

much, is that Dante saw the *Comedy* as a work of public service deserving of recognition and reward. Certainly, as Steinberg makes clear, Dante banked too heavily on the reassertion of imperial power, and the enforcement of law attendant to it, for rescue; as that seat lay vacant, so did Dante's hopes evanesce.

This study, compact yet fully realized, reaffirms the centrality of Steinberg's voice in Dante studies well beyond the limits, if you will, of North America. His is, moreover, a voice one likes to hear: straightforward, thoughtful, convivial. To borrow an image from Dante, Steinberg offers a full four-course meal, one that sates without being heavy, and on which the reader may later reflect with renewed pleasure.

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NICOLA TANGARI, ed., *Musica e liturgia a Montecassino nel medioevo: Atti del Simposio internazionale di studi (Cassino, 9–10 dicembre 2010)*. (Scritture e libri del medioevo 10.) Rome: Viella, 2012. Pp. 322. €40. ISBN: 978-88-8334-932-4.  
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Montecassino and its monastic culture play a large part in studies of the Beneventan zone, the region that used the distinctive Beneventan script for much of the Middle Ages. The abbey's prominence in studies of the region is a result in part of its great collection of manuscripts, many copied and used at Montecassino. These represent a large proportion of the surviving Beneventan manuscripts and form the basis for considering Montecassino a principal driver of liturgical and musical change in the region. Its influence is evident, for instance, in Montecassino's part in the regional replacement of Beneventan chant by Gregorian chant, especially after Pope Stephen IX banned the singing of the local chant at Montecassino in 1058, and the abbot Desiderius (1058–87) commissioned new books to replace the abbey's older liturgical codices. With this volume, based on a conference hosted at the University of Cassino in December 2010 and edited by the conference organizer, Nicola Tangari, leading figures in the study of the music and liturgy of medieval Montecassino present current research that refines, and in some instances challenges, several traditional conclusions about the role of the abbey.

Context for the specialized studies is provided by Thomas Forrest Kelly in his preface, Giacomo Baroffio in his summary, and Tangari himself in an extended review of the relevant literature and sources. Marco Palma's article introduces one of the fundamental tools in the field, the *Bibliografia dei manoscritti in scrittura beneventana (BMB)*, which publishes annual summaries of studies that consider manuscripts in Beneventan and makes an extensive literature available online to a wide range of scholarly interests. The remaining contributions are research papers that in sum lead to an increasingly refined understanding of the abbey's liturgical and musical role. The complex interactions between the Gregorian and Beneventan traditions are examined in articles by Gunilla Iversen on Gloria tropes and prosulas at Montecassino, Luisa Nardini on neo-Gregorian compositions and Beneventan elements in the Mass *Vir dei Benedictus* in Beneventan and non-Beneventan manuscripts, Katarina Livljanić on the elaborate poetic and musical composition of the responsory *Dixit Isaac patri suo* in Montecassino, Archivio dell'Abbazia, MS 542, and Matthew Peattie on Beneventan melodic symptoms in Montecassino antiphons. Considering textual associations, Brian Møller Jensen examines the few nonbiblical introit antiphons in Cassinese sources. Montecassino's interaction with northern Europe is examined in articles by Marie-Noël Colette on Cassinese signs in manuscripts from Saint-Maur-des-Fossés, and Jean-François Goudesenne on the circulation of the Office of Saint Maur in the Romano-Beneventan corpus and at Glanfeuil and Fossés. Other regional influences are considered in articles by David Hiley on the Office of Saint Catherine, which relates to the Norman

impact on the region, Laura Albiero on fragments from Arpino that shed light on the composition of feasts and their diffusion, and Oliver Gerlach on Byzantine chant and its local traditions before and after Desiderius. Musical theory is the topic of Angelo Rusconi's article preliminary to an edition of the famous tonary of Montecassino, Archivio dell'Abbazia, MS 318. Roger Reynolds considers musical-liturgical references in Cassinese canon law collections, with particular attention to the Cassinese Collection in Five Books and its sources. Francesco Zimei identifies connections between Cassinese and Umbrian models, and Benedictine and Franciscan cultures, in examining the melodic settings of the Latin Passion and vulgar planctus in Montecassino, Archivio dell'Abbazia, Compactiones XVIII, the latter likely the earliest vernacular text with musical notation, as Zimei argues.

Many of the articles are provided with plates, musical transcriptions, or tables. The volume has a useful general bibliography, indices, and a list of manuscripts cited. The articles are particularly well supported by manuscript references, which reveal the extent to which fundamental research is contributing to the understanding of Montecassino's role in the period. The articles demonstrate that much remains to be done. The sources are rich, but not known as well as they need to be for a synthetic understanding of medieval Montecassino's place in regional and European cultural history. Nonetheless, the studies challenge several arguments in the literature. Despite the impression that Montecassino was a leader in supplanting the regional culture, it is increasingly clear that the abbey integrated Roman influences with the local musical culture to create a distinctive local idiom. Moreover, it is evident that the influences were not all in one direction. Montecassino was not simply a conduit for external influences, but broadly integrated in the medieval world and closely linked to, and influencing, developments in France and elsewhere in Italy. In a general sense, the range of studies in this excellent volume will also alert readers to the diverse possibilities for cultural studies based on liturgy and music, which defined monastic life and through which an abbey like Montecassino expressed its devotion and its status.

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WARREN TREADGOLD, *The Middle Byzantine Historians*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013. Pp. xvii, 546; 1 table and 2 maps. \$130. ISBN: 978-1-137-28085-5.  
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Warren Treadgold's *The Middle Byzantine Historians* (*MBH*), sequel to the earlier *The Early Byzantine Historians* (reviewed in *Speculum* 86/3 [2011]: 813–14), is a work of impressive scope and ambition that offers original thoughts on most of the works reviewed therein. *MBH* is divided into thirteen chapters covering the period from the seventh century to the Fourth Crusade. With 504 pages of text, *MBH* also offers two useful maps of the empire (one charting the presumed origins of each author) and a chronological table on which to place each historian. The chapter structure is chronological (no generic subdivisions here into chronicles, histories, or biographies). While most sections cover multiple historians, two focus on single individuals (chapter 8 on Psellos, 12 on Choniates), arguably the most talented of the lot.

True to the title of his work, Treadgold does not simply outline the works in question but also focuses on the historians themselves, who are appropriately pegged on the political and ecclesiastical milestones of their time, thus turned into living, breathing social and political agents. Regrettably, *MBH* has much “less to say about ideology and mentalities” and assumes against the grain of contemporary readings of Byzantine literary culture (A. Kaldellis, “The Hagiography of Doubt and Skepticism,” in S. Efthymiades, ed., *The*

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