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Reviews of books

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Catherine A.M. Clarke, *Medieval Cityscapes Today*. Leeds: Arc Humanities Press, 2019. x + 109pp. 8 figures. £11.95 pbk.
doi:10.1017/S0963926820000851

This short book consists of four chapters, each focusing on a different medieval city and the varying approaches taken to re-presenting its medieval form in public contexts. It is remarkable how many approaches are brought to bear on the representation of medieval cityscapes within such a short ambit. The book is written in a pithy but engaging style which perfectly suits the aims of the series: offering new insights and questioning established practice.

The introductory chapter starts in Rouen, where a gigantic panoramic projection allowed visitors to experience an imaginative reconstruction of the late medieval city. This is the most superficially exciting of the presented cityscapes the book covers, with photographs and computer-generated imagery combined with an appropriate soundscape providing a 'hyper-real, immersive view' of the city to hundreds of thousands of tourists. Yet, as Clarke notes, the view is 'impossible': the city hosts an entire year's worth of feasts and festivals simultaneously in its streets, and of the streets themselves it is not clear what is reconstructed from firm evidence and what is conjectural, nor whether anachronisms are oversights or artistic choices. Yet this book presents a strong and cogent argument for the creative interaction of thorough historical research and imaginative, technology-led, delivery. At the most 'obvious' level, this takes the form of digital reconstructions of the buildings, but the historic cityscape is an agglomeration of tangible and intangible, construction and reconstruction, 'accretions, interventions…responses…stories, memories…mythologies… festivals, and religious rituals'. How, then, do we best connect the modern urban environment to the cityscape of the past, and make a city's heritage accessible, placeable and relevant?

The two chapters which comprise the heart of the book detail major heritage projects headed by Clarke on the historic cities of Chester and Swansea. The sense of the city as text, a 'locus of multi-layered stories…where meanings and identities are constantly produced and negotiated' is brought out in a perambulation of Chester which sets the author's impressions within a long tradition of imaginative constructions and reconstructions of the historic city. Different layers of history have, historically, held different perceived value, and as at many of Britain's Roman settlements the imposing stone foundations of Classical edifices have long tended to draw attention away

from the more fragmentary and 'messy' medieval superstrata. Clarke takes us through the process of one particular artistic re-presentation of Chester's heritage and historical fabric in partnership with local government, as part of a series of projects 'mapping' medieval Chester (www.medievalchester.ac.uk) on which she was the lead. A light installation at the partially ruined medieval church of St John projects descriptions of the city in English, Welsh and Latin texts from the twelfth to the sixteenth centuries onto the fourteenth-century fabric. This combines Chester's tangible and intangible heritage, highlighting the complex and not always favourable relations of people to place, and in the deliberate fragmentation of text visually referencing the ambiguity within, and ultimately the impossibility of fully reconstructing, the city's history. The presence within that history of previous textual and architectural attempts to reconstruct historic Chester is potentially problematic, and the temptation for the historian is to see these re-presentations of the city's medieval buildings in their 'pristine beauty' and (riffing on a line of Ovid's) their 'ancient shapes' as giving rise instead to 'new monsters' – chimerical forms indiscriminately mixing authenticity and imagination. Yet the 'monsters' are themselves part of the cityscape, evidence of continued and dynamic approaches to the historic city, and invitations for historians today to be 'more playful, creative, and experimental' in thinking about the past.

