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Review of *In Their Own Words: Practices of Quotation  
in Early Medieval History-Writing* by Jeanette Beer

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Plays and of the *Ordo paginarum*, updated in the light of research by the editors of Records of Early English Drama and Meg Twycross. Beadle then presents evidence about the preparations made for the plays' presentation, including an *ordinacio* to ensure the quality of performance, and the insights offered by modern performance experiments as to the design of pageant wagons. The plays' performance on the Feast of Corpus Christi is described, and then their "Later years, demise, and afterlife": York's economic decline and the theological shifts of the Reformation perhaps both contributed to the curtailment of the city's traditional performances; the last recorded performance (before the twentieth-century revivals) took place in 1569 and was held on Whitsun rather than Corpus Christi, because the latter festival had been officially expunged from the religious calendar; the play texts were preserved by antiquarians until revived in performances in the twentieth century. The introduction then concludes with a summary of the York Plays' distinctive linguistic features. A helpful appendix presents the Anglo-Norman and Latin text of the 1399 Commons Petition that articulates civic understanding of the plays' significance and purpose.

Comparison of descriptions of the pageants in the *Ordo paginarum* (1415–16) with the pageant texts registered in the 1470s illuminates the many changes made in the York Plays during the intervening years: this valuable evidence is detailed in the commentary, which proceeds pageant by pageant. Contemporary records relating to the guild responsible for each pageant are collected, with relevant notes on the *mise en page* and the versification; then each play is described in relation to its biblical sources and its theological take on the scriptural narrative—for example, scholastic readings based on Aquinas are discerned; dramaturgical features of the play are also traced, so that these commentaries provide exemplary expositions of the plays' concretization, through material performance, of spiritual truth. Finally, notes on selected individual lines and passages draw attention to resonant lexis, relevant liturgical connections, underlying theological debates, and illuminating points of comparison with parallel mystery plays or other medieval texts.

One of the delights of the approach taken by these scholarly volumes, where performance records and text are juxtaposed, is that it brings home to the reader the extent to which the "great literary monument" studied by scholars as the York Cycle is a product of pragmatism and the contingencies of performance. The York Crucifixion play, which, alongside the Wakefield Second Shepherds' play is perhaps considered the greatest achievement of medieval drama, is, as Beadle's commentary reveals, simply a product of pragmatic cutting. As part of a solution to the impediment of "the multitude of pageants," speeches from the Painters' play of the nailing of Christ were incorporated into the Pinners' play of the raising of the Cross: the Painters' play was canceled and the Painters were asked to contribute to the costs of the new pageant. These new arrangements are reflected in the alterations to the *Ordo paginarum*.

A full bibliography of secondary material is provided. For further assistance to the reader, there is a glossary, with references to the plays by pageant and line number. An index of proper names enables the reader to trace the appearances of scriptural characters and locations in each pageant: alongside this, an index of biblical references and allusions enables the reader to work from biblical source to the specific pageant in which that material is presented.

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JEANETTE BEER, *In Their Own Words: Practices of Quotation in Early Medieval History-Writing*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014. Pp. xv, 158. \$35. ISBN: 978-1-4426-4754-1. doi:10.1086/685527

Jeanette Beer's contribution to the study of the often bewildering complexities of medieval historiography, as explored perhaps most famously in the excellent work of Gabrielle M.

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Spiegel, offers five case studies of Latin and vernacular prose texts, (ranging in date from the ninth to the thirteenth centuries), that each represent for her a new kind of medieval historical writing. She focuses on these texts' deployment of quotation, which she identifies as (1) the use of direct speech for personages within a chronicle, (2) the employment of first-person observation, and (3) the citation of previous literary sources, biblical, patristic, and classical. The selected medieval history writers, Beer argues, use such practices of quotation in order to authorize their accounts' claim to veracity and to negotiate their relationship to history writers before them. Such use of quotation thus "provide[s] a window upon the relationship between inherited classical and contemporary vernacular influences as they intersected in the early centuries of the Middle Ages" (ix). Beer positions herself against earlier critics, whose responses she observes to be laden with anachronistic assumptions concerning medieval history writers' investment in "objective" reportage. Rather than apply modern notions of objectivity to medieval historiography, she suggests, we ought instead to view medieval historiographical practices of quotation as doing the rhetorical work of guaranteeing the history writers' truth claims.

Chapter 1 looks at Nithard's *Historiae de dissensionibus filiorum Ludovici Pii*, or the Latin chronicle famous for its remarkably early citation of the vernacular in the form of the well-known Strasbourg Oaths. Beer argues that, far from an enthusiastic endorsement of multilingualism, as the Oaths have previously been—in her view, anachronistically—read, Nithard's inclusion of the vernacular is intended to showcase the Babel-like dissolution of Charlemagne's gloriously monolingual empire. The history writer's use of quotation thus reveals the ideologies undergirding his entire historiographical endeavor.

