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Adeline Lionetto and Jean-Charles Monferran, eds., *Fleurs et jardins de poésie. Les anthologies poétiques au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle (domaine français, incursions européennes)*. Paris: Garnier Classiques, 2021. 403 pp. Notes, references, and index. €78.00. (hb). ISBN 9782406121817; €39.00. (pb). ISBN 9782406121800.

Review by Valerie Worth-Stylianou, Trinity College, University of Oxford.

This volume brings together seventeen contributions on the theme of sixteenth-century poetic anthologies, prefaced by an introduction written by the joint editors, Adeline Lionetto and Jean-Charles Monferran. Like many collected studies, it originates from a conference (held at the Sorbonne in 2019), but this volume has the merit of being distinctly more than a collection of Acts. As the subtitle indicates, the focus is largely on French-language anthologies, but there are some comparative contributions on poetic anthologies in Italian, Spanish, neo-Latin, Greek, and English. The selective bibliography of secondary criticism at the end of the volume mirrors the focus of the papers. The vast majority of titles are French-language works, with small, multi-lingual sections on studies of classical, English, Spanish and Italian anthologies. Perhaps surprisingly, there is nothing on German-language anthologies. As a result of this focus, the volume is primarily of use to French-language researchers, rather than offering a full pan-European or global perspective. This reservation is significant and reinforced by the rather surprising absence of English translations for the helpful abstracts of the individual chapters at the end of the volume. However, it certainly does not invalidate what the volume does achieve, within its own terms of reference.

The previous standard overview of poetic anthologies of the French Renaissance dates back to 1922, when Frédéric Lachèvre published a bibliographical study of *recueils collectifs* of poetry in French published between 1502 and 1609. While Lachèvre's work is still recognized as an indispensable bibliographical tool, it concentrated on print editions, leaving out of consideration, for example, anthologies which circulated in manuscript form, or anthologies of poetry set to music. The present volume embraces both of the latter forms.

The editors' elegant general introduction poses the important question of why sixteenth-century poetic anthologies, so popular in their own century, have not benefited in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries from the same critical attention as either their medieval forebears or seventeenth-century successors. They suggest that the modern tendency to focus on individual Renaissance poets at the expense of multi-authored collections is beginning to shift, but must still be challenged. They also draw attention to a key question of definition (to which Lachèvre was less sensitive): an anthology suggests a deliberate selection of poetry judged, by literary

criteria, to be worthy of inclusion, hence the increasing popularity of anthologies as vehicles for poets to establish or affirm their status in the later sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. (Perhaps the equivalent, we might say, of academics today publishing in peer-reviewed journals?) Lionetto and Monferran note a general movement, over the course of the sixteenth century, from anthologies celebrating poetry in the vernacular (in which individual poets were not necessarily named) to those celebrating and naming the individual poets who are included. An anthology featuring the best poems by a single author is not, it seems, a genre which appealed to the French Renaissance book market, with one notable exception: the posthumous florilegium of Clément Marot's poetry (1557).

Introductions to collected studies are particularly useful when they alert readers to what not to expect. Lionetto and Monferran do a service by drawing our attention to the prevalence of shorter poetic forms, favoured at the expense of longer ones, in almost all sixteenth-century anthologies. As a result, their collection of studies necessarily excludes epic and encyclopedic poetry, or longer *pièces de circonstance*. Instead, French Renaissance poetic anthologies focus mostly either on love—an omnipresent subject—or on spiritual themes, which come to the fore in the last third of the century.

Although there is not a single thematic progression evident in the ordering of the papers, I think it is useful to highlight four broad areas into which most fall, with some fruitful overlap in some cases. (I would also note that although there is a full index of proper names, there is unfortunately no thematic index to link papers.) First, four papers treat the earliest printed French anthologies of poetry, underscoring how much the genre initially owed to medieval compilations. Laëtitia Tabard examines the earliest French anthology, *Le Jardin de plaisance*, published by Vérard in 1501, and republished at least eight times over the century. She argues that the disconcertingly wide generic range from which the pieces are selected (including prose *épîtres* by Grands Rhétoriciens and versified *arts poétiques*) have led to multiple and diverging scholarly interpretations. However, she argues for a coherence in the progress of the poet-lover through the anthology and believes that by leaving itself open to different readings, the volume encourages its readers to shape their own creative responses.

