

# A Re-Assessment of Text-Image Relationships in Christine de Pizan's Didactic Works

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## **Short Abstract**

Although the works of Christine de Pizan have been of interest to scholars for some time, technological advances and initiatives to make digital copies of manuscripts available online have only recently enabled close comparisons between the visual programmes of her works to be made. This thesis demonstrates that detail usually considered secondary or 'paratextual' in Christine's manuscripts actually formed a carefully-constructed part of the work itself that Christine explicitly asks her audience to read. Through 'reading' the text and image simultaneously, the visual programme proves to comprise additional layers of meaning that were woven into her didactic works. These meanings can serve to supplement the educational and moral aims of the works, or, conversely, can be inconsistent with the message conveyed in the text, leading the reader-viewer to contemplate further on the matters presented and form their own opinions on them. Sometimes, meaning is created by intervisual connections with pre-existing iconography, such that viewers may be creating associations between the miniatures seen in Christine's manuscripts and other imagery, leading them to make certain associations – this is notably the case in author-portraits of Christine. As manuscripts prepared under the author's supervision came to be copied, changes were made to the iconographic programmes, testifying to and enabling different types of readings to take place. The findings of this thesis have implications for editorial practices of medieval works in general, as these tend to circulate in editions without the visual

programme, providing modern readers with only a partial view of the complete work.



## **Extended Abstract**

For some time, Christine de Pizan has been accredited with some degree of involvement in the preparation of the visual programme of her author-manuscripts. As well as being the author behind her texts, she is also therefore one of the creative forces behind the iconographic aspect of her works. Despite this recognised participation on the author's part, and despite the general recent trend for considering text-image relations in Medieval Studies in general, Christine's works have not been extensively examined in terms of the relationship between her textual and visual programmes. This is the principal aim of the present study: to consider the ways in which reading the text and image together might affect our reading of Christine's didactic works. How do the iconographic programmes serve the didactic aims of Christine's works? I also seek to understand who Christine was writing for, and how she expected her works to be read. What consequences does this have for the way in which modern readers approach them? Such an examination would not easily have been done before manuscripts containing her works began to be digitised in the last decade; it also would have been difficult to undertake such an analysis before the publication of the *Album Christine de Pizan* in 2012, which contains vital information concerning the dates of the various manuscripts and of the artists responsible for the creation of the iconography.

Any extant scholarship in the area of text-image relations in Christine's works has tended to focus only on individual works, whereas this thesis focuses on

a number of her didactic works. It also includes manuscript copies and editions made after the author's lifetime in its analysis. The reason for focusing on didactic works is that in seeking to convey a lesson or moral to their reader, they best exemplify the slippage in meaning that can be brought about by a lack of concordance between text and image. Furthermore, the didactic intent of the work is often communicated to the reader-viewer through their iconographic programmes, although precisely how has not previously been analysed.

Despite Christine's being widely associated with a particular representational convention (wearing a blue dress and white bi-horned wimple), leading to conjectures being made about the historical person of Christine de Pizan, author-portraits in her works have not been subject to sufficient in-depth analysis. Yet it has consequences for the way in which readers conceive of the relationship between the author and her textual counterpart, the narrator-protagonist Cristine. The association of the author with a particular representation therefore forms the first line of enquiry of this thesis. I seek to ascertain first of all whether Christine is indeed represented in such an unvarying manner, what united such depictions, and where and why variant forms of the portrait might be used. This investigation leads me to the Maître de la Cité des Dames (MCD), who is almost solely responsible for all depictions of Christine in blue, and to analyse Christine's relationship with this particular Master. Carrying out a chronological analysis of her author-manuscripts, I found that Christine increasingly used this Master as her patronage and position within the royal household became more secure, a fact that suggests Christine must have liked the representational convention which MCD had developed for her, and perhaps even encouraged the creation of a Christine de Pizan 'brand'. However, the identity of

the figure in these portraits is not always clear, and I analyse several cases in which it is not evident whether the figure represented is indeed the author, or simply another female figure depicted wearing the same costume. I term such representations ‘ambiguous author-figures’. Through analysing the function of several such figures, I demonstrate that one of their functions is to act as manicules within the manuscript, that are used to attract the reader’s attention towards a particularly important point. This analysis bears consequences for how the function of author-portraits is conceived in general, and enables the slippery connection between the extra-textual historical author and the textual implied author to be rethought. The discrepancy between the historical Christine and her textual double is demonstrated through comparing historical data concerning the status of her family with the stance adopted in her texts. Although author-portraits created after Christine’s death have previously been seen as untrue representations of the historical author’s status, on the contrary, such depictions may in fact be truer to life than has been assumed.

It is necessary for a re-evaluation of text-image relationships in Christine’s didactic works to devote considerable space to the most heavily illuminated of those works, the *Epistre Othea* (*EO*). This work has previously been subject to two book-length studies of the text-image relations it presents, which have respectively highlighted the political undertones it presents and the cinematic effect of its iconography. My approach concerns the reading of the work itself: I seek to elucidate how *EO* would have been read by a contemporary audience, what its didactic aims are, and how they are conveyed through text and image. The didactic aspect of this work has previously been understated, which has neglected and simplified the complex lessons it seeks to convey. Far from giving its reader-

viewer straightforward precepts to follow, reading the text and image together reveals they are presented with moral dilemmas on which to reflect. In a format that draws heavily on the medieval reading practice of exegesis, Christine aims above all to teach the reader of *EO* how to read: this reading doesn't simply involve the viewing of text and image on a page, but meditating widely on the questions it provokes and reflecting on one's own behaviour. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the ten *histoires* that are inspired by the Ten Commandments, which would be expected to present elementary, monologic advice with little or no room for interpretation. However, in the text and image of this section of *EO*, Christine renders what I term 'alternative commandments' (that can outrightly contradict the Decalogue) more prominent, both textually and visually. Although an element of the teaching involved in *EO* was religious in nature, the layout of later editions testifies to a greater interest in the mythological material, demonstrating that there were several ways to read this intriguing work.

One of the main findings of this thesis is the role of pluralism in Christine's didactic texts. Pluralism and multiplicity are may be seen in a number of ways: in terms of multiple meanings for the reader to discover, and multiple didactic personas. This is evidenced through the number of female guiding figures encountered in a variety of works. Indeed, I show that women in Christine's works are often associated with didacticism or teaching, and I consider in detail her textual double's, Cristine's, parents as represented in the *Livre de la mutacion de Fortune* as a case in point. The mother figure(s) in this text have previously been seen as seeking to hinder Cristine's education, whilst the father is concerned that she receive suitable schooling. However, closely examining the relevant passages shows the opposite to be the case: whilst two female figures actively ensure that



Cristine receives a proper education, the father is notably absent. Multiplicity is also evident in terms of the audience for whom Christine was writing. In a number of cases, the audience that Christine purports to be addressing in her textual dedication, in dedication miniatures, or from what has been supposed from ownership marks, sits at odds with the type of audience for whom the didactic messages contained within the works themselves seem relevant. A single figure who frequently appears in Christine's *œuvre* symbolises the connection between women and didacticism, multiplicity, and readerships: Minerva. Four of the more extensive textual and visual depictions of Minerva found in Christine's works demonstrate her configuration as a figure able to appeal to and instruct both genders. Even in texts that appear to be addressed to an audience of one gender or the other, it is through Minerva that Christine subtly addresses an audience of both genders. This reconfigures the kinds of works we imagine male and female audiences to have read in the Middle Ages, and implies there might have been more overlap in terms of each gender's reading material than otherwise expected. I also seek to resolve the long-standing question for whom *EO* was composed, widely assumed to be a male prince. My consequent analysis finds that firstly, it is unlikely to have been written with a single addressee in mind and second, its audience as configured by Christine included women.

The findings of this study offer a new perspective on text-image relationships in Christine de Pizan's works more broadly, whilst opening up several potential fields for further investigation. Foremost amongst these is the question of pluralistic views in didactic literature. It remains to be seen whether this is a feature of Christine's works alone, or a more commonly seen feature, of which further examples might be uncovered. This study contributes towards

existing discussions of Christine's connections with her patrons, and offers a better understanding of her relationships with the various Masters with whom she collaborated in early fifteenth-century Paris, in particular MCD, whose increasing collaboration with Christine testifies to her increasingly becoming aware of the potential for visual material to convey meaning. This thesis also stresses the importance of disseminating Christine's works in their complete format, or in a manner that makes readers aware of the presence and content of images, as well as textual layout and manuscript tradition, in modern editions. When an edition of a given work by Christine is under preparation, editors will often use as a base manuscript the latest copy of that work to have been revised by the author. The fact that these can contain visual programmes also revised under the author's supervision suggests that they should not be excluded from modern editions. Without such material, modern students, scholars, and readers are only granted part of the picture.

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## **Abbreviations**

### **Primary Texts**

AC:	<i>Le Livre de l'avisio[n] Cristine</i>
CD:	<i>Le Livre de la cité des dames</i>
CE:	<i>Le Livre du Chevalier errant</i>
CLE:	<i>Le Livre du chemin de longue estude</i>
CP:	<i>Le Livre du corps de policie</i>
CV:	<i>Le Livre des fais et bonnes meurs du sage roy Charles V</i>
DA:	<i>Le Debat de deux amans</i>
DR:	<i>Le Dit de la rose</i>
DVA:	<i>Le Livre du duc des Vrais Amans</i>
EO:	<i>Le Livre de l'epistre Othea</i>
EDA:	<i>L'Epistre au dieu d'Amours</i>
EM:	<i>Les Enseignemens moraux</i>
ER:	<i>L'Epistre a la Reine</i>
ERR:	<i>Les Epistres sur le Rommant de la Rose</i>
FA:	<i>Le Livre des fais d'armes et de chevalerie</i>
LP:	<i>Le Livre de la paix</i>
MF:	<i>Le Livre de la mutacion de Fortune</i>
OM:	<i>L'Ovide moralisé</i>
OND:	<i>L'Oroison de nostre Dame</i>
PM:	<i>Les Proverbes moraulx</i>
RR:	<i>Le Roman de la Rose</i>
TJ:	<i>Le Livre des trois jugemens</i>
TV:	<i>Le Livre des trois Vertus</i>

### **Masters**

BJR:	Maître Bleu-Jaune-Rose
MAS:	Maître au Safran
MBF:	Maître de Bedford
MCD:	Maître de la Cité des Dames
MCV:	Maître du Couronnement de la Vierge
MDE:	Maître d'Egerton
MDG:	Maître de Giac
MDP:	Maître de la Pastoure
MEO:	Maître de l'Epître Othéa
MPE:	Maître de la Première Epître

## Bibliographical

- ACP: Gilbert Ouy, Christine Reno, and Inès Villela-Petit, *Album Christine de Pizan* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2012)
- BL: British Library
- BnF: Bibliothèque Nationale de France
- BSB: Bayerische Staatsbibliothek
- CNRS: Le Centre national de recherche scientifique
- CRMH: *Cahiers de recherches médiévales et humanistes*
- KBR: Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique
- MMV: Marilyn Desmond and Pamela Sheingorn, *Myth, Montage and Visuality in Late Medieval Manuscript Culture: Christine de Pizan's Epistre Othea* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2013)
- P&P: Sandra Hindman, *Christine de Pizan's "Epitre Othea": Painting and Politics at the Court of Charles VI* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1986)



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## **Introduction**

En la sale, que j'ay descripte,  
Vi l'istoire de Troye escripte,  
Et d'or et d'azur les ymages  
Bien pourtrais, et tous les dommages,  
Que se firent Griex et Troyens,  
Et quelx en furent les moyens.  
Tres tout devisoit l'escripture,  
Qui estoit soubz la pourtraiture.<sup>1</sup>

In the above-cited passage from the *Livre de la Mutacion de Fortune*, in a scene reminiscent of Aeneas viewing the story of Troy illustrated on the walls of the temple of Juno, the narrator-protagonist Cristine stands in the Salle de Fortune, admiring the paintings on the walls and the stories written beneath them.<sup>2</sup> The subject-matter of the images that are then described is encyclopaedic in scope: they include allegorical, philosophical, and legendary topics, representing figures as varied as Philosophie and Yconomique, biblical events such as God's creation of the world in seven days, the foundation of Babylon, as well as the more secular theme of the Trojan legends that appear to be depicted in full.<sup>3</sup> Over the course of the following 14,000 lines and 116 chapters, individual figures and events are

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<sup>1</sup> Christine de Pizan, *Le Livre de la mutacion de Fortune*, 4 vols., ed. Suzanne Solente (Paris: Picard, 1959-1966), vol. 3 (1964), 25:14,059-14,066.

