

such as Montoya's. In time then we may have a mega-database that allows researchers to interrogate every collected piece of data on the eighteenth-century book trade directly. As a result, of course, it could be the case that scholarly secondary studies like the ones under review will become redundant or the monograph be replaced by the brief interpretative article. The new age of digital humanities may only take us a little closer to understanding the cultural causes of the French Revolution. We will never find the Holy Grail. But it is set fair to change dramatically what we understand a work of history to be.

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doi:10.1093/fh/crz033

Advance Access publication 22 April 2019

*Heirs of the Vikings: History and Identity in Normandy and England, c.950–c.1015.* By Katherine Cross. York: Work Medieval Press. 2018. Xii + 262 pp. £60. ISBN 978 1 9031 5379 6.

By the twelfth century, historians were characterizing those waves of Scandinavian voyagers who had settled throughout Western Europe from the eighth to the eleventh centuries, as purely Viking: violent, raiding, conquering bands, who generally had a negative impact on the cultures and societies with which they came into contact. This new monograph by Katherine Cross examines a key period (c. 950–1015) in the formation of English and Norman identities. Cross shows that during the period in which these Scandinavians had their greatest impact as settlers, historians on both sides of the Channel were coming to terms with the long-term impact of Scandinavian settlement on the culture of their own times and ultimately, interpreting their influence on society in a much more positive light than later medieval sources might have us believe.

The central question of the book asks how far Scandinavian identity influenced the ways in which cultural and political units sought to present themselves in literature, politics and ecclesiastical affairs during the period in question. The principal source materials used by Cross are textual, in the form of various historical works; interestingly, not just narrative histories and chronicles (given due treatment) but also a wide variety of other texts with historical functions such as genealogies, origin-narratives, saints' *Lives*, and narrative elements and key clauses from charters and documentary culture. Cross organizes her analysis according to the typology of sources consulted. Chapters 1 and 2 on genealogy and origin myths show how seriously authors in England and Normandy took their perceived Scandinavian ancestries. This offers, in the English context, an interesting picture of a culturally amalgamated Anglo-Scandinavian society celebrating the shared roots of its constituent peoples, while the Norman example improves our understanding of how Viking roots enhanced the Norman sense of exceptionalism in early eleventh-century Frankia. In Chapters 3 and 4, Cross shows the importance of hagiographical narratives in shaping the reception of the Viking past in England and Normandy. Although English texts largely depicted Vikings as opponents of the church, their authors appear to have shown some inclination to explain, and perhaps make reparation for these actions. Attacks on churches in Normandy were explained, according to Cross, as part of a restoration narrative which increased reverence for the conversion and patronage of Norman dukes from Rollo onwards. In Chapter 4, Cross highlights the similarities in how Norman and English-based rulers of Scandinavian origin supported

local saints' cults in order to improve their authority and prestige, namely through their financial aid, literary patronage and ritual performance, and in so doing, offers further material for the interpretation of how traditional saints' cults were evolving in post-Viking Europe. Chapter 5 concludes the analysis with a study of how and where perceived ethnic groups were represented in Norman and English charters, and as such provides one of the most illuminating sections of the study as a whole.

One of the principal contributions of this book is the sharpened view offered by Cross, of the role played by careful interpretations of the past in the creation and maintenance of identity. While the idea that the past had a key role to play in identity-making has come to almost uniform acceptance in medieval studies of the past generation, Cross shows how the past was used in all of its numerous forums: not just in advanced literary narratives, but also in more public-facing forums such as worship rituals, rites of benefaction, documentary and legal culture, and all in a period often still seen (at least in England) to have produced little noteworthy historical content.

Readers of *French History*, and others also, may find the comparative aspect of this enquiry a little too restrictive. Cross rightly argues that England and Normandy c. 950–1015 offer similar patterns of Scandinavian cultural influence and textual sources, but the separation of 'English' and 'Norman' case studies and sources can be a little repetitive, and perhaps overly reflective of the doctoral thesis from which this book has evolved. This reviewer would like to know whether having completed the study, Cross would like to have used other comparative categorizations (a separation of northern and southern England, perhaps?) or whether a focus on how Scandinavian settlers were described by sources composed outside of the territories in question but looking in, might have added further weight to the discussion.

Nevertheless, the comparative element does allow Cross to develop some interesting insights: in Normandy, the Viking influence comes to define a duchy and a people attached to it, while in England, it becomes amalgamated into an evolving sense of universal Englishness. Cross shows that in both contexts, those seeking to impose their interpretation of identity used Scandinavian settlement and acculturation in overwhelmingly positive ways. It opens up fertile ground for further questioning on why it was that authors only 100 years later were much more critical of their perception of Viking incursions, and more broadly, on how the analysis of this context might fit in to wider discussions on medieval perceptions of ethnicity and identity, which have grown in momentum during recent years.

This book provides a nuanced reading of how tenth- and eleventh-century societies understood the impact of Viking settlement in England and Normandy and is a must-read for any student of identity and history-writing in these contexts.

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doi:10.1093/fh/crz018

Advance Access publication 3 April 2019

*Henrietta Maria*. By Dominic Pearce. Stroud, Gloucestershire: Amberley Publishing, 2017. 352 pp. £ 11.99. ISBN 978 1 4456 7726 2.

Dominic Pearce's biography of Charles I's queen, Henrietta Maria, opens with a quarrel over her possessions when she died intestate in 1669. 'To whom did they now belong? The same question can be asked about her legacy in history'. Asserting that the best