

Women Playwrights of Early Modern Spain. Feliciana Enríquez de Guzmán, Ana Caro Mallén, and Sor Marcela de San Félix.

Ed. Nieves Romero-Díaz and Lisa Vollendorf. Trans. Harley Erdman. *The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe: The Toronto Series 49; Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies 501.* Toronto: Iter Press; Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2016. xii + 272 pp. \$34.95.

This annotated anthology of dramatic works by three seventeenth-century women playwrights is a welcome addition to the growing bibliography of texts by Spanish Golden Age authors available in English. It is especially valuable because of its focus on female writers, whose names continue to be largely unfamiliar outside of academic circles and whose works have not been translated into English until now. After a general introduction followed by the translator's note, the collection is divided into three sections, one for each author: Feliciana Enríquez de Guzmán, Ana Caro Mallén, and Sor Marcela de San Félix. Each section begins with an overview of the dramatist's life and works, an applicable bibliography, and a brief synopsis and analysis of each text. The volume ends with a selected bibliography on Spanish classical theater and issues of women's social and literary lives, and an index of names and terms. In the introduction, Romero-Díaz and Vollendorf offer a basic survey of the rise of public, court, and convent theater in Golden Age Spain, including the key characteristics of Lope de Vega's "new comedy" genre, which dominated theatrical production of the time. They also discuss women's increasingly important role in Spanish early modern society and its literary, intellectual, and theatrical life. The introduction's notes include extensive bibliographical information for those interested in further study of the subject. Of special interest is a complete list of known women playwrights who lived and wrote their plays between 1500 and 1750.

The editors base their choice of the playwrights in the collection on "their diverse representation of style, context and thematics" (24). Enríquez de Guzmán is known to be the first woman to write for the public stage in Spain. Her only surviving work, *Tragicomedy of the Sheban Gardens and Fields*, is a combination of two five-act parts, ten poetic *coros*, and four interludes. The anthology only includes the interludes, which are autonomous comic pieces populated by farcical mythological figures. The interludes mirror the *Tragicomedy's* plot, themes, and characters in a burlesque way and serve as an example of women writers' engagement with the bawdy side of theater. Ana Caro is the only professional playwright of the three and the best-known one. Her chivalric play *The Count Partinuplés* is an adaptation of a popular French medieval romance, *Partonopeus de Blois*. The plot of the play revolves around the empress of Constantinople Rosaura's efforts to find a suitable husband with the help of her cousin Aldora's magic. What is interesting about Caro's version of the romance is the reversal of traditional gender roles: her Rosaura is a strong, independent woman who controls her destiny, while her be-

loved is portrayed as a more passive character. Finally, selections by Sor Marcela, Lope de Vega's illegitimate daughter, offer an excellent example of Golden Age convent theater. The longest of the five pieces, *Spiritual Coloquio of Mindless Zeal*, is a one-act allegorical play, which was performed for and by the nuns to celebrate a novice's profession of final vows. A *coloquio* was usually preceded by a *loa*, a brief introductory piece, often of a comic nature. The four *loas* included in this volume highlight Sor Marcela's extraordinary wit and linguistic talent.

Erdman's excellent translations of the texts in this anthology convey the rhythm and style of the original, as does his other work with Spanish theater. Erdman finds creative equivalents for jokes, allusions, and linguistic games, only reverting to footnotes when absolutely necessary to explain certain expressions and puns that escape English translation. The footnotes, which also identify the Spanish source for each text and elucidate the many literary, mythical, biblical, and linguistic references, will be of great use to a reader unfamiliar with Spanish early modern literature. While directed at a general English-speaking audience, this volume will also make an excellent textbook for courses on Golden Age literature or Hispanic women taught in American universities. Its format and clear presentation make it easy to use in a classroom setting. More importantly, the anthology prepared by Romero-Díaz, Vollendorf, and Erdman greatly expands the Spanish classical theater canon by bringing to light the many alternative ways in which female writers were able to engage with the themes, perspectives, and stylistic tendencies employed by their male counterparts.

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Outsiders: The Humanity and Inhumanity of Giants in Medieval French Prose Romance. Sylvia Huot.

The Conway Lectures in Medieval Studies. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2016. x + 348 pp. \$40.

Sylvia Huot's work is a timely and important investigation of giant figures in medieval French literature. There have been other explorations of nonhuman and mythological entities, like Isabel Habicht's monograph on medieval French and German dwarfs (2012). French giants, however, have not had quite such an in-depth discussion. It is, therefore, a pleasure to receive this excellent study on the topic.

Huot's introduction lays down the painstaking methodological framework in which she discusses the human, nonhuman, monstrous, and othered statuses of the giants and giantesses of French narratives. While her focus is predominantly on Arthurian works, her interpretations range from religious aspects—giants as converts or non-Christian opponents—to gender. The methodology is wonderfully precise and comprehensive.