Late Medieval Marian Lyric in Urban Spaces: *Puy* Poetry and *Meistergesang*, 1388-1525.



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Short Abstract

Although it is often noted that there are striking similarities between the *puys*, Marian poetry competitions in Northern France, and institutionalised *Meistergesang*, very little comparative work has been undertaken investigating these similarities. This thesis aims to explore Marian lyric composed in urban spaces in the late Middle Ages, both to gain a greater understanding of the individual poetic traditions, and to assess the significance of urban Marian lyric. I argue that the figure of Mary appealed to those living in towns and cities because she reflected the boundedness and privilege of the ideal, imagined city. Moreover, Marian lyric is an ideal method of communicating religious knowledge, both catechetical and experiential. The form of poetry helps audiences to engage with knowledge doctrinally and affectively, with Mary acting both as inspiration for poets and as a teacher. In examining the interplay between the playful and devotional ends of Marian lyric produced in a competitive context, I show that play and piety are mutually enriching and suggest play is a helpful lens for understanding engagement with poetic traditions and the poetic community. Religious lyric is often neglected in discussions of late-medieval poetics in continental French and German Studies, and this demonstrates the need to take religious lyric into consideration as a significant element of poetic production. The comparative study enables us to understand late-medieval Marian lyric in its context, and is significant as the first such Anglophone study. This thesis shows that urban Marian lyric warrants further critical attention, and signals new directions for research into the *puys* and Marian *Meistergesang*. Furthermore, it has implications beyond the field of Marian lyric, opening up new avenues for research into the late-medieval lyric, lay piety and urban history.

Long Abstract

As the first extended literary comparison of Marian lyric from the northern French *puys* and Marian *Meistergesang* in English, this thesis constitutes a significant contribution to our understanding of late medieval Marian lyric in urban spaces. The *puys* were poetry competitions in honour of the Virgin Mary which took place in towns and cities in the north of France: here the focus is on Rouen's *Puy de l'Immaculée Conception*, founded in 1486 and the most famous, and Amiens's *Puy Notre-Dame*, celebrated on Candlemas, known for the paintings associated with the poetry. Similarly, *Meistergesang* emerged from an urban context, and while the institutional guilds of *Meistersinger*, known as *Singschulen,* are more difficult to identify with certainty, a lot of Marian lyric seems to have been composed in similar urban, corporate contexts. I have selected Augsburg and Nuremberg for case studies, given that these cities are known to have had *Singschulen* before the Reformation. This thesis sets out to understand the Marian lyric in its respective contexts, and through comparison, to demonstrate commonalities and differences. Despite the commonplace idea that *Singschulen* were the German equivalent of the *puys*, there has thus far been little scholarship undertaking rigorous comparison beyond Ursula Peters' work on the two institutions and their social settings. As such, this is the first Anglophone scholarship offering a literary comparison of *puy* poetry and Marian *Meistergesang.* Both forms of poetry are understudied, with few editions available. Building on scholarship undertaken by local learned societies in the nineteenth century, monographs by Gérard Gros and Denis Hüe have prepared the foundations well for research into the *puys*, setting out the historical sources and analysing the form and content of the poems through surveys and case studies, but there has been little new research in the last twenty years. Mary Juliana Schroeder's 1942 dissertation offers a survey of what she refers to as 'Mary-

Verse' in *Meistergesang*, and subsequent scholars continue to rely on her analysis. Although much progress has been made through research into the *Töne* and form of *Meistergesang*, with the *Repertorium* making it easier to identify poems, research into Marian lyric has focused more on earlier poems such as Frauenlob's *Marienleich* or Konrad von Würzburg's *Goldene Schmiede*. There is thus a clear need for further research into Marian *Meistergesang*.

My thesis seeks to show the richness of the Marian lyric under consideration, developing an argument with respect to the lyric in its own right, but also showing how urban Marian lyric can fruitfully be brought into conversation with different aspects of late-medieval poetics and medieval studies more generally. I aim to show how urban mentalities manifest themselves through Marian lyric and to understand the poetic context of its production, which is simultaneously pious and playful. While comparison is the key means of literary inquiry, each chapter draws on different methodologies to accomplish this. The first chapter, employing ideas from urban history, seeks to better understand urban mentalities, suggesting Mary's boundedness and privilege appealed to urban inhabitants; the second chapter investigates the relationship between poetry and knowledge, arguing they have an intimate relationship in the late-medieval period, emphasised through the figure of Mary herself; the third and final chapter investigates the interplay between competition and devotion in Marian lyric and employs concepts from game studies to propose a poetics of play.

In my first chapter, I pursue the question of urban mentalities and aim to show why the figure of the Virgin was so attractive to those living in towns and cities. In her examination of images of the medieval city, Martha Howell argued that ideologies of privilege, distinction, boundedness, and separation are highlighted. Although they did not reflect the reality of medieval cities, such images demonstrate the importance of the imagined or ideal city, which,

like the heavenly Jerusalem, was enclosed by walls. Drawing on this, I argue that the imagined space of the city was represented by medieval poets through the Virgin Mary, who, as *virgo intacta*, was a bounded figure just like the city, and whose election and Immaculate Conception reflected the privilege of the city. Using a case study of Oxford, Bodleian Library Douce 379, which contains all the poems presented at the 1511 Rouen *Puy*, I show how images of boundedness recur throughout the collection. Such images as the Tower of David, the Closed Garden, and the Palace all frame Mary as a figure bounded by walls, constructed by a Divine Architect, just like the City of God. Through close reading, I demonstrate how these images can be used interchangeably on a poetological and formal level, reflecting a Marian frame of mind in which Mary is always several things at once: virgin and mother, maiden and queen, daughter and bride. Thus Mary is always the city, too. These bounded images are often used in conjunction with the language of craft, highlighting different members of the urban body as Mary is described as an *œuvre* and God the *maistre* or master craftsman. This constellation of boundedness and construction comes across in the second case study of Heidelberg Universitätsbibliothek Cpg 680, a collection of pre-Reformation *Meisterlieder* from Augsburg. I show that while bounded images are not as prominent in the corpus due to the generic demands of sub-genres such as the *Weihnachtslied* or the *Marienklage*, when poets are freed from the need to adhere to the scriptural passages relating to a particular feast day, they are attracted to images of boundedness. At the end of the chapter, I turn to Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, fr 145, a manuscript containing winning poems from the *Puy Notre-Dame d'Amiens*, accompanied by illuminations depicting the refrains. Bringing in the visual culture associated with the *Puy* emphasises the slippage between different bounded images of Mary, illustrating this Marian mindset. Depictions of cities, towers, and palaces blend into one, supporting the contention that to sing of any single bounded image is, implicitly, to sing of the city.

The findings of this chapter constitute a significant development of Denis Hüe's argument that urban life and space were reflected in the poetry of the *puys* through the use of metaphors and imagery for city life: Mary is at all times the City of God, and therefore, to invoke Mary is to identify the city with the elements of privilege and distinction associated with her. The enclosure offered by the city walls, reflected in Mary, marks the city out as an imagined space in which salvation can be achieved. Just as the enclosure of the cloister delineates it as a sacred space for encountering the divine, so the boundedness of the city, exemplified through Mary, opens up the gates of heaven. For poets to sing of Mary is to sing of the city, and the privileges it bestows.

Where the first chapter primarily tested one overarching idea out on case studies through zooming in on the use of images in close reading, the second chapter takes a broader look at the relationship between poetry and knowledge in the later Middle Ages, and how it manifests itself in Marian lyric. Building on the 2005-9 project 'Poetic Knowledge in Late Medieval France', which demonstrated that poetry was intimately associated with knowledge in that time and space, I show how this relationship could be seen in Marian lyric in *Meistergesang* too. Religious poetry aims not only at communicating doctrinal or catechetical knowledge, such as about the Immaculate Conception, but also experiential knowledge which engenders affective engagement on the part of the listener. Poetry as a form is particularly suited to transmitting both kinds of knowledge. Repetition and recontextualisability lend themselves well to teaching facts, while the engagement required to understand metaphors and poetic language ensures the audience will better retain what they have learned. Form conditions the way in which knowledge is communicated through poetry, and I suggest that the refrain is a key difference between the French and German forms being studied: the *palinod*, or refrain, of *puy* lyric not

only is a key carrier of meaning, but also acts as a safeguard, ensuring the correct articulation of a doctrine or mystery, protecting its orthodoxy. On the other hand, *Meistergesang* allows for different expressions of the same idea, leaving more room for misremembering or misstating the idea. I suggest this reflects different attitudes toward religious knowledge, with German literature being more open to vernacular theology, while French literature retained the cultural memory of Eckhart's trials and, though the jury and norms of the *puy*, sought to control the articulation of knowledge more tightly. The chapter then moves on to the question of poetic knowledge, proposing a relationship between poetic orthodoxy and religious orthodoxy. Metapoems and *arts de seconde rhetorique* employ poetic knowledge not only for pedagogical purposes, but also to construct and defend a tradition of vernacular poetics, and one which is suitable for praise of the Virgin.

A case study of Konrad Nachtigall and his *Töne* closes the chapter, which offers a close reading of four *Meisterlieder*, examining the relationship between poetry and knowledge, and analysing how Mary mediates between the two, as the subject of the poetry and the inspiration for it. In [1]NachtK/10/1, Mary's teaching authority is thematised, while her relationship with the figure of Wisdom is left ambiguous, reflecting the way in which *Meistergesang* allows for different articulations and interpretations where *puy* lyric is univocal with its refrain. Three poems written in Nachtigall's *Sanften Ton* show how catechetical and experiential knowledge are communicated through Marian lyric: in all three, the poet offers Mary a wreath composed respectively of roses, stones, and stars to represent her Joys, her Sorrows, and the twelve apostles along with an article of the creed. Mary is the inspiration, helping the poet to sing, but also a teacher. The *Meisterlieder* promote affective engagement with Mary's own sorrows and joys, and moreover show how the same piece of scripture, Simeon's prophecy, can be recontextualised as both a Joy and a Sorrow. The case study demonstrates that the conclusions

which had been drawn on the relationship between poetry and knowledge in late medieval France are also valid for late medieval Germany, while highlighting the way in which form conditions that relationship differently between the two vernacular traditions.

The final chapter aims to assess the interplay between the devotional and ludic elements of Marian lyric, drawing on concepts from game studies to suggest a poetics of play. I argue that the playful and pious aspects work together in tandem, and indeed, enrich one another and that this is made possible by the non-opposition between the community and the individual. This represents the two mentalities Anthony Black postulates as existing in towns and cities in the Middle Ages: a corporate mentality, as evidenced through the guilds, and 'civil society', in which values of individual liberty become increasingly emphasised. That these two go hand in hand creates the perfect conditions for devotional poetry competitions. Barbara Newman's idea of medieval crossover, expressed as a hermeneutic of 'both/and' demonstrates that we need neither to privilege play or piety nor the individual or community.

Beginning with the statutes and rules of the Rouen *Puy*, and drawing on Serina Patterson's definition of games, I show how the relationship between competition and devotion was framed by the *Puy*: competition inspires poets to produce ever better poetry, and hence ever more fitting praise for the Virgin; the winning poem would be displayed on a board outside the church, with the winning poet's name, so that all devout Christians could meditate on it. This relationship between individual and community, in which the winning poet's glory reflects back on the Virgin and serves the community, resolves any potential tension between competition and piety. A case study of two *chants royaux* from 1497, written on the same set refrain, illustrates the way poets played with tradition to compete in the *Puy*, employing subtle, barely perceptible changes to the *topoi* and form, often referred to by scholars as variation or

innovation. I show how the tension between variation and innovation manifests itself in *Meistergesang*, looking at the poetry of Hans Folz and Lienhard Nunnenbeck who composed poems in their own *Töne*, enabling greater play with form than was possible in the *puys*. There is also a greater emphasis on the poet as an individual, though he still frames himself as part of a community, one which I posit is further strengthened through its exclusion of others, namely by employing Marian lyric as anti-Jewish polemic. The interplay between the individual poet and community is strengthened by the othering of another group that does not share in the Marian devotion.

To conclude, I consider how the two dialectics of play and piety and individual and community interact in Rouen BM Y 226[a], a devotional manuscript made for Jacques le Lieur, including devotional vernacular poetry written by the likes of Molinet and Meschinot, the Hours of the Conception, and poetry from the Rouen *Puy*, some of which was written by Jacques le Lieur himself. In the manuscript, we see competitive poetry recontextualised as prayer alongside the Hours, the prayer of the Church, though surrounded by playful marginalia. Moreover, Jacques le Lieur inserts his own poetry alongside that of *rhétoriqueurs*, constructing a tradition of vernacular poets, though no attribution is given in the manuscript. A personal luxury item made according to the tastes of Jacques le Lieur it subtly foregrounds his own poetry, while at the same time recasting *puy* lyric as prayer belonging to the Church as a whole.

I propose that poetic engagement with earlier traditions and other poets be seen in terms of play, rather than variation or innovation, which suggest more about contemporary attitudes to poetics and aesthetics. Although play and competition have both been explored with regard to medieval lyric, such discussions have thus far tended to neglect religious lyric. By bringing religious lyric into conversation with ideas on play, I have developed our understanding of late-

medieval poetics and shown how my argument can fruitfully inflect analysis of secular lyric. Moreover, this underscores the importance of considering religious lyric as a constituent part of poetic production.

Such conclusions on the importance of religious lyric are indicative of the broader significance of the thesis, which demonstrates why the urban Marian lyric of the later Middle Ages warrants further consideration in its own right, but also emphasises the need for it to be taken into account in medieval studies more generally. The poems merit further study with regard to their lyric form, and I have only touched the surface in this thesis. I have offered some close readings showing the careful play with form and communication of knowledge and devotion, and have shown that more research into these poems would be rewarding. The thesis offers new insights into questions of lay piety, poetics, and urban mentalities, developing our understanding in all three areas. It opens up new avenues for research and acts as a significant contribution to our understanding of Marian poetry.

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Abbreviations

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Approbation	*Approbation et confirmation par le pape Léon X des statuts et privilèges de la confrérie de l'Immaculée Conception, dite Académie des Palinods, instituée à Rouen*
BnF	Bibliothèque Nationale de France
BM	Bibliothèque Municipale
BSB	Bayerische Staatsbibliothek
Cgm	Codex germanicus monacensis
Cpg	Codex palatinus germanicus
DKL	*Die kleineren Liederdichter des 14. Und 15. Jahrhunderts.*
DMF	*Dictionnaire du Moyen Français*
Escritel	Amiens, Société des antiquaires de Picardie, MS 23.
HUB	Heidelberg Universitätsbibliothek
k	Kolmarer Liederhandschrift
MGG	Die Musik in Gesichte und Gegenwart
Salzer	*Die Sinnbilder und Beiwörter Mariens*
RSM	*Die Repertorium der Sangsprüche und Meisterlieder*
^{2}*VL*	*Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters. Verfasserlexikon*

List of Manuscripts

Amiens, Société des antiquaires de Picardie, MS 23.	
Münich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Cgm 4997	*k*
Heidelberg, Universitätsbibliothek Cpg 680	Cpg 680
Oxford, Bodleian Libraries Douce 379	Douce 379
Paris, BnF français 145	BnF fr 145
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Rouen, BM Y.226[a]	Y226[a]

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Introduction

[i]ch binz die groze gotes stat,
von der sant Augustin so vil gesprochen hat.
min pforten nie entslozzen wurden.
doch quam min vriedel drin und nam min bürde,
die ich dar truc, und half mir tragen. [1] *Marienleich* XV:3-7

The Virgin Mary's words in Frauenlob's *Marienleich* highlight her intimate relationship with the city as she declares herself to be the City of God. Her body is closed to all; only her lover can enter without breaking the enclosure of her body, the city walls. Given that City of God was one of her titles, it makes sense that those living in cities were dedicated to the Mary and searched for ways to praise her. In institutional poetry competitions, city-dwellers who were committed both to the mastery of poetry and the praise of the Virgin composed lyrics in fixed forms, being spurred on to more impressive poetic feats and ever-increasing heights of acclaim through not only their own personal piety, but also the urban environment in which they lived, and its collective devotion to the Virgin.

Towns and cities across medieval France and German all had their own patrons, but Mary, under various titles and patronages, featured particularly heavily among them.[2] As the Immaculate Conception, she was patron of Normandy and it was in this region that the *puys* were most popular.[3] A *puy* was a poetic confraternity dedicated to the Virgin Mary which arranged for festivities on Marian feast days, with Mass followed by a poetry competition. The word *puy* is thought to come from the Latin 'podium' on which competitors would stand to perform their poem.[4] Several towns across Northern France had their own *Puy*, including

[1] Stackmann and Bertau 1981.
[2] On the practice of patron saints in this period, see Bauer, Herbers, and Signori 2007, particularly Schreiner 2007 on the Virgin Mary as patron and protector of towns (253-308).
[3] Hüe 2002a, 65–68.
[4] Gros 1992, 28. It is generally thought that the poets did not sing when performing at the *puy*, since no music has ever been found, and the connection between lyric and music was not so strong by the end of the Middle Ages.

Amiens, Arras, Caen, Dieppe, Lille, Valenciennes, Abbeville, Douai, Tournai, and the last to be founded, Rouen. The prescribed lyrics were generally *formes-fixes*, with the *chant royal* the most prestigious category, and in some cities, such as Amiens, there was a set refrain. Prizes were awarded for the best poems in the various categories, with decisions made by a jury heading by an elected Prince.[5]

There were no *puys* in German-speaking towns and cities, but *Meistersinger* arranged themselves into guilds or confraternities known as *Singschulen*.[6] These institutions, like the *puys*, were dedicated to the craft of poetry and prior to the Reformation dealt almost exclusively with religious themes and meta-poems about *Meistersang,* known as *Schulkünste.* Based on her study of around 3000 *Meisterlieder*, Mary Juliana Schroeder estimated that around a fifth to a quarter of all *Meistersang* was what she calls 'Mary-verse'.[7] Poets had to adhere strictly to the *Schulordnungen* and *Tabulaturen*, which governed the form, content and performance of lyrics. Regular competitions known as *Hauptsingen* (public, in churches) and *Zechsingen* (private, in drinking establishments) took place, with a chain of coins as the prize.[8] While the *puys* and the *Singschulen* are not precisely analogous, there are clear structural and organisational similarities in the institutions, such that they are sometimes considered to be variations of the same phenomenon.[9] Yet despite the striking parallels between the two forms of poetic institution, no evidence has yet been found connecting the

[5] Evidence for the functioning of the *puys* can be found in their statutes and records, such as the *Approbation* from Pope Leo X for the Rouen *Puy de l'Immaculée Conception*, which gives detailed descriptions of how the confraternity worked and how competitions proceeded – these details can be found in Rouen BM MS Y18 81r-88r as well as the 1864 print; the *Escritel* gives similar details for the Amiens *puy*.
[6] It is not always clear whether the term *Singschule* refers to an imaginary community, a poetic institution, or instances of poetic performance. On the history of the term, see Petzsch 1976, and for a recent discussion of these different levels of meaning, see Recker 2021, 86–96. For the difficulties in identifying the Augsburg *Singschule*, see 53-54.
[7] Schroeder 1942, 44.
[8] An example of the various rules and stipulations governing both the composition and the procedure for competitions can be found in the *Schulordnung* of the Augsburg Singschule: Brunner et al 1991.
[9] It is not uncommon in non-specialist work to see comments suggesting this, for example, see Latham 2011.

two.[10] It is outside the scope of this thesis to attempt to find such evidence, but the existence of two similar urban institutions dedicated to poetry and both with significant corpora of Marian lyric offers an exciting opportunity to study Marian lyric comparatively in urban spaces. The existence of *Singschulen* before the Reformation is difficult to verify, with little firm archival evidence.[11] Nonetheless, *Meistersang* was practised in towns and cities across southern Germany, with urban craftsmen composing and singing *Meisterlieder,* even though we cannot be certain of the levels of organisation in this pre-Reformation period and cannot identify Marian lyric as emerging from *Singschule* for certain. Unlike the *Minnesänger* who had come before them, performing at court, and the *Sangspruchdichter* who made their living from poetry, *Meistersang* was a firmly urban phenomenon, practised by those who were committed to the craft of poetry, but who were not professional poets.

In examining these two corpora, this thesis will highlight the specificity of these two forms of Marian poetry, demonstrating why singing about the Virgin Mary was such an attractive proposition for urban inhabitants and how it enabled them to reflect on their identity as such. Furthermore, it will argue that the Marian lyric of the later Middle Ages deserves far more critical attention that it has thus far garnered, and that discussion of late medieval poetics and piety must take these urban religious lyrics into account.

The flowering of Marian devotion in the Middle Ages is well attested, with Mary a central figure in the liturgical and devotional lives of men and women by the later medieval period; similarly, a flowering of scholarship about the Virgin Mary has been seen in the last decade.[12]

[10] Peters investigated the connection between the *Singschule* and *Puy,* but had to conclude that nothing concrete could establish a link between them (1983, 63-96).
[11] Baldzuhn 2008, 241.
[12] To give just a few examples from the last five years showing the different areas of medieval scholarship to deal with Mary, we could cite: Saetveit Miles 2022, which looks at Marian devotion and reading in medieval England; Carroll 2022 which takes a psychological approach; Cunningham 2021, looking at Mary in the early

Taking on the resonances of the courtly *dompna* or *vrouwe*, Mary was Queen of Heaven, interceding for sinners. Often depicted as a fourth person of the Trinity in the visual arts in images of the Coronation of the Virgin,[13] so highly prized was Mary, so close to the Godhead, that the word 'götinne' was used to describe her by Mechthild von Magdeburg in her mystical writing,[14] and in Mary's voice, Frauenlob wrote 'ich got, sie got, er got' in his *Marienleich* (Strophe 12, line 33).[15] Audacious as such language is, it implies less divinity and more intimate, familial relationship with the Godhead, straddling the boundaries of orthodoxy and heterodoxy. As the Middle Ages progressed, affective piety became an important way of engaging with the divine, eliciting compassion in the Christian who contemplated Christ's suffering on the Cross and Mary's grief seeing her Son's agony.[16] Mary was a key figure with whom the devout could identify themselves, sharing in her suffering, and to whom they could turn for intercession.[17] By the fifteenth century, Mary embodied both the powerful, heavenly queen, and the meek, suppliant woman and mother. Just as Christ had two natures, human and divine, so Mary seemed to occupy a space that encompassed the two. Barbara Newman characterises this dual configuration by explaining that the Virgin 'represents humankind's point of entry into an intimate, familial union with the Divine'.[18] As Marian readings of the *Cantica Canticorum* proliferated, in which the Virgin is identified with the *sponsa*, so was Mary's status as Bride entrenched.[19] The Mary of the Middle Ages, by the time we reach the composition of the *Puy* poetry and the pre-

Middle Ages; Russakoff 2019, exploring manuscript illuminations; Twomey 2019, analysing Hispanic literature, and McMichael 2019, looking at Mary in Franciscan spirituality. Moreover, in July 2021 a new journal dedicated to research into the Virgin Mary was launched by the Centre for Marian Studies called *Maria: A Journal of Marian Studies.*

[13] See the examples given in Chapter 6 of Newman 2016, in particular 259-266.

[14] Mechthild of Magdeburg 2003, 154.

[15] Stackmann and Bertau 1981.

[16] On affective piety, see McNamer 2011, 1–22 and Boulton 2015, especially Chapter 5, 229-284.

[17] See in particular Part II 'Maria Compatiens' in Fulton Brown 2002.

[18] Newman 2016, 261.

[19] On the development of Marian exegesis of the Song of Songs, see Astell 2018, 42–72 and Matter 1990, 188–214.

Reformation Marian *Meistersang* in the late fourteenth century, was multi-faceted and multi-layered. She was mother of the Son, daughter of the Father, and hence sister to the Son, spouse of the Spirit; she was human, able to share in human sufferings, the handmaid of the Lord who knelt suppliant before Him, and yet the Queen of Heaven, crowned and enthroned with the Trinity. There seems to have been an aesthetic interest in these paradoxical elements of Mary's seemingly contradictory relationships. Mary was central to the liturgical life of the Church, and, by the fifteenth century she could be venerated every day of the year, with Compline always ending with a Marian antiphon, and the option to use propers from her votive Mass.[20] She had several feast days over the course of the year, with the principal ones being the (Immaculate) Conception (8th December),[21] the Purification of the Virgin (2nd February), the Annunciation (25th March), the Visitation (2nd July), the Assumption (15th August) and the Nativity of the Virgin (8th September). Furthermore, in the devotional life of the laity, the Office of the Virgin had become cemented by the fifteenth century, with nobility and educated laypeople reciting it throughout the day, with it frequently being sung in monasteries and cathedral chapters in addition to the canonical hours.[22] Thus those poets composing lyric in praise of the Virgin would have been constantly exposed to the biblical references to Mary which were used on her feast days and in her Hours, with devotion to her playing a central role in their lives, religious and literary.

Scholarship, both public facing and academic, has likewise engaged with the Virgin Mary and medieval devotion to her in recent years. With a *Very Short Introduction* published just

[20] Rothenberg 2015, 529.
[21] As we shall see, the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception was not universally accepted, though nonetheless, the Feast of the Conception of the Virgin was widespread, whether or not the doctrine was believed. On the reception of the doctrine in France, see Hüe 2002a, 37-134, and in German-speaking areas, see Gay-Canton 2011.
[22] Fulton Brown 2018, 23.

two years ago,[23] and the *Oxford Handbook* in 2019,[24] it is clear that there is an appetite for work on the Virgin Mary that extends beyond university circles. Marina Warner's *Alone of All Her Sex* was first published in 1976, but has remained in print with a new edition published in 2013, demonstrating that feminist engagement with the figure and legacy of Mary remains popular. Miri Rubin's *Mother of God* (2010) offered an accessible but scholarly approach to the public, accompanied by *Emotion and Devotion* (2009), which situates the figure of Mary in the 'global Middle Ages'.

It might therefore seem surprising that there is so little critical literature on the phenomenon of urban poetry composed in honour of Mary, namely, the *puys* and the Marian *Meistersang.* Critical disdain has led to this lyric being overlooked, contributing to a lack of editions which only intensifies the problem. Some texts have only become accessible in recent years thanks to the digitisation of manuscripts.[25] Already by the mid-sixteenth century, the poetry of the *puys* was viewed with contempt by the new movement of the Pléiade, who regarded the lyrics as 'vieilles poésies', a relic of the past, with Joachim Du Bellay famously referring to its lyrics as 'épiceries', asserting that such lyrics 'corrompent le goût de notre langue et ne servent sinon à porter témoignage de notre ignorance'.[26] This opinion long held sway and, as medievalists looked to rediscover texts as the discipline developed in the 19th century, Marian poetry, such as that of the *puys* and the *Meistersang*, was deemed as having little value or aesthetic worth, particularly by scholars who judged this expression of pre-Reformation Catholic devotion negatively. In comparison to *Minnesang*, which could serve as an example of the *Blütezeit*, foundational to the formation of a German national culture, *Meistersang* did

[23] Leith 2021.
[24] Maunder 2019.
[25] Indeed, the lack of editions proved to be particularly problematic during the Covid-19 Pandemic, when going to libraries or travelling to archives was not possible.
[26] Du Bellay 2007, 132

not suit the taste of those who looked in lyric for the articulation of intense emotion by a first-person speaker or singer. Similarly, in France, epics such as the *Chanson de Roland* captured the public imagination, while poets and romances that dealt with 'courtly love' were of far greater interest than religious lyric that did not necessarily fit into a conventional understanding of literature or appeal to the preoccupations of medievalists at the time. The *puys* only seemed to be of local interest, with reprints of early printed material or other primarily descriptive works by local learned societies.[27]

The *puys* were little beyond a footnote until the ground-breaking work of Gérard Gros, who, in a series of monographs and articles built on the work that had been done by local learned societies in the 19th century to offer a comprehensive overview of the different *puys* in northern France, illustrating how they functioned through archival evidence and analysing form and imagery to work toward a poetics of the *puys*.[28] His work was taken up by Denis Hüe, who focused specifically on the *Puy de l'Immaculée Conception* of Rouen, and produced both a monograph (2002a) tracing the origins of the cult of the Immaculate Conception in Normandy, the history of the *Puy* and a detailed analysis of the manuscripts and poetry associated with it, and a small anthology of poems from the *Puy*, the only modern edition of *puy* poetry to date (2002). The Amiens *Puy* has long been the subject of critical interest from art historians due to the paintings and illuminations associated with it,[29] but the *La Confrérie Notre-Dame du Puy d'Amiens* (Duvanel, Leroy, and Duvanel 1997) offers more recent contextualisation, along with a consideration of some literary aspects of the *Puy*, and François-Xavier Maillart's 2011 Master's thesis develops it further, considering its literary

[27] For example, in 1864 the Société des Bibliophiles Normands published the *Approbation* of the Rouen *Puy's*, while the Société des Antiquaires de Picardie printed a facsimile of the manuscript of the winning Amiens poems that had been offered to Louise of Savoy: Durand 1911.
[28] Most important are Gros 1992, which presents an overview of the different *puys* and how they work and Gros 1996a on the most important category, the *chant royal*.
[29] For example, Françoise, Mugniot, and Pellas 2020.

and artistic output. A 1999 Colloquium, whose proceedings have been published, solicited interest in the poetics of the *Puy*, situating it as the first French Poetry of the Renaissance, but did not seem to generate further momentum.[30] The only significant Anglophone scholarship on the *puys* is that of Dylan Reid, who wrote an MLitt thesis (1995) on the literary culture in Rouen and has since published several articles on cultural and confraternal elements of the *puys.* His recent chapter on 'Confraternities and Poetry: The Francophone Puys' (2019) offers the most up-to-date description of how the *puys* operated and assessment of research on them in English.

Aside from further individual articles from Gros and Hüe, there has been little on the *puys* since, aside from as a footnote in other discussions of late medieval French poetics: the *puys* are often evoked, but rarely is any discussion developed. Except for Hüe's anthology, the only poems edited are those which appear in *Œuvres Complètes* of poets who competed, such as Guillaume Crétin (1932) or Jean Parmentier (1971), and a small selection in Kathleen Chesney's 1950 Rhétoriqueur anthology. However, the potential of the poetry of the *puys* to inform other areas of medieval studies has been recognised in recent years: Margaret Hoogvliet's 2019 article on 'Metaphorical Images of the Sacred Workshop' demonstrates their value for discussing artisanal work, and Vanina Kopp's forthcoming Habilitation seeks to contextualise the *puys* in studies of games and gaming in the Middle Ages. This thesis participates in this discourse and critically develops it by illuminating our understanding of *puy* poetry in its own right, but also by illustrating how a deeper knowledge of the lyrics can contribute to our understanding of late medieval devotion, urban spaces and competition.

[30] Arnould and Mantovani 2003.

In offering a clear account of all the *Sangsprüche* and *Meisterlieder* in terms of *Ton*, incipit, content, manuscripts, editions, and bibliography, the *Repertorium der Sangsprüche und Meisterlieder* has made research into *Meistersang* far more accessible that it used to be, identifying hundreds of Marian songs from the beginnings of *Sangspruchdichtung* until the waning of *Meistergesang* in the 18th century. Understanding of the poetics of *Meistergesang* has been developed and expanded through the works of Horst Brunner (1975), Frieder Schanze (1983), Johannes Rettelbach (2014), and Michael Baldzuhn (2002). Through such scholarship, the transition from *Sangspruch* to *Meistergesang* has been analysed, formal variation and analysis of metrical and musical form undertaken, and manuscript transmission explored. Editions of individual manuscripts as well as of poets' works have been produced, giving a strong foundation from which to work. However, the Marian lyric of the Meistersinger has thus far received little attention. Schroeder's 1942 thesis offered a survey of the texts and *topoi*, with her classifications of Marian *Meistergesang* still used today while Peter Kern's 1971 monograph addressed theological themes in late medieval poetry. Other forms of Marian poetry have received consideration, from Peter Appelhans' exploration of the *Mariengrüße* (1972) to a recent volume on Mary in hymns and sequences,[31] alongside Sabrina Keim's 2020 study of metaphor, meaning that Marian *Meistergesang* can be contextualised in the framework of late medieval German Marian poetry.

There are therefore strong foundations on which to undertake a comparative study of the urban Marian lyric of the later Middle Ages, but a clear need for a renewed study of the poetry of the *puys* and the *Meistersinger*, making this a necessary and timely contribution to the field of late medieval poetics. Two elements in the preceding sentence require further

[31] Rothenberger and Wegener 2017.

elaboration before moving on to the texts themselves: firstly, what does it mean to do a comparative study; secondly what does 'urban' mean in the context of the late Middle Ages?

Comparative Literature

The danger of the 'unexamined' comparison is a spectre haunting potential comparative projects, making a brief examination of the discipline prudent to offer a clear rationale for comparing *Puy* poetry and *Meistersang*.[32] Beyond the understanding that Comparative Literature is, at its root, about comparing literary texts (though even the primacy of literature within the discipline has been questioned),[33] a clear consensus regarding the definition, purpose, goals, and methodologies of Comparative Literature is lacking. As a discipline often characterised by its interdisciplinarity and its predilection for theory, a multiplicity of principles and approaches have developed. This has led to a high degree of self-reflexivity and questioning within the discipline.[34]

Comparison, perhaps somewhat taken for granted in medieval literary scholarship, is fundamental to the study of literature, both in the broader sense of Comparative Literary Studies and the more ideological Comparative Literature. Although medievalists perhaps assume its importance and that the benefits it can bring are self-evident, it is worth explicitly asking the question 'Why Compare?'. Even when not comparing across national and linguistic borders, comparison is still a feature of much literary scholarship. Sharon Marcus considers 'unexamined comparison' to be a common problem, suggesting that scholars often omit any justification for their comparison of a particular set of texts, or even why they are comparing at all.[35]

[32] Marcus 2011, 142.
[33] Culler 2006, 87.
[34] Ferris 2011, 30.
[35] Marcus 2011, 142.

The simple answer to why we compare is that it is instructive and enlightening. It enables us to understand literature better on both a macro level and a micro level. In comparing texts, we can discover and discern generalities, underlying themes and structures; we can also understand a text in its specificity. Gisèle Sapiro explains: 'Comparisons underscore significant differences. Until we compare a work to others of the same time period, we are unable to understand its singularity or its innovative character for that period'.[36] Indeed, more so than permitting the observation of general, even universal, trends in literature through examining parallels, analogies and similarities between texts, it is the mark of Comparative Literature to illuminate the particular, to emphasise what makes texts different. These particulars, the characteristics that make a text exceptional, can only be observed when texts are considered in relation to one another. This is not limited to literature, either: Harry Levin points out that all critical and intellectual judgement must involve some element of comparison.[37] He is not the only one to make such an assertion: David Ferris, noting that comparison is a form of knowledge rooted in likeness and drawing on Aristotle's *Poetics*, asserts that comparison is therefore 'the mode in which our critical discourse occurs as our reliance on the phenomenological language of analogy, metaphor, in short, of saying what literature is like or not like, confirms'.[38] Meanwhile René Etiemble asserted that comparative understanding was necessarily the foundation for complete knowledge.[39]

Zoe Norridge argues that Comparative Literature ought to pay more attention to the exceptional than the exemplary.[40] Returning to Comparative Literature's role in destabilising hierarchies

[36] Sapiro 2011, 238.
[37] Levin 1972, 70.
[38] Ferris 2011, 37.
[39] Etiemble's philosophy of comparison is explained in Palumbo-Liu 2011, 46–59.
[40] Norridge 2011, 220.

of language and literature, and what she calls its lamentable 'Euro-American perspective', she contends that ideas of universals in literature are Eurocentric, and that, in focussing on the exceptional, we will be able to move away from the notion that Western concepts and ideas about literature are universal. She declares that 'one of the key implications of these observations for our discipline of comparative literature is that we should be comfortable in paying greater attention to the exceptional rather than always seeking to establish the exemplary, with its concomitant assumption that literature is to be used as evidence of social patterns within the world'.[41] Haskell Block also suggests that comparatists may have had a tendency to 'magnify similarities and minimise differences', thereby distorting our judgement.[42] He argues that comparison must work alongside analysis and that its value lies in the extent to which our understanding and interpretation of a particular text or texts is enhanced by the comparison. On the other hand, François Jost believes that the '*raison d'être*' of the discipline must be in revealing a synthetic understanding, and drawing conclusions about the general, rather than the particular.[43] Uniqueness or particularity can only be appreciated, of course, in relation to wider traditions and convention.[44] Thus exemplarity and exceptionality need not be seen as a dichotomy; they inform one another, and would not make sense without the other.

A comparison, therefore, is justified by facilitating the drawing of meaningful parallels between texts, but, perhaps more importantly, by clarifying individual texts, shedding light upon what is exceptional about their form or use of theme or language. As well as enabling us to situate texts in literary history or draw conclusions about genre or movement, it helps us understand what distinguishes a piece of literature, be that structurally, aesthetically,

[41] Norridge 2011, 223.
[42] Block 1969, 90.
[43] Jost 1974, xi.
[44] Prawer 1973, 167.

thematically or formally. Comparing literature written in different languages, for example, enables a better understanding of what languages will allow and what they will not in terms of literary languages, such as the ability of some languages to rhyme better than others, or the prevalence (or not) of monosyllabic words: particularities which would not become evident unless analysed in relation to other languages.[45]

Literary comparison, therefore, is a fruitful mode of studying literature as it enables comprehension on a broad scale of general trends, as well as isolating and identifying what is significant about a piece of literature, thus aiding critical analysis and judgement, and facilitating a more nuanced understanding overall. The two kinds of lyric I have selected, *puy* poetry and *Meistersang*, have enough parallels and are similar enough to enable the establishment of general principles about the nature of late medieval urban Marian lyric. In juxtaposing the two, however, it will also be possible to highlight what distinguishes the two corpora. Surveying lyric from across geographic and linguistic borders will help illuminate the different ways in which Marian devotion was articulated. Using both French and German material permits a fuller understanding of the general patterns, models and forms of Marian lyric than would be obtained by looking solely at the *puys* or the *Meistersang*; similarly, only in apprehending these generalities does it become possible to recognise what is distinct about the two traditions.

Both sets of texts emerge from similar cultural settings at a similar time period, meaning I can operate with similar sets of assumptions regarding religion, poetics, transmission and society. That does not mean overlooking the differences between late medieval France and Germany; rather, a clear awareness of those differences can be drawn out through studying the lyric since

[45] Prawer 1973, 15.

the broad parameters are already analogous, throwing the contrasts into sharper relief. Jonathan Culler, in defending the Eurocentric nature of Comparative Literature, maintains that 'the meaning of a text depends on its relation to others within a cultural space', implying that comparisons from similar, though not identical, historical and geographical contexts are the most profitable.[46] There is a complex relationship between French and German vernacular literature in the Middle Ages, with French texts often being seen as providing a model for German texts: Ursula Peters has already undertaken careful investigation of this question, showing that as far as can be deduced from archival evidence, there is no French influence in this case.[47] This having been established, I do not intend to suggest that one tradition influenced the other, or search for sources.

Reading theoretical pieces on Comparative Literature, as well as practical criticism, it quickly becomes clear that there is little agreement on what critical frameworks should be used. This is partly because the discipline is in constant evolution: as Ali Behdad and Dominic Thomas explain, it is 'a dynamic and plural field of study perpetually transforming its theoretical assumptions, critical methodologies, and objects of study'.[48] Marcus identifies three key frameworks for comparison, dividing comparatists into: particularisers, who compare different national literatures with the purpose of elucidating what makes them unique, considering them to be expressions of a particular context; synthesisers, who study literature with the aim of developing categories of analysis that will hold true over space and time; and intersectionists, who combine these two approaches to demonstrate the ways in which the development of literature depends on transnational contacts.[49] Having outlined these three approaches,

[46] Culler 2006, 92.
[47] Peters: 1983, 207-18.
[48] Behdad and Thomas 2011, 3.
[49] Marcus 2011, 137.

however, she acknowledges that, although one of these frameworks for approaching comparison may dominate, much comparative work tends to draw on all three.

As well as approaches based on either the exceptional or the exemplary, other frameworks for approaching Comparative Literature are often articulated. Though critics may give them different names or sub-divide these further, the key modes of comparison are: analogies and influences (or literary relations); movements and trends; genres and forms; motifs, types and themes.[50] Most pieces of practical comparative work tend to broadly fall under one or more of these topics. Just as the discipline of Comparative Literature has drawn on a variety of methodologies and frameworks, so will I be using different approaches in each chapter of the thesis, drawing on the most appropriate method for the issue at hand rather than committing to any overarching framework beyond that of literary comparison. Thus, in the first chapter of my thesis, I have recourse to an idea from the field of urban history and use an overview of several manuscripts to explore the idea of boundedness in medieval Marian lyric, looking at the recurrence of bounded images, concentrating on individual uses while offering a broader look at collections of poems. In the second chapter, I build on work from medieval French studies on poetry and knowledge in the late Middle Ages, bringing in a wide variety of brief examples. In the third chapter, I employ insights from game theory, using detailed close reading of individual poems.

Urban Spaces

Given the huge diversity in towns, from population to size to economic strength to mode of government, it can be hard to delineate what comprises a town. When 'urban' is simply defined

[50] Variants on these categories are found, for example, explicitly in Prawer 1973, Aldrigde 1969, and Jost 1974, and more implicitly in other discussions of Comparative Literature.

as having to do with 'life of towns' or 'life in towns',[51] without further definition of 'town', we are left none the wiser as to what constitutes an urban settlement. Indeed, diversity is one of the characteristics that Andrew Brown and Jan Dumolyn consider to be a foundational element in defining the urban, in order to emphasise the multiplicity and variety of towns and cities in the medieval period.[52] Medieval towns and cities can refer to settlements ranging from the more precociously developed northern Italian cities, often contrasted with the more 'feudal' northern European cities,[53] to the imperial cities of the Holy Roman Empire, as well as the much smaller market towns that made up the majority of unremarkable urban settlements. Urban encompasses settlements hugely different in population: for example, Milan had around 100,000 inhabitants in the fifteenth century, while a population of 2,000 was still large enough to be considered 'intermediate' according to David Nicholas' definition, with many towns still being far smaller. [54]

When urban covers such an array of settlements, how can we begin to establish what makes something urban? Many scholars of the German tradition have tended simply to use the existence of a market or charter as evidence that a settlement was urban, whereas modern economic criteria have more often been used by North American academics.[55] Yet these potential criteria still run into the same problems: as Nicholas points out, 'lumping Milan and Saltash together as 'urban' creates a category that is too broad to be a useful analytical tool'.[56] Some definitions of towns characterise towns in comparison with rural environments: for example, Richard Hodges suggests that 'an urban community is a settlement of some size and population which is markedly larger than communities concerned with subsistence alone; the

[51] Lilley 2002, 1.
[52] Brown and Dumolyn 2017, 22.
[53] Brown 2016, 341
[54] Nicholas 2003, 19.
[55] Nicholas 2003, 11.
[56] Nicholas 2003, 11.

majority of its inhabitants, moreover, are not engaged in full-time agrarian pursuits'.[57] Thus size and population and activity are considered to be important elements, but comparatively so. Hodge builds on this definition by insisting on the presence of more than one institution.[58] Edith Ennen's *Kriterienbündel* allows for diversity by refusing to insist on adherence to just a few criteria, rather suggesting that towns and cities will have a mixture of the following twelve characteristics, but not necessarily all of them: 1) defence, 2) street planning, 3) market(s), 4) a mint, 5), legal autonomy, 6) a role as a central place, 7) a relatively large population, 8) economic diversification, 9) urban types of housing, 10) social differentiation, 11) complex religious organisation, 12) judicial functions.[59] Such an expansive range of criteria is helpful in accounting for different sizes of settlement, geographic diversity, as well as varying levels of development. Yet it still runs into the problem posed above by Nicholas: is a category that requires such a wide range of criteria and includes such a huge range of settlements truly a useful analytic category?

Insofar as 'urban' can be distinguished from other kinds of settlements, the answer would appear to be affirmative. While there is huge variety amongst the category 'urban', it can at least be distinguished from other forms of settlement, such as rural, monastic, and courtly. In being a distinct form of settlement, and therefore fostering a different kind of culture and environment, even as expansive a category as urban can still be useful as a broad analytical category, as long as we bear in mind that it is diverse and wide-ranging, since 'urban' not only tells us what kind of place a settlement might be but serves also to tell us what kind of place it is not. Perhaps it is not in considering the physical and economic features of a town that urban settlements can be distinguished from others: it may be more useful to examine the less tangible

[57] Hodges 1982, 23.
[58] Hodges 1982, 24.
[59] Ennen 1987, 16.

characteristics, namely, the mentalities of those who lived in cities and the way they perceived them.

It is important to remember that a city is not merely a collection of buildings arranged in a particular shape and form, but an idea that existed in people's minds. Lilley expresses this idea when he says 'medieval urbanism is not something that simply exists "out there" but is instead a product of human imagination and industry'.[60] Medieval cities exist in our minds: Joëlle Rollo-Koster points out that a lot of recent urban history has been engaged in dispelling and discrediting the common, popular perception of medieval cities as filthy, unsanitary places.[61] If we have created in our own minds the image of the medieval city, those living in them at the time will also have created an image of the city in their own minds, which may or may not have corresponded with reality.

Developing the idea that cities were 'imagined, built, and lived',[62] Keith Lilley attempts to locate the city within the Christian cosmos, in which everything has its own divinely ordained place. Drawing on neo-platonic thought, in particular Alan of Lille, he posits two conceptions of the city: the city as microcosm of the universe, and the city as macrocosm of man.[63] He accords a high value to the city in Christian thought, arguing that the city was not a collection of buildings and people, but rather 'a "map" of Christian beliefs about the wider world, about cosmology and cosmogony'. In an argument developed over the course of his book, he concludes that 'for those who conceived, built and inhabited its [medieval Europe's] towns and cities – those who described them and depicted them, who created them and lived in them – the city was a special place, for it was a model of the world that was to come, a city of

[60] Lilley 2002, 10.
[61] Rollo-Koster 2016, 274.
[62] Lilley 2009, 7.
[63] Lilley 2009, 10.

God'.[64] In fact, he contends that Christianity is fundamentally an urban religion,[65] which has significant implications for how the medieval city was conceived and how its inhabitants regarded themselves.

These neo-Platonic concepts about cities as microcosm and macrocosm of universe and body may seem like the sorts of ideas that would only have been understood by certain strata of society, and perhaps not the lived experience of many city-dwellers. For example, many of Lilley's arguments are based on the study of maps and architectural plans, which he suggests articulate a 'sacred geometry',[66] noting details such as the root two proportions of street layouts, reflecting a cosmologically derived aesthetics.[67] Yet it seems unlikely that those not trained in mathematics or aesthetics would be aware of the proportions of the streets they lived on and walked down, or the significance of root two. In emphasising the link between God as Creator and the city planner or architect as creator, as evidenced by a proliferation of images depicting God as *artifex principalis*,[68] holding a compass in his hands, the relationship between city and cosmos is made more accessible. Although not all city-dwellers would necessarily have been fully cognisant of the ways in which the city was a microcosm of the universe, they may have been conscious that there was a link. There seems, however, to be a stronger argument in favour of a wider awareness of the notion of the city as macrocosm of the body. This awareness is not only made manifest in neo-Platonic and Aristotelian writings, but in the writings of urban inhabitants, and the 'moral topography' of the city and its structure of governance.[69] The city was, in effect, the 'urban body', and just as the body has a head which governs its members, so the corporate body of the city, the body

[64] Lilley 2009, 184.
[65] Lilley 2009, 185.
[66] Lilley 2009, 41.
[67] Lilley 2009, 68–71.
[68] Lilley 2009, 77.
[69] Lilley 2009, 131.

politic, has its head in a mayor or city council.[70] Of course, the analogy of the city as body then further conjures up the idea of the city as Christ's body, further cementing the importance of the body metaphor. If the city as body was both being preached from the pulpit as well as invoked by civic leaders, who derived their authority as head of the body in the divinely ordained hierarchy, we can perhaps imagine that it is true that 'the microcosm analogy between cosmos-city = body [that] pervaded Christian thought throughout the Middle Ages'.[71]

What implications does such a conception have for the relationship between Marian lyric and urban communities? If the inhabitants of cities truly considered themselves to be living in a city which reflected the cosmos, with a divine significance, then those poems which explicitly invoke the city or elements of civic pride may well be doing so with such an ideology as part of the hinterland. Those *puy* poems which make use of artisan vocabulary or judicial vocabulary are gesturing towards particular members of the urban body, as well as members who make up the mystical Body of Christ, the Church.

Corpus

The huge volume of Marian lyric produced by the *puys* and the *Meistersinger* in the late Middle Ages and the fact that few editions exist mean that an approach through select case studies is most fruitful, allowing for a more detailed examination rather than general impressions. In terms of *puy* poetry, the foundations laid by Hüe and Maillart, as well as the existence of documentary evidence regarding their operation, mean that the Rouen *Puy de l'Immaculée Conception* and the *Confrérie du Puy Notre-Dame d'Amiens* emerge as the most

[70] Lilley 2009, 136.
[71] Lilley 2009, 132.

fruitful *puys* to study. Thanks to existing work, the literary culture of the two cities has already been explored, and there is a large corpus of accessible poetry to both *puys*. The manuscript offered to Louise of Savoy, Paris, BnF fr. 145, with 48 winning poems spanning over a century, makes for a useful case study, while Oxford Bodleian Douce 379, which contains all the poems presented at the competition in Rouen in 1511, offers a look at a single year. Rouen BM Y18 contains the winning poems from the competitions beginning in 1486 to 1524, covering its early years, and moreover, contains some poems composed on a set refrain. Finally, the Vidoue print, a collection of poems from the Rouen *puy* printed in Paris in 1525 with a selection of poems that were evidently popular, and Rouen BM Y226[a], a Book of Hours of the Conception also containing *puy* poetry, act as case studies which recontextualise the poetry outside its initial, competitive context. Between them, these manuscripts provide a representative survey of the *Puy Notre-Dame d'Amiens* and the early years of the *Puy de l'Immaculée Conception.*

For *Meistersang*, Augsburg and Nuremberg are both cities for which there is similar context of the literary culture in the later medieval period,[72] and which definitely had *Singschulen* before the Reformation.[73] Heidelberg UB cpg 680 is considered to be a good witness for the state of pre-Reformation *Meistersang* production in Augsburg and can serve as a representative of urban *Meisterlieder*, with its proportion of Marian lyric similar to the 20-25% Schroeder postulated as being the case for all *Meistersang*.[74] For Nuremberg, the Meistersinger Konrad Nachtigall, Hans Folz and Lienhard Nunnenbeck can act as representatives for Nuremberg *Meistersang*, all being considered by Hans Sachs to have belonged to the twelve Meister of Nuremberg. There exist editions of much of their work,

[72] For example, Häberlein and Tlusty 2020 and Janota and Williams-Krapp 1995.
[73] Schnell 1959; Schanze 1983, 381-88.
[74] Schanze 1983, 112.

making their poetry an accessible case study for the thesis.[75] The fact that Folz and Nunnenbeck wrote many *Meisterlieder* on the subject of the Immaculate Conception, the patron of the Rouen *puy*, makes them particularly apt for comparison.

With the Amiens *Puy* beginning in 1388, and the transition from *Sangspruch* to *Meistersang* taking place in the latter half of the fourteenth century,[76] taking 1388 as the beginning of the time frame makes sense, firmly rooting this study in the late medieval period. The Reformation was a key turning point for *Meistersang*,[77] and, in particular, changed the priorities in religious lyric, meaning an endpoint of 1517 makes sense for the Meistersinger. With such changes coming more slowly to France, taking 1525 as an end date allows for the inclusion of the Vidoue print and matches up with the dates of Rouen BM Y18 which acts as a record of the early years of the Rouen *puy*. Given that in 1526 Clément Marot, who had himself competed in the *Puy*, was accused of Lutheranism, it suggests that we can locate a turning point in the mid-1520s when religious change begins to have an effect on *puy* poets.

Structure of thesis

The first chapter of the thesis will explore how an urban mentality manifests itself in the Marian poetry from late medieval French and German cities by identifying images of boundedness. Using Oxford Douce 379 to examine the poetry presented in a single year, I will show that bounded images occur in poems which foreground the urban setting through reference to crafts. A similar pattern can be observed, though less strongly, in the collection of Augsburg *Meisterlieder.* Bringing in poems and illuminations from the Amiens *Puy* will

[75] Many of Nachtigall's poems, and other poems written in his Töne, can be found in *DKL*. Hans Folz's poems have all been edited by Mayer 1908. Nunnenbeck's poems can be found in Klesatschke 1984.
[76] Using the change in form, from single strophes in *Spruchsang* to *Barbilding* – multiple strophes – to indicate this transition, Brunner locates this shift as beginning in the mid fourteenth century in Brunner et al. 2019, 324
[77] In the *RSM*, Nunnenbeck is considered to be the last of the older Meistersinger with Hans Sachs the first of the younger ones.

further support the argument that the figure of Mary and her bounded body stands for the city and enabled poets and their audiences alike to reflect the urban space in which they lived.

Following this analysis, the second chapter will examine the relationship between poetry and knowledge in the late Middle Ages, drawing on the research of the 2005-9 project on Poetic Knowledge in Late Medieval France. With examples from the Vidoue print and Nunnenbeck I consider how the forms French and German lyrics articulate knowledge in different ways. The role of the refrain emerges as key: present in the *chant royal* but not in *Meistersang*, it informs the way knowledge is articulated. Looking at *Arts de seconde rhétorique* and *Schulkunst* poems, I show how an equivalence is drawn between poetic and religious orthodoxy. A case study of the Marian lyric of Konrad Nachtigall exemplifies the way in which knowledge about the figure of Mary is conveyed through poetry.

In the final chapter, I examine the dynamic of devotional poetry being composed for competition, and analyse the interplay between play and piety in Marian lyric, using approaches from game theory. Arguing that the productive and mutually enriching relationship between play and piety is made possible by the non-opposition between the individual and the community, I contend that play is an effective framework through which to approach late medieval poetics and the way poets engage with one another and tradition. This is shown through close reading of two poems with the same set refrain from the 1497 *puy*, and exemplified further with examples from Folz and Nunnenbeck. I end with an analysis of Jacques le Lieur's Book of Hours, Rouen BM Y. 226[a], which, as a luxury status object which anonymises le Lieur's own poetry and subsumes it into the prayer of the Church, encapsulates the relationship between play and devotion, and the individual and the community.

