emphasises the fact that many so-called 'charms' are in fact intended for use in the same sorts of circumstances as are 'liturgies', and that Anglo-Saxon scribes sometimes placed them side-by-side on the same manuscript pages without apparent discrimination. These considerations lead Arthur to conclude that 'there is no reason to think that contemporaries would have … distinguished them from other rituals which developed from mainstream liturgical practices' (p. 165), and therefore that 'it is better to consider "charms" as liturgical texts that are part of an innovative, experimental and diverse ecclesiastical culture' (p. 133). Throughout his study, Arthur consistently sets these views against those held in 'traditional scholarship', by which he chiefly means the various nineteenth- and early twentieth-century editors who first collected *corpora* of texts which they considered to be representative of 'Anglo-Saxon magic'. Although Arthur is right to remind us of the distorting effects of such collections, which often pulled individual texts out of their historical and manuscript contexts in ways that can give a misleading sense of their nature and origins, one sometimes wonders whether those old views still hold sway to the extent that Arthur suggests (esp. pp. 8–12). Readers familiar with more recent scholarship, which has already gone some way towards problematising old distinctions between 'charms' and 'liturgy', may already feel predisposed to agree with Arthur that it is productive to look for connections between and among the individual strands of the Anglo-Saxons' religious culture. Arthur himself offers several suggestions of ways in which the interests, goals or methods of so-called 'charms' might intersect with those of 'mainstream Christian texts', highlighting in particular instances in which he detects 'thematic and textual similarities between "charms" and liturgical texts' (p. 103). It is fair to say that some of the suggested 'similarities' go further than others, and there are certainly occasions when the pursuit of parallels in biblical or liturgical sources risks becoming forced (can it really be said that a ritual which requires a woman to step over her husband in bed exhibits 'a close parallel' to the biblical story of Elisha lying upon the body of a dead boy, as suggested on pp. 114–17?). But in its determination to reconstruct the meaning of so-called 'charms' to the people who used, copied and retained them, this study reminds scholars about the continuing need to make fresh connections in their interpretation of these fascinating texts.

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH RICHARD SOWERBY

Edmund. In search of England's lost king. By Francis Young. Pp. 256 incl. 16 colour plates and 3 maps. London: I. B. Tauris, 2018. £20. 978 1 7883 1179 3

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This is a well-written and at times very informative book, in which Francis Young provides an overview of the history of Edmund of East Anglia (d. 869) and his cult from the ninth century and into the modern period. It comprises an introduction, five main chapters and a conclusion. Chapters i–ii cover Edmund's lifetime, chapter iii the period 869–1066, chapter iv the period 1066–1536, and chapter v the period from 1536 onwards. The book has several unquestionable qualities, yet it also has several equally unquestionable problems. The figure of St Edmund and his cult have both been objects of meticulous study for several generations of

scholars, but there is always something new to be said about him. Given this scholarly tradition, however, it is necessary to examine both how the book engages with previous scholarship as well as how it brings something new to the table.

The primary purpose of the book, as explained in the introduction (p. 14), is to present an argument for the hypothesis that the body of St Edmund was concealed on the abbey grounds of Bury St Edmunds during the Dissolution. The author does so very convincingly. This hypothesis is explored in chapter v and the conclusion. In his argument, the author has made use of documents from the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries, which to my knowledge have not yet been introduced into the scholarly discussion about St Edmund. These sources are of great interest as they shed light on how the cult of St Edmund was maintained on the Continent by English Catholics in exile. Consequently, through his argument about St Edmund's current whereabouts, the author has done an excellent job of including new primary sources and also bridging the unnecessary divide between medieval and modern studies. Similarly, by providing examples of how Edmund has piqued interest in more recent centuries, the author also reminds us of the saint's enduring importance to local and national identities. In these ways, chapter v contains the book's single most important contribution to the academic community, and the author is to be lauded for it.

Despite this, however, there are certain aspects of the book that are problematic and which need to be addressed here. This will not be an exhaustive catalogue of the book's various errors and the *desiderata* that they create, but merely a sample of those which are the most noteworthy.

