Books

Maths logic for history

Ugo Mifsud Bonnici

JOSEPH BUSTUM, STANLEY HORNIT AND HOrATIO CAEsar RICHARDS VISIT Melitozzo, Latvia. Lament in Greek Verse of a 15th-century Exile on Gian, The Earliest Foundation. 2010. 612pp. £40

This book is important mainly in its contribution to the study of recent years. It is, perhaps, the first to translate for the first time, in Greek, the 15th-century modern English. This indeed makes it a document, of immense historical importance besides its merits as literature and as evidence of a human drama in the Norman kingdom's court circle.

For obvious reasons it has already been referred to as the most important of recent years and published recently. Frustratingly, I find the book is not only a welcome, but a welcome addition to the currently burgeoning interest in the period's history. The present day interest is perhaps not only a welcome extension to the period's history, but also a welcome addition to the already rich body of literature on the period.

Notwithstanding, in addition to the many other historical events, there is the translation of the first English version of the classic work by the great Byzantine scholar, the Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus. The Emperor's work has long been used as the standard work for the history of the period.

The fact that the work is published in English, and not only translated into English, is also of great importance. The period is well known for its rich literature and especially in the period's history. The present day interest is perhaps not only a welcome extension to the period's history, but also a welcome addition to the already rich body of literature on the period.

The book has the unique advantage of a unique and important perspective. It is an important contribution to the current interest in the period's history.

This book proves to the professors of mathematics can be conscious and scrupulous historians

A 12th century mosaic of Roger being crowned by Christ.

The book has a complete scholarly apparatus to help mathematicians and historians with complete and exhaustive explanations to assist them. The arguments from recent research are scientifically cogent. One expects however some scholarly discussion and reactions from some of the specialists in Mediterranean history, outside and within the continent. Many questions remain to be answered.

The book's intellectual exercise in reading through the poem with its paraphrase of annotations and probable interpretations, is extremely captivating.

The book is technically well-produced and printed, with beautiful illustrations introducing the reader to the world of the Sicilian-Norman kingdom with its three languages (Latin, Greek and Arabic) and its cultures, its connections with the Papacy as well as with the region and its present Byzantium.

This book proves professors of mathematics can be conscious and scrupulous historians, and can bring mathematical logic to bear on historical interpretation. We can be justly proud of two scholars, Joseph Bustum and Horiato Casar Richards who have managed to maintain against many odds, another continuity; that of classical studies in our country.

Opening up the EU and irregular immigration

The Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice has published Opening Up. A report by HanaJesuit Centre for Faith and Justice which helps to place the focus on foreign workers who have to live in Malta today, and what their experience is.

Malta is the smallest state in the EU. Two recent reports have given a voice to foreign workers in Malta and have helped to bring them into a human rights perspective. But there are also some critical points.

Both reports have in particular focused on foreign workers' fears of losing their status as foreign workers. In fact, Malta is a state that is used to controlling its foreign workers, a state that has a lot of experience in the field. In the case of opening up, the union movement has been trying to 'counterbalance' the prospects of greater economic stability.

The process leading up to opening up the EU has been quite delicate and difficult process since it polarised the country. The newly elected government and the Nationalist Party in 2003 have been very positive on the outcome of Malta's referendum. However, while Malta has been in a process of opening up, the government has been promoting the idea of foreign workers as foreign workers. This has been a very positive outcome:

"They are now no longer branded as foreign workers but are accepted as migrant workers in our society. We believe that this is the right way to go because it is important to be a migrant worker and not a foreign worker."