

sex, with regulations concerning rape (chiefly ignored) and castration, it seems more likely that such brother-making might well have a sexual dimension, whether this was viewed as shameful or not.

Clearly, the transition from a monastic to a secular setting, which she dates to the seventh century, changed the character of brother-making and allowed it to develop in very different ways. By the early thirteenth century the great legal expert, Archbishop Demetrios Chomatenos of Ohrid, did not recognize it as officially sanctioned by the Church, but it continued regardless. In this study Claudia Rapp has demonstrated most brilliantly how meaningful the ritual of brother-making was not only in Byzantium but also farther afield. Throughout the Orthodox world, images of saintly brothers on icons and church walls constantly reminded the worshippers of that ideal.

KING'S COLLEGE,
LONDON

JUDITH HERRIN

Church and settlement in Ireland. Edited by James Lyttleton and Matthew Stout. Pp. xxiv + 272 incl. 46 ills, 16 plates and 2 tables. Dublin–Chicago: Four Courts Press, 2018. £45. 978 1 84682 728 0

JEH (70) 2019; doi:10.1017/S002204691900023X

Ireland is reputed to be abundantly, even disproportionately, supplied with sacred sites. Indeed, the editors of this volume reckon that 5,000 are known from the medieval period. They and the other contributors explore the physical aspects and their implications for human settlement. In elucidating these matters, they continue the illuminating work on the Irish past of archaeologists and historical geographers, as well as of orthodox historians using documentary sources. The collection benefits from some of the results of rescue archaeology, channelled particularly through the ‘Making Christian Landscapes’ project. Novel techniques – ‘narratology’, employed by Brian Ó Broin – and new topics, such as fosterage, investigated by Lahney Preston-Matto, make familiar sources like saints’ *Lives* and annals yield fresh insights. Arguments about how ecclesiastical power related to secular authority and how each then affected settlement are pursued. Tomás Ó Carragáin and Paul MacCotter, for example, add to the discussion among scholars about the creation and alterations in dioceses and parishes: in particular how much they depended on or coincided with the locations of lay dominance. Christianity is shown to have annexed older holy places. Predictably, closer studies such as these complicate the pictures of settlement, insisting on regional variations and diversity across the island. Several contributors use specific examples – locations in Counties Laois and Tipperary (investigated by Tomás Ó Carragáin), foundations at Drogheda and Kilcrea (examined by Anne-Julie Lafaye), and the Cistercian abbey at Mellifont (studied by Geraldine Stout) – to test and sometimes to modify speculations about how the settlements had been founded and evolved. ‘Polyfocal ritual landscapes’ are explored by Gill Boazman and Tomás Ó Carragáin. Fruitful comparisons are drawn from similar developments in Scotland, Wales, England, France, Hungary and Italy. With regard to the locating of nunneries, as Tracy Collins shows, in Ireland they were frequently situated in or near towns, whereas in England isolation was sought. Later, the

design of dissenters' meeting-houses in the north of Ireland was influenced by the innovations adopted in sixteenth-century Scotland.

Another theme that recurs in a number of the contributions is the way in which the Church, through its organisation, services and personnel, accompanied or adapted to successive conquests. The Church as an agent of change and instrument of colonisation became a focus for attacks. Such hostility helps to explain the profusion of ruined structures on which the editors comment in their introduction. More recently, secularisation has seen some religious buildings, notably where congregations have dwindled or been extinguished, turned to profane uses. Former churches now serve as cafés, store tyres and sell carpets. The two final chapters investigate physical manifestations of the confessional antipathies which divided Ireland after the sixteenth-century reformations. David Fleming reconsiders the belief that, throughout the eighteenth century, repressive laws obliged Irish Catholics to worship clandestinely, often in the open air at isolated mass rocks. He also suggests how this legend was propagated in popular publications during the nineteenth and twentieth century. In remote areas, especially in the north-west, because of exiguous resources and a scattered population, this strategy was adopted, but elsewhere it was uncommon. Furthermore, improvisation and the need for portable altars were not unique to Ireland. In the larger towns, buildings of some ambition were erected. Finbar McCormick, looking closely at the plans and styles of the Catholics' chapels, hardly any of which survive unaltered, detects unexpected similarities with those of the Presbyterians. Both denominations chose classical simplicity. There is an irony in the Catholics' adopting arrangements devised originally to accommodate Calvinist worship. McCormick speculates that the choice was not just pragmatic, but arose from a shared educational background in the Latin schools of Ulster. The most effective essays in the collection apply the local examples to larger questions. Some arguments may seem abstruse to non-specialists, but the cumulative result of the volume is to clarify how the landscapes of Ireland responded to and still bear the impress of the abundant religious foundations.

HERTFORD COLLEGE,
OXFORD

TOBY BARNARD

'Charms', liturgies, and secret rites in early medieval England. By Ciaran Arthur. (Anglo-Saxon Studies, 32.) Pp. viii + 254 incl. 3 ills. Woodbridge–Rochester, NY: Boydell Press, 2018. £60. 978 1 78327 313 3
JEH (70) 2019; doi:10.1017/S0022046919000691

Contained within the surviving manuscripts of the Middle Ages are a diverse collection of instructions, procedures and rituals intended to enable the users of those manuscripts to affect the outcome of events through supernatural means. For many modern readers of those same manuscripts, it has made sense to distinguish among this variety of texts, and to classify some of them as liturgical rites, prayers or blessings, while labelling others as magical 'charms'. The question of just how meaningful such distinctions are lies at the heart of Ciaran Arthur's book, which focuses specifically on the *corpus* of material from Anglo-Saxon England. He