

MARGUERITE D'AUGE, RENÉE BURLAMACCHI,
AND JEANNE DU LAURENS

*Sin and Salvation in Early
Modern France:
Three Women's Stories*



Edited, and with an introduction by

COLETTE H. WINN

Translated by

NICHOLAS VAN HANDEL and COLETTE H. WINN

Iter Press
Toronto, Ontario

Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies
Tempe, Arizona

2017

Iter Press

Tel: 416/978-7074 Email: iter@utoronto.ca

Fax: 416/978-1668 Web: www.itergateway.org

Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies

Tel: 480/965-5900 Email: mrts@acmrs.org

Fax: 480/965-1681 Web: acmrs.org

© 2017 Iter, Inc. and the Arizona Board of Regents for Arizona State University.

All rights reserved.

Printed in Canada.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

This publication was submitted to the Library of Congress for cataloging. The catalog record was not available at the time of printing.

ISBN 978-0-86698-571-0

Cover illustration:

St. Mary Magdalene Writing, c.1500-50 (oil on panel), Master of the Female Half Lengths, (c.1490-c.1540) / © Czartoryski Museum, Cracow, Poland / Bridgeman Images CZA 229158.

Cover design:

Maureen Morin, Information Technology Services, University of Toronto Libraries.

Typesetting:

Becker Associates.

Production:

Iter Press.

Introduction

The Other Voice

From 1350 to 1650, for the first time, women entered into the intellectual mainstream of European civilization. At first only a small vanguard, but in increasing numbers, they acquired literacy and learning and engaged in the world of ideas from which they had long been excluded. Misogynistic critics still opposed them, but they themselves, and some male defenders, argued for the mental and moral capacity of women in what has been called the *querelle des femmes* (the “debate about women”), until by the mid-seventeenth century a new consensus was emerging, though it was not yet triumphant, that the “mind has no sex.” The increased use of the modern vernaculars (rather than Latin, the language of the professions and the universities), as well as the availability of the printing press, allowed women to reach new audiences. Most of these women authors, however, who were able, in the words of French poet Louise Labé, “to raise their minds a bit above their distaffs and spindles,”¹ came from the nobility or urban elites, and their works were often in genres that permitted little direct personal expression. This volume presents three French women authors born to mercantile or professional families who write in a powerfully personal voice about real experiences and immediate events. Their works are remarkable for the vivid profiles that emerge of their creators, and for the unusual stories they have to tell.

The Pitiful and Macabre Regrets of Marguerite d’Auge (1600) was published once, soon after the author’s execution; Renée Burlamacchi’s *Memoirs Concerning Her Father’s Family* (1623) and Jeanne du Laurens’s *Genealogy of the du Laurens* (1631) remained in manuscript versions until their modern editions.² How did these women withstand the prejudice against female authorship still prevalent in early modern France? How could a woman like Marguerite d’Auge be empowered to speak of what she did when her actions threatened the patriarchal family and the social order it sustained? How did Burlamacchi and du Laurens end up writing the stories of their respective families when, at the time (at least in France), such a task was ordinarily entrusted to the males of the family? And in which ways did gender affect their handling of the family memoir genre? Additional questions present themselves with regard to the issue of religion, the common

1. Louise Labé, *Complete Poetry and Prose: A Bilingual Edition*, ed. and trans. Deborah Lesko Baker (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2006), 43.

2. Translations of these works appear in this volume at, respectively, 29–42; 43–54; and 55–79. Citations of original versions and modern editions of all three works appear in the first section of the Bibliography, “Works Translated in This Volume.”

2 Introduction

thread that runs through these works. In times of religious conflict, how could women convey their views on issues such as sin, grace, redemption, and salvation without transgressing gender expectations? Close reading of these women's narratives invites further reflection, which, it is hoped, will deepen our understanding of the relations between gender, religion, and creativity.

Lives and Works

Marguerite d'Auge (15??–1599)

