Booknotes

Notes de lecture

Marguerite de Navarre. *Complainte pour un détenu prisonnier* et *Chansons spirituelles*. Éd. Michèle Clément. *Œuvres complètes*, sous la direction de Nicole Cazauran, t. IX. Paris, H. Champion, 2001. P. 312.

Ce volume est le troisième à paraître dans la série des treize que comportera la publication des *Œuvres complètes* de la reine de Navarre. On y trouvera la *Complainte pour un détenu prisonnier* qui, sur près de 600 vers, laisse la parole à un « je » masculin dans lequel on pense reconnaître Clément Marot (dont l'influence poétique est perceptible dans ce poème) et qui s'adresse à un mystérieux "François" qui, selon M. Clément, pourrait bien être François Rabelais. À la suite, Michèle Clément donne les 47 poèmes lyriques des *Chansons spirituelles*, magistralement établies et annotées. L'éditrice étudie comment la Bible s'y voit annexée et réinterprétée et elle définit ainsi la nature de l'évangélisme teinté de mysticisme de la reine. M. Clément procure en fin de volume de précieux tableaux de concordance (p. 269), un index des références bibliques (p. 271–75), deux autres des notions et des noms propres, un glossaire et une bibliographie essentielle.

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Leonard Barkan. *Unearthing the Past: Archeology and Aesthetics in the Making of Renaissance Culture*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999. Pp. xxxiii, 428.

In this major book Leonard Barkan is out to show that the discovery of ancient statues in the Renaissance was an occasion for fiction-making, projection, fantasy, and a whole array of cultural investments — something rather more like a raising of the dead than a dry archeological dig. Coming to the field as a literary scholar, Barkan is keenly attentive to the ways in which the appearance of these visual artifacts tested and complicated the elegiac visions of Renaissance poets, who had made a "lost" antiquity a *tabula rasa* on which to project their poetic fictions. The irruption of these palpable and highly engaging figural artifacts instead made antiquity present, enacting a sort of return of the repressed. In this sense Barkan has

recuperated the original spirit of Aby Warburg's interest in the "Nachleben der Antike," that ongoing cultural struggle between the unmediated animations of paganism and the abstractions of rational, distanced thought.

One consequence of Barkan's approach is an emphasis on the ways in which the hermeneutic adventures provoked by antiquities opened a realm of aesthetic autonomy that stands as an alternative to function, referentiality, narrative, and symbolization. This is a realm where motifs migrate independent of context, and art itself emerges as the main preoccupation of art. The *Bed of Polyclitus* and the *Spinario* — enigmatic and anonymous antique works that cast a spell over generations of Renaissance artists and connoisseurs — become, in Barkan's hands, emblems of withdrawal and self-absorption, in which an erotic undercurrent thematizes the viewer's engagement with intractable and ambiguous aesthetic experiences.

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Julius R. Ruff. *Violence in Early Modern Europe 1500–1800*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001. Pp. 269.

Julius R. Ruff's book is a solid addition to Cambridge University Press's *New Approaches to European History* series. Comprehensively surveying the modes of violence and its representation in "a society far more violent than that of [early modern Europeans'] modern descendants" (p. 2), the book is both an excellent comparative introduction to a significant area of early modern cultural and historical studies and a useful reference work for those already familiar with the scholarship in the area. Ruff argues that during the early modern period in Europe levels of violence, measured in a number of ways, dropped dramatically. Drawing heavily on the work of Norbert Elias and positioning himself in opposition to Foucault and E. P. Thompson, Ruff explains the drop in violence as the result of the emerging state's increasingly secure monopolization of the means of violence and of the social and physical disciplinary mechanism that Elias has labeled "the civilizing process." Ruff does not, unfortunately, examine the problematic teleological assumptions and historical elisions of Elias's grand narrative, adopting it more or less as a given. Consequently, the book gives the impression that Europe's march into modernity has been a movement into the sweetness and light of societies with low crime rates, while only cursorily gesturing at the new modes, locations, and scales of the violence that structures modern European and North American societies.

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