The conclusion will synthesise these findings, showing the richness of Marian lyric composed in towns and cities in their depiction of urban mentalities, and the importance of including them in discussions of late-medieval poetics. I will illustrate the implications of my findings for areas of study such as lay piety, suggesting Marian lyric is a key expression of urban, lay devotion, communicating affective and catechetical knowledge in the city.

I will finish by indicating where further research is needed, and the new avenues for study

Chapter I: Marian Lyric as Urban Lyric

Le souverain en sa grand prelature
Fist composer en grant perfection
Une cité faicte dessus nature
Toute belle sans imperfection
Et print ouvriers qui sans quelque insolence
Compilerent l'oeuvre de corpulence
Sans la sallyr car le vray fondateur
La preserva du faulx concurateur
Et la crea par pensée eternelle
Donc la nomme comme simple orateur
Cité de Dieu en tout temps pure et belle

Ceste cité par bonne constructure
Sur ung rocher eust sa fondacion
Adornee de murs pour la closture
Qui decorent la situacion
Et de portes belles par precellence
Ou jamais n'eust aucune violence
De tours aussi faictes en grant haulteur
Tant plaisantes au bon fabricateur
Qui l'appelle sur toutes supernelle
Pour ce la dist tout bon compositeur
Cité de Dieu en tout temps pure et belle

Les citoyens vivent tous par droicture
En demenant grant jubilacion
Comme voyons selon saincte escripture
Et dessus tout pour conservation
A ung bel air sans quelque pestilence
Ceste cité des belles l'excellence
C'est Marie mere du redempteur
Et les ouvriers a tout expositeur
Sont les parens qui ceste noble ancelle
Engendrer veut au gré du createur
Cité de Dieu en tout temps pure et belle

Par le rocher mys en nostre lecture
Prens Jesuscrist par declaration
Qui preveoit Marie sans laidure
En mesme instant de sa conception
Et par les murs beaulx en magnificence
Nous entendons sa charité immense
Les citoyens par l'interpretateur
Sont ses pensées au coeur de sauvateur
Qui confutent le faulx Sathan rebelle
La demonstrant pour le reformateur
Cité de Dieu en tout temps pure et belle

Par les portes closes sans ouverture
Entendre on doit en exposition
Virginité sans aucune fracture
Les haultes tours par ma relation
Sont les vertus grandes par eminence
Et le bon air est la divine essence

Qui la construict mere du plasinateur
Jamais n'en fust ne sera une telle
Car Dieu la fist luy seul triumphateur
Cité de Dieu en tout temps pure et belle

Envoy
Ceste cité que feist l'architecteur
Presidée du treshault senateur
Composee sans quelque corruptelle
C'est Marie mere du salvateur
Cité de Dieu en tout temps pure et belle[1]

Introduction

Le Maschure's *chant royal* with the refrain 'Cité de Dieu en tout temps pure et belle' conceives of the Virgin Mary as a city,[2] constructed as a masterpiece by a *Deus Artifex*, and makes explicit the relationship between Mary and the city that underlies much urban Marian poetry.[3] Building on the exploration of urban space in the later Middle Ages in the introduction, this chapter seeks to explore the extent to which an urban mentality can be found in the poetry of the *puys* and *Meistergesang.*

I will argue that city-dwellers used the Virgin Mary, as a bounded figure, fully intact, to write about the city, depicting her as God's creation. In doing so, this sanctified both the daily work of those living in the city and the act of composition of poetry. After considering the idea of urban mentality and positing the idea of 'boundedness' as a key aspect of this, I will begin with a study of Oxford, Bodleian Library, Douce 379, a *recueil* of all the poems presented at

[1] Oxford Douce 379 41r-42v, my own transcription. As is the case with most of the *puy* poems discussed in this chapter, the *chant royal* only appears in a single manuscript. Following Foulet and Speer (1979), I have distinguished between *i* and *j*, *v* and *u* and expanded abbreviations. Apostrophes have been added along with capital letters for names and the texts lightly edited with the acute accent to aid reading. Hüe (2002b, 13), who has published the only modern edition of puy poetry, points out that it is very difficult to be sure of the pronunciation of Middle French in this time period.

[2] The *chant royal* (sometimes written as *champ royal* in contemporary manuscripts and *Arts de seconde rhetorique*) was built around a refrain, or *palinod*, and consisted of five *onzains*, though occasionally strophes of ten or twelve lines are used, followed by an *envoy*. The rhyme scheme was generally *ababccddedE,* with E being the *palinod,* followed by ddedE in the *envoy*, though there was room for variation. The same rhymes had to be used in all strophes, but no rhyme word could be used twice, meaning it was technically very challenging. The *chant royal* is thought to ultimately derive from the Old Occitan *canso*: on its history and form, see Stewart 1975, Gros 1996a; Denis Hüe 2002a, 885–915.

[3] On the history *topos* of the Deus Artifex, see Curtius 1973, 544–46

the 1511 *Puy de l'Immaculée Conception* of Rouen and investigate images of boundedness in this collection. I will then turn to *Meistergesang*, analysing the Marian poetry in Heidelberg Universitätsbibliothek cpg 680, a collection of *Meisterlieder* linked to the city of Augsburg. Using these two collections of poetry will offer the possibility of a comparative analysis of the respective French and German material to probe how boundedness works across difference traditions of Marian poetry in this period. Having drawn some conclusions, we will return to a case study of *puy* poetry rooted in the manuscript offered to Louise of Savoy containing winning poems and miniatures illustrating their refrain from the *Puy Notre-Dame d'Amiens*. Exploring the lyric, this time in conjunction with image, will demonstrate the richness of the material in light of the earlier analysis.

The analysis in this chapter builds on Denis Hüe's monumental work on the *Puy de l'Immaculée Conception*, in which he carefully shows how the Rouen *Puy* drew on all aspects of urban life, with the metaphors for Mary coming from the trades practised in the city.[4] He shows how technical vocabulary from different fields of daily life is employed such that the poetry of the *Puy* represented the urban space and activity of Rouen, and how technical language became poetic language.[5] The Immaculate Conception united the people of Rouen, creating a focal point for their poetry and a doctrine which they could explore using the language of city life, such that *puy* poetry truly was a 'poésie urbaine'.[6] Hüe points out that, for the many different areas of city life – from artisanal work to finance – one could undertake close readings of poems and show how they were used to praise the Virgin Mary, coming to the same conclusions, such that this kind of analysis will now show little new.[7] Therefore, in this chapter, I will not seek to prove that Marian lyric enabled this kind of

[4] See in particular, the section on 'Les Hommes', Hüe 2002a, 687–884.
[5] Hüe 2002a, 882.
[6] Hüe 2002a, 883.
[7] Hüe 2002a, 881.

reflection on urban life, this already having been demonstrated so masterfully, and only offer a few brief examples of how elements of city life appear in Douce 379. Rather, building on this work, I will show the Virgin Mary did not just create the opportunity to sing *about* aspects of urban life, but that the Virgin Mary was herself, implicitly, *the* city. In the Marian frame of mind, with its blending of Old Testament, Wisdom, New Testament, and Apocalyptic imagery, types and titles of Mary can be identified with one another, and movement from one such image to another is possible, meaning that any image can stand for the Virgin Mary as City of God.

Here I would like to highlight two aspects of this corpus of Marian poetry that reflect the urban space in which it was written. The first is the idea that an interest in enclosure and privilege may point to an urban mentality in those writing, judging, and listening to this poetry, and the second is the use of artisanal language. The latter has already been well established in both *puy* poetry and *Meistergesang*, and so in this chapter I will build on this to show that the language of craft, construction and *Handwerk* is intimately linked with bounded images.[8]

Urban Mentalities

It is often assumed that the new modes of urban living in the Middle Ages, and the fact of belonging to an urban community and living in an urban environment, necessarily created a new mentality and new way of interacting with the world and surrounding space. For example, Albrecht Classen asserts that 'the phenomenon of the medieval city fundamentally triggered the creation of a new type of consciousness, the rise of an urban class, and urban

[8] On *puy* poetry and artisanal imagery and languages see Hüe 2002a and Hoogvliet 2019 On *Meistergesang* and *Handwerk*, see Schneider 2017, Harant 1997 on the earlier *Sangspruch* and *Meistergesang*, and Kugler 1977. More generally, see also Obermaier 2000.

culture, and an urban identity'.[9] He makes this claim in the introduction to a volume of essays on urban space, all of which deal in some way with what we might call 'urban mentality', working with the premise that this 'new type of consciousness' did exist, without this claim having been sufficiently interrogated or substantiated. Rather the reality of this urban mentality is simply taken for granted.[10]

Recent research on cities has often moved away from economic and political questions to social, emotional and cultural questions, particularly in analysing the way in which urban space was produced and perceived.[11] Yet not only is there often little theoretical underpinning for such research, which simply takes the existence of this urban mentality for granted,[12] but there is also a wide variety of terminology used to denote concepts that may or may not be the same. For example, Andrew Brown and Jan Dumolyn's edited volume deals with *Medieval Urban Culture*: in order to avoid the lack of rigour regarding definition and justification of terms which they identify in other studies, they attempt to define culture, but also point out that there is an overlap with the terms ideology and identity and that the precise uses of different terms are not always clear.[13] In fact, though they claim a distinction exists between 'urban culture' and 'urban identity' in their opening remarks, despite the overlap, they often proceed to use both culture and identity in the same sentence without properly distinguishing between the two: for example, mentioning that 'ceremonies conducted in towns thus often contributed to raising the profile of a distinctive urban culture and identity',[14] with the difference between those two terms never made explicit. On the other

[9] Classen 2009, 19.
[10] *Mentalité* as a subject of historical research has its origins in the French Annales school and its emphasis on long-term structural changes and cultural factors. Key texts developing and exploring the idea of *mentalité* include Ariès 1960, Duby 1978, and Le Goff 1977.
[11] Brown and Dumolyn 2017, 2
[12] Brown and Dumolyn 2017, 3.
[13] Brown and Dumolyn 2017, 3.
[14] Brown and Dumolyn 2017, 15.

hand, Black uses 'mentality' for the 'new kind of consciousness' to which Classen refers.[15] Harmut Kugler also uses 'Mentalität' as well as 'Bewusstsein' to describe 'das "bürgerlich" genannte Denken' that developed in the late medieval period.[16] Marc Boone and Peter Stabel (2002) use 'identity' in their volume *Shaping Urban Identity in Late Medieval Europe* and the word appears in the title of four of the contributions to the volume. Neither satisfactorily explains precisely what they understand by mentality or identity. I am going to use 'mentality' to describe the phenomenon that these various terms are gesturing towards, as it is slightly broader in scope, encompassing not just the way townspeople and city dwellers thought about themselves (for which identity would seem to be the more appropriate term), but also their characteristic ways of thinking. It suggests a mindset and character, and thus is not quite as broad as 'culture'.

Did this mentality that Classen postulates truly exist? And if so, what would it encompass? A necessary caveat is, of course, that, just as there is huge diversity in urban settlements, so there will be a huge diversity in urban mentalities. This is not only due to different kinds and sizes of towns and cities, but because the experience of urban life would have varied according to gender and socio-economic status among other factors, meaning that there is unlikely to be a single urban mentality; however, we can still search for commonalities that are characteristic of urban mentalities. Rouen was a French town (but one which had in the century leading up to the founding of the *Puy* found itself in English hands) which owed its allegiance to the King of France, but had privileges bestowed upon it, such as the right to a bell tower, now the *Grand Horloge*. It had a self-consciousness of its status as such, and civic

[15] Black 1984, 15.
[16] Kugler 1986, 6–8.

buildings, such as the *Palais de Justice*, built 1499-1507, emphasise this architecturally.[17] Augsburg, on the other hand, was a 'freie Reichstadt', which visually through its coat of arms created a link with its Roman Imperial history, foregrounding Augsburg's consciousness as a city with a special status.[18] Moreover, Augsburg was governed through a guild regime in the late-medieval period, which began in 1368 when artisans took up arms against the government, occupied the city hall and called for a greater voice in civic government.[19] These are, therefore, both cities which are conscious of their status as such, and have a sense of their identity and privilege.

Representations of space, which could include maps, city plans, and architectural drawings, for example, would suggest that the city was a distinct and bounded space, completely separate from the countryside around it. Martha Howell's study of images of cities, drawing on architectural plans, laws about citizenship, and maps, concludes that medieval images of the city 'replicated the themes of privilege, separateness, boundedness and distinction'.[20] The city was, in theory, and in the representations we have of it, carefully delineated from the surrounding space, demarcated as a closed-off entity and defined against the other of the countryside.

[17] On Rouen in the Middle Ages, see Hicks and Brenner 2013, Cailleux, 1994, and Murphy and Small 2020.
[18] Rajkay 2020, 33.
[19] On the guild regime, see Close 2020.
[20] Howell 2000, 5.



Fig I *Grande-Vue de Rouen* by Jacques le Lieur 1525. Source: BM de Rouen, Licence Ouverte

This image of Rouen, from the Le Lieur's *Livre des Fontaines*, shows the city walls clearly, which separate the city as a distinct, bounded space separate from both the countryside and sea surrounding it.



Fig II Augsburg from Schedel's *Weltchronik*, Public Domain via Wikipedia Commons

Augsburg too is depicted with protective city walls, marking the urban environment as separate and distinct.

One element of city privilege is that *Stadtluft macht frei* – the idea that if a serf remained in a city for a day and a year, he became free.[21] Thus the very air of a city bestowed privilege. This also points toward one of the tensions in the idea of boundedness and enclosure: it is a separateness which implies freedom and accessibility – though only to the privileged few. Yet this ideological separation that is evident so forcefully in representations of urban space, both visual and documentary, may be nothing more than a fiction. Indeed, having cogently made the case for urban space as carefully demarcated and distinct, Howell proceeds to demonstrate that these representations were undermined in practice, and that there was in reality far more exchange with the countryside than initially appears.[22] She ultimately concludes that 'in an important sense […] cities were precisely not what their maps claimed them to be, and precisely not what their laws governing immigration and citizenship, their walls and gates, their jurisdictional boundaries seemed to insist'.[23] This illustrates that imagined urban space could be just as powerful as the physical reality of space, and in spite of Howell's conclusion that cities were not, in fact, as bounded as they claimed to be, I see her emphasis on such images of 'privilege, separateness, boundedness, and distinction' to be key in establishing the power of images and self-representation and, in highlighting such images in *puy* poetry and Marian *Meistergesang*, will show that such images do enable city-dwellers to articulate an urban mentality.

[21] The origin of this phrase, oft cited by writers on the medieval city such as Ennen, is disputed. Hans-Georg Gellinek (1989) argues that it was neither a medieval proverb nor has any legal basis but is rather a later construction. It is true that those who mention it often fail to justify their use of the phrase. On the other hand, Strahm (1955, 103) does find evidence for the tradition, rooting his argument in Bern's *Stadtrechtprivileg,* whose articles 12 and 13 do accord freedom to one who remains in the city for a year and day. He concedes that the formulation 'Stadtluft macht frei' is a more recent invention, but argues that it was a well-known principle which would have been recognised in medieval Germany, linking it to ideas such as the more easily attested 'Luft macht leibeigen'. Though the formulation 'Stadtluft macht frei' may be contentious, the persistence of the idea again highlights the importance of the imagined or ideal city.
[22] Howell 2000, 12.
[23] Howell 2000, 13.

Oxford Douce 379 and the Rouen *Puy de l'Immaculée Conception*

I will begin the investigation into urban mentality in Marian lyric with the collection of poetry in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Douce 379. The manuscript contains all of the poems presented at the Rouen *puy* in 1511, which is just before it reached its apogee.[24] It appears therefore to be the paper record mentioned in the statutes in which all the names of the poets should be written down along with the poems they presented.[25] Alongside the more local poets, in 1511 the Prince had persuaded André de la Vigne, a well-known poet and secretary to the king, to come and compete. Thus far most critical interest in the manuscript has been due to André de la Vigne's contributions:[26] as well as his poem for the competition, there are fourteen further poems 'donnés' to the Prince.[27] However, most of the poets are local, if not from Rouen, then Normandy. We do not know much about them – there is a mixture of secular clergy, lawyers, booksellers, goldsmiths, and sailors. But it is their contributions, as urban inhabitants composing poems for their fellow city-dwellers, in honour of the patron of their city, that are more interesting. The manuscript contains *chants royaux*, *ballades, rondeaux,* and Latin *epigrammes*. For the purpose of this study, I will focus on the *chants royaux* and the *rondeaux* given that they were considered to be the two most important vernacular categories at the *Puy,* and their forms are markedly different.

[24] In 1514, the *puy* had to move from the church St Jean-sur-Renelles to the Carmelites as a bigger space was needed to accommodate all those who wanted to come. During the 1510s, the *puy* increased its reach beyond Rouen and Normandy, too, with poets (as André de la Vigne did in 1511) travelling from Paris and beyond to compete.

[25] The statutes state that a copy should be made on both paper and parchment. These books should be kept in a chest during the year along with the other belongings of the *Puy*, and the Prince should look after the keys. The primary reason for keeping this record is to prevent poets from trying to present a poem from previous years. This is seen as an 'abuss' and an injustice to those who have laboured to produce their poems. See *Approbation*

[26] See for example, Brown 2007. Chesney (1950, 43-45) edited André de la Vigne's winning poem.

[27] Poets were only permitted to present [presenter] one poem in each category to be considered in the competition itself, however, they could offer [donner] more poems to the Prince, and many chose to. In 1511, 32 *chants royaux* were 'presentés' and a further 18 'donnés'.

Taking Howell's themes of 'privilege, separateness, boundedness, and distinction', I will briefly begin with the obvious element of privilege, before focusing primarily on boundedness, which entails separateness and distinction, as well as implying elements of exclusivity. With the Immaculate Conception being a sign of Mary's privilege, it is not difficult to find this theme replicated: Mary is often described as being 'esleue' or even 'preesleue' by God, with the two words appearing sixteen times across the corpus. For example, in Bitot's poem *Jadiz fut veu en la vallée austere* (No. 16) we are told that, 'par exaltacion', Mary has been 'sur toutes bien esleue' (lines 5 and 6). Mary is conceived of as having been chosen from the beginning of time to receive this great honour, and with most of the poems making reference to the Immaculate Conception in one way or another, this being the devotion to which the *Puy* was oriented, the theme of privilege is ubiquitous. Semantic fields around 'excellence' recur, appearing twenty-three times in the poems, often rhymed with 'precellence'. Her privilege of exemption from original sin is foregrounded throughout, with the word family around 'exempt' cropping up thirty-six times in sixteen of the poems 'presentés'.[28] Mary, in her unique situation as Mother of God, free from original sin, exemplifies privilege, a characteristic equated with urban spaces. It is not surprising, given her nature, that this theme comes up constantly, but it could indicate why Mary was the ideal figure for a city, believing itself to be privileged, to take as a patron around whom to form an identity. Moreover, Mary's privilege is seen as being extended to the *puy* itself through the privileges afforded them by Pope Leo X.[29]

> Item nostre dit saint pere le pape consyderant l'honnesteté et singularité de la dicte confraternité voulant icelle décorer de beaux privileges a declaré qu'il veult entend et ordonne de l'auctorité que dessus icelle confraternité comme la plus noble estre avancee/exaltee et preferee/a toutes les autres confraternitez de la dicte ville et cité de Rouen/et mesmes de toute la province de Normandie.

[28] See poems Nos. 1, 3, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 20, 21, 25, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, and 33.
[29] *Approbation*: 27.

The same lexis often used to describe Mary is here applied to the *Puy*: privilege, exaltation and preferment. Members of the *puy* are entitled to indulgences and pardons, and the *puy* may elect a confessor who can forgive sins usually reserved to the Holy See.[30] Rather than visiting the seven pilgrim churches in Rome, members can visit 'les eglises, cathedrale, des Carmes, et de la ronde de ceste ville de Rouen'.[31] The term 'ronde' characterises the city as a bounded space (and sounds like *rondel*, one of the categories of the competition), and this privilege makes the city of Rouen equal to that of Rome, marking it out as a sacred place.[32] The words used in the *Approbation* therefore accord with those applied to the Virgin Mary and those Howell links with images of the city: boundedness, distinction and privilege.

More so than privilege, however, it is the idea of boundedness which I would like to explore. The city walls, which separated the city from the countryside, marking out the boundary, bound the city, which, like Mary's body after conception and birth, remains intact. The relationship between her body and the city therefore has a productive potential for poetry. As *virgo intacta*, she is like the walled city or the castle or tower whose gates and doors are resolutely shut, though have the potential to be opened, and only God can enter. Her womb and body were closed off, just as the ideal city was perceived and represented. Many of her celebrated names and attributes gesture toward this, with the Tower of David, Ivory Tower, and Golden House.[33] City of God is also one of these titles.[34] The idea that boundedness could point to Mary is further emphasised by the nature of Corpus Christi processions tracing

[30] *Approbation*, 29.
[31] *Approbation*, 31.
[32] On earlier comparisons with the city of Rome, see van Houts 2013.
[33] On Marian titles and types, particularly those that appear in poetry, see Salzer 1967.
[34] Mary's title as City of God has a long tradition, and could be seen in, for example in Psalm 46:5-6: 'Fluminis impetus laetificat civitatem Dei sanctificavit tabernaculum suum Altissimus. Deus in medio eius non commovebitur adiuvit eam Deus mane diluculo' in which Mary as tabernacle can be also equated with the City of God – Fulton Brown (2018, 184) cites Augustine's commentary on this passage in favour of a Mariological reading. Psalm 87:3 'Gloriosa dicta sunt de te civitas Dei' can also be seen as a speaking about Mary. See Fultron Brown (2018, 292-5) on the scriptural and patristic basis for this title of Mary. See also Thelamon 2018 on the link between the Immaculate Conception and the image of the City of God.

the city walls: as Christ was in Mary's womb, so the city walls contained the Body of Christ, both in the form of the Blessed Sacrament and the corporate body of the citizenry. Fourteen of thirty-two *chants royaux presentés* engage with images of boundedness, often through conventional Marian images that represent her virginity and her body as a dwelling place for Christ, such as the Tower of David or the closed garden.[35] As with the Tower of David, buildings whose enclosure is formed through walls recur, such as a house or a palace, as in the case of the palace with 'portes closes a jamais' in Mauger's poem with the refrain 'palais royal construict de pierre dure' (No. 13). Images of houses, palaces, and temples abound in the depiction of Mary, all buildings which create enclosure through walls, as did the ideal or imagined medieval city, and just like Jerusalem in Psalm 121.[36] Mary is explicitly described as the City of God in five of the poems, including Le Maschure's *chant royal* given at the beginning of this chapter (No. 33), whose entire lyric is built around the conceit, with the refrain 'Cité de Dieu en tout temps pure et belle'.[37] The city is characterised as enclosed with 'murs pour la cloture' and 'portes closes'. This points rather to the heavenly Jerusalem and an ahistorical ideal of a city, but one which city-dwellers evidently liked to associate with their own as can be seen from their maps and drawings. This creates associations with the other walled images being used to describe Mary, characterising Mary as enclosed, but also implicitly linking Mary with the city. Poetologically, these different images of boundedness which represent Mary are used in similar ways, suggesting to a certain extent that one could be substituted for another without necessarily changing the meaning of the poem.

[35] Poems No. 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 13, 14, 20, 22, 25, 29, 30, 32, 33.
[36] Psalm numbering, and all biblical quotations follow the Vulgate.
[37] No. 5 by Cretin, No. 24 by Henry, No. 29 by Cousture, and No. 34 by Le General de Caen all make explicit reference to the *cité.* Another example from a different year in which the *cite* is part of the palinod would be Pierre le Lieur's poem presented in 1515 with the *palinod* 'Saincte cité contre Sathan fermee', which was printed in the Vidoue *recueil* (No. 27).

In *Building the Text*, David Cowling (1998) analyses the tradition of architectural metaphors, mostly in the late medieval poetry of the *Rhétoriqueurs.* He traces this tradition back to the description of the heavenly Jerusalem in Revelation, but the first paradigm he explores, 'THE BODY IS A BUILDING', goes back even as far as Plato. He characterises late medieval France as 'a culture which made frequent reference to the metaphorical equation of the woman's body as a building'.[38] For his purposes, buildings and cities belong to the same category and he does not distinguish between them or even suggest that this decision needs a justification, suggesting that cities and buildings were indeed the same type of object: with their walls and gates or doors, they function in the same way and are, to a certain extent, interchangeable.[39] Mary's body works in the same way.. Cowling writes: 'The gate of a building or a fortified city may remain resolutely shut, and thus may be compared to the closed gate of Ezekiel, figure of the Virgin in her physical integrity post-partum'.[40] This suggests also that a building with which Mary is identified does not need to be an urban building for the allegory or metaphor to function like that of the city. It is the physical composition of walls and gates and doors that points to the city, not the role or location of the building itself.

For example, the beginning of the fourth *dizain* of the General de Caen's poem, *La mere de Dieu a deu estre conceue* (No. 32), uses multiple overlapping metaphors for Mary:

> La racine par fruict jadiz deceue
> A produicte la vierge florissante
> Ou semence divine s'est receue
> Tous cytoyens celeste nourrissante
> Tour de David porte du ciel certaine
> Puis d'eaux vives ortulaire fontaine
> Cité de Dieu dont onc ne se absenta (lines 21-27)

[38] Cowling 1998, 39.
[39] See the examples of miniatures from BnF fr. 145 later in this chapter 90-98.
[40] Cowling 1998, 24.

A semantic field of cultivated language encompassing ‘fruict’, ‘florissante’ and ‘semence’ segues into more architectural images: those fed are ‘cytoyens’, though the image of the City of God does not come for three more lines. Instead, two other standard Marian images are introduced: the ‘Tour de David’ and ‘Porte du ciel’ each taking up a hemistich, with an equality suggested between the two images, both fitting for Mary, the one implying enclosure of God, the other the accessibility of heaven through Mary. With a return to the garden imagery before the City of God, and, in particular, the idea of life-giving water, the progression to the ‘Cité de Dieu’ suggests something dynamic and alive: ‘la vierge florissante’ is the ‘Cité de Dieu’, giving the impression not of lifeless walls, but of a living being. The Tower of David and City of God function similarly, both as standard titles of Mary, ones which imply enclosure and occupy the same place metrically, and it would even be possible to substitute the one with the other without significantly altering the meaning of the strophe. Architectural forms of enclosure, such as the monastic or anchoritic cell, are ideologically linked with gardens, specifically the closed garden and Eden: Ehrenschwendter, writing on enclosure in the context of convent life, states that ‘life in enclosure resembles – from afar – the garden or paradise’,[41] using examples from writing for cloistered Dominican sisters that demonstrate a similar slippage between different forms of enclosure, from cell to garden to paradise. As with Mary’s closed body, the closure of the cell enables the opening of paradise. Similarly, in the envoy at the end of Guerould’s *Gens vertueux plains de sagacité* (No. 30), built around the conceit that Mary is a palace built by and for God, several of these images are deployed:

> Tour de David sans nulle adversité
> Temple de paix arche de deité
> Je n’ay fors vous pour ma pause et replique
> Car on vous dist sans tenebrosité
> D’alpha et O le palais magnifique (lines 51-5)

[41] Ehrenschwendtner 2010, 309.

The tower and temple in particular have the same formal position, structural role and thematic implication as the house of God, constructed through walls, just like the magnificent palace, whose 'fondaments' were 'fist et bastie' to withstand the destruction of the enemy, as one would expect from the Tower of David.

These examples demonstrate that several of the titles of Mary suggest enclosure and, in the poetry of the *puy,* operate formally, structurally, and thematically in analogous ways, and that their function is also like that of the image of her as the City of God. The fact that these images of enclosure appear in almost half the poems suggests that this aspect of Mary was one that attracted the poets, and presumably the jury and audience for whom they were composing. Even if images such as 'maison', 'mansion', 'palais', 'jardin cloz', 'temple' or 'salle' were not immediately or explicitly linked with enclosure or the city, there is an underlying association between them all. Mary as City of God was able to represent this idea of privilege, enclosure, and separateness from the rest of the world for the citizens engaged in writing, judging, and listening to this poetry. Thus the figure of Mary enabled the foregrounding and exploration of this theme of enclosure and is potential evidence of an urban mentality in the poetry of the *puy*. Much contemporary discussion of medieval enclosure often takes place in relation to cloistered religious women,[42] and, in particular, highlights the gendered nature of medieval reflections on enclosure.[43] These explorations of the cloistered life and the 'architectural space and its symbolic representations' can help us see why bounded, enclosed spaces may have attracted poets and audiences living in the city rather than the cloister.[44] Cities had cloisters functioning as closed spaces within the bounded space of their city walls. Marie-Luise Ehrenschwendter argues that one of the most helpful

[42] Ehrenschwendtner 2010, Cannon 2006, Horner 2001, and Uffmann 2016.
[43] For example, see Uffmann 2016, 85.
[44] Uffmann 2016, 85.

ways of defining enclosure is in terms of separation, both spatially and with regard to community.[45] We have seen this already in the visual representations of the city, ideologically delineating the city from that which surrounds it, be it land or water. Where in the cloister 'it was traditionally accepted that separation from the world generates spiritual liberty and thus restores the primordial dignity of man',[46] the bounded space of the city similarly, in separating itself from the world of the countryside and the court, afforded its citizens liberty and the dignity of their work. The symbolism of the architecturally enclosed gardens, houses, palaces, and the city is equally similar to the symbolism of the cloister, suggesting that the bounded city could perhaps take on some of the significance of enclosure, too. Metaphors and symbolism of monastic enclosure underline the connectedness of the environment and the spiritual quest and enable the cloistered to internalise habits linked to the monastic way of life.[47] The city, too, enabling new ways of life and new forms of spirituality, could therefore be a bounded space in which its inhabitants could live a life of virtue. For example, Jean Quentin's 1491 *La Maniere de Bon Vivre* (Paris, BnF RES-D-11097) addressed those of 'moyen estat' living in the city, directing them to sanctify their workshop through prayer, integrating meditation into their daily life. That it was copied into a 1517 Rouen Book of Hours suggests that it was in circulation among the sort of people involved in the *Puy* and shows attempts at understanding holiness within the context of the city. Moreover, the sense of being bounded and enclosed by walls emphasised the sense of community and the common good, with all members having their part to play.[48] Just as cloistered communities were strengthened by their shared enclosure, so we can see how cities would have benefited from a sense of the *vita communis*.

[45] Ehrenschwendtner 2010, 305.
[46] Ehrenschwendtner 2010, 309.
[47] Ehrenschwendtner 2010, 310.
[48] Uffmann 2016, 107.

The idea that Mary's very body represented the city fits well with the contemporary idea that saw the city as a macrocosm of the human body. This imagery is made manifest not only in neo-Platonic and Aristotelian writings such as those of Alan de Lille, but also in the writings of urban inhabitants, and through the 'moral topography' of the city and its structure of governance.[49] Keith Lilley's *The City and the Cosmos* presents contemporary literature in terms of sermons and political writing as evidence for this. The city was, in effect, the 'urban body', and just as the body has a head which governs its members, so the corporate body of the city, the body politic, has its head in a mayor or city council.[50] If the city as body was being preached from the pulpit as well as invoked by civic leaders, who derived their authority as head of the body, in the divinely ordained hierarchy, we can perhaps imagine, as Lilley writes, that it is true that 'the microcosm analogy between cosmos-city = body pervaded Christian thought throughout the Middle Ages'.[51] The performative nature of Corpus Christi processions manifested this ideology in a very physical way. The Body of Christ was carried around in a procession made up of the head and members of the body politic, spatially delineating the boundaries of the urban body as the route traced the boundaries of the city, often following the city walls and passing by not only significant religious institutions, but also civic ones.[52] It follows that if Christ is contained within the city, then Mary herself is the city.

This idea of boundedness and enclosure is thematised on a formal level through the *rondeau*, the other principal genre of the Rouen *Puy*.[53] The *rondeau*, with its refrain, creates a cyclical,

[49] Lilley 2009, 131.
[50] Lilley 2009, 136.
[51] Lilley 2009, 132.
[52] Liley 2009, 158.
[53] The *rondeau* was a short poem constructed around two rhymes, generally of 12 or 15 lines. The first line is used as the refrain (also known as the *rentrement*) and is repeated throughout the poem. Often, only the first word, or a phrase from the first line is given as the refrain, such that it is not clear how much of the line is to be repeated. There is room for variation in number of stanzas and strophes, so even though it is a 'fixed form', many *rondeaux* look markedly different from one another on the page. On the *rondeau* in the *puys*, see Gros

circular structure, as is made evident explicitly in Guillaume Machaut's famous *rondeau* 'Ma fin est mon commencement/ et mon commencement est ma fin', with these opening lines a refrain reprised during and at the very end of the poem. Philip Knox points out that sometimes *rondeaux* were even presented in a circular fashion in manuscripts, underlining the conception of this form as circular in people's minds.[54] Particularly by this late medieval period, in which the rondeau has been decoupled from its musical accompaniment, it is no longer clear quite how much of the refrain is to be repeated.[55] In Douce 379, as illustrated in the transcription below of Bitot's rondeau (No. 59), only the first word or two of the refrain are written out.[56] While the oral presentation of the poem at the *puy* itself would have had to resolve the cyclical nature by articulating the refrains, the written record is more ambiguous, leaving it unclear whether only the written words are to be repeated, the single line, or whether multiple lines comprise the refrain. Each of these options works semantically and produces slightly different readings. One reading available is that which simply ends up repeating the entire poem again and again.

Gentilz normans prenez felicité
En festinant la grant solemnité
Du jour sacré de ma conception
Laquelle fut par l'ange recité
A vostre duc plain de benignité
Qui l'exaulta par grand dévotion

O cueurs devotz de Rouen la cité
Remembrez vous de la festivité
De mon concept par exaltation

Gentilz normans

Oncques a moy ne fust ferocité
Car mon enfant m'a tins par purité
La plus belle des filles de Syon

1996b, and on the *rondeau* more generally, see the recent edited volume Cerquiglini-Toulet, Dauphant, and Lefèvre 2021.
[54] Knox 2016, 222.
[55] On *rondeaux* where there is no melody, see Mathias Sieffert 2021. Check he's in bibliography
[56] A transcription is given here, showing the form of the *rondeau* as set out in the manuscript (59r), with the *rentrement* comprising the first two words of the first line, and set apart.

Laquelle

De plusieurs roys je prins nativité
Et dedens moy a prins humanité
Par son voulloir le plus noble Cyon
Qui me garda par son utilité
D'estre conceue en la fragilité
Du faulx serpent remply d'ambicion

Gentilz normansz

The rondeau is caught up in an endless cycle of repetition, such that, just like the city, and just like Mary, and in its circularity, it makes its own bounded space. In this particular *rondeau*, in which Mary herself speaks, addressing the Normans, enjoining them to celebrate her conception, the city of Rouen itself is mentioned; the rhyme of 'cité' with 'purité' and, later, Mary's 'nativité and 'humanité' cements these associations between Mary's ever virgin body and the city, privileging the inhabitants of the city of Rouen as it does so. Depending on how much is to be repeated when 'Gentilz normans' is the refrain, we potentially have Mary invoking the *puy* in three ways three times over the course of the poem: first by directly addressing the Norman people of whom she is patron; secondly by appealing to the competition itself, which is how they celebrate her; and thirdly by delineating the time frame as the feast of the Immaculate Conception which roots it in the feast day associated with the *puy* as opposed to other devotions which could happen at any other times. Putting this in the mouth of Mary, and having it repeated potentially *ad infinitum,* emphasises the privileged relationship Mary as the Immaculate Conception has with the people of Rouen. That the relationship is with Rouen, rather than simply all Normans, is clarified by the second strophe. Invoking their devoted hearts, Mary makes explicit reference to the city of Rouen, emphasised by its place at the end of the *vers*, privileging the citizens on Rouen and their devotion as they privilege her in their poetry. The command to citizens, 'Remembrez vous de la festivité', may further hint at the idea of the city as body, in which the people are the members which make up the body of the city. That this command fits within a single

hemistich allows it to be read in isolation as such. And the image of the city as body once again highlights the association of Mary's body with the city, illustrating an exclusive relationship between Mary and the citizens who are the 'membres' of the body, dwelling in her protection.

Although Knox concedes that use of the *formes fixes* in the *puys* entailed an urban application of the associated lyric forms, he primarily situates them within the court, as aristocratic genres associated with the theme of love, suggesting that the *puys* were a space in which bourgeois and aristocratic culture could mix. Considering the formal question of circularity, he writes: 'If "circularity" is a formal principle of repetition it cannot be just that, as its aesthetic refinement shades into social refinement and suggests enclosure, privacy, and aristocratic leisure.'[57] Of course, images of boundedness, privilege and distinction were not exclusive to urban spaces conceived of as such, and the *rondeau*, with its formal circularity, appealed not only to the competitors and audience of the *puy*, but to the court, too. Thus, looking at the contributions of André de la Vigne, and how his entries differ from the more local poets', highlights what uses of the *rondeau* appealed to a specifically urban community. This was his first experience of the *Puy*, and, on a formal and thematic level, his contributions differ, sometimes significantly from the rest of the corpus.[58] In considering how he diverged from the norms of the *Puy* we might potentially draw out some differences between courtly and urban tastes regarding the *rondeau*.

[57] Knox 2016, 228.
[58] See Brown 2007 for a breakdown of the way his *chants royaux* experiment with form in a way not known to the *Puy*.

Although André de la Vigne won the first prize in the *chant royal*,[59] his *rondeaux* did not seem to find favour with the members of the *Puy*. Hüe and Gros both suggest that the order of the poems in the manuscript is indicative of the preferences of the jury,[60] and de la Vigne's five *rondeaux* 'donnés' to the prince come, as a group, at the very end of that section of the manuscript, suggesting they were not particularly highly esteemed.[61] On a formal level, four of his *rondeaux* only use one refrain line, whereas almost all the other *rondeaux* in the manuscript have two discrete refrains, as in the example above.[62] Similarly, putting the poem in the voice of Mary, having her directly address the crowd of people gathered in the city in her honour, seems to have been popular, yet none of de la Vigne's *rondeaux* use this device.[63] Images of enclosure or references to artisanal work do not make an appearance, and, although de la Vigne's poems pick up on some of the images that recur across the whole corpus, such as the *rondeau* with the refrain 'Sans macule vous estes toute necte' (No. 88) emphasising Mary's Immaculate Conception, he tends to favour more courtly imagery, such as in No. 84, de la Vigne's *Royne des cieux et des anges princesse*.

Of course, images of Mary as Queen and Princess are not uncommon in the corpus, but Mary's royalty is heavily foregrounded in this poem with the language of 'Royne', 'princesse', 'noblesse', 'maistresse', and 'souveraine', and the repetition of the refrain line 'Royne des cielz', presenting heaven as a court, underlines this further. This is far more explicit and insistent than, for example, the line of Kings through which Mary is descended in

[59] Hüe (2002a, 451-4) suggests that the jury may have felt obliged to offer him this honour, having invited him to come, with the visit of such an eminent poet bound to add to the prestige of the *puy*, and that therefore his victory should not necessarily be seen as a validation of his poetry, which often did not adhere to the norms of the *puy*.
[60] Hüe 2002a, 451.
[61] His *rondeau* presented for the competition, No. 60, is the eighth in the section, and his *rondeaux* offered to the Prince (Nos. 83-88) come at the very end of the section.
[62] Twenty-six of the other thirty-one *rondeaux* across the poems 'presentés' and 'donnés' have two refrains.
[63] Of the thirty-one other poems, fifteen, so almost half, have Mary speaking in the first-person. Gros (1996b,118) points out that this is an increasingly common feature of the form as time went on at the *puy*.

Bitot's poem. As the 'amye' of God, the lexis of *fin'amor* is hinted at, and while God's great love for Mary comes up time and time again, the specific vocabulary of her as His 'amie' is rare. It is also one of the very few poems in the manuscript in which the 'je' of the poet emerges.[64] The poem only makes subtle references to the Immaculate Conception rather than giving that as the reason for Mary's royalty. Formally and thematically, therefore, it would seem that the more courtly or aristocratic interpretation of the *rondeau* was not so popular and was less suited to the urban setting of the *Puy*. If we compare de la Vigne's *rondeau* with that of Levestu (No. 53), which was crowned the winning *rondeau* presented at the *Puy*, we can see that a different set of images is esteemed. As a frequent competitor and winner more than once, he clearly knew what was appropriate and fashionable in the context of the Rouen *Puy*.

Levestu's poem follows the standard form for the *rondeau* at the *Puy,* with the two discrete refrains and *Premierement* repeated several times over the course of the poem. Beginning the poem with the word *Premierement*, invoking the idea that Mary was conceived in God's mind before all else, the *rondeau* thematises circularity, returning in the middle and at the end of the poem, not just to the beginning of the *rondeau*, but to the beginning of time, an idea appealed to again through Mary stating that she was the 'commencement' of creation. Through its language, the poem therefore draws attention to its form, explicitly highlighting circularity and the closed nature of its form. Mary's conception is referred to in the first strophe and final strophes expressly in terms of her Immaculate Conception as she is 'd'aucun peché', ensuring that the poem explicitly links praise of Mary with her Immaculate Conception, in whose honour the *Puy* was held. The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception

[64] A feature of four of de la Vigne's *rondeaux*, and present in none of the other *rondeaux*, and only three of the *chants royaux*.

is lent authority through the appeal to Solomon and is directly referred to as an 'enseignement': not merely a pious opinion, but a doctrine to be held by all Christians. Linking Mary to Eve and situating her in salvation history reminds the audience how Mary enabled their salvation, since in giving birth to Jesus, she made heaven accessible despite the Fall. Depictions of the Fall, and Adam and Eve's sin as being undone through Mary, come up in many of the poems, suggesting it was a popular image at the *Puy*. Mary's description of herself as 'des oeuvres Dieu je suis commencement' uses the language of artisanal work, characterising herself as an 'oeuvre', and associating God with the work of the city's artisans who themselves made 'oeuvres'.[65] Levestu's poem therefore appeals to the norms of the *puy*, and through its language and form, employs the theme of enclosure, highlights Mary's privilege as the Immaculate Conception, and the themes that seem to have been attractive to the community writing, judging and listening to the poetry of the *puy* in an urban space.

This image of Mary as an 'oeuvre Dieu' highlights the language of craft and construction. One image which often recurs in those same poems concerned with themes of enclosure, especially when through architectural imagery, is the presence of the 'ouvrier'. God is often depicted as the master or architect, with Mary as his 'chief d'oeuvre' – that is, the masterpiece an artisan had to create in order to gain entry to the guild and earn the title of master. These lyrics highlight the kinds of skilled manual labour through which those in urban spaces make their living. For example, Chrestien's poem *Un grant ouvrier et maistre ingenieux* (No. 9) conceives of Mary as the 'chef d'oeuvre' of a Master who built an enclosed garden with high walls. God is described several times as a 'maistre', and language

[65] The term artisan is an unstable one. In discussing artisans engaged in literate devotional activities, Sabrina Corbellini and Margaret Hoogleviet (2013, 523) define them as those 'engaged in the work of manufacturing, either alone or together with apprentices and employees', which acts as a helpful guide, in that it focuses on action rather than social standing, which is difficult to pinpoint. The German term *Handwerker* also foregrounds the manufacturing element.

associated with his labour is used throughout the poem: he is learned in the 'art mechanique', this great work is 'construict', details are given of the 'pierres' used, and the mastery in building the walls is highlighted several times (often linked with the 'closture' they create). The *palinod* line of the poem is 'Le chef d'oeuvre de l'humaine nature', which not only reminds us that God is a creator, but, in imagining Mary as his greatest work, frames Him as an artisan.

Twelve of the poems use this kind of language, attributing artisanal aspects to God. In particular, language around creation and construction is foregrounded, and construction is not depicted as something merely mechanical, but as having an element of creativity. Construction is linked with the divine, sanctifying what may otherwise be conceived of as manual or mechanical labour. In Le Pigne's poem *La Trinité entre les triumphans* (No. 29), in which Mary herself declares how she was made to be a repository for God in another poem which explicitly highlights the theme of enclosure, she says 'je fus construicte' (line 6) and was so by 'oeuvres divines' (line 2), proclaiming herself later on to be to be 'Ce triumphe par ouvriers suffisans/ Faict et construict en divin consistoire/Fust tout encloz' (lines 12-4). With detail on the wood used in construction, the reality of work is featured, but it is elevated through its heavenly setting. Looking beyond the 1511 *Puy,* Hüe has demonstrated convincingly in his study of the Rouen *Puy* that the artisanal crafts of Rouen and the other professions practised there are represented across the wider corpus of *puy* poetry.[66] François Corinilliat emphasises that in the *chant royal*, Mary's grace extends to the metaphors charged

[66] In terms of manual labour (métier manuel being his term) alone, Hüe (2002a) gives examples of poems drawing on wine-making, milling, shepherding, drapery/tailoring, goldsmithing and minting, and glassblowing, all of which were represented in Rouen. Under 'Le Savoir', he considers grammar, printing, medicine, architecture, and navigating, as well as music and singing.

with representing her, highlighting her role in sanctifying the work and craft of those active in the city.[67]

As well as architecture and woodworking, masonry, portraiture, and book-making all appear within the collection of poems, often with God himself depicted as either an 'ouvrier' or a 'maistre' and Mary the 'oeuvre'. Through the deployment of trades practised within the town, and the language of work and construction, the poems show an interest in urban activity. It is interesting that many of these poems are also the ones which most heavily foreground enclosure. Indeed, the poem which takes Mary as the City of God throughout, uses this language of labour. We can see that Maschure's poem, quoted at the very beginning of this chapter, replicates several of the key images we have discussed. God, the architect, creates a city 'tout pure et belle', and it is revealed in the third strophe that 'c'est Marie, mere du redempteur'. The 'closture' of the walls, and the idea that the city air is 'sans quelque pestilence', harking back to the idea the *Stadtluft macht frei,* shows how Mary perfectly represented the city, and she is here an *oeuvre*, who was *composé* and *construict* as if God Himself were an artisan like those city dwellers. This imagery, recurring again and again, clearly appealed to those judging and listening to the poetry competition, and reveals a fascination with privilege and enclosure, for which Mary is the perfect figure.

While not all poems presented in 1511 underline the themes of distinction, boundedness, and artisanal work, they do come up with regularity and imply that, to a certain degree, these poems were operating in a literary community concerned with reflecting the urban space in which it was composed and the mentality of those living there. Furthermore, latent throughout these poems is the idea that that which is closed opens possibilities. The distinct,

[67] Cornilliat 1994, 537–45.

bounded city offers freedom to its citizens. Doors and gates imply potential accessibility and Mary's virginity opens up the possibility of salvation, opening heaven. In her reflections on enclosure and 'claustrophilia', Howie encapsulates this idea by asserting that 'To be inside (a chapter, a house, or a chapterhouse) is not to be sealed off: it is to be summoned, paradoxically, into a more concrete, ecstatic relation to what lies not just beyond but within these boundaries'.[68] In praising Mary's bounded body, which mirrored their own bounded city, the poets of Rouen used multiple interrelated images of boundedness which reinforce internal senses of community and distinction, but also suggest the city is a space in which the divine can be encountered and through which heaven can be reached. Having demonstrated that this is how Mary's body is instrumentalised by the poets of the Rouen *Puy* through the *chant royal* and the *rondeau*, I will now turn to examples of *Meistergesang*. I will examine whether this is unique to the poetry of the *puys* or whether it is indicative of how urban inhabitants sung about Mary by looking at a collection of poetry from Augsburg, using a manuscript of *Meisterlieder* with a selection of Marian poetry.

Augsburg
Heidelberg Universitätsbibliothek cpg 680

The present state of research into the *Singschulen* and lack of archival work is such that it is more difficult to offer a direct comparison with the preceding analysis of Douce 379, given that we do not have collections that can be specifically linked to particular instances of a *Singschule.*[69] Thus there are methodological difficulties in ascertaining the composition and performance context of many *Meisterlieder*. For the purposes of this chapter, Heidelberg Universitätsbibliothek cpg 680 offers a collection of *Meistergesang* which seem to be

[68] Howie 2007, 5.
[69] On the state of research into the *Singschule*, and in particular, the need for more archival research, see Michael Baldzuhn, 2008, 219–56.

associated with the city of Augsburg in the late medieval period, when we know a *Singschule* existed in the city.

The exact details of the original founding of the Augsburg *Singschule* are still not entirely clear. A petition was presented to the town council in 1534 requesting the re-establishment of the *Singschule*, implying one had existed prior to this.[70] However, quite when the *Singschule* first began is still a question for debate. Two of the key indications for a mid-century founding are a poem by Ulrich Wiest and a reference in Clara Hätzlerin's Songbook. Schnell argues on this basis that the *Singschule* was definitely established by 1449, since Wiest, in a poem in which he names himself and gives the year, mentions 'zu Augsburg auff der singschul hatt er es gewert', suggesting that by this point there was an organised institution of Meistersinger dedicated to poetic production, and he points to a further reference to Clara Hätzlerin's Songbook from 1471 to support his insistence on the early founding of the *Singschule*.[71] Citing the fact that Wiest's poem is itself not a *Meisterlied* in a known *Ton*, Horst Brunner does not see this as sufficient evidence for a contemporary *Singschule* in Augsburg, given that the reference to the *Singschule* could have simply been a poetic device.[72] On the other hand, Helmut Rosenfeld argues that, since *Meistersinger* were not limited to the *Töne* in their poetic production outside *Singschule,* there is no reason for all of Wiest's poetry to be the form of *Meistergesang*. He therefore asserts that the form of Wiest's poem is not enough to discount it as evidence for the existence of the *Singschule.*[73]

Therefore we can only rely on poetic references, which may be nothing more than literary conceits, to situate the founding of the real, as opposed to imagined, Augsburg *Singschule* in

[70] Schnell 1959, 12, Brunner et al 1991.
[71] Schnell 1959, 10.
[72] Brunner 1975, 23.
[73] Rosenfeld 1979, 696.

the mid-fifteenth century. There is no concrete archival evidence to establish its existence before the Reformation. Yet, as cpg 680, along with Heidelberg UB cpg 692, demonstrates, *Meisterlieder* were evidently being composed in the city prior to the Reformation.[74] So while we cannot compare Douce 379 with an analogous manuscript comprising the poems presented at a *Cronsingen* at the Augsburg *Singschule*, we can at least examine a collection of poems closely associated with the city in a period in which we can postulate the existence of a *Singschule*. Both Elisabeth Wunderle and Frieder Schanze characterise the contents of cpg 680 as pre-Reformation Meistergesang from Augsburg. Wunderle points to the ownership of the manuscript – it belonged to Mathus Dilbaum of Augsburg in 1539 – and to its songs and *Töne* being of those active in Augsburg, such as Schillers *Hofton*, and the use of Song 39 later in Augsburg cathedral. The manuscript was compiled around 1535, and Wunderle suggests it had a documentary function of preserving the *Meisterlieder* of Augsburg from before the Reformation at the time of the re-founding of the *Singschule*.[75] There are 53 songs in the manuscript, mostly anonymous, of which fourteen are in some way Marian. This accords well with Schroeder's estimate that 20-25% of *Meistergesang* was Marian.[76] Therefore, despite some differences, looking at the Marian *Meistergesang* of cpg 680 will be a helpful means of searching for images of boundedness and artisanal language in German material to see whether the thesis holds that this is reflective of an urban mentality, as evidenced in the poetry of the Rouen *Puy*.

A first examination of the poems, from a more quantitative perspective, finds that the imagery of boundedness – that constellation of architectural imagery and the closed garden –

[74] Schanze 1983, 112.
[75] Wunderle 1993, xiii.
[76] Schroeder 1942, 44.

is far less prominent in cpg 680 than Douce 379.[77] Where images of boundedness do appear, they are often not so developed, nor are they elaborated through the technical terms of artisanal labour so often. Song 22 is a good example of a poem which does, however, use some of the architectural images in a similar way to the *chants royaux.* Although the manuscript claims that the song is composed in Regenbogen's *Blauen Ton*, this is a misattribution, and it is in fact Konrad von Würzburg's *Blauer Ton*.[78] Like most of the poems in the manuscript, there is no indication of who wrote it, with neither Wunderle's edition nor the *RSM* able to offer any suggestions. The song is characterised as a *Marienpreis*,[79] with the first four strophes detailing Old Testament prefigurations of Mary and a final strophe recounting how John the Evangelist saw the light. It is in the four initial strophes, with their Old Testament types, that we find the architectural images for the virgin birth and Immaculate Conception. Each *Stollen* and *Abgesang* takes a different image, addressing Mary directly, such as 'Du bist der flam, den Moises sach' (II, 9).[80] This means that there are only four lines (or six for the *Abgesang*) to develop each individual image. Noah's ark, the Ark of the Covenant, the temple and the chamber each have a *Stollen* dedicated to their Marian significance. For example, the first *Stollen* of the third strophe reads as follows:

> Marie, du tabernackel rein
> den Moses but uß marmelstein,
> die leng, die wit, alz in got hiess
> dar inn clagt er sin sunde (III, 1-4)

The relationship between Mary and the ark from Exodus 25 is clear: as the Holy of Holies was contained within the Ark, so God was within Mary.[81] Mary and the Ark were both

[77] Though proportionally, the number of poems is not hugely different. Five of the Marian poems in cpg 680 reflect an urban mentality, either through boundedness or explicit reference to the city, which is a little more than a third of the corpus of the fourteen Marian poems, compared to almost a half of the *chants royaux* in Douce 379.
[78] *RSM*, vol. 4, 219
[79] Wunderle 1993, 381.
[80] All quotations are taken from Wunderle's edition unless stated otherwise, giving strophe and line number.
[81] Salzer 1967, 11-13.

bounded and enclosed, with the potential to be opened and entered, though the poem does not dwell on that aspect, but rather focuses on its construction. Moses 'but' the ark, equivalent to the 'faict' and 'construict' we saw so often in the *chants royaux*, and the evocation of the 'leng' and 'wit' directs the listener to think of God's commands in Exodus which foregrounds strongly the mechanical elements of the ark's construction in terms of material and measurements.

