The period 1200-1550 opened in a time of population expansion but went on to suffer the demographically cataclysmic effects of the plague, beginning with the Black Death of 1347-51. The period dawned with a confident popacy and the Albigensian crusade against heretics and ended with the Catholic church torn apart by the Protestant Reformation. Huge challenges were affecting society in various ways, but they did not always affect men and women in the same ways. Helen M. Jewell provides a lively survey of western European women's activities and experiences during this timeframe. The core chapters investigate: - the function of women in the countryside and towns - the role of women in the ruling and landholding classes - women within the context of religion. This practical centre of the book is embedded in an analysis of the gender theories inherited from the earlier Middle Ages which continued to underpin laws which restricted women's activity, an education system which offered them inferior institutional provision, and a church which denied them ministry. Three individuals who vastly exceeded these expectations, crashing through the 'glass ceilings' of their day, are brought together in a fascinating final chapter. Combining a historiographical survey of trends over the last thirty years with more recent scholarship, this is as indispensable introduction for anyone with an interest in women's history from the late Medieval period through to the Reformation.

"First Published in 1999, Routledge is an imprint of Taylor & Francis, an informa company." A survey of critical attention devoted to Arthurian matters. This book explores the metaphor of topography as a mechanism for the inscription of gender roles in Arthurian romance. Eleven essays bring Arthurian studies into the 21st century, including film and black popular culture. More than sixty friends and colleagues pay tribute to the distinguished professor Janos M. Bak's 70th birthday.

Proposing a fresh theoretical approach to the study of cinematic portrayals of the Middle Ages, this book uses both semiotics and historiography to demonstrate how contemporary filmmakers have attempted to recreate the past in a way that, while largely imagined, is also logical, meaningful, and as truthful as possible. Carrying out this critical approach, the author analyzes a wide range of films depicting the Middle Ages, arguing that most of these films either reflect the past through a series of visual signs (a concept he has called "iconic recreation") or by comparing the past to a modern equivalent (called "paradigmatic representation").

Journey into twelve of the world's favorite mystery stories that cross the threshold into the world of the High Middle Ages. From Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales" to Umberto Eco's "Name of the Rose" to Dan Brown's bestselling "The Da Vinci Code," the medieval period continues to intrigue, inspire, entertain and fascinate many today. For the general reader and specialist alike, medieval expert, former Rosslyn Chapel museum exhibition curator and bestselling author Dr. Karen Ralls guides the reader through the key historical facts, legends and lore, affiliated places and major symbolism of each of these 12 popular medieval enigmas, providing a lively introductory portal which includes some of the lesser-known, sidelined or unacknowledged aspects of each of these enduring topics. The story of each subject comes alive as never before, providing a solid introduction for all readers as well as further suggested resources for teachers and researchers. Also included are photographs, a recommended reading section, maps, a list of the key major sites associated with each topic, and a full Bibliography. Topics covered include: King Arthur, Merlin and GlastonburyThe Grail Quest Mary MagdaleneThe real meaning of Black MadonnasThe Knights Templar, the Cathers, and Rosslyn ChapelMedieval Guides and TroubadoursHeresy and Heretics Let this book serve as your personal pilgrimage back to the High Middle Ages - a time of potent symbolism, occult knowledge, and spiritual quests.

This major work is the fourth volume in the series "Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages". Its intention is to update the French and Occitan chapters in R.S. Loomis' "Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages: A Collaborative History" (Oxford, 1995) and to provide a volume which will serve the needs of students and scholars of Arthurian literature. The principal focus is the production, dissemination and evolution of Arthurian material in French and Occitan from the twelfth to the fifteenth century. Beginning with a substantial overview of Arthurian manuscripts, the volume covers writing in both verse (Wace, the Tristan legend, Chretien de Troyes and the Grail Continuations, Marie de France and the anonymous lays, the lesser known romances) and prose (the Vulgate Cycle, the prose Tristan, the Post-Vulgate Roman du Graal, etc.).