The only information we know about Marguerite d'Auge is what is found in her *Pitiful and Macabre Regrets*, in Pierre de L'Estoile's chronicle *Mémoires-journaux*,³ and in court records from 1599.⁴ According to Louis Le Caron's court records, Marguerite d'Auge was known for her exquisite beauty and her loose mores.⁵ She was married to Claude Antoine, a wine merchant from Paris, to whom she bore one daughter named Marie. For over a year, she had a liaison with Daniel Jumeau, a financial clerk from Surgères. When her husband learned of the affair, apparently from his own mother Claude Macon, he beat his wife and forbade Jumeau to come by his house. On March 5, 1599, Antoine was killed as he was returning home. The corpse was discovered the next day. Rings and money found on the victim proved that the murder was not motivated by financial gain. Marguerite and Jumeau were taken into custody; the case was prosecuted and judgment rendered. Marguerite was condemned to death by hanging; Jumeau was sentenced to live dismemberment on the wheel, although the dismemberment actually took place after his death. La Houssaye, the actual murderer, was sentenced to three days in prison and his estate was seized. On March 10, 1599, the executions took place at the Place Maubert in Paris. That same day at 6 p.m., Marguerite was buried at Saint Cosme, and Jumeau at Saint Innocent. In addition to a brother and a sister, Marguerite left behind one daughter who received her mother's belongings and the sum of two thousand *livres* from Jumeau's estate in compensation.

Marguerite d'Auge's *Pitiful and Macabre Regrets* is a twenty-two-page long broadside. The sole known edition of this text (Lyon: Fleury Durand, 1600) is preserved at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France as BnF 8-LN27–46809. Judging from the widespread popularity of criminal broadsheets at the time, it is quite

3. Pierre de L'Estoile, *Mémoires-journaux, 1574–1611*, ed. Gustave Brunet et al. (Paris: Librairie des bibliophiles, 1875–1896; reprint Paris: Tallandier, 1982), 7:179–80.

4. Louis Le Caron, "Du Lundy huitiesme Mars, 1599," *Resolution de plusieurs notables, celebres, et illustres questions de droict tant romain, que françois, coutumes et pratique* (Paris: chez la vefve Claude de Monstrœil, 1613), 404–406.

5. Le Caron, *Resolution*, 405.

possible that this story was printed again in France or another European country, as popular stories often appeared with little alteration and sometimes in a different language. A modern edition of the work by Jean-Philippe Beaulieu is found in his *Remonstrances, prophéties et confessions de femmes, 1575–1650* (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2014), 133–54.

Renée Burlamacchi (1568–1641)

On March 25, 1568, Renée Burlamacchi was born in Montargis (France) into an urban, upper-middle class family of Italian Protestant refugees. She was the first of seven siblings, followed by Camille (1569–1646), Jacques (1570–1630), Suzanne (1572–1633), Philippe (1575–?), Madeleine (1579–1663), Claire (1580–?); an eighth, Elie, born between Suzanne and Philippe, died within a month. Her parents came from Lucca in northwestern Tuscany: Michele Burlamacchi (1532–1590), son of Francesco Burlamacchi (who had instigated the rebellion against Florentine overlordship resulting in his execution in 1548),⁶ and Chiara Calandrini (1545–1580). Following the papal bull of July 21, 1542 (*Licet ab initio*) of Pope Paul III that founded the Roman Inquisition, repressive measures were taken in Lucca—a city known to be deeply affected by Protestant influences.⁷ Protestants fled in massive numbers to France (Lyon, in particular), Switzerland (Geneva), and the Netherlands (Amsterdam).

In March 1567, Michele and his young wife Chiara left Lucca in the company of Chiara's uncle Benedetto Calandrini and his wife Madalena Arnolfini, in order to profess openly their Protestant (and specifically Reformed, or Calvinist) faith. Before bringing his family to France, Michele had stayed in Lyon on several occasions, and had been naturalized in 1566. At first, the Burlamacchis settled in Paris, but when the city became unsafe for Protestants (in France known as Huguenots), they were forced to relocate. For a short time they stayed in Montargis where Renée was born. In June 1568, two months after the Peace of Longjumeau that ended the Second French War of Religion, the Burlamacchis returned to Paris, where Michele had business to conduct. A few months later, conflicts between Catholics and Protestants arose again, and the Burlamacchis had to leave the city once more. This time they moved to Sedan where the situation appeared more promising than in Montargis, even though the city of Sedan was not at that time entirely won over to the Reform. The reason for the Burlamacchis' departure from

6. On Francesco Burlamacchi, see Simonetta Adorni-Braccesi, "Religious Refugees from Lucca in the Sixteenth Century: Political Strategies and Religious Proselytism," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 88 (December 1997): 343–48.

7. On Lucca, "an infected city," see the notice by M. E. Bratchel, in *Encyclopedia of the Renaissance*, ed. Paul F. Grendler (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1999), 3:455–57, and Adorni-Braccesi, "Religious Refugees," 338–48.

