

THIERRY LASSABATÈRE and MIREN LACASSAGNE, eds., *Eustache Deschamps, témoin et modèle: Littérature et société politique (XIVe–XVIe siècles)*. (Culture[s] et Civilisations Médiévales, 41.) Paris: Presses de l'Université Paris-Sorbonne, 2008. Paper. Pp. 280 plus 5 black-and-white and color figures; tables. €25.  
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A growing number of excellent scholars have engaged Eustache Deschamps's poetry. Grudgingly rescued from oblivion in the nineteenth century by the Société des anciens textes français, Deschamps began to be noticed by literary scholars only after such historians as Barbara Tuchman and Johan Huizinga, notable for their appeal to popular audiences, cited his poems as documentary evidence of a wide swath of quotidian and royal life. Philippe Contamine notes in his introduction to this collection that Deschamps's sizable corpus is susceptible to many critical modes, and the essays presented here are offered in this polyphonic spirit in diverse approaches and voices, which Thierry Lassabatère and Miren Lacassagne have shepherded into a single volume.

The collection is divided into four sections preceded by Contamine's introduction and Jean-Claude Mühlethaler's essay on Deschamps's *Lay amoureux*. Mühlethaler argues that Deschamps does not invoke the Hermaphroditus myth to perpetuate it but as a "special effect," which jolts the reader into perceiving a moral and political truth (p. 29). Part 1 focuses on literature in the service of writing history. María Narbona Cárceles finds in the incomplete beast fable *Fiction du Lyon* propaganda supporting Charles VI, reading Renart as Charles II of Navarre (Charles le Mauvais), and identifying him as a possible cause of war between England and France. Clotilde Dauphant reads in poems 164–72 a cycle of political events whose unifying principle is the succession of Charles VI. These two chapters might introduce an entire collection in a similar vein, but instead part 2 examines discourse at the margins of poetic genre.

Aurélié Mazingue considers the theatrical nature of Deschamps's dialogued poems and the *Farce de Maître Trubert et d'Antrongnart*, observing that farce breathes poetry into Deschamps's work, whose theatrical diction and situations enliven our view of fourteenth-century French theater: it may not be the black hole critics have named it if only we can imagine contemporary presentations of such dialogues and nuanced pieces (p. 88). Karin Becker compellingly argues that scholarship beginning with Christine Scollen-Jimack on the "rhetoric of misfortune" has sought to harmonize the physical body in historical context and literary discourse (p. 93): "Poor Eustache's" laments on his assorted ailments and afflictions voice physical experiences while popularizing a body of knowledge as practical advice. Fourteenth-century patients endured unimaginable pain and suffering and viewed disease as a military enemy (as is still quite common). These corporeally centered poems may be read with Deschamps's theatrical poems as windows into fourteenth-century life. Widening our view of medieval times, Laura Kendrick argues persuasively that the *Miroir de mariage* provided Deschamps with the opportunity to present amusing material (the tribulations of forming and maintaining the ménage that marriage inevitably entails) in a popular form (a debate on the process of making a decision) couched in an allegory (p. 107; see also p. 115). That the subject under debate couples self-governance and love only increased the poem's appeal to the poet and his contemporary audience. Readers unfamiliar with this twelve thousand-line poem will profit from the useful summary, and more from Kendrick's lucid reading. Part 2 concludes with Madeleine Jay interestingly finding that Deschamps's fable worldview may have included a kind of early ecology while (unsurprisingly) speaking truth to power.

Part 3 provides information on Deschamps at the court of Charles VI via articles by the *Membres de l'opération Charles VI* (part of the Laboratoire de médiévistique occidentale de Paris) and by Christine Barralis (one of its laboratoires). The former describes in de-

tail a rich historical database hosted by the Université Paris 1 (Panthéon-Sorbonne) and the Centre national de la recherche scientifique, now found at <http://www.vjf.cnrs.fr/charlesVI/index.php>. The latter essay considers the impact on the French court of highly placed clergy, especially Jean de Dormans-Beauvais and his brother Guillaume, and Deschamps's understanding of the ideal relationship between church and state. Part 3 concludes with Hélène Millet's essay on Deschamps's possibly having been an early promulgator of devotional poetry on the ten "saints privilégiés"—an intriguing and carefully documented comparative study of hymns and poems.

Part 4 addresses intertextuality and manuscript studies. This, the longest, section is the most speculative. The preponderance of Deschamps studies to date agree that the poet disappeared from memory and public imagination within a short time of his death. His influence on his contemporaries is difficult enough to parse—one hundred years of discussion have not definitively sorted out questions of influence even on Deschamps's contemporaries and immediate inheritors, such as Oton de Grandson, Geoffrey Chaucer, and Christine de Pizan. The essays mostly consider later literature and Deschamps's possible connections to it, arriving at observations that the authors admit are tenuous, although interesting. Ludmilla Evdokimova examines Deschamps's intellectual climate via Jean de Vignay's *Miroir historique*. Zoltán Jeney observes a common sarcasm and style in Deschamps and Du Bellay. Miren Lacassagne reads the *Miroir de mariage* against Rabelais's *Tiers livre* to similar end. Thierry Lassabatère finds medieval roots in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century aristocratic politics. And Anne Dropick attempts a reading of some of Deschamps's moral poetry from its manuscript transmission.

This volume suffers from occasional proofreading lapses as well as some odd omissions from its sizable (if heavily weighted toward European) bibliography of primary and secondary sources. There are indices of people, places, and ideas and allegorical figures, which might more usefully have been combined. But on balance, Deschamps's readers are well served here and will eagerly await more such studies.

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LENA LIEPE, *Studies in Icelandic Fourteenth Century Book Painting*. (Snorrastofa, 6.) Reykholt, Iceland: Snorrastofa, Cultural and Medieval Centre, 2009. Pp. ii, 287; many color figures.  
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While there is a long and distinguished tradition of paleographical and philological scholarship on the manuscripts of late-medieval Iceland, the decorative elements of the fifty or so illuminated manuscripts that survive have received surprisingly little attention. The two articles that make up Lena Liepe's book show how wide the range of possibility is for future study and provide methodological models for interdisciplinary collaboration between philologists and art historians.

The subject of the first article, "The Making of Icelandic Illuminated Manuscripts," is much more specific than its title suggests. It is a detailed example of the methodology of grouping manuscripts according to art-historical criteria, in which Liepe illustrates and tests a variety of methods by applying them to eleven possibly related illuminated manuscripts chosen for investigation: AM 350 fol., AM 233 a fol., Holm. perg. fol. nr. 5, AM 347 fol., AM 343 fol., GKS 3270 4to, GKS 3268 4to, AM 226 fol., GKS 1005 fol. (*Flateyjarbók*), SÁM 1 fol. (*Codex Scardensis*), and AM 225 fol. Liepe tells us that six of these are among the sixteen manuscripts assigned by Ólafur Halldórsson to the so-called Helgafell group on paleographical and historical grounds (*Helgafellsbækur fornár*, 1966) and that stylistic considerations have led art historians to associate each of the remaining five