Wounds were a potent signifier reaching across all aspects of life in Europe in the middle ages, and their representation, perception and treatment is the focus of this volume. Following a survey of the history of medical wound treatment in the middle ages, paired chapters explore key themes situating wounds within the context of religious belief, writing on medicine, status and identity, and surgical practice. The final chapter reviews the history of medieval wound through the modern imagination. Adopting an innovative approach to the subject, this book will appeal to all those interested in how past societies regarded health, disease and healing and will improve knowledge of not only the practice of medicine in the past, but also of the ethical, religious and cultural dimensions structuring that practice. Clothing was used in the Middle Ages to mark religious, military, and chivalric orders, lepers, and prostitutes. The ostentatious display of luxury dress more specifically served as a means of self-definition for members of the ruling elite and the courtly lovers among them. In Courtly Love Undressed, E. Jane Burns unfolds the rich display of costly garments worn by amorous partners in literary texts and other cultural documents in the French High Middle Ages. Burns "reads through clothes" in lyric, romance, and didactic literary works, vernacular sermons, and sumptuary laws to show how courtly attire is used to negotiate desire, sexuality, and symbolic space as well as social class. Reading through clothes reveals that the expression of female desire, so often effaced in courtly lyric and romance, can be registered in the poetic deployment of fabric and adornment, and that gender is often configured along a sartorial continuum, rather than in terms of naturally derived categories of woman and man. The symbolic identification of the court itself as a hybrid crossing place between Europe and the East also emerges through Burns's reading of literary allusions to the trade, travel, and pilgrimage that brought luxury cloth to France.

"Examines literary portrayals of women who practice healing and love magic, and argues that these figures were modeled on informally trained practitioners common in the magico-medical paradigm of the high Middle Ages, and were well-respected and successful"—Provided by publisher. Charting important new territory within medieval gender studies, Megan Moore explores the vital role that women played in transmitting knowledge and empire within Mediterranean cross-cultural marriages.
Whereas cross-cultural exchange has typically been understood through the lens of male-centered translation work, this study, which is grounded in the relations between the west and Byzantium, examines cross-cultural marriage as a medium of literary and cultural exchange, one in which women's work was equally important as men's. Moore's readings of Old French and Medieval Greek texts reveal the extent to which women challenged the cultures into which they married and shaped their new courtly environments. Through the lens of medieval gender and postcolonial theory, Exchanges in Exoticism demonstrates how the process of cultural exchange – and empire building – extends well beyond our traditional assumptions about gender roles in the medieval Mediterranean.

Is the world of George R. R. Martin's A Song of Ice and Fire and HBO's Game of Thrones really medieval? How accurately does it reflect the real Middle Ages? Historians have been addressing these questions since the book and television series exploded into a cultural phenomenon. For scholars of medieval and early modern women, they offer a unique vantage point from which to study the intersections of elite women and popular understandings of the premodern world. This volume is a wide-ranging study of those intersections. Focusing on female agency and the role of advice, it finds a wealth of continuities and contrasts between the powerful and influential female characters of Martin's fantasy world and the strategies that historical women used to exert influence. Reading characters such as Daenerys Targaryen, Cersei Lannister, and Brienne of Tarth with a creative, deeply scholarly eye, Queenship and the Women of Westeros makes cutting-edge developments in queenship studies accessible to everyday readers and fans.

Medieval queens led richly complex lives and were highly visible women active in a man's world. Linked to kings by marriage, family, and property, queens were vital to the institution of monarchy. In this comprehensive and accessible introduction to the study of queenship, Theresa Earenfight documents the lives and works of queens and empresses across Europe, Byzantium, and the Mediterranean in the Middle Ages. The book introduces pivotal research and sources in queenship studies, and includes exciting and innovative new archival research highlights four crucial moments across the full span of the Middle Ages – ca. 300, 700, 1100, and 1350 – when Christianity, education, lineage, and marriage law fundamentally altered the practice of queenship examines theories and practices of queenship in the context of gender, age, and power. The book is of interest to readers interested in the role of royal women in medieval society.

