

as penitential precedents for Malory's story.

Michael Twomey brings to light a playful, satiric letter from Morgan, "emprise de desert", squeezed into a manuscript collection of astronomical treatises and tables held at the British Library. Twomey prints and translates the letter, identifies the fall of Piers Gaveston as the immediate context for its satirical prophecy, and supplies epistolary and proverbial appendices. Less oppositional

adaptations of Arthurian material are showcased in Martine Meuwese's survey of some exquisite Parisian ivory caskets "compiled" from scenes of amorous adventure. Meuwese compares these scenes purposefully with manuscript illuminations, diagnoses some likely nineteenth-century fakes, and, gratifyingly, provides numerous illustrations. Frustratingly, we know a medieval provenance for only one of the caskets

after it left its Paris workshop. In the volume's final essay, Stewart Mottram focuses closely on a handful of salient instances to unpack the twofold meaning of "empire" in early Tudor England. In the process, he highlights Arthur's place in some absorbing current critical discussion about discourses of nation and diplomatic self-fashioning.

It can seem arbitrary for this annual collection to exclude romances and related cultural

products that happen to be non-Arthurian; but this impression is significantly qualified by the scholarly quality of the work and by the contributors' expertise and interests beyond Arthurian boundaries.

ELLIOT KENDALL

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