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only by a "process of intelligence that deciphers and reasons" (81). Eco identifies the pun as the most central and important rhetorical figure of *Finnegans Wake* because it encompasses an intricate tapestry of references while conveying, with "irony and distance," the metaphysical role of language in defining and creating the universe. In essence, Eco identifies a habit of mind and interpretation which sees the universal in the specific and textual and which seeks to order the chaotic accordingly. As literary criticism the book necessarily focuses on generalities; however, it constitutes the most in-depth discussion of the "fearful Jesuit" for whom the Middle Ages, to paraphrase Eco, were, are, and always will be his "vocation and destiny."

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Jacques Le Goff, *The Medieval Imagination*. Translated by Arthur Goldhammer. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1988. viii, 293.

Jacques Le Goff offers this latest set of essays as a successor to his earlier collection, *Time, Work, and Culture in the Middle Ages* (Chicago, 1978). As with the earlier collection, all of the essays in *The Medieval Imagination* have appeared previously in various journals and *Festschriften*, for the most part within the last ten years. Also as with his earlier collection, Le Goff links a diverse group of essays with a broad, general theme: a "history of the imagination." This history is similar to the *Annales* school's conception of the history of *mentalités*. Its primary sources are "the products of the imagination: literary and artistic works" (3). Le Goff cautions, however, that the historian of the imagination should not choose his primary sources on aesthetic grounds: "The masterpiece is no more valuable as evidence than the mass-produced mediocrity, provided that each is properly interpreted. Aesthetic values and ideas of beauty are in themselves historical constructs" (4). What Le Goff really calls for in this book is for historians to examine sources outside the range of materials they have traditionally considered:

The academic disciplines are scandalously specialized, not only in France but in most other countries as well. . . . The

Middle Ages as reconstructed by our scholars is a Middle Ages without literature, art, law, philosophy, or theology. (3)

The "history of the imagination" seems thus to be what an English-speaking historian would call interdisciplinary history.

The essays in *The Medieval Imagination* break through some of the historian's usual disciplinary barriers, but not all of the essays succeed equally well in exemplifying a "history of the imagination." This is inevitable, given the heterogeneous origins of the pieces. Nonetheless, the book contains a number of articles which will interest students of literature as well as history. Le Goff divides the sixteen essays into five general headings: "The Marvelous," "Space and Time," "The Body," "Literature and Imagination," and "Dreams." His introduction and the essay "For an Extended Middle Ages" form in effect a sixth section in which he sets out the program of the collection. These sections vary considerably in length and in number of essays. A few essays such as "The Time of the *Exemplum* (Thirteenth Century)" (78-80) and "Body and Ideology in the Medieval West" (83-5), for example, strike the present reviewer as too brief to treat their subjects adequately; one wonders whether such ephemera would have been included by a less prominent author. The longer pieces, on the other hand, offer much that is worthy of the reader's attention.

"Literature and Imagination," the longest section of the book and perhaps the most interesting one, contains five essays which examine various forms of medieval literature. "Lévi-Strauss in Broceliande: A Brief Analysis of a Courtly Romance" and "Vestimentary and Alimentary Codes in *Erec and Enide*" apply anthropological readings to the romances of Chrétien de Troyes. Another essay analyzes an *exemplum* of thirteenth-century preacher James of Vitry in order to extract James's social theories. The other two essays also examine literary works with an eye toward the social theories implicit in them, focusing on conceptions of the city in twelfth-century French literature and in a sermon of William of Auvergne (Bishop of Paris, d. 1249).

A number of essays in the other sections of the book also deserve notice. "The Marvelous in the Medieval West" (27-44) comes as close as any single piece in the book to demonstrating what a "history of the imagination" should entail. Le Goff here works from philology through theology to courtly romances to offer an initial definition of the "marvelous" as conceived in the Middle Ages. Since no short essay could sufficiently treat a concept as broad and persistent in medieval culture as the idea of the marvelous, Le Goff acknowledges the necessity for more work and supplies a preliminary catalog of sources and conceptualizations of the problem in

the second section of the article (34–40). The long essay “Christianity and Dreams (Second to Seventh Century)” (193–231) likewise works from a variety of sources to trace the development of Christian ideas about dreams and their interpretation. The briefer piece, “The Wilderness in the Medieval West” (47–60), provides a good overview of the ambivalence of medieval people towards the forest and other wastelands, as expressed in saints’ lives, chronicles, French romances, and other sources.

