

## Book Notice

*Personal Names Studies of Medieval Europe: Social Identity and Familial Structures.* George T. Beech, Monique Bourin, and Pascal Chareille, eds. Studies in medieval culture XLIII, Medieval Institute Publications, Western Michigan Univ., Kalamazoo, MI. 2002. Pp. 205.

With this book, the work of the medieval names project *Genèse médiévale de l'anthroponymie moderne* (GMAM), spearheaded by Monique Bourin, receives its first, although limited, exposure to an English audience. This collection of 13 articles, mostly by participants in the seven GMAM conferences to date, the three conferences by a spinoff Italian group, and an international colloquium on medieval names in social history, will whet your appetite for the four books of GMAM, the three entitled *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome: Moyen âge, temps moderne* (106/1, 106/2, 110/1), and *L'anthroponymie: Documents de l'histoire sociale des mondes méditerranéens médiévaux* from the international colloquium. Unlike the other two large medieval names study projects of Europe, *Nomen et Gens*, and *Patronymica Romanica*, which focus on the linguistic origins and development of personal names, Germanic and Romance respectively, the GMAM French and Italian groups focus on French, Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian names. This book of essays concerns naming practices as they relate to social identity and familial structure in France, Spain, Portugal, and Italy and also includes a chapter each on Outremer (the Latin states in the Middle East) and on feminine names in Franconia. Ten of the 13 articles emphasize the 11th-13th centuries; one, the Carolingian era; one, 14th-15th century France; and one chapter refines and reiterates some of the specific methodological problems encountered in attempting to derive valid conclusions from application of statistical methods to a variety of homologous collections of names gathered from varied locales under sundry conditions.

The eight books above and those from *Nomen et Gens* and *Patronymica Romanica* must be ordered from European sources and even the least expensive costs many times the price of this paperback. However, it is not the price, the 23-page bibliography, or the cutting edge data and techniques, but the content that leads me to recommend that, if you can only buy one book on Romance anthroponymy, buy this one.

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