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## Translations, Joachim Du Bellay

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TRANSLATIONS

BY JOHN HOUGHTON ALLEN

JOACHIM DU BELLAY (1525-1560)

(Next to his master Ronsard,  
the best of the *Pléiade*)

*JE HAY DU FLORENTIN L'USURIERE AVARICE*

I hate in Florentines their usurious avarice,  
I hate the foolish of Sienna senselessly,  
I hate in Greeks their rare verity,  
And the Venetians for their caustic malice.  
I hate the Ferrarans for I do not know what vice,  
I hate all the Lombards for infidelity,  
The proud Neopolitans for grand vanity,  
And poltroon Romans for their lack of exercise.  
I hate the stubborn English, and the brave Scotsmen,  
Treachorous Burgundians, and indiscreet Frenchmen,  
The superb Spaniard, and Germans beyond spurning.  
In brief, I hate all and any vice in any nation,  
    I hate in myself my own imperfection,  
But most in the world, I hate pedantic learning.

PEDRO CALDERON DE LA BARCA (1600-1681)

(Poet, soldier and priest, a really great  
dramatist comparable to Lope de Vega)

*ESTAS QUE FUERON POMPA Y ALEGRIA*

And that which is known as pomp and gladness  
awakened while the dawn is wet,  
in the evening will be but a dim regret  
sleeping in the night's arms' coldness.

The shades of color happily met

in rainbows, gold and snow-white and scarlet,  
these are but warnings of your life's swiftness—  
as much were learned at each sunset!

The roses that bloom in the morning decay  
before they are properly flowers:  
their cradle and sepulchre all in a day.

Some such a fortune as this is ours,  
man is born in a morning and dies in a day:  
and centuries pass, but they are hours.

GUITTERRE DE CETINA (1520-1557)

*(One of the elegant soldiers patronized by  
Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, and who came to  
America with later conquistadores)*

OJOS CLAROS, SERENOS

Clear eyes, serene,  
and one sweet look could appraise us,  
why, when ye look on me, look furious?  
Much more clement  
were eyes that laugh!  
Look not at me with wrath;  
beautiful eyes, relent.  
Spare me this torment,  
clear eyes, serene;  
if ye look at me thus, look at me less.

PAUL SCARRON (1610-1660)

*(Burlesque playwright, remembered as  
the husband of Mme. de Maintenon)*

EPITAPHE

He who lies here out of breath,  
Pitied, envied little for his rhymes,  
He has suffered pain and death  
Before he died, a thousand times.  
Make no noise in passing here, light  
Be of tread, and thy silence keep;  
This is grand, the very first night  
The poor Scarron has had his sleep.