

The New Cambridge Medieval History* III c. 900 ? c. 1024 ed. Timothy Reuter (Cambridge, 1999)

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The publisher's claim on the dust jacket, that the NCMH "will become the essential reference tool for anyone interested in the medieval world," is inflated. Nevertheless, this relatively compact and relatively comprehensive volume belongs in every college and university library, as well as in the personal library of every scholar who regularly teaches and writes about the long tenth century. It is, put simply, a very handy thing.

The various contributors have adopted a range of approaches, a fact which the editor, Timothy Reuter, touts as a particular strength of the enterprise (p. xvi). In so far as that variety reveals "the differences between national historiographic traditions" a point which Reuter explores more thoroughly in his introduction (pp. 1-24), he is correct. But such broad structural factors cannot entirely account for the fact that most contributors have been content to provide a (sometimes relentless) version of history as "one damned thing after another," while a few have used the NCMH platform to advance innovative or controversial interpretations. This review will primarily concentrate on differentiating between, on the one hand, those chapters which some readers might wish to consult for their "reference" value as reliable sources of politico-military narrative, and those chapters which, on the other hand, all readers might wish at some point to peruse as original contributions to current scholarly discussions.

First, however, one comment on the organization of the volume as a whole.

Part I is devoted to "General Themes" (the rural economy, towns, government, the secular and regular churches, intellectual and artistic life); Part II covers "Post-Carolingian Europe" (Germany, Austria, the Benelux countries, Italy, France and England) and Part III covers "Non-Carolingian Europe" (all the former Eastern Bloc countries, Greece, Turkey, Southern Italy and the Iberian Peninsula). Defining all of the regions covered in Part III as nothing more than "not Carolingian" is particularly problematic with regard to the Byzantine Empire which, despite its putatively essential not-ness, still requires three chapters of its own ("Byzantium in Equilibrium, 886-944" pp. 553-566, "Byzantium Expanding, 944-1025" pp. 586-604 and "Byzantium and the West" pp. 605-623, all by Jonathan Shepard) and plays a dominant role in many of the other chapters (most notably "Bulgaria: the other Balkan 'Empire'?" pp. 567-585, also by Shepard). The Byzantine Empire clearly was a major political, economic and cultural force during the long tenth century, and it should have been recognized as such in the structure of the work; there were very many problems with the older Cambridge Medieval History, which this new series is designed to replace, but the previous editors -- perhaps due to the fact that they hammered out their scheme when the Ottoman Empire was still alive enough to make the city on the Bosphorus seem like a magnetic pole -- may have been on to something when they established a bi-polar organization consisting of "Germany and the Western Empire" (volume III) and "The Byzantine Empire" (volume IV). A century later, it is hard not to see in the overall scheme of the 1999 version a reflection of the leadership role in an expanded Europe that the "core" countries of the European Union may wish to claim for themselves, as the volume tells the story of how a remarkably homogeneous(!) "post-Carolingian core of Europe" would provide the

model adopted by the emergent societies of northern and eastern Europe? (p. 24). The NCMH's particular binary vision of Europe as core and periphery, as leaders and followers, as developed and emergent regions, is one that may and perhaps should ruffle some feathers in the 'emergent' countries. It is striking that the Carolingian heritage of the Anglo-Saxons was deemed compelling enough to pull England into the 'core' despite its not having been part of the Carolingian Empire, yet not significant enough to require any mention in Simon Keynes' chapter on England. Meanwhile, the construction of great stone buildings for church and ruler in Prague, simultaneous with that same movement in the 'core' territories, is interpreted by Peter Johanek as imitation 'in the Slavonic east' (p. 93). For members of the AARHMS, it is important to know up front that their area of specialization is, like the Byzantine Empire, defined in the organization of this 'essential reference tool' primarily by what it is not.

