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**Speziari Daniele. La Plume et le pinceau. Nicolas Denisot, poète et artiste de la Renaissance (1515–1559)**

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Although this study is an excellent example of arguing from a broad base of evidence, it also represents a lost opportunity. While the book mines several important types of evidence, namely funeral books, ceremonialist diaries, and newsletters (*avvisi di Roma*), there is little contextualization of their authors' identities and backgrounds, interests or disinterests, and their impact. This information is less valuable than it could be, as the author has done little to explore these sources to determine their own worth and meaning. A little bit of book history would go a long way, especially since in the past decade an increasing amount of work has been done on all these media. Nor does the author investigate the readership that came in contact with these sources. While initially the diaries were written to advise other ceremonialists—but widely copied by outsiders through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—knowing more about the recipients of funeral books and newsletters would uncover more about how families, religious institutions, and foreign nations competed for soft power with lavish funerals. This is a widely accepted truth of early modern society, but it is rare that we see the mechanics of shared ideas and practices traced from origin to fruition. Schraven's focus on artistic identity and the recycling of *apparati* is helpful and goes part way towards this goal, but the effect of these sources remains underdeveloped.

In sum, this useful study opens the doors for further research, building on Schraven's illuminating foundation.

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**Speziari Daniele.**

*La Plume et le pinceau. Nicolas Denisot, poète et artiste de la Renaissance (1515–1559).*

Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance 563. Geneva: Droz, 2016. 285 p. + 16 ill. ISBN 978-2-600-01918-7 (paperback) US\$66.

*La Plume et le pinceau* fills a major gap in literary scholarship on the French Renaissance by delving into the life and works of Nicolas Denisot, about whom only eighteen critical works have ever been written. Although underappreciated in modern times, Denisot's remarkable versatility (poet, painter, calligrapher,

editor, tutor, double agent) garnered him much respect from his contemporaries. In part, Speziari aims to convince modern readers to make a place for Denisot at the heart of sixteenth-century French literature.

The first chapter, “Cheminements d’une existence entre poésie et peinture,” focuses primarily on the relationship between Denisot and the Pléiade poets by tracing the references they make to one another in their own works. Most surprisingly of all, Speziari reveals that Denisot’s popularity initially surpassed Ronsard’s (53), indicating that he was one of the most influential figures of the period (59). Rather than separate painting and poetry as Roland Jousselin had done, Speziari speaks of both aspects of Denisot’s career, noting that his contemporaries did so too.

The second chapter introduces the reader to the ways in which Denisot distinguishes himself from his Pléiade contemporaries by focusing on the publication history of the *Noelz* and the *Cantiques sacrées*. Rejecting the latter’s preference for love poetry, Denisot chose instead to create a poetry with the ultimate goal of honouring Christ and hoped his friends would do the same. Here Speziari makes a clear link between the visual and the verbal, arguing that these works demonstrate the uniqueness of Denisot’s artistic vision, both as painter and as poet. For just as Denisot poet insisted on representing truth and reality, Denisot painter insisted on *vraisemblance*.

The third chapter, “Le Ms. Royal 12 A VII (British Library) ou les Muses anglaises de Nicolas Denisot,” focuses on the poet’s experiences in England, which are essential to understanding the scope of his Latin culture and discovering the root of the similarities and differences between his poetry and that of the Pléiade. Most notable here are Speziari’s detailed literary analyses which finally allow the reader a glimpse of Denisot as poet, and her convincing rejection of earlier scholarship which had defined Denisot as hostile to mythology and resistant to classical culture in general.

The fourth chapter discusses the evolution of the *tombeau poétique* and, through the detailed analysis of *l’Hecatodistichon* and the *Tombeau de Marguerite de Valois Royne de Navarre*, demonstrates Denisot’s contribution to the genre of funerary poetry which he first named “tombeau” (169). Although Ronsard and DuBellay refused to participate in the *l’Hecatodistichon*, a project which they deemed antithetical to the illustration of the mother tongue as laid out in the *Defense*, they did work together, for the first time, on the 1551 *Tombeau*, the work for which Denisot was best known. Indeed, the text foreshadowed the

Pléiade with its focus on commemoration, the potential of the vernacular, and the role of the poet.

