

ما سخطا کیند و زربه کارداران سخی کمر اشارت ان کامران در خانه بازار

THE

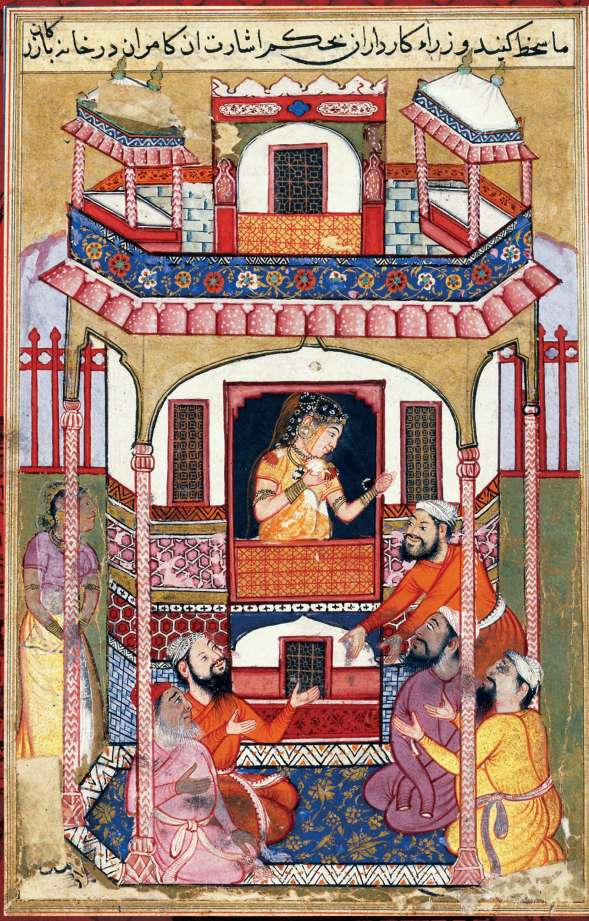
Volume LII, No. 1

Spring 2021

SIXTEENTH CENTURY JOURNAL

The Journal of Early Modern Studies

ما سخطا کیند و زربه کارداران سخی کمر اشارت ان کامران در خانه بازار



0361-0160(202121)52:1;1-K



La Renaissance au grand large: Mélanges en l'honneur de Frank Lestringant.

Ed. Véronique Ferrer, Olivier Millet, and Alexandre Tarrête.

Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance. Geneva: Droz, 2019. 864 pp.
\$117.60. ISBN 978-260005832-2.

REVIEWED BY: Zoltán Biedermann

University College London, UK

The festschrift may be a genre past its prime, but all hope is not lost, as this fine (and impressively voluminous) collection of essays in honour of Frank Lestringant proves. Lestringant has been a key figure in the renewal of French Renaissance studies. Some of his works are available in English, namely *Mapping the Renaissance World*, with a preface by Stephen Greenblatt (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994) and *Cannibals* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), but most are not, despite being key studies for anyone interested in early modern travel literature, cosmography, and the interface between writing and mapping. Lestringant's name is bound to remain attached to the figures of André Thevet and Jean de Léry, but also Rabelais, Bodin, d'Aubigné, and others still living prosperous afterlives beyond the sometimes tragically limited horizons of anglophone Renaissance studies. Importantly as well, Lestringant has been at the heart of an ample network of European and American scholars who have pushed the boundaries of our understandings of Renaissance textual production in its

complicated relationship with geographical space and the making of maps. *La Renaissance au grand large* is a fine showcase of their achievements and ongoing reflections.

