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La Passiun de Seint Edmund by Judith Grant  
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Dr. Gould's book does, however, make the manuscript "available" to scholars for further research. It contains lists of contents; of saints in the calendar, litany, and suffrages; and of illustrations in the manuscript (although all of the historiated initials are not listed). An index of the manuscripts cited is provided, but not a general index. The black-and-white illustrations are, for the most part, clear and of good quality, except for those from the Bibliothèque Municipale in Amiens.

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JUDITH GRANT, ed., *La Passiun de Seint Edmund*. (Anglo-Norman Text Society, 36, for 1978.) London: Anglo-Norman Text Society, 1978. Pp. xii, 172; 1 plate.

FOLLOWING centuries of neglect, hagiographic literature is beginning to make a comeback, and the account of the death and subsequent miracles of St. Edmund, the king of East Anglia decapitated in 869 by Danish invaders, is surely among the more interesting specimens of the genre. In addition to versions in Latin and English, we know of four apparently unrelated accounts in Old French, of which Judith Grant has chosen that in Gonville and Caius College Cambridge MS 435/435 as the basis for her work.<sup>1</sup>

This text of 1,696 predominantly octosyllabic lines, subdivided into 424 monorhyming quatrains, preserves a "good but by no means perfect copy of the seemingly lost original" (p. 60). The poem has been edited with exceptional care, and every editorial decision is carefully defended either in the sixty-one-page introduction or in the thirty-two pages of notes. One decision in particular — not to use the diaeresis — although contrary to accepted editorial practice, deserves some comment and commendation. Since the late nineteenth century editors of Old French texts have generally assumed that these poems were composed in a fixed meter, and have therefore sought to "regularize" any lines which do not conform to a poem's dominant pattern. Recent research has shown, however, that there are frequently many more "irregular" lines than one might suppose — even in a poem such as the *Chanson de Roland*<sup>2</sup> — and that such irregularities may have made little if any difference in the (usually) oral presentation of these works. Therefore, in a poem such as the *Passiun* (with about one hundred clearly non-octosyllabic lines even after one has made all allowances for instability in unstressed vowels, use of elision, hiatus, syneresis, etc.), it is commendable not to use the diaeresis to impose a single manner of recitation upon a line which may have had multiple possibilities. Likewise, Grant properly refrains from attempting to reconstruct octosyllabic lines the poet may well not have written.

Although the text has been edited very conservatively, with a strict minimum of editorial intervention, there are a few choices one might question. Loss of final unsupported consonants when preconsonantal in position is well-attested for texts of the period, as Grant herself notes (pp. 56–57); this is particularly prevalent in the case of *-l* of the pronoun *il* before a word beginning with *l-*. Since the scribe

<sup>1</sup> This text was previously published as a Greifswald dissertation by A. Nabert (1915) and was again edited as a doctoral thesis by C. W. J. Higson (Cambridge, 1936). Grant's edition replaces these.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Marjorie L. Windelberg, "Theoretical Questions about Metrical Irregularities in the *Chanson de Roland*," *Olifant* 6 (1978–79), 1, 6–19, and the ensuing discussion.

consistently omitted *-l* in this position, there seems no reason to restore it at 45, 745, 896, etc. In an analogous situation, Grant quotes Tobler-Lommatzsch to support the correction of *Ço que sun quor a purpensé* (ll. 592 and 1420) to *Ço qu'e[n] sun quor a purpensé*. However, the manuscript reading with *cuer* as subject is supported by T.-L. 7, 1536 *Si granz com cuers puet porpenser*. Finally, I believe that line 265 *Quant un dest[r]uite la cité* might be better amended to *Quant un[t] dest[r]uite la cité* (cf. the correction at line 932).

The introduction — actually longer than the poem itself — follows the consecrated format for studies of this type. The detailed codicological section as well as the carefully established sections on the language and orthography of the poem are to be especially recommended. The chapters on the dating and authorship and on the sources (both historical and literary) are necessarily more speculative in nature, but there is no reason to doubt Grant's general conclusions: that the anonymous Old French poet was a religious writing around 1200, probably in East Anglia for a relatively unsophisticated audience. His principal source was the Latin *Passio Sancti Eadmundi* (c. 985–87) by Abbo of Fleury, but he did not hesitate to adapt this work to his own purposes. Direct comparisons between the *Passiun* and Abbo's *Passio* are limited, and possible influences of/on other versions in Old French are dismissed somewhat too summarily (p. 7). While such analyses are not usually within the purview of an editor, Grant's few suggestions along these lines suggest that there is much more which might eventually be done with the materials now at hand. We can thank Judith Grant for making this text available in a very reliable, carefully annotated, and thoroughly glossed edition.

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THOMAS HALL, *Mittelalterliche Stadtgrundrisse: Versuch einer Übersicht der Entwicklung in Deutschland und Frankreich*. (Antikvariskt Arkiv, 66.) Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1978. Paper. Pp. 160; 83 city plans. SwKr 50.

THE ANCIENT city was well defined. Its physical fabric possessed clear legibility, its political institutions were articulated in law, and its mythic or sacred structure, constantly present in buildings, sites, and rites, made it a vivid reality to its citizens. During the medieval period the continuity of urban-centered civilization was disrupted, but by the late Middle Ages an urban civilization had again been established throughout Europe. Whether completely transformed from their ancient predecessors or new places beyond the sphere of ancient civilization, cities were physically and politically tangible and distinct, and the mythic type or identity of each, whether defined in sacred or civic terms or in both, was a reality to its citizens. The thousand-year interval between these periods, one that is fraught with difficulties for the historian of the city, is the subject of this study.

The book's geographic span begins in the Loire valley and, turning in a great arc, ranges out into the eastern Baltic, returning briefly for a glance at the *bastides* of southern France. Its temporal scope is limited to the early history of each city it discusses. After a town has taken on some semblance of medieval form, the author with few exceptions leaves it and moves eastward. His sources are primarily the extensive literature, mostly in German, that deals with local examples or presents surveys of limited geographic or temporal extent and that was produced during the