Those contributions which rather strictly adhere to the /histoire evenementielle/ approach have, naturally, congregated in the regionally, rather than in the thematically, organized portion of the volume. They are (with one exception) of high quality and should prove useful for years to come; nevertheless, they tend to avoid explicit engagement with both sources and other scholarly literature, and only rarely pause on the trek from tree to tree (or reign to reign) to contemplate the entire forest. Eckhard Mueller-Mertens' chapter on 'The Ottonians as Kings and Emperors' (pp. 233-266), which opens the regional surveys and actually provides the chronological framework and rationale for the entire volume -- running as it does from the death of the last Carolingian (King and) Emperor Arnulf of Carinthia in 899 to the death of the first German (King and) Emperor Henry II in 1024 -- is one of the more successful examples of the maximum narration/minimum synthetic analysis approach. Adequate political narratives are also served up by Herwig Wolfram ('Bavaria in the Tenth and early Eleventh Centuries' pp. 293-309), Michel Parisse ('Lotharingia' pp. 310-327?), Constance Brittain Bouchard ('Burgundy and Provence, 879-1032' pp. 328-345) and G.A. Loud ('Southern Italy in the Tenth Century' pp. 624-645). By placing the stress on frequent pauses for stocktaking, analysis and synthesis, Giuseppe Sergi ('The Kingdom of Italy' pp. 346-371) strikes an extremely satisfying balance and manages to explicate with deftness and clarity the tangled process whereby regional authorities (bishoprics, comital dynasties, and still more localized instances) became entrenched on the Italian peninsula, while royal power was transformed into little more than a spasmodic mechanism for regulating that regionalized status quo. Jonathan Shepard's multiple chapters on Byzantium and Bulgaria (pp. 553-623) are particularly unrelenting, as political narratives go; Shepard's own speciality is diplomatic history, in keeping with which 'foreign relations' are consistently and insightfully highlighted in all his chapters, unfortunately, however, at the expense of the internal military, financial and economic issues without which all the war and diplomacy can only be superficially understood. Furthermore, Shepard picks up in medias res from his chapter on 'Slavs and Bulgars' (pp. 228-248) in volume II of the NCMH. Finally, it may be Shepard who is most (though not solely) to blame for the fact that the fascinating Pecheneg nomads, who show up in chapter after chapter playing key roles (see the index p. 849) and who appear on maps throughout the volume in slightly different areas of the lower Danube and Black Sea littoral, are never themselves the focus of any concerted treatment. By far the worst of the *histoire evenementielle* chapters is Jerzy Strzelczyk's 'Bohemia and Poland: Two Examples of Successful Western Slavonic State-Formation' (pp. 514-535); the author seems to believe naively and romantically in the simple tribal-biological reality of a series of ethnic groups and tells, without caveat or reservation, a detailed story of 'what really happened' based (as far as I can discern) on two twelfth-century chronicles and the scattered

observations of outsiders such as Ibrahim ibn Ya'qub.

