

abruptly in the last chapter “Last Things and Judgement Day,” and this reader would have liked a more extensive summary.

Antonsson writes with a light touch and his arguments are easy to follow. Throughout *Damnation and Salvation in Old Norse Literature*, the reader is helped with summaries and translations of cited texts together with pertinent parallels. *Damnation and Salvation in Old Norse Literature* is a significant study of an important topic and a noteworthy contribution to Old Norse literary studies.

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***The Congregation of Tiron: Monastic Contributions to Trade and Communication in Twelfth-Century France and Britain.* By Ruth Harwood Cline. Spirituality and Monasticism, East and West. Leeds: Arc Humanities Press, 2019. xiii + 210 pp. \$105.00 cloth.**

Although the abbey of Tiron and its founder, Bernard of Tiron, were well known among their medieval contemporaries, modern analysis of their place in twelfth-century ecclesiastical reform has been glaringly absent. In *The Congregation of Tiron: Monastic Contributions to Trade and Communication in Twelfth-Century France and Britain*, Ruth Harwood Cline seeks to fill this void, arguing that the discussion of twelfth-century reform needs to be “rebalance[d]” (xii) and interpretations “nuanced” (2). Cline analyzes and plots Tiron’s expansion throughout France and the British Isles to show both their success as a monastic order and engagement with the economy.

Consisting of seven chapters, discussion begins with the emergence of Tiron within the context of twelfth-century monastic revitalization. The following chapter takes up “Tironensian Identity” in an attempt to outline what made the monks of Tiron distinct. Chapters 3 and 4 examine the contributions of arguably the two most important figures to the expansion of Tiron: Bernard of Tiron and William of Poitiers. While Bernard is recognized for his preaching and role in reform, his successor, William, is less so. As a consequence, chapter 4 restores to view a critical participant in the success of Tiron. After establishing the impact of these founding fathers, Cline digs into how the abbey expanded throughout France and the British Isles in chapters 5 and 6. Central to her argument is that the Tironensians were directly involved in trade. Indeed, her analysis suggests that acquisition of particular properties was directed by Tiron’s interest in participation in the burgeoning economy. These chapters are replete with tables and maps cataloging Tiron’s expansion. The book concludes with a chapter on the later history of Tiron that goes up to 1792 when Tiron was disbanded—a result of the suppression of religion during the French Revolution.

The source base for Tiron is rich. The vita of Bernard of Tiron (*Vita Beati Bernardi Tironensis*) and the charters from Tiron are used to illustrate Cline’s points. The “cartulary” of Tiron was actually assembled and organized by a nineteenth-century scholar, Lucien Merlet, and was printed in 1883. Charters from Winchester and the Scottish houses of Tiron are also mined for information. The charters provide the raw material for the tables and maps that depict Tiron’s expansion. But these rich and engaging

documents remain mostly silent throughout the book, which is unfortunate as the argument would have been strengthened and the narrative enlivened if they had been integrated into the text. Also lacking is an in-depth critical analysis of these sources. Strangely, Cline does not even mention the relatively recent discovery of another life of Bernard: the *Brevis Descriptio*, a late twelfth-century rendition of Bernard's life that provides different information from the *Vita Bernardi*. In doing so, she gives primacy to the *Vita Beati Bernardi Tironensis* as a source for the history of Tiron.

*The Congregation of Tiron* is an important book and contributes significantly to the scholarship on twelfth-century monastic revival. Cline makes a compelling case for how and why the abbey expanded by connecting the acquisition or development of property to economic trends in France, southern England, Wales, and Scotland but also to a wide donor base who supported the monks because of their reputation for piety. But those interested in the religion of the monks or their liturgical practices will need to look elsewhere as this book is less engaged with these topics. The maps and tables that sketch out this expansion, however, will be a useful resource for scholars. Cline also succeeds in calling attention to the place of Tiron among the reformed houses; no longer should it be overshadowed by Fontevraud or Cîteaux.

The book is less successful when it makes grandiose assertions about Tiron and its impact. Cline clearly sees the Tironensians as being unjustly eclipsed by the Cistercians and tries to make the case that Tiron was participating in trade a generation before the monks of Cîteaux. Because Tiron is the focus of the book, the abbey is always portrayed as unique or on the cutting edge. Yet many of the characteristics that Cline identifies as "Tironensian" were shared by a lot of religious orders, which begs the question of whether Tiron really was exceptional or more normative. In a similar vein, Cline posits that Tiron's foundations "on the Celtic Fringe" (a description which is itself problematic) were part of the "Normanization" of the British Isles. Neither what is meant by "Normanization" nor how Tiron would have provided "Normanization" given the relatively modest footprint of its holdings in the region are clear. Rather, Tiron's role in "Normanization" seems to be thrown into the argument just to raise the profile of the Tironensians.

Cline's study of Tiron does draw attention to an order that has been absent from scholarly discussion. And she is correct to assert that Tiron should be included alongside of Savigny, Cîteaux, and Fontevraud as one of the significant orders of the twelfth century. The argument made for Tiron's active participation in the economic growth of the twelfth century is also convincing. Hence, this book will be of interest to scholars of monastic history but also to those studying the economic development of the Central Middle Ages.

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***Fictive Orders and Feminine Religious Identities, 1200–1600.* By Alison More. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018. xi + 203 pp. \$85.00 cloth.**

Around the year 1200, communities of women who pursued active lives of Christian devotion began to appear in number in Western Europe. The best known are probably