> O meit, du bist der guldin sal
> den Salomon mit richer wal
> im but uß marmelsteine wiß
> vergult an allen enden (IV, 1-4)

The fourth strophe begins with calling Mary the 'guldin sal' – the golden inner sanctuary of Solomon's temple in 1 Kings 6.[82] The placement of 'sal' at the end of the line, and its rhyme with 'wal', emphasises the boundedness of the space that is Mary. We find the verb 'but' again, a reminder of the process and labour involved in creating such spaces. Like the passage in Exodus the previous strophe referred to, this chapter in 1 Kings has a similar focus on measurements and material. Once again, marble is given as the primary building material: the rhyme of 'marmelstein' with 'rein' previously, and its designation as 'wiß' here, highlights the purity that characterises Mary. Examples of the way the temple and Noah's ark are used are similar. The fact that they both comprise an individual *Stollen* implies that one could even swap them round. As we saw in some of the examples of *chants royaux*, the images can be used interchangeably without significantly affecting meaning as they have the same formal role and poetological function. These two examples demonstrate that 'boundedness' does appear in several guises, and that it is furthermore in the context of construction. However, the brevity of each of these individual sections prevents further development of the images. Where the language of construction in the *puy* poetry frames

[82] It is from the golden 'oraculo' of Solomon's temple that the Golden House in the Litany of Loreto, and indeed, eventually the idea of the Golden Castle or Palace, derives. See Salzer 1967, 37 and 92.

Mary as the *chef d'œuvre*, the architectural images in this poem do not take the step of conceiving of Mary as a *Meisterstück.*

Song 23 similarly draws on the Old Testament types of Mary, using two of those that came up in Song 22. Written in Marner's *Goldenen Ton* by another unknown Meistersinger, it is another *Marienpreis*, but one which devotes different numbers of lines to different images. The reference to the Ark of the Covenant, for example, is fleeting:

> Du pist der tabernakel guet
> den got Moses pauen hies
> mit mancher hendlung farbe. (III, 9-1)

Even in those short lines we nonetheless see the word 'pauen', that same verb used in Song 22, yet the bounded aspect of the tabernacle image is not thematised or further developed. Noah's ark is similarly summarily mentioned,[83] without elaborating on either building or boundedness.

> Maria, du pist die arch so gut
> du hast den Noe woll behut
> da al dise welt versank
> untz an acht menschen pilde (II, 1-4)

Rather, Mary's protective power is underlined through the 'gut/behut' rhyme. A final poem we might consider in terms of boundedness in cpg 680 is Song 42 in Regenbogen's *Leidton*. It is a Marienpreis by an unknown poet, which focuses specifically on the pre-existence of Mary and all the prophets who foretold of her. The poem is also transmitted in *k* and *B*, and Wunderle points out in her notes on the poem that *k* and *B* seem to be closer to the 'Original' and that cpg 680 has a few significant divergences which simplify the imagery and confuse some of the biblical references.[84] Wunderle uses *k* and *B* as the basis of her edition, but here I will give my

[83] Salzer 1967, 5-6
[84] Wunderle 1967, 433.

own transcription from cpg 680, both as it is the Augsburg witness and because in this *Stollen*, the first in the third strophe, cpg 680 uses bounded imagery more explicitly.

Maria dw verschlosner schrein
Dw warer Salomas tempel
Sechies in werdem schein [Isaiah in *k* and B]
Schrieb von dir maid exempel
Von diner wird ein gloria groß
Do sich got in dein keusch hertz verschlos
In keuscher art versigen rein
In junckfreilicher guette (II, 1-8; 58v-59r)

Where *k* and *B* explicitly call Mary 'Ezechielis schrin',[85] here the specific biblical reference, Ezekiel 44:1-3, is not so clear, but the bounded nature of the image to which it refers is foregrounded through the adjective 'verschlosener', and the verb used to describe the Incarnation, typically 'schloss' (as it is in *k* and *B*), is here 'verschlos' which heightens the focus on the sense of enclosure.[86] The use of 'versigen' further underlines this sense of being sealed in. Here, with the closed gates of Ezekiel, the reference to Solomon's temple and the verbs suggestive of boundedness, we see an individual *Stollen* that uses visual imagery and language to develop the theme of boundedness. Having used the verb 'versigen', the second *Stollen* also makes fleeting reference to Habakkuk,[87] who fed Daniel in the lion's den without breaking the seals – a further allusion to sealed spaces which can be entered while remaining intact, but only through divine assistance. The first *Stollen* comes to a close with two instances of the word 'keusch' and finally 'jungfreilicher' which remind us of the physical integrity of Mary to which these images refer. The text does not explicitly link Mary and the thematised boundedness to the city, but we do find in the fifth strophe a direct link with the city as the Aufgesang opens by describing Mary as 'Ein purgerin von Nassaret'. Here is the *Abgesang*, again in my own transcription:

[85] Salzer 1967, 27.
[86] Kern 1971, 128–38.
[87] Not a common image in Marian poetry: Habbakuk does not feature in Salzer 1967.

Maria du pist der hochste hort
hie und auch dort
aus des himmels pfort
zu dir verschlos sich daz ewig wort
frue an ainer weinacht nacht
ist uns das hail wort sprungen. (V, 17-22)

The 'himmels pfort' with its mention of gates not only reminds of the closed gates of Ezekiel, but also points to the paradox of Mary's closed body opening up heaven for us.[88] Boundedness, and the exclusivity it entails, enables a form of openness.[89] Heaven, in the sense of the heavenly Jerusalem, is a city with gates, like the imagined medieval city, and so the tension between that which is closed but has the potential to be opened, is present. Once again, cpg 680 uses 'verschlossen' to express the Logos entering Mary unlike the other two manuscripts, making the aural link with the earlier 'verschlosener schrein' and the Incarnation. Although Mary is not described as the City of God in the poem itself, the images of boundedness and the link to heaven create the association. Biblical descriptions of Solomon's temple and the New Jerusalem of Ezekiel's vision elide into one, such that Mary's body, which is the temple and Jerusalem, can stand for that eternal city, and also the imagined, ideal medieval city. This idea, first expressed in the third strophe, is lent particular emphasis through the fact that it is recapitulated in the final *Abgesang*. The poem, having expounded on Mary's election from the beginning of time with all the typical images and prophets, from Noah's ark to Isaiah's foretelling, the Star of David to Tree of Jesse, Gideon's fleece to the Burning Bush, ends with reference to heaven's gate. This is more pronounced in *k* and B, where lines three and four read 'du bist die port/der himmel hort' and where Ezekiel had been mentioned by name. But nonetheless, the poem closes firstly by relating Mary's body to a physical feature of intactness and boundedness and then by putting it in the context of salvation history through the Incarnation of the Word and the nativity. Thus, the culmination of five strophes of typology

[88] Salzer 1967, 27.
[89] Howie 2007, 5.

and prophecy is a renewed insistence on the physical nature of Mary's bounded body and its cosmic significance highlighted. The heavenly Jerusalem, conceived of as a city, is metaphorically Mary's body.

Songs 22, 23, and 42 are all characterised by Wunderle as 'Marienpreis'.[90] The nature of these poems in praise of Mary is such that rather than developing a few images, they almost function as litanies; although there is no direct appeal to her to pray for the singer, they briefly enumerate the various Old Testament types one after another, usually with just a few lines of exegesis. While this does not permit for the development of individual images as in the *puy* poems, it does accentuate the underlying association between the different architectural, bounded images of Mary. When the golden room of Solomon's temple and the Ark of the Covenant and Ezekiel's gates are all used in such quick succession and with apparently the same valency, either apostrophising her as 'du … [tabernakel]' or addressing her with the formula 'du bist', it underlines the fluidity of these images. This is closer to vernacular forms of prayer such as litanies in a way not seen in the *puy* poetry.[91] The biblical descriptions of the building of the Ark and the Temple are similar in their emphasis on measurements to that of the heavenly Jerusalem of Revelation 21, which has the same dimensions as Ezekiel's New Jerusalem in Ezekiel 48 but ten times larger. This suggests not mere similarity between all the images (as well as Mary) but identification between them, with the images prefiguring and foretelling one another such that they all signify the same thing. Even though the city as such is barely mentioned in the Marian poems in cpg 680, it is latent through its relationship with the temple, ark and Jerusalem.

[90] Wunderle 1993, 379, 385, and 432.
[91] On litanies, see Sadowski and Marsciani, 2020, in particular Caldwell's contribution.

Other poems in the manuscript reflect urban space without relying on boundedness. Song 6 is a *Meisterlied* about the art of 'hohen maisters sanck' (I, 4), which imagines heaven structured as a *Singschule* in which 'di tzart' (II, 15), Mary, is entreated to help *Meistersinger* sing correctly.[92] That the composition of *Meisterlieder* was a complex endeavour, in which Mary's help would be desired, can be seen in the composition of this poem, which has several metrical errors, with many of the lines having too many or too few syllables.[93] While it is not primarily a Marian poem, Mary's inclusion here underlines her importance to *Meistergesang*, particularly in its institutional expression in the *Singschule*. Reflecting on the art of *Meistergesang*, it further emphasises the creative relationship between God as Creator, *Meistersinger* as creators and *Handwerk* as creation, conceiving of *Meistergesang* as a craft.

In the first person, the poet reflects on the art of *Meistergesang,* asserting in the first strophe that 'wer singen wolt, das er must chunst beweisen' (I, 3). Marie Luise Rosenthal sees this as the poet conceiving of *Meistergesang* as a form of *Handwerk*.[94] He sings of the importance of having good *Mercker* to judge the songs, situating this discussion of *Meistegersang* very much in the context of *Singschule*, whether read or imagined. Most important is that the singers 'chunnen irn gsang wol messen eben' (I, 16). Somewhat ironically this line has two extra syllables.

Having focused on formal elements in the first strophe, he then goes on to explain the themes appropriate to *Meistergesang*, 'und scholt er singen, er müst es lerenn vare' (II, 3). 'Gothait'(II, 4) is above all the subject matter, along with salvation history, though it is also important that

[92] The song is written in Boppe's *Hofton* and is ascribed to him in the manuscript. However, Wunderle (1993, 332) argues against this attribution given it only appears in manuscripts long after his activity, and comprises several strophes whereas Boppe had preferred *Einzelstrophigkeit*.
[93] Throughout her edition, Wunderle marks hypo- and hypermetric lines.
[94] Rosenthal 1957, 406.

this singing be 'hofleich' (II, 10). The singer must learn his subject matter well, and how to relate everything to salvation history: 'Er sol auch kunnen singen wol/von mangerlai, was jedleichs mug bedeuten' (II, 7-8). There is help for singers, and this is where Mary comes into the poem:

> Hülff mir di tzart, so sung ich desder pas gerechte.
> sie ist der tugent ein volles vas,
> der kunst einn stras
> ist sie gefarn an endes tzil, wan si und ir geflechte. (II, 15-19)

Mary is the source of virtue, and 'Tugend' and 'Kunst' are intimately related in *Meistergesang*.[95] She is the path of 'Kunst;, an image which appears elsewhere in *Meistergesang*,[96] though this in in relation to the Trinity – those who had 'geflechte' with her.[97] Mary therefore has a special, particular relationship to the *Meistersinger*: she is not just an intercessor, as she is for all Christians, but uniquely for the *Meistersinger* she is the source of virtue and art, offering them particular help as they practise their art of *Meistergesang*. In the same way that the Rouen poets could look to the Immaculate Conception specifically, here the *Meistersinger* can look to Mary as the font of virtue enabling them to sing.

The final strophe contains the comparison with heaven as a *Singschule,* in which 'Got sitzet auff der kunsten stul' (III, 7), framing God as the most accomplished of all the *Meistersinger.*[98] The angels sing to God, but so, too, the poet, singing 'darumb lob ich den maister gut/der alle ding hat auch so schon gemessen' (III, 11-2). Out of the context of this *Meisterlied*, that could easily refer to a Master artisan. 'Messen' in this context is multivalent, and encompasses God's creation of the world, the 'messen' a poet must undertake to ensure he has counted his syllables correctly as well as the measuring a *Handwerker* must do when making something. The explicit use of the word 'maister' brings out these different forms of creation more strongly, though the

[95] Poynter 1965, 202.
[96] Poynter 1965, 58.
[97] Wunderle 1993, 334.
[98] On God as Creator, see Schneider 2007 and Cramer 1986.

constellation is slightly different. In the *puy* poetry, Mary is that which is created, like the poem or the artwork/building; here she is a source or channel enabling creation, part of the process rather than the object. This conception of *Meistergesang* (and *Handwerk*) as a reflection of divine Creation is often found in the meta-poems, or *Schulkünste*, of the *Meistersinger*.[99] It is made most explicit in the *Schulkünste*, and only latent in the Marian poems where elements of *Handwerk* are foregrounded. The use of the term 'maister' is what brings together this constellation of creations, though where 'maistre' was common in the *Puy* poetry, 'maister' does not appear in the same way in the Marian *Meistergesang*.

The only one of the Marian poems in cpg 680 in which the word 'stat' itself appears is 39A, a *Weihnachtslied*, or Christmas song. Written in the Ungelehrtes' *Schwarzen Ton*, it begins by paraphrasing what 'Lucas schreibt' (I, 1), starting with the census, and follows Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem where she gives birth. The poem depicts the nativity, which is followed by the story of two miracles. This Christmas Song later was adapted into a popular hymn sung in Augsburg cathedral.[100] Following Caesar Augustus' decree, the poems tells us that, with Mary, 'Josep ging ein die stat' (I, 13) and we then hear a little of their experience of the town, and it is not a positive one: they are mocked as they search for accommodation and admonished for arriving so late. An 'ödes haus' (II, 1) is all they can find for lodging which 'was gemain und was lere' (II, 2) and they are forced to sit on the floor. Beginning in precisely the same way as the *Abgesang* of the first strophe, the second *Abgesang* also starts 'Josep ging ein die stat' (II, 13) in search of a midwife. He entreats several women to come, but it takes a while, and, in the meantime, Jesus is born in his absence. Thus far, the town does not appear to be a welcoming place and is hostile to the Holy Family. Even the midwife who does come is, in a

[99] Several examples from *K* given in Poynter 1965, 37–39. On meta-poetry and Handwerk, see also Harant 1997 and the references in n. 14.
[100] *RSM* vol 5, 448.

distortion of the episode of the Protoevangelium of James, depicted as uncharitable. Whereas in the Protoevangelium the midwife insists on examining Mary, disbelieving in her virginity, and her hand withers away, here she desires to touch God and she is left 'in grossem kummer' (III, 9). The poem therefore does not thematise Mary's physical integrity through this scene, which Wunderle describes as an 'Entschärfung' of the original legend.[101] The poem rather shows Mary's role as intercessor beginning at the nativity, as she immediately lays the midwife's arm on Christ's and entreats him: 'liebs kint, la dich das erparmn/und schick si wider haim' (III, 15-6).

The second miracle is also a 'Kontamination' of another well-known legend, the Kreuznagellegende.[102] The traditional version involves a smith, who was a secret disciple, refusing to make the nails for the crucifixion, and God maiming his hands so he can prove his inability to do so. His wife makes the nails in his stead.[103] In this version, taking place at the nativity, a smith is making the nails with the assistance of his daughter, and when they turn out to be blunt, he blames her and throws a hammer at her and she loses both her arms below the elbow. She runs to the scene of the nativity, conveniently next door, where Mary instructs her to kneel at the crib, and her arms and hands regrow. She then announces the Good News to her father.

On one level, the inclusion of this legend shows a further element of urban life with the smith living in the city. It contains details of the 'herten eissen' (IV, 2) and how the nails 'kern tzu dem weissen' (IV, 4). However, Günter Peperkorn argues that this is an allegory, with the smith representing God and the daughter Mary with reference to a similar poem in the

[101] Wunderle 1993, 426.
[102] Gerhardt 1982, 306.
[103] According to Gerhardt (1982, 307), this tradition was more common in England and France, and had its roots in the Eastern Church.

Kolmarer Handschrift.[104] He suggests that 'Die Tätigkeit des Schmiedes während der Geburt Christi kann also als Hinweis auf Gottes Wirken im Rahmen der Inkarnation verstanden werden' and references examples of other poems depicting God as a smith – one could also add the *Goldenes Schloss* of Albrecht Lesch, and of course, Frauenlob's 'smit von oberlande'.[105] In this allegorical reading, the daughter is Mary – he uses other examples given by Salzer in which Mary is primarily called 'tochter' as opposed to mother or bride. In his reading, Mary helps God in the act of Creation as his assistant. This would certainly be an interesting line to pursue, as it would suggest a similar constellation to that presented in the Singschule, where, rather than being created, Mary aids the creative process. To support his argument that the daughter represents Mary, he reads the throwing of the hammer as the Incarnation, seeing it as a reference to the *Marienleich*,[106] in which the throwing of the hammer does indeed demand such an interpretation: 'Der smid von oberlande/ warf sinen hamer in mine schoz'.[107] (*Marienleich* XI 1-2). However, there is nothing in the text to support an allegorical reading of this passage. The line in cpg 680 is 'Er warf der dochtern mit aim hamer nach' (IV, 7) and the Kolmar poem which is being discussed by Peperkorn reads 'und warff ir mit dem hamer noch'.[108] While this could have presented a fruitful opportunity for discussing *Handwerkmetaphorik* in relation to God's creation and the incarnation, aside from a potential reference to Frauenlob, nothing in the text hints that this episode in the poem does indeed have a separate, allegorical meaning, as Christoph Gerhardt argues.[109] Since the girl is then healed through Mary's intercession, it is particularly difficult to see this episode as capable of sustaining the allegorical reading. However, even though such an allegorical reading of the poem cannot be sustained, the presence of the smith in the

[104] Peperkorn 1982, 72.
[105] Such references to smithing are generally seen as relating to poetic creation – see Schneider 2017.
[106] Peperkorn 1982, 72.
[107] Stackmann and Bertaun 1981.
[108] Peperkorn 1982, 66.
[109] Gerhardt 1982, 306.

poem could nonetheless be indicative of the self-awareness of the poet, his smithing analogous to the act of composition, as demonstrated by Schneider (2017). The relationship between poetry, *Handwerk* and divine creation is still bolstered through the poem.

Even without this allegorical reading, the *Weihnachtslied* still offers an illustration of the city, and it is not a flattering one: the city does not offer welcome to the Holy Family, the midwife does not have enough faith, and the smith is depicted as cruel. Far from hinting at an idealised city, as some of the other poems do, this poem indicates the need for salvation: rather than the city as the locus of salvation – Jerusalem, Rome – the city is itself in need of it. However, Mary is at the centre of it: it is through her intercession the two miracles occur, and these also lead to the first instances of evangelisation as midwife and daughter proclaim the Good News in light of their healing and new knowledge.

The five poems discussed thus far are those which most heavily foreground images of boundedness or of urban life; the manuscript contains several more Marian poems, such as Song 7 which takes as its subject the Presentation at the Temple, a few poems dealing with Mary's sorrows, Song 44 in which the poet sings of Mary's joys, or Song 52 which petitions Mary for aid. Others focus on Jesus' childhood (Song 49) or include Mary more generally in the scheme of Salvation History. Many of these poems are rooted in biblical narratives, and thus retell the gospel in lyric form, leaving the poet less scope to expand on individual images. Thus, while the five poems above do work in a similar way to the poetry of the *puy*, they are not as representative of the Marian *Meisterlieder* in the manuscript as a whole. The register of the *Repertorium* suggests that this is the case for Marian *Meistergesang* more generally: images of the ark, the Tower of David and those others which Songs 22 and 23

used do not appear very regularly across the entire corpus of *Meistegersang*.[110] Similarly, Salzer suggests that these images were not so prominent.[111] A comparison of the *puy* poetry and *Meisterlieder* we have examined may help reveal why these images of boundedness are more common in the poetry of the *puy* and why cpg 680 does not engage so strongly with the boundedness I am arguing is indicative of an urban mentality.

Thus far we have observed through a case study of the 1511 *Puy* at Rouen that images of boundedness recur, often in relation to the language of construction and work, and suggested that this is representative of an urban mentality. This constellation was found to be less pervasive and prominent in the Augsburg collection of Marian lyric. We must look at the two manuscripts comparatively to understand the extent to which the figure of Mary, in her bounded body, does indeed enable city-dwellers to show an interest in bounded spaces, representing urban space ideologically through poetry and the Virgin Mary. This will help us to ascertain whether the thesis that, in replicating the themes of privilege and boundedness highlighted by Martha Howell, medieval Marian lyric can function as a means for urban poets to represent the city through the figure of the Virgin Mary. I will suggest that the difference in prominence in these images of boundedness in the French and German material is rooted in the formal and generic demands of their respective contexts.

The *chant royal* of the *puy* tends to focus on exploring one particular image of, title for, or idea about Mary, as encapsulated by the *palinod*. The significance of the *palinod*, its implication and the praise it thus entails for Mary is unfolded over the course of the poem, and the poet had the freedom to do so as he wished. Although emphasis was often put on situating the *palinod* in the context of salvation history and demonstrating that Mary was

[110] *RSM* vol. 15.
[111] A glance through the index of Salzer 1967 shows such images are uncommon.

conceived without the stain of original sin, the only real requirement was to expound on the refrain and observe the rhyme scheme, with the five *onzains* and *envoy* (and some poets on occasion even deviated from the norm). The Feast of the Immaculate Conception was such that any praise of Mary, and particularly of her purity, would be appropriate: it did not limit poets to certain episodes or verses of scripture. This gave poets the licence to use images and language that appealed to them in varying constellations and to explore them as far as the expanse of the five strophes allowed. This flexibility, within the formal constraints, to expound on some aspect of Mary means that those images we see again and again are those which either appealed to the poets themselves, or those which they assume appealed to the jury judging the *puy*, and perhaps also the audience attending. Images of boundedness fit into such a category, appearing again and again as they do.

The *Meistersinger* had other formal demands: on the one hand, where the *chant royal* was heavily prescribed and only a few variations existed, there was a whole gamut of *Töne* in which *Meisterlieder* could be composed; on the other hand, certain sub-genres exercised greater thematic control over the poet, such as the link to a feast day, entailing an element of narrative, or a *Marienklage* meditating on, and even giving voice to, Mary at the foot of the Cross.[112] This left poets with less freedom to contemplate certain images, and fewer opportunities to engage with images of boundedness. The *Merker* of the *Singschule* primarily judged adherence to the *Ton* and consonance with biblical imagery:[113] this required its own form of creativity, enjoining the poets to work interestingly within the particular constraints of the images available to them from scripture. Thus, if writing a song for the Feast of the Annunciation, the poet was required mostly to use the material available in Luke 1:26-28.

[112] Schroeder 1942, 60. Schroeder identifies the key sub-genres, mostly linked to Marian feast days, along with the scriptural references linked to them and the other demands of the genres. Her designations are still used in Wunderle 1993 and, for example, Klesatschke (1984), in identifying the themes of Marian Meisterang.
[113] Brunner et. al, 1991.

The challenge was to do this inventively and observe the metrical demands of the Ton at the same time. The relationship to scripture further means that there is often a narrative element to these lyrics, such as the in Song 39, the *Weihnachtslied*. The need to 'tell the story' in the *Meisterlied* thus precludes overly lingering on certain images and exploring their implications more deeply.

The poets entering the *Puy* had the freedom to explore images as they wished: it seems in Rouen that by 1511 the poets were permitted to choose the refrain themselves, and thus their poems reflected images which the poets themselves found attractive and which they believed would appeal to the jury.[114] Those *Meisterlieder* which are simply a form of *Marienpreis*, bringing with it the freedom to praise Mary and fewer thematic or scriptural demands, function more like the *puy* poems in this respect. This might suggest that when the poets could choose the images that appealed and intrigued them, they were drawn to those Old Testament types of spaces bounded by walls. When they did not need to conform to the conventions of sub-genres of Marian lyric, we find greater points of comparison between the *puy* poetry and Marian *Meistergesang*. However, the fact that Marian *Meistergesang* encompasses a whole range of sub-genres with their own customs and requirements, whereas the *chant royal* is more akin to the tradition of *Marienpreis*, means that a straightforward comparison between *Meistergesang* and *puy* poetry must confront these differing formal and thematic demands. A comparison between the more similar *Marienpreis* and *chant royal*, on the other hand, demonstrates that, where poets had the licence to select and explore images they were attracted to and felt most appropriately praised the Virgin Mary, they often elected

[114] In the earlier years of the *Puy de l'Immaculée Conception,* perhaps taking inspiration from the *Puy Notre-Dame d'Amiens*, there was a set refrain. Rouen BM Y. 18 shows evidence for this, giving both the winning poem (the *Palme*) and the runner up (the *Débattu*) from 1486 which often have the same *palinod.* See the examples from 1497 in Chapter III. At some point, poets were evidently given the freedom to choose their own refrain.

to use, from a long and expansive tradition of all kinds of images, those images of Mary that privileged her virginal body as a bounded space, and implicitly likened the city to it.

In considering the case of Rouen and Augsburg, we have so far examined only textual evidence of urban devotion to Mary. Having now drawn the conclusions that poetry devoted to the praise of Mary allows poets to select the images which most appeal and seem most fitting to them, and that in an urban context this often means images of enclosure which signal both Mary and the bounded city, we will turn to a final case study. In returning to the poetry of the *Puy*, but after having considered how ideas of mastery and the link between artisanal, poetic and divine creation were made more strongly manifest in the *Meistergesang*, this discussion of the winning poems of the Amiens *Puy Notre-Dame* will display how such images can be understood both textually and visually.

Paris, BnF fr 145 and the Amiens *Puy Notre-Dame*

The Amiens *Puy Notre-Dame* was founded in 1388, and took place on 2nd February in honour of the Purification, hence the first *Puy* was held in 1389. It offers a further opportunity to consider the way in which the figure of Mary might enable city-dwellers to explore their urban identity, since, along with the poetry that has survived, we also have evidence of the visual culture associated with it.

The Amiens *Puy* functioned rather like the Rouen *Puy de l'Immaculée Conception*: it was a confraternity which elected a yearly *Maistre*, who, like the Prince, undertook the financing of the confraternity's activities, which comprised a poetry competition on Candlemas followed by a feast, regular Masses and in particular, Masses for deceased members. Where the Amiens *Puy* differs is that the *Maistre* chose a refrain on which every poet had to compose

his poem, and commissioned a painting illustrating that refrain, which would be prominently displayed in Amiens cathedral for the whole year, and conserved there with past paintings.

Thanks to a document begun in 1452 known as the *Escrite*, we have a good idea of how the institution worked, as well as a register of the *Maistres* and their associated refrains.[115] The statutes of the *Puy* were re-written in 1452, occasioning the beginning of the *Escritel,* which faithfully records the origins and first decades of the *Puy* and was continued by several hands up until 1685. Although many of the original paintings were lost, fortunately copies of many of them have survived in BnF fr 145. This illuminated manuscript was given by the city as a gift to Louise of Savoy in 1517, who had admired the paintings hanging in the cathedral when she had been there on a royal visit. As well as an additional poem and illumination in honour of Louise of Savoy, forty-seven of the winning poems are reproduced along with either a copy of the respective painting, or alternatively, a new image was created for the manuscript. The illuminations were simplified versions, given the difference in size. Evidently, the scope of the painting enabled the inclusion of far more people than the illuminations, and, as well as depictions of political and religious figures, such as a recognisable king or pope,[116] city life could be illustrated more fully through the huge number of people visible. Yet different aspects and strata of urban life can nonetheless be observed in the miniatures, even though it is on a smaller scale.[117]

[115] Amiens, Société des antiquaires de Picardie, MS 23. The manuscript functions as a record of the activity of the Confraternity of the *Puy*, explaining how the *Puy* worked, along with the names of the *Maistres* and the refrains they chose.
[116] See Maillart 2011, 58 for an example of how both a cross-section of urban society and recognisable figures such as the King Francis I, Pope Leo X and Emperor Charles V are depicted in one of the surviving paintings, the 1518 representation of 'Au juste poids veritable balance'.
[117] On the different kinds of urban clothing visible, see Paresys 2009, though Paresys primarily focuses on the latter part of the sixteenth century, and the visual evidence of surviving paintings.

Thus far, most of the scholarship on the Amiens *puy* has been in relation to these images, in the realm of History of Art, and in earlier scholarship, much of it in local learned publications.[118] Gérard Gros included the *Puy Notre-Dame d'Amiens* in his analysis of the *puys,* giving them their most extensive literary treatment thus far.[119] An exhibition at the Musée de Picardie reuniting the surviving paintings and BnF fr 145 for the 800th anniversary of the cathedral last year prompted renewed interest in the *Puy Notre-Dame d'Amiens* and the paintings associated with it. The evidence of urban life in the paintings and the clear documentary evidence offered by the *escritel* regarding the occupation of the *Maistres* means that recent academic approaches to the Amiens *Puy* have been characterised by an interest in the sociological composition of the *Puy*.[120] These studies mostly use the lists of *Maistres* and the paintings/miniatures from BnF Fr 145 as the basis of their analysis and do not pay much attention to the lyric itself, aside from a survey of the refrains the *Maistres* chose, which sometimes reflected their profession or included a pun on their name.[121] This approach corresponds well with the aims of this chapter, and in particular, Margaret Hoogleviet's work advances similar arguments regarding the way in which the *Puy* sanctified artisanal labour and explored aspects of creation: 'God has created the Virgin, who in turn gave birth to the son of God. The human production work of alloying metal, hammering and creating objects is an analogous act of creation, infused with divine grace, and so is the creation of poetry'.[122] By anchoring this approach more firmly in the texts of the *puy*, and linking it with the theme of boundedness as expounded in this chapter, I will demonstrate that the conclusions drawn from the Rouen *Puy* and the Augsburg *Meistergesang* are more broadly applicable. Thus far, we have primarily been considering boundedness and distinction in the physical sense,

[118] Durand 1911, Duvanel, Leroy, and Pinette 1997, Gomez-Géraud, 2007.
[119] Gros 1996a; Gros, 1992. See 50-106 specifically on the *Puy Notre-Dame d'Amiens.*
[120] Hoogvliet, 2019; Cyrille Chatellain 2020. See also Chapter I of Christin 2020, which considers the social standing of the *Maistres*, though is primarily interested in the period of Henry IV's reign.
[121] For example, Hoogvliet 2019, 399.
[122] Hoogvliet 2019, 406.

related to city walls and Mary's body through text. By bringing in the *Puy Notre-Dame d'Amiens* as a final consideration, it will also be possible to see how the visual culture associated with the *Puy* complements the preceding discussion.

I will use the manuscript offered to Louise of Savoy as the basis of this discussion, with its 47 miniatures and winning poems. It does not contain all the winning *chants royaux* from the *Puy*'s inception, but most of the winning poems in the period from 1458 to 1515 (though they are not presented in chronological order in the manuscript).[123] The manuscript itself does not give the year of composition, but this, along with the name and profession of the *Maistre* who presided over that year of the competition, can be deduced from the corresponding list in the *escritel.* On the whole, the themes and images explored in the *Puy Notre-Dame* do not differ hugely from that of the *Puy de l'Immaculée Conception* of Rouen: the form of the *chant royal* means that each poem develops a particular image, with typical Marian iconography apparent, such as Old Testament prefigurations, as well as images drawn from the world of the poets.[124] However, where the Rouen *Puy* naturally focuses on the Immaculate Conception, and many of the poems act as defences of the doctrine, in Amiens where the competition took place on Candlemas, light imagery is particularly prominent. The *envoy* at the end of the poem generally concludes with an explicit reference to Simeon and the events of Luke 2:22-40. An implication entailed by this difference is that Rouen focuses on Mary's passive conception, whereas Amiens highlights her active conception of Christ.[125] Refrain

[123] See Table III on p. 266 for details of the contents. One further manuscript transmits poems from the Amiens *Puy,* Paris, Bibl. Arsenal, 3164 (293 B. F.) It contains 22 poems, designated as 'ballades', though they are in fact *chants royaux*, all of which also appear in BnF fr 145.
[124] Maillart (2011, 205-11) classifies the refrains under the following headings: the Virgin associated with the Old Testament (such as *Pierre au desert produisant yeaue vive)*; evocation of a role of the Virgin (such as *Mere de grace et de misericorde*); Mary compared to an element of nature (such as *Soleil rendant eternelle lumiere)*; Mary compared to a place, an object, or a building (such as *Cloistre ordonné au reiglet salutaire*); Mary compared to an earthly job (such as *Aux devetus gracieuse drapiere*); and Mary associated with a plant or an animal (*Medicinalle et fructuese olive*). He places each refrain into an individual category, but there is in fact a lot of potential overlap between them.
[125] Gros, 2018, 58.

lines are often significant, due to their having been chosen by the *Maistre* himself. For example, Robert de Cambrin, who was a canon of the cathedral and taught at its school, was *Maistre* in 1491 and as his refrain chose 'Soubz l'éternel recteur sage régente' (No. 3) reflecting his background; in 1498, the *Maistre* Robert de Fontaines chose 'Au gendre humain consolable fontaine' (No. 24), a play on his own name.

In this section, drawing on the poems and miniatures from BnF fr 145, I will show how urban life was reflected in Marian lyric: the poetry of the Amiens *Puy* celebrates aspects of urban life, sanctifying them. Bringing together text and image, I will demonstrate how boundedness can be thematised textually and visually by showing how different bounded images, such as the city and the tower, resemble each other in illuminations. The constellation of boundedness, city, and language of craft is in evidence across the corpus of Amiens *chants royaux.* In discussing the slippage between bounded images, the relationship between city and court will be brought into consideration to suggest that the relationship is more porous than it first appears. Finally, I will reassess the claim that the *Puy* was a socially inclusive space.

One example of a refrain which foregrounds heavily the profession of the respective *Maistre* is 'Grenier rempli du sel de sapience' (No 17). This was chosen by the *Maistre* of 1480, Jehan Bertin, who was the grénetier of Amiens. This poem recapitulates many of the themes we have already discussed, and an analysis of the text, in conjunction with the image, proves productive in the exploration of the Marian poetry and urban mentalities.

The miniature on folio 17v (Fig III) is representative of the illuminations in the manuscript. At the top, God has His hand raised in benediction; sometimes a dove representing the Holy Spirit is present. In the centre, Mary holds the Christ-child, standing in a covered structure filled with salt. The difficulty with representing Mary as the object with which the poem identifies her is evident. Maillart says that whenever the refrain calls Mary an object or a building, the painter's strategy is simply to either have her standing on it or holding it.[126] Hence here, she stands on the salt store. In the bottom right-hand corner, the *Maistre*, who we assume would have been recognisable as Bertin, kneels in prayer with his refrain written on a banderole. In the foreground, we see different characters involved in the processing of salt,[127] with a cleric discernible thanks to his vestments, and we can infer variable social status from the clothes of the other men.

[126] Maillart 2011, 77.
[127] The depiction of salt itself in the miniature is somewhat ambiguous, particularly given that 'grenier' could also refer to a granary. The text of the poem makes it clear that it is indeed salt being stored, and knowing Bertin's occupation helps cement this, but the colour of the grains in the image potentially suggest cereal grain.



Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France. Département des Manuscrits. Français 145

Fig. III BnF fr 145 17v, Source: gallica.bnf.fr/BnF, Licence Ouverte

Women are present too, with one on the far left-hand side of the group involved in the salt, and one on either side of our Lady: a laywoman and a religious. Further in the background, other men can be seen carrying sacks of salt. The image therefore shows a cross-section of urban society, with men of different social status engaged in the labour resulting from the salt trade. Even the cleric is directly implicated in this work, tipping salt from a dish into a sack. This would appear to suggest that, through the *Puy*, much of urban life was represented in a

way that Hoogvliet describes as being 'socially inclusive'.[128] Poetic fiction though it may be, the image at least puts these figures on the same level. That they are all engaged in the manual and commercial aspects of the salt trade also has the effect of elevating it. It is not a mere economic job, but partakes of the divine, sanctified through Mary's position as *grenier*. This becomes more evident when considering the lyric itself.

Salt is imbued with grace, having the ability to purge 'd'infection' (line 10). It gives 'saveur' et 'nourreture' (line 38), preserving from corruption – aside from the salvific implications of the salt, the taste of which means one can enter the eternal kingdom, the poem advertises the *Maistre's* goods by highlighting its properties. Vocabulary around purity and corruption runs throughout the poem emphasising this, and the theological virtues appear in the third strophe along with prudence and humility, ascribing virtue to Mary, but also implying that those who taste the salt can grow in these virtues. The poem does not leave the audience in any doubt as to how the metaphor functions, explicitly telling us in the second strophe that 'Par ce grenier entendre on poeut Marie' (line 12) and attributing an element of agency to her in our salvation: she is 'cause' (line 13). That the 'grenier' is her virginal body is made clear in the development of this strophe. With 'sans romper le closture' (line 17) we have direct reference to the boundedness of both the salt store and Mary's body. The enjambement of 'closture/Virginalle' reflects the relationship between object and body in the poem. Her body is directly referenced in two successive lines. With 'Virginalle' (line 18) and 'Corporelle' (line 20) having the same position metrically and almost rhyming, it is a reminder of the physical element of Mary's virginity as *virgo intacta* post-partum. The 'closture' is something the miniature struggles to illustrate: were the salt-store that is Mary indeed closed, it would not be possible to see that salt is what it contained. There is still a sense of enclosure

[128] Hoogvliet 2019, 390.

suggested by the columned walls on either side which converge behind her, as if the illuminator has had to cut away the front wall to show us inside, signalling what would otherwise be closed. Furthermore, none of the other figures intrude into Mary's space with the grains of salt, marking her space out as bounded. The text of the poem also needs to be considered in order to draw out the significance of the boundedness, though as we will see, other illuminations do heavily thematise boundedness. The nouns 'habitation' (line 19) and 'residence' (line 20) remind us of those other architectural metaphors, but, following on from the Old Testament introduction of the first strophe, root the poem more firmly in salvation history by making clear that, if Mary is the salt store, then the salt that lives within her is Christ.

The link between Christ and salt is made even more explicit in the fourth strophe, when it is explained that the salt is distributed by the 'saincte église' (line 35) in order to feed us in eucharistic language. The reference to the salt's 'saveur' also brings to mind Matthew 5:13, which calls Christ's disciples to be the salt of the earth, but admonishes them not to lose their taste. This link between the salt which is Christ and the salt which is the Christian is strengthened by the eucharistic language, since in consuming the Eucharist, the Christian becomes more Christ-like. The *DMF* gives 'sel, richesse spirituelle' as one of the figurative meanings for 'saveur' and its closeness to the word 'saulveur' further marks it out as salvific. The final strophe before the *envoy* uses words semantically linked with justice to describe the effect of this salt: 'delict' (line 46) and 'pechés' (line 52) are forgiven through 'contrition' (line 51), which comes from having tasted the salt, such that if one can live a life 'justement rectifié' (47) then they will attain heaven, the 'mansion éternelle' (lines 52-3) bringing out even more explicitly the salvific nature of the salt.

In ensuring that in his year as *Maistre* everyone competing in the *Puy Notre Dame* had to compose on the theme of salt, Bertin elevated his occupation and important role in the city by imbuing his product with divine grace and making it one that everybody would have been talking about. Salt, of course, already had religious connotations and here it is elevated to be Christ. The painting depicting the refrain would have been displayed prominently in the cathedral for the year, meaning that even after the poetry competition had passed, the city-dwellers would have had a regular visual reminder of the devotional discourse surrounding salt and of the way in which the urban commerce had been consecrated through the devotional and poetic activity of the *Puy Notre-Dame*. In showing trades and products that were part of everyday life, the image and poem illustrating the *palinod* enable citizens to see their urban life reflected.

Where the miniature for No. 17 was to unable underline ideas of boundedness visually, one example which does so emphatically is the illustration depicting the refrain 'Digne cisterne a l'eaue desiree' (No. 25) from 1500, which manages to show this on multiple levels. In the foreground we see the Old Testament scene from 2 Samuel 23 in which King David speaks of his desire to drink water from the city of Bethlehem. Three warriors risk their lives to obtain it, and here we see the moment where David rejects it, sacrificing instead to the Lord. The poem explains that, with this:

> David en ce signe moralement
> Le filz de Dieu qui pour le sauvement
> Du gendre humain par désir curieux
> Vault eaue prendre au ventre precieuse
> De Marie l'humble vierge sacree (lines 16-20)

In the background, the Virgin Mary with the Christ-child stands surrounded by walls – the 'noble cité' in the poem, which visually shows the correlation between city, tower, palace and

citadelle, such that it is difficult to see precisely what is being depicted. We know from the poem that it is a 'cité', but it also looks like a castle, tower and citadel.



Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France. Département des Manuscrits. Français 145

Fig IV: BnF fr 145 f. 25v, Source: gallica.bnf.fr/BnF, Licence Ouverte

Within the bounded space created by the walls is another fenced enclosure. One would expect this to be the 'Cisterne' of the refrain but it appears to be filled with grass, evoking instead the *hortus conclusus*, a key image of boundedness. Thus there is a slippage between the different bounded images evoked by the text of the poem and the illumination illustrating the refrain. Just as Sapientia, the young maiden, the celestial queen, the bride of the *Song of*

Songs, and the Woman of the Apocalypse all blend into one in the singular figure of Mary, so there is no clear distinction between the metaphors and titles used for her, meaning that the citadel is at once the tower, the palace, and the city. Her size, larger than all other human figures, exceeds the city, ascending up to the heavens and thereby making the heavenly city accessible. The textual elements of the poem point toward the city and fence standing for her: she is called 'vierge' three times, and her 'Virginité' is directly invoked, while Christ's enclosure within in her is emphasised three times with the preposition 'en'. He desires to take on human form twice 'en Marie' and 'en la vierge honoree' and 'au ventre precieux'. Maillart's assertion that Mary is generally depicted standing next to or on top of the object representing her further associates her with the city: in the poem, both Bethlehem and Jerusalem, but given the presence of the *Maistre* at the bottom right-hand corner, also Amiens. A further link with Amiens is the 'cisterne' itself, which by another name could be a 'puits', linking it with the competition, the *Puy d'Amiens,* implicitly. Indeed, the 1477 *palinod* was 'Puy d'yeae vive aux humains pourfitable' (No. 14), making use of this pun. In that poem, the first lines refer to man's desire to 'parvenir a la cité celeste' (line 2), drawing the implicit connection between the city of Amiens, the location of the *Puy*, and the heavenly city. Moreover, this poem also uses the constellation of city, boundedness and the language of craft, highlighting the 'rondeur estroit' (line 16) of the well and its 'form ronde '(line 27), which it explicitly links to Mary's virginity (line 29). God is described several times as an 'ouvrier', who creates through 'oeuvre providence' (line 12) Mary such that man can return to the 'cite notable' (line 9) which had been lost, with parts of the verbs 'construire' used several times over the course of the poem. The link between boundedness and the city is shown textually, and emphasised in the miniature, in which God is shown at the very top in heaven, depicted as the 'cité celeste' surrounded by fortified walls with towers.



Fig V: BnF fr 145 14v. God in the heavenly city in the illumination for 'Puy d'yeae vive aux humains pourfitable.', Source: gallica.bnf.fr/BnF, Licence Ouverte

Interestingly, several of the poems which use water imagery make an implicit connection between boundedness and the city. Along with No. 25 and No. 14, No 24, whose *palinod* is 'Au gendre humain consolable fontaine', makes mention of the 'cité Jherusalem nommee' (line 2) where 'Yaue tresvive en sa circumference' (line 6) could be found. The circumference presumably is that of the fountain, but that word is not brought up until the refrain in line 11, meaning it could also be the city. That in which the living water, Christ, resides, is Mary, making her implicitly the city of Jerusalem too. The connection with the language of craft is not so clear, though twice God's work in salvation history is mentioned, as an 'oeuvre souveraine' (line 20) and as an 'oeuvre incomparee' (line 48), casting him again as a *Maistre*. In No 32, the 'Lavoir rendant parfaicte purité' is foregrounded as 'ronde' (line 3), signifying virginity, emphasised again through the explanation that 'Rondeur large faict en elle signer/virginité qu'elle eust en permanence'. (lines 45-6); No 15 casts Mary as the 'Isle de mer d'amenité remplie', in which she is 'circundee par divins moyens' (line 48). Where, in Douce 379, bounded images were often related to buildings – *maison*, *palais,* and *tour* – here it is a different set of images used to highlight Mary's virginity in a way which can be related to the image of the city. All these bounded metaphors for Mary are an *œuvre Dieu*: whether such language is explicitly used or not, they frame God as craftsman, but also establish a link with the *Maistre* organising the *Puy* and the act of crafting poetry itself.

Esther, a type of Mary, is the subject of the poem *La royne Vasti honteusement* (No. 18), and Hüe in his analysis foregrounds the role of the city, framing Esther as an urban story which emphasises the idea that 'le salut vient de la cité',[129] with Ahasuerus' court being situated in the city of Susa. He points out that the illumination (Fig. IV) thematises this better than the poem itself, drawing the connections between the city of Amiens, the city of Susa, and the heavenly Jerusalem visually.[130] The story of Esther plays out across the miniature in the foreground: we see her coronation at the front, which makes her typological role clear; Ahasuerus can be seen with his advisors, presumably including Haman, in the chamber in the upper right; we see her kneeling before the king to beg for the lives of her people. This all takes place within a structure that could be a palace made up of towers, or the city more generally. Behind this walled and fortified structure, we see the walls of another city: the heavenly Jerusalem. Hüe describes it as 'une cité fortifiée, régulièrement – idéalement – ceinte de tours semble faire la transition du réel au surnaturel'.[131] This accords well with the idea that the idealised and imagined city was far more important than the reality of the lived-in city; Marian lyric enables urban inhabitants to dwell on the idealised city, imagining their city to be *the* city. Just as the miniature moves from the real to the supernatural, so the poem follows the same trajectory, beginning entirely with the Old Testament narrative, naming figures such as Vashti, Ahasuerus, and Esther, with only the penultimate line of the first *onzain* pointing out that the figure of Esther should 'monstrer Marie a la realité' (line 10).

[129] Hüe 2007, 127.
[130] Hüe 2007, 113.
[131] Hüe 2007, 113.



Fig. VI: BnF fr 145 18v, Source: gallica.bnf.fr/BnF, Licence Ouverte

The first four strophes all follow this pattern, beginning with the Old Testament before moving on to what it prefigures or 'signe moralement' in terms of Salvation History, with the final *onzain* focusing on the Mariological significance of Esther. This trajectory follows the same as the miniature, a simplified version of the painting commissioned to illustrate the *palinod* of 'Plaisant Hester du roy des cieux eslute' and structurally on the level of both strophe and poem follows that same transition from the real to what it prefigures. The implication here is that the earthly city, Susa or Amiens, prefigures the heavenly city and thus

has a privileged significance in typologically indicating salvation, as if the city is heaven on earth.

The presence of the royal court in the city moreover highlights that, while the city is seen as a privileged and bounded space, it is nonetheless not completely distinct from the court. Susa is the seat of the court of Ahasurerus; Mary is Queen of Heaven, the celestial city. BnF fr 145 is a particularly good example of the complex relationship between court and city.

The manuscript was commissioned by the city as a gift for Louise of Savoy after she admired the paintings in the cathedral when she visited the city, and the first miniature and poem in it were created specifically for the manuscript. The miniature (1v) depicts Louise enthroned in the position where we would normally expect to see Mary while city dignitaries present her with the manuscript; the *palinod* of the poem, written by Nicholas la Motte, is 'Mere humble et franche au grant espoir de France', words which could apply equally to Louise and the Virgin Mary. The poem shows the devotion of the citizens of Amiens to the French throne, drawing connections between Christ and the king, with lines such as 'Tu as porté comme mere et regente/Le royal sang le corps honorifique/Du roy francais qui les francoys regente' (lines 13-15). Until the third of those lines, it is not clear whether the poem is praising Mary and her Son, or Louise and hers. 'France' is rhymed with such words as 'puissance' and 'esperance', further emphasising the positive nature of the connection with the throne. The identity of those offering the poem and praising Louise is made clear: the 'Ameyenoys' (line 28); the mention of the 'art de rhetorique' (line 47) and the 'chant royal' (line 48) root it strongly in the poetic tradition of the *Puy*, highlighting the self-conception of the city as one engaged in poetic devotion. The *envoy* positions the city gifting the manuscript as 'Tes serviteurs de Amiens ville et cité' (line 57), proclaiming an identity as servants of the throne, but, simultaneously, proud citizens. This shows a complex relationship between city and

court, which scholarship has tended to view as entirely separate from one another.[132] Hirschbiegel and Zeiliger reassess this relationship through the lens of the royal entry by King Sigismund at the Council of Constance, suggesting that royal entries show there was clear exchange between the city and court.[133] They see royal entries as nonetheless distinctively urban events, which were communicative and interactive processes in which court and civic authorities engaged with one another.[134] Mary's body in *puy* poetry is often described as something closed, with the potential to be opened only by God; in a royal entry, the closed city gates are opened up for royalty. This shows the limits of boundedness, and at the same time, the strength of the idea of the ideal, bounded city. Even though the city's gates were opened, and the boundary between court and city far more fluid than it first appears, the image of the walled, closed city is that which nonetheless dominates.

In her article 'Metaphorical Images of the Sacred Workshop', Hoogvliet argues that the Confraternity of the *Puy Notre-Dame d'Amiens* was a 'hybrid forum',[135] suggesting it was a dialogical space in which potentially opposing areas of society came together in dialogue: lay and clerical; artisans and city dignitaries. The *Puy*, she asserts, was socially inclusive, and what brought these different groups of people together was the same urban identity.[136] Using the example of the poem with the refrain *Forge ordonnee au souverain chef d'oeuvre*[137] (No 39), she offers a reading of both the miniature and the poem similar to that which has been advanced in this chapter: in using the vocabulary and actions related to producing objects from a forge, the work of those in that trade was sanctified. Moreover, she highlights the

[132] Hirschbiegel and Zeilinger 2009, 481. On royal entries, see Boucheron 2011, Blanchard 2003, and Bryant, 1986.
[133] Hirschbiegel and Zeilinger 2009, 485.
[134] Hirschbiegel and Zeilinger 2009, 500.
[135] Hoogvliet 2019, 389. The concept of 'hybrid forum' she uses comes from the work of sociologist Michel Callon.
[136] Hoogvliet 2019, 399.
[137] Edited and translated in Hoogvliet 2019, 409-411.

connection between the divine creation of the Virgin and the creation of objects in the forge and the creation of poetry.[138] This demonstrates the 'hybrid forum' of the *Puy,* which enabled imagery from the religious sphere of life to interact with that of the daily work of crafting: 'artisanal production work, its instruments, and the commercialisation of its products were pervaded with religious connotations of the Immaculate perfection of the Virgin and of her instrumentality in the salvation of human kind'.[139] Hoogvliet's argument helpfully illustrates for Amiens that which has been shown here for Rouen and Augsburg. However, her contention that the presence of artisanal work in the poems and their illuminations is evidence of a socially inclusive institution requires a reassessment. Using the occupations of the *Maistres*, she suggests that the *Puy*, as a hybrid forum, truly was socially inclusive, citing the fourteen *Maistres* who were 'artisans, merchants, or employees', along with the use of imagery and vocabulary from daily life and production to assert that the *Puy* was 'highly socially diversified' and functioned as a 'solidarity network, where social hierarchies and differences were abolished'.[140] This appears to be a convincing argument in light of the occupations she cites, and the two poems she uses: one which compares Mary to a forge, and one which casts her as a 'drapiere' (No. 43).[141]

The idea that the *Puy* brought together all kinds of social classes is not a new one, with Breuil writing in 1854 that it united 'toutes les classes de la famille amiénoise' and that the *Puy* had 'moins égard au rang et à la fortune qu'au savoir et à la piété' when it came to choosing the winning piece.[142] A member of the Société des Antiquaires de Picardie, Breuil was evidently keen to buy into a particular image of the *Puy* as an institution which reflected an attractive

[138] Hoogvliet 2019, 406.
[139] Hoogvliet 2019, 407.
[140] Hoogvliet 2019, 400.
[141] No. 39 and 43 respectively.
[142] Breuil 1854, 25.

view of the town. Similarly, Dunavel and Leroy write 'La Confrérie échappait aux régles ordinaires de l'organisation sociale. L'appartenance à cette association faisait tomber toutes les barrières. Il n'y avait plus de nobles, de bourgeois, d'artisans, de prélats, mais des hommes réunis dans le but de promouvoir la Mère de Jésus.'[143] This image of the *Puy*, however, cannot be sustained. It is unclear how Breuil concludes that judgements were made on the strength of poetry and piety given that we do not have examples of the poems that did not win, nor do we know the names of winning poets, let alone their occupation or social rank.[144] Furthermore, the examples Hoogvliet draws on are not representative of the social background of the *Maistres,* nor are the two poems she chooses typical in their imagery for the Amiens *Puy*. In his study of the *Puy*, Maillart insisted on its elite nature,[145] and Chatellain builds on this in his study of the *Maistres*, pointing out the ideological foundations of those who are keen to see artisans and merchants as having a far more significant role in the *Puy*, as it would paint a picture of an 'unanimisme socio-culturel'.[146] Analysing closely the occupations of the *Maistres,* Chatellain demonstrates convincingly that artisans and merchants, those who might be considered as belonging to a 'classe moyenne', played an increasingly smaller role in the *Puy*. It is true that Hoogvliet gives fourteen examples, but these come from over a hundred *Maistres*, and, as Chatellain shows, mostly date from the earlier years of the *Puy*, after which it became increasingly dominated by local notables: those who do not fit this pattern, such as the goldsmith Jean Poisson in 1442, are deemed to be exceptions.[147] Such exceptions to the rule also happened to be very wealthy:[148] indeed, one of the causes for the decreasing participation of the artisanal and mercantile classes was the

[143] Duvanel, Leroy, and Pinette 1997, 4.
[144] BnF fr 145 is the main source for the *Puy*'s poetry, and includes no information about the winning poets. The names given in the Arsenal manuscript are just those of the *Maistres.* Compared to Rouen, there is not nearly as much extant poetry from Amiens, making it difficult to judge the criteria of the jury when we cannot compare winning poems to others, as is possible in manuscripts like Douce 379.
[145] Maillart 201, 188-9.
[146] Chatellain 2020, 577.
[147] Chatellain 2020, 578.
[148] Chatellain 2020, n. 167.

increasing cost of putting on the *Puy*, which entailed organising the competition, commissioning the painting, and hosting a banquet with a mystery play, pricing out some of those who had earlier been able to take on the role of *Maistre*.[149] Chatellain shows that, in fact, most *Maistres* were lawyers, clerics, canons of the cathedral, and that those who were merchants were wealthy and well connected, giving the example of the tanner Hue Sare, who was also a *sergent à masse*, and brother-in-law of a cathedral canon.[150] Furthermore, many of those who acted as *Maistre* had been or went on to become mayor or magistrate.[151] The picture of the *Puy* that emerges from his study is one which becomes increasingly elitist, showing 'une oligarchie urbaine' who dominated the city's politics as well as its literary and devotional scene through the *Puy*.[152] To return to the question of interaction between court and city, it is clear that the highest echelons of urban society, were not necessarily entirely removed from the court: in the context of royal entries, Hirschbeigel and Zeilinger highlight that 'the urban aristocracy had the semiotic and communicative knowledge to interact with the landed nobility and the high clergy. Thus, not only were city and court facing each other on that occasion, but the partially congruent circles of the city's council, citizenry, and other city-dwellers also present an embodiment of its social ensemble'.[153]

Although the two case studies of No. 39 and 43 visually and textually illustrate artisanal production, other elements of urban life are foregrounded more strongly elsewhere in the corpus. For example, No. 40 depicts Mary as 'Court souverayne administrant justice', representing the judiciary involved in the *Puy*,[154] using the legal language to explain how through Mary, justice could be served, and mankind redeemed from its 'forfait' (line 3).

