

chapter takes a text and explores the role and significance of a single concept of landscape theory to the given text. Benozzo is a philologist and approaches the discussions from a predominantly linguistic perspective; he successfully integrates discussions of landscape theory into his exploration of the poetics of landscape in these Celtic texts. Benozzo uses a deconstructive methodology but not the principles of deconstruction: rather than discussing the textual landscapes as self-referential literary artefacts, he discusses them as texts with a relationship to the physical world. His discussions cover a range of topics, many of which will be familiar to those interested in theories of landscape, such as: perceptions of space; anthropocentrism; intertextuality in landscape perception; and dynamic representations of space. He also examines the use of landscape in the structural organisation of texts; the problem of defining frontiers with the 'other'; and similarities between the difficulties of defining colour to those of defining space.

The unifying thread running through the book is a discussion of intertextuality and space: the relationship between the spaces portrayed in a text and perceptions of space. For example, he examines the use of place-names in the Welsh *Metrical Dindsenchas* and 'the role of landscape as structure/organiser of images and the inclination towards a sort of geographic literature' (p. 65). He also examines how the text portrays a single landscape as both a dream and an actual landscape, thus highlighting the ability of a textual landscape to represent dualities of space: a physical and psychological space that is simultaneously real and mythological. Similarly in a discussion of the Welsh *Englynion*, a collection of three-line gnomic verses that do not appear to have either a unifying theme or narrative strand, Benozzo takes recurring phrases from the verses, such as *mountain snow*, *fish in the lake* and *snow falls*, and finds that these repeating elements form an underlying structure to these seemingly disparate verses: 'Landscapes represent thus a sort of map where the other gnomic (or saga) lines are set, the skeleton where the other sentences are settled' (p. 105).

The intertextuality of landscape perception is an area of discussion that has been covered by numerous writers, most popularly Schama's *Landscape and Memory*, and Benozzo summarises the position thus: 'when you look at a landscape you always look at it through other landscapes that you have met before. Every landscape reminds you of another landscape, and the memory of the first becomes also the way of perceiving the second' (p. 55). However, he goes on to refine this idea further, stating that the 'relationship between landscapes, their absorption and transformation, is part of the landscape itself', and he proposes 'to define this

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Benozzo's stated aim in producing this book is 'to formulate a theory of landscape, starting from a phenomenological analysis of landscape perception in literature ... to build ... something approaching a theory of poetry ... the connection between layers of landscape and layers of thought, and the relationship between the external world and the word' (p. vii). The book is organised into four sections: Old Irish texts; Middle Welsh texts; Literary relations (Celtic and other medieval literatures); and Apparatus (bibliography and indices). Each

process of perception, either referring to literary texts or to landscapes, as resonance' (p. 57). Benozzo's suggestion is that 'resonance' allows for more than the binary opposition or absorption of two texts/landscapes thus making it possible for a plurality of inter-relating influences to be considered.

Where the first two sections of the book, dealing with Irish and Welsh literature, are densely written and closely argued, the third section is somewhat weaker. Chapter seven deals with epic poetry, but is undermined by the omission of *Beowulf*. This is, I suspect, because *Beowulf* does not fit in with his landscape-orientated definition of epic, which is a pity as this is a poem that makes extensive use of landscape and geography and could have contributed greatly to the discussion. The final chapter on 'Chromatic Non-Phenomenology' draws an interesting parallel between interpretations of colour and landscape but lacks a central argument, as Benozzo acknowledges when he describes this chapter as 'experimental' (p. 165). The bibliography is impressively extensive, and refreshing in that it is not limited to English language works; it will provide a useful quarry for readers interested in either poetics or landscape reception theory.

Benozzo set himself a near impossible task for this slim volume, but its appeal should extend beyond those with an interest in Celtic and early medieval literature to anyone interested in explorations of how we understand perceptions of our surroundings and how the physical world may influence artistic works. As Benozzo states in conclusion: 'a described landscape is not a pretext for a critical activity, but a coffer created by poets, full of practical suggestions enriching my perception of the existing world' (p. 190).

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