An engaging history of royal and imperial families and dynastic power, enriched by a body of surprising and memorable source material. Drawing on a range of approaches in cultural, gender and literary studies, this book presents Chrétien de Troyes's Erec et Enide as a daring and playful exploration of scandal, terror and anxiety in court cultures. Through an interdisciplinary reading, it locates Erec et Enide, the first surviving Arthurian romance in French, in various contexts, from broad cultural and historical questionings such as medieval vernacular 'modernity's' engagement with the weight of its classical inheritance, to the culturally fecund and politically turbulent histories of the families of Eleanor of Aquitaine and Henry II Plantagenet. Where previous accounts of the tale have not uncommonly presented Chrétien's poem as a decorous 'resolution' of tensions between dynastic marriage and fin'amors, between personal desire and social duty, this reading sees these forces as in permanent and irresolvable tension, the poem's key scenes haunted - whether mischievously or traumatically - by questions and skeletons from various closets.

In The Curse of Eve, the Wound of the Hero, Peggy McCracken explores the role of blood symbolism in establishing and maintaining the sex-gender systems of medieval culture. Reading a variety of literary texts in relation to historical, medical, and religious discourses about blood, and in the context of anthropological and religious studies, McCracken offers a provocative examination of the ways gendered cultural values were mapped into blood in the Middle Ages. McCracken demonstrates, blood is gendered when that of men is prized in stories about battle and that of women is excluded from the public arena in which social and political hierarchies are contested and defined through chivalric contest. In her examination of the conceptualization of familial relationships, she uncovers the privileges that are grounded in gendered definitions of blood relationships. She notes that in narratives about sacrifice a father's relationship to his son is described as a shared blood, whereas texts about women accused of giving birth to monstrous children define the mother's contribution to conception in terms of corrupt, often menstrual blood. Turning to fictional representations of bloody martyrdom and of eucharistic ritual, McCracken juxtaposes the blood of the wounded grail of the guardian with that of Christ and suggests that the blood from the grail king's wound is characterized in opposition to that of women and Jewish men. Drawing on a range of French and other literary texts, McCracken shows how the dominant ideas about blood in medieval culture point to ways of seeing modern values associated with blood in a new light, and how modern representations in turn suggest new perspectives on medieval perceptions.

Exposes the significance of Alexander the Great in French medieval literature and culture. For more than a thousand years, the adventures of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table have been retold across Europe. They have inspired some of the most important works of European literature, particularly in the medieval period: the romances of Chrétien de Troyes, Wolfram von Eschenbach's Parzival, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight and Malory's Le Morte d'Arthur. In the nineteenth century, interest in the Arthurian legend revived with Tennyson, Wagner and Twain. This Companion outlines the evolution of the legend from the earliest documentary sources to Spamalot, and analyses how some of the major motifs of the legend have been passed down in both medieval and modern texts. With a map of Arthur's Britain, a chronology of key texts and a guide to further reading, this volume itself will contribute to the continuing fascination with the King and his many legends.

This co-written book challenges assumptions about Chrétien as the author of a canon of works. In a series of lively exchanges, its five authors reassess the relationship between lyric and romance, between individuality and social conditions, and between psychology and medieval philosophy. The idea of 'logical time' is used to open up such topics as adventure, memory, imagination, and textual variation. Recent research on Troyes and on the political agency of women leads to the reappraisal of subjectivity and gender. Throughout, the medieval texts associated with the name of Chrétien are privileged as sites where thought emerges; the implications of this thought are historicized and further conceptualized with the help of theoretical thinkers including Agamben, Lacan and Lyotard. This is a multi-stranded work whose dialogic texture interacts playfully with its decentered and decentering account of the Chrétien corpus. ZRINKA STAHULJAK, VIRGINIE GREENE, SARAH KAY, SHARON KINOSHITA and PEGGY McCracken are professors at UCLA, Harvard, Princeton, UCSC and the University of Michigan respectively.

