

Anne Réach-Ngô. *L'Écriture éditoriale à la Renaissance: Genèse et promotion du récit sentimental français (1530–1560)*.

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In *L'Écriture éditoriale à la Renaissance*, Anne Réach-Ngô seeks to demonstrate how sixteenth-century French editors present and shape the material text according to the horizon of expectations of their readership, as well as how the material text creates an image of the editor akin to that of the author. Réach-Ngô's more specific focus is on the rise of the sentimental narrative between 1530 and 1560, taking as a case study Hélienne de Crenne's *Angoisses douloureuses qui procèdent d'amour*, first published in Paris in 1538 by Denis Janot and again in Lyons in 1539, most likely by Denis de Harsy.

Réach-Ngô's aim is admirable in and of itself, but the fact that she chooses to focus on Hélienne, a figure every bit as intriguing as the more notorious Louise Labé, makes this study even more welcome. It is a productive blend of literary, historical, and theoretical approaches that shows how the editor's work reflects the intertextuality of the *Angoisses*, the expectations of its readers, and even a shift toward the "rhetoric of interiority" characteristic of the seventeenth-century psychological novel.

The book is divided into six chapters, each focusing on a specific way in which the editor influences how the text is received and understood. Chapter 1, the broadest in scope, shows how the *péritexte* (paratext found in the physical volume) portrays the editor as mediator between author and reader, and as a producer of the text in his own right. Chapter 2 describes how Janot's and Harsy's editorial practices and strategies vis-à-vis the *Angoisses* may be understood by the editorial landscape to

which they belonged. Chapter 3 focuses on how editorial interventions such as *mise-en-page* or chapter titles structure the narrative of the *Angoisses*, a concern also taken up in chapters 4 and 5, which detail how Janot's division of the text into paragraphs anticipates the following century's rhetoric of interiority and how Harsy's less innovative addition of chapters was better suited to his own readership. Chapter 6, the highlight of the group, centers on the intertextuality of the *Angoisses* and the way in which Hélienne is constructed as an author figure.

Indeed, chapter 6's greatest interest lies in how it addresses the thorny question of Hélienne's identity. Réach-Ngô does not go so far as to claim that Hélienne was a *créature de papier* (to borrow Mireille Huchon's term for Labé), though she does cast doubt on the identification of Hélienne with the Abbéville native Marguerite Briet (425). She does, however, establish the literary and cultural contexts that give rise to the image of Hélienne as an author. In so doing, she reveals that the authorial persona constructed by the editor is more knowable, and perhaps more interesting, than the identity of the historical author.

It must be said that this book is at its strongest and most insightful when it focuses on Hélienne, and it does not do so in chapter 1. Its broad sampling of texts and publishers makes its logic difficult to follow, it reads like a survey of previous literature on the Renaissance *péritexte*, and it is occasionally misleading with regard to dates. For instance, Réach-Ngô presents Jean Lemaire de Belges's preface to the *Triumphe de l'amant vert*, published by Janot in 1535, as if it were the first occurrence of this text (34). In fact, it appeared in the 1511 first edition of the *Épîtres de l'Amant Vert*. The same may be said for Clément Marot's *Adolescence clémentine*: no mention is made of the fact that it was first published by Pierre Roffet in 1532, not 1534.

Yet this objection should not detract from an appreciation of the whole. Réach-Ngô's erudition and documentation are impressive, and her book is a fine example of how considering the material text can lead us to reconsider authorship and the production of meaning in the Renaissance text. It is definitely worth the while of scholars working on Hélienne, and could also prove useful to those interested in reception, female authorship, the publishing landscape of Paris and Lyons in the mid-1500s, or the history of the sentimental novel.

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