

JEAN-CLAUDE MÜHLETHALER, *Charles d'Orléans, un lyrisme entre Moyen Âge et modernité*. (Recherches littéraires médiévales 3.) Paris: Éditions Classiques Garnier, 2010. Paper. Pp. 246. €29. ISBN: 9782812401824.

JOHN FOX and MARY-JO ARN, eds., *Poetry of Charles d'Orléans and His Circle: A Critical Edition of BnF MS fr. 25458, Charles d'Orléans's Personal Manuscript*, trans. R. Barton Palmer. (Arizona Studies in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance 34; Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies 383.) Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, in collaboration with Brepols, 2010. Pp. lxiii, 957. \$120. ISBN: 9780866984317. doi:10.1017/S0038713413001589

Jean-Claude Mühlethaler's masterly volume offers a grand summation of many years of thinking and writing about Charles d'Orléans. It is a compilation of twelve previously published articles now reconsidered, somewhat rewritten, sometimes enlarged, devoted to the work of a major French lyric poet of the fifteenth century. Not for Mühlethaler, as the writer asserts in his introduction and then goes on to demonstrate in the pages that follow, was Charles the dark, even tragic, figure that late Romantic rediscoveries of his work were pleased to discern in their distant forebear. Whether during his twenty-five-year captivity in England or his subsequent quarter-century of life back in France, this remarkably prolific composer of ballades, chansons, and rondeaux, grandson of one French king and father of another, was first and foremost a participant—the principal and most accomplished participant—in a shared social activity.

The self so ubiquitous in his lyrics, a figure not immune to melancholy or safe from danger, not exempt from the disquietudes of old age or reverses of fortune, is, through it all, a verbal craftsman ever ready to step back from immediate experience and shape it, with a sense of irony and play, into his staged contribution to a collective pastime. No work, surely, reveals this sociality more tellingly than his ballade “Je meurs de soif ... ,” Charles's entry in the so-called *concours de Blois*; whether the ten-poet contest actually occurred as a unitary event is beside the point, for it is still emblematic of the ambience of lyric creativity that Charles fostered at his court.

Mühlethaler arranges his articles in groups roughly reflective of the gradual unfolding of the poet's work. His initial focus is the literary tradition from which Charles stemmed and had to reconsider, a legacy marked above all by the *Roman de la Rose*, by allegory and personification, and by poetic debate on the fabrications of courtly love. The writer cogently shows how Charles comes to express “une prise de distance—faut-il parler de rupture?—face à l'héritage littéraire ... [II] crée son proper langage sur les débris de la littérature antérieure” (51–52).

The second group is a series of analyses of particular lyrics and the intertextual associations that they suggest. This is where Mühlethaler explores questions of subjectivity and sincerity, of irony and the ludic. “Comment juger de la sincérité d'un lyrisme où le *je* prend différents masques et où les points de vue changent d'une pièce à l'autre, voire au sein d'un seul et même texte?” (86). Later, a detailed, line-by-line explication of the rondeau *Dedans l'amoureuse cuisine* offers a notable demonstration, with a nod to Villon, of the poet's deft way with the metaphoric pleasures inherent in the nexus of two appetites.

The third set of essays moves from an examination of the poetic craft of Charles d'Orléans to a consideration of his work within the broad late-medieval context of comparison with his Italian predecessor, Francesco Petrarca, and his French contemporary, François Villon. The chapter devoted to the “prince poète” and to the one-time “clerc” is particularly nuanced and instructive.

The three extremely engaging articles that close the volume treat Antoine Vérard's posthumous—and anonymous—publication of most of Charles's ballades and rondeaux

in 1509 and, finally, the rediscovery of the poet in the mid-nineteenth century and the firm appreciation that his works have enjoyed ever since.

As we are told immediately upon opening the volume, this critical edition is due not only to the two editors named on the cover—one, John Fox, long admired for his study, *The Lyric Poetry of Charles d'Orléans* (1969), and the other, Mary-Jo Arn, much appreciated for her critical edition of Charles's English poetry, *Fortune's Stabilnes* (1994)—but to the translator, R. Barton Palmer, and to Stephanie Kamath as well. To all, one can only be grateful for an extraordinary achievement. No stone is left unturned in this presentation of Charles d'Orléans's personal copy of his poetry, a manuscript comprising most of his French poems, both those composed during his twenty-five years of captivity in England and those written during his quarter-century of life back in France. The same manuscript transmits a number of his English lyrics, some narrative work, and poems composed by members of his household and variously defined friends. The edition is meant to replace that of Pierre Champion (1923), following a new arrangement of the pieces dictated by Arn's codicological study, *The Poet's Notebook* (2008).

After a brief summary of Charles's evolution as a poet, touching on forms and themes and his post-return constitution of a poetic entourage, the extensive introduction offers essays: "The Manuscript," "Ordering of the Texts," "Charles de Valois, duc d'Orléans," "Historical Background," "Charles d'Orléans, Reader, Book Collector, Patron," "Literary Context and Poetic Forms," "The Language," and "Editorial Principles and Presentation of the Text." These various aspects of the work are discussed in unstinting and exemplary fashion, with particularly useful attention to literary background and matters of form.

