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whose guilty conscience is caught in the web of the crime played out before and for them, augments its poetic power within the framework of the rhetorical and ethical argumentation derived from Quintilian and La Primaudaye's Christianization of Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics*, and from Francis Bacon. As Shakespeare has Hamlet illustrate, "through his failures with the *Mousetrap*, works of drama should not be taken to function as straightforwardly didactic and forensic tools" (237); the playwright's most original rethinking of the classics lies not in direct imitation, but in their critique. That Hamlet's "philosophical nature is a given" (238) is an inescapable claim. Yet Lewis turns this thesis about Hamlet's way of being, thinking, and speaking into a probing analysis of the character's argumentation about vengeance, his clinging to providence, and his use of natural philosophy and metaphysics. As an intellectual, Hamlet is a fluent philosophical deliberator. His thinking, Lewis shows adroitly, reflects an art of distilling philosophical sources from the past.

In the book's closing paragraph, Lewis asserts that "The brilliantly knowing paradox on which *Hamlet* rests is that it takes the self-reflective contrivances of a dramatic plot to reveal that there is no divine author scripting human affairs; no list of approved parts for humankind to play; no heavenly audience passing judgment on human performance" (303). This paradox is the source of Lewis's readings, which are authentic, full of the surprises of critical invention, ardently articulated, and endlessly thought-provoking.

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Maynard, Katherine S.
Reveries of Community: French Epic in the Age of Henri IV, 1572–1616.
Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2018. Pp. x, 183. ISBN 978-0-8101-3583-3 (paperback) US$34.95.

Reveries of Community: French Epic in the Age of Henri IV, 1572–1616 takes us on a short but nevertheless rich journey through the work of five French epic poets, some of whom are unfamiliar even to many of those working in French Studies: Pierre de Ronsard, Guillaume Salluste Du Bartas, Sébastian Barnier, Pierre-Victor Palma Cayet, and Agrippa d'Aubigné.

Katherine Maynard begins by deftly locating her study in relation to other recent scholarship about the French epic; many of the texts that she mentions are a result of renewed interest in this previously understudied genre. Indeed, a strength of her study is that it is a useful guidebook to the status of the French epic: throughout, she acknowledges existing work pertaining directly to her points and identifies possible areas for future study.

The main focus of her argument is "imagined communities," namely, how epic poets "invited readers to reimagine their own political realities." Through a series of close readings, which are always contextualized by a brief introduction to each author and the context in which he was writing, Maynard reveals the sheer variety of ways in which each poet exploits the epic genre. Her engagement with the classical models that inspired her chosen poets is particularly impressive due to its nuances: she draws a close comparison between Virgil's Italy and Ronsard's Crete while homing in on Ronsard's deviation from Virgil in his choice of landscapes. From Cayet's self-identification as a *chronologue* like Herodotus, as opposed to a historian like Tacitus, to the influence of Ovid's *Tristia* on the preface of *Les Tragiques*, her wide-ranging analysis of the classical influences on the poems is never over-laboured and is well integrated into the analysis of the primary texts which constitutes the bulk of *Reveries*.

The subtle shifts in her argument reveal each poet's adaptation of the genre in order to best convey his respective imagined communities. The flexibility of the epic, something which is all too easy to overlook, is therefore clearly emphasized. The first chapter deals with Ronsard's *Franciade*, which, for Maynard, is a continuation of Ronsard's reflections on the war as opposed to a failure of a poem due to its incompleteness, which is a commonly held view of this text. She considers the links between the *Franciade* and its epic predecessors before using it as a springboard to talk about the other poems, all of which are discussed in relation to Ronsard at some point. The following chapter considers Du Bartas's *La Sepmaine*, setting it in direct opposition to the *Franciade*, for it consists of communities that support his identity as a moderate Protestant and Gascon. A brief discussion of the shorter *La Judit* is a window into a space conceived with a smaller religious community in mind.

Discussion of the depiction of Henri IV really comes to the fore as Maynard turns to Garnier's *La Henriade*, which focuses on his early reign. French identity is defined in relation to Spanish identity, and she points out that choosing a contemporary figure as the hero constitutes a clear divergence from

Ronsard's view of the epic. She contrasts this with Cayet's portrait of Henri IV during a later stage of his reign, highlighting the poet's use of supporting historical context and his exclusion of Protestants. Here, Maynard returns sharply to the idea of collective identity, considering the way in which Cayet looks ahead to a golden age while nevertheless displaying anxiety about the legacy of royal bodies.

The final chapter considers the disillusionment with the French monarchy expressed in d'Aubigné's *Les Tragiques* and the role of his readers in the act of communal remembering, underlining how he engages them in his hopes for success. The idea of war being part of a continuum with the present is emphasized. Throughout her analysis, Maynard strikes an effective balance between engagement with the primary texts in commentary style and historical, literary, and social context.

Both Maynard's analysis of the poems and her outlook on the future of this area are characterized by her optimism and open-mindedness. The conclusion reminds us that the exploitation of this genre by the poets means that, in turn, we can (and should) exploit their work in our scholarship. Her evocation of Voltaire's *La Henriade* in the final pages reminds us that the epic was never fully forgotten, even if it has been somewhat neglected in recent years, and serves to situate it firmly in a continuous history of its own. This concise study raises several questions to be explored further in future scholarship while providing an account of the work of these five poets that is accessible and stimulating for students and non-specialists alike.

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A Guide to Neo-Latin Literature.
Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017. Pp. xxviii, 488+ 1 ill. ISBN 9781107029293 (hardcover) US$160.95.

Neo-Latin is finally getting the attention it deserves. This is the third recent volume in the field (Oxford University Press, 2015; Brill, 2014). It covers much of the same material as the others, including chapters on genres by well-known