Several characteristically Le Goffian themes underlie the book. His conception of the “long Middle Ages,” a recurring idea in his scholarship, should interest most readers. This phrase summarizes his contention that a basic unity existed at the most significant levels in European history from late antiquity to the beginnings of the Industrial Revolution. In Le Goff’s view, conventional periodization pays excessive attention to superficial political changes and fashions in high culture. For example, he dismisses the Renaissance “as a brilliant but superficial interlude” (19) which did not much alter the basic patterns of society nor even many of the broad currents in cultural life. Le Goff also follows up on his earlier work on medieval conceptions of time, a theme well represented here as in the earlier essays in *Time, Work, and Culture in the Middle Ages*. The earlier collection contained two essays on dreams, a subject again represented twice in *The Medieval Imagination*. Two essays discuss aspects of the medieval conception of purgatory, the subject of his book *The Birth of Purgatory* (Chicago, 1983).

The Medieval Imagination succeeds partially but not entirely in its stated intention of working toward a “history of the imagination.” The book suffers from at least one major failing: although the introduction mentions the visual arts among the primary sources essential to a history of the imagination, none of the essays in the book uses them in a substantial way. Le Goff thus does not escape the historian’s fixation on the printed word. Given the importance of visual representation of ideas in medieval societies, where the bulk of the population was illiterate and books were scarce and expensive, a history of the imagination which ignores the evidence of art cannot be considered a complete success. One may also object to the inclusion of some thin, insubstantial pieces, as noted above. The lack of continuity inherent in a collection organized around as broad a theme as imagination makes it hard to read the book straight through; one has to strain to see connections between some of the essays.

Despite these flaws *The Medieval Imagination* should prove stimulating to readers in a wide range of scholarly disciplines. They may not always agree with Le Goff’s views, but they will not find him boring. Most of the essays challenge received opinion and the boundaries of academic

disciplines. Additionally, the notes to most of the essays provide ample documentation, a rare virtue in a French scholar. Arthur Goldhammer's translation renders the text clearly and with due care for the scholarly usages of English-speaking medievalists. Although the title and the introduction promise more than the book delivers, *The Medieval Imagination* gathers a number of provocative essays which should interest scholars of both history and literature.

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Charles M. Radding, *The Origins of Medieval Jurisprudence: Pavia and Bologna 850-1150*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988. xiii, 258.

Medievalists have long considered the development of scientific legal study an outstanding achievement of the "Twelfth-Century Renaissance." While some have stressed the shock of the Investiture Contest as the crucial event behind this legal renaissance, and others instead a gradual evolution of institutions and techniques within secular and canon law, none have disagreed on the importance of law in the crucial period around 1100. In *The Origins of Medieval Jurisprudence*, Charles Radding has thus set out on a well-worn path. His journey is, however, ill-conceived, flawed in conception, method, and conclusions.

Radding's argument can be briefly summarized. He disagrees completely with the traditional emphasis on the rediscovery of the *Digest* in the late eleventh century as the critical moment in the development of jurisprudence (9). To provide an alternative approach, one that seeks to discover how jurisprudence gradually evolved to the point where men could put the *Digest* back in circulation (152), Radding turns to the interpreters of Lombard law. Originally a coherent group of judges at the Lombard court at Pavia in the late ninth century, they became dispersed during the political turmoils of the tenth century. According to Radding this "dispersion of the palace" (72-8) led to contact with other legal experts outside of Pavia and, consequently, to greater familiarity with Roman law. The eleventh century then witnessed rapid advances in jurisprudence, from the debate in the glosses of the "antiqui" and "moderni" over "literal" and "interpretative" readings of laws (101-12) to the formal, separate exposition of Roman law in handbooks such as the *Exceptiones Petri* (142-51). From