The chapters of particular interest to members of AARHMS are Michel Zimmermann's 'Western Francia: The Southern Principalities' (pp. 420-455), Hugh Kennedy's 'Sicily and Al-Andalus Under Muslim Rule' (pp. 646-669) and Roger Collins's 'The Spanish Kingdoms' (pp. 670-691). Zimmermann's chapter (which includes Gascony and Catalonia) is large (the longest of all the regional surveys) and disorganized enough to verge on the incoherent, providing neither mere narrative nor a discernable argument. The final sentences (do they constitute a conclusion?) provide some cryptic allusions to a series of topics which are implicitly presented as crucial, but were never discussed in the course of the long chapter: 'the importance of oaths and contracts, the role of women, the prestige of towns, the fascination with the enemy across the frontier' - all these are characteristics of a different society. The north, which borrowed so much from the south, would later have to 'reconquer' it? (p. 455). The portion of Kennedy's chapter which deals with Al-Andalus is a clear but pedestrian politico-military narrative, avoiding historiographic disputes and explicit discussion of sources, and culminating in the assertion (unsupported by any previous argument or evidence) that 'the break up of the caliphate into Taifa kingdoms cannot really be understood without remembering that Al-Andalus had usually been a land of taifas; it was central control from Cordoba that was the exception' (p. 662). Kennedy, whose own specialty is the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East, seems a strange choice for this chapter; his bibliography (p. 810) is positively skimpy and is the only one in the volume to cite exclusively other survey texts and no specialized or article-level studies. While his discussion of Sicily, evidently closer to his area of expertise, displays a significant command of detail and of the sources, that is perhaps small comfort to Hispanists who might have wished for Al-Andalus to be taken more seriously. It is a small but annoying point that Sicily alone of all regions discussed in the entire volume is not provided with a map. Roger Collins, already himself the author of booklength studies of early medieval Spain and of the Basques, in addition to numerous specialized studies, was very much the natural choice to write the story of the Christian-dominated realms of the Iberian peninsula. Collins's chapter, while useful for 'reference' purposes, is, however, not one of the better of the narrative-oriented contributions, for his occasional brief forays into issues of historiography and source criticism (positive things in my view) are outweighed by his utter avoidance of interpretation and synthesis; it is with great relief that the reader finds, finally, as the last paragraph of Collins's forced march, a summary statement of what it all meant (p. 691). The long tenth century, for Collins, is a time when the lack of overall territorial expansion of the Christian kingdoms is overshadowed in importance by their internal demographic growth; the other major trend of the period was the shift in superiority of military strength from Leon to Navarre. Neither of those points, however, is particularly new or exciting.

Also concentrating on narrative, Simon Keynes's chapter ('England, 900-1016' pp. 456-484) is a model of lucidity and readability, even skimmability, for those seeking a quick brush-up on their Anglo-Saxons. At the same time, however, non-specialists should beware the deceptive simplicity of Keynes's (conventional) approach to telling the centralized story of England, with a spotlight on the monarchy and the lights firmly out - whenever possible - on the Hiberno-Norse, the Anglo-Danes, the Welsh, the Scots, and anyone else who might complicate the seductively neat clarity of the narrative. As the editor Timothy Reuter (no Anglicist, he) warns the reader in his introduction: 'England in the long tenth century was clearly as regionalized a society as anything on the other side of the Channel'. Yet its historiography firmly resists a regionalising perspective; it is not that no such

perspective has been offered, but rather that there is no real place for it within the dominant discourse? (p. 14). The deceptive oversimplification of English history functions not only internally but also in relation to other parts of the world. Keynes' Anglocentric subject position is so strong that he considers it 'tempting to regard the Danes as no more than an instrument by which the English inflicted hurt upon themselves' (p. 484), a perspective which could have been effectively preempted had the Editorial Board of the series (which includes both Reuter and Keynes) included Celtic and Scandinavian territories in this volume together with the Anglo-Saxons and thus permitted those areas to function at some point as the perspectival center of things.

The histories of both the Celtic and Scandinavian areas, through the eleventh century, were compressed into volume II (1995) of the *New Cambridge Medieval History* (ed. Rosamond McKitterick), which otherwise covers only the period from c. 700 to c. 900. This is a disconcerting dislocation, which for the (hyper?)sensitized smacks of the vestiges of English colonialist attitudes towards the 'Celtic fringe' as a region exclusively relevant to a dark age past, when (according to one influential emplotment of Western Civilization) scribbling Irish monks alone kept the fires of culture and learning alive until the torch could be passed to more dynamic and future-oriented nations. Even in volume II, 'Ireland, Scotland and Wales, c. 700 to the early eleventh century' (by Donnchad O Corrain) together receive a scant 20 pages in toto (pp. 43-63) as part of a section on 'The British Isles,' where they are sandwiched between 'England, 700 ? 900' (also by Keynes) which receives 25 pages, and 'England and the Continent' (by McKitterick) which receives 20 pages. Ireland, Scotland and Wales simply don't rate historically in the Cambridge vision, measured simply by sheer space allotted. That 'Scandinavia, c. 700 ? 1066' is also covered entirely in volume II (by Neils Lund, on pp. 202 ? 227) and omitted from volume III is the single greatest peculiarity of the early medieval editorial scheme, given that 'The Age of the Vikings' is precisely one of the leading candidates for labelling the long tenth century (in so far as any single designation can suffice). Although it is less usual than it used to be to blame the Vikings for the breakup of the Carolingian Empire, they are certainly part of that story, which itself is the backbone of volume III, and were active during the long tenth century everywhere from Bokhara and Baghdad to L'Anse aux Meadows. At the very least, readers interested in the islands and peninsulas off the northern coast of Europe (other than the English portion of Britain) should avoid volume III of the *New Cambridge Medieval History*.

