

Marian Rothstein, ed. *Charting Change in France around 1540*.

Cranbury: Susquehanna University Press, 2006. 224 pp. index. bibl. \$50. ISBN: 1-57591-108-6.

The change of which the title speaks is in nothing less than the intellectual and cognitive worldview of the population at large, especially urban artisans, the nascent *noblesse de robe*, and the religious reformers clustered about Marguerite de Navarre. It occurred over the twenty years from 1530 to 1550, and created what we now consider French culture.

Virginia Krause takes off from Rothstein's earlier work on the appearance in French of *Amadis de Gaule* to show that the translator, Herberay des Essarts, moved in his prefatory material from the search for profits due to the popularity of chivalric romance to a different venture entirely, in which the narrative satisfaction presumably sought in these tales is relentlessly deferred: "The resolution of narrative tension has clearly ceased to function as a pretext, however weak, for the reader's desire; instead, the end of the fourth book programs desire for desire itself" (46). She goes on, moreover, to associate the intensification through deferral of desire with the birth of capitalism, but she does so in language that recognizes the tenuousness of the connection she is trying to draw. The strength of this book is also its weakness: the authors are convinced they have uncovered the birth of modern national culture, and they are unafraid to make their case in broad terms, inviting both dissent and excitement in their readers.

Richard Freedman examines a songbook composed by Clément Jannequin and published by Pierre Attaignant in 1540 to show how Jannequin took advantage of the opportunity to present his music visually, and therefore to explore the relationship between the rhythm and melody of his composition and the poetic density of the text it performed. Freedman further finds the musical press initially

characterized by the desire to support the court and its cultural institutions, but, by the end of the period under consideration, musical treatises published the techniques and instruments through which readers could aspire to civility, and therefore at least potentially leave their *roturier* origins behind them. Laurier Turgeon writes about Jacques Cartier's voyages to Canada from 1534 to 1542 and the impact of the New World on French culture, understood at first more materially than in any of the other contributions. Cod from the Grand Banks changed both French eating and trading habits during the 1540s: the city council of Rouen devoted almost as much attention to cod as to wheat. The last third of Turgeon's paper attempts to tie his arresting findings about the importance of cod and furs to the French symbolic order in a way which this reader found less convincing: I would have preferred that he demonstrate these relationships from contemporary documents rather than exclusively from modern theoretical treatises.

Francis Higman contributes perhaps the most provocative chapter of all, in which he suggests a clear connection between evangelical texts and the use of roman letters and accents to print them. He goes on to tie the developing popularity of octavo and 16° formats with the private study, "individual enquiry, and personal thought" (123) favored by authors bent on Reform. Finally, he found the metrical translations of the book of psalms initiated (for François I^{er}) by Marot to be a radical challenge to the erudite and grandiloquent court "poetry of Ronsard and his colleagues of the Pléiade" (133) and, again, an aid to the birth of a national popular culture in French.

Rothstein herself contributes a study of translation, which found a new willingness to buy and read fiction for pleasure (free of the need for justification through moral uplift) coupled with increasing confidence in the ability of French to convey thoughts and emotions previously reserved to the languages of classical antiquity, or to the one claimed by Dante and Petrarch. Bernd Renner undertakes a close study of the four authentic prologues to Rabelais's novels, without explaining why he treats neither the prologue to the 1548 version of the *Quart Livre* nor the metatextual materials in the Prognostications and Almanachs.

The authors have clearly identified a crucial change in the ways educated French people thought about their language and, indeed, their very world. This volume will reward careful attention not simply from students of early modern or Renaissance France, but also from scholars seeking to chart the birth of national cultures across Europe.

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