

ráðsmaðr (steward) at each of the two episcopal sees, as positions of influence that the elite clerics could aspire to. Her most significant point is about the fusion between the Norwegian and Icelandic church establishments in the fourteenth century. She describes how young Icelandic clerics traveled to Norway and found appointments, providing them with experience and the patronage of Norwegian bishops, which would stand them in good stead when they returned to Iceland aiming to secure a prestigious office. From the second quarter of the fourteenth century most bishops of the Icelandic sees were Norwegian and it is clear that there were complex and interwoven patronage networks connecting the two countries. This speaks against the traditional conception of Icelandic society as quite insular and separate from the rest of the kingdom.

Many questions remain unanswered about these clerical patronage networks: e.g., their relationship with the secular elite, the degree to which there developed ecclesiastical dynasties, if the church offered opportunities of advancement for talented commoners, and the extent to which the Icelandic case is typical of provincial churches in other parts of Europe. Compared to the thirteenth century, the sources for Icelandic history in the fourteenth may seem dull, but they are rich and can be tapped to illustrate general European patterns. Sigurdson has shone light on a fertile field.

Orri Vésteinsson, *University of Iceland*

A Companion to Lollardy. J. Patrick Hornbeck II.

With Mishtooni Bose and Fiona Somerset. Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition 67. Leiden: Brill, 2016. x + 252 pp. \$193.

The Wycliffite Bible: Origin, History and Interpretation. Elizabeth Solopova, ed. Leiden: Brill, 2016. xxiv + 500 pp. \$221.

The past three decades have seen the study of Lollardy bloom and grow, from a subfield of interest to students of late medieval English literature, to an entity of its own. These two collections of essays provide an up-to-date overview of the study of Wycliffism in England. The authors are all leaders in their respective areas, and the assembled contributions of these two volumes provide substantial evidence as to why the subfield has become a prominent field of research. Hornbeck's *Companion* contains his own overview of the development of the study of Lollardy, an essay identifying the important names of the movement from Wycliffe onward, and a consideration of the lived experience of Lollard spirituality. Fiona Somerset provides a thorough account of the many types and varieties of Lollard writings, from the Wycliffite Bible to sermons, glosses, dialogues, and poems that have come to light. She also balances Hornbeck's essay on practice with a survey of Lollard belief regarding sacraments, soteriology, and

devotional practice. Finally, Mishtooni Bose describes the many efforts the church made to quell the movement, with reflections on the afterlife of Lollardy, both in England and on the Continent.

What is most interesting in this *Companion* is its attention to the struggle modern scholars have with identifying the phenomenon. The moving force behind Lollardy was John Wycliffe, a professional theologian and Scholastic philosopher who envisioned a movement, “nostra secta,” to revive the pure Christianity of the apostolic church. But his antipathy for the regulated structure of monastic and fraternal orders led him to reject the organizing apparatus that defines an identifiable movement. Hornbeck, Somers, and Bose structure their essays to capture this evanescent quality and the accompanying difficulty of fitting Lollardy into the neat categories still used by modern medievalists to explain their subjects. This *Companion* effectively shows how Lollardy is not simply Scholastic ideology simplified and vernacularized, and how there is no handy checklist by which one can sniff out a Lollard. This is one of the elements contributing to the appeal of the study of Lollardy. It has the quality of a will-o'-the-wisp, glowing faintly in many English works of the late medieval and early modern periods, but frequently difficult to isolate with certainty.

While Lollardy may not be the ideologically unified countercultural phenomenon imagined by earlier scholars and by its opponents, its chief text, the Wycliffite Bible, remains one of the most significant contributions to Middle English literature. Surprisingly, the only edition of the whole text remains Forshall and Madden's 1850 version. That will soon be remedied by Elizabeth Solopova and Anne Hudson, who are working on a new edition. Solopova's *The Wycliffite Bible* is a complete overview of contemporary scholarship on many aspects of its subject, with essays by leading scholars on the Bible's historical and theological context (Jeremy Catto, Ian Christopher Levy, Delbert Russell, Jakub Sichálek, and James Morey); its text, prologues, poetry, and dialect (Hudson, Solopova, Kantik Ghosh, and Annie Sutherland); the manuscript tradition (Solopova, Ralph Hanna, Michael Kuczynski, and Lynda Dennison and Nigel Morgan); and the Bible's reception (Maureen Jurkowski, Michael Sargent, Stephen Morrison, Mark Rankin, and Hudson.)

Solopova's volume is structured to highlight several important aspects of the Bible that direct scholarly research. First, the scope of the translation demands appreciation for the editorial organization of trained scholars with deep familiarity of the sacred-page tradition. Second, the relation of the translation's faithfulness to the Vulgate to its intended audience raises questions about how language related to status and education across England. Next, the manuscripts themselves range from ornate, illuminated copies to plainer, unadorned copies designed for use in worship and preaching, a range open to extensive paleographic study. There are two versions of the translation, and this continues to raise questions about the evolution of the Bible's readership and use. Finally, the wealth of surviving manuscripts provides opportunities to explore pa-

tronage of copying and a possible sympathy for Lollardy among elements of the aristocracy. Solopova and her colleagues have assembled a text that has yet to receive the scholarship it deserves. This collection reveals the success of recent attempts at identifying the text in its late medieval environment. All agree that much remains to be done, including analyzing prose use in the text, tracing connections to contemporary texts, and seeking evidence for its influence in early modern English theology.

Some critics complain that scholarship of Wycliffism and Lollardy has overemphasized the role of the phenomenon in late medieval England. These two volumes present secure evidence that these complaints overlook the fact that Lollardy's existence in a period of evolving attitudes toward the place of the individual in the church demands serious account. I would argue that the connection of English Wycliffite literature to the birth and development of the Hussite movement in Bohemia establishes the study of Wycliffism as of signal importance in understanding the development of Christianity in the century before the Reformation. Michael Van Dussen has recently begun to follow Anne Hudson's lead in exploring the transmission of Wycliffism to Prague, opening the door to many new possible avenues of study. Within twenty-five years of Wycliffism's arrival, Hus would die at Constance, accused of adhering to Wycliffe's teachings, and Hussitism would be born. Scholars interested in exploring the next chapter in Wycliffism would do well to learn Czech, because there is a large body of edited and unedited Bohemian manuscript evidence for the ties between Wycliffe's English followers and his Bohemian admirers. Czech scholars have already laid the groundwork for the study of the Hussite ideology, but few have paid attention to Lollardy. The lack of dialogue between two groups of scholars is puzzling; both anglophone and Czech scholars have related but differing understandings of Wycliffism. The differences between the Bohemian reform movement and the Wycliffite one in England are considerable, but so, too, are the similarities. In time, assessments of the interpretations of Wycliffe, Lollard, and Bohemian preachers and theologians; studies of Wycliffism in English and Czech vernacular sermons and liturgies; and other promising areas of comparison will provide a much fuller understanding of the impact Wycliffe had on late medieval Europe. Rather than being a field that has been overdone, the study of Wycliffism contains many more possible avenues for research; these two volumes provide the reader a secure foundation on which to build a new generation of scholarship.

Stephen E. Lahey, *University of Nebraska*