Sedan remains unclear, but in October 1570, when Jacques was born, they seem to have moved to Luzarches, then again to Paris, and they were still there in 1572 when the tensions that had been escalating between Catholics and Protestants exploded into the mass violence of the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre.⁸

Renée's parents Michele and Chiara fled to Sedan and sought refuge at the residence of Henri-Robert de La Marck, duke of Bouillon and prince of Sedan. They spent the next five years (1572–1579) there, while the fourth and fifth Wars of Religion raged and the Catholic League was formed in Paris to eradicate Protestants from Catholic France. In 1579, they moved once again and settled for several years at Muret on the land of the Protestant Henri de Bourbon, prince of Condé. In 1580, Renée's mother Chiara died. Michele made a good living taking care of the financial affairs of Charles III, duke of Lorraine, and the prince of Condé, but left with his children in 1585 for Geneva, where a small Italian community had gathered. That year, his name appeared as one of the members of the Italian Church of Geneva and, the following year—some twenty years after he left his hometown of Lucca—he was granted the right to participate in city affairs as a citizen of Geneva.

On May 29, 1586, Renée was married to Cesare Balbani (1556–1621), a wealthy merchant from Lucca who had been living in Geneva since 1573. In June 1602, she experienced a miscarriage but subsequently bore ten children who all died in infancy.⁹ Her father had died in September 1590, and after a long and childless marriage, in April 1621, her husband died of nephritic colic after nearly three weeks of agony. Renée was left with a considerable fortune and a vast patrimony in and around the city of Geneva.

On April 24, 1623, at the age of fifty-five, Renée married the septuagenarian Théodore Agrippa d'Aubigné, renowned author, Protestant captain, and former councillor to Henri de Bourbon, king of Navarre, later King Henri IV of France. Staunchly loyal to the Protestant cause even after the latter's conversion, Aubigné fled France in September 1620 to avoid persecution and settled in Geneva. Judging from the close collaboration that existed between Aubigné and his second wife, this was a happy union. Renée served as secretary to her aging husband. By writing letters for him and copying his manuscripts, she had access to discussions of extreme importance concerning the political and religious activities of the Protestant party. This was a privileged position that very few women enjoyed

8. For the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre, see below at 23 and n. 48.

9. This record of Renée's late experience of reproductive difficulties is not derived from her own *Memoirs*, but from the related *Descrittione della vita et morte del signor Cesare Balbani*, in Vincenzo Burlamacchi, *Libro di ricordi degnissimi delle nostre famiglie*, Ms. suppl. 438 (Geneva: Bibliothèque Publique et Universitaire), fols. 33r–34r, and in the edition of Simonetta Adorni-Braccesi (Rome: Istituto storico italiano per l'età moderna e contemporanea, *Rerum italicarum scriptores recentiores*, no. 7, 1993), at 126–128; and is discussed in *Les femmes et l'histoire familiale*, ed. Susan Broomhall and Colette H. Winn (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2008), 9–20.

at the time. This is not to suggest that Aubigné consulted her about military, political and religious concerns, but the fact that he relied on her as the mediator of his thoughts on such important issues indicates his trust in her integrity and in her intellectual capacities. As a further sign of his regard for her, by his death on May 9, 1630, Aubigné bequeathed to Renée all of his books in French and Italian. She conveyed his manuscripts to his close friend, the pastor Théodore Tronchin, who had been designated executor of his estate.

Thus widowed in 1630 for a second time, Renée died eleven years later, on September 11, 1641, in the little community of Saconnex near Geneva in the house that Cesare Balbani had bought in 1598. She was buried at Plain-Palais, according to her will, alongside her first husband.

Even though parts of Renée Burlamacchi's life remain unclear, she left personal documents of which we have knowledge, a rarity for an early modern woman. In addition to letters that she herself wrote to her relatives and those she transcribed under the instruction of Agrippa d'Aubigné, we have her will and the memoir that is translated in this volume, her *Memoirs Concerning Her Father's Family*, that tells the story of her family's wanderings during the French Wars of Religion. Originally this memoir was written by Burlamacchi in Italian, the mother tongue of the first generation of Protestant refugees. We know of two Italian versions: the first one, in an Italian close to French, is included in Vincenzo Burlamacchi's *Libro di ricordi degnissimi delle nostre famiglie* (fols. 50r–54v) under the title *Descrittione della vita e morte del signor Michele Burlamacchi gentilhuomo lucchese, missa in luce dalla signora Renea Burlamacchi sua figlia nel mese di gennaro del 1623 in Geneva* (Description of the life and death of signor Michele Burlamacchi, gentleman of Lucca, published by signora Renée Burlamacchi in the month of January of 1623 in Geneva). This version is preserved as Ms. suppl. 438 at the Bibliothèque Publique et Universitaire of Geneva. The second version, entitled *Memoria dell'uscita di Lucca delli signori Michele Burlamacchi e Benedetto Calandrini l'anno 1567 fatta dalla signora Renea Burlamacchi* (Memoir of the flight from Lucca of the gentlemen Michele Burlamacchi and Benedetto Calandrini in the year 1567, composed by signora Renée Burlamacchi), is held in Geneva in the Archives Turretini, Fonds 2, B7, fine secolo XVII, 12 carte. The first of these manuscripts significantly provides a date for the composition of this family memoir as January 1623, after the marriage to Balbani and before that to Aubigné.

