

“acts as a prism or even an erotic conduit through which Titus’s and Bérénice’s love can be measured, articulated, and witnessed—and held in perpetual deferral” (129). Her unique reading characterizes the dynamics of this polyamorous threesome—Bérénice, Titus, and Antiochus—as a temporality that is “dilated” or “undecided, repetitive, yet full of possibilities” (130).

Theoretically sound and beautifully written, Row’s book compellingly demonstrates that queer velocities were prevalent in even the most successful canonical plays. The author’s thought-provoking study leaves us with room to explore other questions: how did queer velocities manifest themselves in the popular neoclassical forms of comedy, in French baroque tragicomedies, pastorals, court ballets, and in other dramatic genres? Or in those composed by women playwrights? Row has opened the door to a fresh, new avenue for investigating early modern theatrical culture’s full impact on the development of chronobiopower in French dramatic genres. *Queer Velocities* is a stimulating read for any scholars or students who are interested in expanding their knowledge and exploring the combined fields of Gender Studies, Queer Studies, and French theater.

Philippe Quinault. William Brooks and Buford Norman, eds. *Théâtre complet. Tome IV. Tragi-comédies historiques*. Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2022. 613pp. 48€. Review by ESTHER VAN DYKE, INDEPENDENT SCHOLAR.

Sometimes a book takes us by surprise. Reading Williams Brooks and Buford Norman’s critical edition of Quinault’s historical tragicomedies was such an experience for me. Quinault is not one of the three typical playwrights most often read in seventeenth-century studies. When he is mentioned, his reputation for love-besotted alexandrines given to him by his contemporaries Boileau and Racine, tends to dominate. But Brooks and Norman’s critical edition of his works focuses on giving Quinault his due. Their careful and thorough approach enables both scholars and students of Quinault to discover more about this seminal seventeenth-century author.

The book, volume four in a series covering Quinault's complete works, addresses the five tragicomedies written from 1657–1662. As it is not the first volume in the series, the editors begin the work with a brief note on editorial choices rather than a general introduction. The rest of the book has the following layout: each play is introduced with a lengthy critical overlook that covers not only valuable historical context, but also a perspicuous analysis of literary themes covered in the plays, character development, the question of genre, and source material. Each play's introduction is followed by a short editorial explanation of the choice of original texts used for the critical edition. After this meta-material, the editors include the play's dedicatory letter, the royal printing privilege, the text of the play, and finally a page or two of variations between the original first editions. I especially appreciated the editorial choice to include the variations at the end of the play rather than in the footnotes of the text, for that kept the footnotes minimal and uncluttered. Finally, after the plays, the editors include a glossary of seventeenth-century terminology, a critical bibliography, and the ever-necessary table of contents.

The first play, *Amalasonte* (performed in 1657 and published in 1658), is a tragicomedy set in Rome, which tells the story of the eponymous character, queen of the Goths. Amalasonte loves Théodat but believes him to be not only her political enemy who has colluded with her adversary Justinian, but who is also wooing her rival Amalfrède. Amalfrède's brother, Clodésile, and his friend Arsamon conspire to assassinate Théodat thinking it will win Clodésile the approval and possibly the love of the betrayed queen. Through a series of unexpected events, Clodésile is killed, but it is untruthfully reported to the queen that Théodat has died. The queen mourns her lover as Amalfrède confesses both her brother's plot to assassinate Théodat, and her own part in making the queen believe that Théodat has been unfaithful. Amalfrède dies, poisoned by her own hand before the queen can enact justice upon her. In a sudden *coup de théâtre*, Théodat appears on stage, the lovers are reunited, and all is forgiven. As the editors point out in their introduction, this play is complicated in terms of genre. In order to adhere to seventeenth-century genre sensibilities, this play was labeled a tragicomedy since the main characters are united at the end despite the tragic death of several secondary characters. A true tragedy

would have had to end with the death (or separation) of the lovers.

The second play, *Le Feint Alcibiade* (performed and printed in 1658), follows the story of Alcibiade, exiled from Athens and accused by Agis, the king of Sparta, of wooing his wife, Timée. In reality, Alcibiade's twin sister, Cléone, is impersonating her brother in order to win back the love of Lisandre. Through partial revelations and half-told truths, Alcibiade/Cléone manages to keep her secret until the end at which she reveals all to the king and is united with her lover Lisandre. As Brooks and Norman indicate, this play is an example of Quinault's story-telling power, his reliance on sources is minimal, but he holds the audience's attention through intrigue and constant plot reversal.

