

Olivier de Magny. *Les Souspirs — Les Odes — Les sonnets — Pièces diverses*. Ed. François Rouget. *Ceuvres poétiques 2*. Textes de la Renaissance 108. Paris: Honoré Champion Éditeur, 2006. 752 pp. index. gloss. chron. bibl. €54. ISBN: 2-7453-1357-6.

Olivier de Magny has tended to be sidelined by modern commentators, probably mentioned most often as the addressee and imitator of Joachim Du Bellay, and the poetic interlocutor — and possible lover — of Louise Labé (as well as, more recently, the hypothetical author of some of her poems). However, Magny's relationships with poetic figures of the 1550s far exceed these roles, and are to be illuminated by much of his diverse oeuvre: in this volume, the introductions to both the *Souspirs* and the *Odes* stress the insight these collections offer into modes of poetic dialogue and community in the 1550s. Furthermore, an edition of Magny's complete works provides access to a poet treating a rich variety of themes from the political to the erotic, in a diverse range of poetic genres and forms. Indeed François Rouget suggests in this volume that Magny's *Odes*, in particular, contain examples of all the different phases of the Pléiade's experimentation, as well as bearing witness to an eclectic range of other literary influences. Since the only previous complete edition of Magny's works dates from 1871–88 (reprinted by Slatkine in 1969), Rouget and his collaborators have performed an extremely valuable task in producing a critical edition informed by recent research in Renaissance studies. This is the second volume of their edition, containing

Magny's poetic works from 1557 until his death in 1561, together with some liminary compositions and poems attributed to Magny. While a general introduction to Magny was provided in the first volume (1999), this volume contains individual introductions to the poetic collections, a chronology, a bibliography, a glossary, and an index nominum; detailed notes refer the reader to relevant sources and modern criticism, as well as explaining (even quite basic) mythological and historical references.

Magny's *Souspirs* treat many of the same themes as Du Bellay's *Regrets*, and critics tend to dismiss Magny as the inferior poet. However, Marie-Dominique Legrand argues that the value of the *Souspirs* lies in the insight it affords into the relationship between the two poets, which should, she suggests, be reassessed. It is one not simply of imitation but rather of both intense competition and also poetic cooperation: in the spirit of the Pléiade's collective pursuit of the *illustration* of French, the two poets shared the challenges available, while also each pursuing an individual literary and social position. In subtle ways, the *Souspirs* and the *Regrets* refer to each other, and define themselves in relation to each other. Legrand also nuances the opposition made between the *Souspirs* and the *Regrets* in terms of their Petrarchism or anti-Petrarchism.

Rouget's edition of Magny's *Odes* situates their principal interest in their contributions to contemporary poetic debates: for example, to the dispute surrounding the value of the Petrarchan cult of the unique lady. His erudite notes build up a picture of Magny's part in such debates by providing the poetic intertexts of various *Odes*. The notes also trace the intratextual relationships between the *Odes* and Magny's earlier poems, showing how he reuses his own material as if aiming to collect together in the *Odes* all of his own lyric production; reference is made not only to earlier published poetry but also to manuscript poems discovered by Rouget. Finally, Rouget also highlights Magny's deep concern with the structure of his five-book volume, as well as the great diversity of his modes of lyricism, his poetic forms, and his rhythmic patterns.

The *Sonnets de Monsieur de Magny* were composed for the young Charles IX between his *sacre* in May 1561 and Magny's death in June or July of that year. They belong to the tradition of *institutions* or *miroirs* for princes, and Rouget's notes highlight their close relationship to the poetic *institutions* composed by Du Bellay, Ronsard, and Michel de l'Hospital. Magny's originality is in his use of the sonnet form, which, Rouget suggests, divided up his moral lesson into eighteen short parts, thus aiming to maintain the attention of his eleven-year-old reader. In summary, this volume is an excellent and thorough edition of a poet associated with the Pléiade, which enriches our understanding of the poetic and intellectual landscape of 1550s France.

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