João Aidar also concentrates on *Le Jardin de plaisance* but contrasts it with a Spanish anthology of 1511. The comparison highlights Vérard's marked editorial voice in the French anthology, whereas his Spanish counterpart leaves the individual poets and themes to lead the reader. Nonetheless, both Vérard and the Spanish publisher share a strong awareness of addressing a wider and new readership via the printed book as opposed to manuscript collections. We stay in the realm of Vérard's editorial practices (and self-publicity) with Jean-Claude Mühlethaler's analysis of another Vérard collection, the 1509 *Départie d'amours* (attributed to Blaise d'Auriol), which combines an art of love and a second art of rhetoric. While acknowledging that the overt emphasis on technical virtuosity may jar with modern readers, Mühlethaler argues for a re-estimation of the volume's affective range.

Lastly, Ellen Delvallée takes us forward twenty years, to Galliot du Pré's *Rondeaux en nombre trois cent cinquante*, published in 1527. This anthology is distinctive in presenting a single genre and contains a number of previously unpublished poems. Delvallée posits that through astute arrangement of the collection, and by including a range of different *rondeaux* forms, Galliot du Pré offers an energising vision of a traditional genre. From these four papers, it is clear that while earlier sixteenth-century anthologies deliberately look back to medieval collections, they also

seek to be dynamic drivers of further poetic experimentation. Even when individual poets are named in these earlier anthologies, it is the role of the publisher that is crucial in shaping the reading experience.

A second group of papers coalesce around themes of editorial practices and invite us to consider what constituted success. Jean Balsamo brings his magisterial familiarity with Italian and French poetry to bear on Italian collections of *Rime* from 1545 to 1560. Because these works were highly influential for mid-century French poetry, he argues the importance of distinguishing between Italian and French practices, noting that the commercially driven, successive editions of the Italian collections (each featuring some ten poets) were expected to continue to circulate alongside earlier ones. No single edition thus constituted a fixed appreciation of the *summum* of Italian poetry, though all editions bore testimony to Italian literary excellence. From a similar perspective, Anne Réach-Ngô presents her research group's work on a dynamic, online critical version of the five editions of the *Trésor des joyeuses inventions* (1554-1599). One of the purposes of the online edition will be to allow modern readers to experience reading different editions which remained simultaneously in circulation.

In examining Latin poetic anthologies, Virgine Leroux also focuses our attention on commercial concerns, which are reflected in the selection of poems. She makes the distinction that when the anthologies consisted of commonplaces or poetic topoi, pedagogic principles dominated; for anthologies of translations into Latin of Greek poets or of extracts from neo-Latin poets, there was more freedom for an anthologist to indulge their own tastes. Leroux leaves us with a significant question for future research: how far did the anthologies influence subsequent poetry? Similar research questions lead to the jointly authored paper by Hugo Macé and Jean Vignes—which I would warmly recommend to all students of Ronsard's poetry. They examine the composer Nicolas de la Grotte's enormously successful collection of *Chansons* (1569), principally featuring his settings of poems by Ronsard and by the emerging, but hitherto unpublished Desportes. Macé and Vignes question how a composer selected which poems to include, how to order them, and what evidence we can look to in order to assess the specific popularity of anthologised songs. Again, in this process, we are made aware of an anthology's power to inspire fresh imitations and offshoots.

