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**Ronsard, Pierre de. The Franciad (1572). Trans., annot., and intro. Philip John Usher**

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dispose maintenant de sa pinacothèque électronique ! Daniel Ménager vient d'écrire une réflexion majeure sur le désenchantement, avec cette *sprezzatura* qui l'a tant fasciné chez Castiglione : je ne vois pas de plus bel éloge à lui faire.

ANDRÉ GENDRE, *Université de Neuchâtel*

**Ronsard, Pierre de.**

***The Franciad (1572). Trans., annot., and intro. Philip John Usher.***

Studies in the Renaissance, 44. New York: AMS Press, 2010. Pp. lxxviii, 272. ISBN 978-0-404-62344-9 (hardcover) \$162.50.

This handsome volume presents the first comprehensive English translation of Pierre de Ronsard's famous, unfinished epic poem. A somewhat controversial work, long anticipated and at turns both admired and criticized, *The Franciade* went to press in its first edition — on which J. P. Usher's translation is based — in 1572, the year of the infamous Saint Bartholomew's Day massacre. Usher here offers his reader a readable and accurate English version which, though unaccompanied by the original French text, sports a line-by-line numeration for the scholar or student who might wish to make a rapid consultation of the original. (This is the very text that appears in vol. 16 of Paul Laumonier's monumental edition of the *Oeuvres complètes*.) As such, it would be a useful resource for readers whose interest lies in the area of early modern comparative literature.

Usher's book is not just a vulgarization for the benefit of the non-French reader. It is also a work of impressive scholarship. The 65-page introduction provides an excellent overview of both the context and the content of Ronsard's poem. Situating *The Franciade* in the complex development of French historiography and its relation to the oft-commented myth of national origins, the author makes impressive use of research on this aspect of Ronsard's oeuvre. In his analysis of the poem, Usher tends to emphasize the many links between the epic poem and other, shorter works by Ronsard, with special attention to the love poetry — of particular interest in this regard are his remarks on the famous *Élégie à Janet*. As such, Usher's essay also provides a suggestive introduction to Ronsard studies in general. Finally, it should be noted that

the text of the translation is copiously annotated. The volume contains a rich bibliography and a ten-page index.

JOHN NASSICHUK, *Western University*

**Rothman, E. Natalie.**

***Brokering Empire: Trans-Imperial Subjects between Venice and Istanbul.***

Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012. Pp. xx, 350 + 9 ill. ISBN 978-0-8014-4907-9 (hardcover) \$45.

Natalie Rothman's *Brokering Empire* is an extraordinary, path-breaking book. Steeped in archival sources and critical social and cultural theory, it both reveals and explains the role of culture brokers, middlemen minorities, and colonial intermediaries in defining linguistic, religious, and geopolitical boundaries across the Venetian-Ottoman field of power in the early modern Mediterranean world. Rothman calls the protagonists in her story "trans-imperial subjects" — "émigrés from Venetian colonies and borderland regions, redeemed slaves returning from the Ottoman Empire, converts from Islam or Judaism, and merchants and diplomats who regularly traveled across the Venetian-Ottoman frontier" (3) — a neologism for an intermediary category between citizen and foreigner, for those whose relationships between themselves and government institutions defined inclusion and exclusion in Venice, its colonies, and beyond. Trained as an historical anthropologist, Rothman makes theory out of practice as she explores complex networks of alliance and interest through interregional contacts, hierarchies of authority established by legal institutions and the patrician social order, and modes of interaction between the various groups and individuals in her empirical analysis of personal relations that cut across and redefined categories of foreign and local, Muslim and Christian, Turk and Venetian, Levantine and European, and East and West.

Setting is significant here, as Rothman explodes the myths of conflict and the clash of civilizations as well as the place of aristocratic paternalism and citizenship in Venice during the period between two wars, 1571–1669, after the Battle of Lepanto during the War of Cyprus and at the end of the