

helpful and portable contribution, however, is its illumination of the collaborative and socially constructed nature of these “nonfictional” narrative sources.

CHELSEA SILVA, Oklahoma State University

NICOLA POLLONI, *The Twelfth-Century Renewal of Latin Metaphysics: Gundissalinus's Ontology of Matter and Form*. (Durham Medieval and Renaissance Monographs and Essays 6.) Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2020. Pp. xiii, 317; black-and-white figures. \$95. ISBN: 978-0-8884-4865-1. doi:10.1086/721786

This book is an important study of the philosophy of Dominicus Gundissalinus, or more properly, as Nicola Polloni argues, Dominicus Gundisalvi (10). The book is the culmination of several years of research and it helpfully draws upon a burgeoning literature on medieval Iberian philosophy, including a considerable amount that is published in Spanish. In Polloni's historical introduction we learn that much is obscure about Gundisalvi's life, including his birthday and the date of his death (c. 1190–93). As Polloni notes in chapter 1, there are also questions about what Gundisalvi actually wrote. Polloni argues that two texts commonly attributed to him, *De scientiis* and *De immortalitate animae*, probably are not his. However, the *Liber Mahameleth*, which is usually not attributed to Gundisalvi, might have emerged from his Toledo-based translation “team.”

Gundisalvi is best known for his role in the translation into Latin of many key Arabic scientific and philosophical works by, among others, Ibn Gabirol, Ibn Sina, al-Ghazali, and al-Farabi. Gundisalvi's own works incorporate numerous excerpts from these Arabic sources as well as works by Latin philosophers. One of Polloni's central aims, however, is to show that these works are not merely collages of quotations; rather, they are creative, critical adaptations from which a unique and interesting epistemology, metaphysics, and cosmology emerge. Polloni endeavors to give a detailed demonstration of this thesis by focusing on Gundisalvi's theory of matter and especially his allegiance to “universal hylomorphism,” the thesis that everything other than God is composed of form *and* matter. Polloni maintains that the order of Gundisalvi's books begins with *De unitate et uno* and culminates with *De processione mundi*. This allows him to make the case that Gundisalvi started with an underdeveloped theory of universal hylomorphism, which over the course of his career and in response to his work as part of a translation team, he substantially revised but never abandoned.

Polloni divides his story of Gundisalvi's development of a distinctive and defensible version of universal hylomorphism into three chapters. Each enters into Gundisalvi's metaphysics by focusing on the contributions of a specific set of influences. Chapter 2 acknowledges the profound impact of Solomon Ibn Gabirol on Gundisalvi, but it then views Gundisalvi's use of Gabirol's theories as a way to respond to an agenda set by Boethius and the Latin philosophy that developed prior to the arrival of Aristotle's major works and the books of Arabic philosophers. Polloni explores in particular Gundisalvi's engagement with the philosophy and theology that emerges from twelfth-century Chartres, although he is skeptical of the proposal that Gundisalvi's familiarity with Chartrean philosophy means that he studied there.

Chapter 3 focuses directly on Gundisalvi's appropriation of Ibn Gabirol's metaphysics and cosmology. It includes a very helpful interpretation of the Latin version of Ibn Gabirol's *Fons vitae*, appropriately putting aside the complications that the Arabic fragments and Hebrew paraphrase add. It is in this chapter that Polloni begins to solidify his case that *De unitate* is the earliest work, that another authentic work, *De anima*, marks a transition in his thinking, and finally that *De processione* “corresponds to a mature and enveloping reading of *Fons vitae*” (208).

Chapter 4 examines the impact of Ibn Sina's philosophy on Gundisalvi's theory of matter. The theory found especially in *De processione* seems to have been influenced both by Gundisalvi's translation of Ibn Sina's *Metaphysics*, the last part of the *Kitab al-Shifa* [Book of the Healing], and the writings of his teammate Abraham ibn Daud, an avid proponent of Ibn Sina's philosophy and a sharp critic of Ibn Gabirol. Ibn Sina did not advocate universal hylomorphism. But Polloni argues that Ibn Sina's theory of "modal duality," that is, the thesis that all actually existing created things have both an intrinsic aspect of possibility and an intrinsic aspect of necessity, had a profound effect on Gundisalvi's mature universal hylomorphism. It provided Gundisalvi with the tools he needed to address the criticisms that Ibn Daud leveled against Ibn Gabirol.

This book deserves a wide audience, for Gundisalvi is positioned at the moment when Latin philosophy meets up with freshly translated Platonic and Aristotelian works, which were subsequently circulated in the major universities in France, Britain, and beyond. It should interest those who are attempting to discern the impact of early and mid-twelfth-century thought, and especially that of the Chartrean School, on subsequent philosophy and theology. It will surely interest those who are curious about the intellectual ferment and cross-pollination of ideas at multicultural centers like Toledo. Finally, students of thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Scholasticism arguably should read this book. Scholars are quite familiar with Aquinas's attacks on universal hylomorphism, and students of Franciscan thought with Bonaventure's and Olivi's defense of the hylomorphic composition of angels and souls. Here we can see how an early reader of Ibn Gabirol developed and defended such positions. In articulating the renovations that Gundisalvi makes over time and in reaction to the ideas circulating around him, Polloni is able to highlight the philosophical appeal of universal hylomorphism. Specifically, by carefully articulating Gundisalvi's mature theory of matter and its principles and motivations, Polloni pinpoints a problem that arises when one tries to explain the ontological difference between God and creation. Everyone acknowledged that all creatures, including spirits, have an intrinsic aspect or part that grounds their potentialities and possibilities. Philosophers like Ibn Daud (and Aquinas) were willing to concede that this aspect or part is "like matter," but when pressed they often seem to be at a loss as to what more to say. Gundisalvi responds by pointing out that there is something ready to hand that grounds the potentialities in spiritual substances: it goes by the name "matter."

ANDREW W. ARLIG, Brooklyn College, The City University of New York

ANDREW RABIN, *Crime and Punishment in Anglo-Saxon England*. (Cambridge Elements: England in the Early Medieval World.) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020. Paper. Pp. 72. \$20. ISBN: 978-1-1089-3203-5.  
doi:10.1086/721777

Early medieval English law is something of a bramble, sticking you and evading your grasp at every turn. You might come across one intriguing piece of legislation, only to find another that contradicts it in some inexplicable way. Just when you think you are beginning to get a handle on the royal legislative codes of, say, King Alfred or King Æthelstan, you realize there is a still larger and even more unwieldy corpus of charters and wills. And then there's ecclesiastical law, which is a whole other distinct, yet inseparable world. For scholars of legal history, this evasive multifariness is often what sadistically fascinates us most. There is a rich body of scholarship focused on and dissecting the period's jurisprudential thorns. It's the exceptional cases that tend to get the most attention, even though they may not give us the most accurate or complete insight into the mundane workings of the law. So, if one wanted a general and preliminary sense of how pre-Conquest English law "worked," one might turn,

*Speculum* 97/4 (October 2022)