This playfulness is brought through in the second part of the book, dealing with an AHRC 'City Witness' project focused on Swansea (www.medievalswansea.ac.uk). Most of the physical remains of the medieval city were obliterated by industrial development and wartime bombing, and evidence for the historic layout is fragmentary. Yet the detailed witness testimonies surrounding the miraculous intervention of St Thomas Cantilupe in the 1290 execution of William Creagh at Swansea offer detailed insights into the lived experience of the city in the late thirteenth century. Nine witnesses, from a range of social and cultural backgrounds, viewed the extramural hanging from different areas of the city and are shown to access and understand the cityscape in ways reflective of their situation and circumstances. In partnership with the city council, the project developed viewsheds of the medieval city based on the witness statements. Alert to the limitations of the purely visual in fostering heritage engagement, the material was also gamified, offering the chance to interact with the witnesses, gather evidence and navigate the urban environment in order to build a picture of Creagh's execution and 'miracle'. An accompanying pavement marker and city trail scheme show the outline of the historic city, embracing rather than shying away from the lack of physical remains and making a point of the sense of 'disjunction and rupture' created by the presence of an almost entirely invisible medieval footprint underneath the modern cityscape to provoke reflection on the relative transience of supposedly tangible and intangible heritage.

A short afterword sited in Winchester again focuses on the fragmentary nature of civic heritage, physically evidenced in reused stonework and hidden foundations scattered throughout the city. Theories of 'queer time' help to make sense of, or at least to come to terms with, disruptive and provoking juxtapositions of narrative within the urban environment and warn against the professional historian's and archaeologist's desire to extract and present 'ancient forms'. This book is a must-read for anyone engaging creatively with civic heritage. Clarke is sedulously

constructive and never proscriptive, and all those working with medieval cities will find within not 'monsters' but plenty of encouragement and ideas.

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Catherine Casson, Mark Casson, John S. Lee and Katie Phillips, *Compassionate Capitalism: Business and Community in Medieval England*. Bristol: Bristol University Press, 2020. xiv + 382pp. 7 figures. 41 tables. 23 family trees. Bibliography. £30.00 hbk.

Catherine Casson, Mark Casson, John S. Lee and Katie Phillips, *Business and Community in Medieval England: The Cambridge Hundred Rolls Source Volume*. Bristol: Bristol University Press, 2020. x + 386pp. Bibliography. £80.00 hbk.
doi:10.1017/S0963926820000887

The 1279–80 Hundred Rolls represent the return to a far-reaching royal enquiry into tenure and landholding – a 'second Domesday' – and the fine-grained evidence on people and property that they provide has long been fundamental to histories of medieval agrarian social structure. On the whole, the surviving Hundred Rolls returns lend themselves less readily to urban history, but the records for Cambridge, analysed here, are a major exception. The unusually detailed descriptions of Cambridge properties, their rents, holders and descent contained in these returns have been explored before, most notably by Frederic William Maitland in *Township and Borough* (1898). Studies of this material have, however, used incomplete evidence: Maitland and others thought that the Cambridge Hundred Rolls consisted of just the two rolls that were printed in the 1812–18 Record Commission edition, and before now studies have been based on this material only. In 2004, Sandra Raban drew attention to an overlooked third roll which completes Cambridge's return. The distinctive contribution of the pair of works under review – which represent a collaboration between an economist (Mark Casson) and three medieval historians (Catherine Casson, John Lee and Katie Phillips) – is to bring the missing roll into an analysis of medieval Cambridge and its property market for the first time.

Compassionate Capitalism contains most of this analysis, presented in six substantive chapters plus an introduction and a conclusion. Four chapters focus on the Hundred Rolls data and the thirteenth century, and consider the dynamics of the property market (Chapter 2), the town's economic topography (Chapter 3) and families and their fortunes (Chapters 4 and 5). The two remaining chapters (6 and 7) range more widely to consider 'Cambridge in a regional and national context', and 'Legacy: Cambridge in the 14th and 15th centuries'. *Business and Community* consists primarily of a 240-page edition and translation of the now complete Hundred Rolls text, plus 13 appendices of the primary material, drawn mainly from published sources, which was used to compile the larger database underpinning *Compassionate Capitalism*. A final appendix provides a detailed description of a number of Cambridge's leading family dynasties, and represents a supplement to similar material forming Chapter 4 of *Compassionate Capitalism*.