**Beyond Words: New Research on Manuscripts in Boston Collections**

*Edited by Jeffrey F. Hamburger, Lisa Fagin Davis, Anne-Marie Eze, Nancy Netzer, and William P. Stoneman*

In the fall of 2016 an international scholarly conference accompanied the exhibition *Beyond Words: Illuminated Manuscripts in Boston Collections*. The aim of both exhibition and conference was to provide a broad overview of the history of patronage and book production over the course of the High and late Middle Ages, to the extent that the eclectic holdings of Boston-area institutions permitted. Most of the papers delivered at the conference have been collected as essays in this abundantly illustrated volume.

Just as the essays cover a wide range of topics, all relating to the history of the book, but also, inter alia, to the history of law, liturgy, literature, and libraries as well as to devotion, theology, and art, so too the approaches adopted by the contributors are as varied as the materials they study, ranging from paleography, codicology, and provenance research to reconstructions of historical patterns of patronage and the interpretative strategies of authors and artists. What results is not simply a wealth of fascinating insights into individual illuminated books, their makers, and their readers, but also an indication of how much remains to be learned about the materials to which the exhibition served as no more than an introduction.

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**Etienne Gilson**

**Reason and Revelation in the Middle Ages**

*Revised Edition*

*Edited by James K. Farge*

*With an Introduction by William J. Courtenay*

“In three short chapters, and with a few brief strokes, Professor Gilson has succeeded in outlining three dominant threads in the problem of the relations between reason and revelation in the Middle Ages. Those who have read the James Lectures on the *Unity of Philosophical Experience* will find in the Richards Lectures ... a welcome complement to Gilson’s discussion of the role and the fate of rational speculation within the unity of Christian thought during the Middle Ages. ... At the present moment when so much is written on medieval thought, and when the historical landscape is so mobile, it is extremely useful to follow a master guide in a simple but sure presentation of the most important problem confronting medieval thinkers.”

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**Anton C. Pegis**
**From the Vulgate to the Vernacular: Four Debates on an English Question c. 1400**

*Edited by Elizabeth Solopova, Jeremy Catto and Anne Hudson*

Translation is at the centre of Christianity, both scripturally and historically. The four texts edited here discuss the legitimacy of using the vernacular language for scriptural citation. This question in England became central to the perception of the followers of John Wyclif (sometimes known as Lollards): between 1409 and 1530 the use of English scriptures was impeded by the established church. The three Latin works edited here, with modern translations, survive complete each in a single manuscript. Of these texts, two, written by a Franciscan, William Butler, and a Dominican, Thomas Palmer, are hostile to translation. The third, edited here for the first time, was written by a secular priest, Richard Ullerston. These are joined here by an English work, a Wycliffite adaptation of Ullerston’s Latin.


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**Pinchas Roth**

**In This Land: Jewish Life and Legal Culture in Late Medieval Provence**

“In This Land is a remarkable achievement by any standard. It is a clear and well-argued study of the inner workings of the Jewish communities of the medieval county of Provence, ‘This Land,’ in the idiom of the natives. The author addresses with precision and insight the legal system, social practices, cultural conflicts, and intellectual disputes arising out of the different origins of the Jewish inhabitants of the county. Yet, the study possesses a power beyond its substantive findings. It is a roadmap of how to deal creatively and intelligently with what at first sight appear to be almost intractable sources, namely, the contemporary Hebrew *responsa*, that body of precedents, advice, and critical discourse, in laconic and highly allusive form, on the proper operation of Jewish law.”

*William Chester Jordan, Princeton University*

The Llanthony Stories:
A translation of the Narrationes aliquot fabulosae

With an introduction and notes by David R. Winter

Compiled in the early thirteenth century, The Llanthony Stories is a fragmentary collection of exempla gathered by an anonymous canon at the Augustinian priory of Llanthony Secunda, Gloucester. While intended primarily for the edification of readers and those who heard the stories preached in sermons, many of the thirty-five exempla offer humorous (even ribald) glimpses of life in the Severn watershed and beyond. Filled with short tales of greedy archdeacons, licentious monks, pious laymen and prelates trying to navigate their world with decorum and piety, the work expands our knowledge of ecclesiastical politics and evangelical priorities in the Anglo-Norman church. Although the work survives in a single manuscript witness, it has long been known to historians and scholars of medieval literature. This volume makes the collection available in modern English for the first time. The translation, accompanied by extensive notes, is complemented by a contextualizing historical introduction and an edition of the Latin text.

Siegfried Wenzel

Beyond the Sermo modernus:
Sermon Form in Early Fifteenth-Century England

“On Latin sermons by English preachers Siegfried Wenzel is the world’s leading specialist. These sermons are key evidence for vernacular preaching too: most surviving sermons were models for use in ‘live’ preaching and it was normal to use Latin models to prepare for sermons in English to the laity. Beyond the Sermo modernus is thus relevant to the history of popular piety as well as of Latin culture. Scholars are familiar with the dominant late medieval form of preaching, but Wenzel shows how an older form became prominent again in late medieval England. Once again, preachers commented on the whole of gospel or episcopal readings. This inculcated a different sort of religious mentality. Wenzel investigates the theory behind the revival as well as practice, on which he comments with literary critical flair. He also provides immaculate editions from manuscripts – a model for textual critics – and translations which make the original sources available to students as well as scholars.”

David D’Avray, University College London
Between the Text and the Page: Studies on the Transmission of Medieval Ideas in Honour of Frank T. Coulson

Edited by Harald Anderson and David T. Gura

This volume pays homage to manuscripts and early printed books as material witnesses in the Middle Ages. The essays discuss broad questions relating to the partisan interpretation of texts, but they also illustrate how small details of format, script, and decoration uncover the text, its context, and its reception. Some articles explore scientific methods, examining whether social network analysis can offer an advance over traditional methods of establishing textual connections and using statistics to understand the transmission of ancillary materials. Others present critical editions and contextualize lost genres, providing a first edition of an unedited summary of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* steeped in the Boccaccian genealogical tradition, exploring mock funeral eulogies for animals, and discussing the variety of texts that pay witness to Ovid’s penetration into vernacular literature. A closing brace of essays catalogue collections and reflect on changing trends in the study of manuscripts.

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