

1-2004

Graham A. Runnalls, *Les Mystères provinciaux* - Book Review

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Recommended Citation

Hamblin, Vicki L., "Graham A. Runnalls, *Les Mystères provinciaux* - Book Review" (2004). *Modern & Classical Languages*. 57.
https://cedar.wwu.edu/mcl_facpubs/57

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it is not at all clear that parity had the same force. And if “In der Zukunft sprach man anders,” what did survive of *cortesia*, how, and why?

LINDA M. PATERSON, University of Warwick

GRAHAM A. RUNNALLS, *Les mystères dans les provinces françaises (en Savoie et en Poitou, à Amiens et à Reims)*. (Bibliothèque du XVe Siècle, 66.) Paris: Honoré Champion, 2003. Pp. 311; tables. €55.

Published in the long-standing series Bibliothèque du XVe siècle, Graham A. Runnalls's volume on late-medieval mystery plays from the provinces of France reminds its readers that archival research remains essential to understanding these spectacles. In fact, Runnalls contends that too few scholars are studying the diverse and rich resources held in municipal and regional archival records in France. As our attitudes about medieval performance evolve, he maintains, so, too, should our assumptions about what the archival record has already yielded and what that record might still be able to tell us. Thus, while acknowledging that Louis Petit de Julleville's monumental contribution to the study of French mystery plays remains a major resource, Runnalls also notes that it is more than a century old, out of print, and reflects an anachronistic attitude (p. 8). The present volume consists of six studies intended to demonstrate the impact that archival records can have on existing assumptions.

The first three studies center on the plays first uncovered by the nineteenth-century Savoyard scholar Florimond Truchet and then rediscovered in 1985 by Truchet's descendants. Runnalls returned to the archived microfilm copies and to the manuscripts' current owner in order to examine this source that had been overlooked throughout most of the twentieth century. Accordingly, the first of the three Savoy studies describes the Truchet collection's nine performance-related manuscripts. These include four fragments of an *Antichrist et Jugement de Dieu*, a copy of the *Dioclétiane*, a mystery of St. Sebastian, the registry for a Passion play production in Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne in 1573, and two versions of a Passion play. As one might expect, Runnalls inventories all available codicological evidence, describes the manuscripts' contents, and then comments on their relationship to other plays, while announcing which among these works still seek an editor. Runnalls's analysis of the Antichrist manuscripts reveals that the four texts are actually parts of two different versions of a play of which other fragments are located in the Bibliothèque nationale de France (MS fr. 15063) and in the departmental archives of Savoy. The *Dioclétiane*, an early tragedy, is currently being edited by Gaston Tuillon. The *Saint Sebastien* fragments are undoubtedly related to the still unedited fragments that make up BnF MS fr. 12539.

The second study focuses on the two versions of a Passion play in the Truchet collection. Building upon research by the modern historian Jacques Chocheyras, whose project predated the rediscovery of this collection, Runnalls charts the compositional similarities between the Truchet collection's two-day Passion play manuscript and sixteenth-century printed editions of Jean Michel's Passion play. He then includes the four hundred original lines from the play's Resurrection scenes, its prologues, epilogue, and characters' names. Runnalls's analysis of the second Passion fragment, from a four-day production performed in Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne, is presented in the same fashion. Runnalls concludes that there is no relationship between the two Savoy Passion texts and amends conclusions regarding performances and sites that had been made by Chocheyras and Truchet.

A Passion play registry also found in the Truchet collection, together with thirteen other related folios located in the Hôtel de Ville of Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne, brings to five the total number of such texts to have survived in France. In the third study in this volume, Runnalls organizes, transcribes, and describes this valuable rediscovery, which includes the

selection of the play's "commis" or organizers, the distribution of roles, the rehearsal schedule, the choice of a site and the theater's construction, the play text's compilation, and the play's financing in 1573 in Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne.

Unlike the first three studies, which were based on rediscovered dramatic texts and a performance registry from the sixteenth century, the final three studies focus on secondary archival resources in order to reconstitute aspects of play production in the regions of Poitou, Picardy, and Champagne. In the first case, Runnalls describes some fourteen performances in the Poitou region, where various cities shared play manuscripts on a regular basis. Collating details gleaned from sixteenth-century poems, journals, letters, and municipal registers, Runnalls corrects previous research regarding the performance dates and the likely texts used in that region in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The fifth study takes as its point of departure the Passion play performance that took place in Mons in 1501. Because that performance was based on a text borrowed from Amiens, Runnalls consulted the plentiful allusions to theater that are found in that city's archives in order to reconstitute a performance there in 1500, one year before the Mons spectacle. Although the Amiens Passion text for 1500 has disappeared, the rich archival evidence, published in its entirety in the present volume, and the manuscript fragments from Mons authorize a fairly complete description of the first performance of the text in question. In his final study Runnalls analyzes Jean de Foulquart's *Mémoires*, covering 1479 to 1499, to reconstitute the "grandes lignes" of a Passion play performance in Reims in 1490 and to suggest which text may have been used for that spectacle.

The prologue (p. 8) and epilogue (p. 291) to the present volume both maintain that, while they follow in the tradition of Petit de Julleville's tome on mystery play performances, these studies bring to bear the conventions of modern scholarship and the benefit of a century of sustained research. Thus, the volume contains a myriad of relevant, and heretofore uncharted, facts about some twenty-five late-fifteenth- and sixteenth-century mystery performances. In many cases these facts revise previously held assumptions about those performances. In addition, by linking various manuscript fragments to each other across several collections in France, this volume contributes in a very important way to our understanding of which manuscripts, and which printed editions, may have been used for these performances. Furthermore, as maintained in the epilogue, the studies included here also underscore our changing view of medieval theater by demonstrating, for example, that printed editions were widely diffused as a point of departure for planned performances, that plays were borrowed on a regular basis, and that creativity tended to fade as a result of borrowings that recycled a limited number of play revisions.

Nonetheless, in lamenting the oft-repeated fact that the study of medieval French theater lacks the institutional commitment of a project like REED (p. 291), Runnalls underscores the one criticism that might be made of the present volume. The archival research undertaken here will greatly benefit the study of France's medieval theater tradition, and it is told in a disarmingly sleuthlike style that will, one hopes, inspire others to study the archival record. However, the inclusion of a manuscript history of Foulquart's *Mémoires*, while valuable in its own right, seems out of place and only serves to underscore the author's own lament. Indeed, the disparate nature of these six studies echoes the call for a larger, coordinated effort worthy of this painstaking research.

VICKI L. HAMBLIN, Western Washington University

AAGE RYDSTRØM-POULSEN, *The Gracious God: "Gratia" in Augustine and the Twelfth Century*. Copenhagen: Akademisk, 2002. Pp. 555. Dkr 460.

As a student of the late Leif Grane, professor of church history at the University of Copenhagen, Aage Rydstrøm-Poulsen represents a second generation of distinguished Scan-