A few contributors have written juicier or at least more argumentative chapters which delve into sources and source criticism, confront previous historiography head-on, and privilege analysis over narration. Gerd Althoff argues (in 'Saxony and the Elbe Slavs in the Tenth Century,' pp. 267- 292) that the very notions 'conquest,' 'expansion' and 'incorporation' should be banished from the vocabulary of tenth- and early eleventh-century political and military history (particularly in analyzing Saxon policies toward Slavic territories) on the grounds that they fundamentally misrepresent a situation that was largely a question of the 'recognition of overlordship' (see especially p. 280). Jean Dunbabin ('West Francia: The Kingdom' pp. 372 ? 397) magically pulls off the highly debatable (and fun to debate) thesis that the West Frankish kingdom in the long tenth century -- which to many historians is more of a retrospective and teleological nationalist fiction than a genuine regnum, and which to contemporaries was 'a shadowy entity [and] a largely irrelevant abstraction' (p. 372) -- really did exist. Dunbabin's West Francia thus appears as a fascinating contrast to Sergi's Italian kingdom, where decentralization of power and regional particularism are interpreted as decentralization and regional particularism, rather than as (in Dunbabin's paradox-ridden vision) 'an

interesting constitutional experiment in decentralised government, during which political control intensified as it became more localized? (p. 376). David Bates (?West Francia: the Northern Principalities? pp. 398-419) makes a major intervention in a long-standing and on-going scholarly debate over the origins and nature of the principalities which (pace Dunbabin) seem to have been the effective regnal units of the period; he creatively reframes the entire debate over continuity versus change, asserting that ?the Carolingian structure from which we have to start was more flexible than has often been recognised, and that the territorial consolidation achieved by the tenth-century princes represents something more creative than a mere prolongement?.Genuine state-building is typical of the tenth-century aristocracy/princes? (p. 402).

The contributor with one of the more obvious axes to grind is Thomas Noonan, whose chapter on ?European Russia, c. 500- c.1050? (pp. 487-513) is a must-read. His enormously learned contribution, which draws on numerous written sources and scholarly language traditions in addition to archeological and numismatic evidence, should go a long way towards stimulating interest in a part of Europe which is very little known in the Anglophone world. He begins with the premise that most treatments of his region and time period are far too geographically limited (focussing only on the Kievan Rus to the exclusion of other important states such as the Khazar Khagante and the Volga Bulgar Amirate) as well as ethnically and socially elitist, ignoring many of the peoples governed by and outside of those states. Noonan is the sole contributor to the regional survey Parts II and III who fully integrates social and economic concerns, as well as the area?s Jewish inhabitants, into his chapter. Noonan?s contribution can be easily adapted by those Western and Central European specialists who might be giving short shrift to the East in their undergraduate lectures. In that Kiev was, in the eleventh century, one of the largest cities in medieval Europe (p. 512), the Rus state certainly deserves attention, but Noonan?s great achievement lies in demonstrating that a brief survey chapter can provide a complex, holistic view of an area (one far larger than England, for instance, or Southern France) without sacrificing clarity and solid organization. Similarly helpful for non-specialists looking to upgrade their lectures or expand their horizons is Kornel Bakay?s ?Hungary? (pp. 536-552), with its nuanced treatment of ethnogenesis and its careful discussion of the evidence (including archeology). In line with other recent work on the behavior of smaller polities bordering major expansionist powers, Bakay argues that ?many of their campaigns in the early tenth century should be seen as being preventative and defensive rather than mere razzias? (p. 541); this forms part of his broader and utterly persuasive campaign ?against the assumption that the Hungarians simply carried out aimless and uncontrolled lootings? (p. 543).

