

encore and *avecl'avecque*) should have been automatically corrected; occasionally a speech is assigned to the wrong character.

In sum, this is a welcome addition to Classiques Garnier's series of neglected French playwrights. Poisson's status as a minor playwright remains unchanged, but he is fun to read and has real historical importance.

Vittorio Frajese. *Une histoire homosexuelle: Paolo Sarpi et la recherche de l'individu à Venise au XVII^e siècle*. Julia Castiglione, trans. Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2023. 132 pp. 25€. Review by SHANNON MCHUGH, UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS BOSTON.

Paolo Sarpi (1552–1623) was a Venetian prelate, theologian, and jurist. His intellectual interests also ranged to mathematics and science, and he was a friend and interlocutor of Galileo's. Having entered the Servite Order at the age of fourteen, he lived over fifty years in relative peace before finding himself one of the most high-profile enemies of the papacy of the Counter-Reformation (or Catholic Reformation). By early 1606, the Catholic Church's discontent with Venetian clergy had culminated in Pope Paul V's Interdict against the Republic. Sarpi was called upon by the Venetian Senate to weigh in; his trenchant writings resulted in his excommunication in 1607. The next decade would see Sarpi's completion of the *History of the Council of Trent*, a work that condemned papal monarchism and denounced the Church's decades-long reform efforts as a "deformation."

Sarpi's writings have long fascinated historians, evoking an array of interpretations of his religious and philosophical beliefs: from skeptical to libertine, proto-Protestant to atheistic. For the last half-century, his most public texts have been increasingly studied alongside his more private, unpublished writings—especially his *Pensieri medico-morali* and *Pensieri sulla religione*, both published for the first time only in 1969. Such examinations have served to nuance scholarly understanding of the writings published during Sarpi's lifetime and of his larger worldview.

Vittorio Frajese's new study, *Une histoire homosexuelle: Paolo Sarpi et la recherche de l'individu à Venise au XVII^e siècle*, does something new:

it looks to use Sarpi's sexuality to shed light on his oeuvre. Though it can be something of a tightrope act to bring biography into textual interpretation (one thinks of Benedetto Croce's much-criticized model of *scrittura femminile*), Frajese works to provide evidence that strongly implies Sarpi's homosexual desires and practices—not only a denunciation from a papal spy, but also a contemporaneous biography written by his fellow monk and acolyte Fulgenzio Micanzio—and to corroborate those readings with documentation of the same-sex proclivities of men in Sarpi's circle, as well as of other prominent Italians. Frajese then uses this aspect of Sarpi's private life to reconsider his writings, especially as they pertain to his thinking on the individual's right to autonomy.

Une histoire homosexuelle, which expands upon several articles published by Frajese in the last few years, is eminently readable: short (the main body of the work comes in at a little over 100 pages) but incisive, with a clear and eloquent French translation of Frajese's Italian by Julia Castiglione. Divided into six chapters with introduction and conclusion, the study focuses on the years of Sarpi's sustained altercation with the Church and his brush with the Inquisition. The first two chapters narrate the intrusion into Sarpi's life of the pope's network of spies, including the damning report of Giovan Francesco Graziani, a document now held in the British Library. The central chapters use various textual and cultural clues to contextualize Sarpi's beliefs: Micanzio's biography; broader sexual mores in Venice; Sarpi's own writings (in particular, his *Pensieri medico-morali*, placed in conversation with writings by such figures as Michel de Montaigne and the salacious Antonio Rocco); and Sarpi's personal networks. The last chapter covers his ultimate evasion of Inquisitional punishment.

One of the strengths of the study is that it adds a genuinely new dimension to scholarly conversation around this major historical figure, not to mention to emerging discussions of the period more broadly. Though gendered studies on women's lives in the Counter-Reformation are abundant, masculinity studies for this era are only beginning to emerge (see, for example, Mary Laven's discussion of the discrepancy in the introduction to *The Ashgate Companion to the Counter-Reformation* of 2013). Frajese's book does not explicitly mention masculinity studies, nor does it incorporate gendered studies

on such contemporary male writers as Torquato Tasso, Angelo Grillo, and Giambattista Marino (though the latter figure is discussed in the fifth chapter). However, Frajese's work is implicitly in dialogue with such research, especially given his inclusion of literary texts to flesh out the historical record around Sarpi, and his book will be useful to scholars working on such writers and themes.

Another virtue of the book is that, in the face of the balancing act of authorial biography and literary interpretation, Frajese's close focus on text makes his analysis feel well-grounded for the most part, especially when he is focused on Sarpi's own writing. Scholars of gender and sexuality studies will only wish that the depths of those evocative textual moments had been plumbed even more fully, with the tools provided by other analyses of same-sex sexuality in early modern Italy and France, whether historical (Michael Roche, Gary Ferguson) or literary (Todd Reeser). Even more exciting would have been an engagement with scholarship that urges against overreading early modern sexual identity. Carla Freccero's *Queer/Early/Modern* (2006) comes to mind, which argues that, "in pursuing the truth of [historical] persons through sex," scholars are at risk of producing a study that works against its own disruptive goals—that "categorizes and thus also 'manages' persons on the basis of (sexual) identity" (7).

Une histoire homosexuelle will be of interest to scholars working on Sarpi and on Counter-Reformation history, philosophy, and theology, as well as to historians and literary scholars working on early modern gender and sexuality. There will certainly be skeptics who think Frajese's approach is not relevant to an understanding of Sarpi's writings. Personally, I am not so interested in categorizing Sarpi's sexuality as I am fascinated by the potential that a case study of this sort holds for the study of gendered lives in the Counter-Reformation. The intellectual openness encouraged by rethinking Sarpi in this manner demonstrates how lenses like masculinity and desire can help us see more clearly the ways in which even the most canonical of early modern writers engaged with their tumultuous world.