

Yet, throughout his essay, Mazouer keeps pointing at the frequent ambiguities in the approach to transcendence, thus resisting a facile dualistic account of drama moving from the centrality of religion to its eventual sidelining. “A sort of metaphysical uncertainty” (*une sorte de flottement métaphysique*, 195) often characterized the stance of playwrights who in some cases regarded God as little more than a contrivance, or a way to legitimize a kind of morality that would have worked just as well in a secular context.

Despite its chronological order, this book is less a survey than an attempt to define transcendence in light of its manifestations in French stage plays and to demonstrate that it remained a central concern over a millennium, though envisioned from varied, sometimes contradictory viewpoints. Mazouer suggests that this was an inherent feature of dramaturgy, as opposed to other types of writing, at a time when the majority of the population was unable to read, and theater allowed for the greatest possible dissemination of ideas and presentation of debatable issues in front of a relatively large audience. It will be most interesting to see how Mazouer, in the second volume, will account for the evolution following the French Revolution towards mass education and a general decline in spirituality.

Vincent Grégoire. *Marie Guyart de l'Incarnation (1599-1672): Le singulier parcours d'une ursuline missionnaire de Tours à Québec*. Brussels: Peter Lang, 2022. 182 pp. \$45.95. Review by SUZANNE C. TOCZYSKI, SONOMA STATE UNIVERSITY.

In this slim but impactful volume, Vincent Grégoire (Berry College) gives a stirring account of the life and apostolic ministry of the Ursuline nun Marie de l'Incarnation (*née* Marie Guyart), who was canonized in 2014 by Pope Francis, and who worked tirelessly for the education of young women, both indigenous and French-Canadian, in New France, in spite of and occasionally thanks to the obstacles she faced throughout her life. Volume 35 of *Etudes canadiennes*, Grégoire's work is one of only two in the multi-disciplinary series devoted to an individual writer, and the only one thus far that focuses on an early modern author. Parts of chapters II, III and V

of the present volume were previously published in conference *acta*, *Biblio* 17, and *Seventeenth-Century French Studies*, but taken together and augmented by additional compelling research, Grégoire's study of the seventeenth-century religious offers an excellent introduction to a life abundant in challenges and marked by an extraordinary and successful apostolic mission in France's most vast colonial territory of her era.

Grégoire's study relies extensively on letters written by Marie herself, as well as on two autobiographical *Relations* of her life (one written at the behest of her confessor, in 1633, and the other for her son, in 1654), in addition to the hagiographic *Vie* written by that son, Dom Claude Martin, himself a Benedictine member of the Congrégation de Saint-Maur, who highly redacted Marie's texts and published his biography of his mother five years after her death. Grégoire's introduction includes a biographical sketch of Marie, from her early mystical experiences to the birth of her son and her subsequent widowhood, to her efforts to establish an Ursuline convent in Québec and the myriad obstacles she encountered along the way. Indeed, it is these obstacles, or *épreuves*, which give structure to the monograph, as they become significant markers of Marie's personal *chemin de croix*. Grégoire highlights the role Marie's determination and strength and general passion for her cause played in her apostolic mission: "L'idée principale de cette étude peut ainsi être résumée: l'obstacle a fait Marie, n'ayant pu la défaire" (23). Marie de l'Incarnation flourished when tested by God, and was able to redefine the role of women religious at the time of the Catholic Counter-Reformation and beyond, all the while refining her own personal agency through her consummate ability to adapt to the circumstances at hand.

