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*Sin and Salvation in Early Modern France: Three Women's
Stories* by Marguerite d'Auge, Renée Burlamacchi (review)

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SIN AND SALVATION IN EARLY MODERN FRANCE: THREE WOMEN'S STORIES, by Marguerite d'Auge, Renée Burlamacchi, and Jeanne du Laurens. Edited by Colette H. Winn. Translated from French by Nicholas van Handel and Colette H. Winn. *The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe: The Toronto Series*. Toronto: Iter Press and Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2017. 97 pp. \$34.95 paper.

Sin and Salvation in Early Modern France: Three Women's Stories, translated by Nicholas van Handel and Colette H. Winn, is a welcome addition to *The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe* series, offering vivid glimpses of the lives of three very different women of the merchant and professional classes in early modern France. While sin and salvation are indeed important themes, the texts are particularly valuable for the insights they offer into early modern families and the roles of women therein.

Renée Burlamacchi's *Memoirs Concerning Her Father's Family* (1623) and Jeanne du Laurens's *The Genealogy of the du Laurens* (1631) are nicely matched accounts by proud daughters of their birth families. Burlamacchi's family were Protestants from Lucca, Italy, and her *Memoirs Concerning Her Father's Family* recount their journey, led by her father Michele, into exile in France and from one refuge to another (Paris, Montargis, Sedan) to escape persecution. They eventually arrived in Geneva, where they joined a community of Italian Protestant exiles. Jeanne du Laurens's family were Catholic, based in Arles, France. Laurens's story centers on the valiant and remarkably successful efforts of her widowed mother, Louise, to arrange for the proper education and placement of her many children, especially her sons.

In both accounts, God plays a central role. For Burlamacchi, a Calvinist, hardships were signs that God was testing the elect, and triumphs revealed that God's grace was upholding them, even when using Catholics such as the Duke de Guise to ensure their safety. For the Catholic Laurens, faith in God was accompanied by the use of God-given talents to achieve success. Laurens and her mother were proud that four of her nine brothers became either priests or monks. Both Burlamacchi's and Laurens's works remained in manuscript, appropriately since they were intended as memorials and advice for their immediate families.

Marguerite d'Auge's *Pitiful and Macabre Regrets* (1600) is the anomaly here. Like the other two, it focuses on a family but, in this case, a fatally dysfunctional one. Published as a broadsheet, *Pitiful and Macabre Regrets* claims to report the words of repentance spoken by d'Auge, a notorious adulteress who plotted with her lover to murder her husband and was condemned to death. The case was infamous, with court records and another account also available, and the broadsheet is clearly written to

sell to a public eager for a vivid account of violence and passion. It is not actually clear whose voice is recorded in the broadsheet; are the words really d'Auge's or are they attributed to her by an anonymous male author? Much of the rhetoric echoes attacks on women surrounding the *querelle des femmes* (the woman question). The image of d'Auge, as Winn points out, reflects contemporary depictions of the penitent harlot. The lady does indeed protest too much and in too much gory detail, urging other young women to eschew her example. Yet the language of *Pitiful and Macabre Regrets* does echo d'Auge's own plea as recorded in her trial account, a plea no doubt crafted to win the pity of her judges.

All three texts are translated from recent editions of the originals.¹ For d'Auge and Laurens, there exists only one original version. For Burlamacchi, the choice of a base text is more complicated. Two manuscripts written in Italian by the author survive, as well as three translations into French. Van Handel and Winn have chosen one of the French translations as their base text rather than one of the original Italian ones; the reasons for this choice and the complex history of and relationships among the manuscripts are described briefly in the introduction to this translation (pp. 5-6, 27) and in detail in the French edition (pp. 9-20).

The introductory section is rich in background information and textual analysis with a useful account of women's roles as family historians and of the ways historical moments such as the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre are recorded from a woman's and even a child's point of view. The translators have succeeded admirably in their objective of achieving "comprehensibility and readability while bringing the twenty-first century reader as close as reasonably possible to the experience of reading the original text" (p. 27). The language is accessible yet not anachronistic, and the translations are accurate and nuanced.

In the Laurens text, however, there are some quite specific uses of religious terminology that require more precise translations. For example, "Pour mon frère le capucin, il entra en religion" is translated as "My brother the monk entered the clergy" (p. 70). However, *capucin* refers to the Capuchins (a particular monastic order, correctly rendered on p. 72), and *entra en religion* means "entered the monastery" or "took monastic vows," not "entered the clergy," which implies the secular priesthood rather than monasticism. In another passage, "vivant comme un religieux" is translated "living as a cleric" (p. 73). "Monk" would be more accurate; a cleric is a secular priest or clergyman. Furthermore, Laurens's mother's death is said to have occurred "after Christmas, on the Feast of St. John the Baptist" (p. 74). The French version says it was the feast of St. John the Evangelist, which makes more sense since the feast of St. John the Evangelist is 27 December, while St. John the Baptist's is 24 June. Also, "Monsieur le Théologal" was a canon priest who taught theology (p. 78).

These are details worth noting but do not detract from the value of this work. The words and the points of view of women from the merchant and professional classes in the early modern period are rare in any language. These lively translations give us access to three interestingly contrasting women's voices. The work is an important resource for teaching and research in literature, history, and women's and gender studies.

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NOTES

¹For the source text of *Pitiful and Macabre Regrets* by Marguerite d'Auge, see "Les pitoyables et funestes regrets de Marguerite d'Auge," in *Remonstrances, prophéties et confessions de femmes (1575-1650)* [Women's remonstrances, prophecies and confessions, 1575-1650], ed. Jean-Philippe Beaulieu (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2014), 138-54. For *Memoirs Concerning Her Father's Family* by Renée Burlamacchi and *The Genealogy of the du Laurens* by Jeanne du Laurens, see "Mémoires de Dam^{le} Renée Burlamacchi concernant la famille de son père" and "Généalogie de Messieurs du Laurens," in *Les Femmes et l'histoire familiale (XVI^e-XVII^e siècle)* [Women and family history, 16th-17th century], ed. Susan Broomhall and Colette H. Winn (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2008), 97-106, 139-71.

WOMEN'S PROPHETIC WRITINGS IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY BRITAIN, by Carme Font. Routledge Studies in Renaissance Literature and Culture. Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2017. 250 pp. \$149.95 cloth; \$49.46 ebook.

Carme Font joins a cohort of scholars who have discovered creativity, intellect, and beauty in the prophetic discourse of seventeenth-century women. Despite the bodily suffering and self-abnegating authorial strategies often associated with this genre, Font's study helps to celebrate the highly personalized and empowering nature of early modern prophecy. In *Women's Prophetic Writings in Seventeenth-Century Britain*, Font illuminates the ways in which women became leaders of communities and activists for political and social change through their prophetic writing.

Font demonstrates the empowering and personalized nature of seventeenth-century prophecy through the example of the Baptist Anne Wentworth (1629/30-1693?). In Wentworth's prophetic writing, her biblical imagery and doom-laden predictions also reference and condemn her own violent and abusive husband. Font observes that for women such as Wentworth the prophetic mode facilitated "the articulation of personal convictions as spiritual beliefs" (p. 214). This form of discourse allowed