narrative of Christianity's political triumph told in the fifteenth chapter, as well as that chapter's ironic conflations of the new religion's sordid origins, self-aggrandizing claims, and subsequent grandeur. Gibbon's writing is at its most interesting when it combines these purposes: when philosophic interpretation is both mooted and allowed to slip away, and when the sublimity of decline undercuts the complacency of ironic judgment. This complexity is particularly characteristic of the later volumes of Gibbon's history, and an expansion of Liebert's argument to consider these works would doubtless have given further richness to what is already an interesting and valuable study.

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Amanda Luyster, ed. Bringing the Holy Land Home: The Crusades, Chertsey Abbey, and the Reconstruction of a Medieval Masterpiece

Studies in Medieval and Early Renaissance Art History. New York: Harvey Miller, 2023. Pp. 376. $125.00 (cloth).

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The historiography of the crusade endorses a truism of medievalist historiography in general: scholarship on the Middle Ages is often as much about the present as it is about the past. Put differently, our present social and political positions inflect how we look at, and what we look for, in the Middle Ages, the other or "evil twin" to modernity. The attacks of September 11, 2001 have reoriented the gaze of the "western" world eastward to a new understanding of Islamic religion, culture, and, of course, art. Reflecting upon this very theme, Amanda Luyster's Preface to this volume cites Fulcher of Chartres's well-known epitome of a reoriented Europe after the First Crusade (1096–99): "we who were Occidentals have become Orientals," which articulates a new physical, cultural, linguistic, and aesthetic fluidity between the Christian and Islamic worlds after c. 1100.

And yet, British scholarship has been hesitant to explore the impact of the crusade on British art. This lack of attention stands in stark relief aside the work of Daniel Weiss, Anne Derbes, Linda Seidel, and others on France, Jaroslav Folda on crusader art in the Holy Land, and so on. It is also notable because traditions in art historical scholarship are behind that of history itself where the crusade has been a leading occupation of British historians. Whether in the references to the crusade in the Painted Chamber at Westminster, or the eight-pointed stars on the Westminster Retable that surely emulate Islamic tilework, medievalist art history in Britain has tended to ignore or deflect the profound artistic influence of the crusade on British art. Much of the work on the visual culture of the crusade in England has instead been done by North American scholars, something amply attested by the present volume (see also *Crusading and Ideas of the Holy Land in Medieval Britain*, eds. Kathryn Hurlock and Laura Whatley [2022]).

Bringing the Holy Land Home: The Crusades, Chertsey Abbey, and the Reconstruction of a Medieval Masterpiece is a most welcome addition to our understanding of the visual culture of the

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crusade in England. The volume accompanies an exhibition organized by the editor at The College of the Holy Cross in Massachusetts (https://chertseytiles.holycross.edu/). At the core of the exhibition and the book is a piece of detective work by Luyster on the Chertsey tiles—a series of fragmentary, thirteenth-century floor tiles from the chapter house at Chertsey Abbey in Surrey, now in the British Museum. The Chertsey tiles represent a series of battles between Richard I and Saladin, Samson and the Lion, and various knightly scenes. These were one of three groups of tiles also including imagery of the romance hero Tristan and another of the zodiac and labors of the months. The tiles were known to scholars largely through the work of the late Elizabeth Eames who defined them as a series of famous historical combats. Luyster's contribution here is to reread them as a series of crusading deeds accomplished in the Mediterranean. The image of Richard and Saladin addresses this directly, whereas other imagery, such as that of Samson, does so allegorically since Samson was evoked as an Old Testament predecessor to the crusade enterprise.

Luyster's remarkable reconstruction of the tiles (see previously "Fragmented Tile, Fragmented Text: Richard the Lionheart on Crusade and the Lost Latin Texts of the Chertsey Combat Tiles (c. 1250)," *Digital Philology* 21, no. 2 [2022]: 86–120) is laid out in a generous 50-page first chapter. It begins by reconstructing the floor based on the extant tiles including a large color image of the tiles as they may have once appeared, and then turns to decipher the Latin inscriptions. The inscriptions, like the imagery of the tiles, are defined by the language of martial combat. Working with a newly created (and now freely available) computer code, the fragmentary inscriptions were reconstructed by cross-referencing their letters with earlier crusade-oriented texts, namely Richard of Devizes's *Chronicles of Richard I* (1192) and William of Tyre's *A History of Deeds Done beyond the Sea* (c. 1170–84).