Among the richer contributions stands Reuter?s own introduction. He offers a sophisticated meditation on the problematics of source criticism, on the place of the (oft-skipped) tenth century in history and historiography, on the difficulties inherent in the very project of producing a totalizing master narrative for Europe in the long tenth (or any other) century, and much more. More than many a contributor (with exceptions such as Keynes, e.g. p. 458), Reuter seems conscious of ? and eager to admit ? how undecipherable this period and its sources still are, writing ?Much of what has been preserved from the tenth century simply will not yield to a common-sense understanding, and this is true of the apparently straightforward as well as of the evidently obscure or non-literal? (p. 23). This is precisely the sort of caveat concerning the very source base available to all the (occasionally authoritarian) contributors that a conscientious editor should foreground. Reuter also provides a few glimpses of some of the more important very recent trends in tenth-century scholarship, such as the

debate stimulated by Susan Reynolds' 1994 study *Fiefs and Vassals: The Medieval Evidence Reconsidered* (unfortunately, not fully cited in the notes on p. 19 or in the bibliography at all, and thus easily missed by those not already aware of the reference). Reuter's magisterial discussion of the period even constitutes a mini-mine of dissertation topics. In general, students currently in search of a tenth-century topic could do a lot worse than to begin by working through this volume.

Also of interest to Hispanists are some of the thematic chapters in Part I, when the authors have made a */bona fide/* effort to cast their nets truly Europe-wide. By far the narrowest of the thematic chapters is Joachim Wollasch's "Monasticism: The First Wave of Reform" (pp. 163-185) which concerns only a very few male individuals and male religious communities, all concentrated within a limited geographical area deep within the Carolingian "core," with a predictable focus (pp. 174-180) on Cluny. In that the Cluniac order played an important role on the Iberian peninsula during the Reconquista, the roots of the movement may well be of interest to Hispanists. But otherwise the chapter ignores most examples of organized female and male religious life in tenth-century Europe; it is impossible to say whether that came about by authorial choice or editorial design. Rosamond McKitterick's chapter on "The Church" (pp. 130-162) is well nigh perfect in execution, as textbook chapters go, yet "like Wollasch's contribution -- deeply flawed in its narrowness. Her thesis, that "the history of the church in Europe in the tenth and eleventh centuries is essentially the history of many local churches in which the dominant role in secular ecclesiastical and religious life was played by the bishops" (p. 130) is elegantly and incontrovertibly hammered home, along with a number of subsidiary theses; the tragic flaw, however, is that the entire discussion applies only to the Latin Churches. Surely Orthodox (and other) Christianities deserved some attention in the */New Cambridge Medieval History/*? Again, it is impossible to say whether the fault here lies with McKitterick as an individual author, with Reuter as an individual editor, or with the entire Editorial Board (on which McKitterick sits). Finally, Henry Mayr-Harting's chapter "Artists and Patrons" (pp. 212- 230 plus 20 plates) is largely a discussion of Ottonian art, with occasional references to other themes, including the stylistic influences of Byzantine textiles and Spanish metal-work on the *de luxe* products of Germany.

