

march of progress, he argues that "revisionist" historians have largely ignored religious and linguistic themes, blaming their American orientation for this omission. Would that the articles which followed had lived up to the high quality of the Introduction! It is a game attempt to tie together the articles on the theme, but, in a sense, his efforts are wasted, as the papers fail to deliver on his promises.

In summary, the issue displays good variety, and is generally entertaining, but lacks the conceptual focus that would give it real value.¹

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A. B. Cobban, *The Medieval Universities: their development and organization*. London, Methuen & Co., 1975. Pp. x, 264, \$36.95.

Can another book on the medieval universities offer something new? What more can be said after historians like Kibre, Gabriel, Smalley, Hastings and Rashdall? Cobban effectively deals with these problems by concentrating on the institutional structure of the medieval schools. Escapades of student life or the eloquence of famous masters do not dominate the narrative. By concentrating on the legal and statutory basis undergirding the universities the author provides a needed corrective to our understanding of them. Day to day life depended on accounts, administrators, fellowships, organizations and understood laws. Medieval education, even when exemplified by such traditional types as Paris, Oxford and Bologna, survived constitutionally. Knowledge for knowledge sake may have concerned Lupus of Ferrieres in his famous letter to Einhard, but it was not a compelling motive in the universities of later time. The investigations produce at least two unique results. Cobban, while admitting that no exhaustive study of the medieval colleges exists, presents convincing arguments that they emerged for practical not ideological reasons. Even more sobering is the revelation that medieval student power aimed at conservative rather than radical objectives. It was more a question of getting one's money's worth than of ideals traditionally associated with the ivory tower. Carefully avoiding the more dramatic documents left by over active students, his study brings a much needed realism to our understanding of the medieval universities. Thanks to his efforts we are in a much better position to assess the "average" experience which they offered to their clients. Serious students of the subject will be pleased with the extensive footnotes.

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¹By comparison, see John Porter, "Ethnic Pluralism in Canadian Perspective", in Nathan Glazer and Daniel P. Moynihan (eds.), *Ethnicity: Theory and Experience*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1975.