

answer by showing how revolutionary a step this was. Neither Langton nor Grosseteste nor Edmund of Abingdon, whose writings and political pre-eminence inevitably put them in the forefront of her exposition, had justified anything more than passive resistance in response to the actions of an unjust ruler. They saw their role as that of peace-makers, while episcopal solidarity, the product of a common intellectual background, common participation in parliaments and councils, and common pastoral concerns, allowed the attitudes of those at the top to be broadly diffused among the whole group. The bishops emerge from her analysis as a generally conservative body, eirenic in outlook and attitude. All these principles were overturned in 1264, when a substantial number were prepared to back Montfort in depriving the king of power: a *volte-face* which Ambler ascribes to the charisma of Montfort as a leader and as a fighter for the justice and righteousness which were fundamental to the bishops' convictions. This is a notably coherent and well-structured argument. It rests in the first place on a rigorous analysis of texts, especially Langton's theological writings, Grosseteste's commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics, the Song of Lewes, and the dossier concerning the activities of the papal legate in 1264, which is one of the book's strengths. Close work on other sources enables the author to overturn some widely accepted views. She is at her most original in demonstrating convincingly (*contra* this reviewer) that these strikingly unradical bishops did not side with the reformers from the start, in 1258, but were drawn into the movement in two later stages: first, with the Provisions of Westminster in 1259, which even conservatives could support since the Provisions promised justice and had the king's assent, and then, at a second stage, with the emergence of Montfort as the movement's sole leader in 1263–4. The case is to a degree overstated, since the Montfortian bishops never constituted more than a minority of the whole episcopate – a point to which Ambler should perhaps have given greater weight. Yet these men had a significance which was out of proportion to their numbers, not least in providing some precedents for future episcopal actions. To those which she considers might have been added the major part played by the bishops in Edward II's deposition. But these are trivial criticisms of an excellent book, bold in its range and persuasive in its reasoning. Before it appears as a paperback (as it surely will) one minor error should be corrected. In 1258 the bishops met, not at Merton in Oxfordshire, an isolated marshside village (p. 107), but, much more fittingly, at Merton priory in Surrey.

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Franciscan learning, preaching and mission, c.1220–1650. Cum scientia sit donum Dei, armatura ad defendendam sanctam fidem catholicam. By Bert Roest. (The Medieval Franciscans, 10.) Pp. x + 245. Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2015. €110. 978 90 04 28061 8; 1572 6991
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The eight articles published in this important volume trace the history of Franciscan education over five centuries and explore the activities of the order's

missionaries in the early modern period. Six of the pieces (1–4, 7, 8) are based on earlier versions which have already been published; two chapters (5, 6) are printed here for the first time. In the first article, on ‘Francis of Assisi and the pursuit of learning’, Roest underlines his view that the systematic creation of a Franciscan education system was already under way in the 1220s, decades before traditionally assumed. The theme is taken up in the second contribution where further evidence for the early existence of a Franciscan study network is found. Narrative as well as normative sources indicate that this was based on the first *studium generale* in Paris. A closer look at the order’s school network is taken in the third chapter with its outline of a model career structure beginning with the noviciate. Roest can show that within this educational hierarchy there was always a central role for religious formation, despite the privileges granted temporarily to some students. The next contribution (‘Mendicant school exegesis’) focuses on Dominican as well as Franciscan scholars as continuators of the pre-mendicant Parisian scholastic tradition. Roest confirms the traditional view when he highlights the mendicant contribution to Bible exegesis in thirteenth-century Paris, Oxford and Cambridge. However he denies that there was a decline in Franciscan biblical scholarship in the later fourteenth century, pointing towards the achievements of the Observants whose works are less well known because their authors did not obtain advanced academic degrees. This is followed by a study of the role of tradition in Franciscan theology, after the response to Aristotelianism led to different preferences for the teaching of either Bonaventure, who stood for Augustinianism, or Scotus, in the emerging rival branches of the order. The sixth contribution, ‘Franciscan school networks’, provides an extensive survey of changes to the Franciscan study system at the time of the Reformation which coincided with significant shifts in the order itself. The remaining two articles focus on the situation in the Low Countries in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Roest argues that Protestantism was not as widespread in the region at that time as previously thought and he discusses the efforts of Franciscan missionaries and theologians to defend Catholic doctrine. The volume is an excellent contribution to an important series.

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Ricoldus de Monte Crucis. Tractatus seu disputatio contra Saracenos et Alchoranum.

Translated by Daniel Pachurka (Corpus Islamo-Christianum, 9.) Pp. 1+198 incl. 2 tables. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2016. €78. 978 3 447 10711 2
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Ricoldus de Monte Crucis (the name is spelled with minor variations) was an Italian Dominican friar, traveller and Christian apologist active in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries who is well known for his anti-Islamic polemic *Contra Sarracenos et Alchoranum*. This work has gone through many editions and has been translated into several European languages, influencing at least one later Latin translation of the Qur’an. Ricoldus’ tract stands somewhat apart from other Christian anti-Islamic writings of its time because of the considerable knowledge of Arabic and specifically of Qur’anic Arabic that the author, who spent many years in Baghdad, demonstrates. A study of this text is therefore of value not merely