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Michèle Goyens and Werner Verbeke, eds., *“Lors est ce jour grant joie nee”: Essais de langue et de littérature françaises du moyen âge*. Mediaevalia Lovaniensia 41. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2009. xv + 198 pp. Figures and indices. \$55.00 U.S. (pb). ISBN: 978-90-5867-740-2.

Review by Tara Foster, Northern Michigan University.

The latest volume in the Mediaevalia Lovanensia series from Leuven University Press offers an eclectic mix of essays from contributors who have been involved in a number of the other issues in the series. Editors Goyens and Verbeke explain in their introduction that the collection is not built around a unifying theme but is meant to pay homage to Willy Van Hoecke from past and present pupils, mentees, and colleagues, and that the contributions therefore reflect Van Hoecke’s interests and those of the researchers with whom he has worked. The essays cover a remarkably broad range of topics, from diachronic linguistics to manuscript miniatures to the relationship between Middle Dutch and Old French romance.

The first essay in the collection, which is three to four times the length of the other contributions, focuses on the historical phraseology of the French language. As Buridant points out, phrasemes, or idiomatic constructions, can bear witness to a culture, and the essay contains a plethora of examples that bear out this statement. “Le mal saint Fiacre,” for example, “désigne les hémorroïdes, une pierre sur laquelle [le saint] s’assit s’étant miraculeusement amollie sous son corps, selon la légende”; “jeter le gant,” since the glove serves as a marker of feudal authority, “renvoie alors à un défi, comme l’est *briser le fêtu*, pour rompre le contrat féodal synallagmatique liant un vassal à son suzerain” (pp. 26, 28). Buridant gives a detailed overview of the kinds of idiomatic and proverbial expressions encountered in Old and Middle French, examining their variable and non-variable elements and concluding with a diagram of phrasemes from the author’s published work of 1989. The substantial bibliography provides the interested reader with many suggestions for further study.

Buridant cites a study that postulates that the repeated use of doublets in the romance *Guillaume d’Angleterre* strongly suggests that Chrétien de Troyes composed it, an assertion that the author of the second essay indirectly challenges.^[1] In her contribution, Callay outlines the possible meanings of the verb “dire” in the line cited in her title using Léonard’s analysis of the *dit*.^[2] To Léonard’s supporting examples, Callay adds a few more to underscore the difficulty in determining whether the verb is used to connote recitation or composition of a text, and whether use of the verb can reliably indicate authorship. Comparisons to the use of the verb in other texts and an exploration of the information that Crestien provides about himself and his activities lead her to conclude that his use of *dire* refers to his work as a professional storyteller rather than as an author; the reader can therefore infer that in Callay’s view, Crestien and Chrétien are not one and the same.

In the third essay, Van Coolput-Storms analyzes the role of tears in Herman de Valenciennes’s *Romanz de Dieu et de sa Mere*, a late twelfth-century adaptation of the Bible. Van Coolput-Storms argues that the medieval author does not simply translate the passages from Latin into French, he makes alterations that heighten the emotional impact of the scenes recounted in order to open the heart of the audience to the salvific message being presented. His treatment of the story of Joseph and his brothers

demonstrates how he departs from the Latin version and situates him within the contritionist movement of the twelfth century. Van Coolput-Storms explains very effectively the differences in the tears shed by the Biblical figures in the French adaptation. She goes on to examine other instances of tears, their function in an individual's path to salvation and their role in unifying a community of believers.

In the fourth essay, Foehr-Janssens undertakes an examination of the way in which the author Baudouin de Condé and his *Dits* are presented within the series of miniatures in the manuscript Brussels KBr 9411-26. Readers will be delighted to find reproductions of the twenty-four miniatures discussed appended to the essay. As Foehr-Janssens amply demonstrates, the iconographic program of this manuscript emphasizes the figure of the master and privileges the act of delivering the oral lesson over the importance of the written document, for variations of a scene of oral instruction appear in thirteen miniatures. Other miniatures present the principal figure in an attitude of prayer or as a pilgrim, occupying the space occupied elsewhere by the figure of the master. Foehr-Janssens asserts convincingly that Baudouin de Condé's overarching ethic of "parler pour sauver, pour se sauver et pour sauver son interlocuteur" dovetails with the conflation of teacher and penitent that characterizes the conception of the *dit* presented in this manuscript as a text that is both pedagogical and spiritual (p. 112).

