

genius in oratory. A thorough bibliography of primary and secondary sources both modern and ancient regarding Bossuet, historical influences, critical essays, and analyses of his inspirations are listed here in thirty-two pages. This book is a requirement for any serious scholar who is studying the art of theological oratory, the age of Louis XIV, or the religious issues and rivalry of the day (notably between Bossuet and Fenelon), and it gives an overall understanding of the language of passion as employed by Bossuet.

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*“Le secret des secrets,” traduction du XVe siècle.* Pseudo-Aristote.

Ed. Denis Lorée. *Classiques français du Moyen Âge* 179. Paris: Honoré Champion, 2017. 456 pp. €45.

The European tradition of excellence in textual scholarship, which one could say starts with the humanists, is well represented in number 179 of Honoré Champion’s distinguished series *Classiques français du Moyen Âge*. The pseudo-Aristotelian *Secret of Secrets* was a medieval publishing blockbuster. The complete text was translated from Arabic into Latin ca. 1230 (a partial translation appeared ca. 1120); it lived on into the later stages of the Renaissance (for example, the famous Aristotelian philosopher, doctor, and university professor Alessandro Achillini [1463–1512] published an improved Latin text in 1501 that was reprinted in 1516, 1520, and 1528). Part of its enormous success came via retranslations into Europe’s vernaculars, including a number into French; the publication under review here focuses on the most popular of those French versions.

Following the standard formula for such projects, the book has two parts: an extended introduction, and the critical edition of the text in question. The former covers some historical basics, including an overview of the French translation tradition; a description (based on in situ examinations) and classification of the MSS, with the construction of a stemma; a detailed discussion of orthography, phonetics, morphology, syntax, and vocabulary; and a presentation of editorial principles. The second part of the book includes, along with the edition, over ninety pages of variants, over one hundred pages of “Notes et éclaircissements,” a glossary, and an index of proper names.

The heart of the book, of course, is the edition itself, which is concerned with what scholars label Version C of the French tradition. Probably executed ca. 1400 and based on a corrupt and abridged Latin exemplar, Version C ignores the majority of the occult scientific material; it might be described as a mirror of princes with supplementary sections on health and physiognomy. Twenty-four MSS are extant. On the basis of a stemmatic analysis, one of the three subfamilies is identified as being the “most read” and “most diffused”; the best from that group, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France MS 1087, serves as the base text, with omissions being supplied in most cases by Oxford, British Library, MS Douce 305.

On to some comments. First, it is stated in the introduction that Giles of Rome's *De regimine principum* cites the *Secret of Secrets*: while many modern scholars have said the same, making it understandable why the claim would be repeated here, it is simply not true. Second, one important name is missing from the bibliography's list of *Principales études*: Willy Hermenau, who published a dissertation on the French translations in 1922. Third, Monfrin's article of 1982 points to another MS of Version C that was sold at a Sotheby's auction: at a minimum, mention of this MS should have been made; additionally, a description of the MS based on the sale catalogue might have been provided. Fourth, a similar point obtains for the catalogue descriptions of the two MSS destroyed last century: we only see their shelfmark numbers. Fifth, a transcription of the Walters MS that Lorée has made available online (15, n. 15; 108, n. 24) is listed neither with the description of the MS nor in the bibliography. Sixth, there are two early printed editions (1497, 1517) of Version C: both, we are told, were not studied. This omission is odd on its own terms, given that there remain significant gaps in the proposed stemma and that the 1497 publication was certainly based on a MS dating from the same time as the MSS used for the present edition; it is also odd because the first printing is available online and the other is sitting in the city (Paris) where eight MSS were consulted. The upshot is that one and maybe two potentially important MS witnesses have been neglected. Seventh, opting to present an edition based on a subfamily of MSS deemed to be the farthest in time from the original is a rather surprising choice, especially given the reasonable number of MSS to be collated—not too many and not too few, both of which, to be sure, can make preparing a stemma extremely difficult. But these are all minor criticisms: they certainly do not detract from the high scholarly quality and value of this publication.

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*Briefwechsel*. Baruch de Spinoza.

Ed. and trans. Wolfgang Bartuschat. Philosophische Bibliothek 699; Sämtliche Werke 6. Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 2017. xxviii + 332 pp. €48.

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Finally, it is out: Wolfgang Bartuschat's new German translation of Spinoza's *Letters*—and with this, the last piece of Spinoza's work that was still lacking a modern and philosophically adequate German translation since Bartuschat took up the gigantic task of retranslating all of Spinoza's work into German in 1993. Like his previous translations, Bartuschat's new translation of Spinoza's letters is a success. It provides a philosophically accurate, yet well-readable German translation of Spinoza's correspondence, originally written in Latin and Dutch. What is more, Bartuschat's new translation masterfully preserves the variation of Spinoza's original tone: his enthusiasm when he is