The majority of the remaining papers can loosely be grouped together as investigations of the relationships between French poetic anthologies and other genres. Three concentrate on a comparison with commonplace books. Nathalie Dauvois examines Gilles Corrozet's *Le Parnasse des poëtes François modernes* (1571), which deliberately canonises those Corrozet considered the greatest contemporary French poets, in the style of anthologies with extracts from famous classical poets, which were often used to teach translation from Latin and compositional skills. Antonin Godet, whose doctoral thesis in 2020 provided a critical edition of Corrozet's *Le Parnasse*, emphasises its evolving nature. Prepared originally by Corrozet but completed by his son Galliot, it moved from a rather pithy, but interventionist editorial hand to a blander, more commercially oriented one in later editions. Laetitia Sansonetti allows a comparative insight, studying three English anthologies published in 1600; these similarly aspired to establish the Elizabethan poetic canon, the choice of extracts reflecting both moral and aesthetic criteria, with marginal notes often drawing lessons to the reader's attention.

Another group of papers compare the French anthologies with similar works printed in France, but in different formats or languages. Marco Venezia looks at the relationship between

surviving manuscripts and the collection of over sixty poems appearing in *Les Fleurs de la poésie françoise*, printed by Galliot du Pré in 1534. He argues—against some previous scholars—that this anthology reflects the tastes of Marguerite de Navarre’s court and considers that Victor Brodeau probably had a hand in its preparation. Beyond the specific case, Venezia highlights the interesting tensions between collected poetic voices as opposed to a single dominant voice fashioning an anthology. Erica Zanin widens the net by comparing poetic anthologies with anthologies of the numerous prose *nouvelles* of the same period, using the specific case of *La Fleur de toutes nouvelles* (1547), which offers French translations (via Latin intermediary versions) of an anthology of Boccaccio’s and others’ stories. The translations into French are mostly borrowed from earlier printed anthologies, but—unlike poetic anthologies—editors look to reduce the prose texts to their lowest common denominator, erasing stylistic differences between authors, adding morals to tales which lack them, and silently omitting any potentially scandalous tales. This French prose anthology thus blunts and censures a vibrant Italian genre, rather than encouraging a creative development of it.

Luigi-Alberto Sanchi and Rémi Vuillemin also both look at anthologies of texts in or from other languages. For Sanchi, the French edition in the 1530s of Planudes’s thirteenth-century Greek anthology provided the impetus for new compositions of epigrams in Greek, Latin, and French. Vuillemin considers the publication in 1557 of Tottel’s *Miscellany*, a work long held by Renaissance specialists as pivotal to the literature of the English Renaissance. It is striking, above all, in the range of poetic forms included, and although the reasons for its composition still remain a subject of conjecture, like its French counterparts it demonstrates that commercially the whole anthology is greater than the sum of the individual parts.

Finally, rather surprisingly, there are just two papers addressing late sixteenth-century anthologies in France, but each gives a sense of the distinctive tonality and importance of this period. Véronique Ferrer examines multi-author Protestant poetic anthologies published between 1555 and 1591, many of which seek to offer a clear alternative to secular (predominantly Catholic) anthologies of love poetry. In the 1570s, most of the Protestant volumes are published in Geneva, and the confessional position is firmly marked. From 1574, musical settings are initially dropped in favour of the conception of spiritual poetry as a form of prayer, until the anthology *L’Uranie* (1590) reappropriates for Protestants both musical settings and a more sophisticated poetic register, another proof of the flexibility of anthologies to adapt to evolving contexts. Miriam Speyer discusses the specific challenges of compiling poetic anthologies at the end of the Wars of Religion. Published in Paris or Rouen, these volumes looked to collect pieces by poets of the present, and to act as a rallying call for the Muses of French poetry. These late anthologies have disconcerted some modern critics by the freer organisation of the chosen pieces in comparison to earlier ones, but this freedom, for Speyer, is itself a step towards the anthology becoming a luxury item for a discerning public.

The volume *Fleurs et jardins de poésie* itself resembles an anthology, a selection of very good papers on diverse aspects of the subject, and which the reader is free to sample in part or in total, and in any order they wish. Like Renaissance anthologies, it has the great merit of stimulating our curiosity and making at least this reader keen both to explore more Renaissance anthologies and to re-read familiar collections of poems by single authors in counterpoint to anthologies. One also comes away with a heightened awareness of the very varied reading practices and commercial dynamics of the Renaissance literary book market.

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