In addition, three French translations of the *Descrittione* have been discovered to date under the title *Mémoires concernant Michel Burlamacchi et sa famille* (Memoirs concerning Michele Burlamacchi and his family). Vincenzo Burlamacchi, who had been born in France and knew several languages, most likely authored one of them.¹⁰ Two of these translations are located in Geneva: one at the

10. Vincenzo Burlamacchi (1598–1682) is the son of Fabrizio Burlamacchi, a remote relative of Renée's father Michele. Fabrizio died in 1598 during a plague outbreak in Geneva, and his wife Guiditta,

Bibliothèque Publique et Universitaire (Ms. suppl. 84, cc. 2r–8r, secolo XVIII) and the other at the Archives d'État among the Archives de la famille de Vernet, feuilles alliées, n° XXXII, pages 2–14. The third is found at the Library of Trinity College of Dublin: TCD Ms. 1152. These various translations, and the fact that one of them appeared in the Dublin manuscript alongside other similar memoirs of refugee families also from Lucca like the Calandrini and Diodati shows how important it was for the Protestant diaspora to preserve the memory of the community.

Jeanne du Laurens (1563–after 1631)

On May 1, 1563, Jeanne du Laurens was born to a large Catholic family (nine sons and two daughters) in the southeastern city of Arles. Her father, Louis du Laurens (1511–1574), “came from little,” as she later will write in her history of the family,¹¹ but he was “one of the best and most capable of his profession.” Her mother, Louise de Castelan (1527–1598) came from a noble family “with means and connections.” Louis studied medicine with Louise’s brother, Honoré de Castelan.¹² Shortly after his sister’s marriage, Honoré left Montpellier where he practiced and taught medicine in order to become physician-in-ordinary to the Kings Henri II, François II, and Charles IX, and first physician to the Queen Mother Catherine de Médicis.

The du Laurens had moved to Arles so that the boys could attend a good school and prepare for a career in medicine, theology, or law. In addition to Conchet, a poor relative that the du Laurens had taken in as their own son, three of the boys followed in Louis du Laurens’s footsteps and became physicians: Charles (1555–1588), André (1558–1609), and Richard (1564–1629). André, whose career was by far the most brilliant of the three, was urged by his parents to become a monk. Jeanne reports the conversation she had with her brother André concerning

daughter of Pompeo Diodati, died four years later. At her death, Renée and her husband Cesare Balbani were entrusted with the care of the children, and Renée raised Vincenzo like her own son. See *Descrittione della vita e morte del signor Cesare Balbani*, fol. 35r, and in the edition of Adorni-Braccesi, 130.

11. Du Laurens, *The Genealogy of the du Laurens*, abbreviated henceforth as *Genealogy*, at pages 63 and 58. References given henceforth in parentheses in the text, with page numbers referring to the English translation given below in this volume.

12. It was customary at the time to marry someone from the same workplace, and the wife frequently came from an upper class. The du Laurens had several prominent physicians in their family. In addition to being Louis’s brother in law, Honoré de Castelan was Honoré’s godfather; François Valleriola, physician at Valence and Arles was François’ godfather, and Julien Collin, physician at Avignon, was Julien’s. On such practices, see Alison Klairmont Lingo’s study of the medical circles in two major cities of France, *The Rise of Medical Practitioners: The Case of Lyon and Montpellier*, PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1980.

his ambition to become a physician and not a cleric. This episode is meant to show the responsibility parents have in shaping their children's future and in ensuring that they pursue the inclinations they may have. Jeanne takes this opportunity to call attention to the role she herself played in the professional development of her brother, the famous physician André du Laurens. When she became aware of her brother's special calling, she willingly spoke on his behalf to their mother in order to facilitate the communication between mother and son.