<sup>2</sup> Any distinction between the author and narrator-protagonist in Christine de Pizan's works is never straightforward and fraught with ambiguities, particularly when dealing with semi- or pseudo-autobiographical texts. Nevertheless, in an attempt to distinguish between these two positions, and so as to avoid any implication that the extra- and intratextual figures are one and the same, throughout this thesis I refer to the author as 'Christine' and to the narrator-protagonist as 'Cristine'.

<sup>3</sup> As remarked by Kevin Brownlee, the inspiration behind this scene is undoubtedly Virgil's *Aeneid*, in which Aeneas sees the story of the fall of Troy depicted on the Temple of Juno: 'The Image of History in Christine de Pizan's *Livre de la Mutacion de Fortune*', in *Contexts: Style and Values in Medieval Art and Literature*, eds. Daniel Poirion and Nancy Freeman Regalado (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1991), 44-56. Although this scene also inspired the first book of Chaucer's *House of Fame*, it is often missing from Medieval French adaptations of the tale: see *Le Roman d'Eneas*, ed. Aimé Petit (Paris: Librairie générale française, 1997), and *Eneas, Roman du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, ed. J.-J. Salverda de Grave, 2 vols. (Paris: Edouard Champion, 1925-1929). However, the scene does feature in a more condensed form in Jean de Courcy's *La Bouquechardièrre* as found in Geneva, Bibliothèque de Genève, MS fr. 70/1, f. 196v.

developed and the stories surrounding them described in turn. The entire content of the latter two thirds of *MF* is therefore contained within and takes as its basis the images found in the Salle de Fortune.<sup>4</sup> At this point in the narrative, two of the author-manuscripts<sup>5</sup> emphasise the centrality of this scene by a miniature that represents Cristine looking at these stories in the Salle de Fortune (Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod. gall. MS 11, f. 53r: **PL. 0.1**; see also Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, fonds français MS 603, f. 127v). Rather than *seeing* them depicted in this way, the protagonist might have been represented *reading* the stories in a book, which would have been more in keeping with other works by Christine where her textual double is shown to be inspired by her readings – in the opening of the *Livre de la cité des dames*, for example. The miniature inserted here draws particular attention to the fact that this is a visual experience for the narrator, an experience in which the reader-viewer of Christine's manuscript is sharing.

The precise nature of the paintings or of the format of the stories beneath is never described exactly, so it is impossible for a reader to visualise precisely the Salle de Fortune. Instead, their subjects are said to include:

[...] les gestes  
Des grans princes et les conquestes  
De tous les regnes, qu'ilz acquistrent; [...]  
La est la vie de chacuns  
Empereurs et princes et roys,  
Et leurs estas, et leurs arrois

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<sup>4</sup> This has not been remarked on often enough, yet goes some way towards explaining the strange nature and at times encyclopedic ambitions of *MF*.

<sup>5</sup> By *author-manuscripts*, I understand those that were prepared either by or under the author's supervision. It suffices for present purposes to use this term to refer to all such manuscripts, without discerning between different levels of the author's involvement in their production. Olivier Delsaux extensively distinguishes the different forms that Christine's involvement in the production or composition of her works and manuscripts may have taken, making distinctions that will be valuable tools in discussions of the processes surrounding the composition of text and the manufacture of manuscripts: *Manuscrits et pratiques autographes chez les écrivains français de la fin du moyen âge: L'Exemple de Christine de Pizan* (Geneva: Droz, 2013). See also Chapter 2, 142.

Pourtraict, et leurs propres figures,  
Et trestoutes les aventures,  
Qui en leur vies leur advint [...] <sup>6</sup>

and Cristine tells us that:

Je y vi, par belles arrengees,  
Toutes les sciences donnees  
De Dieu, par bel ordre ordenees <sup>7</sup>

The subjects are presented to the reader only abstractly; neither the number of paintings that the room comprises nor details about the compositions are given. Yet the description and function of the images and their captions in this scene are striking for two reasons. Firstly, insofar as both contain and relate the same stories, events, and characters, one textually, the other visually, the *Salle de Fortune* as it is represented within *MF* forms a double of Christine's own book. Secondly, this scene exemplifies what will form one of the central arguments of this thesis: that images in Christine's work offer vast potential for interpretation and extrapolation. This thereby constitutes a foundational scene for the way in which images in Christine's manuscripts operate, and demonstrates that text and image are to be interpreted together by the reader-viewer.

### **Text and Image in the Works of Christine de Pizan**

The extent of the iconographic repertoire that Christine's manuscripts contain warrants further attention than it has so far garnered. The manuscripts that make up her corpus of illuminated author-manuscripts alone feature 374 miniatures in total.<sup>8</sup> Whilst fifteen of these only feature a single miniature (located at the

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<sup>6</sup> *Fortune*, vol. 2 (1959), 101:7,107-7,119.

<sup>7</sup> *Fortune*, vol. 2, 104:7,184-7,186.

<sup>8</sup> Thirty-six of Christine's fifty-four author-manuscripts feature at least one miniature: Gilbert Ouy, Christine Reno, and Inès Villela-Petit, *Album Christine de Pizan* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2012). There is not universal agreement as to which manuscripts of Christine's works are author-manuscripts. My analysis takes the manuscripts examined in *ACP* as its basis; however, various scholars have also deemed the following to have been prepared in Christine's Paris scriptorium: i) Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, MS 11065-73 (a miscellany containing the *Livre de Prudence*,

opening of a new work), and the majority feature under a dozen illuminations, a few manuscripts stand as outliers, with the highest number in a single manuscript to be found in London, British Library, MS Harley 4431, now divided into two volumes that together hold 133 painted images. Since Christine became a focus of sustained scholarly interest in the 1960s, two book-length studies have appeared that concentrate on the iconographic programme of one of her works, to which the present thesis owes a great debt: Sandra Hindman's *Christine de Pizan's "Epistre Othea": Painting and Politics at the Court of Charles VI* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1986); and Marilynn Desmond and Pamela Sheingorn's *Myth, Montage and Visuality in Late Medieval Manuscript Culture: Christine de Pizan's Epistre Othea* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003). Besides these two publications, focus on the visual programmes in Christine's works has been scarce, though what has appeared has been highly informative and undertaken by well-known Christine scholars and/or art historians. These have generally taken the form of a series of small-scale studies, often focused on a single work.<sup>9</sup> That more

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several works by Jean Gerson, and Guillaume de Deguileville); ii) London, BL, Add. MS 31841 (containing *CD* and *Le Livre des trois Vertus*). James C. Laidlaw has argued for this being an author-manuscript: 'Un Manuscrit original du *Livre des Trois Vertus*: Londres, British Library, MS. Additional 31841', in *Une femme de lettres au moyen âge: Études autour de Christine de Pizan*, eds. Liliane Dulac and Bernard Ribémont (Orléans: Paradigme, 1995), 399-409. However, for Delsaux, this appears to be a facsimile of one of Christine's author-manuscripts: *Manuscrits*, 332; iii) Paris, BnF, MS fr. 604, a copy of Chantilly, Musée Condé, MS 493, that Laidlaw considers to be the third redaction of the *Livre de Christine*, though not prepared by the author: 'Christine de Pizan – An Author's Progress', *Modern Language Review*, 78 (1983), 532-550; iv) Paris, BnF, MS fr. 1187, a manuscript of *Le Livre de l'epistre Othea*, unlikely to be an author-manuscript, in an unfamiliar hand, and containing no illustrations. Inclusion in *ACP* does not signify a manuscript is autograph in its entirety. For example, Paris, BnF, MS fr. 580 is included for containing an autograph copy of the *Epistre a la reine*, which takes up only one recto of the 131-folio volume.

<sup>9</sup> To cite but a few recent examples: Anne-Marie Barbier, 'Dessein avoué et intentions voilées dans les représentations allégoriques de l'*Epistre Othea* de Christine de Pizan', in *L'Allégorie dans l'art du moyen âge: Formes et fonctions. Héritages, créations, mutations: Actes du colloque du RILMA, Institut Universitaire de France (Paris, INHA, 28-29 mai 2010)*, ed. Christian Heck (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 289-303; Noriko Kobayashi, 'La Dernière étape de l'enluminure des œuvres de Christine de Pizan', *Art de l'enluminure*, 18 (2006), 2-65; Tania Van Hemelryck and Christine Reno, 'Dans l'Atelier de Christine de Pizan. Le manuscrit Harley 4431', in *Du scriptorium à l'atelier: Copistes et enlumineurs dans la conception du livre manuscrit au moyen âge*, ed. Jean-Luc Deuffic (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 267-286. Inès Villela-Petit's output in this area has been particularly valuable: in addition to



detailed investigation into text-image relations in Christine's works has not been undertaken is all the more surprising given that viewing and making comparisons between images can now be carried out so easily – thanks to the online availability of digitised copies of so many of her works, without which this project would undoubtedly not have easily taken its present shape.

Recent decades have witnessed sustained academic interest in Christine de Pizan: she continues to form the subject of at least one scholarly monograph or collection of essays every year, and enough 'Christinniens' continue to be engaged in studies surrounding her to warrant a long-standing triennial Christine de Pizan colloquium being a firm part of the medieval conference calendar. Although a great deal of Christine scholarship continues to be produced, this typically concentrates on textual aspects of her works, whose iconography is often neither acknowledged nor granted examination. This is surprising, not simply on account of the extent of the visual programmes potentially open to analysis, but also considering Christine's personal involvement in the composition and preparation of her manuscripts.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, following influential works by Meyer Schapiro, Michael Camille, and Otto Pächt,<sup>11</sup> there has been a general trend towards text-image studies in medieval and early modern literature in Latin and vernacular European languages.<sup>12</sup> This is evidenced by several publications, including a

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contributing art historical insight to *ACP*, she has published several articles, including 'L'Épître des ducs: Les Enluminures du fr. 606', *Art de l'enluminure*, 51 (December 2014), 12-65.

<sup>10</sup> This was first established by Gilbert Ouy and Christine Reno, 'Identification des autographes de Christine de Pisan', *Scriptorium*, 34 (1980), 221-238 and has continued to be corroborated by more recent evidence, such as in Delsaux, *Manuscripts*.

<sup>11</sup> Schapiro, *Words and Pictures: On the Literal and the Symbolic in the Illustration of a Text* (The Hague: Mouton, 1973); Camille, 'The Book of Signs: Writing and Visual Difference in Gothic Manuscript Illumination', *Word and Image*, 1.2 (1985), 133-148; Pächt, *The Practice of Art History: Reflections on Method* (London: Harvey Miller, 1999).

<sup>12</sup> Text-image studies are widely regarded as originating in Germany, in the works of Wolfgang Kemp, Erwin Panofsky, Fritz Saxl, and Wolfgang Stämmler, to name but a few. See Norbert H. Ott, 'Word and Image as a Field of Research: Sound Methodologies or Just a Fashionable Trend? A

variety of studies by Madeline H. Caviness,<sup>13</sup> edited volumes such as *Quand l'image relit le texte: Regards croisés sur les manuscrits médiévaux*,<sup>14</sup> and *Text/Image Relations in Late Medieval French and Burgundian Culture (Fourteenth-Sixteenth Centuries)*,<sup>15</sup> as well as smaller studies such as Adrian Armstrong, “‘Regardez bien tout au long les hystoires’: Illustration and Self-Conscious Writing in Jean Bouchet’s *Jugement poetic de l’honneur femenin*’.”<sup>16</sup>

The fact that no recent study has taken text-image relations in Christine’s works as its focus therefore appears all the more surprising given the currents of research in both of those areas. The intriguing relationship between text and image in Christine’s manuscripts was remarked on as long ago as 1981: ‘Les miniatures qui accompagnent les écrits de Christine [...] ont une iconographie plus précise que celle, généralement anodine, des œuvres de ses contemporains. Il est évident qu’elle devait souhaiter une relation plus étroite entre illustration et texte’.<sup>17</sup> Christine’s corpus of text and image provides a valuable resource in many respects: first of all, her thirty-six illuminated author-manuscripts alone represent a particularly extensive corpus of early fifteenth-century illuminations – not to mention the many richly decorated copies of her works produced after her lifetime; second, she is known to have been involved in the production of her

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Polemic from a European Perspective’, in *Visual Culture and the German Middle Ages*, eds. Kathryn Starkey and Horst Wenzel (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 15-32.

<sup>13</sup> For example, her article, ‘Gender Symbolism and Text Image Relationships: Hildegard of Bingen’s *Scivias*’, in *Translation Theory and Practice in the Middle Ages*, ed. Jeanette Beer (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1997), 71-111.