Given the emphasis previously placed on Denisot's role as artist, it is odd that the chapter bearing that title is a mere fifteen pages. Although there remain only a few examples of the two phases of Denisot's artistic production (maps before England and portraits upon his return), more should have been made here of his dual talent given that it is highlighted in the subtitle. For example, when speaking about the portraits of Cassandre and Ronsard featured in the *Amours*, Speziari mentions that the atypical pose of the figures in profile draws attention to their gaze, but fails to go further in that analysis and discuss, with examples, how this pose underlines the centrality of *innamoramento* to Ronsard's work.

In many ways, the sixth and final chapter, "Denisot ou pseudo-Denisot? A propos des attributions anciennes et modernes," is the most engaging, for it invites the reader to join in the investigation of three works—*Livre des Prières à Dieu*, *Nouvelles Recreations et Joyeux Devis*, and *L'Amant resuscité de la mort d'amour*—in an effort to determine which ones may be attributed to Denisot. Here, as throughout her monograph, Speziari works to present a unified portrait of Denisot, the absence of which she views as the weakness of previous Denisot scholarship. She analyzes newly discovered texts and modifies the hasty conclusions of earlier critics, ultimately rejecting portrayals of Denisot as contradictory. Instead, Speziari presents Denisot in a new light as a figure both marginal and central (9), and as a mediator between Marguerite's followers and the Brigade and between the Brigade and the former generation of court poets (52).

The work succeeds admirably in providing a fuller picture of the often-underrepresented Nicholas Denisot, but the emphasis which its title places on Denisot's dual role as poet and artist is not as well articulated as one might hope. Although Speziari concludes that "[c]e qui caractérise Denisot et qui fait son originalité au plus haut degré, c'est en tout cas sa double qualité de poète et de dessinateur" (245), there are very few detailed references to their mutual influence. Speziari speaks of the painterly quality of Denisot's writing—"en bon peintre, Denisot peint un tableau très vif [...]" (158); "le talent du peintre se manifeste [...] en faisant preuve de son gout pour les détails visuels" (159); "sensibilité de peintre [...]" (137, 245); "Attention marquée pour la qualité

picturale du texte” (143)—but she neither provides quotations from the poetry nor compares the techniques to specific examples of Denisot’s artwork.

Although this reader anticipated more of an emphasis on the inextricability of the visual and verbal arts that was so central to the Renaissance and would have liked to have seen comparisons to the emblem tradition and an elaboration of the Horatian credo of *exegi monumentum*, it must be said that Speziari made much of limited resources, both primary and secondary, and ultimately made significant contributions not only to Denisot studies but also to the broader field of French literature by providing insight into the origins of what is arguably its most significant group of poets.

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**Stanisławska, Anna.**

***Orphan Girl: A Transaction, or an Account of the Entire Life of an Orphan Girl by Way of Plaintful Threnodies in the Year 1685: The Aesop Episode. Verse trans., intro., and commentary by Barry Keane.***

The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe: The Toronto Series 45; Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies 492. Toronto: Iter Academic Press / Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2016. Pp. xiii, 128. ISBN 978-0-86698-547-5 (paperback) US\$31.95.

The translation of a late seventeenth-century Polish poetic text into English is no easy task, and Barry Keane must be congratulated for making Anna Stanisławska’s work available for the first time to a non-Polish-speaking audience. This remarkable autobiographical narrative poem, which has attracted the interest in recent years of Polish and non-Polish scholars of the history of women’s writing, remained unknown until 1890, when the manuscript was discovered in a library in Saint Petersburg by Aleksander Brückner. It was first published in Warsaw in 1935, edited by Ida Kott, and this is the edition used for the current translation. Much of the background information contained in Kott’s introduction is included in Keane’s own, to which he adds further contextualization drawing on the research of recent scholars. The poem consists of seventy-seven “threnodies”—strictly correct as the translation