Pignatelli's brief essay reprises the topic of one of her recent publications: the exempla added to the French translation of Gervais of Tilbury's *Otia imperialia*. In this contribution, Pignatelli supports Delisle's hypothesis of 1906 that the translator of the French text is Jean d'Antioche, the redactor of the late thirteenth-century *Rectorique de Marc Tullis Ciceron*.^[3] The "maystre Harent d'Antioche" named in a fifteenth-century copy of the French *Otia imperialia* thus refers, according to both Delisle and Pignatelli, to a thirteenth-century redactor and not to a fifteenth-century scribe. Delisle's reasons for identifying Jean d'Antioche with Harent d'Antioche are not discussed, but Pignatelli cites as evidence elements such as the devotion to the Virgin Mary featured in two of the exempla and the insertion of a chapter of Brunetto Latini's *Trésor* in the body of the French translation. She argues that these and other features point to the thirteenth rather than the fifteenth century as the probable date of composition.

Braet and González-Doreste trace the evolution of the presentation of Dido in French in the Middle Ages from the *Roman d'Eneas* to the late fifteenth-century *Livre des Eneydes compilé par Virgile, lequel a été translaté de latin en françois*. They note that the interpretation of Dido's story typically falls into one of two categories: the character is presented either as a caution against loving beyond reason or as a positive example of constancy in love. In the second portion of the essay, the authors present an overview of the iconography of Dido in medieval manuscripts, outlining three distinct traditions in the portrayal of the heroine. Although six images are reproduced on the pages following the essay, it is regrettable that more of those discussed in both the body of the essay and the notes were not included as they would help shed more light on the distinctions drawn by the authors between the various portraits.

In the seventh contribution, Claassens looks at the Middle Dutch *Torec*, an Arthurian romance based on the now lost Old French *Torrez*, and speculates on the differences between the two texts with regard to their Arthurian elements. He finds that the portrayal of the Arthurian community is ambivalent, with markedly critical episodes counterbalanced by some positive and surprising behavior from particular characters. Claassens postulates that the critical perspective was original to the Old French version and that this perspective likely prompted Jacob van Maerlant, himself critical of the over-fictionalized treatment of King Arthur, to undertake the translation into Middle Dutch. He suggests that the redeeming features might be attributed to the compiler of the collection of Arthurian romances into which *Torec* was integrated.

The final essay looks in conjunction at *Li Romans du Vergier et de l'Arbre d'Amors* and a poem by Gillebert de Berneville, both dating from the thirteenth century. Sleiderink proposes a possible

identification for one of the dedicatees of the *Romans du Vergier*, a certain “dame d’Audenarde.” A person of the same title is mentioned by Gillebert de Berneville, as is a “Bietriz,” and previous critics have assumed that the lady of Audenarde’s forename was Beatrice. Sleiderink makes a strong case for reading the poem differently and distinguishing Beatrice, the poet’s love interest, from the lady of Audenarde, also the dedicatee of the *Romans du Vergier*. As Sleiderink remarks, a correlation between these two texts would have an interesting impact both in dating the Romans and in our understanding of the literary life of the seigneurial courts.

This collection dedicated to Willy Van Hoecke unites a number of interesting if somewhat uneven essays. Given the wide variety of topics treated, the volume will be of interest to scholars in a range of disciplines.

LIST OF ESSAYS

Claude Buridant, “Phraséologie historique du français: esquisse de bilan et perspectives”

Brigitte L. Callay, “*Crestien qui dire siaut* in Guillaume d’Angleterre”

Colette Van Coolput-Storms, “Démarche persuasive et puissance émotionnelle: le *Romanz de Dieu et de sa Mere* d’Herman de Valenciennes”

Yasmina Foehr-Janssens, “Variations autour d’une figure d’auteur: Baudouin de Condé dans les manuscrits”

Cinzia Pignatelli, “Jean d’Antioche et les *exempla* ajoutés à la traduction des *Otia imperialia* de Gervais de Tilbury”

Herman Braet and Dulce Maria Gonz<lez-Doreste, “*Infelix Dido*: Sur la fortune d’une infortune”

Geert H. M. Claassens, “De *Torrez* à *Torec*: un roman arthurien en moyen néerlandais et sa source inconnue en ancien français”

Remco Sleiderink, “La dame d’Audenarde comme juge d’amour: le rapport intertextuel entre *Li Romans du Vergier* et de *l’Arbre d’Amors* et une chanson de Gillebert de Berneville”

NOTES

[1] A. Melkersson, *L’itération lexicale. Étude sur l’usage d’une figure stylistique dans onze romans français des XIIe et XIIIe siècles*, Romanica Gothoburgensia XLI (Göteborg: Göteborg University Press, 1992).

[2] Monique Léonard, *Le Dit et sa technique littéraire des origines à 1340*, Nouvelle Bibliothèque du Moyen Age 38 (Paris: Champion, 1996).

[3] L. Delisle, “Maître Jean d’Antioche, traducteur et Frère Guillaume de Saint-Étienne, hospitalier,” *Histoire Littéraire de la France* 33 (1906), pp. 1-40.

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