[149] The duties of the *Maistre* are set out in the *Escritel*.
[150] Chatellain 2020, 583.
[151] Chatellain 2020, 586.
[152] Chatellain 2020, 585.
[153] Hirschbiegel and Zeilinger 2009, 494.
[154] See also No. 21 for judicial imagery.

Vocabulary such as ‘juridique’ (line 12) and ‘proces verbal’ (line 13) with reference to ‘droit divin civil et canonique’ (line 23), along with the lexis of imprisonment show that it is not only artisanal daily life that is depicted in the *chants royaux*, but also that of the legal class, drawing on its rhetoric, such as ‘par quoy concludz sans aulcun prejudice’ (line 53). No. 38, ‘Siege au grant maistre administrant science’ uses ‘maistre’ in the sense of a Master of Arts, depicting the kind of schooling that may have happened in the cathedral school.[155] No. 10, ‘De vray paix tresoriere excellente’ and No. 34, ‘De dons divins liberale boursiere’ allude to civic functions in terms of managing money, while No. 42 sees Mary as the ‘Clavigere du royaume céleste’. Although artisanal and merchant classes are represented in the poetry of the *Puy Notre-Dame d’Amiens*, it is not necessarily representative of a truly socially inclusive institution. Through the references to their name or trade in the *palinod*, and their depiction in the paintings, the *Maistres* were able to use the *Puy* to increase their social standing and renown in the city, presenting themselves as patrons of art and poetry, and pious devotees of the Virgin. Unlike in the Rouen *Puy*, the names of the poets themselves, and hence clues to their occupation or status, are not transmitted to us at all. Thus the glory of the *Puy* reflects back on the *Maistres* themselves, further entrenching their status as the elite.

While individual poems present a socially inclusive image, suggesting the sort of ‘hybrid form’ Hoogvliet puts forward, it is little more than a poetic conceit. The language of craft and construction certainly points to the activity in the city, reflecting the trades, suggesting that they were indeed seen as having an important role to play in city life and in the urban identity of the city, and helpful in more poetological discourse about the creation of poetry. However, although trades were evidently part of the self-image and conception of the city, membership of the highest echelons of the *Puy* was not generally open to those practising them. Artisans

[155] See also No. 3.

may have participated in the *Puy* as poets – no records survive – but Hüe points out that even in Rouen, where the role of Prince was often taken up by merchants, and poets came from various aspects of urban life, including artisans of a certain sort, there is no evidence of what he calls 'petits artisans', such as drapers, taking part in any way, even though metaphors of drapery were used in the poetry.[156] It seems, therefore, that while the Amiens *Puy* may have represented facets of urban life, and, in so doing, shown that the city comprised many different levels of society and kinds of work, it was the poetry that was inclusive, and not the institution. The fact that critics have been so keen to read values such as equality and inclusivity into the *Puy* demonstrates once again that the imagined and ideal city, the image that is presented textually and lyrically, is more powerful than the reality. The poetry was used by an urban elite to increase their prestige, and in reality, was an exclusive institution. However, it reflected an ideal of the city in which all could participate, and in which all were sanctified by their work, by virtue of being part of the urban body.

Conclusion

Marian lyric is able to reflect the urban space in which it was composed, and let urban inhabitants explore their identity as such, because Mary is a protean figure. Just as biblical images from the Prophets to Wisdom to Revelation were applied to Mary, so too could images from daily urban life be applied to her. Developing Hüe's argument that *puy* poetry showcased Rouen as a city through its depiction of urban life, reinforcing the Conceptionist, urban identity of the Rouennais, I have shown that the figure of Mary in lyric reflects urban mentality through contemplating and celebrating images of boundedness and privilege, which associate Mary with the city. Mary is not only used to talk about the city, but also she is the

[156] Hüe 2002a, 341.

city. Bounded images, which present Mary as a sacred space surrounded by walls, whether it be a tower, a closed garden, a palace, or a room, all point to the city.

Mary's paradoxical nature is such that she is always both/and: virgin and mother; humble maiden and Queen of Heaven, mother to her own Father and daughter of her Son. This means that to compose poetry about the Virgin is to gesture to all those other aspects, titles and prefigurations, even when they remain unspoken. Rather than a single, stable allegory, there is slippage and shifting between these different images, where the literal spatial shift from, for example, garden to palace is not what matters. In the Marian frame of mind, these images blend into one, such that to explore any bounded image is, implicitly, to identify Mary with all of them, including the City of God. This identification of Mary with the city, which associates it with exclusivity and privilege, foregrounds the city and the space between the walls, as a sacred space, one in which Christ dwells. The ideological separation from the world, like that of the cloister, permits spiritual liberty and enables salvation. The enclosure paradoxically entails a form of openness, in which gates of the celestial city, the heavenly Jerusalem, are opened. Similarly, Marian exclusivity and privilege implies an element of inclusivity in which all members of the city share in her privilege and the sacred space she creates. The imagined and idealised city that comes across in Marian poetry is far more powerful than the reality of the city, which was much less separate from, and had far more contacts with courtly and monastic institutions, creating an urban and exclusive elite. In Marian lyric, craft and trades of all kinds are valued and seen as constituent parts of the urban body, reflecting divine creation. Poetry was a particularly apt form for exploring this aspect of urban mentality, given the connection between poetic creation, artisanal creation, and divine creation, with the language of craft and construction used to signal all three forms. By bringing in the example of Amiens at the end, I showed that this thesis can be sustained

through considering the visual culture of the *Puy*, which exemplifies this blending of bounded images.

The constellation of boundedness, craft and the city comes across particularly strongly in *puy* poetry, where the *palinod* entails exploration of a particular image without the need to adhere to particular scriptural references. In *Meistergesang*, we saw that where there was no generic requirement to attend to a particular feast day or bible passage, the figure of Mary was similarly used to explore this expression of urban mentality. Marian *Meistergesang* as a whole emphasises bounded images less strongly than the *puy* tradition, but it underlines forcefully the language of craft. Comparing the two traditions of *puy* poetry and *Meistergesang*, we see that when poets have the freedom to select the aspects of Mary they find most attractive to praise her, they gravitate toward the theme of boundedness. It is clear that Mary was an alluring figure in urban poetry, not only because she allowed poets to represent urban life, but because she herself is the city, thus sanctifying urban space and enabling the ideal city to be identified with the heavenly one. Urban Marian lyric does not represent real urban space; it ideologically constructs through poetry an imagined, ideal city, identified with Mary's virginal body, articulating an urban mentality of boundedness and privilege. To paraphrase Maschure's poem, quoted at the beginning of the chapter, the city, as illustrated through Marian poetry, is without imperfection, full of clean air and towers of virtue, and contains Christ. Designed by the divine architect, Mary is the city, and the city engenders salvation.

Chapter II: Knowledge and Poetry in Marian Lyric

Introduction

Poetry was a powerful means of communicating and disseminating knowledge in the late Middle Ages, whether that be theological political, historical, rhetorical or other more specific or hermetic forms of knowledge. The figure of Mary is ideal for discussing diverse kinds of knowledge, precipitating and enabling discourse on topics ranging from theology and gender roles to music and glassmaking, meaning Marian lyric offers many opportunities for engaging with different fields of knowledge through the medium of poetry.[1] In this chapter, I examine the relationship between poetry and knowledge in late medieval France and Germany, demonstrating the ways in which Marian lyric was a particularly effective vehicle for the transmission of knowledge, and indeed, a form of knowledge itself. This is not only as a result of the evolving relationship between poetry and prose in the late Middle Ages, and Marian lyric's association with scriptural forms which conferred authority on it; it is also by virtue of the fact that, as a literary form, lyric is particularly well suited to conveying knowledge by the very nature of its form and structure. I will argue that form was central in conditioning the process of knowing through shaping the means of communication. Form enables different styles of engagement with lyric, while simultaneously creating structures for protecting and safeguarding knowledge. This chapter will consider the interplay between knowledge and poetry in the context of religious knowledge (here, primarily about the Virgin Mary and the Incarnation), and knowledge about poetry; form underscores all these areas of knowledge and will constitute the key thread running through the analysis.

Following a discussion of how knowledge is to be understood in the context of this chapter and some reflections on form, I will give a brief overview of the ways in which critical

[1] Dürr, et al. 2019, 15.

literature has engaged with knowledge transfer in the late Middle Ages, particularly in relation to poetry. I will then consider how the relationship between poetry and knowledge unfolds in urban Marian lyric. This entails analysing how fixed-form lyric communicates knowledge effectively through form and the need for engagement intellectually, aesthetically and experientially with lyric. Consideration of *artes poeticae* will help to situate this within metapoetical discourse. Throughout the chapter, I will draw on poems from the Vidoue Print, a Parisian print of 1525 containing a variety of poems from the Rouen *Puy de l'Immaculée Conception* with poems dating from 1497 to 1524.[2] The preface claims that the poems have been 'composés par scientifiques personnages',[3] immediately characterising the poets as knowledgeable.[4] With forty-eight *chants royaux* by more famous poets, such as André de la Vigne and Jean Marot, as well as local Rouennais, such as Nicole Lescarre and Guillaume Thibaut, it offers a diverse collection spanning twenty-seven years of *puy* production, and one which, we assume, had wider transmission than most collections. At the end of the chapter, a collection of *Meisterlieder* by Konrad Nachtigall, or in his *Töne*, will form a case study showing the relationship between poetry and knowledge in *Meistergesang*. Unlike the method of comparison in the first chapter, which entailed three case studies using recurring, short references to the texts within them to build up an argument, this chapter develops an argument with the French material, and uses an extended case study analysing four lyrics in details to show the implications for *Meistergesang*.

This chapter will focus primarily on religious knowledge and how poetry engages with, produces and communicates it, and its interaction with poetic knowledge. The definition of religious knowledge proposed by the Tübinger Graduiertenkolleg 1662 is a helpful starting

[2] A facsimile was published by the Société des Bibliophiles Normands (1897) and is available on Gallica, giving easy access to the text. A table of its contents can be found in the appendix on 268
[3] *Palinods présentés* 1897 1.
[4] See 'scientifique' in the *DMF*.

point, particularly because it emphasises that knowledge is dynamic and investigates the process of knowing. The characteristics of religious knowledge, according to their understanding, are that it involves communication, culturally and socially, of ideas not only about God and the divine, but also *with* God and the divine, and that both the form and the content of the arrangement of this communication are significant.[5] Key to this understanding of religious knowledge is that it is in constant dialogue with 'Offenbarungswissen', the revealed knowledge of sacred texts, as it is adapted and engaged with through different media and by different individuals and institutions in distinct spatial and temporal contexts. Therefore, the way in which the different poetic communities of the *puys* and *Meistersinger* engage with religious knowledge will be shaped by the individual institutions and urban contexts in which the poetic composition and performance are situated.

Communicating Religious Knowledge through Lyric

When it comes to Mariology, there are a few key sources of revealed knowledge, both canonical and apocryphal. As well as the key passages from the New Testament that obviously relate to Mary, such as Luke's Gospel, including the Annunciation (Luke 1:26-38), the Visitation (Luke 1:39-56), and the Wedding at Cana (John 2) or Mary at the foot of the Cross (John 19:25-27), developments over time had led to other passages taking on significance in relation to the Virgin Mary. For example, the *Song of Songs* evolved a Mariological reading, and the Woman of the Apocalypse (Revelation 12) came to be strongly associated with Mary. Rachel Fulton highlights Honorius' 12th-century *Sigillum Sanctae Mariae* as one of the earliest readings of the Song of Songs as a Marian epithalamium,[6]

[5] 'die jeweiligen historisch rekonstruierbaren kulturell-gesellschaftlichen Ausgestaltungen einer Kommunikation *über* Gott und das Göttliche, aber auch *mit* Gott oder dem Göttlichen, und zwar mit Bezug auf die Formen wie die Inhalte dieser Kommunikation.' (Dürr et al, 2019, 1).
[6] Fulton Brown 2002, 248.

arising from the tradition of strong Marian devotion in England, already evident in Anselm's writing.[7] With Rupert of Deutz' *Commentaria in Cantica Canticorum* and Alan de Lille's *Elucidatio in Cantica Canticorum*, devotionally, 'the heyday of Marian commentary on the Song'.[8] She suggests that part of the attraction was the possibility of hearing Christ's and Mary's voices.[9] Although Fulton writes that the *mulier amicta sole* had not been primarily identified with Mary, but with the Church until the twelfth century,[10] Delius argues that even the early Church saw Mary in the Woman of the Apocalypse.[11] Furthermore, many of the female figures in the Old Testament can be considered types of Mary, from Sarah, who conceives following the message of an angel to Judith, whose beheading of Holofernes prefigures Mary crushing the devil's head. The apocryphal Protoevangelium of James has an infancy narrative and tells of Mary's time in the temple and marriage to Joseph and is a key source for the dogma of Mary's perpetual virginity, and the origin of much of early Mariology. The development of Marian imagery and theology from a few slender scriptural sources is a good example of the interaction between revealed knowledge and religious knowledge. Indeed, many of the typological and allegorical Marian readings of texts not explicitly about the Virgin Mary, which, according to the Tübingen definitions, would initially have been religious knowledge derived from revealed knowledge, had by the late medieval period, thanks to the work of patristic scholars and earlier medieval theologians such as Bernard de Clairvaux, taken on the status of revealed knowledge.

In discussing 'knowledge' and its communication, I do not mean to imply something static, nor that these poems are to be considered primarily 'didactic', in the way that term has long

[7] Fulton Brown 2002, 204.
[8] Fulton Brown 2002, 291.
[9] Fulton Borwn 2002, 293.
[10] Fulton Brown 2002, 410.
[11] Delius 1963, 29.

been understood and with the negative connotations that come with it.[12] In a recent contribution to scholarship rehabilitating didacticism, Norbert Kössinger and Claudia Wittig take as their starting definition 'any text that takes education as a systematic and dominant principle of composition', taking education in its broadest possible terms.[13] The three forms of knowledge on which I intend to focus – religious, poetic, and artisanal – are dynamic, and knowing is a process rooted in experience. Where didacticism implies a hierarchical transfer of information, these lyrics communicate knowledge about the Virgin Mary that must be constantly rediscovered, experienced and known in one's heart. Furthermore, this communication is taking place within the context of communities sharing, validating and celebrating the knowledge they value amongst peers, in settings both devotional and competitive. Thus, while there is a pedagogical element to the knowledge being shared, the term 'didactic' would not capture the communal, experiential and devotional aspects and contexts of how these Marian lyrics operate within urban communities.

The Marian poetry of the *puys* and *Meistergesang* can entail catechetical knowledge in the sense of facts, such as 'it was the Angel Gabriel who appeared to Mary at the Annunciation', that is, ideas that can be learned by rote or memorised (which are more didactic in nature), but also a more profound sense of *knowing*: the process of understanding of the mysteries of the faith in the heart and soul. Through imagery and allegory from all walks of life, ranging from textiles to music to war, the poems convey significant knowledge about the Virgin Mary. This knowledge mostly pertains to three mysteries: that Mary was the Theotokos who bore God-made-man; that she was both virgin and mother; and that she was the Immaculate

[12] A helpful discussion of the pitfalls of earlier characterisation (and hence dismissal of) much medieval literature as didactic can be found in Linden and Lähnemann, 2009. Their recasting of didacticism as a mode of speaking ("lehrhaftes Sprechen") has helped to re-evaluate the literary quality of didactic texts. Similarly, Sarah Kay (2007) resists the temptation of a monologic reading of didactic poetry and reassesses the complexity of such texts.

[13] Kössinger and Wittig 2019, 1

Conception, conceived without the stain of original sin. In particular, these first two elements of Mariology were well-known, not great theological mysteries of which the laity would have been ignorant. The matter of the Immaculate Conception was more contentious, but as a contemporary debate, was still likely to be widely known, particularly in urban centres which held a *puy* celebrating Mary, such as in Rouen where Mary as the Immaculate Conception was patron.[14] The Council of Basel in 1431 had taught that belief in the Immaculate Conception was an acceptable pious opinion (though it would not be declared dogma until 1854), but this affirmation did not quash debate entirely and while certain regions, such as England and Normandy, developed great devotion to the Immaculate Conception, other regions were much slower to accept it, and the controversy continued into the Reformation. In 1483, Pope Sixtus IV had to forbid supporters and opponents of the devotion from calling one another heretics, demonstrating that it continued to be a live issue.[15]

Given that Mary's perpetual virginity, her Immaculate Conception, and role as Theotokos are 'facts' that every medieval Christian should know, it should beg the question of why this same religious knowledge needed to be constantly imparted and retransmitted.
It can be expected that the laity would have been aware of Mary's purity, virginity and privilege of carrying God made man. There had been a flowering of Marian devotion in the Middle Ages, with several Marian feasts celebrated throughout the year by the late Middle Ages: the Feast of the Nativity of Mary, the Immaculate Conception, the Presentation of Mary, the Annunciation, the Visitation, the Purification, and the Assumption, meaning that several times a year most would hear preaching on those feasts and hence have had catechesis regarding Mary's role in salvation history.[16] Furthermore, those involved in the *puys* were

[14] On the development of devotion to and doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, see Hüe 2002a, 53–84, Rubin, 2010, Gay-Canton 2011).
[15] Schroeder 1942, 76.
[16] Schroeder 1942 60; Rubin 2010; Fulton Brown 2002; Delius 1963.

living in towns of which Mary was patron, and had dedicated competitions in her honour, so it hardly seems likely that the readers and listeners of the poems could be unaware of the great honours that had been bestowed on Mary, yet poem after poem confirms knowledge that they should have known anyway. However, there is a huge difference between knowing rationally that Mary was the Mother of God, or perpetual virgin, as a fact that can be recited or the answer to a catechesis question, and truly understanding the significance of it, and knowing it as a lived truth. Many non-Christians today would 'know' that Mary was ever-virgin, or that Christians believe her to be so, and indeed, many who practise would also accept this as a tenet of their faith without having interrogated the idea or explored its implications. These poems do not just teach facts about Mary, acting as a simple didactic or catechetical tool, but they invite the reader or listener to engage with the knowledge and understand it in their hearts as wells as their minds, inspiring love and inflaming devotion.[17] For example, Jean Gerson in his 1403 Sermon on the Passion, *Ad Deum Vadit*, preaches that his aim is 'principalement a esmouvir nos cueurs a devocion et a deuil'.[18]

Poems based on the contradiction that Mary is both virgin and mother should lead listeners to understand and marvel that God could perform such works, and encourage them to have a relationship with Mary, to know her as a friend, mother and queen. Thus it is an experiential knowledge these poems are trying to communicate. This chapter will demonstrate how Marian lyric creates an aesthetic, affective experience that enables listeners to tap into the affective piety recommended to the laity in manuals and sermons. Form is one of the fundamental means through which lyric was able to shape the listener's experience of the poem.

[17] Boulton 2015 and McNamer 2011.
[18] Gerson 1960, 453.

The key contention of this chapter is that form plays a crucial role in shaping the interactions between poet, knowledge, audience and lyric. Here I would like to outline the significance of form and how it shapes the communication and transfer of knowledge in poetry so as to aid the development of later discussions regarding refrains and textual examples.

A key feature of poetry that makes it particularly suitable for conveying knowledge is that its form and structure make it apt for citation. Metre, rhyme and repetition in verse ensure that it is easily quotable and memorable. Short lines containing nuggets of wisdom are easy to remember, particularly with regard to the refrains of fixed-form lyric, enabling the reader or listener to internalise and recall the knowledge that the text is trying to communicate. The semantic density of lyric means that even a very short text can capture a key concept or truth, often in a striking way that the listener or reader can easily remember.[19]

This ability to break verse down into smaller units and easily cite it further makes it instantly recontextualisable, as can be seen, for example, through the use of lyric insertions in genres like the *dit*, or Jean Gerson's citation of his own poetry in his sermons.[20] Recontextualising verse can legitimate its knowledge, giving it validation by presenting it as an authority, or having that authority granted by its new speaker. The temporal and geographic context of the quotation can also give it new meanings. It is the form and structure of verse which facilitates the excision of small parts of it, and its semantic density which enables it to convey meaning succinctly and be quoted and redeployed elsewhere in new contexts. Therefore, it is especially suited to conveying ideas in such a way that makes them memorable. Many of

[19] Linden 2011, 359–86.
[20] See Bose 2008, 68

these elements are also evident in prose: citation of authorities was a significant feature of much prose writing, and the material manuscript culture could highlight features to make them more memorable, whether through illumination, size, rubrication, the mise-en-page or use of maniculae.[21] Nonetheless, lyric form has its own particular advantages in aiding the reader or listener's ability to remember ideas or quotations.[22]

Thus religious lyric can communicate theological truths with great concision and in a way that is easy to remember, cite and reuse in devotional settings. Even though the poems often construct complex metaphors and allegories, the repeated and final line is easily memorable, and transmits key catechetical knowledge about the Virgin Mary that every Christian should have known. This capacity of lyric as a form to communicate knowledge, both in terms of the way it can be used as a pedagogical aid and its ability to create an affective experience, will help support the arguments this chapter will make about the significance of form in the transmission of knowledge.

Scholarship on the place of knowledge in medieval French literature has often tended to get caught up in the aforementioned trap of conceiving of it almost solely in relation to didacticism. Sarah Kay and Adrian Armstrong characterise this propensity, which they have helped to correct, by saying 'critics have been more inclined to see late medieval literature as peddling moralizing and edifying banalities than as participating in the production and transmission of knowledge'.[23] In more recent years, there has been greater interest specifically in the later medieval period, and as a result the tendency to equate didacticism with prose and vernacularity with secularity has been slowly eroded. It has therefore been

[21] Parkes 1976.
[22] On the extent to which lyric could be remembered by *Minnesänger*, see the discussion at the beginning of Reichlin 2021, 233–4.
[23] Armstrong and Kay 2011, 5.

possible to reappraise the relationship between poetry and knowledge more positively and see it in terms other than didactic, while recognising the literary and rhetorical quality of poetry that had previously been dismissed as such.[24]

There is a body of work specifically focused on analysing the relationship between poetry and knowledge in late medieval French poetry thanks to the AHRC-funded research project 'Poetic Knowledge in Late Medieval France'. This has helped begin to provide a corrective and engage with the aesthetic, philosophical and intellectual dimensions that had been overlooked in earlier scholarship. In particular, the work of Armstrong and Kay in engaging with this material has been influential in this re-evaluation, and indeed, validation of late medieval verse, and I am indebted to their assessments in my own work here.[25]

Of the several volumes which grew out of the project, the edited collection *Poetry, Knowledge and Community in Late Medieval France* is particularly helpful for articulating the means by which poetry had become a privileged form for imparting knowledge in this period.[26] The contributions examine different genres of text, from political treatises to love lyrics and *razos*, but despite the heterogeneity of the subject matter, all use verse to communicate knowledge, simultaneously aiding the establishment or the bolstering of communities. It is the contention of the editors of the volume that not only was poetry was for the transmission of knowledge, but that this was one of poetry's primary functions, and that in this period the association between poetry and knowledge was so compelling that it came to be identified very strongly with knowledge.[27] The fact that many of the arguments and

[24] Linden and Lähnemann 2009, Kössinger and Wittig 2019, Ruys 2008).
[25] Among the work on late medieval poetry which has been significant are Armstrong and Kay 2011, Kay 2007, and Armstrong 2012.
[26] Dixon and Sinclair 2008.
[27] Freeman Regaldo 2008, 151.

conclusions drawn by the essays in this book concern specifically how poetry functions as a form suggests that this thesis may well also be valid beyond late medieval Francophonie, though most contributors qualify their discussions with the caveat that this association between poetry and knowledge is specific to the time and place of late medieval France. Certainly, the arguments we will consider supporting this are extremely pertinent to the poetry of the *puys*, but many are also applicable to other medieval lyric, and indeed poetry to general as the question of form pertains to poetry more broadly.

The *Roman de la Rose* offers the opportunity for reflection on so many of the key philosophical and literary ideas of the late Middle Ages; so many discussions of knowledge and poetry explore the *Rose*, and many analyses of the *Rose* find themselves touching on the subject, a recent example being *The 'Roman de la Rose' and Thirteenth-Century Thought.*[28] The *Rose* discusses so many different strands of thought, from etymology to nature and politics to morality, that questions have been raised regarding its encyclopaedic nature, from Gaston Paris' description of the book as 'une encyclopédie en désordre',[29] to Sarah Kay's comment that it is rather useless as an encyclopaedia as it does not have an index![30] Regardless of whether its disorder precludes it from being an encyclopaedia, it doubtless created 'a legacy of associating poetry and intellectual inquiry',[31] and, both in medieval literature itself, and in modern scholarship, is a key foundation in discussions of poetry and knowledge.

Questions of encyclopaedism and taxonomies of knowledge also feature in French scholarship on poetry and knowledge. From Jacques Legrand explaining that 'Poetrie est

[28] Morton, Nievergelt, and Marenbon 2020.
[29] Paris 1907, 198.
[30] Kay 1995, 71.
[31] Armstrong and Kay 2011, 76.

science qui apprent a faindre et a fere ficcions fondees en raison',[32] discussing its place under rhetoric, to Deschamps' argument that poetry is part of music,[33] both medieval and modern scholars have debated where poetry falls within the seven liberal arts, the overarching classification of knowledge during the late Middle Ages. Understanding how knowledge was arranged, from *florilegia* to what we would call encyclopaedias, has also formed part of discourses on knowledge, with Franklin Brown's 2004 *Reading the World: Encyclopaedic Writing in the Scholastic Age* one recent contribution that analyses literary compilations of knowledge. Indeed, Denis Hüe has argued that the poetry of the Rouen *Puy* takes an encyclopaedic approach to the world, in that it describes and offers and inventory of world around Rouen as well as Marian devotion. Although the poets to not meet the third criterion of encyclopaedism which he suggests, classifying, he nonetheless sees the poems as participating in 'un projet encyclopédiste', albeit an incomplete one – incompleteness being a feature of many encyclopaedias.[34] We can observe this in the collections of poetry discussed in Chapter I, and see that different areas of life and expressions of Marian devotion occur in the Amiens *Puy* as Hüe has argued for the Rouen *Puy*.

While the process of collecting facts is one element of engagement with knowledge, medieval concern with what knowledge entails is more complex. One interesting addition to discussions of epistemology is Karen Sullivan's (2005) suggestion in *Truth and the Heretic: Crises of Knowledge in Late Medieval French Literature* that the presence of heresy, which was evidence of the existence of multiple, conflicting readings of texts, created a sense of epistemological indeterminacy. Though her focus is on the figure of the heretic in late medieval French literature, rather than on the ramifications of this indeterminacy, the

[32] Langlois 1902, 1
[33] Deschamps 1994, 60.
[34] Hüe 1995, 247.

implications are significant. The tension between *Offenbarungswissen*, the canonical texts, and *religiöses Wissen* is made manifest through heresy, as it demonstrates that scripture can still produce conflicting interpretations and alternative readings.

The questions being asked in French and German scholarship regarding the identification of poetry with knowledge in this period are often strikingly different, and exploring the formal differences, here with respect to fixed-form Marian lyric, may partly help to account for this. There is no doubt that the poets of the German late Middle Ages used lyric to discuss and transmit knowledge, and one need only consider the obscure and hermetic *œuvre* of some of the *Sangspruchdichter* to see that poets such as Frauenlob used knowledge from a huge range of different spheres to communicate his ideas and establish his authority. Doing so in the vernacular makes this particularly significant.[35] Indeed, the explanatory notes for all the arcane references in his *Marienleich* are three times the length of the poem itself in Burghart Wachinger's *Deutsche Lyrik des späten Mittelalters* (2010). Their employment of knowledge in verse, however, makes it hard to understand for those who are not learned in arts from botany to gemstones, and perhaps suggest a desire less to communicate and transmit knowledge (certainly not in an evangelistic way), and more to protect it, to include or exclude, and to elicit intense engagement with the poetry. Thus, the link between poetry and knowledge being studied by those such as Horst Brunner in discussions of *Sangspruch* (or, as such researchers are suggesting it be called*, Spruchsang*) is less research into the ways in which poetry is an ideal form for communicating and further disseminating knowledge, as demonstrated in the Poetic Knowledge in Late Medieval France research project, and more an

[35] See Susanna Köbele's introduction in Köbele and Frick 2018.

exploration of the importance of knowledge for poetry, and the value and significance knowing held for poets and their audiences.[36]

There has been significant interest in the different kinds of knowledge being articulated in medieval German literature and in categorising them, with both Latin and German terms being used in such discussions. From *sapientia*, with its biblical implications, and most closely linked to *Weisheit,* to *scientia*, encompassing knowledge such as facts and skills, to *prudentia*, linked by Burkhart Hasebrink (2000) most closely with the idea of *Klugheit*, or the related categories of *Offenbarungswissen* and *religiöses Wissen,* knowledge comes under many guises and forms, and embraces diverse disciplines and genres. In reaction to the nineteenth-century *belles-lettres,* researchers in the latter half of the twentieth century took a greater interest in texts that had more traditionally been considered non-literary, and the Sonderforschungsbereich 26 'Wissensliteratur im Mittelalter' went some way towards redressing the balance by examining knowledge in a wide range of texts and approaching knowledge in the Middle Ages from an interdisciplinary perspective. As important as knowledge itself is, it is perhaps more the process of knowing that is significant, and therefore much research has been carried out into the process of knowledge transfer: how knowledge is produced, organised and received through text and image. For example, the volume *Wissensorganisierende und wissensvermittelnde Literatur im Mittelalter* dealt with several of these questions, with contributions ranging from encyclopaedic dialogues to the knowledge and books available to lay brothers.[37] This emphasis on knowing as dynamic and active is developed helpfully with regard to religious knowledge in *Religiöses Wissen im vormodernen Europa*, which foregrounds knowledge as a 'Prozessbegriff'.[38]

[36] Brunner et al 2019.
[37] Wolf 1987.
[38] Dürr et al 2019, 669.

Recently, there has been particular focus on materiality: how manuscripts as a whole present and transmit knowledge, from the compilation of texts, to the layout of the page, to marginalia, and the link between text and image, taking the material object and its visual impact into greater account. For example, Hanna Vorholt's 2014 essay on 'Wissenstransfer und Erkenntnisprozesse in einer enzyklopädischen Sammelhandschrift aus dem Umfeld der Universität Leuven' considers how knowledge about the world and its history is constructed within the manuscript, and in particular how diagrams enabled knowledge to be produced and received. Emily Steiner and Lynn Ransom (2015) collect essays asking similar questions in their volume on how manuscripts convey knowledge. By analysing the ways in which the layout of text and diagram is organised in different copies of the manuscript, it is possible to explore how the knowledge within it was engaged with by readers and subsequent generations of copyists.

Elements of form and structure are significant in the communication of knowledge in poetry, and the aesthetic experience that form can produce for the listener or reader can furthermore make knowledge, or, more precisely, the process of knowing, affective and experiential. This is demonstrated deftly by Jonathan Culler in his *Theory of the Lyric*, where he argues that modern approaches to poetry rely too much on interpretation and hermeneutics and in doing so neglect the experiential aspect.[39] Although he struggles to express how the 'highly seductive' sound patterning of lyric works on the listener, he nonetheless advocates a greater focus on rhythm, repetition and sound.[40] His theory of the lyric, rather than concentrating on

[39] Culler 2015, 2.
[40] Culler 2015, 134.

understanding the lyric as a mode of self-expression, is instead rooted in experiencing the poem itself as an event.[41]

With its short lines, often metrically and meaningfully excisable from the longer strophe or poem, key ideas or sections were quotable, memorable and recontextualisable, as outlined above. While both the *puy* poetry and the *Meistergesang* had strict rules governing their forms set out in the statutes of the *puy* and the *Tabulatur* of the *Singschule*, those forms were nonetheless very different and the formal qualities of poetry which lend themselves so well to transmitting knowledge in the relatively short *chant royal* are not present in the same way in the German lyric.

A staple of the French fixed-form lyric, forming the basis of the *chant royal*, the refrain or *palinod* has significant formal and semantic implications for the poem. The *MGG* (2020) emphasises that it aids 'die Vereinfachung, die Abgerundetheit und Verallgemeinerung' of the content of the poem, underlining its meaning and ensuring understanding. A fixed-form lyric constructed around a *palinod*, a line repeated at the end of each of the five strophes and the *envoi*, the *chant royal* transmits a key image or idea related to the Virgin Mary encapsulated in the *palinod* and elaborated throughout the poem. The *palinod* with its key piece of knowledge about Mary – for example, 'sans blasme aulcun de couple originel' (No. 3) – is repeated six times over the course of the poem and constitutes its final line. Generally decasyllabic, with a caesura dividing the *vers* into two hemistichs of four and six, the metre makes it easy to remember, and the final sound/rhyme is repeated throughout the poem. This imprints the sound and rhythm of the *palinod* in the mind of the listener, making it, and hence

[41] Culler 2015, 350.

the important truth contained within the few short words, easily memorable, conveying the knowledge regarding the Virgin Mary effectively.

That refrains in carols and hymns had a similar function of repeating a key piece of religious knowledge, and that the *puy* competitions took place inside churches, further aligns the *palinod* with the catechetical intentions of hymns and other songs sung by lay people (though there is still an experiential element).[42] Sometimes the knowledge is communicated very explicitly, such as the *palinod* stating that Mary was without original sin or 'de la grand loy Marie est exemptee' (No. 32 by Thibaut), which, even without further context, articulates the concept clearly with no further explanation needed. They are concise lines communicating the Immaculate Conception with clarity, and which can easily be redeployed in other settings. Thus poetry, through its very form, has a mnemonic function, and Rebecca Dixon points out that 'this propensity to quotation mirrors a cognitive or experiential process which Antoine Compagnon has called "solicitation": the quote lodges itself in the mind, making units such as *vers* or strophes the ideal means by which to transmit an idea'.[43]

[42] Page 1990, 110–33.
[43] Dixon and Sinclair 2008, 215.



Figure VII: *Le Sacerdoce de la Vierge* illustrating the *palinod* 'Digne vesture au prestre souverain' from Amiens 1438, © 2017 RMN-Grand Palais (musée du Louvre) / Tony Querrec
https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010059205#

While the *palinods* of the *puy* may not be cited and recontextualised in other poetry, there are certainly ways in which it was redeployed. In Amiens, for example, where every poet had to use the same *palinod* line, each year an image was offered by the *Maistre* illustrating the *palinod,* which would be displayed prominently in the cathedral for the duration of the year – Figure VII shows the image for the year 1438, which illustrates the *palinod* 'Digne vesture au prestre souverain'. With the line so often repeated during the *puy,* and a perpetual reminder of it in the church, although we can only speculate, one can imagine people adopting the *palinod* themselves in personal prayer or meditation whilst in the church, or a priest picking up on the line as the subject of his homily.

The refrain, as the ultimate nugget of wisdom whose repetition throughout such that it becomes ingrained in the memory, easily detached and reused elsewhere, magnifies this feature, is largely absent from medieval German poetry in comparison. Despite the claim that 'Der Refrain war in der Liedkunst aller Nationen und Zeiten gebräuchlich', and that the time period in which it was most significant was that of the troubadours and trouvères, it is notably rare in the medieval German lyric.[44] Olive Sayce points out that they are 'extremely rare', in the secular love songs of the thirteenth century.[45] Indeed, when they appear, for example, in the *Carmina Burana* or in dawn songs, she makes a point of highlighting the refrain due to it being the exception to the rule. Little is offered in the way of explanation for the general lack of refrain in medieval German lyric, only that their appearances tend to be in imitation of Old French forms when they exist.[46] In late medieval German songs, the refrain becomes more popular and can be seen in poems such as Oswald von Wolkenstein's songs.[47]

Cretin's *Qu'est de besoing au thomistes apprendre* (No. 3) takes as its refrain 'sans blasme aulcun de couple originel': repeated throughout the poem, the claim is justified over its course, and the reader or listener is left with the line imprinted upon their memory; additionally, towards the end, the regularity of the strophes and rhyme scheme is such that they are already anticipating it the final few times. On the other hand, Nunnenbeck's *Maria, keusche junckfraw rein*, which, like Cretin's poem, seeks to praise and advocate for Mary's Immaculate Conception, has no such 'take-away' line: a single refrain repeated that the listener can take away. Written in Maienschein's *Langen Ton*, it has a complex metrical structure, in which each Stollen is almost as long as a strophe in the *chant royal* and

[44] *MGG* 2020.
[45] Sayce 1982, 249.
[46] Sayce 1982, 480.
[47] For example Wachinger (2011, 409) points out that nine of Oswald's songs with refrains are included in Clara Hätzlerin's songbook.

sometimes lines comprise only a single word. The experience of listening to the two lyrics is thus very different; however, the lack of refrain does not necessarily make it less effective as a means of impressing upon the listener that Mary was conceived without sin: rather the nature of the lyric is that the audience, having heard and tried to understand the poem, must formulate their own expression of its meaning, a process which, in forcing them to think, aids their knowing and understanding. These differences in form shape the way in which the audiences engage with the lyric and afford different opportunities for articulating knowledge, and hence influence the process of knowing. Bearing this in mind, we will now explore how the prescribed forms of the *Meistergesang* and *puys* can produce different interactions between the lyric and knowledge and reflect differing approaches to and anxieties regarding religious knowledge.

In relation to religious poems, particularly Marian lyric, we might see the refrain as a form of safeguarding meaning. It is not only easy to remember the *palinod*, but also difficult to misremember or come up with a formulation that risks being incorrect or heretical. If we see the refrain as preserving and insuring knowledge, it is interesting to consider what concerns or anxieties this might reflect about theology in the vernacular, and in the hands of lay poets, and whether different attitudes in French- and German-speaking areas may account for the use of refrains.

Though Nicholas Watson's term 'vernacular theology' or Barbara Newman's 'imaginative theology' are perhaps too broad and approximate to describe vernacular literature dealing with religious knowledge,[48] they nonetheless capture the idea of vernacular texts engaging with theological ideas, often outside institutions or ecclesial structures. While there is a huge

[48] Watson 1995 and Newman 2016.

volume of such writing in German, from Eckhart, Tauler and Suso, to Mechthild von Magdeburg or Hildegard von Bingen, it is noticeable that there is a dearth of such works in medieval French. Indeed, Howie writes that the history of medieval French mysticism is just a history of two Marguerites: Marguerite Porete and Marguerite d'Oingt.[49] She notes further that there is nothing particularly French about Porete, whom she sees as having more in common with her German contemporaries, and, of course, that this most famous of French mystics was burned for heresy. This indicates a certain suspicion of those who were discussing theological matters in the vernacular. It was evidently a contemporary point of contention as the issue in debated in Le Franc's *Le Champion des Dames* (c1440): [50]

> Aussy en deubt mieulx parler
> En latin qu'en commun langage
> Car il n'est point de tel parler
> A mostrer chose haulte et sage [21281-5]

On the other hand, the proliferation of vernacular theology in German-speaking areas suggests that, even if it were not necessarily regarded as legitimate by all, as there was more composition and transmission of such texts, there was a wider acceptance. Even during this later period in the Middle Ages, there was perhaps in French-speaking areas more of a cultural memory of inquisitorial practices, which had had a strong presence in the University of Paris.[51] When it comes to the question of the Immaculate Conception, there was the case of John of Montson, an Aragonese Dominican. Fourteen propositions from his lectures at the university were censured, as he had claimed that the dogma of the Immaculate Conception was heretical.[52] It was similarly on the basis of individual sentences and propositions that Meister Eckhart was condemned, while Marguerite Porete's charge of heresy was very

[49] Howie 2011, 147
[50] Le Franc 1999.
[51] Thijssen 1998.
[52] On the Montson Affair, see Hüe 2002a, 106-8 and Lamy 2011.

specifically surrounding fifteen propositions from her *Miroir des âmes simples*, translated into Latin. Inquisitorial practices centring not specifically upon ideas, but on particular formulations of an idea, seem to have created a climate in which the precise articulation of risky or controversial topics was charged with potential danger. And while the need for poetry to be interpreted is part of what can make it so effective at communicating ideas, as it demands engagements on the part of the reader, the possibility of multiple meanings creates epistemological indeterminacy and even potential heresy.[53] Sullivan argues that in late medieval France, heresy did not seem as prolific as in the High Middle Ages, because all too often it 'wavered on the border of heterodoxy and orthodoxy' and that this made it all the more dangerous.[54] In such an atmosphere, then, the need to ensure that, despite hermeneutics offering different layers of meaning and connotation, there was no confusion surrounding orthodoxy, fostered a literary atmosphere in which the language used to formulate a concept or idea was paramount and could leave no room for potential misunderstanding.

In this light, we could see the continued use of refrain in the *puy* poetry as a reflection of anxieties regarding the use of vernacular, and the fear that it could lead to misinterpretations. The fixed refrain may reveal a desire or need to better control the articulation of ideas by protecting that expression through prescribed language. The fact that in certain *puys* the refrain was dictated could support this. Whereas in Rouen poets had more freedom in their composition, in Amiens they had to write their poem around a given *palinod* each year, further controlling the manner in which an idea could be expressed.[55] Thus the refrain not only acts as a way of helping the audience remember the idea, but also ensures they express it

[53] Sullivan 2005, 2.
[54] Sullivan 2005, 5.
[55] And even in Rouen, there was a set *palinod* in the early years of the competition, as can be observed in Rouen BM Y.18.

without error, potentially leaving less room for personal ideas and preventing lay poets from falling into error.

This is not to imply that theological orthodoxy was not important in *Meistergesang*: indeed Schroeder asserts that it was paramount, with 'falsche Meinungen', which she interprets as the rejection of doctrines of faith or the fostering of superstition, as the most serious of the thirty-three errors listed in the rules for Augsburg.[56] However, the various *Töne* for *Meistergesang*, while prescriptive in their form, do not include refrain, and thus are free, as outlined above, to express ideas in a multiplicity of different enunciations. Perhaps this indicates less uneasiness regarding the articulation of potentially fraught ideas, such as the Immaculate Conception. We therefore could see the respective forms practised by the *puys* and the *Singschulen* as reflective of attitudes toward theology in the vernacular. The constraints of the French forms are epitomised by the refrain, ensuring the audience (and indeed, when the refrain is dictated, even the poet), cannot misunderstand, and can repeat the key concept without having to use their own words. The forms of the *Singschulen* are heavily prescribed, but nonetheless offer more opportunities for reformulation and rearticulations of an idea in different ways, echoing a literary and theological environment in which there seems to have been less fear of an individual sentence or formulation being condemned. This may also reflect the slightly different devotional contexts of the *puy* and the *Singschulen*, in which the purpose of the *puy* was to reinforce a specific devotion to a particular aspect of Mary, whereas the *Singschule*'s poems were less prescriptive in this regard.

Having outlined how lyric as a form was particularly well-suited to the communication of religious knowledge, I would now like to turn to the more experiential aspects of lyric and the

[56] Schroeder 1942, 134

different processes of knowing this entailed, from communal interpretation to aesthetic and emotional engagement.

The fact that verse appears to conceal a deeper, more profound meaning than its literal meaning may initially lead the listener or reader to assume that this concealed knowledge must be valuable. The process of interpreting and elucidating this deeper meaning leads to a more penetrating understanding. Hence Dixon argues that there exists 'a privileged connection between verse and the communication of profound knowledge through figurative languages.'[57] The need for interpretation means establishing communities of interpreters, of which the communities surrounding the *puys* would be a good example.[58]

Although this is not exclusive to verse, the public nature of performance further roots it in communities: the poetry of the *puys* and *Meistergesang* was more prone to public recitation and reception than private reading.[59] Although copies of all the poems presented at a *puy* were deposited in the confraternity's library, and a few collections of more popular poems were compiled in manuscripts or published as early prints, the dominant mode for the reception of this poetry was nonetheless through performance at the *puy* itself. This presupposes an interpersonal situation, giving the knowledge and its communication a more human dimension, its knowledge being transmitted not to one reader at a time, but to multiple listeners at once who valued the interpreted knowledge being shared with them. This puts the knowledge more firmly in the public domain and facilitates communities of learning in which knowledge is interpreted, valued and disseminated.[60]

[57] Dixon and Sinclair 2008, 220.
[58] Stock 1983 and Mews and Crossley 2011.
[59] Dixon and Sinclair 2008, 221.
[60] Dixon and Sinclair 2008, 221.

This need for interpretation and the communal element perhaps go some way toward explaining why so many of the *puy* poems deal with themes and knowledge that ought to be familiar. Given that Mary's perpetual virginity, her Immaculate Conception, and role as Theotokos are things that every Christian should have known, it should beg the question of why so many poems constantly repeat these ideas in ways that could be seen as labouring the point. One caveat here should be that transmitting theological knowledge was not the sole, or even necessarily the primary, objective of the *puys*. From a devotional perspective, they were intended to praise the Virgin Mary and demonstrate one's piety toward her: an expression of personal devotion, or, more cynically, a show of it to others. However, in the context of a community united in praise of Mary, rather than being a boast of piety, it could also be a sincere attempt to offer that community the means to express their devotion. Of course, a key part of many devotions is evangelising about that particular devotion, which means that the element of sharing knowledge cannot be entirely divorced from it. Furthermore, the *puys* and *Meistergesang* were a form of entertainment which brought the community together and acted as an outlet for civic pride, and an opportunity for displaying poetic prowess and celebrating poetry itself.

One of Mishtooni Bose's key arguments for the link between poetry and knowledge, or, more accurately, poetry and knowing, is the way in which it is experiential.[61] Poetry can be an aesthetic and affective experience, which means that the listener or reader engages with it differently from non-figurative forms of writing, and that they access and approach the knowledge contained within it on a different level. That is to say that the process of consuming lyric and understanding it, whether aurally or through the written word, is not simply an analytical one, but a satisfying one, and one which points toward the

[61] Bose 2008, 61.

transcendental. Bose argues that poetry was an ideal means for ratiocinative discourse, particularly when combined with other means of conveying knowledge, as it enabled the reader or listener to reformulate ideas and information 'in such a way that the reader has access to a different mode of experience'.[62] This makes it particularly suited to communicating theological and mystical knowledge, which could not be solely systematic or logical in its presentation, but through its form, sound, and use of imagery, could transport the reader or listener and permit them a more experiential form of understanding which engaged emotion, intellect, and soul.

Such knowledge must touch the whole person, rather than being known rationally as a fact, and poetry is well suited to eliciting such engagement as it necessitates interpretation and is itself an aesthetic and affective experience. It is not enough for the listener to simply be present and hear the poem presented: a level of interpretation and independent thought is required to understand and properly contextualise the *palinod*, and this effort ensures a deeper understanding. Furthermore, the fact that the mysteries explored in the poems are veiled and have a hidden meaning suggest that the knowledge contained within it is valuable, and that one needs a level of initiation to be able to approach these mysteries.

For example Clément Marot's 1521 *chant royal* 'La digne couche: ou le roy reposa' (No. 47) tells of a king who, in order to vanquish his enemies, makes a plan to have an ornate pavilion made, and in it, a grand bed in which he can lie down. It is, of course, the story of salvation history, in which, to conquer sin and death, God became man, the pavilion being St Anne, and the bed Mary. From the context of the *puy,* the listener or reader would know that the poem must in some way relate to the Virgin Mary, but they must still listen carefully and

[62] Bosne 2008, 61.

immerse themselves in the poem in order to work out exactly what the poem is trying to convey. The poem uses militaristic language, such as 'vaincre ennemys', talking of the 'ost', the 'camp', and the king giving out commands, which initially seems to bear little relation to Mary, though perhaps with the contemporary idea of the *miles Christi*, the religious significance was more obvious to the medieval listener. By framing salvation and the battle against sin in militaristic terms, listeners must think for themselves, and can relate the transcendental idea of victory over sin to the more concrete one of battle. The poem brings in images that the listener would know to relate to Mary, mentioning the 'jardin clos', the 'liz royal' and the 'tour de David', helping to indicate how she fits into the war camp being established. As the listener picks up on the hints, which build up over the course of the poem, rather than simply hearing the fact that God became man to save us and Mary bore Him, they engage with it more profoundly, and can wonder at how perfectly God put together His plan, and how precious Mary must be, given the fine fabrics with ornate fringing the bed is made from. The listener must go through a process of understanding and knowing in order to comprehend that the poem is talking about the Incarnation, which is not presented simply as a known fact, a moment on a timeline, but as a wondrous event, and a demonstration of how fitting Mary was to be the place in which Christ lay. The poem invites reflection and active participation on the part of the reader or listener, helping them to know this in their heart, rather than rationally knowing it. Engaging with ideas actively promotes more profound understanding, and the *puys* take this active involvement further, given that people not only listened to poems, but also composed them. The competition, which could be entered by ordinary citizens who were amateur poets, meant that they went a step further in this engagement with the mysteries of salvation histories by composing and presenting their own poems. This would inspire even greater reflection and cogitation, leading to more secure knowledge.

That listening to poetry can be an experience also aids this deeper understanding. The clever and beautiful use of the language in the *puy* is designed to help the listener experience God's love and salvation, not simply analyse the means by which he achieved it in the Incarnation. In Lescarre's 'Sans estre assise en la chaire de peché' (No. 10), the pestilential and negative language of sin is such a stark contrast to the innocence and beauty of Mary which impresses itself on the listener or reader. The grim and terrifying image built up of evil, clustered around the /v/ sound, with 'veneneux', 'vitupere', 'violence,' 'vipere' over the initial strophes, slowly accumulates, leading up to the alliterative line 'Famine, faim, fruict [from the Tree of Knowledge], froid, freeur'; it instils a sense of growing disquiet intensifying to horror of evil, which frightens the listener. This makes the victory over sin even greater, as the listener is moved from fear, to hope, and to salvation, the language of violence transforming into language of triumph and purity, with Mary's nobility, triumph, grace and honour vanquishing Eve's sin. The 'famine, faim' fruict, froid' and 'freeur' go on each to be conquered, such that the listeners' emotions are calmed. Through the language and structure of the poem, the listener is brought to experience despair and then hope. Instead of a sermon or a theological treatise, which may bring knowledge through analysis and study, this offers a form of experiential knowledge. Poetry's propensity to provoke an affective response means that it imprints itself on the memory in more ways than one: the listener may not only remember a particular line that sticks in the mind with its lesson, and have engaged with its images intellectually, but also remember how they felt. This process of knowing helps fortify devotion and build the relationships with Our Lady and God the poems intend to inspire. The process of knowing religious mysteries is perpetual, and requires the devotee to renew and reinforce that process as devotional knowing needs continual rediscovery.

However, it is not only the affective element of poetry and the engagement it requires to understand and interpret it that makes it an effective and appropriate means of communicating knowledge. The relationship between poetry and prose in the late medieval period also accounts for poetry's association as the privileged form for knowledge. Armstrong and Kay assert that, with the rise of prose meaning verse was no longer considered to be the default, it became a marked form, creating a more distinct horizon of expectations regarding its purpose and meaning, which they argue in late medieval France is specifically 'perceived as pertaining to knowledge'.[63]

Moreover, as a form, poetry was seen as deriving its authority as a medium for conveying truth and wisdom from its relationship with scripture, particularly the Wisdom literature. Bose explores the way in which Jean Gerson conceived of his lyric as *carmina*, or songs, aligning it with the psalms, making it a suitable means for conveying Christian knowledge. Walter points out that this association between verse and the psalms was not limited to Gerson, but that Christine de Pizan also understood *carmina* in this manner, suggesting that in this period, song as *carmina* was 'an expression of the living word of God, the very voice of the Holy Spirit or *Sapientia*,'[64] thus conferring upon poetry divine authority and making it the ideal form for communicating knowledge, particularly knowledge about God. This bestowed on poetry the quality of expressing truth. In her biography of Charles V in which she discusses knowledge, wisdom and poetry, Christine equates poetry with allegorical fiction in which something appears to signify one meaning, but in fact signifies a secret meaning 'dont la fin est verité'. Christine's definition of *poetria* is far more expansive than just lyric, but nonetheless serves to show that the association between poetry, allegory and

[63] Armstrong and Kay 2011, 197.
[64] Bose 2011, 71.

truth, particularly religious truth, was a strong one.[65] Furthermore, Jacqueline Cerquiglini-Toulet suggests that there is a movement in the Middle Ages, and one which can be seen on a smaller scale in the works of Christine, from using poetry to articulate a desire for love, to expressing a desire for wisdom, which ultimately, is the desire for God, arguing that for Christine 'Toutes les branches de la connaissance, toutes ces sciences que Christine a illustrées, sont encloses dans la philosophie chrétienne qu'elle égale à Théologie'.[66] Thus poetry, thanks to its links with the psalms, can both be a way of talking about God, and almost equate itself with the voice of God, channelling Sapientia and the authority of the psalms. This gives it a claim to truth, making it an authentic source of knowledge about God, from Whom all wisdom and knowledge derives. This does seem to be a little too bold a teleological claim about the development of poetry and its uses in the Middle Ages, but even if it does create too neat a narrative of progression about poetry in this period, it still demonstrates that, for both medieval writers and modern critics, there is an observable relationship between poetry and religious truth.

However, beyond associations with authority derived from scripture, poetry acts as an authority itself: there is an element of self-reflexivity as poems seek to justify themselves. Poetry constantly functions as a gloss of itself, justifying and legitimising the knowledge it communicates, elucidating images and using metaphors and allegories to better explain and validate the key ideas it is trying to convey. Especially in fixed-form lyric with refrains, it is almost as if the whole poem acts as a gloss of the refrain, illuminating the primary thesis through verse. This is particularly evident in Cretin's *chant royal* in which the *palinod* makes a claim about the Virgin Mary, such as that she is 'Sans blasme aulcun de coupe originelle'

[65] Akbari 2008, 139.
[66] Cerquiglini-Toulet 2008, 14.

