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The volume titled *Text, Transmission, and Transformation in the European Middle Ages, 1000–1500* edited by Carrie Griffin and Emer Purcell tackles the question of textual transmission and contact, translation of texts, theories of textual transmission and the use of these resources as the basis for academic interpretations. Ultimately, this approach seeks to respond directly to issues of textual reliability that make any academic work, whether historical, literary, philosophical, or linguistics based dependable, and fair representations and interpretations of events described in the documents studied. The essays trace the histories of the documents studied. The contributions demonstrate how texts are affected by their use by scribes, readers, and translators. In this manner, the academic reader also becomes part of the textual materiality. The interpretations, omissions, and, in some cases, lack of precision and contextualization affect the overall understanding of the text in question.

As the editors explain, this volume brings together highly specialized essays on texts produced during the Middle Ages in Europe, from pan-European perspectives that «would almost never be located within the same book». There are essays on Old Norse, Anglo-Saxon, Medieval Irish, Welsh, Dutch, German, as well as Iberian texts, Arabic, French and Italian. This volume is impressive in its comprehensive nature. Rarely do we find a volume that so systematically attempts to overcome the shortcomings of many academic works by reaching beyond geographic, linguistic, and even the borders of distinct academic fields. The volume not only includes essays on written texts but also texts that refer to oral contexts such as music and song.

The essays, on the whole, seek to «speak to the profound connections and synergies between peoples and nations». Although they are joined by the main themes of textual transmission and interpretation, the essays do not necessarily connect or reference each other. On the contrary, the essays are highly specific examples or case studies. While a specialist on English or German texts may be able to follow the narrative on the Irish or Welsh based essays, it may be difficult for a specialist of France, Italy, or Iberia to connect to the material. Some of the essays make broader generalizations and give a little more historical context than others and help the reader situate the analysis offered within the context of the global issues addressed in the volume. They brilliantly tackle the minutiae of the textual history they trace. However, other essays do not so transparently offer this global discussion. Scholars unfamiliar with the geographical area, language, or text dissected may have more difficulty applying the concepts to

other works. This is a unfortunate because all the essays are true examples of highly specialized, well researched, thought out and principled works. However, because of the lack of inter-connectivity between the essays, some chapters may not be recognized as the foundational or ground-breaking resource they are.

All in all, the editors are to be commended on bringing together such a diverse mix of essays all centered on a strong theoretical approach. They address questions of textual trustworthiness and reliability or lack thereof as a result of textual transmission and interpretation. This is an issue that is far too often ignored in academia. Drs. Griffin and Purcell have ambitiously taken on an extremely difficult topic that few others even attempt to touch upon. They subtly and elegantly draw a critical view on the scholar's role in process of textual history. All this is achieved while still managing to offer highly specialized and concentrated essays that are, without a doubt, examples of the type of close readings all academics should strive to produce.