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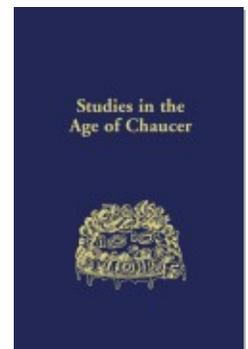
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*Nouveau Recueil complet des fabliaux (NRCF)* . Vol. 1 ed. by Willem Noomen, Nico van den Boogaard, and: *Nouveau Recueil complet des fabliaux (NRCF)* . Vol. 2 ed. by Willem Noomen, Nico van den Boogaard (review)

Juliette Dor

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are smoothly and accurately rendered with occasional very felicitous phrasing.

All in all this is a useful study of an important medieval genre, a work which not only is very pleasant to read but also presents the insights of a perceptive literary critic.

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WILLEM NOOMEN and NICO VAN DEN BOOGAARD, eds. *Nouveau Recueil complet des fabliaux (NRCF)*. Vol. 1. Assen (Pays-Bas): Van Gorcum; New York and London: Garland, 1983. Pp. xxii, 406. \$50.00.

WILLEM NOOMEN and NICO VAN DEN BOOGAARD, eds. *Nouveau Recueil complet des fabliaux (NRCF)*. Vol. 2. Assen (Pays-Bas): Van Gorcum; New York and London: Garland, 1984. Pp. xx, 464. \$50.00.

In 1972, Lein Geschiere, Willem Noomen, and Nico van den Boogaard undertook the huge task of giving a complete new edition of the French fabliaux. The previous editions had been prepared to serve their contemporary audiences and could not have foreseen the further development of editorial practices or requirements. The heads of the project do not deny the value of A. de Montaiglon and G. Raynaud's *Recueil générale et complet des fabliaux des XIIIe et XIVe siècles, imprimés ou inédits, publiés d'après les manuscrits*, 6 vols. (Paris, 1872-90); on the contrary, the title of their own edition is a tribute to their predecessors' work.

Lein Geschiere, who was the initiator of the *NRCF* and who collaborated the first years of the enterprise, retired after the first volume was published. Nico van den Boogaard died on Christmas Day, 1982; he was forty-four and was at the very heart of the project. Death struck him before the first volume was published but he had been involved in the first five volumes. Fortunately, the first team could rely on H. B. Sol's collaboration, but it was also at the head of a pool of editors who prepared the first redaction of each fabliau: K. MacGillavry-Molenaar, M. Bonte, J. A. van Os, R. L. H. Lops, and M. Rus; in addition, M. Gosman, E. Kooiman, T. Verhulsdonck, and J. A. van Os collated the manuscripts. The realization of the project has been made possible by the dynamism of its members and also by a grant of

the ZWO (Low Countries) and of the two universities of Amsterdam and of that of Groningen.

The present edition is based on P. Zumthor's assertion that "chaque version, chaque 'état du texte' doit en principe être considéré, plutôt que comme le résultat d'une émendation, comme un ré-emploi, une récréation" (*Essai de poétique médiévale* [Paris, 1972], p. 72). It means that each version is important in itself, representing a moment in the life of the work; each manuscript is the witness of a particular context, which we do not necessarily understand but which is there and must be handed over to scholars as it is. In other words, they consider each version an independent text, of which they give us a diplomatic edition, with its own critical notes. To make the comparison easier, the different versions are presented synoptically. They are followed by a critical edition of at least one manuscript (sometimes more, if the versions are too different).

The aim of such an edition is to make the text more legible. Some passages are emended, the punctuation is modernized, and the use of *u*, *v*, *i*, and *j*, of some diacritic marks, and of figures is as close as possible to present-day use. But, as Boogaard makes clear in his article "*Le Nouveau Recueil complet des fabliaux*" (*Neophil* 71 [1977]:333–46), their conception of a critical edition is not that of, say, J. Richner in *Eustache d'Amiens du Bouchier d'Abeville* (Genève, 1975), or M. Thiry-Stassin and M. Tyssens, *Narcisse* (Paris, 1976). They do not aim at reaching a collection of *lectiones superiores*, with ultimately not much in common with the realia of the manuscripts. Although they have filled lacunae, tried to emend the text when rhyme or rhythm are obviously incorrect, or when the reading does not make sense, their aim has never been to produce an elegant text if the basic manuscript is acceptable without emendation. Such a double-sided edition of each fabliau is very precious to any reader. Those who want to read it in the text and are not particularly interested in the variations, the graphies, etc., will find a neat text. Those who are interested in the history of the different versions or in punctual points will find what they want without having to travel to the various libraries to see the manuscripts. The critical apparatus is as complete for the more neglected versions, because after all they are perhaps a mine of discoveries for further scholars.