The remainder of the *Bringing the Holy Land Home* is comprised of ten essays exploring the visual culture of the crusade in England and in particular the influence of portable arts from the Islamic and Byzantine worlds, and an additional series of thirteen short catalogue essays devoted to particular objects in the exhibition. For example, Cynthia Hahn's essay chronicles the transfer of relics from the Holy Land to England after the First Crusade and their appearance—via diplomatic gifts or occasionally via looting—in collections at Reading, Thorney, and elsewhere; Sarah Guerin explores the importation of African elephant ivory into England; Elizabeth Williams considers the mobility of textiles in medieval Eurasia; and Paroma Chatterjee describes western crusaders' encounter with sculpture in Constantinople (particularly via the description of Niketas Choniates).

There is much to praise in this volume. To read it is to see the Middle Ages anew and to experience—at least a glimpse—of the wonder of crusaders who gazed upon a new world rich with objects and images. This is not a "shock of the new" because the Middle Ages has always been an intensely international and multicultural period for those able to see it as such. Rather, the book offers a historiographical revision after which the "Englishness" of art history that has dogged much scholarly endeavor in one way or another must fall by the wayside to expose the reality that English art was connected to the Holy Land from even before the First Crusade. Harvey Miller is to be applauded for doing a lovely job of the book and densely illuminating it with 136 color illustrations. To balance out this review, it must be said that the book could have been more rigorously edited. It would have been improved with an initial section on Chertsey abbey, its art, architecture, and culture (some of this material is interspersed between other essays). There were also some surprising omissions, including my own essay on the Painted Chamber at Westminster ("The Painted Chamber at Westminster, Edward I, and the Crusade," *Viator* 37 [2006]: 189–221) that associates crusading aspirations of the Edwardian court with their art patronage in the 1290s. It is also notable that Elizabeth Eames's speculations that the tiles themselves originated at Westminster is not really interrogated (it is entirely possible that that was not the case). But these are minor quibbles and do not detract from a very welcome book. *Bringing the Holy Land Home*

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sets a new agenda for the visual culture of the crusade in England and one that is sure to be influential on students and scholars alike.

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Lynneth Miller Renberg. Women, Dance, and Parish Religion in England, 1300–1640

Gender in the Middle Ages Series 19. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2022. Pp. 268. $85.00 (cloth).

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The relationship between dance and Christianity is under-researched and often misunderstood. Lynneth Miller Renberg's *Women, Dance, and Parish Religion in England, 1300–1600* is a game-changing study that will benefit scholars of dance, religion, and British history. Renberg opens her introduction with a thirteenth-century English text that describes how Christians can dance with God, both literally and allegorically. However, by the end of the Reformation, she identifies a "stillness of the saints," in which "dancers were described as dancing not with angels in heaven but with demons in hell" (3). Thus, the ambitious scope of this book sets out to explore the shifting attitudes of dance in medieval and early modern England and dance's relationship to religion and gender. As Renberg reveals, dance gradually congealed into a feminized and sexualized form of sin.

The first chapter examines major church councils and reforms, arguing that they affected the relationship between dance and faith. Renberg draws from a large corpus of vernacular English sermons and *exempla* (i.e., short, moralizing tales that were often inserted into sermons). While Renberg is aware of the crucial differences between medieval and early modern theology, she also highlights commonalities between 1200 and 1600 that involve the concern for laity and the place of dance in worship. Moving from clerical rhetoric to performance practice, the second chapter analyzes the fraught relationship between dance and sacred space. Here Renberg shows how dance shared a close proximity to sacrilege and pollution, but not necessarily sex and gender. By the Late Middle Ages, as the third chapter on sacred time indicates, dance became more associated with women. While previous scholarship has detailed the role of dancing in early modern witchcraft, Renberg contends that medieval Europe first forged the connection between dancing and female witches. As she writes, "against this inherited medieval theological backdrop and early modern parish tensions over sacrilege, belief, and practice, it is no surprise then that dance, already a mark of the sacrilegious woman, also became a mark of the witch" (102).

The fourth chapter traces the sexualization of dance through the biblical figure of Salome. Interestingly, Renberg notes that, before the fourteenth century, biblical commentators often interpreted Salome in a more positive or allegorical light. In time, commentators reoriented Salome and her mother Herodias as more of the focus of the Bible story. In consequence, they became more guilty of the murder of St. John the Baptist. The fifth chapter

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