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Transacciones sin mercado: Instituciones, propiedad y redes sociales en la Galicia monástica, 1200-1300 by Reyna Pastor, Esther Pascua Echegaray, Ana Rodríguez López and Pablo Sánchez León

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conception to occur, adding the polarities of strong and weak, warm and cold, moist and dry, and right and left, familiar from pre-Socratic philosophy. Most importantly, the doctrine of the seven cells of the uterus (three on the left, three on the right, and one in the middle) explains polyembryony and sex determination. According to this notion, thought to have been introduced to the Latin West by *De spermate* and influenced by septenary speculations of late antiquity, males develop on the right, females on the left, and hermaphrodites in the middle. The medical focus of this section is seen in the fact that references to authorities are exclusively to Hippocrates and Galen. The second section, on the nature of the soul, begins abruptly with the words "Philosophers told Galen," and philosophers, chiefly Porphyry, are cited exclusively. This section, furthermore, contains a certain amount of nonsense, either because the translator misunderstood difficult Latin constructions and complex argumentation or because the source text was corrupt. The third section examines heredity as determined by the time of conception and each of the four humors, turning finally to the influence of the planets and zodiacal signs upon the development of the embryo. The text concludes with the example of Alexander the Great, whose parents consulted astrologers prior to conception so as to ensure in their offspring certain desirable traits governed by zodiacal and planetary influences.

Scholars interested in Middle English technical vocabulary will welcome the selective glossary at the back. Besides the Middle English *De XII portis*, appendices include a list of thirty-eight Latin *De spermate* manuscripts and five sixteenth-century printed editions (with fuller descriptions of the twelve manuscripts either currently or previously held in Britain), and the contents of Trinity College, Cambridge, MS R.14.52. The bibliography contains some errors, for example, in the titles of Green 1989 and Voigts 1995b. Omitted are Joan Cadden's *Meanings of Sex Difference in the Middle Ages* (1993) and Luke Demaitre and Anthony A. Travill's "Human Embryology and Development in the Works of Albertus Magnus" (1980). There is a tendency to dwell on minutiae, on scribal punctuation, for example, which was notoriously inconsistent in the fifteenth century, or on abbreviations, which appear to be entirely standard. Regrettably, the book lacks an index. These minor flaws, however, do not detract from the book's overall invaluable contribution to the study of the vernacularization of science and medicine in the late Middle Ages.

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REYNA PASTOR, ESTHER PASCUA ECHEGARAY, ANA RODRÍGUEZ LÓPEZ, and PABLO SÁNCHEZ LEÓN, *Transacciones sin mercado: Instituciones, propiedad y redes sociales en la Galicia monástica, 1200–1300*. (Biblioteca de Historia, 36.) Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1999. Paper. Pp. 251 plus color maps; black-and-white figures.

This volume offers four articles exploring the social dimensions of transactions involving three Galician monasteries in the thirteenth century. The three houses represent different types of establishments in southern Galicia: Ramiranes was a nunnery, while Montederramo and Oseira were men's monasteries affiliated with the Cistercians in the twelfth century. Montederramo occupied a remote site on the edge of the eastern mountains of Galicia, depending largely on cereals and livestock. The wealthier community of Oseira was more centrally located, and its diversified interests extended from the vineyards of Ribadavia and the fisheries of the Miño to coastal saltworks, drawing it into closer relationships with neighboring ecclesiastical institutions and noble families.

Much recent historical writing on medieval Galicia has charted the expansion, consolidation, and exploitation of ecclesiastical domains, principally those of the Cistercians, and described their imposition of a feudal regime, subjecting the peasantry to mounting rents,

dues, and services in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Contracts have been classified, tallied, totaled, and graphed, yielding schematic accounts in which, simply put, ecclesiastical institutions employed a range of coercive strategies—as well as their ideological arsenal—to drive smallholders into dependence as tenant farmers. The pace and rhythm vary somewhat from case to case, but there is a dreary sameness to the result.

In the introduction to this collection, Reyna Pastor sets a different goal. These studies probe the social meaning of the economic exchanges through which monasteries entered preexisting networks of social relationships. Using a microhistorical approach, the authors promise a more nuanced vision of social status in the Galician countryside by identifying “intermediate groups” whose members successfully negotiated their ties with monasteries to enlarge their patrimony and enhance their social standing. This will be familiar terrain for readers of the work of Barbara Rosenwein, Stephen D. White, Constance Brittain Bouchard, and others, who, drawing upon anthropological literature on kinship and gift exchange, have sought to lay bare the reciprocal character of transactions between monasteries and individuals, families, and communities; to chart the involvement of larger kin groups in such transactions; and to trace, over generations, the social relationships they nurtured.

