (or whatever phrase one wishes to employ in order to express Europe's debt to the Arabs and Islam) is irrefutable.

There is abundant justification for Menocal's approach. The Arabs did contribute more than is generally admitted to the making of mediaeval Europe, and to the twelfth-century Renaissance in particular; and one does not have to probe too far back into the European historiographical tradition to ascertain reasons for the reluctance of Western scholars to reconcile themselves to the obvious. Furthermore, the systematic dissection of 'orientalism'

conducted by Edward Said in the 1970s has paved the way for studies such as this.

One could quibble with the subtitle: *A Forgotten Heritage*. This heritage may have been willfully and wittingly ignored, as for example in Otis Green's four-volume *tour de force*, *Spain and the Western Tradition* (1963), but it has lurked ominously, as the substantial bibliography indicates. Taking the example of Dante's debt to Islam, Menocal acknowledges the pioneering study of Asin Palacios, *La escatología musulmana en la Divina Comedia* (1919), roundly rejected by Italianists in the face of convincing argumentation. It is central to Menocal's thesis that this *causa cetera* is not allowed to rest; accordingly, she devotes what is her most effective and persuasive chapter to the promotion of the image of Dante as an intellectual warrior combating 'Arabio-Andalusian-Sicilian incursions'. Dante's reputation emerges enhanced as a consequence of this sharply argued study, a feature of which are the searching questions (pp. 130-1) which Italians are now called upon to address, if their dismissal of the 'Arabic influence' on Dante, presented here as 'an overwhelmingly negative one', is to continue to command academic respect. The chapter on 'Courtly love' similarly argues, again with the aid of carefully phrased questions (pp. 78, 85) in favour of the reinstatement of the 'Arabist' theory, and the *muwashshahat* are properly regarded as a poetic genre that includes the *khayja*. Here, though, rather too much is made of the supposed divorce of the *khayja* from the *muwashshahat*, of which they form an integral part. The fact that the nature, origin and features of the *khayja* have all been rigorously scrutinized does not mean that the primacy of the *muwashshaha* is ignored.

The principal chapter, however, and the one that occupies most space, is the one entitled 'Rethinking the background'. This constitutes a bold attempt to elevate al-Andalus to a significant position of influence in the formation of 'medieval European literary life' (p. 67). Such an endeavour is long overdue, but it is perilous nonetheless. Menocal comes close to sabotaging her hypothesis in the opening paragraph. Proponents of the 'Arabist' theory have long since recognized that they need to demonstrate just how Arabic influences could have been conveyed into Europe, and from Dozy to Menéndez Pidal attention has focused on the thousand singing slave-girls captured in Barbastro in 1064 and transferred thence to Provence. Menocal comments that 'even if this were an apocryphal and gross exaggeration serving to emphasize the barbarity of the Christians from the Arab chronicler's point of view, we have little reason to assume that the courts of Provence of the late twelfth century were oblivious to the art of Arabic sung poetry that the captured women would have brought with them' (p. 27).

I suspect that this extension to the argument will leave many unconvinced, and to talk vaguely of 'other refugees and victims of the war of reconquest' as 'familiar figures in Christian courts on both sides of the Pyrenees' is an invitation to critics to laugh off what follows. This, however, would be regrettable, because a genuine attempt is made, despite inexact-

tudes (Alvarus was not bishop of Córdoba, p. 28), ill-considered analogies (p. 46) and some contorted arguments (p. 47), to show how the Andalusian cultural heritage could have been transmitted to Western Europe, particularly in the twelfth century.

This book, then, deserves a fair reading. Corners are cut and, in the extensive footnotes especially, scrupulous scholarship is sometimes sacrificed on the altar of 'muted' sensationalism, but I for one welcome what is a spirited challenge to a cultural orthodoxy that has prevailed for rather too long.

Exeter

RICHARD HITCHCOCK

N. R. Ker and A. J. Piper, *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries, IV: Pateley-York* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992). xl + 826 pp. ISBN 0-19-818196-5. £35.00.

The publication of the fourth volume of *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries* marks the near-completion of Neil Ker's remarkable project to describe mediaeval manuscripts in English, Scottish and Welsh collections that have been hitherto uncatalogued, or barely catalogued, in print. The completion of Ker's staggering undertaking remains no mean task (it is envisaged that a fifth volume in the series will contain addenda and indexes), but the publication of this penultimate volume gives much cause for celebration. It means that over 2500 mediaeval manuscripts in almost 200 British libraries have been described in the series according to the points of method set out by Ker in the preface to Volume I (1969), with further revisions and clarification of detail offered in the prefaces to Volumes II (1977) and III (1985). Ker's influence on modern cataloguing has extended far beyond the scope of his series, of course. For two decades, his methods have been readily adopted as standard by most British and North American cataloguers of mediaeval manuscripts. It is therefore good to see Ker's own major scholarly endeavour approaching such a natural and satisfying conclusion.

Ker adopted a basically pragmatic approach to the task of describing mediaeval manuscripts, and, in the light of recent codicological developments, it would be possible to suggest further modifications to his system. These would include a systematic account of some physical details that are given scant or inconsistent attention in some of his manuscript descriptions (such as the attempts to describe paper stocks by watermark identification in just a couple of cases, but not others, in the present volume). But this is a minor quibble, and Volume IV joins its sister volumes in offering much first-rate codicological information, some important bibliographical leads, and several unresolved puzzles, to scholars engaged in literary and historical research on the manuscripts of the period.

When Ker undertook his monumental task he stated in the preface to Volume I that his aim for the series 'can be independent of my own capacity