

Book Notice

L'Anthroponymie: Document de l'Histoire sociale des Mondes méditerranéens médiévaux. Proceedings from the Colloquium on the "Genèse médiévale de l'anthroponymie moderne" (Rome, October 6-8, 1994). Compiled by Monique Bourin, Jean-Marie Martin, & François Menant. Ecole Française de Rome. 1997. Pp. 480. ISBN 2-7283-0361-445.

This volume consists of a collection of 28 papers presented at the 1994 colloquium on the "Medieval Genesis of Modern Anthroponymy." By examining the medieval practices of naming in the Mediterranean countries, these essays seek to answer the following questions: Does the study of naming enable us to discover similarities throughout the Mediterranean world, or at least throughout large areas of it? What does anthroponymy reveal about the cultural contact that took place in the Mediterranean regions and borderlands? What are the central rules of medieval naming practices inspired by family structures, religion, social groupings, and by city or rural life?

The essays, written in French and Italian, examine naming within specific regions of the Mediterranean area (southern Italy, northern and southern France, etc.). They also look at the influence of religion through such topics as "The Jewish World," and "Naming in the Contact Zone of the Christian and Moslem Worlds." Other chapters analyze naming from the perspective of class (e.g., aristocracy, feudalism) and gender (e.g., "Girls, Women, and Lineage"). There is an abstract for each chapter in the back of the volume, written in the same language as the chapter itself.

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