Et l'on vint à un modus vivendi avec le Saint-Siège alors que les chrétiens, faisant front commun, avaient abouti à la victoire de Lépante sur les Turcs en 1571.

Cet ouvrage, on l’aura constaté par ce qui précède, ne manque ni d’intérêt historique, littéraire et sociologique, ni de haute valeur scientifique. Le lecteur ne manquera pas alors de remplir plusieurs feuillets de notes: de relever, par exemple, la “Table” on ne peut plus indispensable, des correspondances de l’Index de Parme (1580) avec les titres de Turin, de Naples et les Index de Rome (1590 et 1596); ou encore la présentation exemplaire des noms des auteurs et des titres des ouvrages condamnés, tous numérotés et en caractères gras, la reproduction remarquablement nette des Index provenant surtout de la Bibliothèque du Vatican, puis de la Folger Shakespeare Library et de la Menno Simons Historical Library de Harrisburg en Pennsylvanie.

Le volume IX fait donc honneur tout ensemble à l’équipe qui a pris l’initiative et assuré l’entreprise au Centre d’Études de la Renaissance de l’Université de Sherbrooke et aux presses Métro litho-Sherbrooke. Il n’aurait jamais pu paraître sans le double concours de l’Université de Sherbrooke et du Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada.

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Oppositional Voices explores the conditions of possibility for literary production by Englishwomen in the Renaissance and the strategies they employ to oppose dominant ideologies about gender. In a world inhospitable to women’s writing and publication, what circumstances, Tina Krontiris asks, enabled a handful of women to succeed in producing secular literature? Krontiris reviews familiar barriers to women’s accomplishment: theories and cultural practices reinforcing male superiority and female subordination, constraining women’s sexual behaviour and verbal expression, restricting their access to business or the public sphere. Nonetheless, she argues, ideological and cultural formations are never monolithic. In general terms, both religion and humanism encompassed contradictions which opened spaces of opportunity for women. The Reformation may have reinforced a woman’s subordinate position in relation to a husband but it permitted her speech in devotion to God; humanist thought may have regarded women as inferior by nature, but it encouraged improvement through education. Particular circumstances, such as service in an
aristocratic household, may have given middle-class writers like Isabella Whitney and Margaret Tyler access to books and learning. Aristocratic birth could both enable and constrain: on one hand, court life might have promoted the verbal skills of women like Mary Herbert and Mary Wroth through expectations of polite conversation; on the other hand, economic pressures on aristocratic marriage might mean marriage partners and future circumstances dictated by fathers and relatives. Suggestive as this book is, about what enabled literary production of six unusual women, the speculations are nonetheless limited by the few facts available or discussed. Who knows, for example, what life experiences other than the unelaborated fact of her ex-servant status might have encouraged Margaret Tyler to write?

In reading their works, Krontiris focuses on the women writers’ strategies for voicing feminist opposition to dominant ideologies. What the women writers criticize, for the most part, are oppressive norms in male-female relations. Krontiris finds both Tyler, in her translation of *A Mirrour of Princely Doughtiest and Knighthood*, and *Elizabeth Chair*, in her *History of King Edward II*, critical of the double standard that treats a woman’s adultery more harshly than her partner’s. Translating *Antoine*, Mary Herbert is said to interrogate conventional ideas about women’s role, by undermining her mature heroine’s maternal identity and celebrating her sexual side. Mary Wroth interrogates patriarchal practices whereby women are victimized in relationships: her romance heroines in *Urania* find themselves forced into undesired marriages by tyrannical fathers or made to suffer intense unhappiness by inconstant lovers. Of the six writers Krontiris discusses, only Margaret Tyler is said to take the routes of direct critique: in her preface to *A Mirrour*, she anticipates objections against female authorship in general and her “man-like” choice of subject matter in particular, and she constructs counter-arguments.

Interesting as this proto-feminism is, Krontiris’s decision to highlight the oppositional character of the writings sometimes makes for unconvincing arguments, especially when she explains their indirect strategies for ideological critique. For example, when she presents the writers’ sympathetic depiction of female characters like Cleopatra, Mariam, Queen Isabel and Pamphilia as a key strategy for foregrounding their oppositional attitudes, one wonders if the sympathetic treatment of female characters like Shakespeare’s Cleopatra, Webster’s Duchess of Malfi, or Spenser’s Britomart should also be read as exhibiting strongly “oppositional” tendencies. The book’s argument gets confusing when the deployment of “conduct-book commonplace[s] on feminine virtues” (p. 35) or even of “contemporary dominant ideology” itself (p. 43) is paradoxically identified as an indirect writing strategy adopted by writers opposing dominant ideology.