<sup>14</sup> Eds. Maud Pérez-Simon and Sandrine Héricé-Pradeau (Paris: Presses Sorbonne Nouvelle, 2013).

<sup>15</sup> Eds. Rosalind Brown-Grant and Rebecca Dixon (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015).

<sup>16</sup> *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester*, 81 (1999), 241-268. See also the works listed in Marco Mostert, ‘Reading Images and Texts: Some Preliminary Observations Instead of an Introduction’, in *Reading Images and Texts: Medieval Images and Texts as Forms of Communication: Papers from the Third Utrecht Symposium on Medieval Literacy, Utrecht, 7-9 December 2000*, eds. Mariëlle Hageman and Marco Mostert (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), 1-7 (1).

<sup>17</sup> Patrick M. de Winter, ‘Christine de Pizan, ses enlumineurs et ses rapports avec le milieu bourguignon’, *Actes du 104<sup>e</sup> congrès national des sociétés savantes. Section de philologie et d’histoire jusqu’à 1610. Bordeaux, 1979* (Paris: BnF, 1981), 335-375 (345).

manuscripts – although the degree to which that involvement extended to the iconographic programme remains to be seen and forms one of the lines of enquiry of the present study. Indeed, as the following examples show, scholarly understanding of the involvement that medieval authors had in the design of their manuscripts’ iconography is often open to question.<sup>18</sup> As a first example, in the place of illuminations, certain manuscripts of Olivier de La Marche’s *Chevalier délibéré* feature descriptions of fifteen scenes to be included in manuscripts of that work, but not only is it uncertain that these descriptions are to be attributed to La Marche himself, the programme of illustrations described was also never realised.<sup>19</sup> These descriptions do not therefore provide evidence of an active involvement in the iconographic design on the author’s part. Guillaume de Machaut provides a second example of an author whose involvement in the design of his author-manuscripts is also uncertain: although his ‘complete-works manuscripts were probably in some sense supervised by the author during their production’, his input is not known to have been so active as Christine’s – Guillaume’s hand has not, for example, been identified in his manuscripts, and may not have extended to the manuscripts’ iconographic programmes.<sup>20</sup> Finally,

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<sup>18</sup> Richard Rouse and Mary Rouse believe authors were only involved in creating textual aspects of their manuscripts, not in the design of their illuminations: *Manuscripts and their Makers: Commercial Book Producers in Medieval Paris, 1200-1500*, 2 vols. (Turnhout: Harvey Miller, 2000), vol. 1, 235-250.

<sup>19</sup> The passage concerned may be found in *Le Chevalier délibéré*, ed. Carleton W. Carroll (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 1999), 329-352. On the uncertain authorship of the descriptions, see Catherine Emerson, ‘Les Illustrations du *Chevalier délibéré*: Autoportrait ou création de personnage?’, in *L’Autoportrait dans la littérature française: Du moyen âge au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, eds. Élisabeth Gaucher-Rémond and Jean Garapon (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2013), 121-31.

<sup>20</sup> Lawrence Earp, *Guillaume de Machaut: A Guide to Research* (Hoboken: Taylor and Francis, 2013), 77. Earp suggests that the *Ovide moralisé* may have provided Machaut with a visual as well as textual source, and recommends that further research be undertaken to establish its influence: *op. cit.*, 132. For further detail of Machaut’s involvement in the preparation of his manuscripts, see Lawrence Earp, ‘Machaut’s Role in the Production of Manuscripts of his Works’, *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 42:3 (1989), 461-503 and Domenic Leo, ‘Authorial Presence in the Illuminated Machaut Manuscripts’ (unpublished PhD thesis, New York University, 2005).

evidence of some possible authorial input into the images is suggested in *Le Livre du Chevalier errant*, in which the narrator says: ‘Mais devant que je aille plus avant [...] je vous monstrey par ceste pourtraicture les .ix. preux esleuz, et après les .ix. dames qui en leur compaignie estoient et leurs armes’, an accurate description of the two illuminations that immediately follow this statement in Paris, BnF, MS fr. 12559, ff. 125r-125v.<sup>21</sup> Without presenting evidence of Thomas d’Aleran’s involvement in the design of the iconographic programme, this at least suggests that he had some input as to the content and placement of these miniatures – although Thomas’s literary corpus extends only to a single work, extant in two manuscript copies.

Christine’s involvement in preparing an extensive collection of illuminated manuscripts presents a unique case in terms of both the certainty of that involvement, and of the number of manuscripts whose production she is known to have overseen. A range of artists are known to have worked on Christine’s corpus of author-manuscripts; these were both established Parisian Masters and artisans whose works have not been seen outside that corpus. Of the artworks that these various Masters created, many of the illuminations draw on pre-existing traditions, but several of them have no known precedent, and therefore appear to have been conceived for a particular purpose in Christine’s manuscripts. If the author was as involved in designing the visual elements of her works as she was in other aspects of the textual presentation, she might also have provided instructions for these images, which would account for their originality. Where established models or traditions exist that could have been drawn on, any original miniatures were

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<sup>21</sup> Thomas d’Aleran, *Le Chevalier errant*, ed. Daniel Chaubert (Moncalieri: Centre d’études franco-italiennes, 2001), 759-760.

undoubtedly created to convey specific meanings – many of which remain to be uncovered. It then follows that the relationship between these images and the text cannot be inconsequential. But perhaps one of the most compelling reasons to carry out a study of text-image relations in Christine's works is that, on several occasions, Christine herself insists on the fact that her images must be analysed in order for the meaning of her works to be understood fully; several instances of which will be examined in the Chapters that follow.

### **The Status of Imagery**

Two main factors might offer some indication as to why Christine's works have tended to be considered predominantly in terms simply of their status as literature, rather than also acknowledged as works of art, or as objects displaying text-image relations. The first concerns the (im)possibility of seeing the images: manuscript illuminations only began to be reproduced in modern editions in the 1920s,<sup>22</sup> and in colour after World War II, before which, most scholars of medieval texts would not have been able to view illuminations outside of the manuscripts themselves.<sup>23</sup> It is easy to forget how recently it has become possible to view any of these images at all. Some were reproduced in scholarly publications, typically library catalogues or medieval art historical works, such as François Avril, *L'Enluminure à l'époque gothique: 1200-1400* (Paris: Famot, 1979); the various works by Millard Meiss are also especially valuable.<sup>24</sup> But until libraries began to

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<sup>22</sup> It was not uncommon for early printed editions of Christine's texts to reproduce illuminations of her works in woodcut form, for example: *Les Cent histoires de Troye* (Paris: Pierre Pigouchet, c. 1499); *The Book of the Body of Polycye* (London: John Skot, 1521).

<sup>23</sup> Charles Sterling, *La Peinture médiévale à Paris: 1300-1500*, 2 vols. (Paris: Bibliothèque des arts, 1987), vol. 1, 19.

<sup>24</sup> *French Painting in the Time of Jean de Berry: The Limbourgs and their Contemporaries* (New York: G. Brazillier, 1974); *French Painting in the Time of Jean de Berry: The Late Fourteenth Century and the Patronage of the Duke*, 2 vols. (London: Phaidon, 1967); together with Elizabeth Beatson, *The Belles Heures of Jean, Duke of Berry* (New York: Brazillier, 1974).

digitise their collections in the last decade,<sup>25</sup> scholars needed to undertake expensive trips to the libraries themselves, or were limited to viewing the few images that had appeared in those costly publications (themselves not readily accessible, and with the added limitation of not necessarily offering contextualising details such as the location or size of the images they reproduce).

The second factor motivating the study of the manuscript's textual, as opposed to visual, material concerns the status of these respective categories with respect to book history. Images are often considered as being paratextual or as forming part of the *paratexte*.<sup>26</sup> The prefix 'para-' of this theoretical term, coined by Gérard Genette, often implies that an element is somehow secondary or inferior to another.<sup>27</sup> When Genette coined the term *paratexte*, he understood it to be formed of two sub-categories: the *péritexte* and the *épitexte*. The *péritexte* is made up of editorial aspects found within the textual volume, including all detail located on the front cover, such as the title page, the title itself, and extending to detail such as the author's name; it also comprises all titles and subtitles, additions (such as *prières d'insérer*), dedications, epigraphs, prefaces and introductions, and the notes at the end of the volume. The *épitexte* is likewise detail that is related to the

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<sup>25</sup> The first time a manuscript was given a digital platform in its entirety is believed to have been in 2005, when the BL contributed a complete set of digital images of Christine's compilation manuscript, Harley 4431, towards James Laidlaw's 'The Making of the Queen's Manuscript' project; I am grateful to Laidlaw for sharing a history of the project with me. Details of the project may be viewed together with the images provided at <http://www.pizan.lib.ed.ac.uk> (accessed 31 October 2016). Since 2005, high-resolution images have been produced, that can be viewed at [http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=harley\\_ms\\_4431\\_f001r](http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=harley_ms_4431_f001r) (accessed 19 October 2016).

<sup>26</sup> See, for example, Keith Busby and Christopher Kleinhenz, 'Medieval French and Italian Literature: Towards a Manuscript History', in *The Medieval Manuscript Book: Cultural Approaches*, eds. Michael Johnston and Michael Van Dussen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 215-241 (224); Elizabeth Eva Leach, 'Seeing *Sens*: Guillaume de Machaut and de Melun', published online, <http://users.ox.ac.uk/~musf0058/MachautMelun.html> (accessed 31 October 2016).

<sup>27</sup> This was Genette's own view of paratextual detail: *Seuils* (Evreux: Seuil, 1987), 16. For Richard K. Emmerson, the notion that visual elements are secondary to the text is particularly prevalent amongst literary scholars: 'Middle English Literature and Illustrated Manuscripts: New Approaches to the Disciplinary and the Interdisciplinary', *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 105:1 (January 2006), 118-136 (119).

text, but it occurs in a space outside the physical book;<sup>28</sup> for Genette, this includes advertisements, interviews with the author, their correspondence, diaries, and so on. Philologists have been particularly quick to downgrade art, on which Ernst Robert Curtius was famously outspoken:

The book is more real by far than the picture. Here we have a truly ontological relationship and real participation in an intellectual entity. But a book, apart from everything else, is a "text". One understands it or one does not understand it. Perhaps it contains "difficult" passages. One needs a technique to unravel them. Its name is philology. [...] So-called *Kunstwissenschaft* [Art History] has an easier time. It works with pictures [...]. Here there is nothing intelligible.<sup>29</sup>

Norbert H. Ott explains the reasons for granting art a secondary status: 'The text is seen as that which [...] exists prior to the images, and the image is presumed to accompany the text only as a secondary element'; furthermore, 'philology's claim to interpretative supremacy is extremely old and can even be supported with quotations from the Bible'.<sup>30</sup> Yet, despite the tendency to view images as paratextual, it should be noted that Genette himself makes no mention of iconographical apparatus in the definitions he offers, leaving their status to be interpreted by others.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> The terms 'paratext', 'pertext', and 'epitext' have become so ingrained in English critical discourse that hereon, I use them in English.

<sup>29</sup> *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, tr. Willard R. Trask (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2013), 14-15.

<sup>30</sup> 'Word and Image' 16 and 23. Ott also singles out the lack of scholarship on medieval French text and image as particularly 'desperate': op. cit., 26; Sylvia Huot's book, *The Romance of the Rose and its Medieval Readers: Interpretation, Reception, Manuscript Transmission* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007) includes a text-image study, providing a notable exception. Emmerson laments that *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, 6 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) vol. 3: 1400-1557, eds. Lotte Hellinga and J. B. Trapp, only includes one chapter that discusses manuscript illuminations: 'Middle English Literature', 129.

<sup>31</sup> Adrian Armstrong has proposed revisions to Genette's definitions of paratext for the purpose of medieval and early modern literature. However valuable these revisions are, they also do not make any mention of iconographic programmes: 'Paratexte et autorité(s) chez les Grands Rhétoriciens', *Travaux de littérature*, 14 (2000), 61-89. I consider this and other problems of applying the term to medieval manuscripts in my article, 'What is Medieval Paratext?', *Marginalia*, 19 (November 2015), 37-50.

