logically weighty treatises, especially his two sets of *Ambigua* and his *Quaestiones ad Thalassium* (as well as the *Capita theologica* in chapter 1), Cooper also uses works written for a monastic context, such as the *Capita de caritate*, sensitive to their ascetical and anagogical significance. It is important that he recognizes the nexus of the theological with the ascetic in Maximus's criticisms of sixth- and early seventh-century Origenism, demonstrating the influence of such earlier Fathers as Gregory of Nazianzus and Nemesius while explicating the creative contributions of the Confessor himself.

The Body in St. Maximus the Confessor is not without its weaknesses. Cooper occasionally fails to distinguish in sufficient detail the corporeal differences of some anthropological stages. For example, he dismisses consideration of prelapsarian anthropology as simply hypothetical in Maximus (80, 114), not recognizing that its lack of actual existence in time does not detract from its eschatological significance. This is particularly noticeable in his discussion of sexual differentiation in chapter 5, where he appears to follow the interpretations of predecessors such as Lars Thunberg. Although he readily describes Maximus as "following in Gregory [of Nyssa]'s footsteps" (210) in seeing sexual differentiation as "'in no way depend[ing] on the primordial reason behind the divine purpose concerning human generation, [and as] provisionally linked to Adam's fall'" (212), he ignores the eschatological significance of this view by subordinating it to Maximus's paradigm of the reconciliation in humanity of the five divisions in creation, asserting that the reconciliation of these divisions "by no means involves the elimination of their distinct characteristics" (211). This may be true for the other four divisions, but the other four are, according to Maximus, part of God's original design for creation, not a contingency plan because of humanity's Fall. In fact, Maximus explicitly states in *De ambigua* 41 (PG 91: 1309B) that it is possible that humanity will not exist as male and female in the eschaton since, precisely *because* of its provisional and contingent nature, there is no need for this distinction to exist permanently. More attention to gender studies and deeper consideration of the corporeal differences between the realized and unrealized aspects of Maximus's eschatology might have allowed Cooper to avoid such an error: the (partially) deified human being in the here and now transcends sexual distinctions while still remaining male or female in the body, while the fully deified human being will have an eschatological body that may not be sexed at all.

Overall, however, Adam Cooper's exploration of Maximus the Confessor's theology of the body is an excellent scholarly work that should prove a valuable contribution to the field.

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Céli Dé in Ireland: Monastic Writing and Identity in the Early Middle Ages. By **Westley Follett**. Studies in Celtic History. Rochester, N.Y.: Boydell & Brewer, 2006. xii + 259 pp. $85.00 cloth.

The Céli Dé or Culdees, as the phrase has usually been Anglicized, have been understood by scholars as a monastic reform movement in the eighth- and ninth-century Irish church, a reform movement necessitated by the decline of Irish monasteries after the initial "golden age" and by the corruption in them introduced by local aristocratic families anxious to keep control

of monastic lands. In this masterful historiographic study, Follett demonstrates how this view arose, how it persisted unquestioned for a century, and how little support it has. Follett makes it clear that Céli Dé, or "clients of God," did indeed practice a rigorous asceticism, sometimes more rigorous than that of other monks, and they do deserve credit for uplifting Irish monastic life, but he denies that they did so because they felt a need to reform.

As usual with historiographic revisions, Follett begins with a review of earlier literature. But what makes this review different from so many others is the list of scholars with whom the author disagrees: William Reeves, James Kenney, Robin Flower, Nora Chadwick, Daniel Binchy, and Kathleen Hughes, all giants in the study of Early Christian Ireland. In fairness to them, Follett recognizes that studying the Céli Dé was not their primary focus, but their prestige guaranteed that an unsubstantiated interpretation dating back to the late nineteenth century survived until the twenty-first.

In a long (65 pages) chapter, Follett studies the supposed reason for the rise of the Céli Dé, that is, the decline of Irish monasticism. This thorough and inclusive account focuses mostly on literary evidence, which is abundant, and it demonstrates that proof for a widespread ascetic decline simply does not exist. The evidence does, however, show that the ascetic life continued to win high esteem among Irish Christians and that there were no strident calls for reform. In his effort to show the continued vitality of Irish asceticism into the eighth and ninth centuries, Follett provides a lucid, well-documented account of Irish ascetic values and practices. Scholars uninterested in the Céli Dé but interested in Early Christian Ireland will find this chapter of much value on its own.