But what distinguishes this new edition most notably from the work of Pierre Champion is its considerable reordering of the texts and the inclusion of an English translation.

Arn's treatment of ordering (xix–xxvii) opens with the observation that Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS fr. 25458 began as an unbound collection of lyrics and narrative poetry evidently meant to be a book with room for expansion: blank leaves after each verse form were left for future compositions. The manuscript was no doubt started in England; after Charles's return to France in 1440, it continued to be used both for his work and for lyrics by poets in his circle. Over time, vellum was added, quires came to be displaced, individual bifolia were shuffled, short lyrics were often copied two to a page, transcriptions were done by various persons—and the result was a patchwork of confusion, the chief disadvantage of which, for any editor or critic, was to mask the writer's development as a poet.

How, then, have editors proceeded? Before Champion, Arn reports, the works were usually published in their order of appearance in the manuscript. Champion, recognizing the difficulty, undertook paleographic and other examinations of the manuscript that led to what he considered a reasonable arrangement. He was mistaken, however, in his belief that the collection had been started as late as 1450; he viewed the lyric pieces, moreover, as ordered primarily, rationally, by verse form. The achievement of the new editors is to have come, in the light of recent developments in codicology, to understand a quite different poetic intention.

There is good cause to believe that Charles organized his poems first of all according to criteria of thematic, circumstantial, and verbal weight that allowed different lyric forms to lie side by side within each of two large categories. Thus, *ballades* and *complaintes* constitute a class distinct from that of the shorter types, comprising *chançons*, *caroles*, and *rondels*. Arn goes on to summarize in a few dense pages how this classification works its way through the manuscript and how the results it yields differ from those of Champion. Her explanation touches as well on non-lyric compositions, works by members of the poet's

Speculum 88.2 (April 2013)

creative circle, and even some of his English pieces. In a word, this reconstruction of the manuscript's apparently proper ordering allows the reader to follow Charles's evolution as a poet along several axes, notably historical, thematic, and formal.

About his translations, Palmer points out that his work is meant both as an occasional lexical and grammatical aid to readers of the original Middle French and as an accurate and fittingly elegant equivalent in English. He finds that, generally speaking, the two objectives are compatible—and the claim seems fully justified. The translations reveal, of course, no attempt to create English poetry, even of the free-verse sort. They are printed in facing-page fashion and normally correspond line by line to the French originals. The poet's frequent use of allegorical personifications shows little need for lexical inventiveness in translation; Palmer maintains, backed by Fox, that even *Dangier*, upon reflection, does quite well as *Danger*.

The back matter is as complete as the rest of the volume, including several appendices, two kinds of notes, an extensive glossary, an index of incipits with pagination concordance, as well as bibliography. The book is accompanied by two pages of corrigenda and a note that others may be posted, as necessary, on the book's website.

SAMUEL N. ROSENBERG, Indiana University Bloomington (Emeritus)

LADAN NIAYESH, ed., *A Knight's Legacy: Mandeville and Mandevillian Lore in Early Modern England*. (Manchester Medieval Literature and Culture.) Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011. Pp. viii, 216. \$75. ISBN: 9780719081750. doi:10.1017/S0038713413001334

This well-conceived and groundbreaking collection edited by Ladan Niayesh sets out to explore Mandeville's afterlife in early modern England, but the volume actually intervenes in a surprising number of fields along the way. Not only do these diverse essays collectively bridge medieval and early modern contexts, but they also enact a series of conversations among scholars in England and France. Most strikingly, this volume limns a multifaceted history of literary and cultural reception that yields many different pre-modern Mandevilles: monastic writer and pilgrim; crusading knight and romance writer; travel writer and ethnographer; geographer and natural scientist; and a literary persona variously (and at times contradictorily) categorized as "curious," "tolerant," or proto-imperialist. As Niayesh suggests her own contribution to this volume, Mandeville—or the author figure we call "Mandeville"—provided a heterogeneous textual repository for pre-modern audiences, and Mandeville's account was identified as a "livre", 'geste', 'romant', 'tractatus', 'itinerarium', 'voiage and trauayle' (160). Rather tracing a unified literary or cultural tradition deriving from single point of origin, this collection reveals how "Mandevillian lore" (more broadly conceived) can be redeployed and repurposed to suit genres as varied as travel writing, religious polemic, scientific texts, and drama.

Although a tradition so multifaceted as Mandevillian reception and appropriation could threaten to become unwieldy, Niayesh admirably lends structural coherence to each section. The collection begins with Mary Baine Campbell's cogent and insightful introduction, followed by three essay clusters. The first, "Editions and Receptions," offers a survey of medieval manuscript traditions and early print editions of Mandeville's travels, as well as an overview of major strands of Mandevillian reception (e.g., early modern compilations of travelers' tales). Michael C. Seymour concisely catalogs the major variations of Mandeville's text across French, Latin, and English manuscripts and early print texts. Charles W. R. D. Mosley describes the multiple avenues through which early modern readers accessed Mandeville. Kenneth Parker traces how "texts modeled upon a Mandevillian mode" were circulated and read in early modern England (63).

Speculum 88.2 (April 2013)