Two thematic chapters in particular, those by Robert Fossier and Janet Nelson, deserve a wide readership. Fossier ("Rural Economy and Country Life" pp. 27-63) offers a maddening contribution: undocumented, allusive, oracular, dismissive, combative, chaotic, sometimes more of a meditative tone-poem on the tenth century than a description of it?but in the end the reader who struggles through and gives Fossier the benefit of the doubt will be rewarded with a provocative (though not necessarily correct) synthetic argument: in the tenth century began "for the first time anywhere in Europe - the creation of a complex, coherent social organization of the "floating mass of the peasantry" (p. 45), a process which he calls "encellulement." Around the millenium there appeared everywhere, except "Ireland, Scotland, Frisia, the Basque territories and a few valleys in the Alps and the Apennines" (p. 50), villages, parishes and finally castles; to the long-term social and economic development of Europe, both the Roman and the Carolingian periods were irrelevant. As the opening chapter of the entire volume, Fossier's view provides a harassing counterpoint to the entire organization of the book, which measures everything by degrees of Carolingianness; it is therefore a pity that this important and controversial chapter is not for the faint-hearted, and decidedly not for students, who will run screaming and confused from Fossier's gratuitous displays of erudition sprinkled liberally with technical terms (e.g. p. 36).

It was Nelson's task to reduce 'Rulers and Government' (pp. 95-129) to a single coherent picture. Her argument is at first made subtly, and it requires a certain level of stick-with-it-ness on the part of the reader before the overarching themes of her chapter begin to emerge. These themes will not be uncontroversial, although they are very much in keeping with recent trends – and perhaps an emerging consensus? – in early medieval scholarship. Nelson has a strong role for the 'public' (she calls it 'regnal') sphere and for royal power. Readers will find here neither the chaos of Marc Bloch's 'first feudal age' nor the incipient vertical bureaucratization of Joseph Strayer's 'medieval origins of the modern state.' In the face of innumerable centrifugal forces (not the least of which was aristocratic entrenchment), Nelson's tenth-century rulers relied on symbolic strategies of rituality to constitute and reinforce their real power, including the rites of king- and queen-making that became frequent in the tenth century, the horizontal bonds of *amicitiae* (political friendship pacts) forged with other magnates, and assemblies at cult centers during which the king and his great men would eat, talk and exercise together. Even in the case of Francia, she stands with Dunbabin in claiming the reality of royal authority which 'generate[d] a kind of power as the imagined guarantor of order and focus of fidelity' (p. 113). 'These were states of a distinctive kind' (p. 128), whose essential characteristics Nelson throws into relief through contrast with the court-centered officialdom of Constantinople and Cordoba.

The two other chapters in the thematic Part I should also be of interest to Hispanists. Peter Johanek's 'Merchants, Markets and Towns' (pp. 64-94) is everything Fossier's chapter on the rural world is not: clear, precise, organized and intensely non-controversial. He tells a story of the beginnings of urban and commercial development in Europe in the long tenth century little removed from what could have been written decades ago, although the plot is filled out with lots of details of more recent vintage. Much of the specific focus falls on the Iberian and Italian peninsulas, although Johanek also makes a major effort to be as geographically comprehensive as possible, and even to regularly include Jewish merchants in his picture. Claudio Leonardi's 'Intellectual Life' (pp. 186-211) – in contrast to the contributions by Fossier or Nelson or even McKitterick – has no strong central thesis, but neither is it an uncontroversial survey as are the contributions by Johanek, Wollasch and Mayr-Harting. The chapter is composed of a string of individual arguments and interpretations concerning the character of the long tenth century in general, concerning individual authors, and concerning various individual literary genres; some are rather sweeping and deserve to generate a response, such as Leonardi's claim that 'the forerunner of the modern intellectual was the tenth-century author; only during this century did knowledge come to be understood both as being a form of personal achievement and as having a social role' (p. 189). Leonardi is one of the few contributors to consistently attribute previous interpretations by name to their originators, which renders his chapter (while sometimes idiosyncratic in its own views) more useful than most in terms of tracing the earlier historiography of a topic. It is impossible to pass in review here all of his theses, which range far and wide over both 'the intellectual centre of Europe' in France, Burgundy and Lotharingia' (p. 194) and 'the periphery of Europe' (p. 190), the latter including Spain, whose long tenth century Leonardi characterizes as 'a period not of decadence but rather of renewed interest in study and intellectual activities' (p. 191).

