

Jean Maugin. *Le Premier Livre de l'histoire et ancienne chronique de Gerard d'Euphrate, duc de Bourgogne.*

Ed. Richard Cooper. Textes de la Renaissance 179; Romans de chevalerie de la Renaissance 6. Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2012. 636 pp. €69. ISBN: 978-2-8124-0806-9.

Sixteenth-century *romans de chevalerie* have been attracting steadily more attention in the past fifteen years or so, expanding the domain of scholarly interest to works that depend in part on a bourgeois audience alongside nobles — Henri II owned a copy of *Gerard d'Euphrate*. These novels often claimed to be rooted in long-ago French sources, combining the prestige of antiquity with nationalism. Herberay des Essarts claims to have traced the origins of *Amadis de Gaule* to an old Picard manuscript just as the anonymous “translator” of *Gérard d'Euphrate* says he is working from a Walloon manuscript. *Gérard* has many other ties to *Amadis*, the most visible of which are its illustrations: almost all were created for *Amadis*; one first appeared in *Palmerin d'Olive*; four splendid new woodcuts were prepared especially for *Gérard d'Euphrate's* first edition (1549) in folio. Happily, the illustrations are included in this edition, which also has a glossary, short bibliography, and indexes of toponyms, characters, and themes. It seems ungrateful to ask for more, but a thorough analytic index would have facilitated exploring other questions raised by the work — for example, the significance of the alternating use of *fortune* and *destinée* or *catolique* and *chrestien* in an age of gathering storm.

Gérard's modern editor, Richard Cooper, displays his exceptional bibliographical skills in the 200-page introduction. He has uncovered a source in BnF MS fr. 12791 (1525–33) (<http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b9064330c>) containing

L'histoire du duc Gerard du Frattre et de ses quatre fils, written or transcribed by Jacques Legros, a Paris merchant, whose considerable library contained many other vernacular, long prose narratives. From *Gérard du Frattre* (earlier *Girard de Fraite*) to *Gérard d'Euphrate* is but a small step. Borrowings from Legros's manuscript are indicated in italics in this edition, other sources in footnotes. Only volume 1, of the six announced in the *privilege*, ever appeared, perhaps because real interest in the project ended with Legros's death in 1551, as Cooper suggests. He attributes the novel to Jean Maugin (fl. 1566) on the basis of stylistic resemblances to Maugin's *Palmerin d'Olive* (31–41), many of which, it seemed to this reader, might also be family resemblances to *Amadis*. The attribution to Maugin gains further strength in the sources section (41–59), showing the influence here of prose romances of the previous two centuries quite like Maugin's use of earlier materials in his *Nouveau Tristan*, an argument Cooper does not make but might have. In the remainder of the introduction, Cooper cautiously refers simply to *l'auteur* or *le narrateur*, noted on the title page as "Maugin [?]."

Cooper credits much of *Gérard* to the author's imagination, although it could be argued that the source of his invention is more often episodes of *Amadis* than Cooper seems to suggest (58–59). Author of the "Outline Bibliography of Works on Chivalry before 1600" (*Renaissance Chivalry* [1990]), this edition benefits from his encyclopedic acquaintance with this literature as well as with prose redactions of *chansons de geste*, some printed, more in manuscript — *Garin de Monglane*, *les Quatre fils Aymon*, *Perceforest*, etc. — reminding us of the literary continuity linking the Renaissance to its vernacular past. Cooper has traced about thirty copies extant of the original folio edition of *Gérard* to a range of libraries in the US and Europe (20–22). One is underlined, occasionally annotated, by a contemporary reader (BnF Rés. Y² 79); the passages underlined are noted in the course of the introduction but regrettably not in the text. The annotations are difficult to locate based on references in the introduction to the foliation of the 1549 edition, noted in square brackets here. Even then, one knows no more than the page (62, 64, 76, 90, 91, 92, 93, 95, 97, 102, 103, 108, 110, 111, 112, 114, 116, 117, 119, 120, 123, 125, 128, 138, 141, 195, 196, 198, 199–200). The silent testimony of this contemporary reader is evidence waiting to be explored for its insight into what such a reader was expecting and what she or he valued. No attempt is made to justify the choice to publish a modern edition of *Gérard* rather than, say, *Palmerin* (1546, 1549, 1553, 1563, 1572, 1573, etc.) or some other novel more often printed; but the case might be made that precisely because the author of *Gérard* is not as gifted a writer, storyteller, and reader of the human spirit as Herberay, and because so unusually much of this novel is put together by the author, the work offers insight into what readers at this given time and place hoped for, just as it reflects the influence of a confluence of vernacular traditions.

MARIAN ROTHSTEIN
Carthage College