

Carola Redzich, *Apocalypsis Joannis tot habet sacramenta quot verba: Studien zu Sprache, Überlieferung und Rezeption hochdeutscher Apokalypseübersetzungen des späten Mittelalters*, Münchener Texte und Untersuchungen zur deutschen Literatur des Mittelalters 137 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010). x + 659 pp. ISBN 978-3-11-023122-9. €119.95.

This formidably erudite book presents a very thorough analysis of the forty-four currently known manuscripts or manuscript fragments containing High German translations of the Book of Revelation that were produced between c.1300 and c.1500. Carola Redzich presents her work in two related thematic streams: analyses of the cultural context of these translations, and linguistic analyses of the translations themselves. She provides a detailed examination of the linguistic features of the Vulgate text, its manuscript contexts, and the history of exegesis on this portion of the New Testament. The exegetical texts studied included many vernacular writings that were, Redzich suggests, often intended for a lay audience and had as their overwhelming interpretative thrust an emphasis not on fear of apocalypse in the modern sense, but rather on the concept of God's love of humanity; a number of the vernacular works examined in this section of the book have not been subject to much detailed study before, and Redzich's discussion is thus rather more than a synthesis of previous scholarship. The central part of the book comprises three long chapters: first, a very detailed descriptive catalogue of the manuscripts; second, a painstaking analysis of the translation strategies used in a representative selection of texts, working from the level of various syntactical units down to individual words and concluding with a catalogue of close to fifty words of which the translations and the exegetical traditions influencing those translations are given thorough analysis; and finally, an examination of the different types of translation strategies used in all the individual manuscripts studied by this author. The concluding chapter returns to the cultural contexts, with a discussion of the manuscript contexts of these translations and the possible significances of the conjunctions of texts within each manuscript in terms of their exegetical value and their reception.

Redzich is able to show that while the traditions of exegesis aimed to make this text more accessible even to lay people, and stressed the compassionate rather than terrifying elements of the faith (and thus fitted into a prominent strand of late medieval theology that in many ways looks forward to the Reformation), the translations themselves often did little to make the biblical text palatable to a lay reader. The translation strategies were generally more conservative than is the case for other text types for which German versions were produced, with the German often staying slavishly close to the Latin in a manner that was meant to imitate the form and structure of the original, rather than aid in its understanding without recourse to additional commentary (this strategy was thus diametrically opposed to that employed by Luther). However, Redzich is able to identify different, more interpretative translation strategies as well, which are to be found in (generally later) manuscripts where the text is presented more as an independent prophetic work or an example of John's particular attainment of grace than as a part of the Bible as a whole; in these manuscripts, the translations

begin to approach the exegetical tradition to be found in contemporary sermons and tracts, and may be seen as belonging to the broader historical context of the gulf between clerical and lay religiosity slowly closing.

This brief summary cannot possibly do justice to the subtlety of argument and the many insights provided by this study, an exemplary work of philology of the best sort, combining painstaking linguistic analysis with *Kulturwissenschaft* that is, because of the philological rigour, always firmly empirically grounded. It will be of great interest to historians of translation, particularly Bible translation, to historians of the German language, but also more generally to historians of late medieval religious culture; and the catalogues of words and manuscripts are rich in information that could raise many questions and should stimulate a good deal more study. The author is particularly to be commended for presenting material that is often very difficult in a language and style that is, for modern German scholarship, refreshingly clear.

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EDITIONS OF TEXTS

The Sermons of William of Newburgh, ed. A. B. Kraebel, Toronto Medieval Latin Texts 31 (Toronto: The Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2010). x + 118 pp. ISBN 978-0-88844-481-3. \$12.95. The twelfth-century Yorkshire historian William of Newburgh has garnered much praise for his *Historia rerum Anglicarum*, a chronicle extending from 1066 to 1198. Yet this Augustinian canon did not confine himself to historical writing. His commentary on the Song of Songs was edited by John Gorman in 1960. Three sermons have also been attributed to him, and were printed for the first time by Thomas Hearne in his 1719 edition of William's works: these are *Sermo de Trinitate*, a reflection on the versicle 'Benedicamus Patrem et Filium cum Sancto Spiritu'; *Omelia super Cum loqueretur Ihesus ad turbas*, which offers a Marian exposition of Luke xi.27; and *Sermo de sancto Albano*, which explores various aspects of the martyrdom as related by Bede. Kraebel's new edition seeks to rescue these sermons from the obscurity in which they have hitherto languished. As such it is welcome. A helpful introduction discusses William's life and writings, the content of the sermons, and their manuscripts, although Hearne's contribution to the subject receives little mention. The first two sermons are found in Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson C. 31, which Kraebel dates to c.1200; this he uses as the base manuscript for these particular sermons, arguing for its superiority over British Library, Stowe MS 62, a manuscript from Newburgh Priory containing all three of the sermons along with the earliest extant text of William's *Historia*. Lambeth Palace Library, MS 73, a copy of Stowe 62, supplies the text of *Sermo de sancto Albano*, which is absent from Rawlinson C. 31 and incomplete in Stowe 62. The missing quire in Stowe 62 that leaves *Sermo de sancto Albano* incomplete severely curtails this manuscript's text of *Sermo de Trinitate* as well, but Kraebel doesn't entirely justify his choice of Rawlinson over Stowe as the base manuscript for *Omelia super Cum loqueretur Ihesus ad turbas*; no readings are given to show the superiority of the Rawlinson text