

*Jean de Vauzelles et le creuset lyonnais: Un humaniste catholique au service de Marguerite de Navarre entre France, Italie et Allemagne (1520–1550)*. Elsa Kammerer.

Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance 522. Geneva: Librairie Droz, 2013. 562 pp. 72CHF.

---

The life and activities of Jean de Vauzelles is at the heart of a burgeoning period in the history of Lyon, when the religious debate had not yet reached confessional radicalization, and when the intellectual elite, to which Vauzelles belonged, was actively engaged in politics and social life. Richard Cooper (“Humanism and Politics,” in *Intellectual Life in Renaissance Lyon* [1993]: 21) believed that Vauzelles “deserves much more study.” Indeed, after the publication of *Les trois livres de l'Humanité de Jesuchrist* (2004), Elsa Kammerer now offers a detailed study of his biography, his writings, and his relations with the royal family and with German and Italian humanists.

After a first chapter that reviews Vauzelles's life and environment, and that, among other details, provides information on the alleged time of Vauzelles's death (ca. 1563), Kammerer focuses on the study of rare and unpublished books, in particular the *Theatre de françoise desolation*, written upon the death of Louise de Savoie (1531). Large sections of the volume are dedicated to a reassessment of the network that led to German humanism. In chapter 3, the author analyzes Vauzelles's translation of Ottmar Nachtgall's *Historiae Evangelicae* and its intellectual impact, as it demonstrates how French Catholic culture in the 1520s and 1530s was attentive to the call for religious renewal that stemmed from German humanism.

The publishers in Lyon specialized in devotional books such as *Ars Moriendi* and *Danse de la mort*, both of which had been translated by Vauzelles. The latter, illustrated by Holbein, was published in Lyon and entitled *Simulachres et historiées faces de la mort*. Kammerer remarkably reconstructs both the literary and the commercial networks that connected the bookshops in Lyon to humanist publications in Germany. Similarly, *Figures de la Bible*, published in several languages, revealed sensitivity to discourse through images specific to the intellectual environment in Lyon but originally conceived in the main publishing centers in Germany. It is this portion of Kammerer's investigation that differs above all from commonplace research on Lyon in the Renaissance, making the city

comparable to an Italian metropolis outside Italy, on account of the economic and cultural influence of its Italian community.

Chapter 7 is dedicated to the most eminent Hebraist of the time, Sante Pagnini, who chose Lyon to publish his translation of the Bible (1528). This detour into Pagnini allows us to comprehend Vauzelles's personality further, because both represent the main Catholic institutions' effort to restructure biblical thought and the interpretation of the holy texts. Vauzelles is well known for his militancy: it was under his impetus that secular support, in the general alms of Lyon, took shape. This concept of charity in action would later be theorized in *Police subsidiaire* (1531), which was vehemently criticized by the theologian N. Morin, who saw evidence of rising Protestantism. Chapter 9, devoted to the royal entries of 1533 organized by Vauzelles, brings out his antiquarian and Italianate culture; details of the ornamentation seem to indicate an early spreading of *Songe de Poliphile* in France. In this regard, Kammerer offers the hypothesis that Vauzelles would have been its first anonymous translator, several years before the publication of its revised edition by Jean Martin.

The book is completed by rare or unpublished texts in annex, notably the *Theatre de françoise desolation* and the prelims of *Hystoire evangelique*. Throughout the study, several hypotheses are advanced about the foggy areas of Vauzelles's activities. In addition to that of *Poliphile*, other works of translation are attributed to him (Regius's *Medecine de l'ame*, a text by Vivès, and a pseudo-Lucian *Le martyr de verité*). All these attributions are no doubt historians' *cruces*. In the case of the French version of *Poliphile*, Kammerer would have benefited from Emanuela Kretzulesco's (1976) and M. G. Adamo's (1992) works about the language of its French translation. Through the translation process we perceive its original Latin text and the *poliphilesque* Italian version to arrive at this Frenchified form, the simplified and unfaithful 1546 edition. In this sense, it is regretful that the broader question of translation in France around the 1540s has not been sufficiently developed in regard to Vauzelles's translation practices.

The availability of these publications, although very uneven, would have allowed a more in-depth *Nachleben* study of Vauzelles's work. For example, it would be valuable to understand why Fernand Colomb takes such an interest in him, to the degree that today the *Theatre de françoise desolation* and the second acknowledged copy of *Hystoire evangelique* are available in the *Biblioteca colombina* of Seville only. These minor remarks in no way tarnish the quality of this study, which remains the reference work for all research on Vauzelles and on humanism in Lyon.

SUSANNA GAMBINO LONGO, *Université Lyon 3*