Following the schematic of the *chemin de croix*, Grégoire proposes five *épreuves*, or tests that Marie encountered in her lifetime, each furnishing the subject of one of the five main chapters of the monograph. Chapter I describes Marie's firm conviction that the devil himself constantly beset her with challenges, pursuing her in her day-to-day existence (in the form of a "mysterious woman" who nearly ruined her husband, for example) and in her mystical life, attempting to destroy Marie's relationship with God and eradicate her missionary spirit. The devil's nefarious efforts were primarily manifested while

Marie was still in France; her use of self-mortification enabled Marie to maintain her independence and claim her own agency. In Chapter II, Grégoire details a moment in Marie's life mostly neglected by other scholars: her crossing, with a handful of other women religious, of the Atlantic Ocean on the *Saint-Joseph*. Relying on three different individuals' accounts of the crossing (and near-shipwreck due to the vessel's close encounter with an iceberg), Grégoire shows how Marie's attitude toward this episode evolved over time, from her romanticized anticipation of the voyage to a more sobering appreciation of the perils encountered (their potentially deadly result), and from a sense of collective "sacrifice" to a more individualized contextualization of the episode in her faith journey. Grégoire cites the women's arrival in New France as a triumph of the Catholic Counter-Reformation.

Chapter III, the shortest but perhaps most poignant of the monograph, details Marie's ostensibly necessary but painful abandonment of her son Claude (twice, once upon entering the Ursuline order, and the second upon her departure for New France), yet another *épreuve* for her to face and therefore a vehicle for her mortification and salvation. Marie's sacrifice was encouraged by her confessor and other religious authorities, and Grégoire argues that Marie "instrumentalized" her son in her writings, rejecting any guilt on his account and steeling herself against the suffering both parties would face. In the end, Claude became his mother's most ardent champion, though his publication of writings she did not intend to be public was problematic.

Chapters IV and V concentrate on external obstacles Marie encountered on her *chemin* while in New France. Grégoire details the cultural hurdles Marie faced in her work with two very different sets of young women, one indigenous, the other ostensibly "French," though Marie would later argue that they should more properly be called "françaises-canadoises," given their "savage" nature due to life in the colony. An unanticipated cloistering of the women religious complicated their efforts, as did Amerindian morality and notions of the French, and difficulties in communication. Grégoire argues against the reading of Marie's linguistic abilities as limited, suggesting that she, in fact, succeeded admirably in this domain. Chapter V chronicles Marie's grappling with the requirements imposed by local Jesuits that contradicted her intentions for the women religious entrusted to her;

Grégoire makes a compelling case for Marie's discrete resistance to the Jesuits' demands through determination and an admirable sincerity of faith.

Throughout this short volume, Grégoire brings his own arguments into dialogue with other leading experts in the field, particularly Dominique Deslandres, Paul Renaudin, Marie-Florine Bruneau, Kathryn Ibbett, Cornelius Jaenen, Elizabeth Rapley, Dom Guy-Marie Oury, and Robert Sauzet, and the monograph's bibliography is solid and useful. Marie herself is portrayed as in dialogue with some of the most significant religious figures of her time, including Teresa of Avila, François de Sales, and Jeanne de Chantal (though the latter is excluded from the otherwise useful index, as is Louise de Marillac). There seems to be some potential confusion regarding dates; Marie was six months shy of twenty (not eighteen) when she gave birth to her son, and his *Vie* was published five (not fifteen) years after her death. But these are trivial matters in what is a beautifully constructed examination of the many crosses of one of the seventeenth century's most memorable female saints, and of her quest for agency in a period that would otherwise suppress her vision. It will be a welcome addition to the collections of all who seek to understand seventeenth-century spirituality and missionary activity as well as for feminist scholars of history and anyone interested in France's presence on the North American continent.

Molière. *Le Tartuffe ou l'hypocrite: Comédie en trois actes restituée par Georges Forestier*, 3. Arles: Portaparole France, 2022. 120 pp. €16.00. Review by SARA WELLMAN, UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI.

To celebrate the 400th anniversary of Molière's birth, the Comédie Française kicked off its 2022 six-month-long "Saison Molière" with a performance of *Le Tartuffe*. Adding to the specialness of the occasion, they performed a version of the play that had been considered completely lost to history until renowned Molière specialist Georges Forestier set out to uncover what the original might have looked like before it was banned and then buried under five years of rewriting. Forestier's reconstructed original three-act version of *Le Tartuffe ou*