Parts 1 (“Voyages”) and 2 (“Espaces”), in particular, offer a remarkable corpus of essays pursuing the most innovative and inspiring impulses to have grown out of Lestringant’s work. Vincent Masse highlights the confluence of the late medieval literature of laughter with the Renaissance travelogue in a singular imaginary account of a voyage to Sumatra from about 1536. Myriam Marrache-Gouraud follows André Thevet’s references to his personal, Parisian *cabinet de curiosités*, to ask questions about autopsy, literary competition, and, fascinatingly, the loss of artefacts to rot and judicial action. Phillip Usher throws light on Virgilian intertextuality in Thévet’s *Singularités de la France Antarctique*. Nicolas Fornerod asks how Vespucci used scale, orientation, and the vertical gaze to piece together and create, under the eyes of the reader, his *Novus Mundus*, offering order where Columbus had thrived on disorientation in a labyrinthine Caribbean geography. Frédéric Tinguely offers a fine essay on the Spanish quest, deeply rooted in medieval mythology, for *Cíbola* in North America. Réal Ouellet explores the pleasurable and playful aspects of sixteenth-century notions of “discovery,” a troubling aspect not to be too easily brushed aside when we subject the term to deconstruction and reconstruction. Marie-Christine Gomez-Géraud provides a finely nuanced reading, with an emphasis on complementarity rather than evolution, of the sacred and profane spatiality of Italy in Jacques de Villamont’s *Voyages*, a pilgrim’s account that saw twenty-five editions between 1595 and 1627. Philippe Desan also places emphasis on the complex nature of the traveling impulse and the ambiguities of authorship in such contexts, in a chapter dedicated to the *Journal du voyage de Michel de Montaigne en Italie*.

Part 2 opens with Grégoire Holtz dwelling on the politics of cosmopolitanism and the ambiguities of neo-Stoicism in Guillaume Postel, Nicolas de Nicolay, and Jean de Léry, a welcome follow-up on a theme once dear to Denis Cosgrove, whose thinking it might be worth comparing and contrasting with that of his francophone contemporaries. Jörg Dünne, a key German interlocutor of Lestringant whose work resonates with that of Ricardo Padrón in the United States, offers a brilliant analysis of lines, line-crossings, bodily hygiene, and metageography from Léry through Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo to Cervantes. Isabelle Pantin identifies the contributions made by the study of syphilis to the creation of global space, a move comparable to Hugh Cagle’s recent archaeology of the “Tropics” in early modern Portuguese medical literature. In a chapter on the places preferred by the devil, Jean Céard follows up on Michel de Certeau’s proposition that travel literature was, in one way, “an immense supplement” (321) to the changing spatiality of early modern demonology. Together with Thibaut Maus de Rolley’s subsequent chapter, this also offers a welcome reminder of how well advised one is to observe the New World in conjunction with a region too often overlooked in the history of representations: the “North,” with at its heart the demon-filled

Scandinavia of Olaus Magnus. Maus de Rolley in particular offers a poignant panorama of the devil's growing "empire" (341) in French Renaissance cosmography, and the ways in which European intrusion caused the return *en masse* of the demons to the Old World, leading some to contemplate the great technologies of their time (artillery, the compass, printing) as nothing less than the devil's own work. The parallels with our own current situation, as we attempt to make sense of the logics and meanings of a global pandemic, are striking.

The disconcerting and at times hilarious "multiplication" (394) of new worlds (not just one, but fourteen in Anton Francesco Doni's *Gli Inferni*) is also the topic addressed by Richard Cooper, further echoed in Bernd Renner's fine take on the "staccato" (397) of possible conquests offered to King Picrochole in Rabelais's *Gargantua*. Brenton Hobart follows up on this with an exploration of the body of Pantagruel as one vast "pestiferous universe" (433), again, resonating suggestively with Lestringant's pioneering take on Rabelaisian geography. Some chapters further below, Nicolas Kiès offers an insightful analysis of vicinity and its meanings in sixteenth-century France, a rarely discussed aspect we may wish to include in future conceptualizations of the local (and potentially the global). Tom Conley also explores an element of geography not usually associated with the making of the early modern European and global orders: rivers. His essay paints a compelling landscape of cartographic resonances emanating from Maurice Bourguereau's *Théâtre François* (1594), which animate Book V, *Les Fers*, of Agrippa d'Aubigné's *Tragiques* (1615).

There are many other worthy contributions in this volume to the study of space and travel in the Renaissance, followed by a more somber, three-hundred-page section dedicated to the wars of religion. The latter, again including an impressive coterie of outstanding scholars in the field, may prove less exciting to readers interested in the intellectual world arising from Lestringant's engagement with global travel books and cosmographies. It does, nevertheless, provide compelling insights into the problematic junction between culture, religion, and political violence in sixteenth and seventeenth century Europe, a timely reminder, alas, of how slippery the slopes of culture wars can become, and how easily a world populated by very brilliant men (not much is said about women in this book) can descend into deadly chaos.