The status of visual elements as non-textual, or seen as being subordinate to the text, is likely to be one of the factors that rendered them of lesser interest to scholars. As a follow-up to the question of why images were left out of textual analysis, it is interesting to consider why text-image studies have recently become so prevalent. For W. J. T. Mitchell, the answer is that the second half of the twentieth century saw a shift from a culture dominated by the book to one dominated by images – a shift he termed the ‘pictorial turn’.<sup>32</sup> Writing in 1994, Mitchell considered that the postmodern era ‘of video and cybernetic technology, the age of electronic reproduction, has developed new forms of visual simulation and illusionism with unprecedented powers’ – claims now all the more true, since so much of the digital technology we use today did not exist when Mitchell wrote these words (one need only think of the rise in communication by GIFs and digital memes, or by emoji (Japanese ‘picture images’), for example).<sup>33</sup> Whilst this view can be seen to downplay the significance of visual culture in preceding periods (such as in the Middle Ages), it is undoubtedly true that we are subjected to more visual stimulus now than our ancestors were under a century ago. Not only are we confronted with more visual material, but imagery that it has long been impossible for a large public to view can also now be seen through an increasing number of published reproductions (both in digital and in physical books – the latter now being cheaper to produce than previously). Perhaps, thanks to this pictorial turn, the experience of modern readers is now more in line with that of our medieval counterparts, so that we are currently more sensitive to the potential of the visual apparatus of a manuscript. The number of text-image studies recently produced

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<sup>32</sup> ‘The Pictorial Turn’, *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), 11-34.

<sup>33</sup> ‘Pictorial Turn’, 15.



appears to confirm that images are no longer considered as paratextual, as indeed they had perhaps never been intended to be. This view is summarised by

Desmond:

The medieval manuscript's visual apparatus was in no way secondary to the textual: images and decoration did not merely supplement the words on the page but functioned as a central component in a textuality that allowed the viewer access to the materiality of written language.<sup>34</sup>

In his analysis of the pictorial turn, Mitchell also touches on an interesting consequence of this shift in focus that concerns how iconographical as opposed to textual sources are read or understood: '*spectatorship* (the look, the gaze, the glance, the practices of observation, surveillance, and visual pleasure) may be as deep a problem as various forms of *reading* (decipherment, decoding, interpretation, etc.)'.<sup>35</sup> This raises questions concerning the way in which textual and iconographic sources are to be viewed and understood – in other words, read. To use the verb 'to read' seems at odds with the type of activity I am describing here, as 'reading' in modern critical discourse usually implies an encounter with text-based material, and that choice of word may be seen as imposing a textual schema on visual material.<sup>36</sup> Yet, there is not another word that adequately describes the process that I am referring to, in which a visual source is examined in

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<sup>34</sup> 'The Visuality of Reading in Pre-Modern Textual Cultures', *Australian Journal of French Studies*, 46 (2009), 219-234 (220).

<sup>35</sup> 'Pictorial Turn', 16. For Mitchell, words and images alike may be understood in terms of linguistic signs that need to be interpreted and read. Mitchell later came to describe a series of pictorial turns that had taken place throughout history, as witnessed by, for instance, the Bible and as brought on by the invention of photography. In 2006, he described the present pictorial turn as a 'bipictorial turn', one that merges cloning and digital technology: 'What do Pictures Want? Interview with W. J. T. Mitchell', available online, <http://www.visual-studies.com/interviews/mitchell.html> (accessed 31 October 2016). See also Mitchell, W.T. J., *What do Pictures Want? The Lives and Loves of Images* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

<sup>36</sup> Whether or not this activity should be described as 'reading' is a point of some contention: 'According to some, medieval images may be "read". According to others, the perception of images is fundamentally different from that of texts': Mostert, 'Reading Images and Texts', 2. Suzanne Lewis holds the former view, 'recogniz[ing] a [...] dynamic process of interaction between viewer, text, and image': *Reading Images: Narrative Discourse and Reception in the Thirteenth-Century Illuminated Apocalypse* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), xxii.

detail and understood. In some of the works that will be studied here, the reader is expected to undertake a simultaneous interpretation of written and visual material. An example of this is to be found in the *MF* image with which this discussion began, in which Cristine appears to be examining the text and image at once; she faces the image on the far left hand side of the miniature, as though she will proceed around the rest of the text and imagery from left to right, in the same manner as if she were reading a book. The 'readerliness' of Cristine's viewing position is emphasised by the miniature's location in the top left-hand column of the page, meaning that the reader-viewer will effect the same left-to-right movement as the figure in the image.

Christine refers more often to the knowledge that will emerge from reading her works than to the process by which that understanding will be gained. Most references to the reception of the work involve verbs of hearing, such as 'entendre',<sup>37</sup> 'ouÿr', or 'oÿr et escouter'.<sup>38</sup> These verbs must refer primarily to the reception of the words or understanding of the work's meaning rather than to the reception of the visual programme, since images are not usually thought of as being 'heard'.<sup>39</sup> The only reference I have found to reading appears in *Le Livre du corps de policie*, where the audience reception is described as 'lire ou oÿr'.<sup>40</sup> To

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<sup>37</sup> Christine de Pizan, *Epistre Othea*, ed. Gabriella Parussa (Abbeville: Droz, 1999), 197.

<sup>38</sup> Christine de Pizan, *Le Chemin de longue étude*, ed. Andrea Tarnowski (Paris: Librairie générale française, 2002), 88:40 and 90:59. On 'entendre' and 'entendement' as a type of understanding, not necessarily connected with hearing, see Chapter 2, 107-109.

<sup>39</sup> As famously put by Richard de Fournival: 'Peinture sert a oeil et parole a oreille': *Le Bestiaire d'amour et la response du bestiaire*, ed. and trans. Gabriel Bianciotto (Paris: Champion, 2009), 154. This distinction is perhaps not quite so clear-cut as Richard implies: although they cannot themselves produce it, images may represent sound or speech (in banderoles, for example), or provide the visual signs for music (as in musical notation). For a discussion of a manuscript of *Le Champion des dames* that 'visualiz[es] its auralit[y]', see Helen Swift, 'Limits of Representation in Fifteenth-Century Burgundy: What the Eye Doesn't Hear and the Ear Doesn't See', in *Text/Image Relations*, 65-85. On banderoles as depicting speech, see Camille, 'Book of Signs'.

<sup>40</sup> Christine de Pizan, *Le Livre du corps de policie*, ed. Robert H. Lucas (Geneva: Droz, 1967), 205. For Florence Bouchet, although *lire* suggests the action and effort involved in deciphering text, *lire* and

return to the *MF* passage with which I opened, the language Christine uses to describe her encounter with both textual and visual material in the Salle de Fortune is significant. As Cristine views images and captions beneath them, the emphasis is firmly on sight:

Philosophie y vi assise  
 Moult haultement, en tel devise  
 Que bien semble haulte maistresse  
 Et des aultres toutes l'adresse;  
 De quoy elle sert, qu'elle fait,  
 Compris la grant part de l'effait [...]  
 Par les escriptures, qu'y vy,  
 Mon esperit y fu ravy  
 Et astract [...].<sup>41</sup>

In the first use of the verb *voir*, the referent is almost certainly an image, since Philosophie's posture and her relation to other figures (who presumably feature in the same picture) are described; yet in the second instance, the referent is clearly the antecedent *escriptures*, and it is therefore the writing that is being viewed. In other words, encounters with text and image are both visual here for Christine and expressed through the same vocabulary, a fact that both draws attention to the iconographic programme of her works and emphasises the reader's visual encounter with the manuscript that contains them.<sup>42</sup> Although using the verb 'to read' today implies the viewing of textual sources, the fact that Christine uses one word to refer to textual and iconographic material (*voir*), combined with the lack of a suitable alternative, justifies my using the verb 'to read' in both contexts.

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*veoir* are often given as equivalents or alternatives: *Le Discours sur la lecture en France aux XIV<sup>e</sup> et XV<sup>e</sup> siècles: Pratiques, poétique, imaginaire* (Paris: Champion, 2008), 23-28.

<sup>41</sup> *Fortune*, vol. 2, 104: 7,195-7,203 (added emphasis).

<sup>42</sup> Peter Brown points out that it is not the case that images were designed to imitate text (suggesting a primacy of the text), but that, on the contrary, the written word was designed to be envisioned as are images: 'Images as a Substitute for Writing', in *East and West: Modes of Communication. Proceedings of the First Plenary Conference at Merida*, eds. Evangelos Chrysos and Ian Wood (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 15-34. See also Jeffrey Hamburger, *Script as Image* (Peeters: Leuven, 2014).

In the following study, I explore some of the possibilities offered by the dialogic relationship between text and image: although both convey meaning separately, my contention is that there is a vital dialogue between the two which cannot but affect meaning. The two elements can either be entirely concordant or discordant with one another; if the latter is true, this results in bringing the didactic message being conveyed into question. Alternatively, the concordance between text and image can be somewhere between these two extremes, creating a degree of slippage that can only nuance the reading of either element on its own. In the examples discussed, I contend that the consideration of text without image becomes methodologically unsound, even leading to a misreading of the work.

### **The Didactic Works of Christine de Pizan**

The works of Christine de Pizan's on which the present study focuses may all be characterised as being to some extent 'didactic'.<sup>43</sup> This by no means suggests that Christine's works may be divided into those that seek in some way to impart a moral or teaching, and those that do not; indeed, that there is a didactic aim to most of Christine's works has not been stated often enough, since didactic aspects

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<sup>43</sup> So as not to suggest that this is a well-defined or limited genre intended only for a princely audience, I avoid using the term 'mirrors for princes', even when discussing texts that are often regarded as prime examples of the genre – such as the *Livre des fais d'armes et de chevalerie*, or the 'mirror for princesses', *TV*. I refer instead to 'didactic texts' or 'didactic works'. In not using this term, I follow the editors of the volume, *Devenir roi: Essais sur la littérature adressée au prince*, eds. Isabelle Cogitore, Francis Goyet and Chris Allen (Grenoble: ELLUG, 2001), which uses the term *littérature adressée au prince* throughout. The various articles in that volume illustrate the problems inherent in attempting to define what they propose instead to call a 'family' of texts, itself suggesting the broadness of the didactic literature genre. Furthermore, for Frédérique Lachaud and Lydwine Scordia, mirrors for princes tend simply to transmit knowledge and advice, rather than invent anew, 'donn[ant] une impression d'immobilité': 'Introduction', *Le Prince au miroir de la littérature politique de l'Antiquité aux Lumières*, eds. Frédérique Lachaud and Lydwine Scordia (Mont-Saint-Aignan: Publications des universités de Rouen et du Havre, 2007), 16. As I argue that, in certain works in particular, Christine pushes readers to think for themselves, and to challenge 'immobile' adages, employing the label 'mirror for princes' could be misleading and contrary to my argument.

may be uncovered even in texts that are less overtly so – such as Christine’s collections of lyric poetry.<sup>44</sup> The reason for focusing on didactic works in a study of text-image relations in Christine’s corpus is that in seeking to convey a lesson or moral to their reader, they best exemplify the slippage in meaning that can be brought about by a lack of concordance between text and image. Furthermore, the didactic intent of the work is often communicated to the reader-viewer through their iconographic programmes, which sometimes depict an author-figure teaching, or a text or letter being delivered (which might be understood to represent the transmitting of the moral message contained therein). The text-image focus of this study necessitates that illuminated works are those that are primarily considered, and the largely unilluminated nature of Christine’s lyric and devotional poetry therefore excludes it from this analysis. Occasionally, however, unillustrated texts provide interesting counterpoints for discussions concerning why some works were illustrated when others were not. Some of these also feature ekphrastic descriptions of images even if such descriptions are not realised in a miniature in the manuscript. Unilluminated texts are therefore not entirely absent from this study.

