

cosmology; and Jennifer Moreton on editing texts which turn out not to be by Grosseteste.

The balance of these essays is very good indeed. Mackie shows how subsequent copyists of Grosseteste's text adapted it for specific audiences. Her conclusions are balanced and are based on her intimate knowledge of the MSS and textual tradition.

Similarly, Quinn addresses the vexed issue of Grosseteste's knowledge of Greek, giving a neat short overview of pseudo-Dionysius in the Middle Ages. She too then draws on her close readings of the MSS to make general points. She notes the difficulties of reading Grosseteste which seem to be inherent in his often long-winded and parenthetical style. It is refreshing to see a Grosseteste scholar admit that his intelligent and original ideas are not matched by clarity of expression and structure. And Quinn makes another undoubtedly correct point: that for Grosseteste, 'the sole purpose and end of studying doctrine was evangelical. For him, symbolic theology was not at odds, nor could it be, with the analytic ... approach ... for comprehending the sensible world.'

Lewis, faced with the particularly difficult *Notes on the Physics*, both makes good points about the varieties of version available in Grosseteste's own time (showing along the way how his medieval editors struggled with his texts), and by his careful textual work redates these texts to the 1220s from the 1230s, hoping thereby to clarify our knowledge of Grosseteste's earlier career.

Panti's close work on three cosmological texts is also supportive of the likelihood raised elsewhere by Goering (whose intelligent readings of Grosseteste are seconded in other essays here as well) that Grosseteste spent a substantial part of 1220-30 in Paris, if not formally studying theology in the Schools, then talking and listening to those who did.

Ginther raises the possibility of editing Grosseteste using the literary concept of *mouvance* - producing texts not in a single 'perfect' state as classical principles of editing would prefer, but as a series of versions, changing with time, perhaps, or with audience or with scribe, possible with computer hypertext in a way that is more difficult in book form. His theoretical suggestion is very well illustrated by the contributors to this volume, whose valiant efforts on behalf of modern would-be Grosseteste readers must be applauded. (LESLEY SMITH)

John Colarusso. *Nart Sagas from the Caucasus:*

*Myths and Legends from the Circassians, Abazas, Abkhaz, and Ubykhs*

Princeton University Press. xxiv, 552. US \$35.00

The sagas of the Narts, tales and myths of a race of larger-than-life heroes descended from a single mother and living before the time of men, recited

and sung by male and female bards as both poetry and prose, are among the most important works of the world's traditional literatures. Nart traditions are found among peoples speaking languages from four different linguistic families all along the mountains of the North Caucasus and even among the Svan and Georgian highlanders, who belong to a fifth linguistic family (Kartvelian) and live just over the peaks in the South Caucasus. John Colarusso has given us a definitive collection and masterful translation directly from the Northwest Caucasian linguistic tradition that can be enjoyed as recreational reading or, thanks to the fine scholarly apparatus that is both informative and unobtrusive, studied for research purposes or used in the classroom.

The name Nart is of Iranian origin from an Indo-European root that is the source of words meaning 'man,' 'hero,' etc, in Sanskrit, Old Irish, Italic (e.g., the Sabine proper name *Nero* means 'strong'), and Greek (the source of the English prefix *andro-* and the suffix *-andry*). As the most archaic of the Nart corpora, the Northwest Caucasian Nart sagas preserve an ancient Iranian core, but also contain Northwest Caucasian accretions of such antiquity that they serve as a window into a more archaic past. Some of the tales are uniquely Northwest Caucasian in their thematics, others have recognizable parallels with traditions and literatures such as Greek and Sanskrit mythology, Homer and the Bible, Norse, Old Irish, and Slavic as well as ancient Hittite and Hurrian myths, Kartvelian culture, and also Russian magic tales.

After an excellent introduction placing the Northwest Caucasian Nart corpus in its larger historical context, the main body of the book is divided into four sections containing selections from the Circassian and Abkhaz corpora as well as all that is available of the Ubykh and Abaza corpora, the total number of sagas being ninety-two. Each text is followed by commentary setting it in its general cultural context, including fascinating and enlightening excursions into comparative mythology, followed by footnotes etymologizing names, peculiar words, and commenting on specific details, the most anomalous of which, argues Colarusso, are likely to be the most archaic, since the only reason for their presence is tradition.

The fifth major section is an appendix giving sagas in five Northwest Caucasian languages: one each in Kabardian East Circassian, Bzhedukh West Circassian (Adyghe), Ubykh, Abaza (Tapanta dialect, 'Northern Abkhaz') and Bzyb Abkhaz. Each text begins with a chart of the phonological system and a discussion of salient features of the phonology, all of which are extraordinarily rich in consonants and famously poor in vowels. The introduction to the Kabardian East Circassian saga also has notes on verbal inflection and syntax which apply to all five sagas. Each saga is then given phonetically in numbered sentences. Below each sentence each word is given in phonemic transcription and separated into morphemes, and next to each word is a morpheme by morpheme gloss into English. At the

end, each numbered sentence is translated into grammatical English. The English translations of the Ubykh and Abaza sagas in the appendix are more literal than those in the main body in the text so that the reader can follow the original more easily. The book closes with a bibliography of around two hundred items.

This work is an extraordinary achievement, and at the same time it is an invitation to future research. Kevin Tuite supplied Colarusso with many valuable comments on relevant material from Kartvelian, but I noticed a number of parallels with Russian themes that could also be pointed out. Having written my BA thesis on Russian magic tales almost thirty-five years ago, I found my old interests revived by reading this collection. There is something here for everyone. The linguist has an extraordinarily interesting data set, students of anthropology, literature, religion, Caucasian and Near Eastern history, and other disciplines have rich source material, and the general reader has a chance to learn about a fascinating part of the world. (VICTOR FRIEDMAN)

Peter M. Daly and G. Richard Dimler, SJ, *Corpus Librorum Emblematum:*

*The Jesuit Series. Part 1: A-D*

McGill-Queen's University Press 2002. lix, 375. \$110.00

This magisterial section of Daly and Dimler's bibliography of Jesuit emblem-books, covering a mere seven (in the Latin alphabet, six) letters of the alphabet, contains as much matter for admiration and meditation as many completed monographs on the arts and cultures of the early modern world. This is genuinely an outstanding achievement, adding to the achievements which have gone before, increasing anticipation of what is to come.

As well as being a wide-ranging collection of bibliographical specifics and encyclopedic information about the present locations of emblem books, considered in a splendidly wide sense (thus including festival decorations and books of iconographic theory), this book gives a real sense of the range of uses to which verbal and visual languages were put in the seventeenth century. It is of interest to all historians of early modern culture, not only to specialists in Counter-Reformation history and the history of the emblem. As so often, the old Society of Jesus provides a particularly keen focus: so much of the Society's mission involved the explanation of the theories of one social group to another that their writings are vital witnesses for the contemporary historian. In their activities as educators of urban adults, they taught the elite arts of emblematics and rhetoric, they taught oratory and emblematics in their colleges, they functioned as one of the primary points of contact between the Old World and the New.