Firstly, while the broad chronological scope of the book has its very positive consequences, this also presents a challenge to the author when he moves beyond his immediate period of expertise, which, judging from his recent bibliographical output, appears to be the early modern period. For this reason, in the first three chapters of the book as well as the part of chapter iv which covers the period before 1400, the author relies mostly on existing scholarship. This in itself is not a point of criticism, because in such cases this is exactly what needs to be done. However, for some details the author seems unaware of recent and important scholarship. This is especially clear when he touches on the liturgical material for Edmund's feast at the beginning of chapter iv. The author wrongly attributes the oldest surviving liturgy for Edmund to Abbot Garnier of Rebais who visited Bury in 1087 (p.111), even though studies contradict this (see especially Henry Parkes, 'St Edmund between liturgy and hagiography', in Tom Licence [ed.], *Bury St Edmunds and the Norman Conquest*, Woodbridge–Rochester, NY 2014, 131–59). Consequently, the author here provides an inaccurate depiction of the cult's historical trajectory and an important aspect of the cult's ritual dimension, i.e. the liturgical celebration. This is unfortunate because it obscures the wealth of eleventh-century liturgical material concerning St Edmund which is available to scholars.

Similarly, the author commits inaccuracies when describing the standing of Edmund in late medieval England, especially Richard II's devotion to Edmund. While Edmund was important to Richard, Edward the Confessor was even more important. This has been detailed by Katherine Lewis in her article 'Becoming a virgin king' (in Sam Riches and Sarah Salih [eds], *Gender and holiness: men,*

women and saints in late medieval Europe, London 2002, 86–100), yet the author fails fully to acknowledge the Confessor's role during Richard's reign. This is problematic because the late fourteenth century was a period when Edmund and Edward increasingly were presented together, and so the author's favouring of Edmund gives the reader the wrong impression of his importance in this period.

Another problematic aspect is the author's reference to Edmund as the embodiment of Englishness. This is part of a minor argument about Edmund's potential role in contemporary England, but it appears throughout the book. Unfortunately, the author does not set down from the beginning how the term Englishness is to be understood, or what it has meant at various points in England's tumultuous history. Thus the argument does not go anywhere and rests on emotion rather than a scholarly discussion.

There are further errors and shortcomings to be found, but the three highlighted here should suffice to point to both methodological and factual flaws that compromise the overall quality of the book. These flaws do not in any way detract from the book's valuable contribution in chapter v, but they do mean that this book is not – even though it appears to be – a comprehensive study of the cult of Edmund. It is therefore best suited for readers who are already familiar with the subject. The book does not shed any new light on the historical Edmund or the trajectory of the medieval cult – these aspects have all been covered more comprehensively by previous scholars. It does, however, widen the chronological scope of the study of Edmund and it also brings exciting new sources to the table, and for these reasons alone it is a welcome addition to the ever-expanding library of scholarship on St Edmund.

ODENSE STEFFEN HOPE

The papacy and the rise of the universities. By Gaines Post (ed. William J. Courtenay). (Education and Society in the Middle Ages and Renaissance.) Pp. xii + 263 incl. 1 colour ill. Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2017. €124. 978 90 04 34726 7; 0926 6070

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Gaines Post (1902–87) was a historian of medieval thought, particularly adept at mapping the interface between scholasticism and law. His Harvard PhD thesis was presented in 1931 as one of the last supervised by Charles Homer Haskins (1870–1937). It is here brought before a wider public as a result of the enthusiasm of William Courtenay, like both Haskins and Post before him a distinguished professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Post himself published only two of its ten chapters. The other eight have until now languished in typescript. As here revealed, not only is this work of the highest scholarly refinement, but an important witness to the transmission of ideas from the age of Haskins and Hastings Rashdell (1858–1924). Rashdell's *Universities* (1895) is cited by Post on virtually every page. Equally ubiquitous, albeit as target as much as model, Heinrich Denifle's *Die Universitäten des Mittelalters* (1885) serves as the antithesis against which Post's argument is constructed. Put simply, Post argues that the papacy, although central to the growth of the universities, acted more as accidental midwife than as in any sense institutional 'founder'. In response to the emergence