

and writing offered, for example, in the unique corpus of papyri from late antique Egypt. Still, what Byzantium, like this volume, does offer is a view of the productive interaction between readers and the written word, not least the cross-pollination of sacred and secular. The practices of reading, writing, book production, and annotation reached all corners of Byzantine literate society. Careful reading was the cultural currency of the Byzantine elite, including the church, and remains one of its most attractive areas of study today, with much new research ongoing.

The editors have organized the chapters by theme, not chronology: thus, “The Emotions of Reading,” “The Power of Rhetoric,” “Text and Image,” “Interlingual Circulation and Transmission,” etc. This arrangement produces a lovely serendipity where patterns centuries apart weave together to form a whole tapestry. Non-Greek reading in Byzantium is also addressed, especially Armenian, Latin, and French, as part of a more expansive Byzantine matrix. Readers looking for the realia of Byzantine texts will be enthralled by this volume, but, while the studies themselves are highly sophisticated, the more theoretically minded will not find much to engage them (outside a brief excursus in Ida Toth’s introduction). The volume highlights the venerable traditions of Byzantine literary criticism: a close attention to language, rhetoric, style, and social context. As a result, the subjects close to the heart of the Jeffreyses recur throughout: secular poetry (e.g., *politikos stichos*, the *Ptochoprodromika*), historiography and chronicle (e.g., Malalas, Anna Komnene, the Greek novels/romances (e.g., *Hysmine and Hysminias*, the *Tale of Troy*), hymnography (e.g., Romanos the Melode, Symeon the New Theologian), epistolography (e.g., Theodore Daphnopates), performance (e.g., the *theatron*, tent poetry), and much, much else. The volume holds an embarrassment of riches. It should also be stressed that there is no shortage of late Byzantium in this book, which is a welcome addition to the repertoire of current scholarship.

By means of a retrospective chapter written by the Jeffreyses themselves, the volume concludes with a meditation on fundamentals, the state of scholarship, and perennial needs. As they emphasize, Byzantine reading was done through the ear as much as or more than the eyes: recitation, performance, and audience remain key aspects. They point to unease in some chapters over the lack of modern editions and translations, which can saddle the study of Byzantine literature with a feeling of “belatedness” and an “absence of Byzantium” (in the words of Averil Cameron) in larger conversations about medieval literature and history. In response, the Jeffreyses double down on their own commitments and propose the need for “more and more reliable basic data” to go alongside emergent interpretive schemata. This includes thoughtful and sophisticated digital tools, which the Jeffreyses have championed throughout their careers. Their final commendation (uttered with authority) is, “We need to learn to read slowly.” The intelligent, variegated chapters in this beautiful volume attest to the impact that this mantra, expressed eloquently in the Jeffreyses’ teaching and scholarship, has had on a generation of readers.

SCOTT FITZGERALD JOHNSON, University of Oklahoma

MADDALENA SIGNORINI, *Sulle tracce di Petrarca: Storia e significato di una prassi scrittoria*. (Biblioteca dell’ “Archivum Romanicum.” Serie I: Storia, Letteratura, Paleografia 500.) Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 2019. Pp. xi, 223; many black-and-white figures and 2 tables. €28. ISBN: 978-8-8222-6691-0. doi:10.1086/716089

The fourteenth-century Italian books and documents that have survived to today, many of which came from the desks of preeminent intellectuals, allow for unprecedented insights into the close relationship between writing as an intellectual and a mechanical activity, and between the creation and use (and enjoyment) of the literary work in the manuscript age. Of particular relevance are Francis Petrarch’s books: Petrarch cared deeply about his library,

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which he compiled, moved, and re-formed at different stages. Already during his lifetime, his library constituted a body of knowledge with the capacity to steer the intellectual field, and Petrarch was eager to settle its future, desiring it to stay intact and be accessible to the public (even if ultimately his books were divided among his heirs). Starting with Pierre de Nolhac's pioneering studies in the nineteenth century, modern scholarship has placed great value on Petrarch's relentless efforts in annotating his contemporary and classical literature. In recent years, the corpus has been redefined: there have been new acquisitions, such as Petrarch's annotations on Giovanni Mansionario's autograph of the *Historia imperialis* (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Chig. I.VII.259), while doubts have been cast on Petrarch's annotations on Livy (London, British Library, MS Harley 2493; see Marco Petoletti and Monica Berté's forthcoming entry for the *Autografi dei letterati italiani* series). Maddalena Signorini's book perfectly integrates this renewed interest in Petrarch's library and scribal work, and succeeds in offering a fresh approach to well-known and thoroughly studied books.