The third play, *Le Mariage de Cambise* (performed in 1658 and printed in 1659), is another story based on false identity, but this time hidden from the audience as well as the characters. Cambise, king of Persia, has gotten religious permission to marry his sister, Atosse. However, the beautiful Aristonne comes to his court accompanied by her mother, Palmis, and Cambise changes his mind. Aristonne's brother Darius also comes to court and promises Cambise his loyalty. Cambise asks Darius to tell Aristonne of the king's love and to get her pledge of love in return. Unbeknownst to Aristonne and Darius, they each harbor what they think is an incestuous love for the other. The (tragi)comedy of errors ends when Palmis reveals that she, acting on the wishes of Cambise's mother, had switched places of her own daughter Atosse with that of the queen's daughter, Aristonne. Darius and his love are thus allowed to marry, and Cambise must be content with his original choice of Atosse, albeit this time not tainted with incest, religiously permitted or otherwise. As the editors indicate, the amorous intrigue of the play serves to enhance the political side of things.

The fourth play, *Stratonice* (performed and printed in 1660) is a complicated love story in which Séleucus, king of Syria, is pledged in an alliance marriage to Stratonice, the daughter of king of Macedonia. But Séleucus secretly loves Barsine, whom he has promised to his son Antiochus. Antiochus, on the other hand, is dying (literally) for love of Stratonice. Barsine convinces Séleucus that she loves him (although secretly motivated by the crown), while Stratonice pretends violent hatred for Antiochus to conceal her own love for the prince. When

Antiochus attempts suicide in despair, Stratonice finally admits her love for him, and Séleucus abdicates the crown to his son to fulfill the marriage alliance between the king of Macedonia and Persia. Traditionally, scholars cite *Stratonice's* focus on love and minimal action as having earned Quinault his reputation as a *tendre* author with Boileau. The editors take issue with this, but I find their argument somewhat unconvincing. They argue that since this reputation is based on Boileau's friend Brosset's recollection rather than any direct evidence in Boileau's writing, it must not be true. This feels a bit speculative and rather like the editors were attempting to deny the reputation Boileau gave Quinault. They should have defended Quinault's strength as an excellent writer of love-intrigue and insisted that modern readers should not underestimate Quinault's abilities, regardless of Boileau's scathing satire.

The final play, *Agrippa* (performed in 1662 and published in 1663), is another story of mistaken identity, this time with significant political repercussions. The main character Agrippa, with the urging of his father, has assumed the identity of the dead Tibérinus, king of Albe, and faked his own death at the hands of Tibérinus. Everyone, including Agrippa's former lover, Lavinie, views the so-called "Tibérinus" as an awful tyrant. Agrippa, unable to withstand Lavinie's hate, admits his identity, but his father Tirrhène convinces her that Agrippa is lying. Tibérinus' rightful heir, Mézence, conspires with Lavinie to assassinate the king. Their apparent success forces Agrippa's father to admit the truth to Lavinie and to wallow in agony for a few scenes before Agrippa is led alive to the stage by his sister (and Tibérinus' former lover) Albine, who had saved him. Mézence is killed in the skirmish, and Agrippa is rightfully in line to be king. Although the play ends happily, as the editors point out, the emotional strife that occurs because of the complex political undertones make *Agrippa* more of a tragedy than Quinault's previous plays.

Overall, the layout of the edition is clear and appealing. The line setting and the footnote spacing are not crowded and allow for a very easy reading experience. Most of the spelling changes (or lack thereof) are explained and justified both in the editors' note at the beginning, and in the footnotes throughout. I found Brooks and Buford's footnotes in the volume helpful. Occasionally they repeated themselves,

such as commenting multiple times on the four-syllable *diarèse* of *inquiète* (295), but for the most part their observations were accurate and thorough. Several grammatical observations were particularly helpful, such as the not uncommon dropping of the “ne” even in the 17th century (as explained in footnote 42 on p. 117).

I only found one editorial choice unsettling. Throughout their introductions, the editors made several allusions to Quinault’s characters without bibliographic reference. The assumption is that the reader is someone like me who is reading straight through the text and will be familiar enough with Quinault’s works to remember the key characters from the preceding plays in the volume. However, this approach is not helpful for someone who is reading a play in isolation or who is not fully familiar with Quinault’s corpus. Apart from this, however, the volume is very helpful and will be a vital tool for scholars of seventeenth-century literature.

Raymond Poisson. *Théâtre complet*. Marie-Claude Canova-Green and Suzanne Jones, eds. Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2022. 1105 pp. 89€. Review by PERRY GETHNER, OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY.

Raymond Poisson was one of a number of actor/authors working in France during the time of Molière. As an actor with a long career (1650–1685), he was widely acclaimed for farcical valet parts, becoming mainly associated with the character type Crispin. He was a competitor, rather than a friend, of Molière, since he worked at the rival Hôtel de Bourgogne troupe starting in 1660, following a start in small touring companies. He would go on to join the Comédie-Française after the merger of Parisian troupes in 1680. Like his fellow actor/authors, he composed his plays for the troupes to which he belonged, and these were all comedies, mostly afterpieces in one or three acts. His plays were so successful that he published all of them individually, then published collections of his complete works starting in 1678. Several of the plays would remain in the repertory of the Comédie well into the following century, and the protagonist of one of them, the Baron de La Crasse, would become a proverbial figure. However, Poisson’s superficiality, as well as the highly topical nature of some of