Its thirty medieval texts, chosen from a wide variety of genres, are accompanied by a short narrative in the modern French dialect of Guernsey, whose last speaker died in the 1980s – a useful addition for those interested in the history and dialects of insular French. The medieval texts, a combination of shorter texts given in their entirety and excerpts from longer works, are grouped into three main sections. The first, ‘Story’, includes the subsections History, in the medieval sense of comprising both factual accounts, legendary tales, and outright fantasy; Romance; and Short stories, including both courtly narratives and fabliaux. The second, ‘An Anglo-Norman miscellany’, is divided into texts identified as Satirical, social, and moral; Grammar and glosses; Letters; and Doctors, lawyers, and writers. ‘Religious writings’, finally, are presented under the categories of Biblical and apocryphal; Hagiography; and Homiletic. Each text is accompanied by a brief commentary that situates it chronologically and explains a bit about the context and background of the piece. The whole provides a diverse, often entertaining survey of the language, styles, topics, and genres of Anglo-French literary composition, as well as the uses to which that language was put in other areas, such as law or medicine. It is sure to be welcomed both for classroom use, and by anyone wishing to familiarize themselves with the multi-faceted culture of England under the Norman monarchs.


These two titles are the first in a new series from Droz (Geneva) entitled ‘Texte Courant’. The texts proper will, say the publishers, derive when available from existing editions in Droz’s Textes Littéraires Français series – so Perugi’s Alexis was first published there in 2014 (in his Saint Alexis, genèse de sa légende …) otherwise, as with Adam, each edition will be an entirely new and critical one. Droz promises ‘éditions d’excellence’ with ‘traduction[s] précise[s] et vivante[s]’, designed to promote ‘le plaisir de lire et de comprendre les textes anciens’, and published in an inexpensive but attractive and durable format and cover. The texts are of very variable lengths – so volume 4, for instance, is a Florilège de Perceforest, edited by Gilles Roussineau and consisting of more than 700 pages (see below); the net is also cast wide, so volume 6, for instance, is a collection of Théories poétiques néo-latines, and volume 8 gives us Marco Polo’s Devisement du monde.

First then, Saint Alexis. Perugi’s edition reproduces, with very minor and largely presentational changes, his 2014 text from the Hildesheim manuscript. The translation – on the left-hand page – is pleasantly readable. The edition provides a short introduction largely devoted to the cult of Alexis, with a ‘note bibliographique’, and there is also an exhaustive ‘index des formes’; for more detailed information, on manuscript tradition for instance, the reader will need to return to the 2014 edition.

The Jeu d’Adam is a rather différent matter. Hasenohr’s edition is entirely new: faced with the deficiencies of the sole manuscript, she has, she says, in contrast to most other recent editions, attempted to ‘récupérer le texte primitif lorsqu’il semblait
à portée de main’ (p. cxxxv). She is therefore, and as her mise en texte shows, very much interventionist: she gives us a new and truly critical edition, with all the critical apparatus which that choice imposes. She provides a scrupulously accurate translation, and the lengthy introduction, for which Bordier is also responsible, deals at length with the manuscript; with the origins of the Jeu (insular or continental?); with Adam’s place in contemporary theatre and in medieval theatre more generally; with the languages (Latin and French) of the text. She also furnishes some 112 pages of exhaustive notes relating to editorial choices, linguistic features, and doctrinal questions. This is, in other words, an entirely new edition which deserves to become the standard text. Both volumes are reasonably priced, and both are nicely set in a pleasant and generous page layout. [Jane H. M. Taylor]

Motets from the Chansonnier de Noailles, ed. Gaël Saint-Cricq, Eglaal Doss-Quinby, and Samuel N. Rosenberg, Recent Researches in the Music of the Middle Ages and Early Renaissance 42 (Middleton, Wis.: A-R Editions, 2017). lxxxiv + 192 pp. ISBN 0-89579-862-6. $360.00. The manuscript Paris, BnF fr. 12615, which contains large collections of both motets and monophonic trouvère song, is central to many of the new directions that are emerging in the study of thirteenth-century motets. This new edition of fr. 12615’s motets is therefore timely; it presents a detailed yet approachable account that should be welcomed by both scholars and performers. Contributing to the ongoing debate about the typology and geography of the motet, Gaël Saint-Cricq’s introduction argues that fr. 12615 contains two different motet repertoires, one which is ‘central’ and Parisian and another which is based in Arras. He differentiates between these two repertoires chiefly through the existence of extant concordances (or lack thereof) in Parisian manuscripts, but also characterizes the Arras repertoire as being more consistently plagued by fr. 12615’s most infamous attribute: incorrectly notated tenors which diverge widely from chant sources. The easy-to-read and performable motet editions, in conjunction with the critical notes at the back of the volume (pp. 135ff.), contain a plethora of detail. When motets have no extant measured concordance, Saint-Cricq foregrounds the contingency of his editions by first presenting an ‘unmeasured transcription’ in stemless noteheads. The one or more rhythmic editions of these motets that follow are therefore deliberately presented as neither authoritative nor fixed. Many of the editions, especially the ingenious solutions to the most intractably notated motets, require the manuscript to be emended. While this is meticulously detailed in the critical notes, it sometimes cuts against Saint-Cricq’s stated aim of ‘adhering as closely as possible to the original musical and literary text’ (p. 135). Despite this small reservation, this edition will remain a vital and much-used tool as research progresses. It is an important collection that calls for and rewards intensive, sustained, and repeated engagement. [Matthew P. Thomson]

Florilège de Perceforest, ed. Gilles Roussineau, Texte Courant 4 (Geneva: Droz, 2017). xxix + 694 pp. ISBN 978-2-600-05831-5. €18.90. In a single inexpensive volume Gilles Roussineau makes available a series of twenty-four extracts drawn from the six books of the vast late medieval prose romance Perceforest. Roussineau’s edition of the complete Perceforest, which comprises thirteen volumes of the Textes Littéraires Français series also published by Droz, is equipped with detailed introductions to each portion of the text, a full account of the manuscript tradition and variant readings, and extensive critical notes,