

BOOK REVIEWS

Im Angesicht der "Pestilenz." Seuchen in westfälischen und rheinischen Städten (1349–1600).
By Kay Peter Jankrift. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2020. Pp. 388. Paper \$82.00.
ISBN 978-3515123532.

Kay Peter Jankrift's monograph is a formidable work of research. Based on extensive archival work, as well as mining of printed primary sources and often obscure regional publications, it offers a data-rich study of how cities in the Holy Roman Empire dealt with disease from the fourteenth through the sixteenth centuries. Jankrift uses the evidence of civic chronicles and account books, as well as, to a lesser extent, wills and letters, to piece together a narrative of how disease outbreaks were experienced, coped with, and remembered in the later Middle Ages and early modern period. While identifying long-term patterns, Jankrift emphasizes ways in which the cities under examination (Aachen, Dortmund, Düsseldorf, Duisburg, Essen, Köln, Liège, Minden, Münster, Paderborn, Soest, Wesel, Xanten) developed individualized responses to the challenges of plague. Jankrift justifies the geographical extent of his study by the fact that all the cities named had significant contact with one another and served as hubs of commerce, ideas, and, of course, disease (63). Some of the book's most interesting work seeks to correlate outbreaks of plague to seasonal patterns of trade (134–37).

The opening section of the book, which examines the cultural experiences and traumas of disease in the medieval and modern worlds, reads eerily like a prophecy in 2020–2021, particularly in its treatment of disease as historical agent (25–34). This is followed by an extensive *Quellenkritik*—analysis of the source types used and of their value to the study (78–131). The bulk of the monograph is taken up with examining the civic policies and popular movements that responded to and sought to prevent outbreaks of plague. The bibliography is extensive, but there are no indices. A subject index would have been helpful for those seeking evidence of, for instance, episcopal and archiepiscopal involvement in regulating public health policy, information on hospitals, or references to particular cities, though the latter are given independent subheadings.

At the outset of the monograph, Jankrift poses ambitious far-reaching questions about the cultural experience and memory of plague—questions that, of course, feel particularly timely in our own historical moment (34–65). From the fourteenth through the sixteenth centuries, which outbreaks of plague became memorable? Which experiences of disease became templates for making sense of others? Although Jankrift points out how the language of treatises and chronicles does and does not change, he mostly leaves these questions open, a possible avenue for further research. Although much of the book focuses on the successive outbreaks of the Black Death from 1349 onward, its value is considerably enhanced by the fact that Jankrift engages in a comparative study of earlier outbreaks of disease, including those associated with the famines of 1315–1318 (154–58), and early modern understandings of the French pox and English sweat (289–99). Disappointingly, Jankrift treats leprosy as a special

case, dealt with in an “excursus” (300–25). Where he addresses leprosy elsewhere in the book (143–44), he makes sweeping claims based on scant evidence. Historians of leprosy, hospitals, and public health alike have queried the extent to which such a framing of medieval leprosy is justifiable. Though Jankrift cites Carole Rawcliffe (2006), he does not seem to have engaged substantially with the extensive work on medieval leprosy that has been done over the past two decades. François-Olivier Touati (1998) and Luke Demaitre (2007), for instance, are included in the bibliography but only briefly referenced in the literature review.

The book’s achievement is somewhat marred by bibliographic lacunae in several fields. Though Rawcliffe’s work on leprosy is cited, for instance, her more recent work on urban public health is not (*Urban Bodies* [2014]). Jankrift’s view that, in the absence of central regulations, urban authorities were either unconcerned about threats to public health or powerless to deal with them ignores much research of the last decade (133). Guy Geltner, for instance (most recently 2018), is missing from the bibliography entirely. In several places, Jankrift acknowledges the importance of material and archaeological evidence and the valuable contributions that climate research can make to historians of premodern disease, particularly. This being the case, the omission of the work of Monica H. Green (2014) and Bruce S. Campbell (2016) is surprising. Some of Ann Carmichael’s valuable work is cited, but not her conspicuously relevant contributions on the language of plague treatises (2008), or on the persistence of plague from the late medieval to the early modern period (2014). Lester K. Little’s important 2011 article on the scientific identification of historical plagues is another notable absence. It may seem churlish to pick out such absences in an extensive bibliography. However, Jankrift’s work takes its place in a rich and rapidly developing field, and its arguments could have been both strengthened and contextualized by taking these recent works into account.

Despite these omissions, the monograph is an impressive work. It represents the fruits of wide-ranging and thorough engagement with archival sources, and should be valuable to historians of late medieval and early modern cities as well as of medicine and public health.

LUCY C. BARNHOUSE

ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

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Heresy in Late Medieval Germany: The Inquisitor Petrus Zwicker and the Waldensians. By Reima Välimäki. York: York Medieval Press, 2019. Pp. xv + 335. Cloth \$130.00. ISBN 978-1903153864.

Building on the work of Peter Biller in particular, as well as Georg Modestin, Alexander Patschovsky, and Peter Segl, among others, Reima Välimäki’s book adds significantly to our understanding of the church’s efforts to repress the Waldensian heresy in late-medieval Germany. His study focuses on the role played by the Celestine monk, inquisitor, and polemicist Petrus Zwicker. In addition to serving as provincial of the Celestine Order in Germany, Zwicker also conducted multiple inquisitions against Waldensians between 1391 and 1404, including at Erfurt, Stettin, Vienna, and Buda. Välimäki’s examination of the sources, including dozens of manuscripts, results in important contributions to our knowledge of Zwicker as an anti-Waldensian polemicist and inquisitor, not the least of