(No. 3) in which the poem appeals to nature, salvation history, Church teaching, ecumenical councils and grace to validate the assertion that she is without original sin, using scholastic ideas and proofs. The entire poem glosses this repeating refrain, demonstrating to the listener or reader its truth, and teaching them how this truth fits into wider schemas of knowledge such as salvation history. Thus poetry can serve as gloss in and of itself, rather than being the subject of gloss.

As the Immaculate Conception was still a cause of debate in the late Middle Ages, the poems which emphasise Mary's Immaculate Conception must deploy knowledge in a more persuasive way, and must appeal to authority and convince doubters. Thus analytical and affective engagement are still helpful, but the knowledge and its sources must be evaluated and glossed in a way not necessary for accepted truths, such as Mary's perpetual virginity. The *Ballade d'invitation* for the 1511 *Puy* in Rouen – the poem on the poster advertising the *Puy* put out in advance – specifically exhorted poets: 'Prenez l'armet de memoire et science' in order to reject 'toute adverse cautelle' against Mary's Immaculate Conception.[67]
For example, in Jean Marot's 'L'humanite joincte a divinite', (No. 7) the envoi explicitly states that the poem is designed to 'dechasse[r]/la grand erreur' by which impurity is imputed to Mary through denial of the Immaculate Conception. He does this in multiple ways over the course of the poem: by making arguments of fittingness, by appealing to God's authority by giving Him voice, and by illustrating Mary's purity through images of light and clarity. The *palinod* of 'l'humanité joincte a la divinité' demonstrates that, for God to have taken form in Mary, it would not be fitting or possible for her to have had any stain of sin: 'car autrement n'y pourroit avoir place'. The poem demonstrates why, logically, anything but the

[67] Oxford Douce 379 2r – see Chapter II for a more detailed discussion, and Chesney 1950, 38, and Hüe 2002a, 272-73 for the text of the *ballade*.

Immaculate Conception would be impossible, repeatedly emphasising the grace, dignity and purity afforded to Mary, while foregrounding that this was a bodily union between God and man in Mary, such that her body could not have been tainted by sin. Unlike the knowledge of, for example, Mary's perpetual virginity, this was not a universally recognised and accepted truth, hence there is a need for logic and analysis, too, and the creation of authority through glossing the key idea that humanity and divinity were united in Jesus through Mary.

Poetry as a form is thus particularly well suited to transmitting knowledge by virtue of its structure and form, which helped it to communicate concepts succinctly and memorably, permitting it to convey truths in a concise, but also experiential way. Its engagement with emotion and the need to interpret further mean that coming to understand poetry is a process, one in which the reader must work to understand. This need for analysis necessitates engagement on the part of the reader, which is an effective pedagogical tool, and the aesthetic element of poetry means that it touches more than just the intellect, and can communicate transcendental, theological ideas. Not only does its form make it an ideal means for conveying knowledge, but, in the late Middle Ages, its relationship with prose marked it out as such, meaning that in this period poetry came to have a greater association with knowledge, identifying the one with the other. This analysis of poetry and knowledge in relation to the poetry of the *puy*, and, indeed, this short summary of it just here, serves to emphasise process and experience: in poetry, knowledge (in the sense of an idea or fact) is not an object, but something that is analysed, felt and lived through, and should be continually renewed and rediscovered. Poetry is an effective means of aiding the process of knowing, and its memorability and potential for redeployment means that process can last beyond the recitation of a poem. The suitability of poetry for communicating knowledge is a key aspect in the relationship between the two.

Poetic Knowledge

In his *Archiloge Sophie*, Jacques Legrand writes that 'Poetrie est science qui aprent a faindre et a fere ficcions fondees en raision et en la semblance des choses desquelles on veult parler, et est ceste science moult necessaire a ceulx que veult beau parler, et pour tant poetrie, a mon avis, est subalterne de rethorique'.[68] This demonstrates that poetry is a field of knowledge, a 'science', as well as evoking the question of where poetry falls within the schema of the seven liberal arts. As a vernacular translation (or perhaps adaptation) of Book I of his *Sophiologium,* a compendium of knowledge which today we would be tempted to call an encyclopaedia, the *Archiloge Sophie* (1398-1401) collected classical learning, mostly through quotations from and paraphrase of authorities from antiquity. Thus the inclusion of *poetrie* in such a work further highlights its status as a 'science' or branch of knowledge. Legrand's conception of *poetrie* is the wider, more expansive understanding of the term, shared, as mentioned above, by Christine de Pizan suggesting use of allegory or metaphor, which can also be done through prose. However, Legrand nonetheless deals with the 'science' of versification too, and in this vernacular treatise even engages with the specificity of rhyme and sound in French. Langlois shows that Legrand sees the sciences of *poetrie* and versification as distinct, and the question of precisely how various branches of knowledge are linked and where poetry (in the sense of lyric poetry) is positioned in relation to rhetoric or music is pertinent to the discussion here. In this section, I will consider the relationship between poetry and knowledge, both in terms of how it linked to other forms of knowledge, especially religious knowledge, and the implications thereof for the evaluation of poetry in its urban institutionalised settings.

[68] Langlois 1902: viii

The *Archiloge Sophie*, as a self-translation of an earlier Latin work, is a useful starting point in showing the extent to which poetic knowledge is mediated through Latin sources and rooted in classical definitions and classifications of knowledge. Legrand's was the first vernacular French *art*, but there was a long tradition of Latin *artes poeticae* and *rhetoricae*, drawing, for example, on Aristotle's *Rhetoric*.[69] Knowledge about poetry was communicated through such *artes,* texts which, on the surface, appear to have pedagogical aims in explaining how to compose or appreciate poetry, and through metapoetical lyrics. Both kinds of text, while imparting instruction about versification, rhyme or the appropriate subject matter for fixed-form lyric, often have another agenda, whether it be valorising a tradition, such as the *Meistersinger* telling of the twelve old masters who founded the tradition of *Meistergesang*, or a member of the *puy* writing an apologia for the *chant royal* which was derided in more courtly circles. Therefore, they transmit knowledge on two levels: the detailed knowledge about versification and the knowledge that the tradition in which they are working is a venerable one which should be widely shared and respected.[70]

Poetry was a 'science', but the question of where precisely it fitted into the schema of the seven liberal arts was one which exercised those theorising about poetry. Aquinas had conceded that poetry was an art, but considered it to be the lowliest, writing in the *Summa* that *poeticae, quae est infima inter omnes doctrinas*;[71] others classified poetry as falling

[69] For more on the development of the *artes* as a tradition, see Worstbrock 1992.
[70] The audience of the *artes* is not always entirely clear: poetic manuals do not always give enough information to enable a novice to begin composing poetry, which suggests that cannot be their primary purpose. They are perhaps intended to help develop an understanding and appreciation of poetry rather than teach composition. Jane Taylor (2017) discusses the question of audience further. Although it is suggested that lists of rhymes may aid amateur poets, she shows that such treatises cultivate poetic appreciation, and the development of indexes aids a consultative reading process which would aid judges in evaluation poetry. The audience for the German metapoems is perhaps clearer when they are performed in the Singschule: the contextualise and valorise the tradition of the Singschule for its participants and (urban, amateur) audience, helping those present understand the proceedings.
[71] Migne 1882, 23

under rhetoric following the classical Aristotelian tradition.[72] Many of the vernacular French *artes* were known as *arts de seconde rhétorique*, reflecting this classification, with poetry being the second rhetoric as opposed to prose. However, Deschamps' *Art de dictier* (1392) made the claim that poetry was not, in fact, an aspect of rhetoric, but rather an aspect of music.[73] The distinction that Deschamps makes between artificial music (that which is played on an instrument, and which anybody can learn), and the natural music of poetry was innovative for the way in which it emancipated lyric poetry from musical accompaniment and presented a view of poetry as an art in its own right.[74]

> L'autre musique est appellee naturele pour ce qu'elle ne peut estre aprinse a nul, se son propre couraige naturelment ne s'i applique, et est une musique de bouche en proferant paroules metrifiees.[75]

Claude Thiry describes Deschamps as a 'révolutionnaire en douceur' for this novel approach to poetry.[76] Although it has been shown that Deschamps was not necessarily the first to conceive of the distinction between artificial and natural music, with Dragonetti citing the influence of Boethius's *De Musica* and Lubienski-Bodenham proposing a Greco-Arab tradition via Al-Farabi's *De Scientiis* mediated through unknown sources,[77] the implications of Deschamps' repositioning of poetry within the schema of the seven liberal arts were substantial. In her edition of the text, Sinnreich-Levi argues that the *Art de dictier* was not primarily a true poetic manual, since Deschamps' instructions do not always make sense, are occasionally contradictory and not sufficient to enable a novice to compose the fixed-form lyrics he describes.[78] Rather, it is significant as one of the very first vernacular *arts*,

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[72] Lubienski-Bodenham 1979, 27.
[73] Wider discussions on *Musica* and its meaning and value in the late Middle Ages lie beyond the scope of this thesis, but Leach 2007 offers a helpful discussion on what was understood by music, and music's relationship to poetry.
[74] Deschamps 1994, 11.
[75] Deschamps 1994, 62.
[76] Thiry 2001, 511.
[77] Lubienski-Bodenham 1979, 35.
[78] Deschamps 1994, 12.

advocating a reassessment of the value of poetry, liberated from music and as something requiring talent and worthy of attention in its own right. By repositioning the way in which poetry was perceived in relation to other forms of knowledge, Deschamps was able to help establish a vernacular poetic tradition to be esteemed, marking French as a language in which poetry could be written and recited, demonstrating, for example, euphonious sounds and the ways in which French could be pleasing to the ears.[79]

Similarly, what Deschamps did for vernacular poetry as a whole, valorising it as an art in its own right and illustrating the merits of French, Pierre Fabri could be seen as doing specifically for the poetry of the *puys* in his *Grand et vrai art de pleine rhetorique* (1522).[80] Although the text is supposedly a poetic manual, Thierry Mantovani argues that it has a twofold purpose: as well as describing the poetic norms of the time, it also functions as an apologia of the *chant royal*, the premier genre of the *puy*.[81] As a non-aristocratic genre, it was often dismissed, with Deschamps declining to give an example as 'nobles hommes n'ont pas coustume de ce faire'.[82] Thus Fabri, who had been a founding member of Rouen's *Puy de l'Immaculée Conception*, employs the model of the previous *arts,* advertising the treatise as 'utille, proffitable, et necessaire a toutes gens qui desirent a bien elegamment parler et escrire' to set out the norms for the *chant royal*, but also to advocate for the poetic norms of the *puy*, and present a fixed form with an illustrious tradition, representing pride in the Rouen institution, and offering the form as particularly apt for praising the Virgin Mary. The pedagogical form is once again being employed to make claims for the tradition and value of a particular kind of poetry – in this case, an urban form that had been dismissed in other

[79] Deschamps 1994, 66.
[80] Fabri 1889.
[81] Mantovani 2000, 54.
[82] Deschamps 1994, 82.

poetics. That is to say, poetic knowledge is deployed in order to make the case for poetry rather than simply teach versification.

We can see a similar effect in some of the metapoetic *Meisterlieder*, known as *Schulkunst*,[83] which discoursed on the tradition of the twelve old masters, the *Singschule*, and the ways of writing poetry. For example, the *Schulkunst* that was to be sung before all meetings of the Augsburg *Singschule* begins with an invocation to the Holy Spirit to inspire them 'Wie du halfst dem Psalmist Dauid' (I, 7). Since David sang 'die schönsten Lieder auff der Erden' (I, 8), the song positions the *Meistersinger* in a tradition beginning with David, and indeed, originating through the Holy Spirit, before perpetuating this tradition by linking David with the other 'vorfahrer weise' (I, 16): the twelve old masters.[84] The *Meisterlied* is a poetic tour-de-force, with the first four strophes each being written in a different *Ton* belonging to one of the *Meister* that are mentioned: Heinrich von Mügeln, Frauenlob, der Marner and Regenbogen. The final strophe then uses elements of each: the two *Stollen* each taken from a different *Ton*, and the *Abgesang* (somewhat arbitrarily) divided in two, such that each of the preceding four tones recurs in the final strophe. Thus the form mirrors the claims that are made in the poem, situating the *Meisterlieder* of the *Singschule* in a venerable poetic tradition. The case is made for the vernacular, as these great poets all sang 'nach der hoch deudschen sprach' (III, 5). However, the lyric not only constructs a narrative, stretching from King David to Kaiser Otto in 962, up to the present iteration of the *Singschule* in which it is being sung; it also versifies the *Tabulatur* in extolling the merits of the twelve old masters, who never had a 'falsch meinung' (III, 7), did not commit errors in versification, such as 'falsch Bundreim' (III, 15), nor in performance, as they 'brachten kein Pauß noch Stutz' (III,

[83] Brunner and Rettelbach describe the genre of Schulkunst as a 'Literaturgeschichte' of the Meistersinger, written in the form of metapoems. The Schulkünste display knowledge both about the history and tradition of the Meistersinger, and the form, structure and language of their poetry.
[84] Nagel 1965, 128–32.

16). In presenting the rules that made up the *Tabulatur* in verse form, and offering four celebrated *Töne* as examples, this *Schulkunst* gives clear pointers as to how to write poetry, though one would struggle to put all its prescriptions in place without further teaching, and would already need to understand the metapoetic vocabulary of 'Klebsyllaben' (IV, 3) or 'klingender Strumpfreimen' (IV, 5) to make full sense of it. Although a literary text, in the form of lyric, the *Schulkunst* operated in a comparable way to the *arts* by exploiting poetic knowledge in order to privilege the tradition in which it is being written. The *Schulkunst* in particular exploits form in order to do so, demonstrating the four different *Töne* as it does this (and hence demonstrating that the poet had mastered these four forms too).

While the rules of the Augsburger *Singschule* had been versified in the *Schulkunst*, they are set out in clearer form in the *Schulregister*, with the rule and the associated penalty set out in full. It is worth noting how in the *Schulregister*, as in the *arts*, questions about form and content often blend into one, and the lexis around correct versification can have a quasi-religious resonance, making it hard to separate poetic practice from religious practice, and implying that poetic orthodoxy and religious orthodoxy became one and the same. Looking at the list of penalties for Augsburg, rules regarding doctrine, performance and form blend into one.[85] The prescription that 'Alle falsche meinungen bleiben unbegabt' (referring to religious error) is sandwiched between the requirement that all poetry be in German and an insistence that any Latin included be correct, whilst in the middle of a set of rules on rhyme comes a rule about not pausing too long.[86] The greatest error is that of 'falsche meinung' as it means the entire poem must be thrown out, and, following this, it seems that deviation from tradition is more serious than metrical or rhyming errors, as changing the Ton is punished

[85] As noted in Chapter I, we do not have the pre-Reformation records of the Augsburg *Singschule* and the rules from the refounded *Singschule* in 1535 will have to suffice. They have been edited in Brunner et al. 1991.
[86] Brunner et al. 1991, 29.

particularly harshly. But there is nonetheless an implication that deviation from theological orthodoxy, Meistersinger orthodoxy and metrical orthodoxy are all entangled, and that poor form would be inappropriate for communicating truth.

It becomes hard to separate the form from the religious knowledge it transmits, which perhaps explains the vocabulary Deschamps (1994) uses when he apologises if, in his *Art de Dictier*, 'j'aye pechie contre l'art en aulcune maniere'. If one can sin against poetry, it sounds like a religion, and indeed poetry, and particularly poetic institutions such as the *puys* and the *Singschule*, have their commandments with prescriptions and proscriptions, the *Tabulaturen* and *arts* acting almost like catechisms. In discussing the aims of Pierre Fabri's *Grand et vrai art*, Mantovani states that it was written to re-establish an orthodoxy that Fabri believed was being threatened: but it is not entirely clear whether this is a religious orthodoxy – that of Mary's preeminence and her Immaculate Conception – or a poetic orthodoxy with regard to the form of the *chant royal*. Latent in Mantovani's analysis of the *Grand et vrai art* is an equivalence, which never fully comes to the surface, between Mariological orthodoxy and poetic correctness: Mantovani uses the vocabulary of heterodoxy, orthodoxy and dissidence to talk about poetry and form, a lexis that we cannot help but associate with religion. Similarly, the semantic field around 'rein' and 'pur', so common to Marian poetry to describe the Virgin Mary, is in the *Schulkunst* attributed to the twelve old masters, who were 'rein und pur', and, at the end, the *Schulkunst* exhorts those present: 'singt Gottes Wort rein'. Once again, theological and poetic virtues become entangled. 'Rein' can describe the Virgin Mary, but also poetic practice that conforms to the tradition of *Meistergesang*, and appropriate rhymes.

The *Merker* who judged the poems in the *Singschule* used the *Tabulatur* with its mix of doctrinal and metrical rules also had two key sources to aid their judging. One was the bible, and the other, a sort of 'crib sheet' with the metrical patterns and rhyme schemes of the *Töne* being sung that day.[87] A rare surviving example of such a sheet can be seen in Munich BSB cgm 4998 on folio 77r, which has tables demonstrating the number of syllables per line, as well as the rhyme scheme for six *Töne* enabling a judge to check easily whether the poet was adhering to the *Ton* correctly.[88] Use of both the bible and a metrical crib sheet demonstrates again the importance of the two areas of knowledge, each with their own point of reference, but both correspondingly necessary. We have less clear evidence for the ways in which the jury of the *puys* were able to judge the entries, but we know that clergy tended to be part of the panel,[89] who would be able to bring their religious knowledge to the jury, and Jane Taylor has theorised that Pierre Fabri's *Grand et vrai art* may have been intended for a use somewhat similar to the crib sheet for the *Töne*, as it is the first of the *arts de second rhétorique* to use an index. This meant it could be consulted readily, making the poetic manual 'a compendium which would be of easy reference', enabling clergy to supplement their religious knowledge with the poetic knowledge required to judge the *puy*.[90]

Although it is not proclaimed explicitly, discourse on poetry, whether in metapoetical lyric or poetic manuals, suggests an equivalence between poetic knowledge and religious knowledge. A poem cannot be good if it contains 'falsche Meinung', but equally poor form cannot communicate religious knowledge successfully. Knowledge about poetry must go hand in hand with religious knowledge; composing and singing good poetry was an act of devotion whereas to sin against metre or rhyme would not only entail bad poetry, but seems to have

[87] Bell 1953, 631.
[88] Reproduced on Bell 1953, 633.
[89] Gros 1992, 160-1.
[90] Taylor 2017, 171.

had shades of impiety. Although this is implicit in both the vernacular French *arts* and the German metapoems, we see that they function differently. The French *arts*, through their form, position themselves in relation to an older, Latinate tradition of the *ars dictandi*, and it is through this imitation of form in offering manuals with instruction on versification that they demonstrate the suitability of the vernacular for poetry, establishing a French tradition which is a continuation of the antique one. On the other hand, there are no vernacular German *artes*, and instead the form used for discoursing on poetry is itself a vernacular form, leaving it less clear where they stand in relation to Latin forms. The implication here is that, by the establishment of the *Singschule* in the late fifteenth century, the *Meisterlied* has long liberated itself from Latin traditions and that vernacular poetics can exist in their own right. Despite the differences in form, both have the twin aims of establishing and justifying poetological traditions and conveying knowledge about poetry, which draws an equivalence between that poetic knowledge and religious knowledge.

Konrad Nachtigall and his Sanfter Ton

Konrad Nachtigall, active in Nuremberg in the mid-fifteenth century, was a key figure in pre-Reformation *Meistergesang* in the city.[91] A baker, and the son of the *Meistersinger* Michael Nachtigall, he is considered in both contemporary opinion and that of scholars now to be one of the most significant composers of *Meistergesang*.[92] Indeed, Johannes Rettelbach considers him to be one of the most important *Meistersinger* from Nuremberg, citing Hans Sachs' 'Die zwellf Nürnberger dichter', which accords him second place in the tradition of Nuremberg

[91] See Brunner 1998; *RSM* vol 4, col. 436-449. He is attested from 1436, and thought to have died in 1485/6.
[92] Rettelbach 2014, 301; see the details in Brunner's 1998 ^{2}*VL* article on praise by other Meistersinger.

Meistergesang.[93] Of his five extant songs, two are Marian: a *Marienlied* in Nestler von Speyer's *Unbekannten Ton*,[94] and a *Weihnachtslied* in his own *Schöner Ton*.[95] However, his *Töne* were clearly popular and used in his own lifetime, given that *Meisterlieder* in *Töne* ascribed to him appear in *k*, and they were frequently used by Hans Sachs. Among the anonymous songs transmitted in his *Töne* are three Marian *Meisterlieder* in his *Sanften Ton*, all of which use the conceit of making a wreath for Mary.[96] Brunner suggests that they were all by the same poet, possibly even Nachtigall himself.[97] The poems of Nachtigall, and those written in his *Sanften Töne*, can act here as a case study of the relationship between Marian lyric and knowledge. Using *Meistergesang* as the case study for this chapter also makes it possible to see how the relationship between poetry and knowledge posited as specific to late medieval France works in the case of German lyric.

In the first of the poems securely attributed to Nachtigall, [1]NachtK/10/1, Mary's relationship with Wisdom and Old Testament prophecy, and the teaching authority it gives her, are thematised. However, where most of the Marian *Meisterlieder* by Nachtigall or in his *Töne* begin by either apostrophising Mary as 'meit' or highlighting the poet's desire to sing for her, the Marian theme is less pronounced to begin with. The first strophe begins 'Von Jesse ist entsprossen/ein reb',[98] firmly rooting the poem in Old Testament imagery of Isaiah 11.1, but not yet revealing whether the poem is about Mary or Jesus. Without the generic marker of the opening, the listener is immediately engaged in trying to work out the sense of the poem. Only in line 6 is 'die rein jünkfraw' mentioned, though the 'himel daw' at the end of line 3 may already have presaged this to the attentive listener. The Virgin was seen by Balaam (line

[93] Rettelbach 1985, 255.
[94] [1]NachtK/10/1 in *RSM* and Konrad Nachtigall I in *KLD*, 376-382.
[95] [1]NachtK/7/1 in *RSM* and Konrad Nachtigall III in *KLD*, 391-3
[96] In the *RSM* [1]NachtK/6/1, [1]NachtK/6/3a, [1]NachtK/6/5.
[97] Brunner 1998, col 846.
[98] All quotations from *KLD*, 376-82.

7), who is used to underline the point that Mary was known about long before she was born: 1200 years. King David is also mentioned as another who spoke of Mary 'vor dem dage' (line 26), emphasising once again how long Mary had been known about. The structure of the strophe further underlines this, with the second *Stollen* beginning 'der profet si erkente' (line 10), while the *Abgesang* begins and ends with lines emphasising the fact that God had chosen her from the beginning of time, and establishing a tradition of knowing about this. Starting with 'von ewigkeit on ende' (line 19), it then ends with the 'aüserwelten' (line 30), book-ending the *Abgesang* with Mary's prexistence and preelection.[99] These references to scripture give authority to the poem. Alongside conveying this knowledge, the strophe also models our emotional response to it: God regards Mary with 'freüdenreicher wüne' (line 23), suggesting we, too, ought to take joy in Mary. The joy contrasts with the 'ellende' at the end of line 28 who will be comforted through her.

The knowledge conveyed in the first strophe is reinforced in the second, with its first *Stollen* recapitulating the images and themes of the first strophe. The enjambement between lines 1 and 2 'Darumb die profezeie/lang' highlights both the foretelling of Mary and the ancientness of it, with the ideas 'lang' and 'profetten' also being repeated at the end of the *Stollen*. 'Entsprossen' which marked the end of the very first line of the poem is here repeated as an infinitive 'entsprissen' (line 8) cementing the aural and semantic link between the first two strophes, while elements of the first strophe are then combined in the second, such as in 'di aüserwelten reben' (line 5). The second *Stollen* begins with a temporal reference: 'got in der ewigkeite' (line 10), thus showing a link between form and content being used across both strophes. King David is brought back in, though this time not as the psalmist presaging Mary,

[99] See Salzer 1967, 342-3 on Mary as the 'auserwählte'. Schroeder (1942, 60) shows that the eternal selection of the Virgin Mary was emphasised in Marian *Meistergesang.*

but as part of her lineage. The *Aufgesang* of the second strophe thus restates the ideas of the first strophe in new constellations, didactically reinforcing it, but also enabling new articulations of it, as I suggested *Meistergesang* allowed for. Only on moving into the *Abgesang* does the poet begin to explore the figure of Mary in her own right. Her title as 'gottes mutter' (line 19) is foregrounded at the start, and she is called the mirror of all virtues and the seal of Christians. In an indication that the poem is to take a more cosmic turn, identifying Mary as Wisdom, the *Abgesang* ends with the poet singing that she is the true source of 'vil mer, dan al planeten' (line 30).

After two strophes which began with references to the Old Testament, the third begins explicitly with her name, though in saying 'Maria ist der brüne' it nonetheless alludes to the *Song of Songs*. In bestowing the seven highest gifts upon her, along with 'weisheit gros' (line 6), Mary is put above all creatures on earth and the prophets. In referring to Mary as 'die meit' at this point, the poet underlines Mary's paradoxical nature as a powerful maiden. The first *Stollen* once again ends with 'profetten' (line 9), reinforcing the relationship between the strophes, but again in a different constellation: where before the prophets told of Mary, now she is placed high above them. Ideas of knowledge, learning and authority are highlighted in the second *Stollen*: Mary is credited with instructing the evangelists. The 'lere' (line 10) she taught them is rhymed with 'here', emphasising her authority in teaching; line 11 has only four syllables, and so 'underweist' takes up almost the entire line, stressing Mary's active role in teaching. Notions of wisdom and truth are underscored in the *Abgesang*, which emotively talks of Christ's 'schwerer pein' (line 20) on the Cross, and explains that although the disciples all deserted, Mary stayed because she understood. A four-syllable line 'den Maria' (line 24), reflects Mary's lone presence at the foot of the Cross, on her own once the disciples had run away. The alliteration of 'dürch ir weisheit sie weste/die warheit ia' (lines 26-7)

accentuates the link between wisdom, knowing and truth. Mary alone represented 'cristendüm' (line 29): this links back to the description of her in the previous *Abgesang*, and makes clear why she could then be called 'des cristendüm ein sigel' (Strophe II, line 26).

Just as Strophe II recapitulated the ideas of Strophe I, so Strophe IV repeats and modifies Strophe III. It once again begins with the name 'Maria' and reminds listeners how Mary represented Christianity alone, attributing this again to her 'hohe[r] weisheit' (line 5), with different alliteration, 'verstentnus veste' (line 8), highlighting her privileged access to understanding. Where the second *Stollen* of the *Aufgesang* had spoken of her teaching the evangelists, the poet now sings of her teaching the twelve apostles, even using the same rhyme of 'here/lere', reinforcing her teaching authority. Nachtigall plays around with sound in this *Stollen* – significantly, a *Stollen* which refers to 'künst' – with rhymes such as 'gab in gotlicher günst/warlich gotliche künste' (line 13-14), using 'gotlich' in different metrical positions, as well as using alliteration in 'gotlich gütigkeit'. This creates that 'highly seductive' sound patterning described by Culler,[100] through which poetry conveys an aural experience to the listener and impresses upon them Nachtigall's mastery of the *Ton*. Use of 'worcht', describing God's works through Mary, implicitly links Nachtigall's knowledge and mastery of poetry with God's great work of Mary. The 'künst' lies partly in Mary's son being 'ihr schopfer', showing a delight in the paradox that is Mary's conception of her own Creator. The line 'ir schopfer wer' (line 24) is followed by 'ir hohe künst', drawing a connection between divine creation and (poetic) 'künst'. The strophe ends by highlighting once more Mary's ability to convey knowledge through 'irer ler' (line 27), a phrase also used in the very final line. While the penultimate line of Strophe III referred to 'den cristendüm allein', thanks

[100] Culler 2015, 134.

to Mary's teaching, by the penultimate line of Strophe IV, the apostles have been able to preserve 'die cristen algemein'.

Having set all this up, ensuring the listener has the correct knowledge about Mary, and understands her role in instructing Christians, the poet moves on to elicit a more experiential knowledge of Mary and her suffering as he meditates on her 'leit und clag' (line 3). Her heart is thematised and described as pure, with 'reine' (line 4) rhyming with 'alleine' (line 5) to remind us of the sorrowful figure of Mary alone at the foot of the Cross. There is a shift of emphasis from 'ler' in the previous two strophes to 'gelaüb' here, fitting with the move from a more catechetical to a more experiential kind of knowledge. Mary alone had faith, and strong faith, in the resurrection. In the second *Stollen*, Mary again has to teach to ensure the evangelists understand: she 'verklert' (line 15) that which they did not understand, and that verb is repeated two lines later, suggesting illumination and understanding, rather than just explanation and instruction. The transition from *Aufgesang* to *Abgesang* centres around the idea of *Meisterschaft*, with the final line of the former explaining that the evangelists wrote what Mary had revealed 'in hoher meisterscheften' (line 18), and the *Abgesang* declaring that 'sie ist ein meisterinne/der hohen schül der heimlikeit' (lines 19-20).[101] This links the poet himself, a *Meister* composing *Meistergesang*, with Mary, and makes her the ideal patron for him, as well as implying that 'meisterscheft' is something that can be learned given the reference to the 'schül'. Nachtigall once again comes back to the idea of 'christendüm' (line 24), which has been preserved because of this, with the rhyme 'lerer/merer' illustrating how faith is increased through Mary's teaching. Mary made it known 'durch gotliche weisheit', and there is thus an evangelical implication, namely that the poet must also make the teaching in Christ's resurrection well known.

[101] On Mary as *Meisterin*, see Schroeder 1942, 179.

In the sixth strophe, words from earlier on in the poem are reused in different places, with ‘erwelte’ at the end of the very first line, while the image of Mary as the seal of all Christians returns at the very end in a slightly different guise: this time she is ‘der christenheit ein sigel’ (line 30). Drawing out the implications of Mary’s privileged position, the poet meditates on Mary as Queen of Heaven and Earth, emphasising her authority and majesty, even though in the first line she has still been called ‘die meit’. This coronation is ‘ewigleiche’ (line 11), a further reminder of the way variations of eternity were used at the beginning of the poem. Her relationship to the audience is made clear, as they are told that God gave her ‘uns zu einer vürsprecherin’ (line 9). Descriptions of angels and seraphim praising her act as a reminder that the poem also serves as such. The final strophe of the poem thematically links back to its beginning, referring to Old Testament types and genealogy: beginning with Jesse’s root, we end with Solomon and the Ivory Throne at the start of Strophe VII. Solomon is described as ‘weis’ (line 1) and he sits on his throne ‘mit clügheit und mit witzen’ (line 5), reminding us of the role wisdom has played throughout the poem. The final *Abgesang* begins by addressing ‘ir aüsderwelten cristen’ (line 19): Mary’s privilege has been transferred onto those who trust in her. Those Christians are enjoined to praise Mary, ‘darumb will euch got geben dor sein reiche’ (line 21): they will similarly receive that which Mary did. Focusing on the implications for the audience, the poet tells them that they should all rejoice, for whoever calls on Mary will be listened to. Speaking on their behalf, in the final lines, he addresses Mary directly, and hopes for the moment when they might experience her Son’s favour ‘ewigleiche’.

Through this detailed exposition of Nachtigall’s Meisterlied, I have shown both how knowledge is communicated, and demonstrated the relationship between Mary, poetry and

knowledge within it. The architecture of the individual strophe with its *Aufgesang* and *Abgesang* enable the structuring of knowledge within it, with transitions between the two *Stollen* and the two parts helping to develop the ideas and their articulation. Without a refrain obliging the poem to concentrate on a sole idea, the poem moves from Old Testament prophecies, to Mary at the foot of the Cross, Mary as teacher, and Mary as Queen, though it is constantly self-referential, using language and structure to guide the audience into making connections between these different parts. The figure of Wisdom is also left ambiguous through the different expressions: God gives Mary wisdom – 'weisheit gros' – and at times she appears to be identified with it, but it is not clear whether the poem really is suggesting that Mary is *Sapientia*. The expansive strophes allow for varying degrees of identification between the two figures, with different constellations possible, exemplifying the freedom that the *Meistergesang* offers. Where the *chant royal* bases itself around a single idea with a precise articulation in the *palinod*, intended a particular interpretation, the *Meisterlied* can play with different ideas, leaving more room for interpretation, entailing engagement and judgement from the audience. Along with conveying key concepts such as Mary's election by God long before her birth, and offering her as a model, the poem also brings out more experiential knowledge in encouraging them to empathise with her pain and isolation at the crucifixion, but also to rejoice in her. The role of poetry is latent: rather than beginning with stating a desire to sing to Mary, instead the poet draws a connection between *Kunst*, *Meisterschaft* and poetry by choosing to foreground the most impressive play with language and sound at a moment when *Kunst* and creation are being discussed, followed by an explicit naming of Mary as 'meisterinne'. Moreover, Mary is not just a 'meisterinne', but actively teaching Christians, increasing their faith. A poem which highlights Mary's role in doing so partakes of that teaching mission of Mary by making it more widely known in poetry.

While that poem's attribution to Konrad Nachtigall is certain, other poems in his *Töne* are transmitted anonymously. I will briefly compare three poems written in Nachtigall's *Sanften Ton*, whose authorship is uncertain. Though Horst Brunner suggests they could indeed be by Nachtigall himself, and assumes that they are probably all by the same person,[102] we cannot ascribe them to Nachtigall for certain, but they nonetheless make use of his *Ton* and act as a helpful example of using a single *Ton* for a particular theme. All three poems use the conceit of making a wreath or crown for Mary, with each element of the wreath representing something:[103] in I, the poet makes a wreath for Mary out of roses, adding a rose for each of her Seven Joys; in II, the poet makes a wreath out of seven precious stones symbolising her Seven Sorrows; and in IV, twelve stars for the twelve apostles.[104] The wreath or crown in all these poems can function as a bounded, circular image, showing how such images recur in Marian *Meistergesang*. All three poems use the conceit of making a crown, whether through roses or stars, to convey religious knowledge: in I and II, specifically the Seven Joys and Sorrows, both teaching catechistically what these joys and sorrows were and also promoting affective engagement with them; in IV, along with the names of the apostles, elements of the Creed are also brought in, meaning the faith as a whole is also taught through the lyric. Such poems are similar to craft prayers, defined by Björn Buschbeck as producing an imagined object 'seen as being manufactured out of the raw material of a prescribed number of prayers, Masses, virtuous deeds, or ascetic exercises.'[105] He argues that the objects produced through such prayers had a an element of spiritual concreteness and could be understood as a form of spiritual handiwork.[106] The allegory of these craft prayers, like these poems, could have a

[102] Brunner 1998, 846.
[103] See Schroeder 1942, 145 on poems about roses and wreaths. She links such poems to older *Tagelieder* and *Wächterlieder*. This does not seem to the case in these poems, as they focus more on the process of making the wreath than the wearing of it, which Schroeder sees as representing Mary as the Beloved of God.
[104] I will follow the numbers in *KLD* here. Sanfter Ton I is [1]NachtK/6/5, II is [1]NachtK/6/1, and IV is [1]NachtK/6/3a.
[105] Buschbeck 2021a, 65.
[106] See also Buschbeck 2021bh.

catechetical purpose: as well as praising Mary through the creation of a garment or wreath, knowledge is transmitted to the devotee crafting it.[107]

To conclude this chaper, I will demonstrate how these poems work and communicate knowledge, and, using the example of the Presentation in the Temple, which is one of both the Joys and the Sorrows of Mary, show how the same piece of scripture can be used to produce different meanings. These poems all use the *Sanfter Ton*, finding it conducive to such enumerations. The *Aufgesang* and *Abgesang* are of similar lengths, meaning each strophe can be divided into two almost equal parts, so can encompasses two joys or sorrows, while the c rhyme at the end of each *Stollen* and the *Abgesang* link them aurally:
Ababbc + dedeec + fgfghihihic

Using the metaphor of making a wreath – 'flechten' is the verb used in I – we see the constellation of craft and bounded image put forward in Chapter I; it further acts self-referentially to draw attention toward the crafting of the poem, which is itself the wreath. Just as the wreath is to be used to crown the Virgin Mary and show her virtue and majesty, thus praising her, so, too, will the poem. *Sanfter Ton* I begins with the desire to sing, highlighting the act of poetic composition: 'Ich will der keuschen maget rein/zw lob singen ein ticht' (line 1-2). Mary is not just the inspiration, however; she will help the poet (line 3), and can give him 'weise ler' (line 5), which, given the context of singing a poem of praise would appear to be poetic knowledge, thus situates Mary as the fount of poetic knowledge. Even before the theme of the Seven Joys is established, Joy is the first emotion mentioned, as the poet says 'des freudt ich mich von herzen ser' (line 10), with the reference to the heart emphasising the affective nature of the poet's engagement with the Virgin. He then introduces the idea of the

[107] Buschbeck 2021a, 79.

seven roses given to Mary by God, which act as the structuring device both for the rest of the poem, and the knowledge communicated through it.[108] The Seven Joys are then taught through the lyric: the Annunciation, the Nativity, the Presentation in the Temple, the Adoration of the Magi, the Resurrection, the Ascension, and the Assumption. The Seven Joys were not yet fixed in this period, hence the variation – one might expect to find the Visitation, or the Coronation, though the entire poem acts as a Coronation.[109] Similarly *Sanfter Ton* II structures the Seven Sorrows of the Virgin around the stones to go in Mary's crown:[110] a diamond for Simeon's prophecy, a ruby for losing Christ in the Temple, an amethyst for the imprisonment and scourging of Jesus, a hyacinth for the carrying of the cross, a carbuncle for the Crucifixion, a chrysolite for the piercing of Christ's side, and a sapphire for the deposition, mourning, and burial of Jesus.[111] Again, at this point, the Seven Sorrows were not fixed and the poet has made his own selection. The creation of the crown is rooted even more in numbers, with the pins representing the thirty-three and a half years of Christ's life and His forty days, offering further structured elements of meditation. In focusing on Mary's joys and sorrows, as well as transmitting catechetical knowledge about them, offering vernacular retellings of scripture (such as in the Presentation or the piercing of Christ's side) or of tradition (such as the Assumption), the numbers and objects offer a schema for meditation, and, in addressing Mary directly, emphasise her humanity and emotion, encouraging an emotional engagement on the part of the audience. Anyone who inhabited the 'ich' of the poem would be talking to Mary, and so the poem itself could function as a form of prayer. As an example, the Crucifixion (Strophe IV, fifth sorrow, carbuncle) highlights Mary's pain

[108] On creating a *Rosenkranz*, see Winston-Allen 1997. See also Karl Klinkhammer's 1987 *²VL* article. Unlike such rosary prayers, however, this poem does not construct a rosary by suggesting fifty *Ave Marias*, but rather uses the roses to construct a crown for Mary.
[109] The *Gaude Maria Virgo* traditionally had Five Joys – the Annuncation, Nativity, Adoration, Resurrection and Ascension – but Schroeder (1942, 214-8) demonstrates how Seven were often used, and how Meistersinger select different groups of joys.
[110] Schroeder (1942, 248) sees this as having developed out of the tradition of the *Marienklage* and the sorrowful Mother presented therein.
[111] On gemstones and their meaning, see Meier 1977.

while also painting a very visual image on which the audience could meditate, fostering an experiential and affective engagement with the religious knowledge communicated about the Crucifixion. Mary's sorrow is expressed through the lexis of 'leid' (line 7) and 'groste pin' (line 10), using the conventional vocabulary of suffering, and the reference to her heart and a reminder that it is her 'liebes kint' (line 11) she sees suffering heighten the affective element. Christ's suffering is also referred to through 'liden' (line 12), thus connecting Mary's suffering with his. However, it is the visual element that is most strongly foregrounded: the strophe begins by naming the fifth stone as carbuncle 'mit siner edeln farb' (line 2), but colour takes on new resonances in the second *Stollen.* The three explicit references to Mary's gaze – 'du seht in an' (line 6), 'da du die farb seht an' (line 9) and 'also seht du din liebes kint' (line 11) – direct the audience to develop their mental image. The colour that was so noble at the beginning is now transformed into the colour of Christ's body on the cross: 'sin farb was swarz, bla, gel, rot, blich' (line 8). With these few words and sparse detail, the poem evokes a distressing image of Christ's bruised and bloody body, immersing the audience in the scene and encouraging them to empathise with Mary and Christ's suffering. While each sorrow had thus far fit neatly into an *Aufgesang* or *Abgesang*, this fifth sorrow spills over into the *Abgesang*. Formally and thematically, the fifth and sixth sorrow are hard to distinguish: where each other sorrow had begun with the naming of the stone, the *Abgesang* here moves from Christ's many sufferings on the Cross – the 'liden' of line 12 – directly into the story of Longinus. It seems like the piercing of Christ's side is still part of the fifth sorrow until it is revealed in the final line of the strophe 'crisolitum nenn ich den stin' (line 19). This transition between the two sorrows, difficult to distinguish formally, reflects Mary's ongoing pain. Thus, form is again a key element in communicating religious and experiential knowledge. Even as the poem promotes this affective knowledge of the Passion, it also communicates

key theological knowledge, pointing out that Jesus was fully human and fully divine by emphasising that God was on the cross 'und menschlich daran starb' (line 4).

Sanfter Ton IV takes this even further by versifying the creed amongst the twelve stars, representing the twelve apostles, that make up Mary's crown, with each apostle/star structuring the articles of the Apostle's Creed.[112] The first strophe sets up the conceit, rooting the image in the Old Testament, pointing out that David had seen the crown, and that Sybilla showed them to Solomon, but it does not reveal what the stones represent; instead we have to wait till the second strophe, which uses a dense semantic field around light imagery – 'glanz' (line 1), 'gelenzet'(line 3) , 'leucht schon für die sün' (line 4), ' lichten schein' (line 9) – creating a strong sense of shining and brightness, and drawing a connection with the Song of Songs 'electa ut sol' (6:10). The first stone, revealed to be Peter, is then linked with the 'gelauben' that God the Father Almighty was Creator of heaven and earth (lines 14-15): a belief that Peter 'bewert'. Again, the *Sanfter Ton* lends itself well to this enumerative structure: it has the same five strophes as I and II, but this time each *Stollen* encompasses a star, and the *Abgesang* comfortably has room for two. Each apostle is seen as giving witness to one of the articles of the creed. After Peter, the following apostles are associated with the respective articles, which are generally given in a relatively close translation of the Latin Apostle's creed:

- Andrew (2nd star) confesses Christ, the only begotten Son, born of the Father 'ewigkleich'.
- James the Elder (3rd star) makes known that the Son was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a Virgin.
- John (4th star), as evangelist, made known the great Passion and death of Christ.
- Philip (5th star) makes known that he went down to hell and rose on the third day.
- Bartholomew (6th star) names Christ as sitting at the right hand of the Father.

[112] Although the division of the Apostle's Creed into twelve articles was not universal in the Middle Ages, it was prominent in the *forma antiquor*. See Gordon (1965) for a discusses regarding this, along with the tradition of each apostle contributing an article.

- The 7th star (unnamed, but referring to Thomas) 'im credo' announces that He will come again to judge the whole world.
- Matthew (8th star) that we have been sent the Holy Spirit.
- James the Younger (9th star) tells us about the Communion of Saints.
- Simon (10th star) makes known in detail the forgiveness of sins, stressing the need for true conversion, along with 'lauter rew, peich und püß', expanding slightly on the text of the creed.
- Thaddeus (11th star) tells of the Resurrection of the Body.
- Matthew (12th star) gives the final article of faith, that we will have 'ewiges leben'.

Therefore, the poem uses the metaphor of making a crown of stars for Mary to transmit knowledge, not just of the apostles, but also of the fundamental tenets of faith. That these articles are the stars in Mary's crown further underlines her association with teaching and knowledge: through singing about and praising Mary, poets can spread that knowledge with which she is associated. The link between the numbers, the apostles and the articles of the creed help to reinforce the knowledge.[113] Indeed, Buschbeck highlights the mnemonic potential of craft prayer as devotees craft their gift for Mary.[114] The poem is both didactic, imparting knowledge in the vernacular about key catechetical teachings, while also functioning as praise of Mary in offering her a poem and crown.[115] In versifying the Latin text of the Apostles' Creed, the articles of faith are made accessible in the vernacular, but also interesting. Rather than giving the audience isolated statements of belief, their imagination is called upon to aid their learning. First, through the image of the stars in the crown, whose light imagery is expressed so vividly, but secondly through the apostles. Rather than the poet teaching the articles of faith, it is the individual apostles who do so, as the words are put in their mouths. Through engaging the audience's imagination in this way, they are more likely to remember. Although the focus is on Mary in the first strophe, she then gets slightly lost in the stars: although she is addressed, with Christ referred to as 'dein eingeporner son' (III, 3),

[113] On memory and mnemonic devices in the Middle Ages, see Carruthers 2008.
[114] Buschbeck 2021a, 70.
[115] Gordon's article is slightly dated in its expression, but he highlights that such versions of the Apostles' Creed are of 'frequent occurrence in books of religious instruction as a basis for the unschooled laity in the essential articles of belief' (1965, 634).

and there are frequent references to ‘deiner kron’, the final *Abgesang* does not dwell on the completed crown (though the ‘glanz/ganz’ rhyme does hark back to the light imagery of the second strophe), but rather uses the final two lines to highlight Mary’s role as intercessor, and one who points to Christ, addressing her as ‘o magt’ (line 18), asking her to help us to her dear Son, Christ. This cements the fact that the figure of Mary, her teaching, and the knowledge she is used to impart, are all a means of approaching Jesus. Verbs related to announcing and testifying are significant, with ‘bewert’, ‘beweist’, ‘bekent’, ‘düt bekant’, ‘düt kunt’, ‘nent’, ‘bescheit’, and ‘gibt urkünt’ all describing how the apostles confess these articles of belief. With the poem itself acting as a confession of faith, it acts as a mouthpiece for the apostles, highlighting the evangelical nature of such teaching, made particularly explicit in the example of John. In composing a song which announces the Good News, the poet fulfils the Great Commission, and so the communication of knowledge is an act of evangelism.

Sanfter Ton I Strophe III		Sanfter Ton II Strophe II
Die dritt ros der freuden dein		Den ersten stein tun ich bekant,
die pluet auch gar schon,		den ich auch setz daran:
da du opferst dein kindelein		daz ist ein herter adamant,
in tempel, Simeon		alz ir her Symeon
seiner zwkunft het lang wegert.	5	vor langer zit hat vorgeseit.
er umfieng das kindelein so fron		er sprach zu dir: “du hochste kron,
er sprach: “Maria, mit schmerz		du bist selig on end;
ein schwert wurt dein sel durchgan		doch wirt ein swert din sel durchgan
und auch dein reines herz.”		on alle widerstand
die profecei wart wol bewert		so gar in großer bitterkeit.”
die viert ros di thet bekannt….	10	der ander stein ist ein rubin…

As a conclusion to this case study of Marian *Meistergesang*, a comparison of the depiction of Simeon’s prophecy at the presentation demonstrates how the same knowledge can be deployed in different ways: the same scriptural episode is used to exemplify joy and sorrow with different framing and emphases. Interestingly, the Joy of the Presentation could have been illustrated through Simeon’s words at the *Nunc Dimittis*, but the poet has chosen to use

the prophecy of the sword piercing Mary's heart. It is clearly marked as a joy, the rose of 'der freuden dein', and its blooming cements the positive connotations. Structurally it is framed by the Nativity and the Adoration of the Magi, ensuring the audience receives this rose in the context of more obvious Joys. Simeon's prophecy of Luke 2:35 is translated slightly differently in each song. Although 'schmerz' is mentioned in I, the enjambement stops the singer from lingering on the word, and the alliteration of 'schmerz' and 'schwert' make the two words almost indistinguishable: instead, it is 'herz' which makes the end of the phrase. 'Herz' in the context of a recasting of Luke has associations with Luke 2:19, in which Mary stores up the joyous events of the Nativity in her heart. On the other hand, it is the 'bitterkeit' which is stressed in II, highlighting the sorrow to come. The sword piercing the soul is moreover linked with the lance piercing Christ's side later on in the poem, again changing the inflection of the prophecy in this Song. This demonstrates how, through careful use of sound and form, poets can communicate different knowledge with the same facts, highlighting that dynamic relationship between the *Offenbarungswissen* of Luke and the *religiöses Wissen* associated with it, and showing the importance of the interplay between mastery of poetic knowledge and religious knowledge.

Conclusion

The discussions in this chapter, exemplified through the case study of Konrad Nachtigall, have demonstrated the interplay between poetry and knowledge in the late Middle Ages. Not only was poetry a particularly appropriate means of conveying religious knowledge, but also there existed an intimate relationship between the two.

The significance and implications of the refrain in *puy* poetry are best drawn on though comparison with *Meistergesang*: in considering how knowledge is communicated and articulated differently when there is no refrain, it becomes clear that the refrain acts as a conservative force on the poem, safeguarding the knowledge and precluding wrong, potentially heretical articulations and interpretations of the religious knowledge it expresses. In *puy* poetry the refrain is a semantic key for the knowledge encapsulated in a *chant royal*, but is also something of a lock, preventing the important idea being enunciated in a different, even dangerous way. On the other hand, without the refrain imposing a univocal interpretation and structuring the poem, *Meisterlieder* have more freedom to explore different expressions of a particular idea without necessarily establishing a single meaning.

The experience of poetry was well suited to the affective piety of the late medieval period, meaning that lyric not only transmitted catechetical knowledge, but also the sense of wonder and mystery inherent in Creation and the Incarnation. Though the songs of Konrad Nachtigall, I have shown that the findings of *Poetic Knowledge in Late Medieval France* can indeed be applied beyond the scope of the original project, with poetry and knowledge having an intimate relationship. In the German context this is cemented by Mary's role as *Meisterin*, with her role in instructing the faith implicitly linked to her role helping *Meistersinger*. Moreover, it is not only Mariological knowledge transmitted through Marian poetry: other fields of religious knowledge can be communicated through her privileged position, as in the example of the Apostles' Creed. Poetic form conditioned the way in which that knowledge was communicated, and good form has been shown to be entwined with religious truth: Mary's role as *Meisterin* and intercessor can help ensure poetic and religious orthodoxy, making her a natural patron for *Meistersinger*, and it is particularly apt that a poetry competition be held in her honour such as the *puys*. Having established in this chapter the

need for mastery of poetry and form in order to communicate religious knowledge effectively, the final chapter of this thesis will explore how competition spurred on poets to compose ever better, more complex poetry to better articulate such knowledge and praise of the Virgin, further developing the relationship between form and devotional knowledge explored here.

Chapter III: Play, Poetry, and Piety in Marian Lyric: Toward a Poetics of Play

Introduction

At first glance, there may appear to be two underlying incongruities in competitive Marian poetry: firstly, the apparent contradiction of sacred poetry being composed and performed in a ludic setting; secondly the opposition between the individual poet competing and the corporate nature of confraternities. The Marian poetry under consideration in this thesis all emerged from the context of fraternal, urban institutions and their competitions: the *puys* in Northern France, and, though more difficult to pinpoint institutionally, the German *Singschule*. Following on from the exposition in Chapter II which demonstrated the link between poetic and religious orthodoxy, the need for poetry to act as fitting praise for the Virgin Mary is elaborated on further here through the lens of play and competition. This chapter explores the interactions between the pious and playful aspects of Marian lyric and characterises poetry as creative play which can indeed be an expression of devotion. It is my contention in this chapter that a key constituent of this is the non-opposition between the individual and the community. Furthermore, I argue that engagement with poetic tradition through variation and innovation is best characterised through the notion of play.

Anthony Black's model of two potentially competing urban mentalities offers a potential frame within which to analyse Marian poetry and its urban specificities: the corporate mentality and civil society. The corporate mentality, linked strongly to the guilds and ideas of the city as the urban body, emphasised fraternity, friendship and mutual help.[1] The importance of mutuality and corporatist ideology has been emphasised by many studies into urban mentality.[2] Evidence for this sort of mentality can be seen in the guilds and their

[1] Black 1984, 15, Lilley 2009, 141, and Brown and Dumolyn 2017, 11 and 21.
[2] Hirschbiegel and Zeilinger 2009, 481 and Brown and Dumolyn 2017, 11.

religious counterparts, the confraternities, expressed in their regulations, which would be ratified by an assembly of all members, and made manifest in processions and other communal events, such as annual feasts.[3] The *Singschule* and *puys* would also appear to be groups that operate with a corporate mentality in that they bring a group of people together who are united by a common purpose: by song in the case of the *Singschule* and the Virgin Mary in the case of the *Puy*; they are governed by regulations. The performance of song in a group setting and subsequent compilation in manuscript, along with the regulations governing composition, performance and recording of lyric further point toward a sort of corporate mentality.[4]

However, alongside this corporate mentality, Black also traces the development of what he calls 'civil values', an apparently competing urban mentality, which he describes as 'a set of practices and beliefs centred upon a market economy, social mobility, individual self-determination and private property'.[5] He goes on to equate these ideas with both medieval and modern concepts of freedom. This risks falling into the trap of teleology: Andrew Brown and Jan Dumolyn warn that 'modern ideas of urbanity have sometimes imposed a teleological framework on the medieval city' in an attempt to associate urbanity with modernity, and thus see in the medieval city a teleological narrative of, among other modern values, democracy and freedom.[6] This caveat borne in mind, Black, however, makes a convincing case for an emerging mentality that does indeed bear strong relation to 'freedom'. Those values to which he attributes the term 'civil' have, he demonstrates, strong classical pedigree, along with support from Germanic and Christian traditions.[7] Drawing on evidence from the reception of

[3] Black 1984, 24.
[4] On manuscript compilation, see the essays in the recent edited volume by Chinca et al. (2022), in particular the essays by Suerbaum and Weitbrecht.
[5] Black 1984, 30.
[6] Brown and Dumolyn 2017, 4.
[7] Black 1984, 41.

Cicero to urban communities' claims to territorial liberty, he presents evidence for the development of these values and identifies the ideas expressed in such texts with the (then) recent emphasis on the individual in the Middle Ages.[8] Although we have seen that the structure of the poetic institutions from which the lyric came seemed corporate, with a guild-like mentality, these institutions nonetheless produced poets as individuals who competed in a *puy* or *Singschule*, who differentiated themselves and their poetry from the others by managing to be distinctive while working within a restrictive set of constraints. Such institutions are distinct from the corporate body of the monastic community, but also earlier poetic groups such as *Minnesänger*, who were formed through abstract literary conventions as opposed to social realities or institution, creating instead an imagined community of poets. Competing suggests an element of individualism, going beyond communal praise of the Virgin Mary and communal entertainment through poetry. Yet this civil values mentality need not necessarily be seen as inimical to the corporate mentality, which continued to persist: in fact, the two could work almost symbiotically. Corporate mentality created the conditions for individual liberty; freedom could be achieved through belonging to a group; individual goals could be achieved through associating together under oaths.[9] Thus these apparently competing mindsets could in fact work in tandem and be the fruit of an urban environment. Having delineated the two mentalities, Black emphasises that '*individuation* and *association* went hand in hand' and were not as opposed as they may initially have been seen. By investigating how these two mentalities interacted with one another within Marian lyric – the desire of the individual poet to win notwithstanding the need to work within and appeal to the corporate tradition – I will illustrate the interplay between the pious and playful

[8] Black 1984, 40–43.
[9] Black 1984, 44.

elements of the poetry. Exploring the individual and corporate elements of this Marian lyric will also help establish what is specifically urban about the poetry.

