
J. B. Owens

*Idaho State University*

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visionary experience, women found both authority and a voice. Their writings reveal that “creative fulfillment through writing might be bound in the religious as well as the secular world.” To my own surprise these writings show women as “active agents in the transformation of their society” (21). Many of the women represented here were leaders in religious communities, popular preachers, or reformers; they reflected their times but also could be “thinkers on the cutting edge of new developments in the church” (21). They were literary innovators. Unlike those in more formal or learned modes, their texts tend to be “subjective, repetitive, nonanalytical, ahistorical, preferring the concrete to the abstract, and the formulaic to the self-consciously literary style.” The women “use the vernacular languages to express complex subjective states directly, forthrightly (by medieval standards), and precisely” (48-49). The women often found themselves isolated or alienated from others, involved in “the discovery of the self” and at the same time seeking to transcend the self in mystic otherness. I found especially powerful St. Ultimà of Fenza's Fifth Sermon, “Discourse on Weeping and Lamentation.” She had met with strong opposition in her work to establish a convent near Florence. She writes,

The garden in which the color of the rose was predominant now is all a dark bramble. . . . I was planted in charity, but now I have been pulled out of that ground, and my roots are dried up, and every fruit has been made impossible for me. . . . When I think back on what I have lost, I recall with great pain that for which I was destined, and my heart shatters, thinking that I am plunged in error. I am far from my homeland, and I find myself among foreigners.

(248-49)

Petroff's book makes a little-known literature accessible conveniently, even richly. Is her book likely to revise scholars' as well as students' ideas about women in medieval times? It did for me.

Richard J. Panofsky
New Mexico Highlands University


In this attractively written book, social anthropologist Alan Macfarlane demonstrates the existence of the “companionate Malthusian marriage
pattern” throughout the period “from [Geoffrey] Chaucer to [Thomas] Malthus.” Lawrence Stone (1977) argued that English family life evolved from the fourteenth century, when the individual was subordinate to the interests of the clan or “open lineage,” until the eighteenth, when the “modern,” highly individualized, loving style had clearly emerged. Here Macfarlane responds persuasively that no such shift occurred, a position reinforced by the recent book of Barbara A. Hanawalt (1986) on medieval English peasant families.

Macfarlane does not launch as radical an attack on the views of Stone and of Edward Shorter (1975) as that of John R. Gillis (1985), who argues for the absence of a unilinear history of the English family and for great variety in the design of marriage relationships. Although he cautions that his generalizations “iron out” some variety and subtle changes, Macfarlane does believe that there was a general English pattern characterized by a fluctuating age of first marriage, by individual choice of whether and when to marry and with whom, by the absence of strong rules about the choice of partner, by a cost-benefit calculation both in the marriage decision and in the determination to reproduce, and by couples functioning as independent social units. Thus, in England culture played a more important role in decisions to marry and have children than did biology, and Macfarlane shows how this fact was crucial to demographic and economic history. Because cultural norms were so important, Macfarlane undertakes interesting discussions of matters ranging from romantic love to inheritance laws.

Macfarlane accepts both the importance of companionate marriage as the basis of significant economic and social change in England and Western Europe and the connection between this type of conjugal relationship and capitalism, but he shows that, contrary to conceptions drawn from the works of Karl Marx and Max Weber, these two factors were already dominant by at least the fourteenth century and thereafter were not significantly altered.

While this central hypothesis is well sustained by the evidence amassed, Macfarlane’s secondary attempt to present the English pattern as somehow unique in comparison to continental marriages fails to convince. All too often he makes the same selective use of evidence about practices in other countries for which, in an earlier review essay (History and Theory, 1979), he condemned Stone’s treatment of England. Indeed, he seems curiously unaware that he cites observations from English jurists and political theorists, travelers’ accounts, and Enlightenment writers on continental law and practice that were too polemical or too uninformed to be reliable. Yet while his evidence is insufficient to sustain a hypothesis about English differences from Western European marriage patterns, Macfarlane’s book will still be important for those studying continental family life both as a guide to the use of available sources and as a warning about the extent to which scholars may be blinded by the received opinion that the
early modern was a period of significant change in all major social institutions.

J. B. Owens
Idaho State University


This collection of essays by the great French art critic Emile Mâle was first published in 1927; a fourth revised edition appeared in 1947. This handsomely produced and well-illustrated edition offers the first English translation, excellently done by Sylvia Stallings Lowe. The collection provides a helpful supplement to the new Princeton edition of Mâle’s *Religious Art in France*, published now in three volumes as part of the Bollingen series.

The first essay gives the reader an informative summary of Mâle’s major insights into the history of Christian artistry. “The Stages of Christian Art” traces the influence of Greek culture on catacomb iconography, especially in the image of the beardless Christ as the Good Shepherd. The essay then turns to the independent tradition of Syrian art in the early Church, epitomized by the bearded Christ. The confluence of these two strains into the medieval period follows. The fourfold division of the universe by Vincent of Beauvais in his *Speculum Majus* into the Mirrors of Nature, Science, Morality and History supplies Mâle with the matrix of his analysis of medieval art. He concludes this overview with an appreciation of the Italian Renaissance artists Raphael and Michelangelo. For Mâle, the Sistine Chapel echoes the imagery of the catacombs and of the stained glass windows of the cathedrals. Through the centuries, the tradition has remained true to itself and its inspirations.

In the next two essays, Mâle discovers similarities between Christian and Arabic art. The study leads him back on a pilgrimage through France to Spain, from Vezelay to Saint John of Compostela. The mosque at Cordoba, with its horseshoe-shaped arches, bicolored vault, and decorated cornices recalls the churches of Auvergne and Velay. Other strikingly similar patterns are found in Le Puy, Valence, Vienne, and back on the pilgrimage road to Vezelay again. The accumulated evidence is convincing, and the illustrations clinch the argument.

In the essay that follows, Mâle expands his study of architecture to the Gothic churches of the Midi, with special attention to the construction of the single nave under Cistercian influence. Mâle’s search again takes him to Spain and remote rural churches to end with the design of the Jesuit Gesu