

treatises are the focus of the second chapter. Amer examines in particular the seven stanzas Etienne de Fougères devotes to lesbians, demonstrating that the work presents lesbians in heterosexist terms and that the martial metaphors echo those found in Arabic erotic treatises. She suggests as well that unattested words found in the passage may come from Arabic terminology and determines that Etienne de Fougères, never as explicit as the Islamicate tradition, displays a different attitude toward lesbians.

In the third chapter, Amer turns her attention to cross-dressing and same-sex marriage in three versions of *Yde et Olive* (a verse epic, a play, and a prose narrative) and an Arabic tale. Amer affirms that despite their dissimilarities, the *Yde et Olive* texts reveal that same-sex love in the West is based on the heterosexual model of courtly love even as they challenge the paradigm. Comparing *Yde et Olive* to *The Story of Qamar al-Zaman and the Princess Boudour*, with its more open treatment of homosexuality, Amer asserts that the divergences highlight heterosexuality's constructed nature.

The final two chapters treat Jean Renart's *Escoufle*. Analyzing Aelis's relationships with three women, Amer questions the line between love and friendship and proposes that Aelis may be an unrecognized lesbian. Amer also raises the possibility, only implicit in the tale, that Aelis's embroidery workshop could be a private prostitution house. Before the romance returns to heteronormativity with Aelis's reunion with Guillaume, it creates a series of paradoxical social identities for Aelis. Thanks to the evocation of the Islamicate world through material goods and echoes of the Middle Eastern traditions of *zarf* (courtliness) and *qaynas* (singing slave-girls), Amer posits that Aelis's identity blends cultures, too.

Amer's conclusion expresses the implications of her cross-cultural approach, which uncovers multiple discursive voices, enhances cultural understanding while providing an oppositional strategy for Middle Eastern women today, and deconstructs the binary logic of humanism.

The complexity of Amer's topic means that many arguments remain speculative. Amer carefully qualifies her points, emphasizing for instance homoeroticism rather than lesbianism in *L'Escoufle*. Some chapters integrate French and Arabic works more successfully than others, and, more problematic, the Arabic written examples often postdate the Old French texts (although Amer points out the likelihood of the tales' earlier circulation in oral form). Furthermore, the discussion of grammatical ambiguity in the verse *Yde et Olive* is less convincing because "le" can signify a feminine direct object in Picard. Nonetheless, Amer's bold work raises fruitful questions and offers new ways of thinking that force us to re-evaluate our assumptions about same-sex love and the interplay between cultures in the Middle Ages.

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Etudes françaises 44.2 (2008). "La Littérature tragique du seizième siècle en France." Montreal: PU de Montréal, 2008. ISBN 978-2-7606-2128-2. Pp. 165. \$12,00 Can.

Like all issues of this well-respected Quebec scholarly journal on French and Quebec studies, this issue deals with a single topic. This volume, edited with great care by Louise Frappier, deals with sixteenth-century French tragedies and theoretical writings on the tragic and opens with an excellent essay in which Olivier Millet explains that sixteenth-century French treatises on the tragic relied

more heavily on the rhetoric of praise and blame than on a psychological approach. He also indicates that Horace, and not Aristotle, was the primary influence on French tragic playwrights of the Renaissance. This will probably come as a surprise to those who recognize the dominant influence of Aristotle on more famous French tragic playwrights of the seventeenth century. Essays by Normand Doiron and Samuel Junod analyze insightfully the role of formal speeches in Biblical tragedies such as Jean de La Taille's 1572 *Saül le furieux* and Robert Garnier's 1583 *Les Juives* in defining the moral dimensions of famous episodes from the Old Testament and the continuing relevance of these episodes for Catholics and Protestants during the Reformation and Counter-Reformation in France. John Nassichuk indicates that Théodore de Bèze was not only Jean Calvin's successor as the spiritual leader in Geneva and the author of a famous 1550 tragedy *Abraham sacrificant* but also a major neo-Latin poet who wrote eloquently about the deep guilt felt by David after his adultery with Bathsheba and his sending of her husband to a certain death. Essays by Frappier and Antoine Soare describe how Catholic and Protestant playwrights used different approaches to adapt Seneca's tragedies. Madeleine de Sudéry's novel *Clélie* (1654–60) is treated in Isabelle Ducharme's excellent essay; it was not clear to this reviewer why an essay on a seventeenth-century novelist was included in this special issue on French Renaissance tragedies. This anomaly notwithstanding, the quality of the essays in this issue of *Etudes françaises* is consistently high.

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DEJARDIN, ISABEL. *Captives en tragédie: la captivité au féminin sur les scènes antiques et modernes*. Saint-Genouph: Nizet, 2008. ISBN 978-2-7078-1304-6. Pp. 318. 34 €.

Dans *Captives en tragédie*, Isabel Dejardin nous offre une étude comparative très fouillée du thème éponyme qui se distingue dans le paysage tragique. En effet, la captive de noble extraction émerge "essentielle [...] à une analyse des relations entre action et caractère" (10), et l'auteure montre avec érudition les différentes facettes de cette analyse. Les œuvres sur lesquelles Dejardin se penche font partie d'un corpus choisi et original rassemblant des pièces de dramaturges grecs tels qu'Eschyle, Sophocle et Euripide qu'elle rapproche de tragédies d'écrivains comme Jean de Mairet, Tristan L'Hermitte, le célébrissime Corneille et John Dryden, puisque le thème de la captive se retrouve dans le théâtre du dix-septième siècle français et anglais.

Avec l'aide d'un appareil critique essentiellement français, Dejardin répond avec brio à l'objectif suivant: "[...] déterminer s'il existe effectivement des caractéristiques propres à la situation de captivité en tragédie, et interroge[r] par conséquent les relations entre les caractères et l'action représentée" (13). Pour cela, l'auteure suit une démarche très structurée comme le révèle l'architecture du livre divisé en trois grandes parties, intitulées respectivement *Traitements dramatiques de la captivité*, *Ancrages de la captivité* et *La Captivité en spectacle*, elles-mêmes précédées d'une introduction concise et d'une partie nommée *Définitions et principes méthodologiques* dans laquelle Dejardin justifie, délimite et définit avec précision le choix de son thème, mais aussi celui de son corpus.

Dans *Traitements dramatiques de la captivité*, l'auteure adresse deux points importants. Le premier met en lumière la présence dramatique substantielle de la captive sur la scène tragique antique et moderne tout en analysant le concept de