

of eating disturbances' (p. 314). Gäbel's chapter is a good example of what can be achieved, and the questions that can be asked by focused source analysis, here of Aätius of Amida (pp. 315–40). Gäbel is able to demonstrate, while working with complex source documents, that the compilers sought to link mental illness with cognitive function and the brain more generally, and in doing so set out a systematic methodology.

The final section takes a more philosophical approach, with three chapters that illuminate the interaction of medical aetiology and philosophical discourse (pp. 343–420). Of the three, Ahonen's exploration of the Stoic interpretation is the most persuasive, in particular when looking at Seneca and Cicero (pp. 349–57). Both are famous figures, but studied and analysed here with focus and precision, which, when read together, allows for a more nuanced understanding both of mental health (*animi sanitas*, p. 356) and its importance to true wellbeing.

To close, this is an impressive collection of essays, reflecting a good level of historical analysis and a willingness to ask important questions of those sources still left to us. When read together, a much wider understanding of ancient approaches is possible, one that betrays the sophisticated and shifting pattern of intellectual and religious reflections upon illnesses of the mind. As with any edited collection, there are some concerns over how well each section fits together, and the over-long introduction is not quite as useful as needed to fully establish a clear and focused foundation and framework for the later studies. Nonetheless, this is an important volume, and one that offers much insight into a complex and multifaceted topic.

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**Claire Trenery**, *Madness, Medicine and Miracle in Twelfth-Century England* (London and New York: Routledge, 2019), pp. xi + 163, £115, hardback, ISBN: 9780815367451.

This slim volume presents an in-depth study of five specific twelfth-century English miracle collections, arranged in chronological order. Along with such well-researched cults as St Thomas Becket's and William of Norwich, this study investigates also less-known miracle collections, such as those of St Edmund of Bury, St Bartholomew of London and St Hugh of Lincoln.

The last two decades have seen an impressive spate of studies concerning miracles and miraculous cures in many world cultures, and medieval Europe is only one of them. Within this scholarly landscape, it is surprising to find a micro-study concentrating upon one country, one century and a handful of cases describing miraculous cures of madness. The author states clearly her position that such detailed studies are more helpful than the large surveys or the theory-ridden explanations of the Foucauldian school, and she does prove her point to a certain extent. Her approach, however, has its weaknesses, to which I shall return.

Each chapter has its own special thematic focus. The miracles of St Edmund appear in two separate collections decades apart, thus providing a fruitful basis for analysing the change over time from one collection to another. A phenomenon observed already in other studies of continental miracles is the twelfth-century transition from punitive miracles to thaumaturgic ones. The difference between the first two books of the miracles of St Foy and the two later ones is a striking example (see *The Book of Sainte Foy*, trans. Pamela

Sheingorn (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995)). The author does not address the possible continental influence on this subject. Chapter two raises the presence of demonic possession and its banishment, albeit with few details. It is only in chapter three and Becket's murder that one finally finds a clear consideration of medicine – obviously due to the paucity of information about medical knowledge in the earlier decades of the twelfth century in England. By Becket's death and miracles, the author is on firmer ground, and yet the sum total of the medical sources available to biographer William of Canterbury is highly disappointing. The much-vaunted twelfth-century renaissance, so closely tied with English and English-appointed scholars, seems sadly lacking. Very few of the new Salernitan works and Arabic translations are familiar to the miracle writer. Indeed, a reader searching the book for medical knowledge in twelfth-century England will come away disappointed. It is sparse to the point of non-existence.

Throughout the last three chapters, the problem of demonic possession recurs time and again. At first, it seems Treney expects demons to vanish from miracle stories: '[...] medieval diagnoses of madness were not always straightforward and *continued to contain references to demons* in the twelfth century' (p. 80, my emphasis). One would expect this prelude to lead to the decrease in demonic possessions. Not so: demons continue flourishing in later miracle collections, as they do all over Europe. The last two chapters focus, correspondingly, upon the demonisation of illness and its congruence with growing medical knowledge, and the theory of naturalisation and medicalisation of twelfth-century miracle collections. Here, again, the author leaves the reader in a state of uncertainty: she cites those who espouse this theory, but has neither praise nor condemnation for it. Her own voice is lacking.

Finally, the entire book is overshadowed by a very basic question. Why England? The author justifies this decision by pointing to the importance of England in the twelfth-century renaissance, but her arguments are not convincing. Most twelfth-century English scholars were trained in Paris and imported their knowledge across the Channel. Furthermore, in the realm of medicine, which plays a central role in the study of madness, England is barely an appendage of Salerno and Monte Cassino. Even when William of Canterbury shows off his medical knowledge by strewing various Greek terms for epilepsy, he still does not cite Bartholomaeus' *Practica*, presumably his source for this knowledge.

A corollary to the 'Why England?' question is the begging of chronological conclusions. In a book arranged chronologically, one would expect some overview of developments over the long twelfth century. But since each chapter addresses a different focus, there is little possibility of constructing any chronological narrative. The only change to appear over the century is the introduction of Salernitan writings during the second half of the century. Such a detailed micro-study would have provided a wonderful arena for examining the evolution of miracle collections from local monastic literature to papal canonisation inquiries, but, unfortunately, little of this development emerges in the book.

In sum, this is a very painstaking, thorough and learned study of some twelfth-century English miracle collections. Though there is very little by way of contemporary medicine in it, it provides an interesting view of high medieval English diagnoses of madness and the vocabulary employed to describe the illness.

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