

sition from the erudite authority of rhetoric to the mysterious prestige of poetry (Guillaume Berthon), a perfect definition of the poetic “revolution” hinted at in the section title. Another, less known quarrel, documented in the *Panegyric des Damoiselles de Paris* (1545), contributes to the creation of a Lyonnais poetic identity and retraces a path from victorious and sadistic Muses to a more saintly vocation (Elise Rajchenbach-Teller).

The five essays of the following section focus on the Pléiade poets and their heritage, beginning with Du Bellay’s complex relationship with the Muses (George Hugo Tucker), reflecting shifting attitudes and approaches (*otium/negotium, voluptas/virtus*, France/Rome, vernacular/Neo-Latin). In Ronsard’s elegies, the use of the Muses marks the genre’s status with regard to the lyric and the epic (Benedikte Andersson), whereas, for Étienne Jodelle, their juxtaposition with the diabolic allows them to surpass the domain of inspiration to provide a bona fide theory of poetic genius (Emmanuel Buron). Des Autels’s Rabelaisian *Mitistoire barragouyne* constructs an inverted Parnassus, a lascivious parody, whose chapter 14 serves as a serio-comical *art poétique* in its own right (Jean-Charles Monferran). A countermovement, E. R. Curtius’s challenge or rejection of the Muses, illustrates a distancing from a cultural ideal and a tarnishing of poetic values, which can only be accomplished in a poetry of paralipsis (Audrey Duru). Seventeenth-century satirical, burlesque, and polemical Muses form the coherent endpoint of the volume. Whereas they are rare in the satirical collections of 1600–22, showcasing a changing aesthetic (Guillaume Peureux), they are the object of paradoxical praise in Cortese’s attempt to elevate the Neapolitan language (Roland Behar). Afterward, their menacing presence reaches a peak in midcentury polemical writings of Labadie and his followers (Julien Goeury), or, alternatively, they are a marker of derisive distancing from love or poetry, no longer transgressive, however, but grotesque, ridiculed, or devalued (Claudine Nedelec). The diversity of approaches, topics, and texts makes this mandatory reading for students of early modern poetic writing, in verse or in prose.

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La Comédie française et la ville (1550–1650): L’“Iliade” parodique.
Goulven Oiry.

Bibliothèque de la Renaissance 15. Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2015. 794 pp. €59.

A substantial work in every sense of the word, Goulven Oiry’s nearly 800-page study of the relationship between the city and French comic theater between 1550 and 1650 represents a significant contribution to early modern scholarship—not only for its focus on an otherwise overlooked corpus, but also for the author’s illuminating, interdisciplinary approach. Drawing on anthropological concepts of the city, which he adeptly integrates into more traditional styles of literary criticism and historicism, Oiry

demonstrates how an emerging urban culture influenced theatrical comedy in the period and how that comedy depicted, questioned, and affirmed societal power structures.

Oiry's argument is complex—at times unnecessarily so—though the thesis may be simply stated: there was a fundamental and formative relationship between a certain concept of the city and theatrical comedy produced in the late sixteenth century and first half of the seventeenth century, which, as the author emphasizes, includes both the end of the Renaissance and the Wars of Religion. What makes this a particularly intriguing argument is not the manner in which the city is portrayed in the comedies of the time or how authorities gradually restricted potentially subversive theatrical representations to the designated and therefore controllable spaces of newly built theaters, though Oiry competently treats both of those subjects and many others relating to the evolution of theater. Rather, it is the analogy that Oiry draws between the concentric protected spaces of the city, the home, and the female body—specifically that of the maiden daughter—that forms the most compelling premise of the larger argument. This permits the author to draw a further analogy between the siege of a city, a common event in the religious wars, and the efforts of a young lover trying to penetrate the protective boundaries of a family's home and seduce the young woman living there: the common trope of comic theater. This latter analogy produces the subtitle of the book: *"Iliade" parodique* (Parodic *Iliad*). Unfortunately, the reader is left to wonder about this significant reference until page 423.

A first look at the table of contents is sufficient to realize that the work came out of a French doctoral dissertation. The research is uncommonly thorough and the theoretical apparatus exceptionally well developed, both natural consequences of the long, deliberative dissertation process. It should also be noted that Oiry's 2012 dissertation was supervised by the respected scholar of Renaissance satire Pascal Debailly, whose influence is discernible throughout. Alongside these positive characteristics of an adapted dissertation are some negative ones. For example, Oiry alternates between appearing overly deferential to established scholars and overly dismissive of them; it sometimes seems as though the author does not recognize the strength of his own argument and thus opts for such extremes. Related to this, the profuse citation of comparable, substantiating examples from the admittedly impressive corpus that he has assembled—fifty-two plays—is at times tedious; where one or two detailed references might suffice, the author frequently uses four or more. The greatest weakness of the work, however, results directly from the French dissertation style: the work reads as three separate, albeit related, books. The first part, or "act," as Oiry playfully titles them, focuses on the city as portrayed in and influencing the evolution of comic theater in the period; the second part explores the theatricality of city life. It is not until the third part that these ideas are brought together under the overarching thesis—which is only revealed at that point, some two-thirds of the way through—and the insightful analogy between experiences of war and theatrical depictions of seduction

is laid out. That being said, each part is, in its own right, an impressive work of scholarship.

In spite of these weaknesses, I unreservedly recommend Oiry's excellent work to anyone studying the comedy of the period, the history of theater, or early modern urban culture—though I might suggest reading the epilogue first, so as to begin with an idea of where the argument will lead.

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La plume et le pinceau: Nicolas Denisot, poète et artiste de la Renaissance (1515–1559). Daniele Speziari.

Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance 563. Geneva: Droz, 2016. 286 pp. \$66.

The French Renaissance poet and painter Nicolas Denisot offers the peculiar case of a writer best known for works he didn't write. Having insinuated himself into the good graces of the Pléiade, Denisot's name, or rather his pseudonym, le Conte d'Alsinois, appears regularly in the major vernacular lyric collections of the 1550s, from Ronsard's *Amours* to Du Bellay's *Regrets*. Moreover, he usually appears in these collections as a sort of fictional painter, whose portrait of the poet's beloved consoles him in her absence. In modern times, and especially since Margaret Harris's monograph of 1966, Denisot has been identified as the author of the ghostly humanist romance *L'Amant resuscité de la mort d'amour*, of which he is most likely innocent and whose real author had the good sense to use his own pseudonym, Théodose Valentinian. Consequently, and in the absence of any modern edition of Denisot's own sparse poetic output, Daniele Speziari's new monograph on this elusive figure spends a lot more time on literary history than literary criticism.

The book consists of an introduction, six chapters, a conclusion, a bibliography, and an index. Fifteen illustrations, many of portraits that Denisot never painted, round off this handsomely produced volume. Because of the adventurous life of its subject and the meticulous research on which it is based, this new volume should be of mild interest to a wide reading public. The author has unearthed some new archival material, notably Denisot's last will and testament, and has diligently assembled and consulted all previously available information on Denisot's diverse occupations as poet, painter, cartographer, and spy. Speziari nominates Denisot's collection of Christian poetry, the *Cantiques du premier advenement de Jesu-Christ* of 1552, as his most successful and significant publication (there aren't many contenders for that title) and suggests that the poet's decisive career move was to organize and contribute to the Latin and vernacular *tombeaux* for Marguerite de Navarre in the years immediately preceding the *Cantiques*. On the basis of these achievements, Speziari somewhat generously ranks Denisot as a "second order star" (244), but he comes off instead, in this