Through an elegant wordplay, the title specifies the type of source that Signorini is focusing on. *Tracce* ("traces") is not a mere metaphor, but a technical term that indicates short texts added in records (books, documents, etc.) that were not intended to preserve these *tracce*. Many of the earliest extant texts in vernacular languages are "traces" found in spaces originally left blank in books or documents, where, although not in a dedicated medium, their scribes thought they could be preserved safely. By definition, *tracce* are unrelated to the contents of the medium in which they appear, and usually chronologically distant from it as well; often they are in a different language, and are written out of urgency, not copied from a specific source or meant to be replicated themselves. In fourteenth-century Italy, the practice of adding *tracce* in books and documents was widespread and encompassed many examples that do not strictly adhere to the definition just described (for instance, some are carefully thought out and related to the contents of the medium in which they are copied). By following a more flexible idea of *tracce*, which corresponds to late medieval writing habits, Signorini isolates thirty-nine short texts by Petrarch found in the flyleaves of his books. They are all in Latin and cover most of Petrarch's life, from the 1320s to the 1370s. For each, an edition, translation, and black-and-white reproduction is provided. Signorini divides Petrarch's *tracce* into three categories: 1) service notes, such as ownership notes; 2) biographical notes, or texts that are associated with personal memories; and 3) exegetical notes, related to the text contained in the book. Signorini highlights that often Petrarch's *tracce* are not extemporaneous, are in the same language (Latin), and related to the main work(s) contained in the volumes, and in more than one case they were subsequently copied. Nevertheless, she argues convincingly that they are strongly characterized by their position at the threshold of Petrarch's books, and most importantly seem to define *e contrario* a new way of conceiving such short texts. Signorini emphasizes that Petrarch used this particular kind of writing on purpose, in order to further enhance his ideal autobiographical narrative and strengthen the exemplary cohesion of his library.

The biographical notes are of particular interest. The *nota di Laura* (Laura's note, where Petrarch commemorates her death), the *note intime* (personal notes), and the *note di agricoltura* (agricultural notes) epitomize the powerful insights that these *tracce* can yield. The *note intime*, a list of dates with symbols that, since de Nolhac, has been interpreted as a record of Petrarch's sexual encounters, and the *note di agricoltura*, descriptions and anecdotes related to Petrarch's gardens in Provence, Milan, and Padua, are here made accessible to scholars also from a materiality standpoint. By providing detailed insights into the habits and idiosyncrasies of the times, they are ripe for new historical analyses. From Petrarch's epoch, the most famous among the *tracce* is the *nota di Laura*. Signorini underscores Petrarch's care in placing it as an epigraph at the threshold of his *Virgilio ambrosiano*, a book that was meant to become public, and thus the note and its biographical and literary meaning with it. Even though it is materially close to other notes remembering the deaths of friends and relatives, the *nota di Laura* clearly stands

out as a meaningful composition because of its significant positioning. The large tradition it generated, in Latin as well as in the vernacular, is a reflection of the emblematic role bestowed on it by its author. Signorini describes its reception (in miscellanies or with Petrarch's vernacular works, the *Canzoniere* and the *Triumphs*) and the ways in which it reflects diverse interpretations of Petrarch's life and works. (Signorini provides a list of the manuscripts, but Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, MS Lat. XIV 223 must be excluded: the presence of the note signaled by Giuseppe Billanovich is a mistake.)

Signorini's book provides crucial insights for understanding Petrarch not just as a scribe, but as an intellectual who used his books as repositories of memories and to shape his image for future generations. It is this reader's hope that these *tracce*, as a system (such as the ownership notes, as Signorini suggests) and as single points of entry, will encourage scholars to pursue new research paths inside and outside of Petrarch's works.

LAURA BANELLA, University of Oxford

PATRICK SIMS-WILLIAMS, ed., *Buchedd Beuno: The Middle Welsh "Life" of St Beuno*. (Medieval and Modern Welsh Series 15.) Dublin: School of Celtic Studies for the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 2018. Pp. ix, 226; 1 map. €24. ISBN: 978-1-85500-236-4. doi:10.1086/716312

The new edition of *Buchedd Beuno* by Patrick Sims-Williams is the first saint's life to be included in the Medieval and Modern Welsh Series from the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies. It is a welcome addition, widening the field of literature in that series to include a genre that deserves more attention from scholars and students alike. Indeed, the inclusion is a timely one, with the two AHRC projects making up *Cwlt y Seintiau* having been recently completed. This volume also nicely complements the previous entry in the series, Barry Lewis's *Medieval Welsh Poems to Saints and Shrines* (2015).

Like other volumes within the Medieval and Modern Welsh Series, this one is aimed at both scholars and students. Beginners in Middle Welsh are a particular target audience for this volume, which includes "A Short Grammar of Middle Welsh" (97–140). While previous volumes in the series have featured discussions of Middle Welsh grammar and syntax in varying depths within their introductions, this volume is unique for treating grammar as an independent section of the book, and doing so in sufficient detail that students would be able to make their way through *Buchedd Beuno* without access to D. S. Evans's *A Grammar of Middle Welsh* (1964). Although Sims-Williams's "Short Grammar" is not a replacement for Evans's work (nor is it intended to be, described by Sims-Williams as a "stepping stone" [vii] to that work), that students interested in Middle Welsh would be able to study *Buchedd Beuno* without purchasing an additional book is certainly a selling point for this edition. It makes it particularly attractive for students outside of the United Kingdom who may not have copies of *A Grammar of Middle Welsh* in their institutional libraries.

With its helpful tables (98–103) laying out a guide for the phonology and orthography of Middle Welsh, the "Short Grammar" keeps the promise made in the preface (vii–viii) that "This edition is aimed at complete beginners in Middle Welsh and assumes no knowledge of Modern Welsh or any other Celtic language" (vii). With the caveat that the discussion of orthography here is focused on that of the manuscript underlying this edition (*The Book of the Anchorite of Llanddewibrefi*; Oxford, Jesus College, MS 119) rather than the range of Middle Welsh orthographies, this treatment will help students and others unfamiliar with Middle Welsh to pronounce the language confidently, particularly were they to be reading this text aloud in a classroom setting.

This facilitation of pronunciation seems also to be one reason that the 6 form of *v* has been "replaced by *u*, *v*, or *w* as required by context" (141) and *d* replaced with *ð* "Where it

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