After receiving his medical degree in Avignon in 1578, André studied in Paris under the well-known physician Louis Duret. In 1583, he passed his medical examination to qualify for the chair of medicine at the University of Montpellier left vacant after the death of Honoré de Castelan in 1582. After occupying this chair for ten years (1586–1596), André became the personal physician to Louise de Clermont Tallart, Madame de Crussol, duchess of Uzès. It was she who introduced him to the French royal court. From this connection came many opportunities, and André took full advantage of each and every one of them. In 1596, he became physician-in-ordinary to King Henri IV. Four years later, he was appointed first physician to Queen Marie de Médicis. In 1603, he became chancellor of the University of Montpellier while residing at court. In 1606, the duchess of Uzès died, and André was elevated to the post of first physician to the king.

Among Louis du Laurens's sons, two studied theology: Julien (1557–?) and Jean (1565–1617). Both became clerics, and died with the reputation of having lived saintly lives.¹³ Gaspard (1567–1630) studied law at Bourges under the prominent jurist Jacques Cujas, but he felt a calling for religious life. In 1597, he became abbot of the monastery of Saint Pierre de Vienne. At the same time, he entered the Benedictine order and took monastic vows.¹⁴ Two other sons in addition to Gaspard studied law. Antoine (1560–1631?) became an *avocat au conseil*, the official responsible for presenting cases to the royal councils. Honoré switched to law, which he studied at Turin and Avignon, even though his godfather (Honoré de Castelan) had made financial arrangements for him to study medicine in Paris. Honoré became a successful barrister at the regional Parliament of Aix-en-Provence, then succeeded his father-in-law as lawyer to the king. When his wife died, Honoré took clerical orders and became the archbishop of Embrun, due to his brother André's influence at court. A few years later, Gaspard obtained the archbishopric of Arles in the same way. In her memoir, Jeanne recalls with a certain pride the time when she saw her two brothers, Honoré and Gaspard, "preach in the church of Saint Trophime in Arles, each wearing a miter" (*Genealogy*, 77), the headdress signifying the high authority of bishops and abbots.

13. According to Joseph Bergin, Jean, who became a major figure in the Capuchin order of Marseille and of Provence, rejected episcopal office; see *The Making of the French Episcopate 1589–1661* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 613.

14. See Bergin, *Making of the French Episcopate*, 613.

Like male children in wealthier families, the boys in the du Laurens family were given the opportunity to pursue their studies at the university. When their father died, however, Charles was expected to support the family with his income and share with his mother the responsibility of raising the younger children. Boys and girls were taught to love, respect, and obey their parents without fail. They were chastised when they behaved badly or told lies. Girls were raised to be passive, compliant, and submissive. The desired goal for them was to marry (rather than enter the convent) and follow in the footsteps of their mother by tending to the children and the household. Of Jeanne in particular, we know that she read extensively (*Genealogy*, 75). In June 1581, she was married to the “very honorable Monsieur Achard.” Her marriage only lasted “four years, four months, four days and four hours” (*Genealogy*, 70) and from it was born only one child, a son, on December 19, 1582. In her memoir, Jeanne expresses a special sentiment for her first son, an exceptional child in many ways, who would die at the age of seventeen.

After spending 1586 with her mother-in-law (the year that followed her widowhood, as was the custom in Provence), Jeanne was called back home by her mother, who believed that “girls should never be separated from their mothers” (*Genealogy*, 69). Shortly after, she was remarried to a certain Monsieur Gleyse to whom she bore four sons and one daughter. Jeanne was sixty-eight in 1631, when she wrote the *Genealogy*, the last known event of her life.

The *Genealogie de Messieurs du Laurens descrite par moy Jeanne du Laurens Veufve à Monsieur Gleyse et couchée nayvement en ces termes* is the only work that we have of Jeanne du Laurens. The autograph manuscript is preserved at the Bibliothèque Méjanes in Aix-en-Provence as Ms. Provence Recueil K 843 (827), pièce 29. Most likely, this twenty-seven-folio text was written in one sitting. In addition to the date at the end (“Done this 1st July 1631”) and the author’s statement (“I wrote this memoir as concisely as I could”), several features corroborate this idea: the regularity of the writing, the uniform color of the ink, the general coherence of the text, and its clean presentation with only a few sentences added in the margins. As far as we know, the *Genealogy* has not been transcribed elsewhere. Jeanne concludes her memoir by saying that it was solely intended for “[her] children and those who depend on [her]” (*Genealogy*, 79). In 1867, the *Genealogy* was published for the first time by Charles de Ribbe under the title *Une famille au XVIe siècle* (Paris: Joseph Albanel), an edition reprinted in 1868 and, revised, in 1879. Besides the 2008 edition by Susan Broomhall and Colette H. Winn in their collection *Les femmes et l’histoire familiale, XVIe–XVIIe*, this work has received scant critical interest.