French novels such as "Madame Bovary" and "The Stranger" are staples of high school and college literature courses. This work provides coverage of the French novel since its origins in the 16th century, with an emphasis on novels most commonly studied in high school and college courses in world literature and in French culture and civilization. The present collection echoes and contributes to a number of the issues defined by both the traditional and revisionist historiography. The intent of this special issue of the
Portuguese Studies Review was to highlight some of the new research on late medieval and early modern Portuguese women, subjects typically situated outside of the academic mainstream, and to complement the four major collections on the history of Portuguese women published since 1986, as well as the larger literature dealing with Spain. The essays are organized into six general themes: “Female Characters in Late Medieval Chronicles,” “Women and Power in the Late Middle Ages,” “Habsburg Queens and Portugal,” “Women and the Economy,” “Attitudes Toward Women,” and “Women and Religion.” The volume presents essays by Amélie P. Hutchinson, José Valente, Jutta Sperling, Ivana Elbl, Susannah C. Humble Ferreira, Félix Labrador Arroyo, Annemarie Jordan, Almudena Pérez de Tudela, Amélia Polónia, Amáudio Jorge Morais Barros, Darlene Abreu-Ferreira, Pedro Miguel Reboredo Marques, Marcia Eliane Alves de Souza e Mello, Jessiva V. Roitman, Inês Amorim, Elisbete de Jesus and Célia Rego, and Haruko Nawata Ward, with an Introduction by Darlene Abreu-Ferreira and Ivana Elbl. The volume also contains an Addendum on the Portuguese Estado Novo, with studies by Sonny B. Davis and Antonio Muñoz Sánchez.

The essays in this volume reflect to a large degree the scholarly interests of the honorand: Arthurian romance, the fabliaux, and Villon, just to mention the principal ones. Over the years, Norris Lacy's contribution to, and influence on, the study of Old French literature has been practically incalculable. The Arthur of the North is the first book-length study of the Arthurian literature that was translated from French and Latin into Old Norse-Icelandic in the thirteenth century, which has been preserved mostly in Icelandic manuscripts, and which in early modern times inspired the composition of narrative poems and chapbooks in Denmark, Iceland and Norway, chiefly of the Tristan legend. The importation of Arthurian literature in the North, primarily French romances and lais, is indebted largely to the efforts of King Hákon Hákonarson (r. 1217–63) of Norway, who commissioned the translation of Thomas de Breteagne's Tristan in 1226, and subsequently several Arthurian romances by Chrétien de Troyes and a number of Breton lais. The translations are unique in that the French metrical romances were rendered in prose, the traditional form of narrative in the North. The book concludes with a chapter on Arthurian literature in the Rus' area, and focuses on the Belarusian Trys?tan.

In From She-Wolf to Martyr, Elizabeth Casteen examines Johanna I of Naples's evolving, problematic reputation and uses it as a lens through which to analyze often-contradictory late-medieval conceptions of rulership, authority, and femininity.

A fine collection…an excellent introduction to Chrétien's world and work. Highly recommended. CHOICE

This new companion to the works of Marie de France offers fresh insights into the standard critical debates. Queen Marie of Castile, wife of Alfonso V, “the Magnanimous,” king of the Crown of Aragon, governed Catalunya in the mid-fifteenth century while her husband conquered and governed the kingdom of Naples. For twenty-six years, she maintained a royal court and council separate from and roughly equivalent to that of Alfonso in Naples. Such legitimately sanctioned political authority is remarkable given that she ruled not as queen in her own right but rather as Lieutenant-General of Catalunya with powers equivalent to the king's. María does not fit conventional images of a queen as wife and mother; indeed, she had no children and so never served as queen-regent for any royal heirs in their minorities or exercised a queen-mother's privilege to act as diplomat when arranging the marriages of her children and grandchildren. But she was clearly more than just a wife offering advice: she embodied the king's personal authority and was second only to the king himself. She was his alter ego, the other royal body fully empowered to govern. For a medieval queen, this official form of coeurshilp, combining exalted royal status with official political appointment, was rare and striking. The King's Other Body is both a biography of María and an analysis of her political partnership with Alfonso. María's long, busy tenure as lieutenant prompts a reconsideration of long-held notions of power, statecraft, personalities, and institutions. It is also a study of the institution of monarchy and a theoretical reconsideration of the operations of gender within it. If the practice of monarchy is conventionally understood as strictly a man's job, María's reign presents a compelling argument for a more complex model, one attentive to the dynamic relationship of queenship and kingship and the circumstances and theories that shaped the institution she inhabited.

