

*Querelle des femmes* that continues well into the early modern period. Therefore, this is a welcome new edition for those interested in both the philological study of the text offered by Rychner and the accessible contemporary French version of it offered by Mühlethaler. It should be useful to those interested in its possible place as part of the *Querelle* and, overall, to scholar-teachers who wish to incorporate the text or parts of it into discussion of late medieval satire and misogyny.

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RÜDIGER SCHNELL, *Accomplissement de l'amour, mort de l'amour? Le paradoxe amoureux et l'amour courtois*, trans. SANDRA DEBOT. (Recherches littéraires médiévales 31.) Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2021. Paper. Pp. 182. €19. ISBN: 978-2-4061-2156-5. doi:10.1086/728376

Sometimes a happy turn of phrase becomes its own problem and limitation: such is the case with Leo Spitzer's famous *paradoxe amoureux* (*L'Amour lointain de Jaufré Rudel et le sens de la poésie des troubadours* [1944]). After Spitzer characterized love—a core aspect to understand troubadour lyrics—as paradoxical, his formulation became a staple of troubadour scholarship, often as shorthand for innumerable assumptions around troubadour love (a situation that similarly afflicted Gaston Paris's *amour courtois*, or Alberto Limentani's *eccezione narrativa* characterization of Occitan verse narrative). As Rüdiger Schnell shows, Spitzer's intriguing expression has been replicated in a high number of studies without reassessing the concept, or even referring faithfully to Spitzer's meaning. Given the enormous interpretative weight it has acquired over the decades, Schnell's volume rightly intends to review the foundation of Spitzer's notion, re-evaluating whether, according to the troubadours, sexual consummation kills desire and even love.

Schnell sets out to examine “le discours prémoderne” regarding this issue, then interrogates the medieval texts, and finally discusses modern approaches, which “invitent à renoncer dans son intégralité à une vision de la poésie courtoise psycho-historique et portant de façon unilatérale sur la vie des auteurs” (10). He analyzes the love paradox, and the validity of considering troubadour love “un phénomène déterminé par le vécu” (23) from a personal, rhetorical, and performative angle, sometimes examining concepts from a logical viewpoint and at other times reviewing whether literary examples support the received assumptions. As anticipated, he finds little evidence of sexual renunciation in lyrics and focuses instead on new paradoxes and research questions concerned with the performance and reception of love poetry.

The volume's main purpose is extremely pertinent, central even, to the interpretation of troubadour culture and highlights the fact that we do not have certain, sufficient knowledge about some of the most basic elements of their poetry, despite extensive, available studies, going centuries back, and despite troubadour poetry being a pillar of Western culture, at the origin of European vernacular lyric. Even though new data and certainties are hard to come by, rethinking, recalibrating, and unpacking inherited assumptions may certainly offer new insights or at the very least avoid building new constructs on shaky foundations. As Schnell affirms in the preface, “on étudie de nos jours en détails l'esthétique, l'intertextualité et la médialité de la poésie des troubadours et des trouvères, mais quand il s'agit de proposer un ancrage historico-culturel de phénomènes, on recourt encore et toujours aux anciens modèles explicatifs” (7).

In this sense, Schnell's volume had the potential to be a core contribution to medieval lyric studies. The wider impact that his thesis could have had is undermined, however, by some of the approaches taken, which limit the scope of his study and its results. For instance, the various meanings attributed to Spitzer's concept, and therefore its widespread appeal, are solely illustrated by studies on *Mimmesang* (and a few German troubadour scholars) on pages 12–20.

Similarly, bibliographic references are focused toward specific sectors of troubadour scholarship: German studies are well represented, and a few British and American works are mentioned, but Italian studies are largely absent. And more importantly, Schnell's caveats in the notes of page 11 somehow dilute the initial premise, as he acknowledges that the definition of troubadour love and its reality are left aside, and no attention is paid to the "différentiations et périodisations de la poésie courtoise" (11 n. 3).

This brief monograph offers, nonetheless, much valuable information. To mention just two examples, there is a wealth of relevant details in the chapters surveying medieval theories of love from different perspectives (from philosophical approaches to views on conjugal sex), while the extensive chapter on troubadour debate poems not only advances Schnell's thesis but provides new insights on this corpus. (Although, as is the case in other parts of the study, the solid argumentation presented would have been enriched by contextual analysis of each text and the genre, allowing for wider-ranging results.) The conclusion (149–54) expounds the results of the survey in articulate terms, which more than prove Schnell's point: it undoubtedly discourages a biographic (or "vécu") approach and focuses questions about troubadour love in discursive and performative issues. However, without fully asking what troubadours mean when they talk about love, somehow setting the rules of the literary game being performed (as mentioned in 25 n. 8), as well as fully discussing some elements taken for granted (such as the fictional status of ladies or the poet's retribution), the appeal to performance and the public as a provider of sense becomes inevitably weaker than it could have been.

In brief, this is an interesting book, well argued, insightful and full of important observations worth noting and pursuing, particularly with regard to the troubadours' public and performance. It should be an encouragement to go back to ask basic questions about troubadour culture and the courts where it was created and performed, while rethinking many established notions on the way. The goal is ambitious, and opting for a wider scope and a denser textual net makes it an even more complex and daunting task. However, such studies, accompanied by an interdisciplinary methodology, are the best bet in helping to unlock the understanding of a culture that is still fundamental to fully comprehending ours.

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JÓN VIDAR SIGURÐSSON and HANS JACOB ORNING, eds., *Medieval and Modern Civil Wars: A Comparative Perspective*. (History of Warfare 135.) Leiden: Brill, 2021. Pp. xxiii, 316; black-and-white figure. \$212. ISBN: 978-9-0044-6147-5.

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The idea motivating this volume, too rarely attempted in book form, is laudable: a comparative exercise through and through, calling together specialists with widely divergent expertise to interrogate a shared analytical category. Contributors include historians, anthropologists, political scientists, and legal scholars. Despite an open-ended title, this volume remains anchored in a handful of specific case studies. The co-editors' areas of expertise—Norway's twelfth-century and Iceland's thirteenth-century "civil wars"—are at the core, triangulated with the struggle for domination in Guinea-Bissau from the late 1990s onward and with Afghanistan from the 1700s to the present. The book's structure is equally bold. Seven contributors, paired in shifting interdisciplinary constellations, have co-authored as many essays; an eighth (John Comaroff [279–308]) critically responds to them; and the remaining three offer expert views on related extensions, such as the evidence for or against Charles Tilly's famous dictum that "war made the state, and the state made war" (quoted by Øyvind Østerud [258–78]). The editors collaboratively wrote the introduction, and each participated

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