But, what is a fabliau? It is all very well to decide to make a complete collection of fabliaux, but the genre has to be defined, since critics do not always agree on some of them. Fabliaux share some common features: short narratives written in octosyllables, not belonging to a more particular genre; their actors are human beings. Some properties can be extrapolated to other texts, which can then be defined as fabliaux. Such a definition has

enabled the editors to make a list of 127 fabliaux (see W. Noomen's "Qu'est-ce qu'un fabliau?" paper read at the 14th Congrès international de Linguistique et de Philologie romanes, Naples, 1974). They had to revise Nykrog's, Legry-Rosier's, Rychner's and Jodogne's lists; some fabliaux appear under different names, some so-called fabliaux belong to another genre (e.g., two of them are fables from Marie de France). A close examination of manuscripts has also resulted in the discovery of new versions or fabliaux (e.g., MS Chantilly Condé XIV-32, or Bodmer 113). As a whole they have gathered 278 copies preserved in 42 manuscripts.

The editors also had to make a decision concerning the order in which the fabliaux would be presented. The previous editors had differing views on that matter, but all of them seemed to agree on a particular point: the classification should not be made on the basis of the quality of the fabliaux. Geschiere, Noomen and Boogaard rejected the possibility of grouping them by their themes, their authors (if they had any) or their *incipits*. They decided to innovate in that field: the fabliaux are published according to the manuscripts in which they are found and in the order in which they appear in the manuscript. The first manuscript taken into consideration is the one having the largest number of fabliaux (i.e., Codex A, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, fonds français 837), and they then proceed in decreasing order.

The first volume contains *Estormi* (manuscript A), *Constant du Hamèl* (manuscripts A, B, D, J, n), *Saint Pierre et le Jongleur* (manuscripts A, D), and *Auberee* (manuscripts A, B, C, D, E, F, J, f). Volume 2 contains nine other fabliaux chosen according to the same criteria: *Sire Hain et Dame Anieuse* (manuscripts A, C), *Barat et Haimet* (manuscripts A, B, C, D), *Boivin de Provins* (manuscripts A, P), *La Bourse plein de Sens* (manuscripts A, C, E, O), *Les Trois Aveugles de Compiègne* (manuscripts A, E, F, q), *Jouquet* (manuscripts A, Y), *Les trois Dames qui trouvèrent l'Anel* (manuscripts A, C), *Le Chevalier à la Robe vermeille* (manuscripts A, C, E, O, o) and *Le Vilain Mire* (manuscripts A, B, C). All the fabliaux belong to the A manuscript, and their order of appearance in the manuscript is that given here. It must be underlined that such an editorial decision does not imply anything concerning the manuscript selected for the critical version (e.g., *La Bourse pleine de Sens* relies on C).

Each edition is preceded by an introduction giving information on the manuscript(s), comments on the choice made for the edition, data concerning the author (or possible author), the date and the place of the composition of the fabliau, a detailed summary, and a bibliography of the previous editions and translations.

Each volume ends with a table of proper names and a glossary of the words not understandable to the present-day average French-speaker.

The first two volumes happen not to contain any source of Chaucer's fabliaux (which could be deduced from their titles), but they can now be checked by reading the detailed summaries or editions. We are looking forward to seeing the edition of fabliaux 35, *Gombert et les deus Clercs*, and 80, *Le Meunier et les deus Clercs* (apparently two different texts, since B and C have both: *Gombert* . . . : A, B, C, H; *Le Meunier* . . . : B, C), where we shall probably gain more information on Chaucer's source for *RvT*. The edition of the six versions with their notes will perhaps enable us to gain a clearer view of the material he used and the way he transformed it.

A new edition should, of course, correct the very rare misprints (e.g., vol. 1, p. 352, line 220, *leçons*) and also revise Morawski's quotation (vol. 1, pp. 318, 452): according to them it represents no. 2378, *Tierce foiz c'est droiz*, whereas for Elisabeth Schulze-Busacker (*Proverbes et expressions proverbiales dans la littérature narrative du Moyen Âge français* [Paris, 1985], p. 335) it is 2379, *Tierce mis paste set* . . .

We wish a long life to the *NRCF* and look forward to seeing the next volumes.

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WILLIAM D. PADEN, JR., TILDE SANKOVITCH, and PATRICIA H. STÄBLEIN,  
eds. *The Poems of the Troubadour Bertran de Born*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1986. Pp. xxii, 574. \$65.00.

Limited space cannot do justice to this necessary and long-awaited edition by a team of researchers at Northwestern University. The book begins with an exhaustive analysis of the life and times of Bertran de Born, his cultural and geographical milieus. Such considerations are crucial in studying a body of poetry the satirical and political content of which, not to mention the circumstances of its production, depends both on the troubadour's relations with noble and royal families and on contemporary events. The introduction continues with enlightened discussion of Bertran's importance in contemporary Occitan literature and his subsequent role in literary