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The Templars, the Witch, and the Wild Irish: Vengeance and Heresy in Medieval Ireland by Maeve Brigid Callan (review)

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and seek information in other references so as to fully grasp the nuances of the argument. This kind of density is not necessarily a criticism, and those looking for a deep exploration of certain time periods will likely find it to be a substantive jumping-off point to more focused studies. Ultimately, this is an essential work for anyone studying the rhetoric of violence in the West.

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Maeve Brigid Callan, *The Templars, the Witch, and the Wild Irish: Vengeance and Heresy in Medieval Ireland* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press 2015) xxi + 280 pp.

Most scholars are aware of the papal bull *Laudabiliter* and its lasting effects on society in Ireland. Authorizing the English conquest of Ireland on the basis of a deviation of Christian orthodoxy naturally seems absurd for an island known as the “sanctuary of saints and scholars” (1). However, as Maeve Brigid Callan notes in the introduction to her first book, *The Templars, the Witch, and the Wild Irish: Vengeance and Heresy in Medieval Ireland*, “heresy trials in medieval Ireland did not involve actual alternative understandings of Christianity but were used to discredit one’s opponents and to attack groups or individuals whom the accusers feared and resented” (19). This is the driving thesis of Callan’s excellent book and one which she deftly supports. Callan sets out to review the evidence concerning the heresy trials in Ireland in the fourteenth century by offering the wider European context, including the Albigensian Crusade in France, the first crusade directed at Christians, and the radical turn against the Templars that bled into the political climate of England and its governance in Ireland. In each chapter, Callan examines the allegations available in the primary sources as well as subsequent misconceptions or misinterpretations that continue to persist in modern scholarship, relying on a survey of the evidence from both Ireland and the continent to satisfactorily refute such allegations or better contextualize them. Utilizing these contexts as well as a history of Christianity in Ireland, the history of *Laudabiliter* and the English Conquest of Ireland, and the targeted revision of the definition of “heresy,” Callan demonstrates that it was simply a means to persecute Irish and Anglo-Irish individuals in order to achieve a variety of personal or political ends.

Callan divides out her chapters to cover the development of the heresy trials, featuring heavily the central figure of Bishop Richard de Ledrede. The governing structure is three primary types of heresy trials that occurred in fourteenth-century Ireland, each part investigating all or the most important cases. These three types are the cases against the Templars, the witch trials, and the more general persecution of the native Irish. The first chapter covers the development of the trial against the Templars, revealing the motivations that produced false witness testimony and examining the fraught conditions that produced the likely untrue confessions. Of particular note is Callan’s examination of the use of torture to elicit the desired results. Callan notes that the inquisitors in the Templar trials made “their most detailed report about the need for torture” after the initial trial in Ireland concluded and after the successful introduction of their desired method, the inquisitors obtained “confessions of a

caliber unknown previously in the British Isles" (62–63). Charting the shift in methodologies and the results of such moves strengthens Callan's case for the importance of applying a European context to the history of heresy in Ireland. She emphasizes the differing results in each country and the increasing pressure on the Templars that resulted in their dissolution in Ireland as well as the connection to the increasingly popular use of heresy charges for personal benefit.

The second and third chapters evaluate Richard de Ledrede's handling of the Alice Kyteler case, a witch trial that became a heresy case due to Ledrede's apparently intentional mischaracterization of Kyteler's past, the surprising number of former husbands she had, and the considerable wealth she had accrued from those marriages. While this trial is well-documented, Callan points out that the coverage is heavily biased in Ledrede's favor. Given Callan's interests in gender and women's history in Ireland, these chapters outshine the others in terms of their lively discussion of the curious characters of Kyteler and her associate Petronilla, as well as Callan's thorough examination of the variety of interesting charges against them, including consultation with demons, sexual misdeeds, and rituals (85–86). Chapter 2 charts the progression from witchcraft accusations to Ledrede's conflation of witch and heretic. Indeed, these chapters are the centerpiece of the entire book. However, all the chapters in this book evidence Callan's meticulous research and careful engagement with the available primary materials, readable prose style, and awareness of the current arguments in the field.