Although many (if not all) of Christine’s works may be considered didactic in one way or another, the particular didactic intent of each work varies

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<sup>44</sup> The didactic aspects of Christine’s lyric poetry have been touched on in Charity Cannon Willard, ‘Christine de Pizan’s *Cent ballades d’amant et de dame*: Criticism of Courtly Love’, in *Court and Poet: Selected Proceedings of the Third Congress of the International Courtly Literature Society, Liverpool, 1980*, ed. Glyn S. Burgess, (Liverpool: Cairns, 1981), 357-364. Any studies that take Christine’s didacticism as their subject have tended to focus on individual works: for example, Sarah Kay, ‘Melancholia, Allegory, and the Metaphysical Fountain in Christine de Pizan’s *Livre du chemin de long estude*’, in *The Place of Thought: The Complexity of One in Late Medieval French Didactic Poetry* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), 150-176; Christine M. Reno, ‘Les *Nota bene* dans trois manuscrits de présentation de la *Mutacion de Fortune*’, in *Au Champ des escriptures. III<sup>e</sup> Colloque international sur Christine de Pizan (Lausanne, 18-22 juillet 1998)*, eds. Eric Hicks, Diego Gonzalez and Philippe Simon (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2000), 781-787; Bernard Ribémont, ‘Christine de Pizan et les arts libéraux: Un modèle à géométrie variable’, *French Studies*, 63.2 (April 2009), 137-147.

enormously, as does the type of narrative in which it are presented. Many of her works seek to impart advice on good conduct and behaviour (*Le Livre des trois Vertus, Les Enseignemens moraux*), and some of these take the form of debate poetry (*Le Livre du chemin de longue estude, Le Debat de deux amans*). Some concern themselves with proto-feminist causes (*L'Epistre au dieu d'Amours, CD*), and others serve an overt political purpose (*Livre des fais d'armes et de chevalerie*). Christine's didactic texts are not a fixed or defined body, and might generally be described in terms of a variety of genres or categories. Some are presented as narrative fictions (*CLE, Le Livre de trois jugemens*), others invite an autobiographical reading (*Le Livre de l'avision Cristine* and parts of *MF*), while others still are historical in focus (*Le Livre des fais et bonnes meurs du sage roy Charles V*), or epistolary in form (*Le Livre du duc des Vrais Amans, EDA*). Despite these variances, all of the works have the common aim of instructing the reader in some way. Their didactic intent is variously expressed: in *MF*, C(h)ristine states:

Si la deviseray en brief,  
Car au lonc compter seroit grief,  
Nonobstant soit ycelle histoire  
Moult plaisant et vraye et nottoire,  
Et la y peut on moult apprendre  
Des tours Fortune, qui veult prendre  
Garde comment elle se tourne  
Souvent et le hault au bas tourne.<sup>45</sup>

This description undoubtedly simplifies the didactic potential of *MF* as a whole, as its encyclopaedic scope offers to impart far more knowledge to its readers than simply illustrating the twists and turns of Fortune. Only the didactic intent of the wider work is made explicit, whilst the particular lessons that are attached to the individual stories or events that are recounted in the work are not. In *CD*, C(h)ristine summarises the overall desired aim of the work in the final chapter:

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<sup>45</sup> *Fortune*, vol. 3, 25:14,067-14,074.

‘vous soit cause ceste Cité d’avoir bonnes meurs et estre vertueuses et humbles’.<sup>46</sup>

Whilst this at first appears to be the same expression of the general lesson to be taken from *MF*, it is then broken down into more particular advice, providing her readers with a list of individual imperatives to follow: ‘soiés humbles et pacientes’, ‘soiés pures, simples et quoyes’, ‘vueillez estre sur toute riens avisees et caultes en deffence contre les ennemis de voz honneurs et de vostre chasteté’, etc.<sup>47</sup> The didactic advice imparted at the end of *CD* is thus made more particular and practical, and its aims articulated more explicitly.

### **Text and Image in Christine de Pizan’s Didactic Texts**

The effect of the text/image relationship varies according to the genre or tradition within which it operates. In narrative literary works (whether in verse or prose), illustrations are often closely related to the plot, allowing the reader-viewer to easily identify an episode.<sup>48</sup> This is also the basic function of images in devotional texts, such as commentaries on the Apocalypse or saints’ lives, as well as in instructional works – the diagrams found in scientific treatises, for example. According to Michael Clanchy, images in devotional contexts formed a substitute for the text that reflected its theme and content.<sup>49</sup> He argues that the combination of text and image allowed the literate and non-literate alike to follow the same

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<sup>46</sup> Christine de Pizan, *Le Livre de la cité des dames (La Città delle dame)*, eds. Patrizia Caraffi and Earl Jeffrey Richards (Milan: Luni, 1997), 498. All citations of *CD* in this thesis are taken from this edition.

<sup>47</sup> *Cité*, 500.

<sup>48</sup> This was especially the case in works whose iconography was relatively stable and recognisable, such as the *Roman de la Rose* or *OM*: Desmond, ‘Visuality of Reading’. On *RR*’s iconography, see *De la Rose: Texte, image, fortune*, eds. Catherine Bel and Herman Braet (Louvain: Peeters, 2006); on the iconography of certain *OM* manuscripts, see Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, ‘Illustrations et interprétations dans un manuscrit de l’*Ovide moralisé* (Arsenal 5069)’, *Cahiers de recherches médiévales et humanistes*, 9 (2002), available online, <http://crm.revues.org/56> (accessed 31 October 2016). Blumenfeld-Kosinski argues that the miniatures in the manuscripts studied add a visual interpretative layer to those offered in the text alone.

<sup>49</sup> These devotional contexts may have been psalters and prayer books, but also extend to buildings and architectural features – stained glass windows in churches, for example.

story together.<sup>50</sup> Text and image were also both key to medieval education, in which 'schoolmen were trained to make physical objects create graphic images in the memory to which they attached their abstract ideas'.<sup>51</sup> In other words, physical texts were recalled through imagined imagery; students were thus able to recall text visually, through a kind of memory map, and possessed a high level of visual literacy.

I mentioned above that the didactic intent of a work could be made apparent by its visual programme. This can be achieved in a number of ways. Firstly, by depicting the act of teaching, such as in the two miniatures that accompany *EM* and *Les Proverbes moraulx* in Harley 4431, ff. 259v and 261v, which each depict a Christine-figure instructing her son and a group of men, respectively (**Pls. 0.2** and **0.3**). These portraits represent the straightforward and unproblematic advice contained in these two works: the stance of the author-figure suggests authority and instruction, and reflects the texts' forthright instructions to act and behave correctly. Elsewhere, the presence of diagrams, or of a guiding figure who appears in a series of miniatures, can signal the didactic nature of a work.<sup>52</sup> In terms of the function of images in didactic works, they can substantiate the prescriptive content of the text by providing a visual example, such as the ideal behaviour to follow, or, conversely, the immorality of those who

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<sup>50</sup> *From Memory to Written Record: England 1066-1307* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), 191, 281-282.

<sup>51</sup> Clanchy, *Memory*, 297; see op. cit., 172-181 on the use of images in medieval memory, and Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) which discusses Hugh of St. Victor's use of visual aids for memory at length, and offers a translation of his 'De Tribus Maximis Circumstantiis Gestorum', 261-266.

<sup>52</sup> Evrart de Conty's *Livre des eschecs amoureux*, as found in Paris, BnF, MS fr. 143 features examples of miniatures functioning as diagrams on ff. 17r and 20r. In fr. 12559, a copy of *CE*, the first miniature shows the Chevalier and his companion encountering Dame Cognoissance in the forest (see **Pl. 1.6**). In the five miniatures that follow, Cognoissance accompanies the two men in the forest and at court; in each, her didactic, instructive function is represented through her gestures, which signal that she is talking to the two men and directing them (the miniatures are on ff. 1v-3r).



have not heeded the advice. A striking example can be seen in Paris, BnF, MS fr. 143, f. 28r (**Pl. 0.4**), in which the generosity of Cybele, who gives bread to a grateful man, is contrasted with Saturn's cruelty: on the left of the image, he is seen castrating his father, whilst, on the right, he devours his children. Although these stories are recounted in the text without the narrator providing any moral judgement, there can be no doubt that the reader-viewer of this manuscript is invited to mirror the actions represented by the virtuous Cybele (whose good nature is emphasised by the whiteness of her skin and attire), and to abhor the crude, unnatural acts carried out by old and haggard Saturn, whose scythe is reminiscent of that carried by personifications of Death. The moral judgement in this example therefore takes place on a visual, as opposed to textual, level. In the Chapters that follow, different examples will show that the didactic function of images in Christine's manuscripts can vary: they can serve to draw attention to a key point, create *intervisual*<sup>53</sup> links with other works, and even form a counterpoint with the text, provoking readers to think further on the matter presented and to reach their own conclusions.

Another function of iconographic programmes in Christine's works is the way in which they construct authority. By this, I mean both that they bestow authority on the works themselves, and that they serve to emphasise Christine's own as an author – two aspects of authority that can be said to have gone hand in hand, since the authority of a text was inextricably bound up with that of its author.<sup>54</sup> Illumination was one of the means by which books less explicitly connected with religious matters 'took on many of the trappings of sacred books in

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<sup>53</sup> I borrow the term *intervisual* from Michael Camille, 'Gothic Signs and the Surplus: The Kiss on the Cathedral', in *Contexts: Style and Values in Medieval Art and Literature*, eds. Daniel Poirion and Nancy Freeman Regalado (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1991), 151-170.

<sup>54</sup> Paul Zumthor, *Essai de poétique médiévale* (Paris: Seuil, 1972), 65.

ways that would endow them with similar claims to authority'.<sup>55</sup> In other words, the mere fact that some of Christine's manuscripts are illuminated is revealing about their claims to authority – or rather, the claims to authority that its author sought to construct both for herself and for her books. Christine's reasons for wishing to do so are well-known: since the deaths of her father, her husband, and the protector she had in Charles V, her position at the French court was less secure than it had once been, and her finances had been adversely affected.<sup>56</sup> She tells us that she took up writing in order to gain an income and/or protection, and, undoubtedly, to secure her family's position at court.<sup>57</sup> Christine's position as a widow provided her with both a hindrance and an advantage: as a widow, she needed to find a way to reintegrate into and have a function at Court whilst, simultaneously, the autonomy that her widowhood granted her enabled her to take steps to do so.<sup>58</sup>

In her manuscript output, Christine set herself up as an authority. She did so not simply by continuing the compositional practice of quoting and compiling from ancient texts (a practice seen notably in *FA*, a text that depends so heavily on the works of preceding authors that she has often been accused of plagiarising them),<sup>59</sup> but she also set herself up as a rival to other authorities by questioning

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<sup>55</sup> Hamburger, *Script as Image*, 54.

<sup>56</sup> Charity Cannon Willard, *Christine de Pizan: Her Life and Works* (New York: Persea Books, 1984), 35-40.

<sup>57</sup> Although it is often tempting to take Christine's words at face value, and to assume that the state of affairs we are presented with in her works reflects the historical reality that Christine lived through, it should be remembered that her texts are a construction, one through which an author sought to gain financial advancement, and should therefore be taken with the proverbial pinch of salt. The separation of Christine and Cristine serves as a reminder of this construction. The state of Christine's finances as a case in point is discussed in Chapter 1.

<sup>58</sup> 'Widow denotes an autonomous status equivalent to the legal term *feme sole*, a woman who enjoyed full legal personality': Sue Sheridan Walker, 'Introduction', in *Wife and Widow in Medieval England*, ed. Sue Sheridan Walker (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993), 1-16 (3).

<sup>59</sup> On Christine's compilation practices, see Simone Pagot, 'Du Bon usage de la compilation et du discours didactique: Analyse du thème "guerre et paix" chez Christine de Pizan', in *Femme de lettres*, 39-50. More recently, scholars have highlighted the more original aspects of Christine's *FA*, and

and entering into debate and dialogue with them. That dialogue was sometimes direct, as in the *Epistres sur le Rommant de la Rose*, in which she took on some of the leading figures at the University of Paris, later compiling their correspondence and circulating it amongst royal circles.<sup>60</sup> At other times, her challenging of existing authorities was more implicit, as when she granted positive connotations to the rose in the *Dit de la Rose* – implicitly rewriting the lewd and antifeminist associations the flower holds in Jean de Meun’s section of the *Roman de la Rose*. Christine’s engagement with existing authorities did not just occur textually, but can also be seen in the iconographic programme, such as in a striking image to be found in the fr.603 manuscript of *FA* (f. 49r: **Pl. 0.5**). In this miniature, a Christine-figure holds a blade in one hand, while in the other, she holds the branch of a tree ready for cutting. The tree, which is filled with warring soldiers, stands for Honorat Bovet’s work *L’Arbre des batailles*, and Bovet stands to the right of the image, his gestures signalling that he is speaking with the Christine-figure. This illumination is in many ways representative of Christine’s relationship with preceding authorities: she engages, dialogues with, and acknowledges her debt to them, but ultimately prunes and trims their work, adapting and reshaping it into something of her own. The creation of authority for herself and for her texts was one of the means by which Christine added weight to the didactic intent of her works.

In text and image, Christine’s manuscripts therefore bear witness to her

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shown that she dialogues with and even questions the author Honorat Bovet – topics explored in several contributions to the collection of essays, *Une femme et la guerre à la fin du moyen âge: Le Livre des fais d’armes et de chevalerie de Christine de Pizan*, eds. Dominique Demartini, Claire le Ninan, Anne Paupert, and Michelle Szkilnik (Paris: Champion, 2016).