Both the topic of late medieval lyric and the theme of play have received increasing attention in recent years. In particular, work on poetry in late medieval France has sought to understand the aesthetic horizons of those composing and consuming poetry and thus foreground the creativity it displays, such as Adrian Armstrong's (2012) *Virtuoso Circle* focusing on collaboration and competition or Leonard Johnson's (1990) *Poets as Players*. As well as situating the composition of poetry in specific social contexts, critics have worked to tease out the socio-literary dynamics surrounding poetry and the prestige it conferred upon both poet and patron, such as Jane Taylor's (2007) *The Making of Poetry.* Emma Cayley explored ideas of play and collaborative debating communities to make sense of the cultural context of Alain Chartier in late-medieval France.[10] Competition and poetry have primarily been discussed in medieval German studies in terms of the *Wartburgkrieg*,[11] such as Burghart Wachinger's (1973) *Sängerkrieg*, which foregrounds the role of polemic and artistic rivalry in competition. Such work, alongside that of Peter Strohschneider's contributions,[12] frame competition as conflict, even violent, as opposed to playful, with Freimut Löser also highlighting artistic rivalry as a key concern underpinning medieval literature.[13] In comparison to the modest attention devoted to late medieval poetics, there has been an explosion of interest in games and gaming in medieval studies. Although *Homo Ludens* first brought the topic of play to bear on the discipline in the mid-twentieth century,[14] the last

[10] Cayley 2006, 136–88.
[11] A singing contest that supposedly took place in 1207 at the Wartburg with poets such as Walther and Wolfram competing in constests such as the *Fürstenlob* (praise of princes). The extent to which it is entirely fictional or has some kind of historical basis is debated. See Wachinger's 1999 article in [2]*VL* v. 10 'Wartburgkrieg' col. 740-766.
[12] Strohschneider 1999 and Kellner and Strohschneider, 2012.
[13] Löser 2009, 81–116.
[14] Huizinga 1949.

fifteen years alone have seen the publication of edited volumes such as *Games and Gaming in Medieval Literature* (Patterson 2015)*, Spielendes Mittelalter* (Birkhan 2018), *Games and Visual Culture in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (Kopp and Lapina 2021), and *Des jeux et des hommes dans la société médiévale* (Mehl 2010).

However, there is thus far little work that brings these two areas of research together specifically in the context of religious poetry. The forthcoming *Habilitation* by Vanina Kopp, *Sacred, Serious, Suberversive: Literary Games and Poetic Competitions,* may start to shed light on the interplay between game theory and institutions such as the *puys*. Her article in the *Religion and Urbanity* project, 'Paintings, Poetry and Prayers: Lay Confraternities and their artistic devotion between 1450 and 1700 in French Urban Centres' (2021), suggests that her approach is primarily cultural and social rather than literary, considering visual art and material objects in order to analyse the institutions and their ludic and devotional elements. This will be invaluable for the study of the *puys,* but will still leave questions about the poetry itself and how it functions rhetorically and formally. In treatments of late medieval poetry, religious lyric in general, and particularly that of the *puys,* is often relegated to the status of a footnote. Scholars acknowledge the large body of material but tend to focus on the coterie at the court of Charles d'Orléans.[15] For example, Jane Taylor's *The Making of Poetry* focuses heavily on poetic games and addresses the *puys* only briefly, as an activity of the 'bourgeois', despite the fact that her insights on the social uses of poetry in court could very fruitfully be applied to the *puy*.[16] Similarly, other volumes on competition or engagement in late medieval literature tend to focus on responses to the *Rose* or the *Belle Dame Sans Mercy*.[17] While such

[15] Both Taylor (2007, 83-187) and Armstrong (2012, 71-116) use the Court of Orléans and the poetic games that took place there as key case studies.
[16] Taylor 2007, 140.
[17] Armstrong takes the *Belle Dame Sans Mercy* and responses to Chartier's work as the paradigm for how poets engage fruitfully in play with previous poets' work and all of his subsequent chapters are similarly not religious.

texts and responses deal with serious ethical questions, they are not devotional. This chapter will engage with this under-theorised area, applying the insights developed in the study of late medieval poetics to religious lyric, and, in turn, asking how the constellations of sacred/ludic and personal/corporate examined here can helpfully inflect studies of 'secular' lyric.

A key hermeneutic for understanding these two dialectics will be what Barbara Newman characterises as 'crossover': in her discussion of how the sacred and secular interact in the Middle Ages, she describes this dialectical relationship as 'both/and'.[18] The sacred and secular are not in opposition to one another, and they are difficult to separate; similarly, I do not wish to suggest that piety and play are a dichotomy. This chapter will examine the way such elements can be foregrounded in poetry and the interactions between them. Furthermore, this 'both/and' relationship can also fruitfully characterise what Black described as the 'symbiotic' relationship between the corporate mentality of city-dwellers and the newly emerging 'civil society' in towns and cities.[19] Using Newman's idea of crossover, therefore, I propose to read Marian lyric from the *puys* and *Meistergesang* as exemplifying Marian piety with playful elements which are not in tension with the devotional context; the individual poet hoping to the win the competition in the *puy* or the Meistersinger hoping to win a *Hauptsingen* does so through conforming to the fraternal, mutually agreed norms. Hence these different elements are not in conflict with one another. I argue that this dialectic of personal and public is part of the particularly urban characteristic of the Marian lyric.

[18] Newman 2013, 5.
[19] Black 1984, 66.

Beginning with a poem considered to be an 'advertisement' for the 1511 *puy* in Rouen which acts as an invitation to the competition, I will look at how the institution itself frames the relationship between competition and devotion, before moving on to a comparison of two poems from the 1497 *puy* with the same *palinod* in order to examine how poets use variation and rhyme in order to distinguish themselves as poets and honour the Virgin. The form of the rondeau offers interesting possibilities for play with form and language, and the opportunity to push variation even further with the double rondeau. A close reading of a selection of winning rondeaux will suggest that inventive play with the form offers the opportunity for complex theological reflection. Critics writing on late medieval French poetics have emphasised variation as the key to creativity and playfulness as opposed to innovation; moving on to look at Hans Folz and his *Meisterlieder* will enable us to explore the tension between invention – finding that which already exists – and innovation, composing in new forms, or *Töne*. Hans Folz composed a cycle of *Meisterlieder* (*RSM* 77-82) advocating *Meistersingers*' right to invent their own *Töne* in Nuremberg, as opposed to only using those of the *zwölf alten Meister*, as well as a cycle of songs (*RSM* 39-49) addressing his competitors. In this light, I will examine how the relationship between devotion and innovation can be observed in his Marian poetry. Lienhard Nunnenbeck was a *Meistersinger* also active in Nuremberg and its *Singschule* and was a great devotee of the Immaculate Conception. His poetry demonstrates expert understanding of the theological issues at stake using new *Töne*, exemplifying that play with form permits more fitting expressions of piety and belief. This comparison of *Meistergesang* and *puy* lyric indicates that play with form in *Meistergesang* entailed a greater degree of innovation, where in the *puys* variation was valued more highly within the corporate context.

The chapter will finish with a case study of a Book of Hours made for Jacques le Lieur, Rouen Bibl. Mun. Y226[a], which removes *chants royaux* from their competitive, communal context, and places them in a private, devotional context in a luxury material object designed to show the prestige of its owner. The use of the poems in this manuscript will bring together the two poles of devotional and ludic and personal and public to encapsulate the relationship between these two dialectics as proposed in this chapter. Creative play with form and the traditional *topoi* of Marian poetry within institutional frameworks engenders poetry which praises Mary more fittingly. The ludic setting and fellow competitors encourage individuals to push boundaries creatively, and it is in such a fraternal, but ludic environment that, building on and within the communal tradition, the poet and his community enhance both their poetry and their devotion. This non-opposition between the individual and the community generates and informs the playful piety of the Marian lyric and ensures that it is not a contradiction.

Competition at the *Puy de l'Immaculée Conception*

The *Ballade d'invitation*, as Denis Hüe names it, transmitted at the beginning of Oxford Douce 379 1v-2r, acts as a call to arms to poets to enter the competition of the 1511 *Puy de l'Immaculée Conception* in Rouen, framing it as a 'tournoy' in which poets will battle for the honour of their lady, she who is 'la plus belle'.[20] Denis Hüe speculates that this *ballade* would have been on the posters advertising the *puy* in prominent locations in Rouen and, as the fame of the *Puy* increased, that were sent further afield in France.[21] The demands of the *Puy* are set out in poetic form: the virtues and skills of the poets are enumerated, and the ultimate aim of the competition – the praise and honour of the Virgin Mary – is

[20] The text of the *ballade* has been edited by Hüe (2002a, 272-3), and Chesney (1950, 38-9) Chesney also prints the text preceding it.
[21] Hüe 2002a, 272.

foregrounded. This immediately sets up a relationship between play and devotion that shows the two in tandem: through competition, Mary will be praised; the more skilled the poet is at the game, the greater the honour that will be given to Mary. This is the eponymous 'Virtuoso Circle' of Armstrong's title: the model in which competition produces ever more complex poetry.[22] In the context of the *Puy*, that entails ever greater glory to Mary. It furthermore is playful in its conflation of the courtly lady with the Virgin Mary, a similarity which had in earlier generations inspired the trouvères and troubadours to compose songs where the identity of the lady was played with, sometimes in a risqué or daring way. Therefore, the poem demonstrates a self-conception of the *Puy de l'Immaculée Conception* as an institution which sees a reciprocal relationship between play and piety: far from being in opposition to one another, the poets will gain pleasure through their involvement in the competition and praise of Mary.

The text before the *ballade* purportedly contains the text of the poster with clearer slightly more practical instructions on what the poets – called 'facteurs' – ought to prepare for the competition.[23] It sets out the date, but clearly assumes the potential competitors are already familiar with the functioning of the *puy*, informing them that it will take place 'au lieu et heure acoustumez'.[24] Thus, although it is a public-facing announcement, that public is already circumscribed by pre-existing knowledge, creating a community within the wider citizenry who are familiar with the time and place. The genres and prizes are named. For example, poets may compose a *chant royal* using whatever *palinod* 'bon leur semblera'; the winner will merit the *Palme*, and the second-place the *Laurier*. The text of the poster

[22] Amrstrong 2012, xvi.
[23] The normal term for poets in this period, used, for example, in Fabri's *Grant et vrai art*; Hüe (2002a, 72) points out that regarding the *Puy*, poets writing in French are referred to either as 'facteurs' or 'orateurs', while those composing epigrammes are 'poetes'.
[24] Chesney 1950, 38.

remarks explicitly on the twin purposes of competition and devotion by proposing a further category: 'et oultre plus pour inciter tous facteurs et exalter icelle vierge donnera le prince ung autre prix de valleur a celluy qui composera le meilleur rondeau double redoublé exaltant icelle saincte conception'.[25] The prize is offered both to motivate the competitors and to ensure that there is another genre to praise Mary, and to encourage the poets to exalt her as fittingly as possible. The functioning of the *Puy* is set out in further detail in the *Approbation*. it sets out the statutes of the *Puy* and all the privileges afforded it by Pope Leo X. As well as setting out in great detail the duties of the Prince and the liturgical activities of the members of the Confraternity, it gives a more comprehensive breakdown of activities of the day than the poster, specifying that, for example, Mass begins at 7am and all members of the confraternity must be present, or else pay a fine of 10 *sols tournois* if they do not have a good reason for their absence.[26] Here it is made clear, for example, that anyone can enter as long as their poems conform to the specifications set out on the poster, the qualifications for being a member of the jury as well as a specific prohibition on attempting to present more than one poem by having others submit it on one's behalf, implying this had previously been a problem.[27] The statutes also set out what should happen to the poems after the competition, in a phrasing which once again highlights the twin reciprocal purposes of praising the Virgin and foregrounding poets as winners:[28]

> Item et affin de plus en plus collauder et magnifier la tressaincte et sacree immaculée et que les œuvres des facteurs soient congnuz et exaltez ainsy qu'il appartient. Est statue en la forme acoustumee que chacun prince en son année fera mectre et rediger par escript en bonne forme et escripture en ung tableau honneste selon sa devocion ainsi qu'il est acoustumé les champs royaulx et epigrammes ballades et rondeaulx qui de son temps auront esté premier desditz prix ensemble l'année qui fust/le nom surnom et qualite des facteurs. Lequel tableau sera presenté et mis au lieu des Carmes ou autres lieux et place qui par lesdicts princes sera limitté dedens la feste de la Purificacion Nostre Dame et du plus tard dedens la feste de Paques ensuyuant. Affin que tous devotz chrestiens orateurs et gens de tous estatz les puissent veoir

[25] Chesney 1950,38.
[26] *Approbation*,10.
[27] *Approbation*, 12-15.
[28] *Approbation*, 16

> et lire pour de plus en plus esmouvoir leur devocion a icelle tressaincte et immaculée conception.

The first sentence makes this double purpose clear, and, although the devotional element comes first and is clearly the more important, the fact that this is a competition with winners, who deserve recognition, is not seen as any sort of contradiction. Indeed, showing the winning poems allows Mary to be 'de plus en plus' praised and magnified, but the poets themselves ought to be recognised and 'exaltez' – the word which was on the poster applied to the Immaculate Conception. This panel with the winning poems is to be put outside the Carmelite Church, the location of the competition, enabling the faithful to read these poems before entering a place of worship, where they may wish to meditate on the praise offered therein. Thus 'tous devotz chrestiens' can benefit and the poems will be able to 'de plus en plus esmouvoir leur devotion'. The community is framed as one of Christians first and foremost, and 'esmouvoir' gestures toward a sense of affective piety. It is clearly important that the poets' achievements be recognised: name and surname must be given, and it must be 'honneste'; yet their poetry and praise of Mary is nonetheless the property of the whole Church – 'gens de tous estatz' – who have the right to see it, and not limited to paid-up members of the confraternity. This reciprocal relationship between the poet and the wider Christian community highlights the way in which competition fosters praise of Mary, and that an individual poet's renown benefits all the devout.

The information on the poster, as well as the more detailed statutes of the *Puy,* demonstrate already how the *Puy*'s poetry competition conforms to some of the key characteristics of play, as set out in *Homo Ludens*, Johan Huizinga's study of play (1949), which has continued to be foundational for studies of play despite its at times dated nature, with Serina Patterson

calling it 'the first touchstone both in play and cultural games studies'.[29] One such characteristic is that all play has rules.[30] Unlike other languages, English makes a distinction between 'play' and 'game' that has informed the direction of Anglophone game studies.[31] Thus while Huizinga defines play as 'a voluntary activity or occupation executed within certain fixed limits of time and place, according to rules freely accepted but absolutely binding, having its aim in itself and accompanied by a feeling of tension, joy and the consciousness that it is 'different' from 'ordinary life',[32] it is also worth making the distinction with regard to the *puys* between what is play with regard to the *Puy*, and the game itself. I will follow Patterson's proposed definition of game, namely that:

> Games are *designed experiences*; they model behaviour and imply intent from players (those who participate). Unlike unstructured, freeform play, which humans and animals both enjoy, games have identifiable rules within a contained system. They require varying degrees of abstract thought, cognitive representation, skill, imagination, and an understanding of rules – traits that, taken together, are found within diverse human cultures around the world since at least 5000 BC.[33]

It seems that while the composition of poetry in advance of the competition itself – the posters went out three to four months in advance, giving poets plenty of time to compose and refine their poem – might be more akin to unstructured play – though the rules of the fixed-form poems and knowledge of the exigencies of Conceptionist devotion will still have informed their play with poetry prior to the *Puy* – the competition itself follows the definition set out of a game, and thus elements of play and the game itself are relevant here.

To return to the *Ballade d'invitation*, we see the stakes of the game set out lyrically: the 'skill and imagination' which form part of Patterson's definition of the game are enumerated

[29] Patterson 2015, 7.
[30] Huizinga 1949, 29.
[31] Patterson 2015, 5.
[32] Huizinga 1949, 28
[33] Patterson 2015, 7.

through the metaphor of the tournament, with the Lady for whom a knight might compete being transformed into Our Lady, 'la plus belle du monde', for whose honour one could compete. The institutional framing of the competition is evident from the first strophe, as it is the 'Prince' of the *puy* organising it, and he desires to 'Tenir tournay de grand solemnité/ Pour maintenir l'honneur de purité/ De sa dame sur toutes la plus belle' (lines 4-6).[34] The tourney conceit is introduced, and out of the context of the *puy* could indeed sound like a courtly affair of a knight wishing to defend his lady's honour, with 'solemnité' having the double sense of 'noble and important' and well as 'religious feast'. A key part of the *palinod* is already introduced in the second hemistich of line 6, that it is 'la plus belle' lady, while the final few lines set out the importance of the Immaculate Conception, restating it in several different ways, using formulations which recur in *puy* poetry: her 'sainct concept' (line 8) is to be celebrated; Mary is free from all sin, 'necte et munde' (line 10), and is without any 'infection' (line 11). Where the first strophe addresses these qualities of Mary, the second deals with the desires of the poets: if they are searching for 'precellence' (line 13) and 'immortallité' (line 14), desiring to have their name remembered, then this is the competition for them. The rhyme of 'precellence/excellence' is one which appears constantly, so the *ballade* is already offering poets inspiration in including this typical rhyme. It is the poet's posture of humility which will, as emphasised by the Christian tradition, bring him immortality, as foregrounded by the rhyme of 'humilité/immortallité', in which service of Our Lady will obtain for him renown on earth, and eternal life in heaven. Although the prizes for the *Puy* were monetary, the 'retribucion' (line 23) offered by the Prince according to this poem is rather honour and Mary herself.

[34] Chesney 1950, 38

The third strophe moves on to enumerate the qualities and skills needed to succeed in the *Puy* and offer a formula for winning: continuing the theme of the tourney, the semantic field of military vocabulary is used, enjoining poets to take up their arms in honour of Mary. This also serves as a reference to Ephesians 6:13-17 in which Christians are exhorted to put on the 'armaturum Dei', with each part being associated with a virtue, here with a tool of the poet. The 'galeam salutis' of 6:17 becomes the 'armet de memoire et science' (line 27). Poets must rely on the Aristotelian categories of invention, disposition, elocution and memory to aid them in their mission, all of which Pierre Fabri would highlight ten years later in his *Grant et vrai art,* which essentially used the norms of the *Puy de l'Immaculée Conception* as its basis for composing poetry.[35] The apologetic nature of *puy* poetry is also made more explicit here, as poets are admonished to reject all 'adverse cautelle' (line 31) and must 'argue[r] par elocution' (line 34) in favour of the Immaculate Conception, to defend Mary's honour in the face of those who doubt that she was conceived without the stain of original sin. This roots the *Puy* in the contemporary debates surrounding the doctrine, suggesting the institution and individual poets are responding to particular objections and engaging in that discourse.

The *envoy* recapitulates both the theme of competition, with its exhortation to each 'champion' (line 37) to participate, recapitulating the tourney conceit, and the ultimate goal: to 'collauder' (line 39) her who is without peer. Thus the poem sets out, in the form of lyric, these twin aims of the *Puy*, which work hand in hand with one another. It encapsulates one of Huizinga's key insights about play, namely that it can be 'very serious indeed'.[36] Patterson refers to this as the 'game-earnest topos'.[37] Prior to *Homo Ludens*, play had been viewed in scholarship as frivolous, but it is now a key axiom of game studies that play means something

[35] Taylor 2017; Mantovani 2000.
[36] Huizinga 1949, 24.
[37] Patterson 2015, 7.

and is serious. Indeed, the tournament metaphor in the poem makes this evident: tournaments were a form of recreation and entertainment, but they could be deadly. Similarly, the *Puy de l'Immaculée Conception* had its ludic elements, and was a fun competition that attracted competitors from different social stations in Rouen and beyond, but the goal of that play, producing good poetry which honoured the Virgin Mary fittingly and sufficiently defended her Immaculate Conception from detractors, was a very serious one. Because it increased the praise and honour of Mary, play with poetry and competition was not frivolous, and the fact that the individual poet, while seeking his own 'nom glorieux', also gave the faithful a devotional poem which might move them made it a worthy cause. Armstrong highlights that 'the twin mechanisms of collaboration and competition foster ongoing development and innovation' in poetry: here the mastery of poetry and encouragement to reach new heights through competition is in service not merely of the body of poetic knowledge, but also Mary herself.[38]

Having established that the ludic aspect of *puy* poetry is not in tension, but rather works fruitfully with its devotional aims, I will demonstrate how poets could put this into practice by offering a close reading of two poems with the same *palinod* to investigate how variation worked in *puy* poetry.

Variation at the 1497 *Puy de l'Immaculée Conception:* 'Pour son plaisir Dieu la feist toute belle'.

In his monograph on *Poets as Players,* Johnson (1990) argues that variation was the key means by which poets distinguished themselves from one another in late medieval French poetics. The aesthetic horizons for appreciating poetry entailed subtle and interesting variation of use of languages, rhyme and theme, particularly in fixed-form poetry. In this

[38] Armstrong 2012, xvi.

period, it was not innovation, he argues, but variation which was valued – though Johnson undersells the extent to which variation is a form of innovation in his attempt to avoid anachronism. Pleasure and creative play in poetry were found through subtle differentiation of traditional *topoi*. He writes: 'The kind of aesthetic pleasure caused by such slight shifts in patterns seems, to our sensibilities, delicate indeed, if not imperceptible. But to deny the very existence of this pleasure is to misunderstand completely the art of these poets'.[39] Johnson engages with fixed-form lyric in his study, but the *chant royal* is notably absent, as he shows how poets played with form through minor variation.

In the earlier years of the Rouen *Puy de l'Immaculée Conception,* as was the practice in Amiens, there was a set *palinod* on which poets must compose their *chant royal*.[40] In Rouen BM MS Y.18, which transmits the winning poems from the beginning of the *Puy* in 1486 until 1524, there are several instances in which the poems winning the *Palme* and the *Laurier* had the same *palinod*, suggesting a set refrain chosen by the Prince. In 1497, that *palinod* was 'Pour son plaisir Dieu la feist toute belle'. The winning poem was by Nicolle Ravenier, while second place went to Richard Bonne Année. Despite being composed around the same refrain and having the same overarching theme of the Immaculate Conception, the poems use the refrain differently, and use the form of the *chant royal* to explore ideas and develop images and rhymes independently from one another. These two poems were submitted in the same year, and evidently both lauded by the jury, though, with no extant *recueil* for 1497, we cannot know against how many poems they were being considered. As such, they offer an interesting case study for how these poets used variation to differentiate their *chant royal* and play with topoi and form, bearing in mind Johnson's emphasis on slight shifts and the extent

[39] Johnson 1990, 36.
[40] Hüe 2002a, 271.

to which such variation was both playful for the poets and pleasurable for its recipients. These two poems not only won prizes in 1497, but also, for *puy* poems, had a relatively wide transmission, suggesting they indeed appealed to audiences beyond the jury.[41]

Chant royal forme
de dialogue [f. 23v]

A Gabriel sergent de deité
Pour ce que aulcuns ont eu suspicion
De Marie vaisseau de purité
Mettans erreur en sa conception
Verité mect leur confusion.
Gage plegé requérant la deffence
Estre faicte sur grand peine d'offence
Vers tous humains a ce autre disans
On proposans au conttraire libelle
Car en despit de tous les medisans
Pour son plaisir Dieu la feist toute belle

Les sergent plain de benignité
Grace de Dieu receust pour cauxion
Et recorda devant la trinité
En avoir faict sinificacion
Certiffiant par sa rellacion
Que Marye plain de precellence
Est et sera des belles l'excellence
Le triomphe de cielz replendisans
Le fort escu contre Sathan rebelle
Et que par faictz treshaultains et puissans
Pour son plaisir Dieu la feist toute belle

Heresie de sa malignité. [f. 24r]
Pour ses adjoincte mist oppossicion
Voullant prouver que toute humanite
En son concept contraict polucion
Mais verité dit pour solucion
Que Dieu qui print en elle corpulence
La preserva de toute pestilence
Que ses parents qui luy furent plaisans
L'engendrement sans tache originelle
Et que devant les seclis reluysans
Pour son plaisir Dieu la feist toute belle

Gens le veut tesmoingz de verité [f. 24v]

Chant royal [f. 25r]

Le seul voulloir de divine puyssance
Aproever de ciel la createur
Qui est plus faict en bonne cognoissance
Qui de l'impur avoit faict chose pure
Ce que Dieu feist en humaine nature
Quant il crea par sa vertu immence
Le pur vaisseau venu de la semence
D'Eve et d'Adam tout plain de dignité
C'est Marye la pure colombelle
Sy tellement qu'en son humanite
Pour son plaisir Dieu la feist toute belle

Il n'e faict point avoir d'esbahissance
Se de peché n'a quelque pourriture
Le povre sang duquel Dieu prinst naissance
Et ce pur lait dont il print nourriture
Car il est mis en la saincte escripture
Qu'oncques peché n'y a faict viollence
Mais a esté la chambre d'excellence
Plaine des dons de la divinité
Et pour les bien qui sont trouvees en elle
Il apport bien qu'en grand solemnité
Pour son plaisir Dieu la fiest toute belle

Celle a recu la divine substance [f. 25v]
Dedans son clos et souz sa couverture
Dieu enffenta en toute esjouissance
Sans la froisser ne luy faire ouverture
Celle a donc eu en sa noble closture
Ce que les cieulz tous plains de reluysance
N'ont peu prendre veu sa magnificence
Conclure fault qu'elle est sans vilité
Et que jamaitz il n'en fust onc de telle
Car veu ses biens et son humilité
Pour son plaisir Dieu la feist toute belle

C'est le beau lix qui par juste ordonnance

[41] Ravenier's poem is also transmitted in Copenhagen BR Thott 59 2º; Oxford Douce 252; BnF fr 1538 and BnF fr. 2765 while Bonne Année's *chant royal* could be found alongside Ravenier's in Thott 59 2º and BnF fr 1538 as well as in BnF fr. 2206, BnF fr. 19184 and the Vidoue Recueil. Even the most successful *chants royaux* are generally transmitted at best in three or four manuscripts, so this suggests a measure of popularity. Both poems from Rouen BM MS Y.18, following directly on from one another on ff. 23v-26r. Although they are transmitted in other manuscripts, BM MS Y. 18 places them directly one after another, highlighting the initial competitive context, and hence in my transcription I have followed Y. 18.

Sur ce furent leur desposicion
Ezechiel pour sa securité
La denomma en jubilacion
Porte close sans quelque fraction
Gedeon veist la toison d'innocence
Arroser par la divine essence
Donc les docteurs sont a ce concordans
Et affermans ceste vierge eslue telle
Et que de droit malgré tous descordans
Pour son plaisir Dieu la feist toute belle

Salomon roy feust juge deputé
Pour en faire la judicacion
Lequel apres que on eust fort dispute
La matiere conclud pas par union
Des assistans avons opinion
Qui par conseil de la dite assistance
Declara lors par tresmeure sentence
Contre heresie et tous les oppossans
Que Marye la pure colombelle
N'eust onc peché et que sur tous umains
Pour son plaisir Dieu la feist toute belle

Envoy
Vous orateurs en termes florissans
Enregistres la droicture d'icelle
Et publies ces mots resjouissans
Pour son plaisir Dieu la feist toute belle

Ne receust oncq d'espine la puncture
C'est la roze qui toute belle et blanche
Est en tout temps d'excellente facture
C'est la porte qui n'eust oncq fracture
C'est le jardin de pure conscience
C'est le lieu sainct que Dieu de sa sentence
A exempté de la calamité
De tous humains touchant playe mortelle
Par quoy concludz veu tel sublimité
Pour son plaisir Dieu la feist toute belle

26r
En sa beauté a prins telle plaisance
Que desus tous luy donne prelature
En son concept la garde de nuysance
Car de peché n'y eust oncq conjecture
Mais a donné par raison et droicture
Son toussainct corps du mansteau d'innocence
Duquel connoist divine sapience
Le vray tresor qui est en deité
Elle fust donc vierge mere et pucelle
Consydere sa preciosité
Pour son plaisir Dieu la feist toute belle

Envoy
Prince du puy par l'ardante charité
De la voye la vie et verité
La preserva de coulpe originelle
Ainsy doncqz veu telle aultorité
Pour son plaisir Dieu la feist toute belle

From the starting point of the *palinod*, 'Pour son plaisir Dieu la feist toute belle' and with the need to link this theme explicitly to Mary in her Immaculate Conception, the two poets talk about Mary's perfection and the fact that she was preserved from all stain of sin, often encompassing the same rhymes – 'belle/colombelle' an obvious one to derive from the *palinod.* However, they take subtly different approaches in how they advocate for the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception in their *chants royaux*: Ravenier's poem seems to be actively taking the position of defender of Mary's honour, responding to 'heresie' and engaging with the 'mesdisans' who doubt in her Immaculate Conception and hence dishonour her, whereas Bonne Année simply praises this quality. To an extent, Bonne Année's *chant*

royal still acts as a proof for the doctrine, but the poem can be read on its own terms, as opposed to apparently responding to specific detraction.

In the first strophe, Ravenier highlights the possibility of detraction with a semantic field around it, including 'suspicion', 'erreur', 'libelle' and 'mesdisans'. The rhyme of 'deffense/offence' foregrounds his approach to the theme of the Immaculate Conception, while 'libelle/belle' highlights contrast between the awful calumny and Mary's perfection. He calls Mary a 'vaisseau de purité' enabling the *rime riche* with 'deité' whereas those words appear in a slightly different constellation in Bonne Année's first strophe, which calls her 'le pur vaisseau venu de la semence'. Although Mary's purity is nonetheless important, it is on Mary's creation and origins (which account for her purity) that he chooses to focus – an approach from first principles to demonstrate her purity as opposed to a response. In a poem which will develop horticultural images of Mary later on, she comes from the 'semence' of Adam and Eve, harking back to the Garden of Eden before the fall. Eve comes first, reminding us that Mary is the New Eve, and there is a particular focus on the physicality of Mary's 'humanité', whose rhyme with 'dignité' emphasises its goodness in the context of Mary; Bonne Année goes on to make reference to blood and milk in the next strophe, reminders of the fleshiness of the Incarnation, and hence a significant argument for why the Immaculate Conception was so significant: Jesus's flesh came from Mary, He was nourished by her and hence her flesh could not have ever been stained by sin.[42] The 'nourriture/pourriture' *rime léonine* reinforces this connection and the importance of physical purity.

[42] Hüe 2002, 516.

In this second strophe, both poets find themselves using ‘excellence’ in the same position at the end of the seventh line. Ravenier rhymes it with the traditional ‘precellence’, ensuring that his poem is not mere refutation of heresy, but also exalts Mary with great praise, proclaiming her to be the triumph of heaven. On the other hand, Bonne Année uses the less expected ‘viollence’ for his rhyme, with the adversative conjunction ‘Mais’ at the beginning of line seven, which stresses the contrast between the violence of sin and Mary’s excellence. Ravenier has been defending Mary, and then calls her the shield against Satan, so his defence of her is a mere reflection of the great defence she offers us. In the third *onzain*, both poets intensify their argumentation. Ravenier specifically calls out the heresy of those desiring to ‘prouver’ that Mary, too, was touched by ‘pollucion’ whereas he instead offers the ‘solucion’. Bonne Année demonstrates the logical nature of his poem by using ‘donc’ and ‘conclure fault’; the following line ‘Et que jamaitz il n’en fust onc de telle [vilité]’ with all its emphatic negatives and absolutes leaves no room for confusion. Both poets use light imagery, with Ravenier using ‘plaisans/reluysans’ and Bonne Année linking it aurally with God’s great joy in Mary through ‘esjouissance/reluysance’. Bonne Année also highlights in this strophe the boundedness of Mary’s perpetual virginity discussed in Chapter I, asserting that she was not fractured by the conception and birth. The ‘Sans’ at the beginning of 26, with regard to her physical intactness, and the ‘sans’ of line 30, that she is without sin, emphasise her exemption and election. The ‘ouverture/closture’, another common rhyme in *puy* poetry, further underlines her boundedness.

The ‘-ture’ rhyme continues to be semantically linked with Mary’s intactness in Bonne Année’s fourth strophe, rhyming ‘puncture/facture/fracture’. He uses the ‘lilium inter spinas’ (Song of Songs 2:2) image to demonstrate this, enabling him to introduce the floral theme that characterises this *onzain*. The lily, rose and garden – images from the Song of Songs and

prevalent in Marian litanies – are all featured to underscore Mary's purity. The repetition of 'oncq' twice and the enumeration of the images of Mary beginning with 'C'est le…' are all designed to lead the audience to the inexorable conclusion, made explicit by Bonne Année: 'Parquoy concludz veu tel sublimité/Pour son plaisir Dieu la feist toute belle'. Ravenier also looks back to Old Testament prefigurations in his fourth strophe, but rather than the floral Song of Songs types, he chooses Ezekiel's gates and Gideon's fleece as his proofs. Bonne Année had also mentioned the 'porte', but without the context of Ezekiel, making it a more general image for Mary; however, it is striking how both poets use it in the fifth line of their strophe in very similar constellations – Ravenier's 'Porte close sans quelque fraction' versus 'C'est la porte qui n'eust oncq fracture' in Ravenier's poem. This is a traditional image in *puy* poetry but the two poets have successfully used it in subtly different ways: Bonne Année's progression of '-ture' rhymes makes this the apogee of his sequence of proofs of Mary's intactness; Ravenier's word order enables him to emphasise the 'Porte close' image at the beginning of the line, with each hemistich foregrounding the bounded image. The scholastic language of disputation comes across strongly in his strophe, too, with an emphasis on the witness to truth, appealing to the 'docteurs' who are all 'concordans', thus 'affermans' the truth about Mary. The positioning of his poem as a response to detractors is reaffirmed with the final hemistich before the *palinod*: 'malgré les descordans', whose disagreement is aurally in opposition to the 'concordans' of the learned doctors.

Bonne Année continues with his appeal to authority by bringing in Solomon as the wise judge in his fifth strophe. The need for judgement further brings out the sense that Ravenier is in dialogue with his opponents, though their words are hardly transmitted, and instead simply characterised as wrong and heretical: it would be too dangerous to give voice to them – rather, their confusion about her conception was evoked in the first strophe and from then on

they are just presented as ‘libelle’. He makes it clear that the question has been ‘fort dispute’, but here, with the presence of a judge, all semblance of disputation is brought to an end as the question is ‘conclud’ with Solomon declaring that Mary was always fully without sin. It is only in this final strophe, as the declaration is made, that Ravenier uses the satisfying *rime riche* of ‘colombelle/belle’, as if he has been storing up that which Bonne Année used already as his very first rhyme with the *palinod*. He does not finish his poem with such a strong sense of judgement, but, nonetheless, the ‘oncq’ is repeated, and asserts that both ‘par raison et droicture’ God ensured Mary was never touched by sin. He continues his emphasis on Mary’s body: it is her ‘toussainct corps’ given the coat of innocence, and this gestures toward another image sometimes used in Marian poetry – the coat or garment out of which another garment, Jesus, is made without ever cutting or tearing the original. This is evoked without needing to describe the full image. Bonne Année uses most of the final strophe to praise Mary for her beauty and dignity, marvelling at the gifts God has given her along with the paradox that she is ‘mere vierge et pucelle’.

Both *envoys* round the poems off in the same tone in which their stanzas have been composed: Ravenier focuses on the need to proclaim these truths about Mary, addressing not as is the norm the Prince du Puy, but the other poets, enjoining them to use ‘mots florissans’ to make the truth in this poem widespread. Even through this slight variation on the typical *envoy*, it is self-referential, evoking the activity of the *puy*. Bonne Année finishes with the traditional formula, moving from the alliterative reference to John 4:16 to a reassertion of the fundamental idea behind the poem: that God preserved Mary from original sin. The penultimate line with its words ‘ainsy’, ‘doncqz’ and ‘aultorité’ restate the logical means by which he has come to this conclusion.

Through this close reading of the two poems, which are both built around the same refrain line and both of which have the purpose of honouring Mary through demonstrating the truth of her Immaculate Conception, it is possible to see how variation works in the context of *puy* poetry. Both poets draw from the same bank of imagery and are conveying the same doctrinal truths, yet use different arrangements of imagery and use language and rhyme to create subtly different emphases, as we saw with the example of the closed gate. They praise Mary's beauty, use light imagery, and some of their rhyme words are exactly the same, all in the tight constraints of the *chant royal* which dictates the metre, number of lines in a strophe and the need for the *envoy*. And yet, even though they come to the same conclusion – that Mary was conceived without sin and hence 'pour son plaisir Dieu la feist toute belle' – and have had the same refrain line repeated six times, they are remarkably different in tone and emphasis. This demonstrates how the game of the *Puy* was to be played: within the framework of the rules, and using the same stock of images, poets had to honour Mary's Immaculate Conception in ways that were different enough to be distinctive, but which adhered closely enough to the tradition to appeal to the Conceptionist piety and aesthetic tastes of the *Puy de l'Immaculée Conception.* Thus, Bonne Année and Ravenier deftly play with rhyme and imagery to advocate for the Immaculate Conception: they are never wholly innovative in their images, but rather bring prefigurations, praise and argument together in different semantic and phonetic constellations.

In foregrounding the idea of variation, which Johnson uses to try to avoid imposing modern aesthetic standards and notions of innovation onto late medieval poetry, he inadvertently undersells the extent to which these very minor, subtle variations in the use of image, lexis, and rhyme do constitute a form of innovation. Indeed, it is through their subtlety that the *puy* poets distinguish themselves from one another and it is small, barely perceptible differences

that are privileged: the smaller and more subtle the variation, the greater the degree of distinction for the poet. This is made clearest by reading *puy* poetry in context.[43]

Ravenier's poem received the Palme and Bonne Année's the Laurier, putting them in first and second place in the *chant royal* category that year. With no *recueil* surviving from 1497, we cannot compare their poems with other entries, but we can ask why Ravenier's was considered to be superior. Thematically, its explicit attempt to combat heresy may have been considered more attractive. It honours and exalts Mary while potentially responding to specific concerns at the time. This was long before the 1511 *ballade d'invitation* which imagines the competition as a tournament and the 1520 *Approbation*, but the sense of defending Mary's honour was likely still present, and hence the unequivocal correction of the 'maldisans', given how successfully it is combined with praise of Mary in her own right, may have been more interesting than Bonne Année's slightly more generic proofs of the Immaculate Conception through scriptural authority and prefigurations. The framing of Ravenier's poem enables a slight variation on the emphasis of praise. However, we can only speculate on the tastes of the jury in the absence of further evidence regarding their preferences. On a formal level, both poems are impressive, using metre effectively and, over the course of the entire poem they are consistent and successful with their rhymes, both using a high proportion of *rime riches*. Given the demands of the *chant royal*, which entailed using the same rhymes over all five strophes, successful rhyme may well have been one way of distinguishing poets. Neither have recourse to *rimes pauvres*, with all being at least *suffisantes*; however, the winning poem does have a higher proportion of rhymes which are at least rich. While both are impressive, this clearly marks out Ravenier's poem as formally

[43] See Jane Taylor's argument (2007, 6) that it is only in reading fixed-form lyric associatively in anthologies that we can 'recognize, and salute, dense and complex networks of collective images and shared allusions, and tease out the relationship of poem to poem, rhetorically, metrically, schematically'.

superior. We know from the statutes that poets were required to submit a copy of their text to the jury both to aid them in their judgement and ensure that the poems could be recorded and kept for posterity, and so having the text in front of them would mean that even if they did not pick up on it during the performance, the jury could both count and compare rhymes across different texts. This develops Taylor's argument that it is in the noticing and saluting of minor differences in fixed-forms lyrics that pleasure can be found.[44]

There is no explicit 'je' in either poem: the poets follow the norms of the *puy*, explicitly gesturing to that context in their *envoy,* engaging in communal devotion to Mary. Neither poet speaks in the first person. In Ravenier's poem, the 'bons orateurs' are addressed in the *envoy*, those dedicate themselves to the same task as the poet, praising and defending Mary. This suggests a community of those devoted to both the Immaculate Conception and good poetry. This highlights the non-opposition between the individual and the community: all are engaged in the same task, and the competitive spirit merely entails ever greater praise of Mary. The poetic voice in Bonne Année's poem is yet more subtle, with no first-person verbs, only impersonal verbs such as 'conclure fault' with perhaps an implicit 'je' or 'nous' who must come to that conclusion – by the same token, a collective, corporate 'on'. Thus any member of the faithful could take up Bonne Année's poem and defence of the Virgin as their own. Competition is therefore not necessarily a form of self-promotion. While the individual poet need not efface themselves, they compete best by conforming to the community. Of course, looking at the written record alone, we cannot know how the performance of the poem on the day of the *Puy* itself would have affected the perception of the poet and how they might have foregrounded themselves as competitors and poets. Nonetheless, it seems that the way of distinguishing oneself in terms of the competition was through careful

[44] Taylor 2007, 6.

variation of the traditional themes and *topoi*, appealing to the Conceptionist piety of the audience and writing as part of the Conceptionist community rather than by asserting a confident, individual poetic 'je'. The poetic voice was, rather, notable for its slight and deft manipulation of the form of the *chant royal*.

This comparison of the two *chants royaux* therefore demonstrates that play with form, rhyme and image was sophisticated and that poets and juries alike appreciated subtle and slight variation. Though the rules of the competition are somewhat sparse, only specifying the form of the *chant royal*, the subject matter of honouring the Immaculate Conception, and, at this point, presumably determining the *palinod*, the unwritten rules, gleaned through prior participation in the *puy* and membership of the Conceptionist community, indicated other norms to be followed when competing.[45] The individual competitor and his fellow poets and devotees of the Immaculate Conception seem to have had an interdependent relationship: there does not seem to have been tension between the desire to win and the confraternal nature of the *Puy*, nor is individual prowess in opposition to piety.

Rondeaux: play with language and form

The *chant royal* was the premier genre in the *Puy*, but the *rondeau* also enjoyed a high standing in the competition. It did not receive quite as many entries as the *chant royal* – in 1511 there were 51 entries in the *chant royal* category and 22 in the *rondeau* – but many of the most eminent poets contributed *rondeaux*. The short but complex form placed a high demand on competitors and had different norms from the *chant royal*. For example, it is rare

[45] Pierre Fabri's *Grant et vrai art* which sets out norms was only written in 1521, forty-five years after the *Puy* began, with nothing like this available in the early years of the competition.

to hear Mary speaking in the former, but in the *rondeau* over half the entries give voice to Mary.

The form of the *rondeau* clearly has much potential for play with language and form, given the need for the refrain to fit in semantically at multiple points over the poem. Johnson's *Poets as Players* focuses almost exclusively on non-religious lyric, but he demonstrates masterfully with his commentary on Christine de Pizan's 'Dieux est' how the form of the *rondeau* can play with voice, language and form to make a serious theological point: 'it is equally clear that the poet is playing with the form and its exigencies of rhyme and repetition. Yet the subject is entirely serious: the writer is attempting to define God – not on the face of it a very amusing enterprise. But this is play, nonetheless – serious play'.[46] This is Johnson's sole example of a religious poem. The idea that such poetry should not be considered 'a very amusing enterprise' fits in with the tendency of scholars of late-medieval poetics to neglect religious lyric when dealing with play and games.[47] Yet as the previous *chants royaux*, and the very existence of a competition like the *Puy*, demonstrate, composing and consuming religious poetry as an amusing enterprise is not a contradiction in terms. Although we tend to think of play and devotion as a question of either/or, the medieval poets did not see a contradiction here, but rather considered the two to be mutually enriching.[48]

In this section, I will show that the *rondeau* combines very well a playful poetics with sincere piety and that Christine's *rondeau* as analysed by Johnson, far from being an outlier which demonstrates a unique form of serious play, is rather representative of a genre which offered the potential for ludic piety. In particular, Cousture's 1511 *rondeau,* which could be read in a

[46] Johnson 1990, 84.
[47] See also Taylor 2007 and Armstrong 2012.
[48] Cf. Newman's hermeneutic of 'both/and' (2013, 5)

minimum of three different ways, affords an apt opportunity for poets to play with the potential of the form. However, the potential of the *rondeau* is curtailed by the need to articulate it, and thereby choose one option when performing; the playful possibilities are in fact greater when the *rondeau* is written down and a reader given the chance to play with its different options.

Cousture presented this *rondeau* above at the 1511 *Puy* in Rouen, demonstrating an impressive ability to play with form, metre and rhyme, as the *rondeau* is in fact made up of two separate *rondeaux* which can be read independently of one another. The first *rondeau* making up *O Saincte Dame Vierge Tresgracieuse* is particularly impressive, with each line being made up of only four syllables, such that some lines consist of only one word. Cousture has at least chosen easy rhyme sounds with *-ame* and *-ent* but manages to include *rimes equivoques* with the 'fame/femme' rhyme even in this constrained form and with so few syllables. Just as the poem highlights Mary's perfection – 'parfaictement' a single line on its own – so the *rondeau* itself has been constructed with perfection, its structure and form a mirror of Mary's own perfection. The rhymes of 'parfeictement/nectement/dignement/ sainctement' foreground her virtues and beauty, while her femininity is emphasised through the 'femme/dame' rhyme. 'Ame' is used both as noun and verb, again allowing Cousture to show off his ability to play with language and rhyme, but all in the service of the 'saincte dame' who is the direct addressee of the *rondeau*, meaning it can function as a prayer, such that it is fitting for him to use the most virtuoso form he can master.

O Saincte Dame by Cousture[49]

O saincte dame — Vierge tresgracieuse
En corps et ame — Es sainctz cielz glorieuses
Certainement — Tu tiens prelacion
Parfaictement — Et domination
Belle on te clame — Sur toutes precieuse

Jamais ne euz blasme — Onc ne fuz vicieuse
Mais sans diffame — Du filz Dieu mere heureuse
Fuz nectement — Sans maculacion

O saincte dame

Dieu quy tant ame — Comme son amoureuse
Et loz et fame — Du filz Dieu mere heureuse
T'a dignement — Parfaicte et vertueuse
Et sainctement — Par preservation
Faict belle femme — Lumiere lumineuse

O saincte dame

The second hemistich of each line, which is slightly longer, again uses two relatively easy rhyming sounds (*-euse* and *-ion*) to strong effect. Where the first *quintil* of the first *rondeau* emphasised Mary's perfection, here in the second *rondeau* it emphasises her power through the 'domination/prelacion' rhyme (and here, when both parts of the lines are read together, this is intensified through the 'certainement/parfaictement' of the first hemistich), while the first set of rhymes focus on praise of body and soul. The middle sections of both *rondeaux* deal with her Immaculate Conception, with the 'jamais' and 'onc' paralleling one another and insisting on the temporal importance of any stain of sin being removed even before Mary's conception. When read together, the poem therefore makes a strong case for the Immaculate Conception, with the negative words implying sin – 'blasme', 'diffame', 'vicieuse' and 'maculacion' – all negated absolutely and contrasted strongly with the praise in the refrain which follows – *O saincte dame, Vierge tresgracieuse*. The poem insists on Mary's perfection in 'corps' and 'ame' and we could also see the two separate *rondeaux* each

[49] Oxford Douce 379 No. 68. My transcription.

embodying this: the first *rondeau* could be seen as having a greater focus on Mary's body – she is twice described as 'belle' – while the second *rondeau* which deals with Mary's dominion in heaven and talks of her radiance could be associated more with her soul. When read together, the two *rondeaux* build a complete picture of her perfection. Used at the beginning of the first *rondeau* in line 4*,* it is only toward the end of the second *rondeau* that 'parfaicte' appears, this time in its adjectival form. Here, the rhymes of 'heureuse/vertueuse/lumineuse' justify why Mary is the 'amoureuse' of God, worthy of being His mother. The word 'preservation', almost taking up an entire hemistich on its own, reminds us again of how Mary has been preserved from sin, and hence brings the theme of the Immaculate Conception back just as we reach the end of the poem.

The scribe who copied the poem into the annual *recueil*, Oxford Douce 379, was clearly aware of the possibilities offered by the text, setting out the two hemistichs separately so as to signal the form of the *rondeau*, making its potential visually apparent and the offering reader an opportunity to play with the different options when it comes to reading the *rondeau*. On the other hand, Cousture will have had to read the poem out loud on the day of the *Puy* and will have therefore had to constrain himself to only one option and read out both hemistichs together, unless he read out its different variations. While the lyric on the page is full of potential, in the moment of performance the lyric is circumscribed and its existence limited. Of course, aurally, the internal rhymes would have been noticeable, but the *rondeau*'s playfulness loses something as soon as it is articulated out loud and the decision must be made which version to recite.

This case study shows play happening at different times and places: first there is Cousture's composition of the poem, in the months before the competition in which he conceived of the

idea of his *rondeau*, played with language, form, and rhyme to achieve his structure, editing the poem and perhaps practising reciting it, perhaps in his home; secondly there is the *Puy* itself at which he presented the poem to the Prince, jury and audience as part of the competition at the church of St-Jean-sur-Renelles; thirdly, there is the reader reading it later on, playing with the different possibilities offered by the poem. Temporally, this play is still happening in the present, as we read and explore the poem in this thesis wherever we are sitting now.

These different times and spaces of play point toward one element of game theory which has been challenged and problematised more recently in medieval studies: the 'magic circle'. Discussed briefly in *Homo Ludens*, Huizinga develops the idea that play takes place in its own space: 'the third main characteristic of play: its secludedness, its limitedness. It is 'played out' within certain limits of time and place. It contains its own course and meaning'.[50] This seems, on the face of it, obvious: given that play has its own rules, it also has its own limited time and place in which the real world does not quite apply. Huizinga suggests that the act of playing games entails crossing a boundary marking the sphere of play from the ordinary world; in doing so the player's identity also shifts from their ordinary, everyday self to their lusory or playful self. Entering the magic circle entails adherence to the rules of the game and crossing boundaries between the real world and the world of the game, be they spatial, temporal or psychological. Huizinga, however, does not over-prescribe the magic circle. Indeed, he goes on to point out that, for example, the play community can persist even after a game is ended, and that precisely delineating the sphere of play is difficult.[51]

[50] Huizinga 1949, 28.
[51] Huizinga: 1949, 31.

The idea has become more formalised in 21st century games studies, particularly in relation to computer games and was more precisely set out in *Rules of Play: Game Design Fundamentals*.[52] The magic circle is clearly an attractive idea with regard to entering the virtual world of a video game, in which the lusory self is even represented with an avatar or character on the screen. Huizinga's reception has been strongest in Games Studies more strictly applied to such video games, such that, now the field of medieval studies is returning to Huizinga, it is seen through the lens of game theory, in which the magic circle, its consecrated space and lusory self, is a formalised concept. When taken in the context of literature and medieval studies, the more formalised understanding of the concept indeed seems too prescriptive and rigid.[53] Patterson points out that within the discipline of medieval studies, the magic circle has come under criticism, and the enumeration of the times and spaces of play with regard to Cousture's *rondeau* show the problems with this.

Part of the issue with the magic circle is perhaps rooted, again, in the linguistic difference whereby Anglophone scholarship distinguishes between play and game where Huizinga does not. As suggested earlier, only the competition of the *Puy* proper could be a game according to Patterson's definition. The composition of the poem is part of the preparation for the game, and still involves a ludic element as the poet plays with the possibilities of the *rondeau*; reading the poem later on, even if inspired by the Conceptionist mentality of the *Puy*, is, however, no longer part of the game. The magic circle, as used in game theory, particularly with video games is necessarily more formalised, referring as it does to a *game* as opposed to

[52] Tekinbaş and Zimmerman 2004.
[53] Patterson 2015, 10.

play. It is true that even when it comes to games specifically, the magic circle can still be too rigid a concept, with the boundaries between game and reality far more blurred and flexible than they might initially seem. Gordon Calleja argues against the concept of the magical circle through the lens of game studies even in relation to digital games, demonstrating a long line of critics who have problematised the notion in its strictest sense.[54] The opposition between reality and the magic circle has already been called into question by those engaging with Huizinga, in particular by Jacques Ehrmann and Eugen Fink.[55] This problem can be seen being played out with the question of the *rondeau* above: at what point does the poet enter the magic circle? When playing over rhymes in his mind? Would he be in the magic circle if praying for inspiration for writing a fitting poem in praise of Mary? Or is the magic circle delineated by the bounds of the church of St Jean, on the Sunday closest to the Immaculate Conception? As Calleja puts it, 'the problem with such an opposition [reality and the magic circle] is that they create either/or relationships that ignore the richer middle ground'.[56] This gets to the heart of how play and piety relate to one another in devotional, competitive lyric. There need be no 'either/or' in which only one mode of experience exists: the mere fact of the competition taking place within a church demonstrates that this is a question of 'both/and'. And the ludic nature of the poetry is not confined only to the moment of competition that constitutes the 'game' of the *Puy*, but rather extends beyond it to encompass both the conception and the reception of the poetry over a longer period of time. Cousture as poet, player and devotee of the Virgin can be and is often all these things at once. Similarly, the real world evidently enters into the 'magic circle' of the *Puy* competition as clerics, town dignitaries, locals and visiting poets found themselves in the same space; engagement with the *Puy* would have had an effect on social standing, with participation, and particularly

[54] Calleja 2015.
[55] Anchor 1978, 89.
[56] Calleja 2015, 217.

winning the competition or running it as Prince, conferring prestige. The afterlife of the poems, whether on display outside church for the faithful to pray with, or in private Books of Hours or manuscripts documenting the *Puy*'s affairs, shows that Huizinga was correct in positing that the playful – and the pious – community persisted after the game had ended and that the sphere of play cannot be so easily delineated as those who have sought to develop a coherent, rigid game theory have proposed. Rather, there are times and spaces in which preparation, play, piety, and prestige converge and blur the 'richer middle ground' at the fuzzy edges of a magic circle.[57] There is a similar fuzzy edge when it comes to the boundary between the individual and the community: the poet, as an individual, desired to win, playing with language and form as he strove to synthesise the received *topoi* that appealed to the community to gain honour, both socially through the competition and as favour from heaven. That was best done by submitting to the norms of communal Conceptionist piety rather than promoting the self, and hence the individual poet benefitted most through his participation in and his surrender to the community.