Chapter 2 explores the frequent quotation of direct speech in the anonymous *Gesta Francorum*, an eyewitness Latin account of the First Crusade. Beer first shows that the use of direct speech in the mouths of key figures in the narrative, such as Pope Urban II, heroic crusaders, and villainous opponents, aids the author in emphasizing the dominant ideological premises subtending his account. She then goes on to challenge Louis Bréhier and August Krey, who posited, in the 1920s, the existence of a second author responsible for the lively interpolations of direct speech, seen by these earlier critics as inconsistent with the *Gesta's* written style. Such readings, Beer argues, assume the intrusion of direct speech as a textual "problem" in need of outside explanation because they fail to understand that direct speech, by virtue of its jarring nature, can serve a powerful rhetorical purpose within a medieval historical account.

Beer continues to explore the use of quotation to bolster eyewitness truth claims by considering Geoffroy de Villehardouin's vernacular *Conquête de Constantinople* in chapter 3. Here, Beer takes to task the work of Albert Pauphilet and Edmond Faral, in 1928 and 1936, respectively, for trafficking in shared (misguided) assumptions that the more subjective features of Villehardouin's account require either censure or apologia. Beer demonstrates that the *Conquête* offers a complex multifaceted construction of subjectivity, as indicated by its rapid shifts from "ce tesmoigne . . . Villehardoin" (Villehardouin . . . testifies to this), to "li livres" (the book), to "je" (I), to the first-person plural. Each of these instances of what Beer identifies as self-quotation is carefully deployed, she argues, to authorize the unverifiable and to suppress controversial material. In such a way, the personal nature of the account in fact guarantees its claims to veracity. From here, Beer returns to the issue of direct speech, on which Villehardouin's chronicle heavily relies, (but only towards the beginning). She argues against Jean Frappier's 1946 claim that the tapering off of direct speech in the *Conquête* points to Villehardouin's increasing investment in historical objectivity as being, again, anachronistic. She suggests instead that direct speech, as in the *Gesta Francorum*, serves an important rhetorical function in promoting Villehardouin's crusade ideology; its abandonment towards the end of the chronicle thus speaks to the author's disillusionment with crusade. Beer's fourth chapter, developing from the third,

treats Robert de Clari's vernacular *Conquête de Constantinople*. She also considers here Robert de Clari's use of direct speech; demonstrating its profoundly ribald quality, she argues that its employment affords Robert de Clari an opportunity for intertextual play with alternate literary genres, such as the *fabliau*, that allow him to add flavor to his account.

Chapters 5 and 6 focus on *Li fet des Romains*, chosen for its role as a vernacular compilation of classical sources. Here Beer tackles the question of quotation from earlier textual sources in a work that is not an eyewitness account and therefore cannot rely on the quotation of direct speech or on self-quotation as in earlier accounts to bolster its truth claims. Quotation from earlier literary sources must thus step in to fill the rhetorical void and offer opportunities for validating the history writer's project. In a neatly recursive manner, *Li fet's* author's participation in the widespread medieval belief that Julius Caesar's account of the Gallic Wars, one of *Li fet's* major sources, was authored by Julius Celsus Constantinus leads the author imaginatively to construct Celsus as an eyewitness participant in Caesar's campaign in Gaul in order to explain this Celsus's close familiarity with Caesar's military strategy. In such a way, Beer reveals, even mediated quotation practice in non-eyewitness accounts continues to be undergirded with the same anxieties over truth claims present in eyewitness-based historiography. When the author moves on to adapting Lucan's *Bellum civile*, eyewitness claims become no longer possible to sustain. Thus, Beer argues, *Li fet's* author is forced to adopt a wide variety of rhetorical postures in his quotations of Lucan to distance himself from that classical account and to suggest that the onus of differentiating between truth and falsehood in Lucan's claims now falls instead upon the reader.

Beer's discussion is an intriguing exploration of medieval historiographical practices that continue to be regrettably understudied. Its enthusiastic engagement with both Latin and vernacular sources, moreover, and its highlighting of those sources' practices of code-switching in particular contribute to the welcome emergence of a robust interest in medieval multilingualism.

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FELIX BIERMANN, JIŘÍ MACHÁČEK, and FRANZ SCHOPPER, eds., *An Thaya und Notte im Mittelalter: Vergleichende archäologische Untersuchungen zu Sozial- und Siedlungsstrukturen im westslawischen Raum (6. bis 13. Jahrhundert)*. (Studien zur Archäologie Europas 25.) Bonn: Habelt Verlag, 2015. Pp. 352; 186 black-and-white and 133 color figures and 45 tables. €75. ISBN: 978-3-7749-3786-4.  
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Although we see more comparative history these days, it has still not swept the field of medieval studies. It is always a pleasure, therefore, to read a good work of comparative history, especially when written by archaeologists. Felix Biermann, Jiří Macháček, and Franz Schopper prove the value of the comparative approach in the study of medieval economic and social history. They specifically challenge the notion of a uniform development (or lack thereof) of central Europe before the onset of what German scholars call *Ostsiedlung*. The book offers a model of integration of the written and the archaeological sources. The authors compare the historical experiences and developments in southern Moravia and eastern Germany on the basis of the system theory borrowed from the conceptual arsenal of the "new archaeology." This may raise some eyebrows among historians, but the results of such an approach consistently demonstrate its merits. The comparative perspective enables the reader to focus on areas and issues otherwise left in the shadows. Biermann, Macháček, and Schopper (as well as the other nineteen contributors) claim that at the beginning and at the end of the chronological interval considered in this book, the two