

contemporary usages. Being chiefly about the confrontation of diverse national practices, however, this text nimbly negotiates these linguistic parallels and disparities.

This volume offers the theater historian a clarifying look at the crossovers and differences in dramatic practice of early modern continental Europe. Likewise, it provides a valuable tool for dramaturgs and translators working on of plays from the period, helping one to understand them contextually in terms of both the language and culture in which they are originally situated, as well as external cultural and linguistic influences. This reader felt invited to consider how these artists themselves conceived of their theater, especially at moments of intersectionality, such as Corneille approaching *El Cid* and contemplating how to adapt it for the French stage, or the influence of Tiberio Fiorilli's *commedia* troupe on Molière's *comédies*.

Thomas A. Donlan. *The Reform of Zeal: François de Sales and Militant French Catholicism*. St. Andrews, UK: University of St. Andrews, 2018. iv + 144 pp. Free. Review by SUZANNE C. TOCZYSKI, SONOMA STATE UNIVERSITY.

In light of a recent renewal of interest in the interdisciplinary field of peace studies, this slim volume by historian Thomas Donlan brings a welcome and gentle corrective to scholarship focusing on “the nexus between devotion and violence” (3) during the French Wars of Religion through a careful examination of the work and writings of the seventeenth-century Savoyard and Bishop of Geneva, St. François de Sales, with a particular focus on the saint's spirituality of *douceur*. Engaging with critical analyses from seventeenth-century Jesuit Louis Bourdaloue or his contemporary Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet, to those of contemporary historians Jill Fehleison, Linda Timmermans and others, Donlan convincingly argues that de Sales was not merely an enthusiastic evangelist in the predominantly Calvinist region of the Chablais, he also sought to reform *Catholic* militancy as embodied by members of the so-called Holy League, a political confraternity dedicated to eradicating the Huguenot menace from France by any means necessary. Embracing an approach of non-violence and gentle-

ness, François de Sales promoted a Christocentric vision, exhorting “the faithful above all, to love God and neighbor in a spirit of joy, [and] speaking rarely of the dangers of heresy, the body, or sin” (123). “Salesian *douceur*,” Donlan notes, “constituted a moral vision of a nonviolent Catholicism formed in the crucible of religious strife and violence” (5).

Following a solid introduction in which Donlan enters into the conversation, so to speak, with various extant labels attached to de Sales’ work—from “devout humanist” to “Tridentine reformer” to “Counter-Reformer”—and a comprehensive set of terms and definitions, Donlan organizes his account in essentially chronological fashion, beginning with a summary of existing religious currents that influenced or formed the young François de Sales, including *devotio moderna*, Erasmus’ study of Jesus Christ, Jesuit theology, and the *moyenneur* critique of violence in the mid-sixteenth century. Donlan’s engagement with Erasmus’ work is particularly enlightening, focusing as it does on Catholic irenicism and its promotion of dialogue, preaching, and education as means by which to combat war and violence in Europe. The Jesuit influence (particularly as embodied by the recently deceased Ignatius of Loyola and Pierre Favre) was also significant in its rejection of severe asceticism as antithetical to identification with and imitation of Jesus. Having read Favre’s work, de Sales would himself come to abandon bodily mortification in particular as useful to Catholic spirituality.

Devoting his second chapter to “Early Religious Influences and the Question of Zeal,” Donlan goes on to chronicle (over chapters three, four and five) significant movements in de Sales’ elaboration of the concept of *douceur* as necessary and central to Catholic life. From the time of his ordination to the priesthood, de Sales preached non-violence, encouraging the Catholic faithful to combat their own sin through gentle “spiritual warfare” on the self rather than on other, using such techniques as self-examination, humility, and penance. In his evangelization of the Protestant Chablais region, François de Sales put these techniques to work, espousing a fairly restrained relational, pedagogical, and liturgical approach to his promotion of Catholic worship in the area, an approach that met with no little success.

