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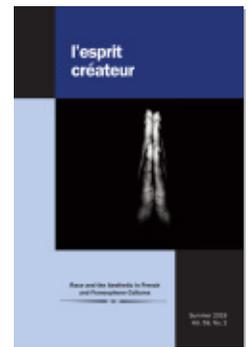
Love's Wounds: Violence and the Politics of Early Modern Europe by Cynthia N. Nazarian (review)

Robert J. Hudson

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Book Reviews

Crystal Marie Fleming. *Resurrecting Slavery: Racial Legacies and White Supremacy in France*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2017. xi + 276.

Crystal Marie Fleming's *Resurrecting Slavery: Racial Legacies and White Supremacy in France* engages France's greatest paradox, the popular understanding of race and racism. In this impressive study, the author examines contemporary discourses about the nation's relationship with slavery. Combing a review of historical contexts, an analysis of statements from politicians, interviews with members of the African diaspora, and participant-observer ethnographies of memorial events, Fleming finds a radical disconnect between the alleged official consensus of a color-blind France and the racist realities of institutionalized white supremacy. She holds that most white French citizens actively embrace a collective historical amnesia, conveniently forgetting the nation's active role in the Atlantic slave trade and the ways in which the brutal exploitation of the labor of black slaves directly benefited white slave owners in the Caribbean as well as the consumers of sugar and coffee produced on island plantations. While a work of sociology, *Resurrecting Slavery* shows an impressive command of history. In her historiographic review, Fleming persuasively demonstrates that French academics have failed to integrate slavery and white supremacy into the national narrative. Thus, both popular opinion and scholarship fall victim to the self-congratulatory myth of color-blind France. This is seen most explicitly in the refusal of the post-World War Two French state to recognize race as a social category. Fearing that to acknowledge race is an act of racism, the republic does not have demographic records of how many people of color live in France. As with *Harry Potter's* Voldemort, one should not even name the problem.

Fleming juxtaposes this alleged post-racialism with the diverse ways in which the people of the African diaspora in France self-identify. Not surprisingly, she finds that black people want their history acknowledged. They also report a host of ways in which they have been subject to racist discrimination. French attempts at not seeing race frustrate many of her interviewees. *Resurrecting Slavery* holds that the failure to acknowledge race is fundamental to French white supremacy. Yet Fleming demonstrates that there are numerous tensions and often heated debates within the diaspora community. One of the most important issues she identifies is basic terminology. From the use of the English "Black" to the cumbersome "Descendent of Slaves," no one word can capture the myriad identities and diverse histories. *Resurrecting Slavery* notes an important fault line between first- and second-generation immigrants from Sub-Saharan Africa and Antilleans who have been French since 1848. The genius of the book lies in the way in which it unsettles the received wisdom and the alleged consensus on being black within France's institutionalized white supremacy. While not offering any solutions, Fleming shines a spotlight on the long-ignored problems of race in France.

MICHAEL G. VANN

California State University, Sacramento

Cynthia N. Nazarian. *Love's Wounds: Violence and the Politics of Early Modern Europe*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2016. Pp. xv + 299.

The lyric, as conventionally understood, is the literary genre whose express purpose is to evoke poetically and thereby mitigate the individualized suffering of a subject for an inaccessible object. In her efforts to reconsider and recast the lyric in the early modern period from the singular to the collective—from the *je* to the *nous*—Cynthia Nazarian's *Love's Wounds* is nothing short of a revolutionary examination of the Renaissance lyric from Petrarch to Shakespeare. Moving

both northward and chronologically from the disquiet of *trecento* Italy, through the French kingdom of the Italian Wars and the Wars of Religion, and into the contentious debates of legitimacy in Elizabethan England, Nazarian demonstrates how the poets from these belligerent eras adroitly tapped into the rhetorically potent posture of the downtrodden lover. Progressively exaggerating the abjection and vulnerability of powerless desire, Petrarchan imitators extended the castigated body of the forsaken lover to the subjected body politic in a gesture of countersovereignty, through which they could challenge cultural, religious, and political authority.

Across the four chapters of her volume, which treat 1) Scève's adoption and adaptation of Petrarchan strategies and imagery of suffering in his *Délie*, 2) Du Bellay's mimetic reenactment of violent imperial conflict in his *L'olive*, 3) the mortification and self-dissection of human anatomy in D'Aubigné's verse, and 4) Spencer's lyrical pleas in his *Amoretti* as resistance tactics in the face of tyranny and authoritarian government, as well as her conclusion, in which the flawed tragedy and satire of Shakespeare's anti-Petrarchan forays are brought to the fore, Nazarian negotiates close readings of canonical writers admirably. Central to her argument of the rhetoric force of poetic violence is reading the lyric as *agon* (a space of struggle) that can be expanded to the collectivity and amplified via *parrhēsia* (bold or frank speech), as practiced by Petrarch. What's more, she creates a convincing dialogue between key volumes in the amorous tradition, written in imitation of the *Canzoniere*, and political texts by the same authors (Du Bellay's *Défence*, D'Aubigné's *Les tragiques*, Spencer's *The Faerie Queene*), which are traditionally considered to be disparate, effectively establishing contiguity between the projects of the love poetry and the political writings (treatises, epics, manifestos) in meaningful ways.

On the whole, this volume is exceptionally well-researched and annotated, as Nazarian leaves no theoretical stone unturned in making her arguments. New Historicism, gender studies, queer theory, deconstruction, imitation theory, and narrative studies each have their say and are intricately woven with the most contemporary essays of Nazarian's peers. The resulting study is at the same time respectful of colleagues' contributions and confident in its own innovative claims, highlighting the very best of the author's comparatist training. At the same time, despite the richness of its synthesis, the text is beautifully written in crystalline prose with Nazarian's original contributions featured preeminently. Indeed, the marginal stars, check marks, and exclamation points that illuminate nearly every page of my review copy stand as a tangible testament to the volume's freshness and brilliance. Even if I would have liked to see a more focused examination of the formal aspects of the sonnet (or Scève's *dizain*) in terms of the embedded violence within the quintessential Petrarchan structure, what Nazarian accomplishes in her examination of the political and ethical rhetoric of the early modern love lyric will cause generations of scholars to take pause and reconsider their understanding of the uses and intent of unrequited Petrarchan desire.

ROBERT J. HUDSON
Brigham Young University