From Variation to Innovation: *Meistergesang* in Nuremberg

Thus far we have seen that play in late medieval French poetics was rooted in subtle and slight variation of form and *topoi*. At the *Puy*, poets worked within the frame of pre-existing fixed forms, and the key to playing the game well and winning was to make stimulating small changes within the frame of what was expected, conforming to the poetry and piety of the community and standing out only just enough to be noticed. The first section in Pierre Fabri's *Grand et vray art de pleine rhetorique,* the *Art* most closely aligned with the *Puy*, is 'De Invention', emphasising that skill in poetry is about *finding* what already exists as opposed to

[57] Cajella 2015, 217.

creating something new. Even as Fabri introduces 'invention', the notion of subtlety is simultaneously brought in:

> Combien que plusieurs conditions soient requises a ung facteur, la principalle c'est invention, car sans invention subtille, plaisante et nouvelle, le facteur ne sçaura deduire sa matiere plaisante ou utile, et est principalle et necessaire pour trouver ses raisons, prouver ses faitz, pour suader et dissuader. Et apres les matieres trouvees, il faut disposer par ordre, mettre les foibles raisons au milieu, les fortes au commencement, et les tresfortes a la fin.[58]

It is clear that it is the role of the poet to find the relevant material, and that his main task is arranging this material in a persuasive, subtle new way.[59] The various *Arts* aid poets in finding ways of enabling subtle variation, through offering numerous examples, such as in the anonymous *Règles de la seconde rhétorique*, which gives lists of rhyme words, from 39v all the way to 58r, which can help find variation in sounds which are more difficult to rhyme.[60]

Within the tradition of *Meistergesang,* particularly as the *Singschule* developed toward the end of the period of *ältere Meistergesang* before the Reformation and Hans Sachs, there appears to have been tension between the poetics of variation and that of innovation.[61] Baldzuhn describes the *Meistergesang* of this period as the 'Aufführung einer Aufführung', in that it was strongly rooted in the past, using the *Töne* of the twelve Old Masters.[62] A key figure in this debate was Hans Folz (c1435-1513),[63] whose cycle of so-called *Reformlieder* lay bare the controversy around innovation when it came to *Töne*.[64] As the *Schulkunst* poems show,[65] particularly when it came to the *Singschule*, there was great reverence for the twelve old masters, and it seems that there was debate as to whether poets ought to be permitted to

[58] Fabri 1889, 19.
[59] On subtlety in late-medieval poetics, see Cerquiglini-Toulet 2001.
[60] The text is edited in Langlois 1992, 11-103.
[61] On tradition and innovation in early Meisterlieder, see Wachinger 2011, 231–44.
[62] Baldzuhn 2011, 165.
[63] Janota 1980.
[64] Horst Brunner et al. 2019, 494.
[65] See Chapter II on the *Schulkunst*.

compose their own *Töne* or whether they should be limited to only composing in the existing *Töne* of the twelve old masters whose praises were sung at the start of all sessions of the *Singschule*.[66] Given that there is evidence of plenty of *Sangspruchdichter* and *Meistersinger* writing in their own *Töne,* this potential prohibition clearly did not apply to the production of poetry in general, but rather seems to have been a debate in relation to regulated *Meistersingergesellschaften*, or *Singschulen*. Folz's cycle of poems of *Reformlieder* advocate for the right of poets to compose their own tones.[67] For example, in Mayer 90, he addresses the 'meister' who believed that one should only sing 'in den thon/den die zwolff hant gemachte' (lines 24-5),[68] and asks why, if he wrote a song in a *Ton* nobody had heard before, if should be thrown out. He asserts that the twelve have now been 'uber wunden' (line 83) as there are many that can compose better than him, and he evidently counts himself among them: 'Seit ich die ding hab selbst erfarn/Mit wort, weis uberfeste' (lines 89-90). A further argument is that, as well as outclassing the twelve, a poet should not reject 'was im des himels einflus gibt' (line 110), marking out poetic innovation as a duty.

In the earlier research into *Meistergesang* it was commonly thought that it was Folz himself who introduced new *Töne* and initiated a reform of the rules in Nuremberg.[69] However, it is now accepted that Hans Folz did not initiate any sort of reform to the rules himself, and was rather advocating to retain a pre-existing right in the face of a conservative faction who wanted to have songs composed only in the *Töne* of the *alten Meister*.[70] Evidently, Folz was responding or reacting to a more conservative faction, so this desire for innovation was clearly not unanimous, and the extent to which other *Singschule* or towns in Germany

[66] Petzsch 1967, 110–42.
[67] In Mayer 1908 these are Songs 89-94; in the *RSM* 77-82
[68] Songs are given according to Mayer's (1904) numbering and all quotations from his edition.
[69] This seems to date back to Karl Goedeke's 1872 reading of the *Reformlieder.*
[70] See Brunner 1975, 80-85 on the question of Reform.

allowed for the introduction of new *Töne* is unknown. Brunner shows that there was certainly such a tendency to reject new *Töne* in Nuremberg.[71] Michael Baldzuhn can only conclude that the praxis outside of Nuremberg is, in the absence of other evidence, unclear.[72] The existence of the debate implies at a minimum that there were varying practises and not an entirely clear consensus.

Folz's cycle of songs demonstrates the tension existing between tradition and innovation, and a desire to be known for one's own *Töne*. This stands in contrast to the poetics of the *Puy,* in which subtle variation on tradition was privileged. Folz, on the other hand, introduced fifteen new *Töne*, manifesting a desire for formal innovation not only on a theoretical level, but also in his own practice. As well as his *Reformlieder*, he has another cycle of songs (*RSM* 39-49; Mayer 39-49) known as the *Streitgedichte* in which he engages in polemic with fellow poets as competitors.[73] Thus Folz, or at least his poetic persona, had a conception of himself as an innovative poet on a formal level, and as a competitor. He plays with poetry itself as he invented new forms, but also with other poets. His name is attached to the *Töne* he introduced, and he engages in a certain level of self-fashioning through his manuscript and print production, putting himself as an individual poet with a level of self-promotion. Many of Folz's *Meisterlieder* deal with Marian themes, and some (including those in his own *Töne*) are dedicated to the Immaculate Conception, offering a meaningful comparison with the poetry from the Rouen *Puy de l'Immaculée Conception*. Although we know Folz was linked to the Nuremberg *Singschule,* we cannot necessarily connect any of these poems explicitly with the *Singschule,* but given Folz's *Streitgedichte* we can assume, even if only on a

[71] Brunner 1975, 82
[72] Brunner et al 2019, 493-94.
[73] On polemic in medieval German poetry, see in particular Wachinger 1973.

fictional level, that he perceived himself as writing within a poetic community, which would have entailed both competition and collaboration.

Folz's *Meisterlieder* on the Immaculate Conception resemble *Puy* poetry not only in their theme, but also in their tone. Mayer 31 offers proofs of the Immaculate Conception which can be used in a 'disputacion', reminiscent of the careful scholarly arguments that some *chants royaux* use in their defence of the Mary and the doctrine. Song 31 is written in one of Folz's own tones, this one unnamed, and appears in München cgm 6353, Folz's *Autorhandschrift*, so it not only demonstrates his innovation in form, but is also recorded in a manuscript which fashions and promotes him as a poet. The unnamed Ton is made up of two *Stollen*, each of four lines, and an *Abgesang* of eight lines, with the form:
abac dbdc efefghgh

Johannes Rettelbach asserts that the unnamed *Töne*, which only appear in Folz's own manuscript and are not taken up by later *Meistersinger*, are seen as having a distinctive character, being rather unrelated to other *Meistergesang:* it was not taken up by any other poets.[74] All the lines here are of a fairly similar length with only the final lines of the *Stollen* and *Abgesang* reaching 10 syllables, the rest varying between 6 and 8, making for relatively uniform strophes, primarily using *Kreuzreim*. Thus the interest is not in huge variation in line length and rhyme, but in building up consistent strophes which develop a coherent argument with convincing evidence. For as much as Folz has created his own *Ton* here, it is not particularly original, but rather uses typical structures such that the focus is primarily on his argument. Indeed, evidence and proof are not only the nature of the song, but are

[74] Rettelbach 2014, 304.

semantically prominent, with words such as ‘besteten’, ‘beweren’, ‘beweisen’, ‘prufen’ and ‘bezeugen’ making very explicit the purpose of the poem.

The first strophe begins with the poet wondering that people engage in ‘disputacion’ (line 2) about the Immaculate Conception, reminding us of the at times almost scholastic tone of some of the *Puy* defences of the doctrine. Although the rhyme scheme may appear fairly predictable in this *Ton* of Folz, he still plays with the *Kanzone* form, using enjambement from the *Aufgesang* to the *Abgesang* to foreground the key thesis of the poem, with the second *Stollen* ending with ‘Wie man worhafft und grüntlich müg besteten’ (line 8) and the claim that must be upheld only made explicit in the *Abgesang* ‘das an alle erbsunde/Die muter Jhesu, unsers hern/Empfangen sey […]’ (lines 9-10).[75] Throughout the *Aufgesang*, the listener had been held in suspension as to what the cause of the ‘disputacion’ was, only knowing that a proposition was to be defended over the course of the poem. It is in the *Abgesang* that Folz then introduces one of his key rhetorical strategies: enumeration. His first set of enumerations is the list of techniques that different people use to defend the doctrine, from appealing to nature to using prefigurations and examples from scripture. Again, the form of the strophe is not quite enough to contain this as the fourth means of defence spills over into the second strophe, with Folz’s enjambement implying that poetic form and language are barely sufficient to contain and express the truth of the Immaculate Conception despite the language of disputation and enumeration being used in an attempt to order and accommodate it. Folz performs a balancing act here, showing that he struggles to contain this great truth, but that the overspill is nonetheless still accommodated formally. ‘Exempel’ (line 17) as a means of proving the Immaculate Conception thus appears only in the first *Stollen* of

[75] As Baldzuhn (2011) shows, these terms were not yet used by the *Meistersinger*, but rather developed later in the *Tabulaturen* of the post-Reformation *Singschule*.

the second strophe, and its rhyme with ‘tempel’ (line 19) underlines exactly how this works with the *Kreuzreim*, while the *c* rhyme of ‘gefreyet’ (line 20) and ‘gebenedeiet’ (line 24) emphasises Mary’s exemption across the entire *Aufgesang*. The simplicity and absoluteness of the proof is made clear in the *Abgesang*: even a child could give the proof, as evidenced by the rhyme of ‘kint’ (line 30) with ‘sint blint’ (line 32), the *Schlagreim* further emphasising the simiplicity of the proof.

The second set of enumerations begins in the third strophe as the poet presents five witnesses: namely the Father, Son, Holy Spirit, Gabriel and Mary. An insistence on truth becomes evident, with ‘wor’ (line 33) making its first appearance – its similarity to ‘wort’ will become thematised over the course of the poem. The ‘glauben/dauben’ rhyme plays into this, and the undeniability of the witnesses is stressed through negation: ‘kein geschrifft nit wider sprechen mag’ (line 36). This sets up a subtle contrast with orality which will be the key means of proof. With ‘zeugnus’ in the first line of the strophe, and ‘bezeugen’ in the very last line, the poet ensures that his argument and evidence are laid out with great care and that a listener can follow with ease. The final set of enumerations, namely Gabriel’s words to Mary, begin in the fourth strophe, and the connection between ‘wort’ and ‘worer’ is made more explicit. Given that this final enumeration will extend over two strophes, the poet beings with ‘Vort ich in dreien pausen/des gruß aus Gabrihelis munt’ (lines 49-50), drawing a connection between Gabriel’s mouth and the poet’s own mouth who will transmit ‘worer wort’ to us. The ‘munt’ of the first *Stollen* rhymes with ‘kunt’ in the second, underlining speech as the means through which the divine proof is revealed. The first words of the angel were ‘a ve’ (line 53), which the poet tells us means ‘an we’ (line 55): a connection that can only be made through orality in the vernacular. Again, the poet is a key mediator for the word of God by offering a translation of the Latin, but it also lends an authority to the vernacular lyric, as only through

the German translation is this truth revealed. The *Aufgesang* then ends with a rhetorical question about how sin came into the world, immediately answered in the *Abgesang* with 'erbsunde'. The poem continues to be self-referential with 'sprach', 'worte' and 'sagt' all appearing, and such words which are 'clar bestimet' (line 61) enable us to 'clerlich nymet' (lien 63) through the second words of Gabriel, given in Latin and the vernacular, that Mary was full of grace. The words of Gabriel cannot be contained in one strophe either, as 'der her mit dir' are introduced in the fifth strophe, enabling a further rhetorical question, which mocks those who doubt the Immaculate Conception in asking if anyone in his life had ever heard of God being from a sinful person. Therefore, Mary must 'zwore' (line 71) have been fully without originally sin – 'ganz clore' (line 69) rhyming with 'zwore', emphasising both the truth and self-evidence of this. Mary's *fiat* is then quoted, which serves to further give authority to the spoken word, as it is 'nach deim wort' (line 74) that she conceives. The poem then uses a different tactic to give evidence for the Immaculate Conception by engaging in a counterfactual with the conditional 'het': had Mary ever been touched by sin, then Gabriel would have been lying. This is presented as a plainly ridiculous notion, and the five-syllable 'lugenthafflichen' (line 79) which almost takes up an entire line on its own adds further stress to the question of truth and falsity, which is continued into the next strophe as 'bezeuget' (line 81) is rhymed with 'lewget' (line 83). The poet stresses that the number and quality of his witnesses should suffice as proof. Anyone who doubts at this stage 'het den text der schrift felschlich gelesen' (line 88): this once more points to the poet as authoritative and offering true interpretation as opposed to the risk of the written word being misleading if misunderstood. He warns against 'grubeln' (line 89) and says that, rather than speculating, listeners would do better to listen to him: 'Ich sprich, die durch figure, mein suchen worer pillekeit, in gleichnus und nature'(lines 93-96), reminding the listeners through the 'figure/nature' rhyme of the earlier means of proof suggested, which centres himself as an

authoritative speaker on the matter. The poem finishes with praise of Mary, who is ‘alles rume wert’ (line 98): having successfully demonstrated the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, it is fitting to finish with praise. Listeners are enjoined: ‘sprechet eer und preyse’ (line 105), once again privileging orality as the mode of proof and now praise. The next two lines are almost entirely monosyllabic, drawing attention to that which is appropriate for Mary before the poem finishes with a plea for help and the ability to make Mary and her Son more widely known – a feat which the poem itself accomplishes.

Hans Folz’s poem engages in similar strategies to the *chants royaux* which act as proofs of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception: the disputation element is made clear through the use of language related to argument and proof, and authorities, Latin, examples and wordplay are employed in support. However, the poem plays more with ideas about words and speech, suggesting the focus is as much poetological as it is theological. *Meistergesang* is more self-reflexive than *puy* poetry in this respect, subtly emphasising the poet and his craft. Where the *Puy* poetry positions itself very firmly in a Conceptionist community and institution, with the ‘je’ rarely making an explicit appearance, the ‘ich’ here acts as an authority. Folz has composed his own *Ton* for this song, which appears deceptively simple and conservative in its standard line lengths and rhyme schemes. This orderliness is undercut by the arguments which spill over and cannot be contained by the rigid structure, with neither the unit of the line being sufficient, given the frequent enjambement, neither the *Stollen* nor Strophe able to match the units of meaning as ideas and sentences overflow. That Folz thematises this struggle to express the doctrine formally (and yet does manage to contain it within the poem) highlights his achievement to his audience by ensuring they are made aware of the difficulty he is overcoming. He shows mastery of both complex ideas and form by making apparent just how challenging his task is. What may seem a rather conventional *Ton* is used here to assert

the truth of a doctrine but simultaneously suggest its transcendent nature as form and language struggle to express it: indeed, attempts to set it out in 'Schrift' are implied to be risky. The serious nature of the topic is also undercut by the occasional rhetorical question or counterfactual which is set up to be so ridiculous. This feeds back into the argument, and the humour bolsters the proof that is being offered, bringing the playful element to the fore through humour.

The poem begins with 'mich wundert', the first-person pronoun immediately centring the poet, in a *Ton* which he has named for himself. As well as playing with the poetry itself, there is a latent ambition in the poem: proofs relaying the word of the witnesses and the association between 'wor' and 'wort' set the poet up as a figure who could compete, were this to be in a competitive, *Singschule* setting. However, it nonetheless ends with a union with the audience, encouraging them to do that which the poem achieves in praising Mary. The final two lines use the first-person plural pronouns, asking Mary: 'Hilff unß' in order that 'wir' might make her more widely known. The poem initiates a move from the individual to the collective: once the audience have been taught and accepted the right doctrine which the poem proves, then they can be in communion with one another and pray together. In his study of the reception of the *Töne* by the *Meistersinger*, Brunner traces the 'für die Nürnberger Gesellschaft charakteristischen "modernen" Züge in Folz's *Meisterlieder*,[76] showing that there is a tension between the old and the new, the traditions of the community and poetic innovation in his work. Folz regularly used the *Töne* of others – indeed, Schanze points out that though he invented many new *Töne*, he rarely composed in them.[77]

[76] Brunner 1975, 140
[77] Schanze 1983, 342

The emphasis on the 'ich' and the poet as an individual composer becomes more pronounced in the *Meistergesang* of Lienhart Nunnenbeck. Also active in Nuremberg, he composed in his own *Töne*, to which Rettelbach ascribes an impressive technical ability regarding rhyme and metre, demonstrating that, in terms of *Kurzreimen*, he managed to pursue paths that were 'gänzlich neu[en]'.[78] He described Nunnenbeck as being on occasion experimental and creative, suggesting a direction that is more one of innovation than variation.[79] Some of his poems also tend to a greater emphasis on the poet singing his own praise, rather than that of a community. For example, Lied 6, *Maria zart*, is framed as his own personal praise of the Virgin and is written in one of his own *Töne,* the *Neuer Chorweise*, whose complex rhyme scheme includes several *Schlagreime* and *übergehend Reime*.[80] The poet declares 'ich wil zw lob dir singen', addressing Mary directly, asking her to help him. Personal pronouns appear several times, and the poet emerges very much as an individual seeking personal relationship with Mary. Yet while it is more daring with form than Folz's Lied above, it engages in many similar strategies. This quotation, from the end of the very first *Stollen*, both shows the use of *Übergehend Reimen* and also foregrounds the language of proof through text and image.

Wan ich virbar meine
deine enpfenknus zw beweren hy
y wol durch geschrifft und figure schan

He also engages in similar strategies to Folz, such as enumeration: 'van erst…', and uses Old Testament examples, such as are common in *puy* poetry, and quotes Solomon, translating 'Tota pulchra…' into German. He similarly draws on the exegesis of 'ave' as referring to 'we' as one of his proofs. On the one hand, the song appears to approach more modern ideas of innovation in terms of form, and the 'ich' comes out far more strongly here with little

[78] Rettelbach 2014, 306.
[79] Though Rettelbach's use of terms such as 'Kreativität', and indeed, some of the concerns about this chapter and its discussion of innovations betray more about our modern aesthetic notions and interests and reveal more about scholarship than they do the medieval context we are considering.
[80] Song numbering and text all taken from Klesatschke 1984.

sense of a collective (though anyone could voice the song themselves to offer Mary praise); yet on the other hand it is conservative in the imagery and examples – conventional rhymes such as 'figure/nature' 'clar/war' or 'zart/art' are common. Of his nine songs on the theme of the Immaculate Conception, almost all of them are sung by the 'ich' who often sings of his desire to sing a new song to Mary. The desire specifically to sing individualises the 'ich' to a certain extent in that it implies a *Meistersinger* – someone who can sing – but beyond that it is not personalised, such that any reader or listener could use the poem themselves. And indeed, the desire to sing a new song alludes to Psalm 96, songs which were the property of all Christians with which anyone, clergy or lay, could praise God. This use of 'new' exemplifies the dialectic between tradition and innovation in the late medieval lyric: the lyric is a new articulation of the praise of Mary, written in a new *Ton*; on the other hand, the use of 'new' itself positions it in a tradition going back to the Book of Psalms, and the new songs involve different constellations of old *topoi*. In several songs (3, 5 and 9, all of which are written in pre-existing *Töne*) he does in the final verse bring in the wider community with 'uns' and 'wir' as 'wir dich loben sende', asking Mary to save 'uns' from hell. Eventually the poet reframes himself in these poems as part of a faithful community devoted to Mary. Yet, by drawing on the bank of images traditionally associated with Mary and the Immaculate Conception, particularly through the references to the Wisdom books, the poems engage with the existing body of Marian iconography and poetry. In calling on authorities whose work supports the doctrine, the 'ich' in the poems also situates itself in a longer line of Conceptionist advocates: in Song 5 he lists 'Anshelmus, Augustinus/ Thomas, Perenhardinus/vnd Sckotus, der suptil/Ieronimus genenet/Amprossius pekennt […]'. As well as mentioning Origen in the next *Stollen*, the final strophe brings in 'al Christen', thereby constructing a community of believers across time and space stretching back to the early Fathers. Therefore, even though the 'ich' is more prominent in Nunnenbeck's *Meisterlieder*,

it is still an ‘ich’ that could not exist on its own, and one onto which any faithful Christian could project themself. The ‘ich’ may be individual, but is far from being individualist.

Nunnenbeck is considered to be one of the last of the ‘alten Meistersänger’, whereas his pupil, Hans Sachs, is one of the ‘jüngeren Meistersänger’. Perhaps we see in Nuremberg *Meistergesang* entering the sixteenth century a tendency toward what we might think of as innovation as opposed to variation: greater novelty in form, even where content remains conventional. This comes also with a slight emphasis on the individual believer – though never divorced from the community of believers and poets alike. Where late medieval French *puy* poetics is characterised by variation, perhaps we might see late medieval *Meistergesang* as beginning to tend toward innovation, and as part of this, a subtle shift in the relationship between the individual and community begins to take place.

The community of believers, ‘al Christen’, is one which entails the exclusion of those who are not part of the Christian community. The sense of identity and belonging is built through not only shared belief, but also the exclusion of Jewish people, and Marian poetry is appropriated as a vehicle for anti-Judaism, particularly in the *Compassio Maria* lyrics which dwell on Mary’s suffering at the foot of the cross. For example, in Song 13, the singer addresses Mary, accusing the Jews of causing her pain: ‘Der Iuden schmach, hönynge/scheltwort vnd schnoes kale/mit schmerz dein hercz durchginge’ (IV 6-9), directly linking the Jewish people as a whole with the semantic field around ‘schmerz’ and ‘hercz’, themselves a *Binnenreim,* and hence emotively incriminating the Jews. In the seventh strophe of the same song, Nunnenbeck uses the stereotype ‘ein plinder Jud’ (VII 10), again in the context of Mary’s heart, and the ‘groß leidt vnd vngemache’ (VII 8) she experienced. Just as the poets use common Marian *topoi* to signal their belonging to the community of devotees

and root themselves in a poetic tradition, here Nunnenbeck engages in the same way with anti-Semitic tropes in a genre of Marian lyric which had a tradition of doing so.[81] The poetic and devotional community is built at the expense of the Jewish other, and develops into an outright anti-Semitic polemic in Song 24, ostensibly a *Weihnachtslied*, but which shames those who do not believe that the Messiah was 'Geboren von der keuschen meit/an alle schmercz' (I 21-2), linking Jewish blindness with their failure to recognise that Mary was the Virgin Mother of God. Offering various proofs from the prophets and threatening the Jews with judgement, in this poem Nunnenbeck tries to use his mastery of poetry to exclude and other those who do not believe the same.[82] In doing so, he draws on a long tradition of anti-Semitic Marian polemic, which can also be seen in Folz's Marian *Meisterlieder*,[83] but in fact has a far longer literary history,[84] with Mary a figure in the Middle Ages who separated and excluded.[85] Richards argues, with primary reference to vernacular French Marian literature, that Marian devotion could indeed be exclusionary and, in the late Middle Ages, the inclusion of anti-Semitic elements in Marian literature stemmed from the advantages to authorities of manipulating Marian devotion, particularly to the Immaculate Conception, and channelling it to secular ends.[86] He links this to a 'nascent urban political consciousness',[87] and suggests that the Immaculate Conception had a latent anti-Semitic potential, one that could reinforce Christian community, but at the expense of disbelievers.[88] In considering the urban nature of Marian lyric, we must therefore also contend with its anti-Semitic nature. Part of playing with

[81] Klesatschke 1984, 446.
[82] On the context of anti-Semitism in Nuremberg, see Evers 2020. On how language can be exclusionary and appropriated for violently othering, see Suerbaum 2015: 129-135, in which she shows how anti-Semitic polemic is used to help articulate Christian identity.
[83] For example, Mayer 37 is a *Compassio Maria* which similarly blames the Jews for Christ's death and Mary's suffering.
[84] Anti-Semitic tropes can often be found in miracle collections, such as Gautier de Coinci's *Miracles de Nostre-Dame*, and Michael Miller, a *Meistersinger* associated with Ulm and Augsburg, has a song *RSM* Mill/2a based on one such miracle, and are present in many other vernacular lyrics such as the *Cantigas de Santa María*.
[85] Schreiner 1994, 413.
[86] Richards 2011.
[87] Richards 2011, 178.
[88] Richards 2011, 206.

the tradition of Marian lyric and succeeding in composing good Marian poetry therefore entails bolstering community and one's own relationship with it through excluding others.

Meistergesang as Play

Due in part to genres such as the *jeu-parti*, whose name alone implies a game, critical literature in French has not been reluctant to consider poetry as a form of play.[89] Given the nature of the *puys* as a competition with clear rules with solicited behaviour and involving abstract thought and skill, it undoubtedly meets Serina Patterson's definition of a game. However, the case has not always been made so clearly for medieval German lyric.

Hans Folz and Lienhard Nunnenbeck have been chosen as examples for this chapter due to their participation in the Nuremberg *Singschule*, whose pre-Reformation existence is well attested.[90] Hans Folz evidently envisaged *Meistergesang* as an endeavour rooted in a community committed to poetry, addressing others in his poems: 'ir singer' (Mayer 39), 'ir schuler' (Mayer 40), or 'ich bit euch, meister' (Mayer 94), with frequent references to 'meisterschaft' and 'kunst'. His *Reformlieder* are clearly addressed to a community, and his targets in the *Streitgedichte* are part of the *Singschule*, with an explicit coda in the Munich manuscript noting that it was 'im 1496 jarnn gesungen … auf der Singschul'.[91] It is clear enough that the *Singschule* existed, and that he participated in it, but what we cannot be certain of is the extent to which his *Meistergesang* was associated with the *Singschule*. Even the references to the other singers and masters in his poetry could be a conventional fiction rather than addressing a real audience at a specific performance. Whereas we can be sure that

[89] See for example O'Sullivan 2015, 61–78. The coterie around Charles d'Orléans is similarly considered in terms of play, such as in Taylor 2007.
[90] Baldzuhn, 2008: 241.
[91] Mayer 1908: 192.

the *puy* poetry was composed for a competition, *Meistergesang* cannot consistently be linked with the institution and competition of the *Singschule* which would entail the kind of 'game' Patterson suggests.

The notion of game and play thus needs further nuance with regard to poetry. A recent contribution to the field of game studies in the Middle Ages is the 2018 volume *Spielendes Mittelalter*.[92] Helmut Birkhan draws up his own, lengthy definition of 'das Spiel', and considers explicitly the extent to which poetry can fall under the definition, as it is a 'Grenzfall', seeing activities that fall under the aegis of art as particularly problematic.[93] Unlike the Anglophone scholarship with its sharper distinction between play and game – Patterson's definition is specifically that of game rather than 'unstructured, freeform play' – Birkhan admits to being a victim of his mother tongue which does not make the distinction, and furthermore does not see it as hugely significant, writing 'dass die größte Zahl der in meinem Buch vorkommenden Spielenden diesen Unterschied auch nicht gemacht hatten'.[94] Thus his definition of 'das Spiel' encompasses both game and play. While this is justified from his perspective, the careful work of Anglophone scholarship, which does see a significant difference in that which is structured and that which is not, leaves this compromise seeming unsatisfactory. However, this lack of clear differentiation enables us to consider poetry which, while not necessarily originating from a specifically-structured game setting, is a form of play as opposed to game. Birkhan's definition of 'das Spiel' is made up of eight parts, namely that play is:

> a) eine freiwillige Handlung oder Beschäftigung,
> b) innerhalb festgesetzter Grenzen von Zeit und Raum,
> c) bei welcher Chancengleichheit unter den Spielern herrscht,
> d) nach freiwillig angenommen, aber unbedingt bindenden Regeln

[92] Birkhan 2018.
[93] Birkhan 2018, 27.
[94] Birkhan 2018, 16.

e) an denen der Spieler scheitern kann.
f) Das Spiel hat sein Ziel in sich selber
g) und ist von einem Gefühl der Freude und der Spannung sowie
h) von dem Bewusstsein des 'Anderseins' also das 'gewöhnliche Leben' begleitet
i) Signifikant ist in vielen Fällen ein gemeinschaftstiftendes Element.[95]

The idea that the possibility of failure or loss is an integral part of play is specific to Birkhan's understanding of play, which does not appear in Huizinga's concept, nor in Patterson's definition.[96] It also puts an emphasis on enjoyment and suggests that the community-building element is often a constituent part of games. Although the latter is indeed an important consideration in the wider question of the role of play and game in culture, the extent to which it should be considered a constituent part of a definition is debatable. The reference to time and space does move this definition further toward the 'game' element of 'Spiel' (and the idea of the magic circle) and is the one that, at first glance, would seem to pose the greatest difficulty for characterising *Meistergesang* as play when it is not clearly associated with the institution of the *Singschule*. However, this is not the factor for Birkhan that makes the arts generally, and poetry specifically, a marginal case. Rather it is that 'Das Spiel hat sein Ziel in sich selber'. This is linked with the voluntary element – that play must be engaged with out of one's own volition and not for any kind of payment or material gain.

Birkhan's argument is that many medieval poets were professional, career poets, who made their living through the composition of poetry, serving patrons with their lyrics, whether the poets received payment in money, or material goods such as bed and board or other gifts.[97] Birkhan asserts that poets can only be said to be playing if they have nothing to gain from their poetry. Thus the 'adelige Minnesänger' may potentially be playing with poetry since

[95] Birkhan 2018, 27–28.
[96] Birkhan 2018, 14.
[97] Birkhan 2018, 228.

they are mere 'Dilettant', for the only end is their own amusement.[98] These comments are made primarily in the introductory theoretical section of the book; when he comes to consider poetry specifically, it is revealed that his argument about poetry is based solely on *Minnesang*. In his discussion of *Minnesang* it emerges that the game noble dilittanti are playing when they do compose poetry is that of *Minne*, rather than play with language and form.[99] Using *Minnesang* as the primary example of medieval lyric which can only be play if it is purely gratuitous both privileges a certain kind of poetry – namely secular love lyric which seems to articulate the emotions of an individual – and adopts a more modern aesthetic paradigm of 'art for art's sake' which at best minimises and at worst ignores all the other factors at stake in *Minnesang* from subjectivity to social relations to gender.

On the other hand, Meistersinger who did not earn their living from their poetry but whose primary employment came from another craft challenge the notion that poetry in the Middle Ages was primarily professional and hence not ludic. Hans Folz was a barber surgeon and printer while Lienhart Nunnenbeck was a weaver. Yet to think of them as mere amateur poets or dilettantes would be reductive given their commitment to 'meisterschaft' and 'kunst' which they saw as a serious endeavour. While Huizinga foregrounded the voluntary and superfluous nature of play, he nonetheless emphasised its serious nature. The gratuitous nature of play – incidentally not part of Patterson's definition of game – does pose problems for devotional poetry which has its twin aims of both praise and play. Furthermore, while prizes are not a salary and one could not have made a living solely from the winning a *puy* or *Hauptsingen*, a prize also adds a further layer of complication to the question of gratuitousness. However, the fact that many competitors in the *Puy de l'Immaculée*

[98] Birkhan 2018, 31.
[99] Birkhan 2018, 228.

Conception 'gave' poems to the Prince as well as 'presenting' them at the competition demonstrates that the prize, although a means of honouring the best poets, was clearly not the motivating factor for poets, some of whom submitted an additional three or four poems which would never be considered for the prize. Similarly, the compositional context for many *Meisterlieder* would not necessarily have been the *Singschule*. This demonstrates that poetry and praise of the Virgin could be ends in themselves, and such ends are not incompatible with play. *Meistergesang* composed even out of the competitive context of the *Singschule* would indeed seem to fit Birkhan's definition of play, even though he himself sees it as at best a marginal case. Even the question of failing or losing, which Birkhan struggles to relate to art, is applicable: given the complexity of the formal *Töne,* it was quite possible for poets to compose poor *Meisterlieder* that did not meet the demanding metrical and rhyming requirements of the *Ton*, to come up with poor rhymes or deficient metaphors. Elisabeth Wunderle's edition of Heidelberg Cpg 680, whose contents were examined in Chapter I, marks lines with too many or too few syllables, and such interventions are not infrequent. Different genres have their own formal rules and conventions, and as such, meet the criteria for play, regardless of the competitive context. Birkhan's definition, with its emphasis of 'Freude' and 'Spannung', its suggestion of the community-building component and its voluntary nature offers more than the more rigid definition by Patterson, which, due to its context, is focused on game rather than play. Its flexibility and ability to exist outside the structures of a designed game like the *Puy* can helpfully encompass Marian *Meistergesang*.

The composition in new *Töne* does seem to entail a level of innovation in that it creates a form that was not there before. Folz points out himself in one of his 'Reformlieder' that, were it not for the original twelve old masters, 'so het gesang anfang noch nie genommen' and that 'new gedichte' are needed: particularly in the case of the old masters, something truly new

was being created.[100] Volker Zapf characterises his formal achievements in terms of *Töne* as 'innovativ' in comparison with his more conservative choice of theme.[101] Yet in Rettelbach's study of *Töne*, none of the key terms he uses – Variation, Derivation, Imitation – suggest anything quite so revolutionary as the term innovation. His definitions are as follows: [102]

> Variation – die Fortentwicklung präexistenter Tonschemata;
> Derivation – die umittelbare Ableitung neuer aus vorgefundenen Tonschemata;
> Imitation – die kreative Fortführung einzelner innovativer Elemente in später komponierten Töne

These three terms, and his definitions, all highlight the reliance on pre-existing material and that any innovation is purely in particular elements. This leaves room for a playful kind of creativity but leaves the impression that changes in form were slight and subtle, even in the composition of new tones, which is here described as 'Imitation', the word making clear the debt to that which came before. Indeed, variation was the term used by Johnson to describe the different permutations used by late medieval French poets, and the subtle changes they made to existing forms, use of language and development of themes. As can be observed simply by looking at *Meisterlieder* on the page of a modern edition, different *Töne* are still relatively similar in form – they are still constrained by the need for an *Aufgesang* of two identical Stollen followed by the *Abgesang* – and their key differences tend to be in rhyme scheme or line length; the composition of new *Töne* thus seems to be the same kind of novelty as the variation we saw in the *chant royal*. It is perhaps the attachment of the *Meistersinger*'s name to the new *Tön* that makes it seem less subtle than it first appears: this plays into more modern assumptions about the author and creativity that impinge on our ability to consider medieval lyric on its own terms.

[100] Mayer 91, *RSM* Folz/80.
[101] Zapf 2012, col. 939.
[102] Rettelbach 2014, 1.

Rettelbach's different definitions of different kinds of change in *Töne* are certainly helpful in distinguishing where the subtle changes or variations lie; similarly, Johnson's concept of variation is helpful in its emphasis on approaching late medieval poetics from its own aesthetic standpoint. These terms all serve to deter us from evaluating medieval lyric in terms of modern ideas of creativity and innovation; however, they are not necessarily satisfactory for encompassing the skill, craft, and commitment to poetry needed to engage in the subtle and slight play with form and language that characterised late medieval poetics. In fact, 'play' may be a helpful term for encapsulating this approach to poetry. As we have shown, play can indeed be a serious endeavour, but characterising this subtlety as play reinforces the pleasurable aspect of poetry, too: both for the poet engaging with the work of predecessors and deriving enjoyment from the careful crafting of slightly different rhyme schemes or gratification from the subtle sound changes which bring with them new constellations of meaning, and for the audience who appreciate and delight in the new framing of ideas and amuse themselves by noticing that which is slightly different and can develop a sense of superiority and pleasure in being capable of noticing such changes.

Jacques Le Lieur's Book of Hours Rouen BM Y.226ª

In this chapter so far, we have primarily considered Marian poetry in its original institutional context, in terms of both composition and the manuscripts, rather than its afterlife. To conclude, I will use a Book of Hours which incorporates poetry from the *Puy de l'Immaculée Conception* to evaluate the two dialectics introduced at the beginning of this chapter: competition and devotion, and individual and community. Rouen BM Y. 226ª was made for Jacques le Lieur,[103] a prominent member of Rouennaise society: most widely known now for

[103] Hencefore Y226ª.

his *Le Livre des Fontaines*, he was an *Échevin*, member of the City Council and a frequent participant in the *Puy*, with 46 poems attributable to him,[104] and he would go on to act as Prince in 1544.

He seems to have acted as a patron and been involved in the commissioning (and even production) of several manuscripts, having illustrated the *Livre des Fontaines* himself: the image of Rouen on was his own.[105] Several Books of Hours have come from his workshop: Y226ª as well as Paris BnF MS Rothschild 31 which transmits many of the same texts. Y226ª not only includes a vernacular set of Hours, specifically Guillaume Tasserie's *Heures de la Conception* and other vernacular prayers, such as versified paraphrases of the *Pater Noster* and *Ave Maria* but is also punctuated throughout with *rondeaux* and contains several *chants royaux*, including poetry by Jacques le Lieur himself – see Table V indicating the content of the manuscript.[106] No attributions are given in the manuscript itself; those given in the table are derived from other manuscripts which transmit the text with a named author.

It is clear from the contents of the manuscript that it is primarily a devotional book, containing prayers with a heavy focus on Marian piety, and, indeed, on her Immaculate Conception, given that the vernacular office included is specifically the *Heures de la Conception*. It is designed to suit Jacques le Lieur's personal piety: as well as Conceptionist piety, specific other saints, such as St Nicholas, St Barbara, and St Sebastian, are included. Given that the prayer to St Barbara was written by Jacques le Lieur himself, we can assume that he had a particular devotion to these saints, each of whom also had a miniature dedicated to them, taking up almost an entire page. Yet as a devotional manuscript, it nonetheless

[104] See Hüe 2002a, 349–55. for a full list.
[105] See Chapter I, 47.
[106] See p. 268

evidently emerges from a milieu in which poetry is privileged and seen as the ideal means of praise and articulation of piety. Following the calendar, but before the beginning of the Hours, the manuscript opens with paraphrases of the *Pater Noster* and *Ave* by none other than Jean Molinet: prayer is in the form of vernacular poetry, and *Rhétoriqueurs* such as Molinet and Meschinot feature over the course of the manuscript.[107] All the prayers and texts pay careful attention to form, metre and rhyme and are a form of lyric, even when not explicitly given such a title in the manuscript itself. The *Heures de la Conception* by Guillaume Tasserie, himself a frequent competitor at the *Puy*, demonstrate a commitment to poetry, with frequent use of *rimes riches* and *rimes équivoques*. The lines 'Ne me permettez pas/Tumber sans apuys/En infernal puys' might even be an oblique reference to the *Puy* itself.[108]

Along with the prayers and the Hours, the manuscript contains five Marian *rondeaux* and four Marian *chants royaux* as well as three further *chants royaux*: one on the Passion and one each on St Sebastian and Mary Magdalene. Most of the *rondeaux* appear only in Y226[a] and, similarly, the *chants royaux* cannot all be found in other manuscripts, meaning they cannot necessarily be definitely judged as originating from the *Puy*, but it seems reasonable to assume that most, if not all of them, do. For example, the first *chant royal* and second *rondeau* to appear in the manuscript can both also be found in Paris BnF français 19184, a collection of poems for several Rouen *puys*, and the three Marian *chants royaux* at the end are transmitted in several other collections of *Puy* poetry, making their source certain.[109]

[107] On Molinet's devotional writing, see Gros 1993.
[108] Y226[a]: 60. (The manuscript has been paginated rather than foliated)
[109] The question of the other three *chants royaux* is an interesting one: it is possible that the *Chant royal de la Passion* was composed for the *Puy de la Passion*; the *envoy* of the poem in honour of Mary Magdalene mentions the Prince and its penultimate line 'De puys qu'elle eust remission plainiere' could also be a play on the word *puy*. The reference to the Prince is most likely a fiction traditional to the genre rather than an address to a real *Prince du Puy*, and the final *chant royal* in honour of St Sebastian similarly has no obvious context. Rather it is likely that the *chant royal* was just a popular form in Rouen for devotional poetry.

Most of them begin with a heading along the lines of *Champ royal* or *Rondeau de Nostre Dame* marking the form distinctively and implying a difference from those explicitly designated as *Oraison.*[110] However, their inclusion in this material context suggests that these poems are here being used as prayers. The first fixed-form lyrics – a *rondeau*, the *chant royal* on the *Obscuro te* prayer, and a further *rondeau* – are preceded by the Hours and followed by a poem explicitly described as an *Oraison de Nostre Dame* by the rubric above it. The headings appear to be formal descriptors as opposed to labels designating types of text: that is, it is described as an *Oraison* due to its form rather than content. Thus the *Puy* poetry interspersed amongst prayers suggests that the poems themselves can be used as prayers and indeed, in this context, are intended as such. We therefore see *Puy* poetry being removed from its competitive, institutional context and placed squarely in a devotional one. The poetry which had its origin in a communal, fraternal establishment which brought citizens of Rouen together in a common cause of poetry and piety is now being carefully selected, presumably in terms of personal preference, for private prayer. At least two of the texts in the manuscript are by Jacques le Lieur himself: the *Oraison tresdevote a Saincte Barbe* and the *chant royal* on the *Ave Maria … Virgo Serena*. They appear consecutively, potentially suggesting a section of the manuscript devoted to his own poetry: the authors of the preceding texts are unknown, and so it is possible they are part of a larger section of his own poetry. His *chant royal* was from the year 1516, when Jacques le Lieur did not compete in the category of the *chant royal*, but instead offered one to the Prince (a *chant royal donné*). Why he did not compete that year is unclear, but in Rouen BM Y.16, the annual *recueil* for 1516, it is the first of the *chants royaux donnés*, implying that it was judged to be the best of all those not presented for the competition. It also appears to have been popular, with a wide

[110] The spelling of 'Champ' for *chant* is often used in manuscripts, and is used, for example, by Pierre Fabri in his *Grand et vrai art.* Hüe (2002a, 904) links the spelling to the 'champ' meaning field, seeing it as a potential allusion to the field of play, strengthening the idea of poetry as play.

transmission.[111] It seems, then, that Jacques le Lieur has chosen for his personal devotional manuscript to include a poem of his that enjoyed particular success. He has placed his own composition in the same context as poets such as Molinet and Meschinot, as well as very successful and prolific *Puy* poets like Nicole Osmont and Nicolas Lescarre. His own work is positioned favourably both in the micro context of local Rouen Conceptionist piety and on the macro level of late medieval vernacular lyric. However, this does not imply that Jacques le Lieur is using the prayer book as a means of centring himself a poet: were it not for their transmission in other manuscripts, we would not know he had written them as there are no attributions. Y16 and the other yearly *recueils* always name the competitor as well as their entry, offering a faithful record of the proceedings that year and, the *Approbation* makes clear that names of winners should be displayed outside the church. In the context of the *Puy* itself, therefore, it is important that the poems be linked with the poet and that winners be honoured. Here, on the other hand, Jacques le Lieur has had his own poems presented as several among many, incorporating his work into an anonymous community of poets at the local and broader level.[112] Neither Molinet nor Lescarre are named: all poems here are in praise of Mary, God, or the saints, and, as such, any reader can use them to offer fitting praise. And it is in this vein that it is appropriate for Jacques le Lieur to include one of his most successful poems. He is submitting the best that he can offer to praise the Virgin Mary: just as the competitive context elicited ever greater praise to her through poetry, so, in the devotional context of a prayer book, he offers her that which was most widely praised in the ludic context of the *Puy*.

That the manuscript includes an *Heures de la Conception* shows that it is part of the wider lay movement of piety in which lay people could participate in the prayer of the Church,

[111] As well as Rouen Bib. Mun. Y16, the collection of all poems from 1516, it is also transmitted in Carpentras, Bib Mun 385; BnF fr 379; BnF fr 2205 and BnF fr 19369.
[112] In discussing coterie manuscripts, Taylor (2007, 64) Marotti's description to describe this phenomenon, writing that 'authorship dissolves into group ownership of texts'.

diligently offered in monasteries and convents by monks and nuns who prayed the entire office daily, here made accessible through shorter, vernacular Books of Hours, which were most commonly Hours of the Virgin.[113] As Denis Hüe points out, it will require long hours in archives and libraries to establish precisely what versions of the Hours of the Virgins lay people in Rouen would have been praying.[114] The *Heures de la Conception* by Guillaume Tasserie only survive in Y226[a] and Rothschild 31: it seems likely that, given the devotion to the Immaculate Conception in the city, it was in wider circulation. The inclusion of a form of the Hours shows that this prayer book is conceived of as participating in the wider prayer of the Church, a form of corporate worship taking place in abbeys and cathedrals, but also in courts and homes as individuals prayed their own, simpler Hours, in union with the Church as it took on the Opus Dei. The *Heures de la Conception* begin, as all do, with the Latin verset and response:[115]

> V: Domine labia mea aperies
> R: Et os meum annunciabit laudem tuam.

While the prayers in Y226[a] are the careful selection of an individual for devotion, it is nonetheless built around the prayer of the Church as a whole. Thus, the *Puy* poetry that is inserted in the manuscript has been removed from the competitive, named context of the *Puy de l'Immaculée Conception* and subsumed anonymously into the prayer of the Church, and is the property no longer of the poet or the *Puy*, but the inheritance of all the devout. The Marian poetry of the *Puy* thus entails a complementary relationship between the private and the public, the personal and the communal.

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[113] On the importance of the Hours of the Virgin, see Fulton Brown 2018. For more general introductions to medieval Books of Hours, see Wieck 1988. On lay piety and Books of Hours, see Duffy 2006.
[114] Hüe 2002a, 380.
[115] Psalm 51:17, the opening of Matins, and a psalm which in the *Hours of the Virgin* was associated particularly with the Annunciation. See the introduction to Gragnolati and Suerbaum 2022 (5–8). for a discussion of this opening, and Beth Williamson 2004,24–27 on the iconography associated with it, which Suerbaum and Gragnolati draw on.

And yet one further layer exists in this interplay: materiality. The competitive poetry is being used here in an explicitly devotional context in which the ludic and competitive elements have faded into the background. But nonetheless, the manuscript itself is beautifully illuminated, with borders on every page and fifteen miniatures. Particularly in the era of print, this manuscript on vellum is a luxury object which reflects and manifests that prestige of its patron and his standing in the city:[116] his rank comes primarily through his birth and office but his position as a leading man in the city was presumably strengthened due to his successful participation in the *Puy* and his patronage of it. His ability to play the game of the *Puy* well in terms of poetic proficiency and showcasing his devotion contributed to his image as an urban leading light. Huizinga admits that it can be hard to draw the line between the real world, in terms of social grouping and standing, and the sphere of play.[117] The material object of this prayer book, which on the one hand anonymises Jacques le Lieur's contribution to the *Puy*, but on the other reframes its poetry as a prayer in a way that is devotional and flaunts it as a marker of wealth and prestige, shows that the sphere of play and the sphere of devotion continue to interact long after the game itself has come to an end.

Bringing the material object into the spotlight also allows us to focus on one final manifestation of the dialectic between play and piety: the sumptuous borders that surround the pages are themselves often playful, with *putti* engaged in all sorts of amusing activities to an entire border on page 100 (Fig. VIII) that shows people at play.[118]

[116] On the argument that manuscripts acquired a new kind of status in light of the printing press, see the essays in Lestringant and Millet 2021.
[117] Huizinga 1949, 31.
[118] On the relationship between text and marginalia, see Camille 1995.

The playing figures – who appear to be adults, showing that play is not the property only of children – surround the words to an anonymous *Oraison a Nostre Dame*, and while the link with play in the border is particularly strong here, many of the prayers and devotional poems in the manuscript are surrounded with ludic illuminations, demonstrating visually that the division between piety and play is an artificial one and that it is perfectly possible to have devotional material framed by playful imagery. Jacques le Lieur's own *chant royal* from the 1516 *Puy* is headed by two *putti* jousting with rams' heads on sticks. The playful and pious nature of the *Puy* is here encapsulated by the visual programme of the manuscript, demonstrating that play and piety need not be mutually exclusive.[119] Although this Book of Prayers appears at first glance to be predominantly a devotional object in which the interplay we have thus far seen between competition and devotion is at stake, a closer look at its contents and layout shows that the two continue to coexist even outside of the *Puy* itself.

[119] On the subject of play and piety in marginal illuminations, see Camille 1994, 171–92.



Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque municipale de Rouen

Figure VIII: Rouen BM Y226[a] p.100, Source: BM de Rouen, gallica.bnf.fr Licence Ouverte

The ‘magic circle’ cannot be restricted to the competition; rather, life itself is caught up in this dialectic between piety and prayer. Barbara Newman writes that ‘when sacred and secular meanings both present themselves in a text, yet cannot be harmoniously reconciled, it

is not always necessary to choose between them'.[120] We do not have to choose between the playful putti and the Marian prayer of Jacques le Lieur's manuscript; the fact that it is a luxury prayer book demonstrating his prestige and containing his own poetry does not undermine its devotional aims; its private, personal nature as a prayer book designed for a specific individual does not undercut its universality as participating in wider lay movements of spirituality and the prayer of the Church as a whole.

Conclusion

Jacques le Lieur's prayer book, which recontextualises the poetry of the *Puy* in a devotional as opposed to competitive setting, serves as a fitting conclusion to this chapter, demonstrating as it does that piety and play can be difficult to disentangle, but that we do not necessarily need to disentangle them. The relationship between the individual – whether than be the individual poet or the private devotee – and the community is a constantly changing one. Poets cannot escape the community within which they are writing: they are dependent on and enriched by their interactions with others, and this prayer book is a testament to that, positioning poetry as prayer, but within the framework of late medieval poetics at the local level of Rouen and the wider network of *rhétoriqueur* poetry. Furthermore, the individual poet can only be distinguished from other poets by adapting conventions and forms playfully and can only be appreciated by those familiar with those conventions and forms. Those poems which do this most successfully continue to have an afterlife in the form of prayer: a further example might be the *Weihnachtslied* from Chapter I, which, post-Reformation, was adapted into a hymn, which continued to be sung in the cathedral and be transmitted in songbooks over the next century. The terms 'variation' and 'innovation' crop up in critical

[120] Newman 2013, 7.

literature on late medieval poetics, particularly with regard to form. Considering the subtle ways in which poets and their texts engaged with existing forms suggests that neither of these terms are adequate, nor do they reflect the medieval aesthetic approach to poetics. Instead, thinking about engagement with existing forms in terms of play may better express the relationship between the body of extant poetry and community of poets whence it arose, and new compositions and the nuanced changes in language, rhyme and metre that result from that engagement.

One critic who has recently proposed an approach to lyric through the lens of variation is Beate Kellner in her 2018 monograph on *Minnesang*. Kellner characterises *Minnesang* as a form of 'Variationskunst', in which each poem develops its own position in the discourse of courtly love, which 'in Nuancen von anderen Liedern abweicht',[121] which is analogous to the poetics of subtle change I have proposed here. Calling *Minnesang* an art of repetition and variation, Kellner calls for a focus on rhetoric and form to analyse how key ideas such as joy and pain are articulated in different constellations, suggesting that 'Minnesang als Kunstform besteht in der Spannung von Wiederholung und Variation'.[122] This interplay between the two is conceived of as dynamic, and operating at the deepest levels of the lyric, from structure and semantics to sound and image. Although the book is called *Spiel der Liebe,* the title is taken more figuratively – a form of wordplay – and *spielen* appears several times used figuratively, suggesting at one point that language is reduced to a semiotic system comparable to chess, or asserting that polysemy and its connotations 'spielen hier eine Rolle'.[123] Kellner does not fully exploit the semantic range of *spielen* itself, and bringing out the play element more explicitly, which underlies the interplay of variation and repetition, and seeing poetic

[121] Kellner 2018, 50.
[122] Kellner 2018, 60.
[123] Kellner 2018, 62.

engagement with the key terms of *minne, wunne* or *schmerz* more literally in terms of play, would help refine and advance her argument further. The dynamic model she propounds for *Minnesang* could be enriched by developing it to take play more into account seriously. This acts as an example of how the poetics of play I have advanced here through a study of religious lyric could fruitfully be applied to other forms of medieval lyric.

The model of the corporate mentality and civil society suggested by Antony Black, in which the two co-exist in late medieval urban spaces, can therefore be applied to *puy* poetry and Marian *Meistergesang*: the relationship between the individual and community is a reciprocal one. The corporate devotion and poetic tradition are foregrounded, and as can be seen by the dark example of Nunnenbeck's anti-Semitism, strengthened by the exclusion of the Other; the poet as an individual nonetheless emerges though subtle distinction, and in the case of *Meistergesang*, composition in new *Töne*. This interplay between the individual and community which is not a tension, but rather an enriching dynamic, acts as a characteristic of the urban setting in which the poetry is performed and composed. A comparison of the dynamic between the poet and the collection in Marian lyric and, for example, the coterie around Charles d'Orléans, would make an interesting case study to see to what extent this specifically reflects the city context, or whether it is rather a feature of late medieval poetics more generally.

Devotion and play, and the individual and the community do not emerge as oppositions or contradictions in *Puy* poetry and *Meistergesang*: they complement one another and work together – more complex, interesting poetry is more fitting praise of Mary; the individual poet can only emerge from a community with *topoi* and conventions. Marian poetry can function as prayer, but that does not stop it being a vehicle for poets to develop their craft and

hone their personal voice, and it is appropriate for them to do so as it engenders ever greater devotion. The institution of the *Puy* and, on a less formal level, the phenomenon of *Meistergesang*, are dedicated to both piety and poetry, and these work in tandem to praise Mary, create community and increase the prestige of those who participate in that poetic community. This lay collective identity, dedicated to poetry in which the individual and community are not at odds, but rather create a dialectic which ensures that play is in service of devotion rather than becoming an end detached from it, seems to have been able to flourish in the environment of the city, where lay devotion burgeoned and institutions such as confraternities enabled an individual to develop their craft as well as express devotion more fittingly.