<sup>60</sup> Five author-copies of *ERR* survive that were included in two manuscripts presented to the Queen of France, Isabeau de Bavière (Chantilly, Musée Condé, MS 492-493, Harley 4431), and one that belonged to Jean de Berry (Paris, BnF, MS fr. 835). The original owners of Paris, BnF, MSS fr. 604 and 12779 are not known: *ACP*.

familiarity with extensive sources, and convey her concern with authority. This is nowhere more evident than in her author-portraits, whose complex means of creating an authoritative persona have not previously been analysed. Author-portraits therefore form the starting point of the first Chapter of this study. Once the ways and means by which Christine's didactic authority is created through the visual programme of her works has been established, I move on to examine the function of images in her didactic works more widely. This begins in Chapter 2 with a study of *Le Livre de l'epistre Othea*, whose extensive but varied iconographic programmes justify that a Chapter of its own is dedicated to this work, and to the type of reading its various forms invite. The structure of the patronage of this work is also brought into consideration. In Chapter 3, the didactic roles that female figures play in both text and image in Christine's works are examined, and a second Section tackles the question of Christine's audiences, asking to whom were her didactic works addressed? Over the course of these three Chapters, my aim is to further our understanding of the way in which illuminated copies of medieval didactic literature operated, how they were read, and by whom. I develop a picture of the complex and multiple meanings that can be found, and of the new readings that become apparent when reading the text and image of Christine's didactic works together.

## Chapter 1

### **A Spectrum of Selves: Christine de Pizan and the Maître de la Cité des Dames**

Like a text, an image acquires authority through repetition.<sup>1</sup>

In the Introduction, I highlighted the importance of the concept of authority when approaching Christine de Pizan and her works, and set up the premise that images are central to our understanding of her didactic texts. The purpose of this Chapter is to bring these two elements together in a discussion of author-portraits within Christine's works. Whilst scholars are used to identifying the figure that so often features on the frontispiece of Christine's works (and occasionally within the texts themselves) with the author herself, its function and the identification it sets up has never been the subject of a deep analysis. If these portraits operate to endow Christine with authority, how exactly do they do so? What symbolic connotations or illustrative conventions do they draw on in order to create this authority? Since a large body of Christine's writing is didactic in nature, and therefore needs to be seen by the reader as authoritative, the authority of the entity behind these works matters for their preceptive aims to succeed.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Desmond, 'Visuality of Reading', 228.

<sup>2</sup> Much has been written about Christine's construction as an authority, although without considering the visual programme of her manuscripts in detail. Such studies include: Armstrong, 'Paratexte'; Deborah McGrady, 'Reading for Authority: Portraits of Christine de Pizan and Her Readers', in *Author, Reader, Book: Medieval Authorship in Theory and Practice*, eds. Stephen Partridge and Erik Kwakkel (Toronto and London: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 154-177; Maureen Quilligan, *The Allegory of Female Authority: Christine de Pizan's Cité des Dames* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991).

For Armstrong, the author-function<sup>3</sup> is instrumental in the creation of a text's authority.<sup>4</sup> To this, I would add that, where present, author-portraits contribute towards the construction of the literary author-function, as they visually establish a connection between it and the historical being on whom that authority can be pinned. In the words of Marie-Anne Polo de Beaulieu, 'le portrait d'auteur en tête de l'ouvrage parachève [la] mise en place de la fonction-auteur'.<sup>5</sup> If the premise that images are central to the understanding and reception of Christine's texts is correct, and since author-portraits so frequently feature in Christine's author-manuscripts, it follows that the manner in which the author-preceptor is represented is fundamental.

There is furthermore a potential biographical slippage in these images, as readers might understand them to represent the historical person that was Christine de Pizan.<sup>6</sup> The fact that, in Christine's texts, the narrator often shares the author's name only makes this slippage more alluring: the image can be read as standing in both for the narrator (Cristine) and the historical author (Christine). Indeed, as the figure in these portraits is often depicted in an authorial stance, and since it cannot be known whether they represent a life-like portrait of the historical Christine, author-portraits should only be seen to represent the implied

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<sup>3</sup> The term 'author-function' (*fonction-auteur*) was coined by Michel Foucault to refer to the authority attributed to a named author. It is a kind of label that allows readers to classify the works of a single person; however, this can misleadingly appear to homogenise a single author's works. For Foucault, 'tous les discours qui sont pourvus de la fonction-auteur comportent [une] pluralité d'ego' – a plurality that will be shown to be apparent in Christine's author-portraits: 'Qu'est-ce qu'un auteur?', in *Dits et écrits 1954-1988*, 2 vols. (Paris: Gallimard, 2001), vol. 1, 789-821 (803).

<sup>4</sup> 'Paratexte', especially 81-82.

<sup>5</sup> 'L'Émergence de l'auteur et son rapport à l'autorité dans les recueils d'*exempla* (XII<sup>e</sup>-XV<sup>e</sup> siècle)', in *Auctor et auctoritas: Invention et conformisme dans l'écriture médiévale. Actes du colloque de Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines (14-16 juin 1999)*, ed. Michel Zimmermann (Paris: École des chartes, 2001), 175-200 (176).

<sup>6</sup> The biographical slippage between Christine's different narrative facets is well summarised by Tarnowski: 'la poésie nous renseigne sur le personnage historique qu'était Christine de Pizan, tout en maintenant sa littérarité': 'Introduction', in *Chemin*, 31.

author: how readers are invited to imagine the author, based on textual and paratextual indications. Unlike the real, historical author, the implied author is a virtual, textual creation.<sup>7</sup>

Yet readers are often prevented from easily distinguishing narrator, implied and historical authors in Christine's works, especially in her pseudo-autobiographical texts (such as *MF*, *AC*, or *CLE*).<sup>8</sup> Where author-portraits feature in these texts, they can be understood as representing everything from the narrator-protagonist to the extra-textual historical author. Seeing these portraits as representations of the implied author may allow these images to be situated somewhere between these two poles, but simultaneously, because the identity can be applied to either, visual representations of the implied author also reinforce the apparent link between the historical author and her narrator-avatar. This slippage is only made more possible by the fact that these representations often make use of 'authorial' poses that the historical Christine herself would have assumed, such as presenting her book, or writing in her study. The perceived double movement from the narrator to the implied author, and from the implied to the historical author often enhance the latter's authority, and it was possibly even devised so as to create this effect. Pseudo-biographical elements within Christine's works bring an element of realism to the narrative whilst, simultaneously, the images that accompany the text construct a picture of the author in the reader-viewer's mind;

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<sup>7</sup> The distinction highlights that the views expressed within a work are not to be confused with those of the historical author's, although the boundary between the two is not fixed, and the author can play on this ambivalence. See Wayne C. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), especially 71-75 and 86; Geoffrey N. Leech and Mick Short, *Style in Fiction: A Linguistic Introduction to English Fictional Prose* (London: Longman, 1981), 257-287.

<sup>8</sup> I use the term 'autobiographical' very loosely here, and – following several critics – preface it with the term *pseudo* to acknowledge that the modern perception of autobiography is doubtless very different from any medieval conception of the genre: see Laurence De Looze, *Pseudo-Autobiography in the Fourteenth Century: Juan Ruiz, Guillaume de Machaut, Jean Froissart and Geoffrey Chaucer* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1997).

the combination of these two elements makes the texts appear to bring life to the author-portraits.<sup>9</sup> Although it is good critical practice to distinguish between the implied and historical authors, because of the double movement that links the implied author to both narrator and historical author (especially where the three share a name), any authority that the image confers upon the implied author is also refracted onto the historical person of the author. The question of which agencies are involved in conferring this authority in the manuscript itself is complicated, and undoubtedly several conduits are involved. As suggested by Camille, images go some way towards creating the subject; but when it comes to an author, *how* do images – portraits in particular – construct that subject?<sup>10</sup> And is the created subject historical, literary, or, to an extent, both?

An analysis of the fifty-four extant author-manuscripts, presented in detail in the *Album Christine de Pizan*, reveals that Christine is represented in the frontispiece of fifty-seven per cent of those manuscripts.<sup>11</sup> She is also represented both within the works themselves and in miniatures created by artists with whom she does not appear to have actively collaborated, some of which were produced

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<sup>9</sup> A number of recent studies have begun to explore the role played by photographic author-portraits in constructing the implied author. These include Akane Kawakami, *Photobiography: Photographic Self-Writing in Proust, Guibert, Ernaux, Macé* (Oxford: Legenda, 2013). The conference 'Intimate Archives: Photography and Life-Writing' at the Oxford Centre for Life-Writing (29 November 2013) explored the intersection of photography, including author-portraits, and life-writing, <https://www.wolfson.ox.ac.uk/clusters/life-writing/events/intimate>, accessed 31 October 2016. In asking 'what role does photography have in the construction of life narratives?', it implicitly only considered works from the mid-nineteenth-century onwards, but this is a question worth asking of portraits and illuminations predating photography, including medieval portraits. The intention behind the decision to visually represent the author, and the effect created in doing so, is as relevant in life-writing and life-narratives as in other genres and periods.

<sup>10</sup> 'It is through the image that we construct the imaginary, and in psychoanalytic terms, the subject': 'Art History in the Past and Future of Medieval Studies', in *The Past and Future of Medieval Studies*, ed. John Van Engen (Notre Dame and London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994), 362-382 (366).

<sup>11</sup> The number of portraits might have been higher, as some of the illuminations in manuscripts discussed in *ACP* were either never completed or damaged/removed. Further copies may have existed that have not survived, which would also potentially alter this figure.



after her lifetime.<sup>12</sup> The existence of this number of portraits would seem to indicate a certain self-consciousness about the way in which Christine wished to be represented. Given the size of this corpus, it is surprising that only a little critical attention has been granted to them, and that existing scholarship has not sought to analyse the symbolic associations and the intertextual and intervisual links that influence the creation of these images.<sup>13</sup>

This lack of scholarship seems all the more surprising given the acknowledged relevance of portraiture (which, along with author-portraits, was a relatively new phenomenon) in contemporary works. In Luke Syson's words, 'a particular notion of individuality that is held to have emerged in the early years of the fifteenth century [...] provoked men and women to have their features recorded accurately for the first time since antiquity'.<sup>14</sup> Later, a trend towards recognisable portraits for the aristocracy led to an abundance of portraits amongst the lower nobility from the second half of the fifteenth century onwards.<sup>15</sup> Author-portraits had previously commonly appeared in devotional texts, examples including representations of the Four Evangelists, the Prophets, and the Church Fathers.

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<sup>12</sup> Author-portraits feature in all manuscripts prepared by Christine towards the start of her career: Patrick de Winter, *La Bibliothèque de Philippe le Hardi duc de Bourgogne (1364-1404)* (Paris: Centre national de recherche scientifique, 1985), 100.

<sup>13</sup> There exists a single notable study of Christine's author-portraits, Laura Dufresne Rinaldi's 'A Woman of Excellent Character: A Case Study of Dress, Reputation and the Changing Costume of Christine de Pizan in the Fifteenth Century', *Dress*, 17 (1990), 105-117. McGrady's 'Reading for Authority', is also worth mention, although this study focuses only on the portraits of Christine found in Harley 4431. Winter's 'Enlumineurs' analyses the characteristics that distinguish the various illuminators who worked on Christine's texts in great detail; he includes portraits of the author in his analysis, without focusing on them. Mary Wetzel Gibbons' short article recognises the importance of portraiture in Christine's manuscripts, but is very limited in scope and does not consider the (possibly fictional) effects created by this imagery: 'Christine's Mirror: Self in Word and Image', in *Contexts and Continuities (Proceedings of the IV<sup>th</sup> International Colloquium on Christine de Pizan (Glasgow 21-27 July 2000) Published in Honour of Liliane Dulac*, eds. Angus Kennedy et al, 3 vols. (Glasgow: University of Glasgow Press, 2002) vol. 2, 367-396.

<sup>14</sup> 'Introduction', *The Image of the Individual: Portraits in the Renaissance*, eds. Nicholas Mann and Lyke Syson (London: British Museum Press, 1998), 9-14 (9). The tradition of portraiture can be drawn back to Antiquity: Kurt Weitzmann, *Ancient Book Illumination* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959), 116-127 and 154-156. For Shearer West, it dates even to the Neolithic period: *Portraiture* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 14.

<sup>15</sup> Sterling, *Peinture*, vol. 1, 17.

