
Francesco Montorsi, *Mémoire des anciens: traces littéraires de l'Antiquité aux XII^e et XIII^e siècles*, Publications Romanes et Françaises 275 (Geneva: Droz, 2022). 375 pp.; 13 black-and-white illustrations. ISBN: 978-2-600-06362-3. €36.93.

Medieval French representations of the ancient Greek and Roman past often introduce anachronisms, sometimes out of a desire to translate alien concepts, sometimes – it seems – out of misunderstanding. The view that medieval authors were victim to historical naivety or presentism has been complexified and challenged over recent years. Francesco Montorsi's impeccable study adds further nuance to this discussion. Montorsi rigorously examines aspects of antiquity that fascinated – but also morally and intellectually tested – medieval writers across a wide range of French texts composed between 1150 and 1300. His corpus includes texts traditionally at the centre of scholarship on medieval anachronism, namely the verse *romans antiques* (early vernacular adaptations of Latin texts about Aeneas, Alexander, Thebes, and Troy). Yet considerable attention is paid also to the slightly later, lesser-studied prose histories, the *Faits des Romains*, the *Histoire ancienne jusqu'à César*, and the *Chronique de Baudouin d'Avesnes*. Readings are contextualized in precise detail with influential Latin works by Guido delle Colonne, Walter of Châtillon, and Geoffrey of Monmouth amongst others. Montorsi sets out his comparative methodology as 'une archéologie de la mémoire littéraire' (p. 21), which, in excavating the many overlapping traces of the past, treats the medieval reception of – and ongoing negotiation with – the classical era as 'un bric-à-brac de temporalités proches et distantes' (p. 22).

The introduction and first chapter provide an accessible overview of the extensive scholarship on medieval conceptions of 'history', Latin *historia*, and French *estoire*, and especially their relationship to rhetoric. Each of the following chapters then looks at how a practice, institution, or type of object from antiquity is represented across Montorsi's corpus: making and worshipping idols (chapter 2); soothsaying and sacrifice (chapter 3); embalming corpses (chapter 4); tombs (chapter 5); statues (chapter 6); games, plays, and the theatre (chapter 7); and warfare (chapter 8). While most of the analysis is textual, working meticulously between ancient Latin sources, late antique or medieval Latin, and then French, Montorsi also draws on archaeological and art-historical evidence. In his compelling discussion of funerary monuments (pp. 153–82), for instance, Montorsi notes how scholars have overlooked the multiple evocations of 'pyramids', which appear in his French corpus without necessarily being lifted directly from the source texts. He argues that inspiration for these 'pyramids' came from the Gallo-Roman and early medieval sepulchres that peppered the French landscape and which, haunting the twelfth-century imagination, found their way into literary or historiographical production. Rather than see – often elaborate – textual descriptions of tombs as a foreignizing aesthetic strategy linked to the 'marvellous', Montorsi makes the case that such descriptions can be understood also as the result of 'une approche

érudite' or 'une pulsion historiographique' (p. 180) towards the real traces of the ancient world. This is just one of Montorsi's many examples that show how a fuller picture of the textual, material, and historical context allows us to counter a facile view of the medieval author as naive or ignorantly anachronistic (other interesting examples relate to embalming and cremation, p. 150, to the theatre, p. 219, and to jousting, p. 267). Though, as he writes in the thoughtful conclusion, we should not then have the pendulum swing too far the other way and make the Middle Ages 'le berceau de l'érudition moderne' (p. 288).

Such a balanced and reasonable view characterizes a beautifully written book that should be essential reading for scholars working on medieval history-writing or translation. Although this reviewer would like to have seen more engagement with manuscript illustrations and visual culture (images in the appendix should have been better integrated into the chapters), an opportunity now presents itself for art historians to build on Montorsi's many insights.

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Troja bauen. Vormodernes Erzählen von der Antike in komparatistischer Sicht, ed. Anne-Katrin Federow and Kay Malcher, Germanisch-Romanische Monatsschrift. Beihefte 103 (Heidelberg: Winter, 2022); 268 pp. ISBN 978-3-8253-4803-8; €44.00.

Anstoß für das Buch, das schon im Titel das stets aufs neue konstruktive Potential der großen Erzählung von der Stadt Troja aufruft, gab ein Panel auf dem Tübinger Mediävistentag 2019. Arrondiert um weitere Beiträge trans- und interdisziplinären, methodisch weiter als das ursprüngliche Panel gefassten Zugriffs entsteht ein facettenreicher Aufriss des gewaltigen ‚Hauses‘ Troja, an dem fast alle Literaturen des europäischen Mittelalters mitbauten. Dass das Buch im ‚Schliemann-Jahr‘ 2022 erschien, ist eine einleitend ausführlich begründete Koinzidenz, die auf das für die Troja-Rezeption seit der Antike konstitutive Schwanken zwischen literarischer Fiktion und historiographischer, erst später auch archäologischer Authentizität abstrahlen mag, aber bis zu dem eindrucksvollen Schlussbeitrag von Bernd Roling (‚Usually ungodded at that age‘, S. 245 ff.) keinen expliziten oder impliziten Reflex findet. Letzterer Beitrag verfolgt kundig den Zwist innerhalb des englischen Antiquarianismus des 18. Jh.s, der in vieler Weise in Schliemanns Zeit fortlebt und sich an der Frage entzündete, welcher historische und geographische Wert, jenseits des unbezweifelbaren literarischen, Homer für die Existenz und Lage Trojas zukam. Der Protagonist in dieser ‚Querelle troyenne‘ ist der Theologe Jacob Bryant (1715–1804), ein scharfer Kritiker der zeitgenössischen Homer-Apologeten, und neben der noch