Terri L. Snyder demonstrates how women resisted and challenged oppressive political, legal, and cultural practices in colonial Virginia. In contrast to the widespread view that the Middle Ages were a static, unchanging period in which attitudes to women were uniformly negative, D. H. Green argues that around 1200 the conventional relationship between men and women was subject to significant challenge through discussions in the vernacular literature of the period. Hitherto scholarly interest in gender relations in such literature has largely focused on French romance or on literature in English from a later period. By turning the focus on the rich material to be garnered from Germany - the romances Erec, Tristan and Parzival - Professor Green shows how some vernacular writers devised methods to debate and challenge the undoubted antifeminism of the day by presenting a Utopian model, supported by a revision of views by the Church, to contrast with contemporary practice.

In "The Making of Europe": Essays in Honour of Robert Bartlett, a group of distinguished contributors analyse processes of conquest, colonization and cultural change in Europe in the tenth to fourteenth centuries. This groundbreaking collection brings the Middle Ages to life and conveys the distinctiveness of this diverse, constantly changing period. Thirty-eight scholars bring together one medieval world from many disparate worlds, from Connacht to Constantinople and from Tynemouth to Timbuktu. This extraordinary set of reconstructions presents the reader with a vivid re-drawing of the medieval past, offering fresh appraisals of the evidence and modern historical writing. Chapters are thematically linked in four sections: identities beliefs, social values and symbolic order power and power-structures elites, organizations and groups. Packed full of original scholarship, The Medieval World is essential reading for anyone studying medieval history.

Peggy McCracken offers a feminist historicist reading of Guenevere, Iseut, and other adulterous queens of Old French literature, and situates romance narratives about queens and their lovers within the broader cultural debate about the institution of queenship in twelfth- and thirteenth-century France. Moving among a wide selection of narratives that recount the stories of queens and their lovers, McCracken explores the ways adultery is appropriated into the political structure of romance. McCracken examines the symbolic meanings and uses of the queen's
body in both romance and the historical institutions of monarchy and points toward the ways medieval romance contributed to the evolving definition of royal sovereignty as exclusively male. A new study of the continuations to Chrétien's Conte du Graal shows their crucial influence on the development of Arthurian literature.

This book examines female lordship and the power of the political voice in medieval Northern Europe, focusing on three prominent, foreign-born queens of medieval Scandinavia - Agnes of Denmark (d. 1304), Eufemia of Norway (d. 1312) and Margareta of Denmark/Sweden (d. 1412) - who acted as cultural mediators and initiators of political change.

Queens of Poland are conspicuously absent from the study of European queenship—an absence which, together with early modern Poland’s marginal place in the historiography, results in a picture of European royal culture that can only be lopsided and incomplete. Katarzyna Kosior cuts through persistent stereotypes of an East-West dichotomy and a culturally isolated early modern Poland to offer a groundbreaking comparative study of royal ceremony in Poland and France. The ceremonies of becoming a Jagiellonian or Valois queen, analysed in their larger European context, illuminate the connections that bound together monarchical Europe. These ceremonies are a gateway to a fuller understanding of European royal culture, demonstrating that it is impossible to make claims about European queenship without considering eastern Europe.

The Romance of AdulteryQueenship and Sexual Transgression in Old French Literature

Finally, Grieve focuses on the misogynistic elements of the story and asks why the fall of Spain is figured as a cautionary tale about a woman’s sexuality. In medieval literature, when humans and animals meet—whether as friends or foes—issues of mastery and submission are often at stake. In the Skin of a Beast shows how the concept of sovereignty comes to the fore in such narratives, reflecting larger concerns about relations of authority and dominion at play in both human-animal and human-human interactions. Peggy McCracken discusses a range of literary texts and images from medieval France, including romances in which animal skins appear in symbolic displays of power, fictional explorations of the wolf’s desire for human domestication, and tales of women and snakes converging in a representation of territorial claims and noble status.

These works reveal that the qualities traditionally used to define sovereignty—lineage and gender among them—are in fact mobile and contingent. In medieval literary texts, as McCracken demonstrates, human dominion over animals is a disputed model for sovereign relations among people: it justifies exploitation even as it mandates protection and care, and it depends on reiterations of human-animal difference that paradoxically expose the tenuous nature of human exceptionalism.

Exploring the issue from both historical and literary perspectives, the contributors examine violence in a broad variety of genres, places, and times, such as the Late Antique lives of the martyrs, Islamic historiography, Anglo-Saxon poetry and Norse sagas, and more.

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