

Corinne Noirot-Maguire. *“Entre Deux Aïrs”: Style simple et ethos poétique chez Clément Marot et Joachim du Bellay (1515–1560)*.

Les collections de la République des Lettres; Série études. Quebec: Presses de l'Université Laval, 2011. xix + 754 pp. \$85. ISBN: 978–2–7637–8827–2.

Corinne Noirot-Maguire addresses the important topic of *style simple* in the works of Clément Marot and Joachim Du Bellay, and in an original manner connects it to a recurrent ethos or philosophical *habitus*. This ethos distinguishes itself from the agitation of pathos. Her study articulates the seemingly paradoxical relationship between simple rhetoric and a weighty moral stance, a relationship made more paradoxical when compared to the grander styles and visions of other poets of the period. She explicates thoroughly the complexity of the simple style.

Noirot-Maguire offers as a preamble a “synopsis théorique” of simple style. Though she states that it is “consultable indépendamment” (20), it offers a useful review of two rhetorical paradigms of simple style, one of the ciceronian tradition, which aims at a refined simplicity, and the other of the augustinian tradition including Erasmus, which tends toward the sublime nature of Christian simplicity. Often defined in opposition to the “style élevé,” simple style embodies both a clarity and humbleness or earthiness that belie its ability to teach, to delight, and to be suitable to diverse addressees.

Part 1 presents a study of Marot’s poetry. Noirot-Maguire shows in chapter 1 the poet’s deliberate use of the simple style. Having no poetic manifesto, Marot makes remarks throughout his poems in which he defines his enterprise in opposition to the “style haut.” The pastoral poems, the rondeaux, the “Epistre au Despourveu,” and the “déploration” marking the death of Florimond Robertet among others, point repeatedly to a humble ethos against the grand pathos associated with a loftier style. Coupled with these self-reflexive statements is a refusal to compose heroic verse with its warrior values. Noirot-Maguire analyzes deftly Marot’s strategy for addressing prominent people without abandoning his humble position. Chapter 2 delves into the verse epistles and the modulation between the poet’s playfulness and seriousness. Characterized by a subtle familiarity and

a conversational tone (*sermo*), Marot's poems promote both a conciliatory and communitarian ethos, distinct from epistles of strict juridical or official form. Noirot-Maguire elaborates in chapter 3 on what she astutely observes as the "pathos atténué" of the elegies. In these poems, Marot tends toward the modest and compassionate rather than the excessive and passionate and manipulates the elegy's form and its content to produce a bittersweet message, alleviated of any intense anguish caused by amorous affliction or mourning. The concluding chapter treats evangelical humility and the simple style, and particularly how the Spirit works in Marot's poetry to join the low with the sublime. Noirot-Maguire makes an interesting case of *Le Balladin*, a work of questionable authenticity, claiming that it exemplifies Marot's expansive understanding of grace, be it divine or stylistic. The lack of a sustained discussion of the psalms, however, is remarkable.

Du Bellay's poetry occupies the second part of the book. Noirot-Maguire opens by explicating a moralizing tone noticeable in the poetry that valorizes the virtue of moderation in all aspects of life and warns of the pitfalls of *hybris*. This restraint urged by Du Bellay contrasts markedly with the grand desires that Ronsard has for himself and France. In chapter 2, Noirot-Maguire sees the poet's critique of "ravisement" in love as analogous to that of *hybris*. Though susceptible to the alienating effect of love in notably *L'Olive* and the *Sonnetz de l'Honneste Amour*, Du Bellay presents it as problematic. Chapter 3 presents a nuanced reading of the *Divers jeux rustiques*, which benefits from Thomas Greene's and Marc Bizer's studies of the *Antiquitez* and *Poemata* respectively; Du Bellay resists an "*imitation aliénante*" (507). The poet preserves with humility what is his own and naturalizes the foreign, which is conceived in broad terms. Noirot-Maguire concludes with the *Hymne de la Surdit *, which conveys in a magisterial way Du Bellay's "conversion int rieure" from an outward projection of desire to the depths of being understood as "domestique." Du Bellay's *style simple* is for her bound throughout to a kind of "auto-limitation."

Elegantly written, Noirot-Maguire's study deepens our appreciation of the poetry of Marot and Du Bellay.

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