However, in this early state, they were not ‘à proprement parler des portraits individuels, mais des icônes’.<sup>16</sup> This is an important distinction to make: these portraits were of generic author-types, not individualised beings. The consistent, recognisable author-portrait begins to appear with the rise of portraiture in the later Middle Ages, seemingly shortly after the creation of the first recognisable portraits. In England, the 1369 effigy of Queen Philippa is regarded as the first individualised portrait, and the portrait of Geoffrey Chaucer found in London, BL, Harley MS 4866, f. 88r, which dates to around 1412, is widely seen as the first English author-portrait – although earlier examples may of course have been lost.<sup>17</sup>

I must briefly set out what is understood by ‘portrait’ for the purposes of this Chapter. By this, I mean the representation of an individual in a broad sense. The miniatures on which this study focuses are not detailed or lifelike representations of the external features of an individual, characteristics that have defined portraiture since the Renaissance;<sup>18</sup> in any case, their status as miniatures makes the individuation of features nigh impossible. Nevertheless, they do attempt to convey the representation of an individual. Part of what renders these portraits of such interest is precisely the fact that they are both generic portraits and yet somehow also constructors of an identity.<sup>19</sup> The images with which this Chapter is concerned therefore both are portraits, in that they attempt to represent an individual, and yet at the same time are not, since that individual does

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<sup>16</sup> Herman Braet, ‘Du portrait d’auteur dans le *Roman de la Rose*’, in *Medieval Manuscripts in Transition: Tradition and Creative Recycling*, eds. Geert H. M. Claassens and Werner Verbeke (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2006), 81-99 (83).

<sup>17</sup> Amanda Tomlinson, *The Mediaeval Face* (London and Bradford: National Portrait Gallery, 1974), 3-4.

<sup>18</sup> See Lorne Campbell, *Renaissance Portraits: European Portrait-Painting in the 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Centuries* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990), 1-23.

<sup>19</sup> ‘This equation of portrait with likeness is not altogether satisfactory, for some portraits are not likenesses and not all likenesses are portraits’: *ibid*, 1.

not always bear recognisable features. Only sometimes is it clear that viewers are invited to identify the portrait with the author.

Christine's contemporary author-portraits were created at a time when individualised portraits were only starting to be used to represent authors: they are no longer icons of a generic author, although still a construction, unlikely to be true to life.<sup>20</sup> Whilst Gibbons is right in saying 'Christine's self-portrayal is not distinguishable from her female contemporaries' and that 'all of the women in her manuscript illuminations appear to be cut from the same mold',<sup>21</sup> her view downplays the significance of the consistency with which the author is represented. This view is at odds with other critics for whom Christine is always depicted in a distinctive way, that is, in a long blue dress with trailing white sleeves and white headdress.<sup>22</sup> How is it that such opposing views have come to exist? There is much to be commented upon in how Christine is depicted, as 'pointers to the proper reading of a portrait might be given by its setting [...] by the attribute-objects associated with the subject, by the richness of plainness of costume, or [...] by an explanatory inscription'.<sup>23</sup> As is often the convention, Christine's author-portraits commonly represent her in authorial stances, such as writing, or

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<sup>20</sup> See Elizabeth Salter and Derek Pearsall, 'Pictorial Illustration of Late Medieval Poetic Texts: The Role of the Frontispiece or Prefatory Picture', in *Medieval Iconography and Narrative: A Symposium* (Odense: Odense University Press, 1980), 100-123. These authors exercise particular caution not to 'use the frontispiece as a witness to historical truth': op. cit., 109. On frontispiece composition, see Meiss, *Limbourgs*, 408-409. Certain author-portraits punned on an author's name: for example, Ovid 'is always engaged in writing, speaking, teaching, or examining an egg (a punning reference to 'ovum' and his name)': Kathleen L. Scott, *The Caxton Master and his Patrons* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Library, 1976), 10.

<sup>21</sup> Gibbons, 'Mirror', 376.

<sup>22</sup> Didier Lechat recently referred to this costume as Christine's 'marque de fabrique': 'Christine et ses doubles dans le texte et les enluminures du *Livre du duc des vrais amants* (BnF fr. 836 et BL Harley 4431)', in *Sens, rhétorique et musique, études réunies en hommage à Jacqueline Cerquiglini-Toulet par Sophie Albert, Mireille Demaules, Estelle Doudet, Sylvie Lefèvre, Christopher Lucken et Agathe Sultan*, 2 vols. (Paris: Champion, 2015), vol. 2, 693-706. I am grateful to the author for sharing this article with me ahead of the book's distribution.

<sup>23</sup> Syson, *Image*, 12.

teaching, but this is not always the case. There are also more ambiguous examples, in which it is not clear whether the author is represented or not.

In this Chapter, I examine the factors that affect how Christine was represented in her manuscripts. I build on existing scholarship to explore how, by representing the implied author, author-portraits bestow authority on that figure, and thereby on the historical author. This can even be the case in texts in which the author is not present as a character – such as *EO*. In the first two Sections, I begin by looking at the much-studied author-manuscripts and by examining the consistency of representations of Christine in this collection, asking why she was represented as she was. There is a great deal of autograph material to examine: within her fifty-four author-manuscripts, Christine is believed to have worked with as many as twelve different illuminators (see **Fig. 1**).<sup>24</sup> The works and practices of these illuminators are also examined so that their illustrations of Christine's texts might be situated within a broader context. I therefore examine the consistency with which different artists portrayed the author with whom they were working, as well as other historical figures and fictional characters within these works. I focus on one particular Master,<sup>25</sup> known as the Maître de la Cité des Dames,<sup>26</sup> who

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<sup>24</sup> This was not unusual in the Middle Ages, particularly in Paris where it was especially common for several artisans to collaborate on a single manuscript: Sterling, *Peinture*, 14.

<sup>25</sup> It is usually unknown whether the Masters referred to consisted of individuals, or of groups of artists working in a single workshop, as the names of the artists involved in the creation of these images are generally not known (the only exception in Christine's corpus of manuscripts is Haincelin de Haguenau, known to art historians as the Maître de Bedford: *ACP*, 327). They are commonly referred to as individual workshops, allowing for the possibility that different craftsmen may have collaborated on individual illuminations, overseen by the direction of a 'Master', as Meiss conceived of workshops: see, for example, *Late Fourteenth Century*. Patricia Stirnemann and Marie-Thérèse Gousset have discredited the view that labour was organised in such a manner in their article 'Marques, mots, pratiques: Leur signification et leurs liens dans le travail des enlumineurs', in *Vocabulaire du livre et de l'écriture au moyen âge. Actes de la table ronde, Paris 24-26 septembre 1987*, ed. Olga Weijers (Turnhout: Brepols, 1989), 34-55 (39-40). However, since most of the miniatures I discuss are painted, it is more likely that they were created collaboratively, unlike pen-and-ink drawings: Scott, *Caxton Master*, 67-68. Whilst acknowledging that 'Master' may refer to several artists working in the same style and to crafts carried out by men as well as women, for expediency, I use the masculine singular to refer to the various methods of craftsmanship, as is the

is responsible for the best-known illuminations (because most often reproduced) in Christine's manuscripts. Next, I consider the impact of author-portraits on our reading and understanding of the implied author in the text, particularly when the identity of figures in certain images appears to be made deliberately ambiguous.

Despite their centrality to this discussion, my examination is not limited to portraits found in Christine's author manuscripts, or to those over which she is believed to have had some stylistic influence; in the final Section, I consider how the author was represented in later copies, printed editions, and translations of her works prepared after her lifetime. Where these significantly differ from their models, what motivated such changes? Which type of portrait is closer to historical truth: the contemporary portrait supervised by the author, or those carried out after Christine's lifetime? These reflections will help gain an understanding of how the implied author (and, therefore, the historical author) was imagined by a non-contemporary audience.

This Chapter does not aim to add to the significant body of work by art historians who have sought to identify the various artists who worked on Christine's manuscripts, or to reattribute the workmanship of any of the illuminations studied. Unless otherwise stated, I rely on the data provided by *ACP*, which takes into account recent scholarship.

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convention. On the 'varying connotations' of the term 'workshop', see, Catherine Reynolds, 'The Workshop of the Master of the Duke of Bedford: Definitions and Identities', in *Patrons, Authors and Workshops: Books and Book Production in Paris around 1400*, eds. Godfried Croenen and Peter F. Ainsworth (Louvain: Peeters, 2006), 437-472 (449).

<sup>26</sup> Art historians who have closely examined the body of works attributed to this Master generally agree that MCD was likely to have been a group of Masters working in one workshop. On this artist, see *ACP*, 154-168. It is possible that the other Masters who worked on Christine's manuscripts might have formed part of MCD's workshop, before setting up their own.

## I. The Problem with Harley 4431

[Le] plaisir de se retrouver en terrain connu, doublé  
d'un effet de réel qui accrédite l'histoire<sup>27</sup>

### i. Recognising Christine

For some time now, scholars have become accustomed to identifying the figure wearing a long blue dress and white headdress that often appears in Christine's manuscripts with the historical author herself.<sup>28</sup> This identification is reinforced by the figure's common appearance on covers of modern editions of Christine's works and scholarly texts that take those works as their subject. To restrict examples to editions of Christine's works themselves,<sup>29</sup> the following all feature such an image on their front cover: *La Cité des dames* (2010), *Le Chemin de longue étude* (2002), and the English translation of *TV, The Treasure of the City of Ladies* (2003). Descriptions of Christine's dress in *ACP* serve to illustrate how fixed this identification has become, even in the minds of scholars, who are perhaps too accustomed to seeing Christine depicted in a certain way: they state that 'Christine se reconnaît à sa guimpe, sa robe bleue et ses manches rouges habituelles'.<sup>30</sup> Identification of Christine with the figure in this particular costume is so strong that some scholars have argued that representations of Christine that diverge from this model are unrepresentative, unrealistic, or demonstrate a misreading of the author's texts that she would have found most displeasing.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Bouchet, *Discours*, 82.

<sup>28</sup> Patricia M. Gathercole typifies this view: 'Christine de Pisan [...] is pictured on several manuscripts of her own works [...] dressed in blue with her little white dog beside her': *The Depiction of Women in Medieval French Manuscript Illumination* (Lewiston and Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press, 2000), 49.

<sup>29</sup> Many works of medieval scholarship also reproduce these images on their covers.

<sup>30</sup> *ACP*, 564; see also 292 and 556.

<sup>31</sup> See for example, Rinaldi, 'Character'.

It is true that in the manuscripts created during her lifetime, the nature of Christine's costume remains almost invariable: save for a few minor details (such as the height or angle of the horns on her headdress, or the neckline of her dress) she tends to be identifiable by her 'royal blue *cotehardie*, with short, square-ended hanging sleeves worn over a darker gown with visible long sleeves'.<sup>32</sup> Her headdress is almost invariably 'comprised of several fine white linen veils, widely stretched between two horns made of wire or some rigid form', and a 'sheer wimple [...] covering the shoulders and chest area'.<sup>33</sup> Even when sleeping, the Christine-figure does not abandon this headdress (see Harley 4431, f. 180v: **Pl. 1.1**). From the earliest illustrations we have, in Chantilly, Musée Condé, MS 492 and Paris, BnF, MS fr. 848 (e.g. ff. 2r and 1r respectively: **Pls. 1.2 and 1.3**), to the later, familiar illustrations of Harley 4431, the Christine-figure is recognisable by her outfit.<sup>34</sup> However, across the illuminations carried out by the various Masters, although the style of her costume is almost completely unchanging, the colour of her dress is far from stable.<sup>35</sup> In earlier illustrations, the author-figure is often drawn simply in grisaille, against a painted background; sometimes grey, grey-

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<sup>32</sup> Rinaldi, 'Character', 107.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid. Winter notes that 'Jusqu'en 1404, dans toutes les miniatures la représentant, Christine porte une coiffe blanche et une longue robe à traîne sobrement coupée. A partir de l'année suivante, plus coquette et mieux établie, elle se fera souvent peindre arborant une cornette': *Philippe le Hardi*, 101. This change is partly to do with her employing new artists after approximately this date, including MCD and the Maître d'Egerton. The Maître de l'Épître Othéa, whom Winter discusses extensively, continues to represent Christine in much the same manner, for example in Paris, BnF, MSS fr. 606, 835 and 836 (see **Pl. 3.2**).

<sup>34</sup> Throughout this thesis, unless otherwise stated, I rely upon the dates provided in *ACP*. Of Christine's thirty-six surviving illuminated author-manuscripts, Chantilly 492, on which work began in 1399, is the oldest; however, most of the texts in this volume are believed to have been added in 1402. Dating to 1400, fr. 848 is therefore the oldest manuscript to have been completed. The latest surviving illuminated author-manuscripts are Brussels, KBR, MS 10366 and Harley 4431, which date to no later than 1414, although work on the latter may have begun as early as 1410.

