

Editorial

Ingrid Hartl and Walter Pohl

For the winter edition, volume 14 of *Medieval Worlds* has moved to Anatolia and its surroundings. Starting from northern Greece, Thessalonike, it visits urban centres of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries such as Ani and Ahlat in the east and Kastamonu in the north. It meets urban power brokers, explores city markets and their regulations and is enthralled by the role fortresses play in the historical tales of Anatolia. All of this is presented in the themed section *Urban Agencies: Reframing Anatolian and Caucasian Cities (13th-14th Centuries)*, in which guest editors Bruno De Nicola and Matthew Kinloch have collected a series of compelling articles exploring the role of cities as political and economic hubs and their negotiations of power and autonomy in imperial and sub-imperial contexts.

The second instalment of *Movement and Mobility in the Medieval Mediterranean: Changing Perspectives from Late Antiquity to the Long-Twelfth Century*, with guest editors Christopher Heath, Clemens Gantner and Edoardo Manarini, leads us further south, from Sicily, where Geniza commercial letters give insight into the relationship between ruler and merchant in the Islamic Mediterranean of the 11th century, to Palestine and the interest male spiritual leaders took in female pilgrimages. The concluding article of this section takes a step back and presents the Mediterranean, and Jerusalem in particular, as seen from the distanced perspective of Henry II's court – mainly as a place to avoid.

Our stand-alone contributions explore a cultural act shared by many peoples – riddling. They provide the first extensive study of ancient and medieval verse riddles whose solutions are plants, and by using ecocritical methods and drawing on critical plant theory, they offer fascinating insights into ancient and early medieval ecosystems and the dynamic relationships of humans and plants within them.