Religious poetry has often been overlooked in discussions of poetic communities and competition and collaboration in the late medieval period; including religious lyrics in such analyses would help shed further light on how a given poet engages with an existing body of work and community of fellow poets. Conversely, studies of religious writing, particularly with regard to lay spirituality, would benefit from a deeper consideration of the ludic and competitive contexts set out in here by examining institutions like the *Puy* and *Singschule* alongside other confraternities, Eucharistic devotion and Books of Hours. The 'both/and' principle underlying Newman's idea of medieval crossover indeed demands that religious writing such as the Marian lyric here not be examined in isolation, but that it should be contextualised in a culture that is never solely sacred or profane, and that as such, we should not view Marian lyric as solely one or the other.

Conclusion

This thesis set out to shed light on the urban Marian poetry of the later Middle Ages, investigating the French *puy* poetry and the German *Meistergesang* to show how they function as examples of late medieval urban poetry, understanding what is exemplary about them and what is exceptional when they are compared with one another.[1] As well offering new interpretations of individual poems, I have placed the corpus as a whole in its urban setting, considering the ways in which the town or city is thematised through Marian lyric, how knowledge is communicated through the figure of Mary, and the interplay between play and piety in the poetry, suggesting that play is a fundamental characteristic of late medieval poetics. While brief comparisons have been made between the idea of the institution of the *puy* and the *Singschule* before, this is the first sustained comparative inquiry into the poetics of the *puy* and Marian *Meistergesang* which properly takes texts into account, and thus acts as a key reassessment of the poetry, making it a significant contribution both to the body of work on Marian lyric in the Middle Ages and late medieval poetics more generally. Furthermore, it opens up new and important avenues of inquiry for research in medieval studies beyond the literary, with implications for cultural studies in terms of late medieval piety and urban mentalities. This conclusion will offer a brief synthesis of my key findings from each chapter, an analysis of its contributions and their implications and will finish by suggesting future directions in which this work could be taken.

The urban setting of *puy* poetry and *Meistergesang* was the key focus of the first chapter of this thesis. Building on the work of the likes of Denis Hüe and Ursula Peters, I sought to understand what was specifically urban about this Marian poetry and how the city is

[1] See the Introduction for comparative methodology.

examined through the lyrics themselves.[2] Beginning with a discussion of medieval conceptions of the city, I drew on ideas from urban history, particularly Martha Howell's proposition that boundedness was an important element of medieval urban mentalities.[3] Through a case study of Oxford Bodleian MS Douce 379, I established that images of boundedness, such as the *hortus conclusus* or the Tower of David, appeared frequently in the 1511 *puy* at Rouen, and moreover, were commonly used in conjunction with artisanal imagery and language – a subject which Hüe has convincingly linked with the urban nature of *puy* poetry. Various bounded images (one of which was the *Cité de Dieu* itself) had identical poetological functions, implying that the one could be substituted for the other and that to sing about Mary was, subconsciously, to sing about the city. This connection and use of bounded imagery comes out particularly forcefully in the poetry of the *puys* and can also be observed, though less strongly, in pre-Reformation *Meistergesang* associated with Augsburg where a *Singschule* is known to have existed. The Marian lyrics in Heidelberg Universitätsbibliothek Cpg 680 show evidence of this interest in boundedness, and the constellation of bounded imagery and the vocabulary of craft (with its concomitant poetological significance) can be detected in *Meistergesang* too. However, not being linked with a particular Marian feast day meant that the *Meistersinger* had far more freedom in subject matter with various sub-genres of Marian poetry available to them and this diversity in theme meant that the development of particular bounded images which had emerged as a key characteristic of *puy* poetry was not as distinct. An exploration of the *Confrérie du Puy Notre-Dame d'Amiens* showed how images of city life could be seen through both the poetry and the images associated with Amien's *Puy* in the manuscript presented to Louise of Savoy, which offered the opportunity to examine text-image relation with the miniatures illustrating

[2] Hüe 2002a, Peters 1983.
[3] Howell 2000, 4.

each *palinod*. It becomes clear through such an examination that urban life was indeed thematised through the *puys*, with Marian poetry offering poets the potential to explore their own urban mentalities.

The second chapter studied the relationship between poetry and knowledge in the late Middle Ages and demonstrated how Marian lyric in particular enables the communication of both catechetical and experiential knowledge. Taking as a foundation the 2005-9 AHRC-funded research project on Poetic Knowledge in Late Medieval France,[4] I considered how the figure of Mary could be used to transmit diverse forms of knowledge and explored the idea of poetry as a form of knowing, with an emphasis emerging on the experiential process of knowing as a dynamic one. The use of the refrain in *puy* poetry was established as a key carrier of knowledge, safeguarding the articulation of doctrinal knowledge and acting as a significant means of communication of religious knowledge. I suggested that the lack of refrain in *Meistergesang* was a fundamental formal difference between the French and German lyrics considered here: the *palinod* in the French *puy* lyrics represents a more cautious approach to the idea of communicating religious knowledge through vernacular lyric; on the other hand, Marian *Meistergesang* permitted poets to explore different ways of expressing theological ideas, and in it we can observe a more flexible approach to vernacular theology. Poetry was evidently a significant transmitter of religious knowledge in the late medieval period, and the importance of being able to compose good poetry in order to best articulate that knowledge was a key concern: *Schulkünste* and *arts de seconde rhétorique*, such as Pierre Fabri's *Grant et vray art de pleine rhetorique* which is ideologically linked with the *Puy de l'Immaculée Conception* at Rouen,[5] illustrate the intimate link between poetic

[4] In particular, the project's key outputs such as Dixon and Sinclair 2008 and Armstrong and Kay 2011.
[5] Fabri 1889.

and religious orthodoxy. Good poetry was therefore an appropriate way of communicating religious knowledge, and, as the final chapter of the thesis shows, of praising the Virgin Mary in a fitting manner.

Following on from this assessment of the relationship between poetry and knowledge, in the third and final chapter, I analyse the interplay between piety, poetics, and play in late medieval Marian lyric. I argued that the non-opposition between the individual and the community enabled a mutually enriching relationship between the playful and pious elements, removing any potential tension or contradiction between the two. The competition of the *puy* easily meets the definition of 'game' offered by Serina Patterson,[6] while exploration of ideas about play, building on *Homo Ludens*,[7] shows that poetry such as *Meistergesang* is a form of play itself, even though it cannot necessarily explicitly be linked with the competitions of a *Singschule*. I proposed that the interplay between play and piety was mutually enriching in the late medieval context, showing through an analysis of the *Ballade d'Invitation* that this relationship was conceived of and understood by the members of the *puy*: competition between poets and the drive to compose ever more impressive poetry entailed ever greater and more fitting praise of the Virgin Mary, meaning that the playful and pious elements of Marian poetry are intertwined. Through a close reading of two poems from the 1497 *puy* at Rouen, which were composed around the same *palinod*, I established that subtle variation of language and image was a key goal of *puy* poetry, and that playing with subtly different constellations of the same *topoi* was where the pleasure and play elements of the lyric could be located. It was in using the traditional *topoi* of the community and appealing to their tastes that the individual poet could distinguish themselves to succeed at

[6] Patterson 2015, 7.
[7] Huizinga 1949.

the *puy.* Looking at *Meisterlieder* by Hans Folz and Lienhard Nunnenbeck, which, like the poetry of the Rouen *puy*, also dealt with the question of the Immaculate Conception, I questioned the extent to which the subtle variation was also at play in Marian *Meistergesang*, and whether terms such as 'innovation' and such enquiries say more about our own, modern, aesthetic tastes and conceptions of poetry. A case study of Rouen BM Y226[a] formed a conclusion to the chapter: an illuminated manuscript made for Jacques le Lieur with the Hours of the Conception and other Marian prayers, some by well-known *rhétoriqueurs*, it also included *puy* poetry, now anonymised and subsumed into the prayer of the Church, but acted as a luxury object with playful marginal imagery, showcasing the wealth and poetic talents of its owner. The manuscript exemplifies the way in which the interplay between the individual and the community, both religious and poetic, permits the non-oppositional relationship between play and piety in poetry. I argued that seeing late medieval poetic engagement with tradition and the poetic community in terms of play is a more fruitful mode of analysis than concern with innovation and creativity.

By adopting a comparative approach, considering both French *puy* poetry and German Marian *Meistergesang*, it has been possible to consider the two separate traditions in their own right as well as building up a comparative, more wide-ranging view of late medieval poetics, particularly with regard to religious poetry. The different case studies over the course of the thesis have shown, for example, that the significance of the refrain in the *puy* poetry is crucial and that this is a key formal element distinguishing *puy* lyric from *Meistergesang*. *Meistergesang* offers far more variation in terms of theme, ranging from *Marienpreis* to the Seven Sorrows of Mary, whereas the *Puy* lyric is constrained by the need to link its *envoy* to the patronage of the *puy*. However, the figure of Mary nonetheless enables poets to bring in a huge variety of images, from Old Testament prefigurations to crafts practised in the city.

Images of boundedness in particular crop up frequently, though this is stronger in the French tradition. The institution of the *puy* and its statutes meant that although there was room for play with imagery and rhyme, the basic form of the *chant royal* and *rondeau* were, as the term *forme fixe* suggests, fixed, and the challenge was finding ways of subtly playing within those fixed forms; in *Meistergesang* new *Töne* could be sung, and this meant that play with form could take on a different guise as the form itself could be changed. The comparative approach of the thesis allows the identification of that which is exceptional in the French and German traditions, as shown here, but also enables us to underscore that which is exemplary: the connection between craft, poetry, Mary, and the city can be seen in both *puy* lyric and *Meistergesang*, suggesting that this is indeed a characteristic of urban lyric, and one of the things which attracted poets in towns and cities to the figure of Mary. Poetry also enables the communication of catechetical and experiential, affective knowledge of Mary in both French and German urban Marian lyric, with the connection between good poetry and religious truth evident in both traditions. Although the stakes were different in the competition of the *puy* and the more general poetic play of Marian *Meistergesang*, the analysis of both has shown that play constitutes a key mode of poetic engagement in the late Middle Ages and that there is room for both devotion and entertainment at the same time within Marian poetry.

Although it would have been an even more pertinent comparison had it been possible to more directly compare and contrast the *puy* with the institution of the *Singschule* in order to compare urban institutions and competitions more explicitly, the two traditions compared in the thesis have afforded the opportunity for an effective and rewarding comparison. It has made it possible to distinguish specificities and identify commonalities with greater confidence, permitting a fruitful exploration of Marian lyric in urban spaces in the late Middle Ages. The thesis therefore constitutes a significant contribution in terms of offering a

comparative understanding of late medieval Marian lyric. However, this study has implications beyond the bounds of just Marian lyric, with ramifications for the field of medieval studies more broadly, in not just poetics, but also urban culture and lay piety.

Implications

The research on Marian lyric in the late Middle Ages in this thesis impinges on questions of late medieval poetics more generally and is not limited only to religious lyric. Studies of late medieval lyric tend to look at prominent names, such as Charles d'Orléans for later courtly lyric or Molinet as a *rhétoriqueur* in French-language studies, or, Hans Sachs on the German, and to privilege polemic or metapoetic works. Often these very same poets wrote lots of devotional lyric, too, but not as much consideration is given to them. For examples, *chants royaux* make up a substantial part of Cretin's known *œuvre*, and in Y226[a] we saw that the *rhétoriqueurs* were well represented with Molinet and Meschinot, yet such lyrics are often not fully incorporated into studies, as if the production of devotional lyric were not an integral part of their poetic output. However, the insights of this thesis can be fruitfully brought to bear on late medieval poetics more broadly, and religious lyric should not simply be bracketed off as an entirely different kind of poetic production. This is not to say that religious lyric does not have its own specificities and considerations – the compositional contexts for the *puy* must be taken into account, or the tradition of earlier Marian *Spruchsang*, for example – but it does not exist in a vacuum, and an account of late medieval poetics should engage fully with religious lyric The interplay I have outlined between play and piety, and between the individual and community, which suggests that engagement with poetic tradition should be conceived of in terms of play, can helpfully inflect discussions of more 'secular' lyric traditions. Many of the same poets composing more political or polemical poetry also participated at the *puys*; with 20-25% of *Meisterlieder* being Marian, and far more

being religious, it is a very significant proportion of *Meistegersang* production. It would be worthwhile bringing this thesis' constellations of individual and community, play and piety as suggested here into the discussion of late medieval lyric more generally, and the Marian poetry ought not to be considered a mere footnote or written off, as Deschamps proposed, as a bourgeois pastime, but rather fully integrated into research into poetic production in the later Middle Ages.

Lay piety and theology is a further area which can be inflected by the work in this thesis: in Marian lyric, we can find an articulation of different strains of late medieval religious practice and the images of the Virgin Mary which should be considered in tandem with research into lay reading and education, use of Books of Hours, and vernacular theology. The poets, from various strata of society, ranging from a weaver like Lienhard Nunnenbeck, to a sailor such as Parmentier, to poets such as Guillaume Cretin, have a striking amount of religious knowledge, drawing on Old Testament prefigurations, patristic knowledge, and engage in contemporary theological debates surrounding the Immaculate Conception. They employ different discourses, such as the more scholastic mode of debate, offering arguments and proofs, as well as more affective more of lyric, and are attracted to an aesthetic of paradox, capable of seeing Mary as at once the very human maiden whom they can strive to imitate and simultaneously the Queen of Heaven for whom no praise can truly be sufficient. Different strands of medieval Marian devotion come together in varying constellations, offering an insight into the forms and discourses of piety in the late Middle Ages. It shows how laymen were engaged in theological debate and implies that they expected their audience to be familiar with their references and imagery. The use of Marian *topoi* and their articulation in *puy* poetry and *Meistergesang* would also be helpful for discussion of civil religion in terms of understanding better how lay piety and poetry was institutionalised

through confraternal competitions. Studies of civic religion often focus on processions and confraternities, and are concerned with the relationship between municipal authorities and sacred activity.[8] *Singschulen* required the permission of town councils to operate, and the *puys* were generally run by those with high standing in urban authority, meaning that these poetic institutions would act as helpful case studies. Although *Meistersinger* appear to have been primarily lay, the *Hauptsingen* took place in churches; the *puys* are also an good example of collaboration between laity and clergy, with the competition taking place in church, and clergy competing and acting as members of the jury. We see therefore a form of devotion in the *puy* that brings laity and clergy together, involved in worship through poetry on an equal footing.

Moreover, there are implications for urban history and urban cultural studies more generally. In particular, the case studies of my first chapter test out Howell's idea of boundedness and build on Hüe's work to show how Marian poetry functioned as an important expression of urban mentality and enabled urban communities to explore and strengthen their identities. Not only the poems, but also the illustrations in BnF fr 145 (as in Paris BnF fr 1537, which fell outside the scope of this thesis)[9] are helpful for showing the relationship between the city, the crafts practised in it, and the Virgin Mary and the self-presentation of the *Maistre* as urban dignitary, devotee of the Virgin and patron of poetry. Social and cultural studies of urban spaces in the late Middle Ages would benefit from examining the portrayal of the city as demonstrated here. The image of Mary as the City of God is certainly not unknown, but urban studies would profit from a closer look at her role as patron of cities, and moreover as a representation of the city itself.

[8] Brown 2016.
[9] BnF fr. 1537 is a collection of poems from the Rouen *puy* from 1519-1528, all with full page illuminations, similar to that offered to Louise de Savoie.

Further research

This thesis was necessarily limited in scope, not only in terms of what could be accomplished over the course of a doctorate, but furthermore by the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.[10] Undertaking a comparative study of both French and German Marian lyric additionally entailed a more limited focus on each respective corpus. A more comprehensive project would naturally take in a wider range of primary material, for example, taking into consideration some of the collections of *puy* poetry which were excluded from this thesis because they were unavailable, such as Paris, BnF fr 2205[11] and Paris, BnF fr 19369,[12] or because the lack of attribution in many of the poems would make dating problematic, as is the case for Paris, BnF fr 19184, which contains 133 works, many of which are associated with Rouen *puy* poetry, though not all necessarily the *Puy de l'Immaculée Conception*. I used the Oxford Bodleian Douce 379 1511 *recueil* as a representative annual record for the early years of the *Puy* before its move to the larger *Église des Carmes* in 1514. The collections for 1516 and 1522 would also make for interesting case studies. Applying the insights of this thesis to the *puys* at Valenciennes and Dieppe, for which some poems are still extant, would permit us to see if these findings hold true for other traditions. Similarly, there are several Meistersinger whose work would have been useful to consider, such as Fritz Zorn, who was active in Nuremberg in the fifteenth century with at least 14 Marian *Meisterlieder*.[13] Few of his poems are edited, and access to Berlin Mgq 414 would bring in a further example of a Meistersinger who sang about Mary in a city in which a *Singschule* existed. Looking beyond Nuremberg and Augsburg, other cities such as Strasbourg are believed to have had a

[10] Uncertainty over the reopening of libraries and archives and the resumption of international travel at the point at which I needed to select case studies meant unedited material which was not accessible online could not be considered at all.
[11] Manuscript containing 51 *chants royaux*, 30 *ballades* and 7 *rondeaux.*
[12] 31 *chants royaux*, 12 *ballades* and 5 *rondeaux.*
[13] Rettelbach 1985.

Singschule before the Reformation, and a detailed study of Marian lyrics in the *Kolmarer Liederhandschrift* would be very valuable.

The need for editions of both *puy* poetry and *Meistergesang* is clear. Aside from Denis Hüe's anthology, which contains 131 poems from the Rouen *puy*,[14] poems only exist in modern *Œuvres complètes* for more well-known poets such as Guillaume Cretin,[15] Jean Parmentier,[16] and Clément Marot.[17] A new anthology, or an edition of a particular manuscript, such as Rouen BM Y18 which transmits the winning poems from the early years of the *Puy,* would be particularly helpful. BnF fr 145 contains almost the entire extant corpus of poetry from the *Puy Notre-Dame d'Amiens* and, as such, would form the excellent basis of an edition, allowing the texts to be studied alongside the miniatures which have thus far received most of the attention. Increasing the accessibility of texts through further digitisation and editions would enable further research into the *puys* as a phenomenon in their own right, while also making it easier for those studying late medieval poetics more generally to bring them into consideration as I have argued they ought to do.

Meistergesang is in a similar state, and while the *RSM* has hugely facilitated research into *Sangspruch* and *Meistergesang*, it lays bare how few texts have been edited. Many of those that have been exist in old, nineteenth-century editions, and although many significant manuscripts have been digitised, such as the *Kolmarer Liederhandschrift*, there is a clear need for modern editions of key *Meistersinger*, such as Fritz Kettner. Projects such as the DFG funded project to edit Regenbogen's *Brief-* and *Grundweise* and *Grauer Ton* are making headway in this area; however, it is clear that establishing texts will be a long and arduous

[14] Hüe 2002b.
[15] Crétin 1932.
[16] Parmentier 1971.
[17] Marot 1990

task.[18] With Marian *Meistergesang* constituting up to a quarter of extant *Meisterlieder*, many texts are barely known or accessible beyond their entry in the *RSM*.

When embarking on this project, I had hoped to be able to draw more explicit comparisons between the institution of the *puy* and the *Singschule,* but this proved to be methodologically challenging given the lack of evidence we have about the latter's presence before the Reformation. Although we can have relative confidence in the existence of a *Singschule* in Nuremberg and Augsburg before the Reformation due to references in songs and documentary evidence,[19] only the *Schulordnung* and *Tabulaturen* from after the Reformation survive, making it hard to know precisely how the *Singschule* operated in this period, and difficult to link individual songs or *Meistersinger* to the *Singschule* with any certainty. Further archival research is therefore needed into the state of the pre-Reformation *Singschule*, and this would enable a more direct institutional comparison rather than looking at the texts alone, and let us be sure, for example, that the *Meisterlieder* were indubitably composed in an analogous competitive context to the *puy* poems. In the later period of the Rouen *puy* and the *jüngeren Meistergesang* it is already possible to draw this comparison.

Taking into account the effect of the Reformation would be a further fruitful avenue for research that lay outside the scope of this thesis: the Reformation had a huge effect on *Meistergesang* – the works of Hans Sachs show that many poets engaged in Reformation polemics, and this also entailed a change in emphasis on the Virgin Mary as many *Singschule* became explicitly protestant.[20] While the effects were less pronounced in the *puy*, Clément Marot, who participated several times, was already being accused of Lutheranism by 1526. A

[18] One pertinent output from the research project which deals with Marian lyric is Rothenberger 2019.
[19] See the discussion of the Augsburg *Singschule* in Chapter I and Schnell 1959, or on the Nuremberg *Singschule* Schanze 1983, 381-88.
[20] See Schmeer 2017 for an example of such research, which taken Nuremberg as a case study.

study into the effects of the Reformation on Marian poetry could consider how the volume of Marian *Meistergesang* changed in the early years – a case study of Hans Sachs alone would be enlightening – but also whether the presentation of the Virgin changes in this period, and whether the *puy* poets find themselves defending Mary in different ways. Both the *puys* and *Meistergesang* persisted long after the Reformation and into the 18th century so there is potential for a lot of research to be undertaken by non-medievalists, too. While the *RSM* encompasses the later *Meistergesang*, and there has been interest in Meistersinger from the 16th and 17th century,[21] it has often been from the perspective of medievalists, with less interest from early modernists. Similarly, studies of the *puy*, particularly literary ones, generally end in the mid-16th century before the impact of the Wars of Religion, with Denis Hüe ending his study in 1550. There is clearly a huge potential for work here, particularly given that in this period the status of the *Singschule* is much clearer, making a direct comparison between the competitive urban institutions easier.

Given this thesis was already a comparative one, there was not space to make further comparison between late medieval urban Marian lyric and Marian lyric composed in other settings, primarily monastic and courtly. Further research into how images of boundedness function differently in these settings would offer rich ground for comparison; for example, looking at how the image of the *hortus conclusus* is used ideologically. Whereas in urban Marian lyric I have argued that it, along with other bounded images such as the Tower or the Palace, represents the city and enables poets and their audience to reflect on their urban mentality, in the monastery or the convent, the closed garden is linked to the enclosure and separation from the world. So many of the key images associated with Mary foreground the boundedness of her body, which has diverging implications depending on the environment in

[21] For example, Schultze 1982 on Schwarzenbach, 1544-84, or Kugler 1977 on Metzger, 1537-1632.

which those images are used and received. Such a comparison would help tease out more explicitly what is uniquely urban about the use of those images in *Meistergesang* and *puy* poetry.

To continue the research on knowledge in late medieval urban Marian poetry, it would be interesting to consider the idea of learning communities in relation to *Meistersinger* and the *puys*, as set out by Mews and Crossley.[22] Their central insight is that all learning takes place in communities, and that informal networks can constitute just as powerful a community of learning as formal institutions. Communities surrounding religious texts have been studied by Brian Stock, who coined the term 'textual community' to describe the heretical communities of the early Middle Ages.[23] He argues that texts influenced group organisation and helped members of a group to internalise behaviour and social norms. Within a textual community, the text provides a common understanding which 'provides the foundation for changing thought and behaviour'.[24] However, Stock's 'textual communities' rely on more than just text, centring around a literate individual who is the ultimate interpreter of the texts. He defines textual communities as 'groups of people whose social activities are centred around texts, or, more precisely, around a literate interpreter of them',[25] later on foregrounding once again that within a textual community the central motor of change was the literate interpreter of a text working within a less lettered community.'[26] What we have in the case of the *puy* and *Meisterleider*, however, are three sets of texts – the Marian lyric itself, the rules governing their composition in the form of the statutes of the *puy* and the *Tabulatur* of the *Singschule*, and the religious texts from which they gained their knowledge – and no single

[22] Mews and Crossley 2011.
[23] Stock 1983, 90.
[24] Stock 1983, 522.
[25] Stock 1983, 522.
[26] Stock 1983, 523.

individual who might be considered the interpreter, though the Prince and jury at the *puy* and the *Merker* of a *Singschule* could fulfil this function collectively. Thus, although the relationship between text and urban community is key, the idea of 'learning communities' is perhaps more useful for describing the way in which Marian lyric functioned within urban communities and this would make for an interesting development of the ideas on the relationship between poetry and knowledge.

As the first comparison to examine the poetry of the *puy* and Marian *Meisterlieder,* and to do so in English, this thesis offers new insights and strong foundations on which to conduct further research into the poems themselves and has significant implications for medieval studies more generally. I have shown that the lyrics themselves yield fruitful analysis, and indicated how this can be taken further, meaning urban Marian lyric warrants greater critical attention.

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Appendix

Table I

Oxford, Bodleian Libraries, MS Douce 379

Manuscript containing all the poems presented at the 1511 Rouen *Puy de l'Immaculée Conception*

The transcriptions are all my own, but the table was prepared in conjunction with *JONAS, Répertoire des textes et des manuscrits médiévaux d'oc et d'oïl* (Institut de recherche et d'Histoire des Textes, 2016) < https://jonas.irht.cnrs.fr/> [accessed 20 April 2023] and Douce 379

Number	Folio	Author	Incipit	Palinod	Bounded Imagery	Artisanal Imagery
1	1v-2v	?	L'on a faict savoir a tous sans difference	L'honneur des cielx la plus belle du monde		
2	3r-4r	André de la Vigne	Ou est celuy tressouveraine mere	Royne des cieux et princesse des anges	x	x
3	4r-5r	Nicole Turbot	Tous les arbres furent seches de yvers	Le laurier verd tout beau par excellence		
4	5r-6v	Guillaume Cretin	Pour reparer angelique ruyne	Livre de vie ou tous biens sont compris	x	
5	6v-8r	Nicole Lescarre	Au val obscur de tribulacion	Pour Jesuscrist lanterne preparee	x	
6	8r-9r	P de Bellengues	Jadiz fut veu en la mer tresparfonde	Du gouffre elle est invincible nacelle		x
7	9v-10v	Pierre Avril	Retirez vous malheureux heretiques	Au cler soleil en beaulté comparee		
8	10v-11v	Nicolas Levestu	Le plasinateur de toute creature	Corps lumineux exempte d'obscurité	x	
9	11v-12v	Chrestien	Un grand ouvrier et maistre ingenieux	Le chef d'oeuvre de l'humaine nature	x	x
10	13r-14r	Pierre Duval	Plusieurs ont veu les eaues perdre leurs cours	Du hault rocher l'eau vive et clere		
11	14r-14v	Chapperon	Le formateur de tous les elements	Le pont parfaict pour passer tout le monde		x
12	15r-16v	Poullart	Premier que Dieu eust formé terre et ciel	Le beau verger produisant fruict de vie		
13	16v-17v	Mauger	Le grant maçon angnoissant l'artifice	Palais royal construict de pierre dure	x	x
14	18r-18v	Le Moyne	Un grant seigneur voulut ediffier	Tour de David sur toutes bien esleue	x	x
15	18v-19v	Nicole Auber	Le plaisant roch et specieuse pierre	Royne des cieux et princesse des anges		
16	20r-21r	Bitot	Jadiz fut veu en valle austere	Fleur florissant qui les autres precelle		
17	21r-22r	R le Franc	Astrages roy craignant division	Digne de prix salue de l'humain gerre		
18	22v-23v	Le Veau	Ung jardinier qui veult faire debvoir	A tous humains le fruict solacieux		
19	23v-24v	Le Saonnier	Dieu voult creer en estat d'innocence	Que sans peché par grace fut conceue		
20	25r-26r	S Lambert	Humains löez la criminelle offence	Saincte en concept de Dieu la maison necte	x	
21	26r-27r	A Verdure	Le medecin de grand preeminence	D'ung corps pollut toute belle conceue		
22	27v-28v	Henry	Le roy du ciel puissant et magniffique	Royne des cielz en concept toute belle	x	
23	28v-29v	Parmentier	Jadiz Zeusi en l'art de pourtraicture	Toute belle sans quelque tache immunde		x
24	30r-30v	Theroulde	En meditant avec doulce armenie	Le fruict rendant oudeur inestimable		
25	30v-31r	Pierre Marc	Dieu tout puissant perdez vos ennemis	L'honneur des cielz la plus belle du monde	x	

26	32v-33v	Jean Amici	L'omnipotent Dieu en vray trinité	La vierge fut exempte de tout vice		
27	33v-34v	Cousture	Faulse langue venineuse vipere	Vierge sans sy la plus belle des belles		
28	35r-36r	Bertran	Dieu eternel precognoissant l'offence	En lieu de paix et repoz pardurable		x
29	36r-36v	Le Pigne	La trinité entre les triumphans	Le triumphe de la divinite	x	x
30	37r-38v	Guerould	Gens vertueux plains de sagacité	D'alpha et o[mega] le palais magnifique	x	
31	38v-39v	Gilles des Maisons	Vrays orateurs de coeur laborieux	Du filz parfait vierge et mere parfaicte		
32	39v-40v	Le General de Caen	La mere de Dieu a deu estre conceue	Cree en grace necte de tout peche	x	x
33	41r-42v	Le Maschure	Le souverain en sa grand prelature	Cité de Dieu en tout temps pure et belle	x	x
	The chants royaux donnés					
34	42v-43r	Nicole Osmont	Le grant evesque et bon reformateur	Lampe illustrant l'eglise militante	x	x
35	43v-44v	Nicole Osmont	En ordonnant du monde la fabrique	Mer qui recoit et qui donne toute grace		
36	44v-45v	Jean Alyne	Apres le mort dont tout mal nous redonde	Le chandelier de lumiere eternelle	x	x
37	46r - 47r	Jacques le Lieur	Le faulx serpent par sa mallivolence	Cloche sonnant le salut des humains	x	x
38	47r-48r	M.A. Desreques	Passant les montz de Cygnis de Egnebelle	Le mont de Dieu de beaulté d'oultrepasse	x	
39	48r - 49v	M. A. Desresques	Au councille solemnise a Pyse	Belle par tout en sa conception		
40	49v-50v	Nicole Lescarre	Alors que humans estoyent tous gemissans	En temps de mort la vive medicine		
41	51r-52r	Nicolas Maillard	Pour assister et faire comparence	Mere de grace et de misericorde		
42	52r-52v	André de la Vigne	O treschiere fille dilectissime	Tout par vostre saincte conception		
43	53r-54v	André de la Vigne	Par moy des cielz la porte fut fermee	Car vous estes sans tache et sans macule	x	
44	54v-55v	André de la Vigne	Tant fut Adam povre rebelle et rude	Dieu fist pour nous la mere Jesucrist		
45	56r-56v	André de la Vigne	Le prepotent qui tout a ordonne	Puis qu'en vous est pour redemption né	x	
46	57r-58r	André de la Vigne	Au tribunal d'eternelle vallue	Qu'estes la mere et la fille pudique	x	
47	58r-59r	M. S. du Val	Ce temps passe pluvyeux et divers	Sur l'arbre sec le cyon florissante		
48	59v-60v	M. S. du Val	Vers l'occident du signe saggitaire	Jardin d'honneur ou n'ya que redire	x	x
49	60v - 61v	M. J. Maugier	Sus les fleuves loingtaines bablyloniques	En actendant la fille de Syon		
50	62r-63r	N. Guerould	Tyrez vous loing faulx pevers detracteur	La fleur des fleurs en beaulté gracieuse		x
51	63r-63v	Cousture	Quant au prestre pour hostie convenable	Par dessus tous fors Dieu la plus louable		
52	64r-65v	Cousture	L'homme mortel n'est pas prudent ni saige	Sans macule plus belle qu'oncques rose	x	x
	The rondeaux presenté		First refrain	Second refrain		
53	66r	Levestu	Premierement que les cielz fussent faictz	Des oeuvres Dieu je suis commencement		x
54	66v	Avril	Pour son plaisir Dieu me forma		x	
55	67r	Maschaire	Royne de paix des humains l'excellence	Et vous crea par povoir vertueux		
56	67v	Lefeavre	Par le vertu du Pere imperatif	Pour debeller le serpent deceptif		
57	68r	Turbot	Mon filz qui feist l'immunde le monde	Me confera par le divin effect		

58	68v	Chrestien	Resjouys toy povre Adam douloureux	La pucelle celle quy toutes precelle		x
59	69r	Bitot	Gentilz normans prenez felicité	Laquelle fut par l'ange recité		
60	69v	Andre de la Vigne	La mere et fille estes pour dire voire	Royne des cieux en tous cas digne et saincte		
61	70r	M.S. du Val	A tout jamais le bruyt et renommee	Car son chier filz tellement la clammee		
62	70v	P. de Belenques	En contemplant de ma conception	Bonne je suis sans quelque vanité		
63	71r	Le Pigne	Le tout puissant et hault imperateur	Cest Marie la pure coulombelle		x
64	71v	R. le Franc	Ce jour sacré de la conception	Puis qu'ainsi est par la trinite		
65	72r	Mauger	Ce benoist jour de ma conception	De mon cher filz en grand dilection	x	
66[1]	72v	A. Verdure	Du createur qui forma tout le monde	De mon cher filz en grand dilection		
67	73r	A. Verdure	Du createur qui forma tout le monde	Belle je suis tresclere necte et munde		
68	73v	Cousture	O saincte dame Viere tresgracieuse			
69	74r-74v	Le Saomner	Dieu trin et ung en son eternite	Mere de dieu genitrice pucelle		
70	75r	Le Parmentier	Si de sexe vil et abhominable	Que dirons nous de la vierge honnorable		
71	75v	Bertran	Clere clarté qui les cielz enlumyne	Pure du tout sans quelque impurite		
72	76r	Des Maisons	Le tresparfaict qui ciel et terre a faicte	Tresparfaict ne luy couste a me faire		
73	76v-77r	Mare	Seule je suis que Dieu fist en plenye		x	
74	77r-77v	Le General de Caen	De ma beaulté le Dieu d'amour m'espris	Autre que moy n'as esté tant eureuse		
75	77v	Le General de Caen	Qu'en puis je maiz se ma mere a failly	Par vostre foy mesdisans ennuyeux	x	
	Then the rondeaux donnés					
76	79r	Jacques le Lieur	Devotz normans lentz vos estandars	Mon sainct concept que devez reclamer		
77	79v	Lescarre	Pour esclerer en humans vicieux	Que nous servons de cueur devotieux	x	
78	80r	Maillard	Resjouys toy povre humaine nature	Ce sacre jour du concept admirable		x
79	80v	S. du Val	Par le voulloir du hault roy triumphant	Nous est donné par mandement plaisant	x	
80	81r	Maschure	Povres humains vous estiez residens	Monstres crueux et rage tyrannique		
81	81v	Cousture	Vierge pucelle tu est bien a reprendre			
82	82r	Cousture	Quelle femme au veille testament			
83	82v	Alleyne	Par toy dame sur toutes la plus belle	Car ton concept par divine facture	x	x
84	83r	André de la Vigne	Royne des cieux et des anges princesse			
85	83v	André de la Vigne	Né et nourri pour la redemption			
86	84r	André de la Vigne	Pour nous Dieu feist de Jesucrist la mere			
87	84v	André de la Vigne	Triumphante saincte conception			
88	85r	André de la Vigne	Sans macule vous estes toute necte	Royne sans per que ciel durera		

[1] No. 66 appears to have been a scribal error. It begins with the first line of No. 67, but the text rest of the *rondeau* is that of No. 65

Table II

Heidelberg Universitätsbibliothek cpg 680

Manuscript containing pre-Reformation Meistersang from Augsburg. Included here are all those songs that make reference to the Virgin Mary. In all cases the author is unknown. The number given is that from Wunderle's edition:

Wunderle, Elisabeth, ed., *Die Sammlung von Meisterliedern in der Heidelberger Handschrift cpg 680: Edition und Kommentar*, Göppinger Arbeiten zur Germanistik, 584 (Göppingen: Kümmerle, 1993)

Number	*RSM*	Ton	Incipit	Theme	Bounded Imagery	Artisanal Imagery
3	Bop/1/561	Boppe's Hofton	Do Jesus, der liebe got, gefangen wart	Compassio Mariae		
6	Bop/1/549b	Boppe's Hofton	Ich wolt, das recht in allen landen wäre gar	Schulkunst		x
7	Frau/4/500c	Frauenlob's Grüner Ton	Her Simeon, der wise	Presentation		
22	KonrW/8/4b	Konrad von Würzburg's Blauer Ton	Maria, hochgelopter nam	Marienpreis	x	x
23	Marn/1/508	Marner's Goldener Ton	Maria, ich sing dein hohes lob	Marienpreis	x	x
37	Ungle/2/1	Ungelehrter's Fremder Ton	Ist imandt hie, der mit mir singen welle	Schulkunst		
38	Walt/24/8	Walther's Übergoldener Ton	Ich sing, als ich gedrincke	Sto VIII: Marienpreis	x	
39A	Ung/1/10a	Ungelehrtes' Pflugweise	Lucas schreibt, der ewangelist	Nativity		x
40A	Lesch9/9c	Lesch's Zirkelweise	Was hilfft mich, daz ich singe?	Riddle	x	
42	Regb/8/1c	Regenbogen's Leidton	Maria, muter, reine meit	Marienpreis	x	x
44	NachtK/6/5	Konrad Nachtigall's Sanfter Ton	Ich will der keuschen maget rein	Seven Joys	x	x
49	Frau/33/6b	Frauenlob's Zugweise	Jhesus der ging zu schol mit andern kinden	Jesus' childhood		
50A	Regb/2/26b	Regenbogen's Grauer Ton	Wo wort und craft	Salvation History	x	
52B	Reg/1/564c	Regenbogen's Briefweise	Geseng mich heut der got, der mich beschaffen hat!	Petitions		

Table III
Bibliothèque National de France, français 145
Manuscript containing winning *chants royaux* from the *Puy Notre-Dame'd'Amiens* offered to Louise de Savoy 1517.
Table produced with the help of *JONAS, Répertoire des textes et des manuscrits médiévaux d'oc et d'oïl* (Institut de recherche et d'Histoire des Textes, 2016) < https://jonas.irht.cnrs.fr/>, and the digitised manuscript https://gallica.bnf.fr/view3if/ga/ark:/12148/btv1b8426257z [accessed 10 August 2023]

Number	Folio	Year	Maistre	Incipit	Refrain
1	2r	1517	Written by Nicolas de la Mothe		
2	3r	1466	Martin Davennes	Precognoissant divine sapience	Seel royal ou Dieu print forme humaine
3	4r	1491	Robert de Cambrin	Quant Carmentis de science anoblie	Soubz l'eternel recteur sage regente
4	5r	1487	Jehan Rouhault	Le roy d'Egipte a toutte diligence	Vierge Assenach du vray saulveur espeuse
5	6r	1493	Jean Dardre	L'home premier du beau jour d'innocence	Aube du jour qui le monde illumine
6	7r	1502	Pierre du Mas	Le ciel reçoit digne formosite	Soleil rendant eternelle lumiere
7	8r	1497	Jean de Seint-Delis	Dieu cognoissant la grande plenitude	De mer estoille adreschant l'homme a glore
8	9r	1470	Jean Lebarbier	Humain lignage en desolation	Harpe rendant souveriane armonie
9	10r	1474	Jehan Marchant	Enfin des temps Dieu composition	Calice esleut au divin sacrifice
10	11r	1492	Adrien de Henencourt	Du bon Laban patriarche honorable	De vray paix tresoriere excellente
11	12r	1490	Pierre Coustellier	Dieu eternel quant par puissance immense	Ciel contenant lumiere glorieuse
12	13r	1478	Martin Martin	Le premier homme esprins de ambition	Terre donnant fruict de grace et de glore
13	14r	1485	Jacques Lengles	Par l'excessive et criminelle offense	De terre et ciel triumphante princesse
14	15r	1477	Jehan Obry	L'homme premier mys en la belle sente	Puy d'yeae vive aux humains pourfitable
15	16r	1484	Jehan du Gard	Sus une isle de mere en paine austere	Isle de mer d'amenité remplie
16	17r	1509	Nicole de la Couture	Le psalmiste voeullant par excellence	Mer spacieuse au viateur propice
17	18r	1480	Jehan Bertin	Artaxerxes roy par sa seignourie	Grenier rempli du sel de sapience
18	19r	1483	Vincent le Cat	La royne Vasti honteusement	Plaisant Hester du Roy des cieulx eslute
19	20r	1495	Jean de Flandres	David voyant l'obprobrieuse injure	Du vray David fonde victorieuse
20	21r	1499	Antoine de Cocquerel	Adam estant au jardin delectable	Arbre portant fruict d'eternelle vie

21	22r	1488	Robert Bigand	Ung roy auquel fut jadiz faict offense	De l'angle du grand conseil consistore
22	23r	1471	Jean de Bery	De pellicans trouvons double maniere	Au pellican forest solacieuse
23	24r	1501	Jean le Caron	Pour subvenir a la necessité	Sacre ampoule a l'unction royale
24	25r	1498	Robert de Fontaines	L’escripture saincte faict mention	Au gendre humain consolable fontaine
25	26r	1500	Arnoul Jacquemin	En Bethleen une cisterne avoit	Digne cisterne a l'eaue desiree
26	27r	1479	Fremin le Normand	L'homme jadis sa parfaicte santé	Medicinalle et fructueuse olive
27	28r	1489	Estienne le Vasseir	Salomon roy parlant mistiquement	Le jardin clos ou crut le vray laurier
28	29r	1496	Fremin Pinguael	Le unicorne est en rigeur si poissant	A l'unicorne agreable pucelle
29	30r	1476	Jean de Lattre	Quant Moyse de servitude osta	Du feu d'amour columne lumineuse
30	31r	1473	Robert Faverel	Car faulte d'eaue affliction dolente	Pierre en desert produisant eaue vive
31	32r	1508	Robert de Cocquerel	L'homme premier mys au chemin notable	Du seur chemin infallible monjoye
32	33r	1486	Jean de Saisseval	Salomon fit ung lavoir composer	Lavoir rendant parfaict purite
33	34r	1482	Jean Matissart	Entre les mons ou David nous incite	Mont auquel Dieu s'aparut aux humains
34	35r	1505	Robert Rouache	Dieu tout poissant monarche insuperable	De dons divins liberale boursiere
35	36r	1512	Jacques le Coustellier	En Phenice prochaine de Judee	Mont de Liban a l'homme consolable
36	37r	1504	Jean le Prevost	Pharaon roy pervers et tirannique	Au souverain Moyse humble fiscelle
37	38r	1494	Simon de Conti	En Babilonne a ung jardin notable	Balsme donnant oudeur aromatique
38	39r	1506	Pierre Peredieu	Quant l'homme estoit innocent et sans vice	Siege au grant maistre administrant science
39	40r	1507	Nicolas Boulanger	Le grant forgeur de la gloire infinie	Forge ordonne au souverain chief d'oeuvre
40	41r	1503	Pierre Vilain	Eternel Dieu roy du throne celique	Court souverayne administrant justice
41	42r	1511	Antoine de Rocourt	L'archelipe divine intelligence	Au souverian seigneur de tout le monde
42	43r	1513	Pierre Cousin	Dieu offensé par l'homme miserable	Clavigere du royaume celeste
43	44r	1514	Michel Laloyer	Le roy des royes par divine clemence	Aux desvestus gracieuse drapiere
44	45r	1510	Gilles Damourette	Le plasinateur a sa similitude	Seur bolvert contre tous ennemyes
45	46r	1515	Antoire Louvel	Quant l'homme estoit en l'estat de innocence	Mere de grace et de misericorde
46	47r	1461	Guy de Tallemas	Dieu forma l’homme a sa similitude	Lampe rendant en tenebres lumiere
47	48r	1469	les Maistres de la confrérie	Le Roy des Roys veant en fin de temps	Des christiens excellente baniere
48	49r	1458	Jean Framery	Dieu un miroir faire predisposa	Miroir de foy d'amour et d'esperance

Table IV

Vidoue Recueil of poems presented at the Rouen *Puy de l'Immaculée Conception*, printed in Paris 1525. The *chants royaux. Palinods présentés au Puy de Rouen : recueil de Pierre Vidoue, 1525 / précédé d'une introduction par E. de Robillard de Beaurepaire* (Rouen: Léon GY, 1897) https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k424468q.

Number	Author	Year	Prize	First Line	Palinod
1	André de la Vigne	1511	Palme	Ou est celuy tressouveraine mere	Royne des cieux et princesse des anges
2	Guillaume Cretin	1513	Débattu	L'altitonant supreme plasmateur	Temple construict par divin artifice
3	Guillaume Cretin	1521		Qu'est de besoing aux thomistes apprendre	Sans blasme aulcun: de couple originel
4	Guillaume Cretin	Unknown		L'extreme dueil de noire couverture	La fleur de liz preservee entre espines
5	Guillaume Cretin	1520	Palme	Apres fonder universelle estude	Rigle infallible en tous cas approuvee
6	Jean Marot	1522		Apres que Dieu eust les haultz cielz parfaitz	La porte close ou peché n'eust entree
7	Jean Marot	1521	Debattu	Pour traicter paix entre Dieu et nature	L'humanité joincte a divinité
8	Nicole Ravenier	1500	Palme	Pour reparer l'offence et la ruyne	Vaisseau esleu preservé de tout vice
9	Dom Nicole Lescarre	1522		Le bon Jacob fuyant vice mondain	Le droit baston rendant force a vieillesse
10	Dom Nicole Lescarre	1522		L'air putrefaict mortel et veneneux	Sans estre assise en la chaire de peste.
11	Dom Nicole Lescarre	1524	Palme	Baptiste sainct de Dieu herault disert	Le sainct desert plain de manne angelique
12	Dom Nicole Lescarre	1515		Le filz de Amos rempli de prophetie	Mont distillant/paix/salut/grace et gloire
13	Dom Nicole Lescarre	Unknown		Hardy pillage en ses faictz violent	Marle rendant terre fertile et grasse
14	Dom Nicole Lescarre	1513	Palme	Cessez David cessez roy pacifique	Le lucz rendant souveraine harmonie
15	Dom Nicole Lescarre	Unknown		Torment despit le canonnier d'enfer	Le chevalier a la forte bombarde
16	Pierre Avril	1521		Ung fin pescheur gectant jadis ses rethz	Le beau daulpin qui ne fut jamais prins
17	Pierre Avril	1524	Debattu	Le souverain en sa grant court premiere	La noble court rendant a tous iustice
18	Nicole Osmont	1510		Le formateur du hault ciel astrifere	Sphere monstrant tous les secretz des cieulx
19	Jacques Le Lieur	1522	Palme	Ung papillon en plaisir et leesse	D'ung povre ver triumphante vesture
20	Jean Alyne	1512	Palme	Au val profond de ce bas territore	Le seur repos: du grand tresor des cieulx
21	Jean Alyne	1510	Débattu	Combien que Adam par sa transgression	Pour le tout beau: la plus belle du monde
22	Guillaume Columbe	1500	Débattu	O vous normans qui par chascune année	Maison de Dieu de peché separee

23	Richard Bonneannee	1497	Débattu	Le seul vouloir de divine puyssance	Pour son plaisir: Dieu la fist toute belle
24	Nicole le Vestu	1512	Débattu	Dieu prevoyant Sathan sedicieux	Le parc d'honneur/muny de toute grace
25	Nicole le Vestu	1523	Palme	Okghan tresdocte en art mathematique	Mottet exquis/chef d'oeuvre de nature
26	Nicole Aubert	1521	Palme	Plusieurs quantons d'hommes barbariens	Sans lesion/a passé par les picques
27	Pierre Le Lieur	1515	Palme	Pere d'orguiel maudict et detestable	Saincte cité: contre Sathan fermee
28	Nicole Turbot	Unknown		Phyffres sonnez trompettes et clerons	La France terre: appartenant au roy
29	Guillaume Thibault	1522		Montez au puy montez grand Ptolomee	Le hault soleil: qui luict sur tout le monde.
30	Guillaume Thibault	1523	Débattu	Les ennemys de la chair virginale	Du hault seigneur: la coulumne tresforte
31	Unattributed	Unknown		Le fier tyrant chef de la grosse armée	Le regne franc: de la loy tributaire.
32	Guillaume Thibault	Unknown		Quant Belial procureur infernal	De la grand loy/Marie est exemptee
33	Nicole Turbot	1522		Le roy Xerses magnanime et puissant	La royne fut exempte d'estre prise
34	Nicole Turbot	1511	Débattu	Tous les arbres furent seches d'yvers	Le laurier verd: tout beau par excellence.
35	Jacques du Parc (Nicole Lescarre?)	1514	Palme	Pour triumpher sur la morsure austere	Cloistre de paix: sans enuye et murmure
36	Jacques du Parc (Mathurin du Parc?)	1514	Débattu	Ung bon pasteur/de bercail amoureux	La brebiette: et l'aigneau sans macule
37	Jacques du Parc (N. Osmont?)	1514-16		Je te salue en toute reverence	De ung filz tout beau: la mere toute belle
38	Innocent Tourmente	1522		Le tresgrant roy ayant biens a puissance	Elle a retraict: le franc fief par desbours.
39	Innocent Tourmente	Unknown		Ung grand orfebure ayant de tous metaulx	Le desire: en fin or de salut
40	Pierre le Chevallier	1522	Débattu	Dieu qui voulut prendre humaine nature	Conception/plus divine que humaine.
41	Crygnon de Dieppe	1522		Le bon seigneur/qui le logis gouverne	Le beau vaisseau plain de bon vin de grace
42	Crygnon de Dieppe	1522		Dieu par Moyse en exaltant sa gloire	Le vestement precieux: de grand prebestre.
43	Guygnard apothicaire	1522		Quant le soleil de la gloire eternelle	L'air cler et pur: venant du port de grace
44	Guygnard apothicaire	1522		Dames d'honneur qui voulez voir les tours	Forte amazone: aux tournoys courageuse
45	Picot	1522		Ou prendrons nous povre necessité	La saincte salle: ou Dieu prend nourriture.
46	Guillaume Roger	1522		Troys nobes roys munis de sapience	Source d'eau doulce: au parmy de la mer
47	Clement Marot	1521		Lors que le roy par grand desir et aire	La digne couche: ou le roy reposa
48	Jacques Fillastre	1524		Le grand evesque en l'eglise rommaine	Le grand decret: d'auctorité divine

49	Busquet	Unknown		Par le Sathan cuydant avoir victoire	Exemption/de tache originelle
50	Tasserie	Unknown		Le grand peché trespervers et inique	Liz virginal: de Dieu reclinatoire

Table V:
Rouen Bibliothèque Municipale Y226[a]
Table produced with the help of *JONAS, Répertoire des textes et des manuscrits médiévaux d'oc et d'oïl* (Institut de recherche et d'Histoire des Textes, 2016) < https://jonas.irht.cnrs.fr/>, and the digitised manuscript https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b100528468?rk=150215;2 [accessed 20 April 2023]

Page	Work	Author	Incipit	Refrain
1-12	Calendar			
13-21	*Pater Noster* Paraphrase	Jean Molinet	Pater Noster vray amateur	
22-31	*Ave Maria* paraphrase	Jean Molinet	Ave angelique salut	
31-37	*Ave Maria* paraphrase	Jean Trottinet	Ave fleur des precieux cieux	
37-57	Declamation sur l'Évangile 'Missus Est'	Guillaume Alexis	Ainsy qu'on va seul son ennuy passat	
57-65	*Les Heures de la Conception Nostre Dame en françois*	Guillaume Tasserie	Domine labia mea aperies	
65	Rondeau	Unknown	Je t'ay en pensée	
65-69	Chant Royal sur *Obscuro te*	Unknown	Je te supplie dame saincte Marie	Fay que ton filz paradiz m'accorde
69	Rondeau	Unknown	Je vous supplie doulce vierge benigne	
70-74	Oraison de Nostre Dame	Unknown	Si la splendeur plus que incomprehensible	En qui beaultez toutes sont belles
74	Rondeau	Unknown	Toute belle sans reprouve	
74	Rondeau	Unknown	Belle toute en beaulté same	
75-81	Oraison de Nostre Dame (Lay)	Arnoul Graban	En protestant de la haulte excellence	
81-88	Lai en honneur de Nostre Dame	Achilles Caulier	O digne preciosité	
88-92	Oraison de Nostre Dame faict sur Sub Tuum Praesidium	Unknown	Soubz l'estandart de toy vierge ancelle	
92-98	Oraison de Nostre Dame	Unknown	Doulce vierge toute plaine de joye	
98-102	Oraison de Nostre Dame	Unknown	Vierge qui toutes aultes passe	
102-104	Missus Est	Charles Morel	Du hault rocher de vraye eternité	
104-106	Rondeau de Nostre Dame	Unknown	Vierge enfantant oultre loy de nature	

106-107	Rondeau a Nostre Seigneur	Unknown	En ceste croix attaché piedz et mains	
107-110	Oraison du Pecheur	Jean Meschinot	O Pere par creation	
110-111	Rondeau de Nostre Dame (Ballade)	Unknown	Qui me crea je l'ay conceu	Mere de Dieu que veult on plus
112-114	Dialogue de l'annunciation	Unknown	Que dites vous vierge pucelle?	
115-118	Chant Royal de la Magdalene	Unknown	Apres regrets et piteuses clamours	Elle a bien sceut la meilleur party prendre
118-123	Oraison de Saint Nicholas	Unknown	Demostones eloquent orateur	
123-123	Oraison de Saint Nicholas	Unknown	Ajoinctes mains les deux genoux a terre	
125-127	Chant royal de la Passion	Unknown	Qui de son cueur vouldra lermes tyrer	Le bien du corps et le salut de l'ame
128-132	O bone Iesu per tuam misericordiam	Unknown	O bon Jesus fontaine de science	
132-137	Oraison tresdevote de Saincte Barbe	Jacques le Lieur	Le hault espoir, l'amour, l'affection	
138-140	Chant royal (Ave Maria… Virgo Serena)	Jacques le Lieur	Salut te rends vierge sans vilité	De tout peché exempte et preservee
140-142	Chant royal (Ave Maria)	Nicole Osmont	Je te salue en tout reverence	D'ung filz tout beau une mere toute bele
143-145	Chant royal (Ave Regina Caelorum)	Nicolas Lescarre	Royne des cieux tressaincte et preesleu	Le firmament du soleil de justice
146-148	Chant royal (of St Sebastien)	Unknown	Hault et puissant prince chevalere	Respit de mort et securité de vie