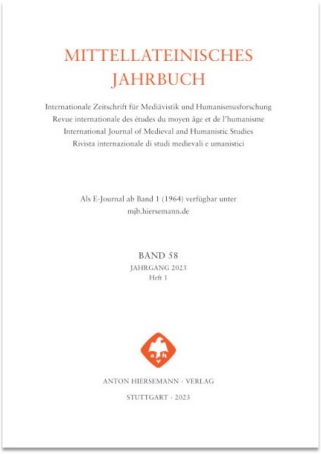

Andrew Hicks, Composing the World. Harmony in the Medieval Platonic Cosmos, New York 2017 (Oxford University Press), 344 pp.

Andrew H.'s ‹Composing the World› is a well-written and informative work. It was undoubtedly a courageous and imaginative decision to embark on a study of the notion of «cosmic harmony» in twelfth-century Latin sources, since a successful outcome could only be achieved by someone who combines many skills including not only musicology but medieval Latin philology and paleography, not without some acquaintance with the histories of philosophy and science. Given that the so-called «music of the spheres» has been part of popular lore for more than two thousand years, it is also something of an achievement to have sufficiently reorientated the subject of study in such a way that it almost seems like a fresh topic.

To be more specific, the most original part of ‹Composing the World› is undoubtedly the chapter on what the author calls the «Sonic Materialisms» (chapter 4). Most earlier writing on cosmic harmony has centred on its astronomical aspects (which H. also examines in chapter 5), and it is interesting to have a detailed treatment of the medieval theories of sound-production and to see how these theories fit into the broader picture. Over all, this book impresses on the grounds of its philological expertise in dealing with some difficult and little-known medieval glosses on works like Boethius' ‹De Institutione Musica›, and even more so because of the enormous range of modern secondary scholarship that the author has read and mastered. The philological expertise is especially displayed in the very useful edition of Hisdosus, ‹De Anima Mundi Platonica› in the manuscript Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, lat. 8624 forming Appendix 2. Although short, this is a critical edition with a very useful apparatus and accompanying notes. H.'s mastery of the modern scholarship is shown by the very precise reports of the opinions of modern scholars that occur on almost every page of his book. Clearly, the bibliography of secondary sources which runs to twenty-nine pages (single spaced) is a real working bibliography and is not there simply to impress the reader.

In the opinion of the present reviewer, the arguments in the chapters of part two (chapters 3–5) are more compelling than those in part one (chapters 1–2). Although the wide reading of modern secondary sources is a strong feature of this book, it occasionally happens that theses argued in some of this scholarship, which are flimsy and superficial when judged against the standard of precise study of the original Latin sources, are reiterated without proper critical evaluation. This weakness tends to occur where H. is attempting to sketch the broader philosophical background of some of the more ‹musicological› material, for instance where he is discussing the notion of ‹nature› in chapter 1. In addition, the author operates throughout his book with a strongly dualistic notion of the relation between soul and body which seems to have been influenced by some thoughtless modern scholars (I shall not name them out of *politesse*) who are quoting Foucault who was himself quoting Descartes. Given that nothing even approaching the Cartesian style of dualism ever occurred in the writings of the medieval Platonists (or any other medieval philosophers, for that matter), H.'s implicit and explicit dependence on this assumption – for instance, in

debating the question whether harmonic notions apply to the body, the soul, or the soul's *relation* to body – makes his arguments less compelling.

The failings in this book are, however, outnumbered by the strengths. Indeed, such weaknesses occur in the more strictly philosophical sections of a book which is, after all, primarily directed towards the professional audience of medieval musicologists. Andrew H. is obviously a person of great intelligence and already of considerable learning. It seems to me that with his range of expertise he is adding greatly, and could presumably so add in the future, to medieval musicology and medieval studies more generally.

Stephen Gersh

Peter Orth, Die rhythmischen Martinsschriften Guiberts von Gembloux (BHL 5636/5637). Leiden/Boston 2017 (Brill), 289 pp.

Dans un article de 1976 intitulé ‹Hagiographie et politique, de Sulpice Sévère à Venance Fortunat›, à propos du sanctuaire de Tours Jacques Fontaine évoquait une «intoxication spirituelle»; l'expression pourrait sembler excessive, mais elle est tout à fait appropriée pour rendre compte de la place occupée par saint Martin dans la littérature hagiographique jusqu'au XII^{e} siècle au moins. Guibert de Gembloux en fut un témoin vivant, qui se fit sectateur du saint. Il se dota d'un double nom (*binomius*) et, dans une lettre, se nomma *frater G(uibertus) cognomento Martinus*, puis *Guibertus Martinus* (3, n. 4).

La ‹Bibliotheca hagiographica latina› compte sous le nom de Martin une cinquantaine de numéros, et presque autant dans le ‹Novum Supplementum›. Les deux ‹Libelli› de Guibert de Gembloux, édités ici par P. Orth, à savoir le ‹Libellus panegyricus in sanctum Martinum› (BHL 5636) et le ‹Libellus de specialibus piissimi patroni veneratoribus› (BHL 5637), étaient restés inédits. Les lettres de Guibert de Gembloux éditées par Albert Derolez en 1988–1989, et la Vie d'Hildegarde de Bingen éditée par Monika Klaes en 1993, avaient occupé toute la scène; les poèmes rythmiques de Guibert n'avaient donc intéressé personne, d'autant qu'Hippolyte Delehaye les avait déjà ‹assassinés› en 1889 dans le n° 46 de la *Revue des questions historiques* en écrivant: «Inutile de dire que la lecture de cette œuvre très peu poétique est des plus fatigantes».

Heureusement P. Orth vint. On put avoir un premier aperçu de son entreprise de réhabilitation dans un article intitulé ‹Tradition als Bürde und Anreiz. Martin von Tours in den lateinischen Dichtungen Guiberts von Gembloux› (in: Auctor et auctoritas in latinis medii aevi litteris, ed. Edoardo D'Angelo/Jan Ziolkowski, Florence 2014, 791–819). Les premiers jalons étaient posés.

Guibert avait reçu sa formation à l'abbaye bénédictine de Gembloux vers 1124/1125. En 1157 un incendie détruisit la ville et l'abbaye végéta. Vingt ans plus tard, Guibert mit son talent d'écrivain au service d'Hildegarde de Bingen († 1179) sur le Rupertsberg. En 1180 l'archevêque Philippe de Heinsberg lui accorda l'autorisation de faire le pèlerinage de Tours, où il demeura huit mois avec les moines de