Donlan is not the first to examine the work of de Sales in the area of spiritual direction. What this study does add to the field, however, is a more thorough analysis of seventeenth-century pieties, from those de Sales critiqued to that which he advocated. De Sales expressed particular concern over Catholics' "nervous, hurried performances of devotion" (77), their moral anger, and a tendency toward excessive, sorrowful piety. Grounding his argument in Barbara Rosenwein's notion of "emotional community" as it applies to militant Catholicism, Donlan argues that de Sales brought instead a piety of inner tranquility, peace, confidence, hope and joy to his Catholic constituency. All of this work culminated in de Sales' foundation, along with his colleague St. Jeanne de Chantal, of the Order of the Visitation, an order very much unlike other ascetic religious communities (French Carmelites, Ursulines and Capucines) of the time. Building on Wendy Wright's scholarship of spiritual friendship, Donlan offers an account of the Visitation that demonstrates de Sales' very modern, holistic approach to spirituality, including active attention to physical well-being and the cultivation of spiritually meaningful interpersonal relationships. The Order of the Visitation thus represents the culmination of de Sales' spirituality of *douceur* in its approach, both *affective* (or prayerful) and *effective* (involving outreach), as a strong force of reform in late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century France.

For all its optimistic perspective, Donlan's study does not fail to account for St. François de Sales' own complex evolution over time. Having embraced, at an early age, certain principles of militant Catholicism, de Sales would move slowly but surely away from the influence of such thought, though, as Donlan notes, he did recognize the need for martial force under some circumstances. But the greatest strength of *The Reform of Zeal* lies in the contextualization of the future saint's choices, particularly when set against the vicissitudes of the Wars of Religion that so plagued France during his lifetime. Donlan's work is amply supported by references taken from de Sales' own writings, from his letters to his *Entretiens spirituels* to the *Introduction to the Devout Life*. If there is any criticism to be made of Donlan's thin but compelling volume, one might note that each individual section is so short (following, perhaps, the model of his subject as seen in writings such as the *Introduction to the Devout Life*), that one cannot help

but wish for more: more historical detail, more development, more analysis at every step of the way, particular with reference to de Sales' most developed writing, the *Treatise on the Love of God*. One hopes there is more to come.

According to the Centre for French History and Culture of the University of St. Andrews, an electronic copy of *The Reform of Zeal* may be downloaded from the Centre's web site free of charge at <http://cffhc.wp.st-andrews.ac.uk/publications/>, and a paperback copy is available free of cost by emailing the Centre at cffhc@st-andrews.ac.uk.

Georges Forestier. *Molière*. Paris: Gallimard, 2018. 544 pp. + 32 illus. €24.00. Review by STEPHEN H. FLECK, EMERITUS, CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY LONG BEACH.

This major new biography of Molière, the first in France since Roger Duchêne's of 1998, is a most welcome publication. Aiming to get beyond the limitations of previous biographies, too directly influenced by Grimarest's *La Vie de M. de Molière*—whether positively or negatively—Forestier brings a genuinely novel approach to the task.

The author is in a unique position to do so, for several reasons. First, in addition to a career-long record of excellent scholarship on his subject, including the single best introduction to the works (*Molière en toutes lettres*, 1990), he is co-editor in chief, with Claude Bourqui, of the recent Pléiade edition of Molière's works (2010). This massive undertaking integrates exhaustively the available scholarship of the forty years since Georges Couton's Pléiade of 1971; it also innovates by bringing to bear the efforts of a multidisciplinary team of scholars including musicologists and dance specialists.

Second, noting the twin dangers of either a dry, text-centered approach or one indulging in novelistic supposition, Forestier proposes to proceed from a "table rase" by integrating (1) the best-established historical data with (2) the works themselves seen both individually, but also (3) in interrelation with each other, a "genetic" approach. All this is intended to serve the goal of producing a "récit biographique vraisemblable," a work that respects all objectively known data while seeking to illuminate the not-directly-knowable personal and creative