Relying on 525 documents of Montederramo, Esther Pascua Echegaray traces individuals, families, and properties through sets of charters, labeling some protagonists as members of “intermediate groups,” a diverse category that includes knights, clerics, craftsmen, titled women, and descendants of recipients of royal privileges. Various characteristics determine her classification: the size, dispersion, and diversity of their landholdings; their access to dependent labor and issuance of rental contracts; their provision of credit in cash and kind; their exploitation of livestock; and, most of all, their autonomy in making contracts with the monastery and challenging it in disputes. She is emphatic, however, in characterizing these “intermediate groups,” not by a fixed position in a social hierarchy, but by their place in a system of social relationships. They used their privileged ties with the monastery to receive credit, to consolidate properties, to cultivate new lands, and to prevail in disputes within their communities. Such reciprocal relationships encouraged social differentiation in the countryside, even as they favored the growth of the monastic domain.

In the second study, Pablo Sánchez León draws upon 250 published charters of Ramiranes, of which 220 are *foros*, contracts for tenant farming. Perhaps because of the smaller and less varied pool of texts, this article is overly burdened by its theoretical apparatus and social scientific jargon. Of most interest are the author’s observations on the concession of *foros* by the nuns to knights and notables who relied on their own dependents to work these properties. The author argues that these lay proprietors actively procured such contracts—normally associated with the reduction of the peasantry to dependence—as part of a broader strategy of consolidating estates and offsetting the dispersion of inherited lands.

Ana Rodríguez López taps the largest number of documents, approximately 1,300 published charters from Oseira, and traces the fortunes of knights, clerics, monastic officials, and others who entered into relationships with the monastery. There are, however, troubling misreadings and omissions. For example, two cited donations (p. 168) by Count Rodrigo and Doña Sancha Ponce are plainly to Premonstratensian abbots, not to Oseira, which only acquired the properties in a later exchange with the canons. The genealogy (p. 190) of Munio Fernández de Rodeiro, royal *merino* in Galicia under King Ferdinand III, and the discussion of his activity confuse him with a lesser knight of the same name. Fernando Pelaez is mistakenly identified (pp. 148–49) as the noble’s father, and the genealogy incorrectly names his second wife, Doña Maior Alfonsi, as Maria Alfonsi. In fact, a twice-published genealogy of the late thirteenth century (Archivo Histórico Nacional,

Clero, 1096/21) from the family's monastery at Ferreira de Pallares describes his lineage in detail and establishes his descent from the counts of Monterroso. This is amply corroborated by numerous charters from Ferreira de Pallares, now divided among the parchments of that house and Samos in the Archivo Histórico Nacional, and by references to this prominent figure in documents of the cathedral of Lugo, the Hospitallers, and other institutions. Unfortunately, such lapses make this reader wary of wholly accepting the author's accounts of more obscure individuals whose very identification depends on the careful correlation and judicious interpretation of bits of information from wills, witness lists, property descriptions, and the laconic clauses of contracts.

In the final article, Reyna Pastor analyzes collective relationships between rural communities and Oseira. She considers the incorporation of communities into the monastic reserve, the establishment of new ones for the clearing of land, and the resolution of disputes over boundaries, services, and dues. From these accounts, she cites evidence for differences in status within these communities, and she pursues this by turning to the *foros*, where the most complex examples reveal the layers of dependence that articulate this rural society.

Each study describes a dynamic process of social differentiation within the Galician countryside. In one crucial respect, however, each remains bound by prevailing approaches to monastic domains in recent Galician—and Spanish—historiography: by confining examples to documents from one monastic archive, each author inevitably highlights the protagonism of the house from which the sources originate. True, ecclesiastical archives supply nearly all of the documents of thirteenth-century Galicia, but one only magnifies the resulting distortion of the historical record by permitting documents of a single institution to define the parameters of each study. To recover the protagonism of the “intermediate groups” so ably described, one might profitably turn to the borderlands where different ecclesiastical domains met or to privileged districts where the competing interests of diverse establishments ensured the survival of a more varied collection of documents from which local communities may be reconstructed.

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ROGER PENSOM, *Aucassin et Nicolette: The Poetry of Gender and Growing Up in the French Middle Ages*. Bern: Peter Lang, 1999. Paper. Pp. 160; diagrams. \$27.95.

Aucassin et Nicolette is an anonymous Old French text dated between the last quarter of the twelfth century and the first half of the thirteenth. It is the only extant example of a genre the text itself refers to once as the “cantefable.” One of the many rarities of *Aucassin et Nicolette* is its formal composition: strophes of assonantal poetry alternate with short prose passages. Its comic narrative bears a certain similarity to Ovid's tale of Pyramus and Thisbe: two children of conflicting social backgrounds fall in love. It is rich in intertextual references to Old French literature of the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

Roger Pensom's slim volume consists of a preface, twenty chapters, and a postface. The chapters are organized in accordance with the linear narrative and follow the medieval text section by section. The bibliography is three and a half pages. There is no discussion of the possible performance of the text.

Pensom's book is rich in intertextual analysis. He is extremely familiar with the corpus of texts that *Aucassin et Nicolette* parodies. Furthermore, Pensom consistently strives to make an argument for the contemporary nature of *Aucassin et Nicolette* by drawing analogies between it and the culture of twentieth-century England.

Pensom's translations are of Mario Roques's edition. They are resolutely colloquial and