

Marie-Dominique Legrand and Keith Cameron, eds. *Vocabulaire et création poétique dans les jeunes années de la Pléiade (1547–1555)*.

Colloques, congrès et conférences sur le XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle 1. Paris: Honoré Champion Éditeur, 2013. 336 pp. €60. ISBN: 978-2-7453-2536-5.

This book discusses degrees of lexical innovation in French through the poetry of the Pléiade poets, a period (1547–55) from the coronation of King Henry II of France, just prior to Joachim Du Bellay's *Deffence et illustration de la langue françoise*, to publication of Pierre de Ronsard's *Hymnes*. An introduction plus epilogue by editor Marie-Dominique Legrand and a conclusion by Nathalie Dauvois enfold twenty-one essays by junior and senior scholars, all but one from France.

Following many nineteenth-century editions that revived the Renaissance poets' contribution to literary history, among the following century's editions and studies, betimes lexicographical, the decades 1970 to 2000 manifested special focus on concordances to the poets (e.g., Keith Cameron's *Concordance des œuvres poétiques de Joachim Du Bellay* [1988], often cited here). This collective volume builds upon them, explains editor Legrand, by analyzing in a detailed, comparative way the renovating impulses the sixteenth-century poets gave to their vernacular, and how they achieved, on the page, the program Du Bellay defined in his aforementioned treatise. As Jean Pruvost explains ("La naissance de la lexicographie française"), the philological interest and spur that especially characterized the Renaissance world of letters — the alphabetically ordered glossaries compiling the total of glosses at the end of a work were the "embryons de dictionnaires" (18) — importantly facilitated the emergence of dictionaries as we know them today. The word-symbol became a lexical unit that could be explained and translated by means of synonyms or paraphrase. In France, two main events preceding the *Deffence et illustration* establish French as a printed and "lexicographed" language, and, simultaneously, its assimilation to national, political ambitions: Francis I's Ordinance of Villers-Cotterêts made it, in 1539, the sole administrative language; that same year Robert Estienne published his *Dictionnaire françoislatin*.

For the Pléiade poets, Horace's *Ars poetica* constitutes the key reference at a theoretical level in their enterprise to innovate French vocabulary through poetry by deploying hitherto-uncommon lexical uses and figures of speech as well as newly invented words. Horace was translated by Jacques Peletier du Mans in 1541 and is steadily referred to in the second book of Du Bellay's *Deffence et illustration*. Peletier did not attempt a slavish imitation of the Latin master, however, as Alice Vintenon shows once more in her article on Peletier's (pejorative) use of the word *fantasie* throughout his Horace translation (27–38). He associates Horace's *aegri somnia* — incoherent images of badly composed books — with Greek *phantasia*, which bears medical connotations.

Peletier, inspired by Macrobius, is the first to imbue the French word *fantasie* with philosophical connotation, harking also to Horace's Neo-Latin commentators. Peletier's Hellenizing of *fantasie* represents a connotative process

closely linked to a changing idea and fashioning of the poets' self-image as divinely inspired savant who aspires to found language anew and reorient man's sensibility to nature. Philosophy becomes part of poetics. Likewise, technical vocabulary taken from arts and crafts becomes part of poetic theory and praxis, first in Jean Lemaire de Belges's, then in Pléiade poetry, as shown by Agnès Rees (221–32). Emmanuel Buron (67–81) interestingly analyzes changing uses of the word *objet* in love poetry; he concludes that the transforming meaning of *objet* is, again, closely linked to the evolution of the poet's self-fashioning: from "un artisan du verbe" he became "un philosophe inspiré." That the poets' "re-invention" or "enriching" of French lexis should be placed in the context of the transmission of texts, in a wider cultural context, is nicely illustrated by Rosanna Gorris Camos's article, lavish with information, on "Le saule et l'olivier" in Du Bellay's *L'Olive* (129–37): here she cites Gorni's *il petrarchismo non basta* (2003). Du Bellay was part of a network of Italian and French diplomats and poets, Vittoria Colonna and Veronica Gambara not the least among them, who exchanged poetry collections.

Among the other contributions, special mention should be made of the late Philip Ford on the rooting of the *style mignard* in Neo-Catullianism (39–50) and Olivier Halévy's instructive synthesis on forging epithets (279–92). This volume contains abundant new information on the French language and its evolution. It has the potential to become a worthy tool in future studies, linguistic as well as literary.

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