

Renaissance and Reformation Renaissance et Réforme



Navarre, Marguerite de. Oeuvres complètes. Tome XIII. Les Tombeaux. Ed. Richard Cooper

Scott Francis

Volume 45, numéro 2, printemps 2022

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1094844ar>

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.33137/rr.v45i2.39787>

[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

Éditeur(s)

Iter Press

ISSN

0034-429X (imprimé)

2293-7374 (numérique)

[Découvrir la revue](#)

Citer ce compte rendu

Francis, S. (2022). Compte rendu de [Navarre, Marguerite de. Oeuvres complètes. Tome XIII. Les Tombeaux. Ed. Richard Cooper]. *Renaissance and Reformation / Renaissance et Réforme*, 45(2), 332–334.
<https://doi.org/10.33137/rr.v45i2.39787>

© Scott Francis, 2022



Ce document est protégé par la loi sur le droit d'auteur. L'utilisation des services d'Érudit (y compris la reproduction) est assujettie à sa politique d'utilisation que vous pouvez consulter en ligne.

<https://apropos.erudit.org/fr/usagers/politique-dutilisation/>

éerudit

Cet article est diffusé et préservé par Érudit.

Érudit est un consortium interuniversitaire sans but lucratif composé de l'Université de Montréal, l'Université Laval et l'Université du Québec à Montréal. Il a pour mission la promotion et la valorisation de la recherche.

<https://www.erudit.org/fr/>

Navarre, Marguerite de.

***Œuvres complètes. Tome XIII. Les Tombeaux.* Ed. Richard Cooper.**

Textes littéraires de la Renaissance 25. Paris: Honoré Champion, 2021. Pp. 864. ISBN 9782745355935 (hardcover) €115.

Les Tombeaux is the thirteenth volume of the definitive *Œuvres complètes* of Marguerite de Navarre and the last in the sequence, if not the last to be published. It is the only volume in the entire series not to contain any works authored by Marguerite herself. Richard Cooper, who also edited the eighth volume (*Chrétiens et mondains: poèmes épars*), aims to provide an overview of how Marguerite was remembered in poetry after her death, how the volumes of commemorative poetry dedicated to her mark a literary historical shift with the participation of the Brigade (the group of poets who later styled themselves the Pléiade), and of how Marguerite's image shifted after the posthumous publication of the *Heptaméron*. A product of Cooper's unique brand of polyglot erudition, this edition is a veritable anthology of encomia accompanied by a robust critical apparatus, including an extensive bibliography and an introduction deeply informed by archival work and existing secondary literature.

The edition is divided into nine sections, the first of which, "Mort et obsèques de Marguerite," contains accounts of the funeral services held for Marguerite at Lescar Cathedral and Notre-Dame de Paris, as well as notices of her death in official chronicles and Montaigne's *Livre de raison*. The next two sections contain the Latin and French versions of Charles de Sainte-Marthe's 1550 funerary speech, an important if idealized account of the queen's life, personality, and political and literary pursuits. The fourth section is devoted to the *Hecatodistichon* (1550), a collection of 104 Latin couplets in honour of Marguerite attributed to Anne, Margaret, and Jane Seymour, the young daughters of Lord Protector Edward Seymour and the nieces of Henry VIII's third wife and the mother of Edward VI. The evidence suggests that they were actually written by Nicolas Denisot, the girls' tutor, who figures prominently in the collection alongside Charles de Sainte-Marthe, his brothers René and Louis, and two Brigade members, Jean-Antoine de Baïf and Jean Dorat.

The fifth section, "Entre l'*Hecatodistichon* et *Le Tombeau* (1550)," consists of three entries, only one of which, François Habert's "Cantique sur le trespas de la Roïne de Navarre," is reproduced here. The other two are pieces by the

renowned Neo-Latin poet Jean Salmon Macrin and by Joachim Du Bellay that were reprinted in *Le Tombeau de Marguerite de Valois* (1551). This collection is the object of the sixth section, and Macrin's and Du Bellay's poems appear here. The *Tombeau* is an expanded version of *Hecatodistichon* in which the Latin couplets are now accompanied by Greek, Italian, and French translations as well as contributions from Nicolas Herberay des Essarts, Nicolas Bourbon, Pierre de Ronsard, Dorat, Baïf, and others.

The remaining sections of the edition are essentially miscellanies. "Le Cercle de Gascogne" consists of pieces by various minor southwestern poets attached to Marguerite, "Après *Le Tombeau* de 1551" is an assortment of poems from the second half of the sixteenth century, including Jean Passerat's and Jean Vezou's liminary sonnets from the 1559 edition of the *Heptaméron*, and the final section, "Devises et éloges," is divided between emblems honouring Marguerite and reminiscences of the queen from after the publication of the *Heptaméron* by Scévole de Sainte-Marthe, Pierre Boaistuau, Claude Gruget, Étienne Pasquier, La Croix du Maine, Antoine du Verdier, Jacques-Auguste de Thou, and of course Brantôme.

As comprehensive as this edition may be, its organization is rather perplexing. The sections are more or less arranged in chronological order, but not entirely; Guillaume Philandrier's epitaph, the first piece in "Le cercle de Gascogne," is dated 1549, earlier even than Charles de Sainte-Marthe's speech. Moreover, if the section "Devises et éloges" was intended to paint a picture of what was said about Marguerite after the publication of the *Heptaméron*, one wonders why Cooper omitted Montaigne's scathing evaluation of Nouvelle 25 in "Des prières" or the conflicting polemical takes on the queen's religion from the *Histoire ecclésiastique* attributed to Théodore de Bèze and Florimond de Raemonde's *Histoire de la naissance, progresz, et decadence de l'heresie de ce siecle*, even though he cites both in the introduction (25, 169). Finally, while the edition is intended for specialists, it could have been made more accessible. While translations are provided for pieces in Latin and Greek, they are not provided for two works in Italian, Antonio Caracciolo's lamentation (724–26) and Gabriele Symeoni's emblem (739–40), nor are they consistently provided in the introduction, which is as multilingual as the edition proper.

These inconveniences notwithstanding, *Les Tombeaux* is an immense contribution to the study of Marguerite de Navarre that reveals how the persistent myth of Marguerite was constructed after her death. Cooper's introduction

is in essence a detailed biography of the queen's final days and literary afterlife that sheds light on the discrepancies between the historical Marguerite and the image that Charles de Sainte-Marthe crafted of her in his influential speech. His solid, patient work reveals Sainte-Marthe to be the origin of several misconceptions, including the notion that Marguerite somehow had Greek (43). Sainte-Marthe also praises Marguerite for embodying the traditional wifely virtues of obedience and silence and dwells upon the inconsolable grief of her husband, Henri de Navarre, but Cooper's examination of other primary sources reveals just how contentious the marriage was, with Marguerite even intercepting her husband's letters to Henri II, and how Henri de Navarre saw his wife's death less as a tragedy than as an opportunity to focus on hoarding money and womanizing (32–33, 46).

Thus, the fact that *Les Tombeaux* contains no works by Marguerite makes it no less interesting for historians or literary scholars working on the queen, and unlike the other entries in the *Œuvres complètes*, it has a clear audience beyond Marguerite specialists. Thanks in particular to the presence of the *Hecatodistichon* and *Tombeau*, scholars working on the Pléiade poets or Neo-Latin poetry will find a great deal into which they can sink their teeth. The volume will also be of interest to scholars working on funerary poetry, commemoration, and Anglo-French literary relations in the Renaissance.

SCOTT FRANCIS

University of Pennsylvania

<https://doi.org/10.33137/rr.v45i2.39787>