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history, and yet it is a period that is infrequently studied due to a lack of materials. In this way, he makes an important contribution to the understanding of the high Middle Ages in Italy. Additionally, his book is detailed and easy to read, allowing non-specialists access to the information therein.

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***Wigamur*, ed. and trans. by Joseph M. Sullivan. German Romance, VI. Arthurian Archive. Woodbridge, Suffolk: D. S. Brewer, 2015, xxvi, 348 pp.**

Late medieval literature knows of many texts that enjoy very little interest, or even respect today. Some of them were true bestsellers, but many have not survived in more than just a handful of manuscripts, so they might not have had real success in the Middle Ages either. Quantity, however, is not necessarily a criteria for the critical examination of those texts, such as the anonymous *Wigamur* (ca. 1220–1230). In order to gain a better understanding of the Arthurian romance, two fundamental approaches can be pursued; 1. to make this text available in a solid historical-critical edition; 2. to translate the text into a modern language. The first task has already been accomplished several times, especially by Danielle Buschinger (1987) and by Nathanael Busch (2009). Joseph M. Sullivan has now taken the next step and created his own edition and accompanied it with an English translation on the facing pages. Buschinger's edition was marred by her decision to use a strictly diplomatic method, presenting the three manuscript copies W,

M, and S practically as they are, which resulted, however, in numerous transcription errors. All her notes and commentaries are in French. Busch approached his task in a much more traditional manner, radically normalizing the text of ms. W according to the standard features of Middle High German, which seems rather risky nowadays, or at least misleading because this resulted in the creation of an artificial text. He also offered a modern German translation.

Sullivan takes the middle road for his edition, relying mostly on ms. W as the lead manuscript, and drawing from the two fragments M and S only where W is lacking text or proves to be too unclear. He has written out all abbreviations, and added punctuation, capitalization, and paragraphing to make it easier for the ordinary reader to follow the romance. Corrections were applied only in drastic and obvious cases, and explanations for all decisions can be found in the notes. He also regularized the allographs i, j, u, and v, and carefully adapted some of the complex spellings for diphthongs etc. for a better reading, without intervening into the text otherwise. This means, for instance, that he reproduced the superscripted umlauts as they appear in the manuscript. All this strikes me as most reasonable and clearly acceptable. From now on we can freely choose between the normalized text edition by Busch or the more conservative, manuscript-oriented edition by Sullivan.

The English translation immediately proves to be excellent and highly reliable, even though, or perhaps just because he did not cling stubbornly to the exact word order or sentence structure, but tried his best to render the Middle High German into a trustworthy and also readable version. At times a bit freer

style might have been useful. Line 122 “Da was verlor gar die wer” is correctly given here as “All chance of resistance then was in vain,” but the text really implies something like: They could do nothing against her. The subsequent reaction by all those who witness the kidnapping of the royal child is given as “ain unmuoet” (123), which Sullivan translates as “malaise,” but the context really implies: “deep sorrow.” “Da pließ er an den stunden / der kunig das horn krefflich” (214–15) is rendered as “Right then and there / the king blew powerfully upon his horn.” It might have been slightly better to say: ‘blew his horn.’ “Mit züchten warn sy alle fro” (2470) is rendered as “Befitting their courteous natures, they were all happy,” while it might have been somewhat better as: ‘They displayed their happiness in a courtly fashion.’ But these are all just subjective, stylistic comments, and Sullivan can be fully credited with having created an excellent English translation that reads well and stays very close to the original Middle High German at the same time.

On this basis, we are invited to revisit *Wigamur* once again both as an enjoyable and meaningful late medieval German Arthurian romance, whether we rely on the critical edition or on the modern English translation. The final judgment as to the literary relevance and importance of *Wigamur* hence is still outstanding, but we have now the text available in the best possible manner, both in a German and an English translation, and in three competing critical editions that all differ from each other. My own choice now would be the edition by Sullivan. Moreover, the extensive notes make it possible to understand editorial decisions, to comprehend the reasons for peculiarities in the English translation, and to find helpful comments on particular motifs,

themes, or topics. This excellent volume concludes with a bibliography and an index of proper names.

*Albrecht Classen*

***The Histories of a Medieval German City, Worms, c. 1000–c. 1300. Translation and Commentary. Trans. by David S. Bachrach. Farnham, Surrey, and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014, xiii, 175 pp., 3 maps, 2 genealogical tables.***

We could not understand well the world of the late Middle Ages if we did not consider carefully the most significant contributions by cities in terms of economic productivity, political power, and literary documents. Many, though not all, of the major political, economic, religious, intellectual, artistic, literary, and military developments took place there, and many times cities built very powerful networks through which they could exert major influence on the governments. One of those cities, almost a central node in a wide network, was the German city of Worms on the Rhine, where, for instance, the famous Concordat of Worms was concluded in 1122, establishing peace between the German Emperor Henry V and Pope Calixtus II. Literary historians have known Worms well through the heroic epic, the anonymous *Nibelungenlied* (ca. 1200), while economic, religious, and political historians have focused for a long time much on Worms because so many important events took place there. In the early modern age Martin Luther had to defend himself against the Catholic Church and the Emperor during the Worms Diet in 1521, and lost in the public debate, but his defiance there also triggered a mass