



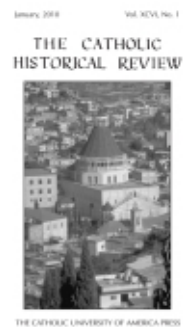
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Histoire littéraire des Bénédictins de Saint-Maur, Vol. 1
(1612–1655), Vol. 2 (1656–1683) (review)

Mary Kathryn Robinson

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essay, Donna B. Hamilton studies Anthony Munday's translations of Iberian chivalric romances, in which an emphasis on an international, unified, and Catholic Christendom would seem to conflict with English Protestant fears of Catholic foreignness and contamination, whether or not particular details of Catholic worship and practice are maintained or excised in translation.

This book may legitimately claim to be the most important current essay collection on its subject. It is strongly recommended reading for any scholar interested in pursuing research in the area.

University of Notre Dame

SUSANNAH BRIETZ MONTA

Histoire littéraire des Bénédictins de Saint-Maur, Vol. 1 (1612-1655), Vol. 2 (1656-1683). By Philippe Lenain. [Bibliothèque de la Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique, Fascicules 88 and 89.] (Louvain-la-Neuve: Collège Érasme. 2007, 2008. Pp. iv, 559; iv, 665. Vol. 1, €65.00; Vol. 2, €75.00 paperback. ISSN 0035-2381, fasc. 88, 89.)

In 1621, Pope Gregory XV issued a bull establishing a new branch of the Benedictine order known as the Congregation of Saint-Maur. This exclusively Gallican reform movement stressed stricter adherence to the Rule of St. Benedict while also allowing for some interpretation of the Rule to suit contemporary needs and preferences. Most notably, intellectual labor, rather than physical, constituted the *labora* of the members of the order. They took up their pens and poured over ancient and medieval texts with all the fervor and attachment to duty that the first disciples of St. Benedict would have given when grasping their plows in the service of the Rule. Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and even on the eve of the French Revolution, the Maurist literary production was prolific and profound, earning for the order a reputation for superior scholarship in the humanities and sciences.

In the late-eighteenth century, when the usefulness of religious orders was called into question and their very existence threatened, the Maurist Dom René-Prosper Tassin attempted to compile a list of all the literary works written by the members of the Congregation, no doubt, among other reasons, to showcase the contributions of Maurists to the intellectual life of France. He completed this monumental task in 1770 at age seventy-three, but his work remained incomplete. Later researchers in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries added to Tassin's catalog especially with the inclusion of works after 1770. The reprinting of key texts by members of the Congregation in the early-twentieth century revealed the need for an updated compilation. Prompted by the monastic historian Dom Yves Chaussy, Philippe Lenain undertook this task with the publication of this multivolume work, *Histoire littéraire des Bénédictins de Saint-Maur*.

To date, Lenain has published the first two volumes, which cover Maurist literature from 1612 to 1655 and from 1656 to 1683. He envisions two more

volumes, which will encompass Maurist writings up to 1787. By his own admission, his catalog will be incomplete as it will not include the works contained in the numerous departmental and municipal archives. Also, by ending the final volume with 1787, Lenain's work will not cover the letters and essays by Maurists in defense of their order in 1789 and 1790. Nevertheless, Lenain's volumes and the well-organized data that they present will serve as invaluable tools for researchers.

After some prefatory remarks, the first volume begins with a bibliography on the Congregation of Saint-Maur. While the bibliography includes mostly French sources and lacks the most recent scholarship, it does include both printed primary sources and key secondary works. Lenain then presents two lists, one chronological and one alphabetical, of all Maurist authors from the beginning of the order until its suppression in 1790. (He also has plans to publish a CD-ROM version of the list.) The individual entries of monastic authors follow. Tassin ordered his catalog chronologically to demonstrate the progress of the Congregation over two centuries. In deference to Tassin, Lenain has chosen this same format. For each Maurist, Lenain gives a biographical sketch, list of works and their current locations, primary sources for the monk's life, and secondary bibliographic references.

Lenain has undertaken a monumental task, but one worthy of its subject. The lists of monks and entries on individuals serve as valuable resources for researchers of the Congregation of Saint-Maur while his chronological organization should serve well scholars of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Although the volumes have their limitations, as did Tassin's catalog, Lenain not only provides a significant research tool but also his systematic approach and attention to detail do justice to the lives and works of these scholarly monks.

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MARY KATHRYN ROBINSON

Prosopographie Génovéfaine: Répertoire biographique des Chanoines Réguliers de Saint Augustin de la Congrégation de France (1624-1789).

By Nicolas Petit. [Matériaux pour l'histoire, Vol. 6.] (Paris: L'École nationale des Chartes. 2008. Pp. 597. €38,00 paperback. ISBN 978-2-900-79197-4.)

The French congregation of the Canons Regular of St. Augustine, headquartered at the abbey of St. Genevieve in Paris, was a major manifestation of the resurgence and renewal of religious life and of priesthood that occurred in seventeenth-century France. Several French scholars have recently brought attention to this congregation, Yves Breton and Isabelle Brian among them. Brian's 1994 doctoral dissertation on this topic was published as *Messieurs de Sainte-Geneviève* (Paris, 2001). In contrast to many French historians, Brian enjoys the gift of succinctness. In a very helpful preface (pp. 7-14) to the present work by Nicolas Petit, Brian explains that within ten years of 1624, when reform of the abbey of St. Genevieve began, the number of