of Francis's life before the painting of the Upper Church fresco cycle in Assisi. I believe that Brooke misreads a section of the panel in Santa Croce in Florence and hence errs in placing it later in the tradition than scholars such as Chiara Frugoni do. Brooke spends fifteen pages (202–217) discussing fresco fragments of a life of Francis from the Kalenderhane Camii in Istanbul. This is a work that is in quite fragmentary condition—we do not even know what the stories of about half of the sections were. This fresco is precious and interesting, but it hardly merits the attention it receives in a book about the image of St. Francis in the thirteenth century.

Often, the book appears to be the work of someone who has many thoughts and ideas about the thirteenth century and wants to get them all into one big book. Hence, we have quite a few asides. Brooke clearly loves and knows about Pisan sculpture in the thirteenth century, but what she says about it in more than one place has little to do with the image of St. Francis. In her section of chapter 8 dealing with Bonaventure's *Legenda Maior*, it takes her ten pages to begin her analysis of the text, which after all is the proper focus for a book about images of St. Francis.

My respect for Rosiland Brooke is profound, and I ordered this book with great enthusiasm. Many details and some sections were informative and useful, and I value them. However, this book needed more authorial discipline and a lot more editorial guidance to live up to expectations.

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The Insight of Unbelievers: Nicholas of Lyra and Christian Reading of Jewish Text in the Later Middle Ages. By **Deeana Copeland Klepper**. Jewish Culture and Contexts. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007. ix + 230 pp. $55.00 cloth; $22.50 paper.

Deeana Copeland Klepper's study of the Christian Hebraist Nicholas of Lyra (c. 1270–1349) focuses on three quodlibetal questions the Franciscan raised in 1309: Could Christ's advent be proved by Jewish scripture? Could his dual nature as human and divine also be demonstrated from Jewish scripture? And, did Jews in Jesus' day recognize Jesus as the Messiah? Nicholas's answer to these questions provided a defense of literal exegesis as well as the means by which Christians could use Jewish knowledge and expertise to understand the Bible. Nicholas's encounter with Jewish tradition came at a critical moment in the history of Jewish and Christian relations:

the expulsion of Jews from France and the burning of the Talmud and other sacred works; the aggressive missionary activities of Dominican friars; and the scholastic debates regarding Aristotle and the nature of cognition. As a result, Klepper argues, the Franciscan serves as a pivotal transition for Christian use of rabbinic sources.

Chapter 1, which originally appeared as an essay in *Nicholas of Lyra: The Senses of Scripture* (ed. Philip Krey and Leslie Smith [Leiden: Brill, 2000]), looks at medieval Christian uses of biblical and postbiblical Jewish texts. Klepper recapitulates the history of the recovery of the literal-historical sense of scripture by the Victorines and their successors. She contrasts Franciscan interest in Hebrew language and learning as a means for better understanding the Bible, with Dominican interest in Hebrew as a means for developing arguments against the Jews that would serve their missionary endeavors.

In chapter 2, Klepper identifies five distinctive ways in which Jewish interpretations shaped the commentaries of Nicholas of Lyra. First, he could appeal directly to Hebrew texts to clarify the literal meaning of the Vulgate. Second, his knowledge of Hebrew enabled him to use postbiblical Hebrew sources, such as midrash and Talmud, and, third, alternative Jewish sources, such as the Septuagint, the Targums, and Josephus. Fourth, his use of rabbinic insights led him to wrestle with those parts of Jewish interpretation that denied Christian doctrine. Finally, Nicholas became preoccupied with issues of Jewish faith and unbelief.

Chapter 3 traces the Franciscan precursors of Nicholas who shared his concerns, as well as the currents of theology that set the stage for his own commentaries: "Ongoing Jewish unbelief was a puzzle particularly for those exegetes who accepted that Hebrew Scripture was key to an understanding of God's Word and that the Jews held critical insights into Scripture's literal sense" (61). The questions that these exegetes—Roger Marston (d. 1303), Raymond Rigauld (d. 1296), Peter Olivi (d. 1298), and Peter of Trabes (fl. 1280)—developed as they worked against the backdrop of late thirteenth-century Joachimism has received little scholarly attention. Yet they are important for understanding the concerns of Nicholas of Lyra.

Chapter 4 is the heart of the book, a close reading of the three questions posed at the very beginning. It will serve as an indispensable guide for anyone wishing to understand not only Nicholas's quodlibetal discussion (which appears in numerous manuscripts under the heading *Quaestio de adventu Christi*), but also for understanding his highly influential *Postilla litteralis super Bibliam*, which reprises most of the themes and observations the Franciscan made in his early work. Nicholas concludes that some Jews in the first century did know that Jesus was the messiah—primarily the educated elite—but also notes the problems of peer pressure and political considerations that may have made them ignore the evidence. He provides a similar argument

regarding Jesus' dual nature, and allows that prophetic texts are notoriously ambiguous, thus it was entirely plausible for Jews in the first century to miss the telltale signs. Finally, he concludes that there is abundant evidence in the Old Testament for Jews to have seen that Jesus was clearly the messiah that their texts predicted. Klepper provides a richly detailed and instructive analysis that indicates that Nicholas of Lyra went beyond traditional Christian arguments to truly engage his sources in a thoughtful way that "was actually maintaining the essential validity of Jewish interpretations of Scripture" (108). Ironically, as chapter 5 demonstrates, Nicholas becomes *the* Jewish source for subsequent Christian interpreters.

Klepper's own work contributes to the growing body of twentieth- and twenty-first-century studies that examine the relationship between medieval Jews and Christians, and the Christian use of Jewish tradition to understand scripture. Interest in this field began with Beryl Smalley's ground-breaking work *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Blackwell, 3d. ed., 1983), which highlighted the contributions of the Victorines and other Augustinian canons to recovering the "literal" sense of scripture. It continued with Herman Hailperin's *Rashi and the Christian Scholars* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1963), which drew attention to the influence of Rabbi Solomon Isaac (d. 1105) on medieval Christian exegetes. Most recently, Krey and Smith's *Nicholas of Lyra* focused specifically on Nicholas and the various ways he functioned as an exegete.

The Insight of Unbelievers provides its own valuable insights into the significance of Nicholas of Lyra for understanding the study of the Bible in the Middle Ages. It shows how Nicholas differed from his contemporaries, and his predecessors, in his approach to reading various texts. It also demonstrates, perhaps counterintuitively, how a literal and historical reading of Scripture allows for greater theological diversity, rather than less.

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Lay Religious Life in Late Medieval Durham. By **Margaret Harvey**. Regions and Regionalism in History VI. Woodbridge, U.K.: Boydell, 2006. xiv + 234 pp. $85.00 cloth.

This meticulously researched and detailed book is a close study of the religious life of the parishes of Durham between the Conquest and the Dissolution. There have been previous studies of the secular organization of the medieval city, and