Isolating the motive of opposition from the outset turns out to be a little misleading, and the book’s real accomplishment pulls against its title. What Krontiris brings most strongly into focus is what muted the opposition in the women writer’s voices — how basic motives like gaining a hearing and social survival made for appropriation of conventional forms and accommodation to conventional attitudes. Krontiris does an excellent job of showing how strongly oriented these women were towards the anticipated reception of their writings and what a significant role expected
response played in shaping what they produced. "To control response and pre-empt criticism," (p. 30) Isabella Whitney apologizes for her preoccupation with non-religious books and Mary Herbert for the "inferiority" of her part in translating the Psalms; Herbert limits and effaces her own artistic self-assertion through her patronage of others; Elizabeth Chair offers sympathy for disadvantaged male characters to balance her sympathy for rebellious Mariam; and Mary Wroth endorses narrow ideas about respectable behaviour for women as she works out her critique of men's behaviour to women. Overall, the book illuminates the complex situations and contradictory motives of the women writers, and it provides a good basic introduction to literary women's achievement in early modern England.

The announced promise of *English Women's Voices* is to uncover "the lives of women whose voices were buried for centuries under a heap of male writing" (p. xv): their voices will "pierce the consciousness of the twentieth-century reader, who will undoubtedly recognize affinities and shared concerns" (p. xiv). Many readers will bring a scepticism shaped by post-modern theory or simply by previous disappointments to such claims about presenting the actuality of women's lives or the immediacy of women's voices. But Otten's anthology of non-literary writings, organized by themes relevant to early modern women's lives, does not disappoint. In the first gatherings, one hears the voices of women in extreme situations — suffering sexual and psychological abuse, enduring prison for strongly held and boldly stated religious convictions, or petitioning, often in the face of male ridicule of their efforts, for peace or religious purity or economic stability. Even silenced voices find expression. When Dr. John Lamb rapes eleven-year-old Joan Seager and infects her with venereal disease, leaving her mother Elizabeth "not able to tell me... she could say no more, her grief was so great," (p. 30) we hear their neighbour Mabel Swinnerton, raising her voice to confront the man with his outrage and to testify against him. The vivid detail in her testimony captures not only the burdensome theft of language from the victims but also the trifling evasion of the confronted rapist's answer: "he railed upon my Lord of Windsor grievously, with many base words, and said, he did more good deeds in a week, than my Lord of Windsor did in a year" (p. 31). Indeed, the interplay of voices within these accounts is often striking: in Anna Trapnel's account of her Bridewell imprisonment, for example, she converses as familiarly with the Lord as she does with the courteous prison matron. Trapnel's and other forceful voices of women preaching and prophesying support Otten's and Krontiris's shared view that religious conviction could overrule prohibitions against women's self-assertive discourse.

Otten's selections on health scare, on love and marriage, and on childbirth and sickness offer access to the daily lives of women: to Lady Margaret Hoby's routines in caring for the hurt and injured in her community; to Mary Boyle Rich's meditations in overcoming her "aversion to marriage" (p. 160) and choosing, in despite of her kind father's concerns, to marry a "younger brother;" to Alice Thornton's history of her pregnancies, which, Otten suggests, constructs "a distinctly female identity" by its intertwining of "the clinical with the biblical" (p. 225).

Publié l’année où La Sepmaine figurait au programme de l’agrégation, La bibliothèque de Du Bartas n’est pourtant pas un livre de circonstances. C’est plutôt la synthèse des nombreuses études sur le “docte gascon” qui ont vu le jour depuis une dizaine d’années (les travaux de James Dauphiné lui-même, d’Yvonne Bellenger, de Jan Miernowski, ou encore les deux colloques de 1988 et de 1990) ou antérieures (par exemple, les recherches de Marcel Raymond).

L’ouvrage se compose de deux parties inégales: la première comporte six études de James Dauphiné, la deuxième, plus importante en nombre de pages, trois index et une liste des mots à la rime.
