

Jean Salmon Macrin. *Salmon Macrins Gedichtsammlungen von 1528 bis 1534: Edition mit Wortindex.*

Ed. Marie-Françoise Schumann. *Hamburger Beiträge zur Neulateinischen Philologie* 7. Munster: Lit Verlag, 2011. xvii + 538 pp. €54.90. ISBN: 978-3-643-11016-9.

Jean Salmon Macrin (1490–1557), once hailed as the French Horace by his contemporaries, is recognized today as one of the most prominent Neo-Latin poets of the first French generation, and a forerunner of the Pléiade. His early poetry emulated the Italians, Pontano especially, as well as Pindar, Catullus, and Horace. Among his works, however, only his two most-acclaimed books were thus far in modern editions: the *Carminum libri quatuor* of 1530, published *in extenso*, translated and annotated with the *Epithalamiorum liber unus* by Georges Soubeille in 1998 (completing a first, incomplete edition in 1978); and the *Hymnorum libri sex* of 1537, recently published by Suzanne Laburthe in 2010. Schumann's complete edition of Macrin's poetry is, therefore, of major importance for Macrin scholars as well as anyone interested in the early developments of French Neo-Latin poetry.

The first volume of this edition comprises all of Macrin's production from 1528, year of his literary debut, to 1534, the probable date of his accession to the prestigious office of *cubicularius regis*, King Francis I's manservant and official poet. It only omits a couple of early Christian elegies published before 1528. A second volume, *Salmon Macrins Gedichtsammlungen von 1537*, by the same author, comprises all poetry from 1537 until Macrin's death.

Macrin's first verse was composed in celebration of his wedding to Guillonne Boursault, whom he renamed Gelonis in the *Carminum libellus* (1528), a short collection of twenty-three pieces in the style of Catullus, Horace, and Pontano. He dedicates it to Honorat de Savoie, the son of his earliest patron. These short pieces announce many of the themes that will characterize the first half of Macrin's career: his love for Gelonis, his attachment to the countryside around his hometown of Loudun, and his dedication to his friends and peers.

These themes are also at the core of Macrin's much more ambitious following publication, the *Carminum libri quatuor* (1530), a title reminiscent of Horace, his main model. This collection of 116 odes, most of which are composed in Alcaic or Sapphic verse, is dedicated to Guillaume du Bellay, the diplomat, humanist, and poet who had offered Macrin his protection. The *Carmina* mark the epitome of Macrin's talent in emulating the themes and style of classical lyric poetry, but also the poet's participation in his time's Republic of Letters — among his most prestigious addressees are many of his French *sodales* (companions), but also Guillaume Budé, Erasmus, Thomas More, and others.

The success of Macrin's first poems encouraged him to offer a second edition of the *libellus*, published under the title of *Epithalamiorum liber unus* in 1531 with the addition of four poems and a few rewritings — Schumann's edition offers the text of both versions. This second edition was to accompany an original publication, the *Lycoricorum libri duo*, which paid a vibrant homage to Francis I and

the new era of prosperity that his reign promised to France. The *Lyrice* also marked Macrin's return to the Christian vein of inspiration, while not yet forsaking the elegiac inspiration of his youth. For all these reasons, they represent a turning point in Macrin's career and poetry, making this first modern publication all the more valuable for scholars.

Also edited for the first time are the *Elegiarum, Epigrammatum et Odarum libri tres*, published in 1534 when Macrin was at the peak of his career and recognition. These works are considered minor when compared to the others, but continue to bear witness to Macrin's division between his loyalty to the court, the king, and his fellow poets, and his aspiration to a life of simple *otium* alongside his family. It also confirms the growing influence of the Christian faith in his verse.

The edition of this eminent work is accompanied by a vast word index that may help the novice reader enter the world of Macrin's poetry, although one might regret the absence of any substantial introduction, commentary, or notes to better grasp its reach and originality.

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