

Historians of philosophy should certainly attend to the fourth dimension ... but they should also be careful not neglect the first dimension ... [otherwise], in their attitude to history, they will be dilettantes. The history of philosophy, however, can be, and should be, a proper, professional specialism (p. 90).

As examples of the four dimensions, Marenbon discusses first the chronology of Abelard's works, clarifying the chronology of his logical writings, and second Abelard's relationship to Anselm of Canterbury. He shows that no serious engagement by Abelard with Anselm's theses can be demonstrated. As for Abelard's future, Marenbon shows that Abelard's argument that God cannot do otherwise than he actually does, was well known, in an anonymous form, to many medieval thinkers, due to its presence in the *Sententiae* of Peter Lombard. This is not a new insight, but Marenbon shows that reactions were very different and that it was probably Aquinas who came closest to understanding Abelard's original intention. This is interesting. First, because Aquinas shows a remarkable similarity to Abelard in other areas too, especially in the doctrine of conscience, and, second, because an acceptance of Abelard's argument coheres with Aquinas's conviction that God created a world of intelligible and sensible substances, because this was the most convenient thing to do. Furthermore, Marenbon shows how Leibniz, as a result of the sources that he used, overlooked the fact that his own theodicy was quite close to that of Abelard. The last part of the book is a balanced discussion of some recent attempts to parallel Abelard's theory of signification and his ontology with some recent strands in analytic philosophy. Marenbon shows, correctly, the limits of such a comparison. However, he could have gone further by stating that the history of philosophy can and should be a starting-point also for criticising contemporary approaches, if they do not reach the complexity of their historical predecessors or ignore some of their important insight. In this way, the history of philosophy, which is so brilliantly presented and defended in this book, becomes itself really a piece of philosophy and treats historical authors in accordance with its own philosophical spirit. However, every historian of philosophy, while never losing sight of this final aim, is well advised to take all the, sometimes painful, but always fascinating steps, which Marenbon proposes in this remarkable book.

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The repentant Abelard. Family, gender and ethics in Peter Abelard's 'Carmen ad Astralabium' and 'Planctus'. By Juanita Feros Ruys. (The New Middle Ages.)

Pp. xvi + 355. Basingstoke–New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. £55. 978 0 312 24002 8

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Peter Abelard is a figure about whom judgements are quickly made, often based on a hasty reading of his *Historia calamitatum*. The stock phrase is that he was arrogant and dismissive of his teachers. In this volume, Ruys offers an Abelard who is much less well known, namely a poet, committed to writing a long didactic poem for his son, Astralabe, and a series of poetic Laments for Heloise. In these compositions, all

written in the mid-1130s (in the assessment of Ruys, persuasively argued), we find a much more personal series of reflections, of remarkable originality, but all shaped by experience. Abelard's *Carmen ad Astralabium*, of which Ruys provides a critical edition, translation and commentary, is particularly little known, even though it was one of Abelard's most popular compositions, judging by its diffusion in manuscripts. The poem has also suffered from unnecessarily harsh criticism about its supposedly disorganised character. Not the least of Ruys's achievements is to demonstrate that the *Carmen*, in its first, longest version (of which she argues that two separate shorter versions were made), does in fact have a sophisticated structure, that follows through many distinctively Abelardian themes. Central to her argument is that its composition marks a new awareness of familial responsibility that came about in the 1130s, after he resumed contact with Heloise. Central concerns in the *Carmen* are with the avoidance of verbosity, preference for *planities* in style, and insistence on the priority of matching external words with inner intention. Abelard offers much fatherly advice about relationships with women, even commenting on the 'complaint' of Heloise about her being so attached to past pleasures that she could not feel true repentance. Ruys's presentation of the six *Planctus* or Laments of Abelard (of which she similarly presents a critical edition, translation and commentary) is equally significant in demonstrating a level of human engagement and sensitivity that goes beyond the large cycle of hymns that he wrote at the request of Heloise for the nuns of the Paraclete. Ruys offers probing analysis of the way in which Abelard writes about the imagined laments of a series of biblical figures over individuals whom they held dear. Thus the series begins with a lament of Dina, a daughter of Jacob, raped by a non-Israelite, followed by one of Jacob over his sons (above all Benjamin), one of the virgins of Israel over the daughter of Jephtha and of Israel over Samson, followed by a final couple of laments, of David over Abner, and over Saul and Jonathan. These are searing compositions, that Ruys suggests were provoked by Abelard responding to Heloise, whose sense of the tragic is evident in her surviving letters. It was unfortunate that the Latin and English could not be placed on facing pages. None the less, this volume deserves to be studied by all those who are fascinated by these two personalities.

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New monks in old habits. The formation of the Caulite monastic order, 1193–1267. By Phillip C Adamo. (Studies and Texts, 189.) Pp. xv+260 incl. 17 figs. Toronto, ON: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2014. \$85. 978 0 88844 189 8

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The Caulite order owes its name to the place where its founding monastery was located, that is in the Val-des-Choux (Vallis Caulium). Its founder was said to be a certain brother Viard, a former *conversus* of the Charterhouse at nearby Lugny, whose identity Philip Adamo has convincingly pieced together. Its existence and subsequent development have largely escaped the attention of English monastic historians despite the presence of three Caulite foundations in Scotland. It