

than drama tended to metaphysics and to religious symbolism, and his reliance on opium increased. All of this is recounted perceptively and sympathetically. But with the *Biographia*, as Christie remarks, Coleridge had largely said his piece. There, he pleaded, 'By what I *have* effected, am I to be judged by my fellow men; what I *could* have done, is a question for my own conscience'. Part of what he effected was a culture which made a fine study like this one possible.

It would have been helpful to give the dates of the Coleridge letters quoted, as well as references to the *Collected Letters*: not all readers will have the six volumes to hand. I have noticed three minor errors of the press.

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**Abbé Jean Paulmier, *Mémoires touchant l'établissement d'une mission chrestienne dans le troisième monde. Autrement appelé, la Terre australe, méridionale, antartique, & inconnuë.* Édition critique établie, présentée et annotée par Margaret Sankey,\* Paris: Honoré Champion éditeur, 2006. 400 pp.**

For many years Margaret Sankey's research has centred on the imaginary voyage in seventeenth-century French literature and on travel accounts published in Paris on Australian themes through to the early 1800s. Alongside the names of Cyrano de Bergerac and of Nicolas Baudin has to be put that of Jean Paulmier, who in the present volume is rescued from the semi-obscurity into which he had fallen even amongst collectors and devotees of books on the Great South Land.

Not that Paulmier and Gonneville were completely unknown to students of History at the University of Sydney. G. Arnold Wood's *The Discovery of Australia* (London: Macmillan, 1922), a prescribed text for Second Year in 1925, allots a few pages to the story first revealed in print in the 1663 *Mémoires*. The first sale of the Rodney Davidson

Collection in Melbourne in 2005 has as its n° 2 the former George Mackaness copy of the second issue – dated 1663 – of the *Mémoires* (realization \$69,900). Are there others to add to the lists Margaret Sankey provides (pp.303–05) with only two (National Library of Australia and Mitchell Library) held in public institutions in this country? By any measure this is a very scarce book, which makes a modern re-edition more than welcome.

The essence of the book on hand is Paulmier's own text (pp.135–267) in the second issue of 1664 (the year being taken from an added preface (pp.142–46) since the title-page date of 1663 is unaltered). The basis for this version is furnished by the exemplar in the National Library of Australia. Variants from the first issue and from two manuscripts – one in the Archives des Missions Étrangères in Paris, dated 1659; the other in the Scottish Catholic Archives, dated 1654 – are given, selectively rather than exhaustively, at the bottom of each page. Paulmier's own shoulder-notes appear in the same position, along with Margaret Sankey's historical explanations, so that the reader has to pay attention to the distinguishing sigla used. A sixteen-leaf inserted and unpaginated gathering between pages 194 and 195 presents a series of pertinent maps from the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries. A very substantial preface (pp.7–133) sets Paulmier in his historical context and explains the principles of the edition. No fewer than ten annexes (pp.269–368) reproduce *in extenso* some of the major documents that underpin the investigation, and an abundant bibliography (pp.369–85) indicates the range of research on primary and secondary sources that lies behind the enterprise. Published in the series 'Les Géographies du Monde', overseen by the distinguished scholar Frank Lestringant, this is a volume for specialists. At the same time it has an important message for all those who recognise the complexity of European curiosity about *Terra australis incognita* and the conflicting motives of those who began to explore and exploit the region in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Paulmier, a Canon of Lisieux Cathedral and, surprisingly in view of his history as an anti-Protestant polemicist, a representative of the Danish crown in Paris, claimed to be descended from an inhabitant of the South Land brought back to France and eventually adopted by

Gonneville at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The *Mémoires* brought into print some particulars of a story that was available in manuscript only before 1663. Paulmier's purpose was not antiquarian, however, despite the coincidence of his claimed connection with Gonneville. His book is part of the missionary project of a French Counter-Reformation Church intent on emulating the Spanish and the Portuguese. In order to achieve support, the evangelising aim had to be linked to more conventional colonising and commercial ambitions. In the end a 'Compagnie des Terres australes', a replica of the East India Company with a strong stress on missionary work, was not to eventuate. One of the problems, of course, was that the South Land discovered by Gonneville is hard to locate. Was it Brazil, as some writers have claimed, or Madagascar? Or even what we now know as Australia? To attempt to answer these questions Margaret Sankey's preface leads her to many documents and difficulties. We do not know everything about Paulmier's life or death – a common enough situation when one is dealing with minor figures of the seventeenth century. The correspondence around Paulmier's plans and campaigns suffers in part from gaps and from uncertain dates. None the less, the reader of this edition now has a considered assessment of the literature, including the Président de Broches's *Histoire des navigations aux Terres Australes* of 1756, which gave the Gonneville story wider currency, not least among the great eighteenth-century navigators. There is no doubt that Margaret Sankey has put the Paulmier dossier on a firmer documentary basis, and she has done this with due attention to the niceties of the religious, political and literary history of the period. It is entirely characteristic that the Gonneville narrative feeds into the important tradition of imaginary voyages – Foigny, Vairasse, Tyssot de Patot – with supposed South Land destinations. Paradoxically these entirely fictitious texts are much better represented in our libraries. The argument also moves inevitably into the domain of cartography and into some of the arguments about Portuguese discovery of Australia before the Dutch and the Spaniards. In short – and despite our present-day disinclination to read foreign languages – this is a volume no serious Australiana collection should be without.

A physical bibliographer could wish for Greg-Bowers descriptions

of the editions and issues used. Similarly, a proof-reader's eye can pick up a few literals it would be inappropriate to list here. No doubt, too, fresh documents will come to light in what has to be an unending search. These are all reasons to hope the book is successful enough to be reprinted 'with additions and corrections' as seventeenth-century booksellers used to say.

Wallace Kirsop

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