The major problem with the thematic Part I is that at least two major themes *qua* themes have been omitted. One of these is European Jewry. As Reuter explains, the 'chapter planned on Jews and Jewish life in western Europe from 700 to 1050 fell victim to the death of a contributor' (p. xvi). The

Editorial Board, having already made the questionable decision to contain all of early medieval European Jewish history (like that of the Celts and Scandinavians) in one volume, should have made it a top priority to find a replacement, rather than let the topic vanish altogether. The absence of Jews is, of course, particularly ? though not exclusively -- distorting for the histories of the various parts of the Iberian peninsula; an alternative editorial strategy, once the untimely death became known, might have been to encourage at least some of the authors concerned with areas of significant Jewish settlement to include that portion of the population in their individual chapters. The best we can now hope for in terms of the integration of European Jews into the story of medieval Europe is that they will appear in force in volume IV (c. 1024-1198), just in time to start getting massacred. The presumably unintentional but certainly unfortunate result will be a reinforcement of the Lacrymose Conception of Jewish history; I am tempted to go so far as to suggest that the New Cambridge Medieval History is, in effect if not by design, itself chillingly reenacting the erasure of Jews from the European landscape.

The other major thematic omission is Gender. A small minority of the contributors (Strzelczyk, Wollasch, Fossier, Johaneck, Shepard) tend towards the methodologically retrograde in ignoring (individual or groups of) women, or treating them as insignificant, or failing to treat them as autonomous performers on the historical stage. The Genealogical Tables as well (pp. 693 ? 717) were compiled by a scholar who adhered to the absurd but accepted convention of representing males with aristocratic and royal titles as persons who can unilaterally produce offspring and who thus omitted women from the charts with stunning regularity. Hispanists, for instance, might particularly notice the absence of Queen Toda Aznarez, real ruler (sometimes sole, sometimes joint) of Pamplona-Navarre from 933 ? 958 (see the text p. 688) who somehow failed to make the relevant chart (p. 717). However, the vast majority of contributors are perfectly capable of noticing when women appear in the sources and when events cannot be explained without reference to them. The volume includes as well isolated arguments for the greater importance of women at particular moments than has heretofore been recognized. As just one example, Bouchard includes in her chapter her own 1988 argument ? which deserves to be much more widely known -- that the foundation of the hugely important monastery of Cluny was the work of duchess Angilberga, and not (as in the received scenario, perpetuated here by Wollasch (p. 174)) that of duke William the Pious of Aquitaine (pp. 332 ? 333). Women consistently appear as autonomous protagonists in very many of the chapters, and the status of the NCMH as a self-proclaimed ?essential reference tool? should in the long run facilitate the systematic integration of individual (and groups of) women into the historical picture, and to render their presence in the picture something that is taken for granted as a matter of course. Nevertheless, it is a problem that gender - and sexuality - are never thematized per se, anywhere in the volume. Both are important aspects of cultural and social history on which there has been much excellent recent research; both are aspects of life that are at least as important as intellectual and artistic endeavors (which did receive thematic chapters). For gender and sexuality, as well as for Jews, early medievalists must already start looking forward to the Even Newer Cambridge Medieval History.

One final point in closing: the majority of the contributions were already complete in 1994 (according to Reuter, p. xvii). Readers should therefore not expect the very most recent scholarship to be reflected either in the 28 individual articles or in their (often quite valuable and extensive) companion bibliographies. Despite the fact that they are already a tad dated, the nearly 100 pages of bibliographies (pp. 718 ? 811) are nevertheless invaluable and could easily be used by professors as a guide against

which to check and fill in the holdings of a solid research collection on the long tenth century in institutional and (for the very lucky few) personal libraries.