Reinterpretation of historical events usually involves reinterpretation of agreed-upon sources, but here Follett presents the true strength of his approach. He reviews the literature but demonstrates that earlier scholars rarely tracked the manuscript traditions of the works they cited. Follett does so meticulously, proving that they relied on inadequate editions, inaccurate readings, poor translations between Irish and Latin, and works whose relation to the Céli Dé cannot be maintained. Several other contemporary scholars evaluated some manuscript traditions and came to similar conclusions, but Follett puts all this evidence into a comprehensive whole. The considerable research that marks this chapter gives this book its true worth.

Utilizing the manuscript evidence, Follett evaluates all texts attributed to the Céli Dé with predictable results: some texts are definitely Céli Dé; some are definitely not; some are influenced by or related to the Céli Dé. But the only strong criterion for a positive attribution is some affiliation, proximate or remote, with the monastery of Tallaght, a known Céli Dé center, and the clients' two most famous leaders, Mael Díthrub and Mael Ruain. Yet in spite of this limitation, Follett has produced a sizeable list of texts for scholars to work with.

Follett respects his evidence, and so he titles his last chapter "Towards a Reassessment of Céli Dé," rather than claiming that he can offer a comprehensive picture of the clients of God. Since the Céli Dé did not need to reform Irish monasteries, they usually accepted their traditions, and so, "There can be little doubt that these (the Céli Dé) are regular monks" (180), a conclusion justified by examination of Céli Dé asceticism, chastity, and pastoral work. They also followed common literary types; for example, they produced two

martyrologies, one of which, the ninth-century *Martyrology of Óengus*, provides the first record of Saint Patrick's feast day being observed on March 17.

So what did distinguish the clients? "For their part, Céli Dé in Óengus's day maintained severe rules, undertook massive vigils, dutifully confessed their sins, performed their penances, and stringently observed Sunday because these were the actions or services that they felt were required of God's 'clients' and that would mark them as such. Moreover, while they considered themselves apart from others, they were not entirely reclusive or isolationist, for they advocated an active pastoral ministry within their own communities" (215).

By its nature a technical study based on codicological evidence has a limited audience, and this book will appeal primarily to specialists in Irish church history.

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Living Together, Living Apart: Rethinking Jewish-Christian Relations in the Middle Ages. By **Jonathan Elukin**. Jews, Christians, and Muslims from the Ancient to the Modern World. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2007. xii + 196 pp. $24.95 cloth.

Jonathan Elukin has penned a concise, vigorous polemic designed to challenge what he views as the dominant thesis regarding medieval Jewish-Christian relations during the past sixty years. In his own words, "The historical fulcrum for much of the recent work on the treatment of Jews is the claim that twelfth-century Europe became a 'persecuting society.' The treatment of Jews in the medieval past thus ominously signals the fundamentally intolerant character of European states and Christian culture" (4). For historians working under the shadow of the Holocaust, this thesis may have seemed compelling, both for its explanatory power in the face of the Shoah, and for the warrant it provided for continued secularization in the West. Yet Elukin feels that it has "inadvertently distorted or at least obscured our ability to see a fuller range of Jewish experience in the Middle Ages" (5). He proposes instead seeing the series of disasters that befell medieval Jewry—beginning with the crusader massacres of 1096, including the confiscations and burning of the Talmud in the thirteenth century, and culminating in the expulsions from England (1290), France (1306), and Spain (1492)—as exceptional, while an admittedly imperfect yet resilient *convivencia* between Jews and Christians was the norm.

Elukin's thinking is guided by a simple series of questions: Why is it that after each of these disasters Jews (and often their Christian neighbors) sought to restore the normalcy of the *status quo ante*, and often succeeded in doing so? If unremitting violence and persecution was the norm in medieval Christendom, whence the enduring belief in the possibility of tolerance? Is the incidence of violence against Jews really that remarkable, given the "background level" of generalized violence in the Middle Ages? Is it likely that so many Jews could have been so wrong for so long about something so crucial, while only we moderns can see medieval reality for what it was? It is possible, of course, to answer the last question in the affirmative, if one assumes that medieval Jews (and their descendants up to the last century) shared a "diaspora" mentality that concealed from them the implacable