

Pernette du Guillet, Complete Poems: A Bilingual Edition. Ed. with introduction and notes by Karen Simroth James. Poems trans. by Marta Rijn Finch. *The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe (The Toronto Series)*, Vol. 6. Toronto: Iter Inc. and Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2010. 360 pp. \$24.50 CAD. ISBN 978-0-77272-06508

The works of early modern French women writers have enjoyed a vibrant revival since the 1990s, with numerous modern and bilingual editions produced in large part thanks to dedicated work by venues such as Droz Press in Geneva and “The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe” series, published first by the University of Chicago Press and currently by the Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies at Victoria University in the University of Toronto. In Volume 6 of the new Toronto series, French Renaissance specialist Karen Simroth James and poet Marta Rijn Finch have joined forces to produce the first bilingual edition of the 1545 *Complete Poems* of the poetess Pernette du Guillet. Du Guillet, along with her counterpart Louise Labé a decade later, is the most acclaimed female writer of that time, whose works appeared in her home city of Lyon, the literary and cultural capital of France in the early to mid-sixteenth century. The full corpus of du Guillet’s poems with Finch’s translations on facing pages are preceded by the dedicatory preface of the well-known humanist Antoine de Moulin (translated by James) as well as publisher Jean de Tournes’s introductory poem to the reader. This impeccably prepared volume also includes an extensive critical introduction by the editor, a substantial note by the poems’ translator, exhaustive translation notes and bibliography, a glossary illuminating difficult elements of sixteenth-century French diction, a synchronizing of two differing numbering systems of the poems in recent editions, and indexes of titles and first lines. Thus, the new edition provides a complete array of pedagogical and research supports that will enhance the reading experience of seasoned early modern scholars and first-time Francophone or Anglophone readers of du Guillet alike.

Karen James’s highly readable introduction provides important background to a series of critical issues related to du Guillet’s poetry: the social, cultural, and literary climate in which it was produced and the history of

its reception, the crucial role of the paratext (including the closing epitaphs by Lyonnais poet Maurice Scève and cleric-humanist Jean de Vauzelles), and the multiple influences on her work stemming from the traditions of Neoplatonism, Petrarchism, and the Rhétoriciens, as well as her close dialogic relationship with Scève. At the present moment in early modern scholarship, when ever-sharper attention is being paid to the hermeneutic implications of paratextual elements, print culture, and editorial practices — especially in the absence of verifiable biographical information on the author — James's deft translation and discussion of de Moulin's preface in particular demonstrates how his representation of "a humble young poet, inspired by Platonic love and awed by the vast erudition and eloquence of her beloved" (13) illustrates only one aspect of du Guillet's work and its "complex series of voices that assert contradictory emotions and proclaim the merits of the speaking, writing woman" (14).

Du Guillet incorporates a multiplicity of voices into her poetry and revises numerous intertextual discourses as she creates her lyric universe. This tapestry comes alive both through James's introductory textual commentaries and her translation notes, which focus especially on the subtleties and polyvalences of Middle French diction, and through Marta Finch's beautifully nuanced translations replicating Du Guillet's original meter and rhyme schemes — the challenges of which she illuminates in her own translator's note. Although du Guillet is perhaps best known for her adherence to Neoplatonic thought and convention, she is not content to follow the Neoplatonists' attribution of the generative act of poetic creation to men alone: rather, in direct address to her beloved, she insists on exercising an active and outspoken role in the artistic process: "Don't be surprised to any great degree/When I, through art and learning, persevere" (41, ll. 3–4). This active posture confirms, in turn, her denial of the distant, silent status of the female beloved in the Petrarchan male tradition highlighted in the *Rime sparse* and in her interlocutor Scève's *Délie*. A telling case in point is her re-writing of the Diana-Actaeon myth, in which Diana's vengeful act of throwing water upon the gazing lover and transforming him into a stag fleeing toward his own death forms a nexus of anxiety for both of her predecessors. In the examples from the *Délie* offered by James, Scève eschews the actual retelling of the Ovidian story in favor of representing

it as a metaphoric reflection of his troubled psyche in the emblem and motto preceding Dizain 168 or as a literal reflection of his eternal separation from the beloved whom he can only venerate by gazing at the clear fountain in which she has bathed in Dizain 235. Instead, in her famous Poem 43, du Guillet ostensibly follows Petrarch's lengthy recounting of the Ovidian tale in his renowned *Canzone* 23 of the *Rime sparse*. However, as James's analysis astutely points out, and as Finch's moving translation emphasizes, du Guillet replaces Petrarch's assimilation of Diana's punitive act, transforming Actaeon into a solitary wandering stag (*cerf*) with a positive transformation of her beloved into a faithful servant (*serf*): "Oh, if that splash could have the effect /Of transforming him into Actaeon!/ Not, however, that he be leapt upon /As a stag — killed and devoured by his own hounds,/But that he feel, through me, within those bounds, /So changed — like a dear and loyal servant — And hold that conviction in thought so fervent . . ." (Poem 43, ll. 28–33).

This illustration of just one set of the many elegantly articulated intertextual re-creations in Pernette du Guillet's *Complete Poems* indicates the possibilities this volume holds for the fields of early modern literature, history, culture, and gender studies and confirms the current bilingual edition as a major contribution to the ongoing rediscovery of a Renaissance woman poet who at last is receiving her full due.

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The Cambridge Companion to Early Modern Women's Writing. Ed. Laura Lunger Knoppers. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009. 306 pp. \$29.99. ISBN 978–0–521–17242–2.

Edited by Laura Knoppers, this collection of essays forms the latest addition to the *Cambridge Companion* series, a survey collection on English women's writing between approximately 1500 and 1700. The volume is both a valuable teaching tool and an impressive contribution to the study of gender and literary history. Its chief achievement is a new and expansive definition of authorship — including anonymous, professional, collective,