

poetry, statuary and other non-literary sources as well as books, sermons and newspaper reports in a well-rounded presentation of crusader symbolism in wartime propaganda. Finally, he overviews Muslim evaluations of crusades and their own involvement in warfare with balance and clarity.

Phillips is good at explaining the factual details, for example, he does not just note the amount paid for a crusade but explains what portion of the French annual budget this was. He also discusses various accounts of troop numbers and tactics in a way that links issues like prestige with geographical positions and outcomes. Every chapter is replete with brief quotes that bring authenticity to the argument presented, and the endnotes are rich and helpful.

This is an excellent book which captures the breadth and depth of the crusades while offering enough detail and bibliography to allow further in-depth research. It has a very good index and maps and illustrations that make the crusades come alive. While the cover says that the Daily Telegraph finds it “terrifically entertaining,” this is also a solid summary of crusading history that makes history appealing and shows its significance for today.

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Pietarinen, Juhani, and Viljanen, Valtteri (eds), *The World as Active Power: Studies in the History of European Reason*

(Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2009) hardback; x + 350 pages; RRP €105.00; ISBN 9789004177123

The World as Active Power: Studies in the History of European Reason is a collection of essays that examines the world in terms of power. The essays span from the classical era to the Early Modern period. However, there is a lot in this book to interest the early medieval scholar. A significant concept in western philosophy is the natural ordering of elements of the world and this has led to the presumption that this ordering is a result of a rational power. In the introduction Pietarinen and Viljanen explain that the most common views of this power are two-fold. First, “power dualism” where there are two types of power, which are opposite and different in nature; for example active–passive; good–evil, and immaterial–material. Second, “power monism” where there is one type of power that is mysterious, insensible, and concealed from us. This power, “dualism” or “monism,” is considered to be the rational essence of human beings, the guiding factor to rational thought and to happiness in this world.

“Power dualism” forms the basis of Plato’s ontology and Juhani Pietarinen examines Plato’s explanation of the sensible world. In *Timaeus*, Plato contrasts two basic types of being, the rational and the irrational. In Plato’s explanation of the sensible world things have both these types of power. The sensible world is a result of bringing order into disorder. The source of all changes in the material world is the active power of order acting on the receptive passive power of disorder. It is only in the exercise of active thinking that true human happiness can be found. It is only through active thinking that knowledge of eternal truths can be found. Pietarinen concludes that it is only through knowledge of eternal truths that immortality can be achieved.

Havard Lokke next considers the Stoics' concept of active power. The ancient Stoics believed that there exists an active materialistic principle that governs the world in accordance with a rational power. The world consists of four elements: earth, air, fire, and water. The Stoics regarded earth and water as "causally inert elements making up the passive principle called 'matter', while air and fire have tensility because they are causally active, making up the active principle" (58). Fire and air go beyond being elements; they are the power that drives the teleological schemes of things. The "matter," the elements of earth and water, are without motion and form; they require the active principle to constitute reality.

Eyjolfur Kjalar Emilsson argues that although the Neoplatonist Plotinus' concept of power was a development of his Platonic and Aristotelian heritage, it remains an original conceptualisation. A distinct element of Plotinus' foundation of causation is the notion of double activity. The hierarchy of being is defined by a type of internal activity. At the same time the internal activity produces an activity external to itself. This double activity operates at every level of the hierarchy. The external activity becomes the matter for the next level below.

In the early medieval period the ultimate cause of all being and becoming is a unique and supreme God. Questions on the notion of power itself invoked questions about the origin of evil, the nature of free will and the relation between free will and grace. Tomas Ekenberg surveys and analyses Peter Damian's views on divine power and will, Abelard on goodness and rationality, and Anselm on partial powers. Ekenberg concludes that Damian, Abelard, and Anselm take their general theoretical framework from Augustine and Boethius, explaining that action is dependant on both the power and the will of an agent. "Together power and will constitute a necessary and sufficient condition for action" (110).

Andreas Schmidt argues that in Thomas Aquinas there can be found a modal theory where it is logically possible for whatever God has the power to do and one can draw on this power. Something can only be created by the active power of God, who can produce things out of nothing. Schmidt outlines objections and responses of God's possibilities and freedom. However, what is possible is not necessarily actual, thus the question arises as to how is it possible to conceive the transition from possibility to actuality. Duns Scot rejects Aquinas' reasoning by claiming the "logical space of possibilities exists independently of God; it would exist even if God did not exist" (128).

The World as Active Power: Studies in the History of European Reason constitutes an advance in the field of the history of ontological thought. The topics of the paper are well considered and each paper flows on from the previous one. It is well written but not always easy to read; however this is due to the complex subject matter rather than unnecessarily complex language. It is an excellent addition to the ongoing discussion on the history of ontological thought and it is well worth reading.

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