

Arles's efforts to build Christian community, and A. C. Murray on immunities), its breadth remains impressive. Those scholars who emphasize continuity, in particular, now must take into account Mazel's insights into the ways in which bishops defined and attempted to control space over time, even if they do not accept in full his periodization schema. This is a stimulating book that ought to prompt both discussion and debate.

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Mother of Mercy, Bane of the Jews: Devotion to the Virgin Mary in Anglo-Norman England. By **Kati Ihnat**. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016. xii + 305 pp. \$45.00 cloth.

Kati Ihnat's study of monastic proponents of Marian devotion in early twelfth-century England is at once wide-ranging and tightly focused. The work shows an impressive grasp of the artifacts of monastic life in the period, ranging from liturgy and artworks to theological treatises and collections of miracle stories. Her discussion of the interactions among these genres, used as they were to build a case for Mary's supremacy among saints, is consistently learned, informative, and thought provoking.

The meat of the book, chapter by chapter studies of each genre, is set off by subtly argued introductory and concluding essays—worthy of mention because of the care with which Ihnat engages the particular difficulties of answering the questions “Why Mary? Why the Jews?” in this context. She argues that Mary rose to special prominence in the lives and intellectual preoccupations of Anglo-Norman Benedictine monks for a variety of reasons. Pre-Conquest England venerated Mary in ways and on a scale unfamiliar to the Norman churchmen installed as leaders of the English church after 1066. Those leaders sought to curb, purify, or eliminate local customs; for their part, Anglo-Saxon monks worked to protect and promote their indigenous practices, such as the feast of Mary's Conception, for example. As Ihnat demonstrates, the two sides eventually joined forces as Anglo-Norman clergy saw an opportunity to promote Mary as a universal patron whose powers exceeded those attributed to local or regional objects of veneration. Ihnat's first chapter, “Praise of Mary,” explores the wealth of liturgical forms that emerged or evolved in this period. She is keen to show that this

efflorescence resulted from the monks' desire to inculcate correct forms of devotion, meant to achieve amendment of life, in those who venerated her.

Mary also emerged as a central figure in twelfth-century Anglo-Norman theology. Its renewed focus on the nature and purpose of the Incarnation is discussed in Ihnat's second chapter, "Understanding Mary." The vehicle through which the Incarnation occurred received sustained attention from Anselm of Canterbury and his students. While Anselm argued that Mary was cleansed of sin at the moment of the Annunciation, enabling her to give birth to the sinless God-Man who could "fittingly" reconcile sinful humans to God, Ihnat documents the far stronger claims for her specialness made by Anselm's successors: her superiority to all humans, indeed all saints, on the basis of her miraculously pure gift of embodiment to the Savior. The notion of Mary's own "immaculate conception" was elaborated considerably in England, partly to reinvigorate the Anglo-Saxon feast devoted to her conception. Ihnat attends to subsequent Anglo-Norman elaborations of other Marian feasts, noting that liturgy drove theology (or apologetics)—in the sense that existing practices required post-factum rationales.

Ihnat argues that liturgy and theology combined to teach Christians how and why to devote themselves to Mary, to seek her patronage, or to imitate her humility by using positive instruction and negative stricture. A long history of skepticism about the Incarnation and the Virgin Birth attributed to the Jews was retrieved and elaborated by Anglo-Norman churchmen. She asserts: "Anselm's new approach to exploring the Incarnation and virgin birth thus incited theologians to place Jews squarely in the conversation on Mary's role in the scheme of Christian salvation" (92). Whether real or imagined, the skeptical Jew served as a proxy for the doubting Christian.

The succeeding chapters of the book are devoted to collections of miracle stories and exempla involving Mary, rewritten to serve the polemical, catechetical, or liturgical needs of the Anglo-Norman church. These stories make vivid use of Jews as Mary's opponents (sometimes converted through an exhibition of her power and/or mercy). Ihnat demonstrates that English monastics such as Anselm of Bury St. Edmunds, Dominic of Evesham, and William of Malmesbury were especially alert to the possibilities of Marian miracle stories, collecting and transmitting them in forms that liturgists and polemicists could retrieve and reuse. "While works of theology treated the Synagogue and unbelieving Jew as almost abstract categories," she notes, "miracle stories represented Jewish hostility in stark literal terms, bringing them into the eternal present of the narrative" (138).

Ihnat adduces multiple reasons for the English focus on Mary and the Jews in the post-Conquest period. The Norman drive to reform, or at least regularize, the English church was chief among them. Also, Ihnat alludes to the social disruption caused by a small but notable influx of Jews crossing the

Channel, which could, perhaps, be linked to other disruptions—the “profit economy” and attendant repugnance toward “avarice,” noted long ago by Lester K. Little, and the shift from vernacular to Latin sponsored by Norman bureaucracy, documented by Michael Clanchy—with the unfamiliar, unwelcome Jews cast as beneficiaries of these dislocations.

The value of Ihnat’s work rests on two key contributions: firstly, her exhaustive close study of liturgical, polemical, and theological works relevant to Mary in the body of the book; secondly, the care with which she frames the possible meanings of Jewish presence in those works in her introduction and conclusion. Exploring how the Jews were “tools to think with” for Anglo-Norman writers, she extends and refines important insights from Miri Rubin, David Nirenberg, and Sara Lipton, who eschew simple equivalences between what Christians *said* about Jews and what they may have *believed*. There is occasional dissonance between conclusions argued for in individual chapters—regarding the monks’ intentions or the effects of their efforts on the laity—and Ihnat’s framing of the evidence in her opening and closing essays. There, she argues convincingly for the indirect impact of the circulation of images of, and ideas about, Jews that became part of cultural currency, useful for suggesting “what Jews were at least *capable* of doing” (187). Ihnat’s meticulous study ultimately illuminates the conditions of possibility for anti-Judaism created, intentionally or not, by Anglo-Norman monastics striving for multiple, sometimes worthy, goals.

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***The Reliquary Effect: Enshrining the Sacred Object.* By Cynthia Hahn.** London: Reaktion, 2017. 328 pp. £35.00 hardcover.

While the idea of preserving a child’s skull in a gem-studded gold statue may be off-putting in the twenty-first century, there are yet remnants of sacred materiality—often tied to memorial—at work in contemporary culture. From celebrity paraphernalia to a photograph of a deceased relative, memory and presence are communicated through material effects and visual representations. A more public and persistent example includes the various building, vehicular, and clothing remains from the destruction of the World Trade Center on 9/11; these objects have drawn patriotic pilgrims from around the country, and themselves were circulated internationally to commemorate the tenth