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In chapter four, Kleiner approaches the problem of Dante's science with an emphasis on surprise and play. His point is that the particularly intimidating technical passages in the *Paradiso* betray Dante's attachment to contradiction and anomaly, his tendency to be "willfully erratic" (86). Close readings of dense scientific passages result in an awareness of what Kleiner calls extremely subtle "vanishing acts"—Dante's efforts to lure us, with a show of scientific precision, into trying to visualize the invisible (107). Frustration, blindness, and surprise are not casual occurrences but a structural method guiding the pilgrim's ascent to God.

On the whole, *Mismatching the Underworld* is a study developed with remarkable insight and subtlety of thought. The message seems to come down to this: to err is human, to do so on purpose is divine—and not only divine, but fun as well.

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Although the papers collected in *Diesseits- und Jenseitsreisen im Mittelalter* were presented at a conference in Bad Honnef, Germany, as far back as 17–20 June 1987, the proceedings did not appear in print until recently because of financial difficulties. The articles are written either in German or in French, reflecting the cooperation between the Universities Paris-Sorbonne IV and Bonn in Bad Honnef.

The theme is of great interest to a wide range of medievalists and is not limited to travels in concrete, physical terms, but rather also includes travel descriptions of literary, spiritual, and theological nature.

Marianne Barrucan analyzes the pictorial representation of the foreign world in Islamic miniatures in the travel account of Abû Zayd
from the beginning of the fourteenth century. She concludes that for him the various countries following the Islamic belief on the Asian continent formed one geographical unity. Anne Berthelot examines the touristic adventures of Alexander in the *Roman de Perceforest* from the early fourteenth century, which assumes the dimensions of a museum of adventures, thereby re-creating and merging the narrative patterns of the *roman antique* and the *roman breton*. A similar observation could have been made for fourteenth-century German romances such as *Diu Crône* or *Wigalois*, confirming Berthelot's observation.

Régis Boyer studies travel accounts in the Nordic literature by Snorri (*Edda*) and Saxo Grammaticus (*Gesta*) with their characteristic references to giants and dwarfs. André Crépin pursues a similar line of argument in his article on the Other in the Old English *Beowulf*, interpreting the monsters as literary expressions for the metaphysical dimension of the Other (see also my study on the Other in *Canon and Canon Transgression in Medieval German Literature*, ed. Albrecht Classen [Goppingen: Kummerle, 1993]). Christiane Deluz attempts to reconstruct the projection of the foreign worlds in Mandeville’s fantastic travel account, not discarding it as a product of his lively imagination and extensive reading, but as an effort to comprehend the entire world as an inhabited, livable place in the universe. Rainer Lengeler directs his attention towards the quotations from the Bible in the same text and toward Mandeville’s technique in selecting his sources.

Christoph Dröge moves into the age of the Renaissance, focusing on Petrarch, Poggio Bracciolini, and, above all, Giannozzo Manetti, who was the first Renaissance writer to discuss the explorations of the African coast by the Portuguese in his *De Dignitate et Excellentia Hominis*. Claude Lecouteux returns to the High Middle Ages in German literature and its representation of the foreign worlds in travel accounts such as in *Wigalois*, *Wigamur*, or Konrad von Würzburg’s *Partonopier und Melius*. He correctly observes that, for medieval readers, the foreign worlds described in literary texts were as real as the actual world, which also applies to one’s travel after death.
Mireille Mentré examines medieval iconography dealing with travel in the world of the Grail and analyzes the literary sources. Michel Stanesco offers a paper on chivalric travels in courtly literature. Alain Michel discusses spiritual travel in literature, whereas Francine Mora follows the reemergence of images of the Vergilian hell in twelfth-century texts such as by Bernard Silvestris and Chrétien de Troyes. For the object of his paper, Karl August Neuhausen chooses Cyriacus von Ancona, a fifteenth-century traveler journeying extensively through the world of the Eastern Mediterranean, exploring the architectural remnants of classical antiquity and reflecting on them in his prayers written between 1444 and 1447. Margarete Newels examines unpublished pastoral, didactic fourteenth-century texts regarding their perception of the other world which people enter after their death. Similarly, Erich Trapp discusses journeys to Hades in twelfth-century Byzantine literature, using specific texts as historical documents.

Claude Thomasset looks from a medical point of view at the practical aspect of traveling and analyzes relevant treatises by medieval writers such as Adam de Cremona and Arnaud de Villeneuve. At the end, Heinz Jürgen Wolf explores the possible meanings of the term “Wenelande” in Wace and similar expressions for a Nordic country in twelfth- and thirteenth-century texts as faint but possible reflections of the Viking discovery of America.

This volume offers a wide spectrum of discussions on a variety of aspects relating to travel. Both medieval and Renaissance texts are considered. Obviously the distinction between projected and real travels did not play a major role in medieval literature, and in this sense one might argue that those of the medieval period had a much better holistic perception of existence than we today. The papers are well researched and offer intriguing reading material. Despite the disparity of the themes, they all manage to complement one another and thus to create a homogeneous image of “travel” and the Other in the Middle Ages.

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