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*Le Français médiéval par les textes: anthologie commentée*. Sous la direction de JOËLLE DUCOS, OLIVIER SOUTET et JEAN-RENE VALETTE. (Champion Classiques; Références et dictionnaires, 11). Paris: Honoré Champion, 2016. 464 pp.

This new anthology, aimed primarily at undergraduate and Master’s students, presents extracts from sixty-four medieval French works. These extracts are arranged chronologically and incorporate such well-known texts as the Oxford *Roland* and the *Roman de la rose* alongside lesser-studied, less conventionally ‘literary’ material such as the *Bataille des sept arts*. The work’s title is highly significant: the editors demonstrate both in their choice and treatment of material a desire to produce a work that is neither a ‘florilège littéraire’ (p. 7) nor a purely linguistic introduction to medieval French. Instead, this anthology makes a strong case for considering the ‘corollaires’ (p. 93) to medieval French texts — linguistic, literary, and historical — and, among these, for a particular focus on language. This dualistic approach, in which the language of medieval French texts is seen as indivisible from their literary history, is reflected in the manner in which the texts are presented. Each individual extract of around sixty lines is preceded by a brief introduction and is followed by suggestions for further reading. The copious notes accompanying each extract, by contrast, are purely linguistic in nature, and offer valuable morphological, syntactic, and phonetic insights. Some of these insights will likely be more useful to readers than others: a brief note glossing *sunt* as ‘graphie anglo-normande de [õ]’ in Thomas de Kent’s *Alexander* (p. 210) will be appreciated by many interested in dialectal variation, whereas the explanation of the term ‘beiaus’ in an extract from Sainte-Maure as ‘la vocalisation du [ʰ] au contact de [s] (*bels*) et après une voyelle [ɛ]’ (p. 180) is likely to be relevant only to specialists in phonetics. Perhaps of more use to students approaching medieval French for the first time will be the two separate

introductions to the collection. The ‘Introduction linguistique’ offers an overview of some key aspects of medieval French, including its relationship with Latin and, unusually in a piece with an ostensibly linguistic focus, introduction, questions of orality/literacy and authorship. It also provides a point of entry to more traditionally philological questions, such as the emergence of a ‘*koinè* graphique’ (p. 19). Of particular note here is the highly readable account of the analytic tendency in medieval French syntax in comparison to Latin. It is followed by a series of literary ‘Éléments d’introduction’, which focus on the applicability of the term ‘literature’ to the medieval period, the challenges and merits of periodization, and questions of genre. The texts themselves, arranged in a tripartite structure encompassing ‘l’émergence du français face au latin’, ‘expression et autonomie du français comme langue écrite’, and ‘normalisation du français comme langue écrite’ (pp. 461–63), reflect the decidedly diachronic approach adopted by the editors. Nevertheless, throughout the 800-year period covered, the wide range of material selected for discussion (in terms both of genre and provenance) allows the editors to highlight significant elements of synchronic variation. The work is completed by additional linguistic addenda, with both a glossary and an ‘Index grammatical’. Students approaching medieval French literature for the first time may find the denseness of some of these notes intimidating; as a linguistic sourcebook, however, this anthology is likely to prove invaluable, both to students and to specialists.

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