Chapters 4 and 5 examine the role of colonial conflict in Ledrede's heresy hunt and what it means to be a native Irishman under English rule. As Callan notes at the beginning of the fourth chapter, "heresy was wielded as a weapon within personal feuds" (150). This is particularly true of the contentious feuds with Arnold le Poer and Alexander de Bicknor, each of which resulted in heresy proceedings. Chapter 5, aptly named "The Heresy of Being Irish," reflects on the history of Christianity in Ireland as well as the English conquest in order to contextualize the heresy trial of Irish native Adducc Dubh O'Toole, which Callan argues has been widely misunderstood by scholars. After O'Toole's conviction and death, came the unsuccessful plea to the pope for a crusade against the native Irish. What Callan ultimately finds in her research strengthens her thesis that heresy was not rampant in Ireland, but rather, was a tool for persecution.

This book will be a welcome addition to the fields of ecclesiastical studies, Irish studies, and the medieval history discipline. Callan's methodical approach in examining the uses and misuses of heresy in medieval Ireland will position this book as a mainstay of the field. Callan considers and in many cases rejects or corrects ongoing perceptions of Irish history, which are often tainted by the colonial lens. By reframing the investigation into heresies in Ireland with the additional contexts of the crusades and heresy trials both in Europe and England, Callan's valuable contribution renegotiates our understanding of heresy, *Laudabiliter*, and Irish colonial and ecclesiastical history. Aside from the value of the arguments made in the chapters themselves, Callan further provides additional resources such as a list of abbreviations, a chronology of key events, a map of the native Irish dynasties and the regions loyal to the English crown, a translated copy of the Articles against the Templars in Ireland, and a translated

copy of the charges against Alice Kyteler and her associates. Her bibliography is exhaustive, including over twenty pages of primary and secondary sources, demonstrating her fluency with the history of the research on this topic as well as the requisite manuscripts containing the pertinent records and chronologies of such events. Callan's style is vivid and evocative of her level of comfort with the topic. Discussion of each trial relies heavily on descriptions from witness testimonies as well as the available legal records, allowing Callan to reconstruct the circumstances of each trial for her readership. Her deft handling of interdisciplinary approaches and the extensive usage of primary sources to set up the trials discussed makes this book an entertaining read for both students and seasoned scholars of Irish studies.

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***Chaucer and Fame: Reputation and Reception*, ed. Isabel Davis and Catherine Nall (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer 2015) 264 pp.**

Chaucer and Fame: Reputation and Reception, a collection of essays edited by Isabel Davis and Catherine Nall, comprehensively explores the central idea of fame, or *fama*, as it arises within Chaucer's poems and pertains to the poet's afterlife. The theme of surviving time permeates the speeches of Chaucer's characters and connects his poems to medieval works including Dante's *Commedia* and Petrarch's *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, but these essays primarily demonstrate how later readers, authors, manuscript compilers, and printers perpetuated and shaped Chaucer's name and reputation. *Chaucer and Fame* appeals essentially to scholars of Chaucer; however, the focus on intertextual dialogues and reception, multilingualism, and book history also make this collection a significant contribution to the scholarship of medieval literature and medievalism.

The eleven chapters of *Chaucer and Fame* reflect a wide range of topics pertaining to Chaucer's works and posthumous fame, and address a variety of historical, biographical, and cultural contexts, but Davis justifies this breadth by stressing Chaucer's own complex engagement with literature, ancient and medieval. The volume aims to investigate not an independent Chaucer, whose works are to be read in a literary vacuum, but rather a "diachronic and international exchange," considering how Chaucer imagines himself in relation to classical *auctores*, as well as French and Italian medieval authors, including Dante and Petrarch, who frequently obsessed over their connection to figures like Virgil and Ovid, and gave Chaucer material for his exploration of *fama* (2). For one, Davis's introduction considers how, in *The Legend of Good Women*, Chaucer not only recognizes the canonical positions of Virgil and Ovid, eliciting concerns with celebrity found in Chaucer's earlier dream vision *The House of Fame*, but also intervenes in the two ancient poets' dispute over Dido's reputation. Recognizing Chaucer's object in the *Legend* to fix the reputations of legendary women, Davis emphasizes authorial omission and inclusion in a useful context that prepares for the subsequent essays in the volume.

For a discussion of the preoccupation with presence and absence in the "making" of Chaucer, Davis points to the essays by Andrew Galloway and Thomas Prendergast. Considering the idea that "absence...defines and even