<sup>35</sup> I briefly remark that Christine's style of dress and headdress are both typical of women's dress in the early fifteenth century: see, for example, Françoise Piponnier and Perrine Mane, *Se Vêtir au moyen âge* (Paris: Adam Biro, 1995), 96-103. Although Gathercole sees her headdress as 'fancy', in contrast to her otherwise 'plain-looking' outfit (*Depiction*, 49), costume historians indicate that this was an unremarkable headdress for a woman of Christine's stature, which is common to many of the women represented in contemporary manuscripts.

blue, or grey-brown tints are overlaid on the grisaille, so as to give a hint of colour to her dress. Where the dress is painted, it is most commonly found in beige, brown, grey, or grey-brown tones; on two occasions – in Harley 4431, f. 265r (**Pl. 1.4**) and Paris, Bibliothèque de l’Arsenal, MS 2681, f. 4r (**Pl. 1.5**) – Christine is encountered in a pink dress; similarly in Chantilly, Musée Condé, MS 492-493 she is depicted wearing a mauve gown. Why, then, are we so quick to associate Christine with the colour blue?

*ii. The Maître de la Cité des Dames*

The need to ask this question is made only more apparent once an important fact has been established: of the twelve artists who worked with Christine or under her supervision, only one consistently represents her in the royal blue robes with which we identify her: the Maître de la Cité des Dames.<sup>36</sup> Indeed, many of the images of Christine that are most often reproduced are attributed to that Master, most famously those of Harley 4431 and Paris, BnF, MS fr. 607.

Why, then, do critics tend to associate Christine with this blue gown? Do modern audiences perhaps simply prefer MCD’s illuminations? Does this reflect Christine’s preferences? Following the dates given in *ACP*, the last eight of Christine’s autograph illuminated manuscripts, dating from 1407 to 1414, were illustrated solely by MCD.<sup>37</sup> It is reasonable to deduce that this near-exclusive

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<sup>36</sup> MCD was not the only of Christine’s contemporary Masters to depict her in this colour: so too did the Maître de Giac, who is responsible for the single illustration of *AC* in ex-Phillipps MS 128, now held in a private collection, and MEO, who represents Christine in a blue dress in the *Cent Balades* of fr. 835, and *CLE* of fr. 836. These illustrations likely postdate MCD’s work (his earliest depictions – in Paris, BnF, MSS n.a.f. 25636, fr. 1179, and Boston, Public Library, MS 101 date to 1405-1406; those of MDG and MEO all postdate 1406).

<sup>37</sup> With the exception of five Harley 4431 illuminations, that were carried out by MBF. On this artist’s involvement in the Harley manuscript, see Avril, *L’Enluminure*, 109-118.



collaboration was a conscious, aesthetic choice on Christine's part.<sup>38</sup> She also used him to illustrate her two most extensive and arguably most famous manuscripts: Harley 4431, or the Queen's Manuscript, and the Duke's Manuscript, whose components are now contained in Paris, BnF, MSS fr. 835, 606, 836, 605, and 607.<sup>39</sup> However, MCD was not involved in the preparation of the three earlier renditions of the *Livre de Christine*, which James Laidlaw designates by the sigla *L*<sub>1</sub> (Chantilly 492-493), *L*<sub>2</sub> (fr. 12779), and *L*<sub>3</sub> (Paris, BnF, MS fr. 604 and Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery, MS 316).<sup>40</sup> He was not, therefore, an artist responsible for illustrating all compilations of Christine's works in presentation copies.

Speculation about how Christine might have encountered MCD's work, or indeed about how involved she was in selecting artists to work on her manuscripts, might not get us very far: her choice of artist could have depended on her patrons' tastes and funds (see Chapter 2, 133-138). It is likely that Christine would have been familiar with his work, as he illustrated at least three texts with which intertextual links indicate that Christine was familiar. These consist of several manuscripts of Boccaccio's works translated into French, including four copies of *Des cas des nobles hommes et femmes*, one manuscript of *Des cleres femmes*, and one of the *Decameron*. Many of these were produced in Paris and held

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<sup>38</sup> Although most of Christine's manuscripts can be dated quite precisely, thanks to the dates they contain and to library records, these are unlikely to ever be entirely certain. The preparation of a manuscript was a time-consuming process, and the illuminations may sometimes have been prepared later than the rest of the copy. Nevertheless, the evidence indicates that Christine increasingly used MCD in her manuscript production as time went on.

<sup>39</sup> On the Duke's Manuscript, see James C. Laidlaw, 'Christine de Pizan – A Publisher's Progress', *Modern Language Review*, 82 (1987), 35-75. Fr. 607 is now widely accepted to make up the fifth part of this luxurious collection (op. cit., 52).

<sup>40</sup> The *Livre de Christine* is the name given by critics to the earliest incarnation of Christine's complete works: see James C. Laidlaw, 'Christine and the Manuscript Tradition', in *Christine de Pizan: A Casebook*, ed. Barbara K. Altmann and Deborah L. McGrady (New York: Routledge, 2003), 231-249. Christine is not believed to have been involved in the preparation of the *L*<sub>3</sub> manuscripts, thought to have been copied from an earlier manuscript that she did supervise: see Gianni Mombello, *La tradizione manoscritta dell' «Epistre Othea» di Christine de Pizan: Prolegomeni all'edizione del testo* (Torino: Accademia delle Scienze, 1967), 66, 111-12, 303-306, 327-28, and Laidlaw, 'Author', 533.

in the royal library, and may therefore be the very copies to which Christine had access.<sup>41</sup> In any case, it seems unlikely that Christine, who was actively involved in the production of her manuscripts and therefore collaborated with contemporary artisans, would not have been familiar with MCD's works: not only was he active in Paris whilst Christine was producing her manuscripts there, but his output was particularly prolific.<sup>42</sup> His works have not been the subject of a sustained art historical study, and references to his style of illustration with particular mention of Christine's material are few.<sup>43</sup>

The body of illuminations that are attributed to him testify to his popularity, and to appreciation for his works – notably in royal circles. Anne Hedeman notes that 'one reason for his popularity in courtly circles was probably his realistic style; he could evoke the interiors where the courtiers lived and the clothing and political emblems that they loved to wear'.<sup>44</sup> She also highlights his ability to use 'various methods of illustration to gloss the chronicle and express his political message'.<sup>45</sup> That it was his attention to realism and ability to subtly weave political points into compositions that attracted Christine to this particular Master

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<sup>41</sup> Meiss attributes forty-four manuscripts to MCD; a full list is to be found in *Late Fourteenth Century*, vol. 1, 356-357, and *Limbourgs*, 377-382. Villela-Petit estimates his output even higher, at over fifty manuscripts: *ACP*, 154.

<sup>42</sup> Sterling dates his activity to c. 1400-1415, making him an exact contemporary of Christine's: *Peinture*, 286. More recently, Villela-Petit has estimated that he was active from the period of 1401 to 1420: *ACP*, 154.

<sup>43</sup> Some indications may be found in Sue Ellen Holbrook, 'The Properties of Things and Textual Power: Illustrating the French Translation of *De proprietatibus rerum* and a Latin Precursor', in *Patrons, Authors and Workshops*, 367-403 (382-392), and in Sterling, *Peinture*, 286-295. For a description of MCD's illustrations of four copies of the *Grandes Chroniques*, see Anne Hedeman, *The Royal Image: Illustrations of the 'Grandes Chroniques de France', 1274-1422* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 153-177.

<sup>44</sup> *Image*, 153. On MCD's depictions of the interior of Isabeau de Bavière's chamber, see Sandra Hindman, 'With Ink and Mortar: Chrisitne de Pizan's *Cité des Dames* (An Art Essay)', *Feminist Studies*, 10.3 (Fall 1984), 457-483 (463).

<sup>45</sup> Hedeman, *Image*, 175.

is a mere hypothesis.<sup>46</sup> Two points, however, are certain: first, MCD was active and his works known to royal patrons before he came to work on Christine's manuscripts; second, their collaboration only began once the careers of both individuals were well established.

A further important manuscript that MCD worked on is a copy of Thomas d'Aleran's *CE*, contained in fr. 12559.<sup>47</sup> This text was composed during the author's captivity in Turin from 1394 to 1396,<sup>48</sup> and this manuscript is believed to have been made in Paris at his behest, from around 1403 to 1404.<sup>49</sup> It is an extensively and carefully decorated manuscript, containing ninety-two illuminations, several of which are full-page; it has been described by its editor as 'l'un des plus beaux manuscrits que je connaisse' – a significant point, as it is unlikely that its noble author would have asked an inexperienced artist to work on such a manuscript.<sup>50</sup> It can therefore be surmised that MCD was already an artist of some repute by 1403-1404. The materials used in the illustration of this volume support this conclusion: he makes extensive use of costly pigments, including gold leaf (as seen in, for example, fr. 12559, f. 1v: **Pl. 1.6**), and lapis lazuli whose deep blue is the root of the present investigation.

Over time, the quality of the illuminations in Christine's author manuscripts increased, as did her output, both in terms of the number of manuscripts produced

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<sup>46</sup> The political purpose of imagery was commonly seen in illuminations from the fourteenth century onwards: Sterling, *Peinture*, vol. 1, 19.

<sup>47</sup> MCD worked on another copy of this work, Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale, MS R. 1680, which postdates the Parisian manuscript by about ten years and was badly damaged by fire early in the twentieth century. On this manuscript, see Robert Fajen, *Die Lanze und die Feder: Untersuchungen zum Livre du chevalier errant von Thomas III, Markgraf von Saluzzo* (Wiesbaden: Ludwig Reichert, 2003), 25-38.

<sup>48</sup> Chaubert, 'Introduction', in Thomas d'Aleran, *Chevalier errant*, 9.

<sup>49</sup> Daniel Chaubert and Gillette Tyl-Labory, 'Thomas III de Saluces', in *Dictionnaire des lettres françaises: Le Moyen âge*, eds. Georges Grente et al (Paris: Fayard, 1992), 1140.

<sup>50</sup> Chaubert, 'Introduction', *Chevalier errant*, 14.

(see **Figs. 1** and **3**), and of the illuminations contained within single works.<sup>51</sup> *EO* best illustrates this: in its earliest form, dating to around 1400 (fr. 848), this work comprises only five grisaille miniatures, clustered at the beginning of twenty-two folios of text. It maintains this format in more than one early copy (Chantilly 492-493; fr. 604; fr. 12779) but, after the copying of fr. 606 in around 1408, its iconographical programme was extended to 101 illuminations.<sup>52</sup> This is also the format of *EO* in Harley 4431, in which it takes up forty-six folios – over double the space of its original layout, meaning twice the amount of expensive vellum, not to mention the cost of preparing the additional miniatures.

MCD's involvement in the illuminations of the Harley 4431 copy of *EO* demonstrates the increasing quality of the artistry in Christine's author-manuscripts, and points to her marked preference for this artist. The Harley manuscript's layout and illustrations closely mirror those of fr. 606, illustrated by MEO: with only a few minor exceptions, the locations of the miniatures are absolutely identical until *histoire* LXXXVIII (found on f. 41v in Harley 4431 and f.

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<sup>51</sup> MCD is not the only artist used by Christine later in her career that testifies to her increased fame – or at least, to Christine's or her patrons' increased spending on decoration. The involvement of one of the five most important Parisian artists of the period in the decoration of Harley 4431, MBF, also strongly supports this notion. Earlier in her career, the artists used in Christine's author manuscripts are comparatively unknown and do not appear to have worked on any manuscripts besides those of Christine's works after which art historians have sometimes named them – such as MEO and the Maître de la Première Epître. MEO worked exclusively on Christine's works, with the exception of a copy of the *Grandes chroniques*: Meiss, *Fourteenth Century*, vol. 1, 358. Very little has been written about MPE, whose name comes from the first copy of *EO* contained in fr. 848 (the 'première épître'), on which this artist worked. No further manuscript illuminations have been attributed to this Master.

<sup>52</sup> *ACP* dates fr. 606 to 1406-1408, whereas Laidlaw previously dated it to 1408-1409: 'Manuscript Tradition'. As Jean de Berry acquired the volume in 1408, it cannot have been prepared so late as Laidlaw supposed. However, the change in its design to include 101 images suggests that it was prepared after fr. 604, dating to 1407, which has space for only six images. The reasons for the considerable extension of *EO* and the possible motivations for this restyling are fully discussed in Chapter 2.I.

135v in fr. 606)<sup>53</sup> and, in several cases, the Harley manuscript's images could almost have been traced from the earlier copy (for example, compare f. 98v: **Pl. 1.7** with fr. 606, f. 4v: **Pl. 1.8**).<sup>54</sup> The differences between the two are down to the peculiar characteristics of the different Masters' work, but the later manuscript's more detailed illuminations suggest that a greater amount of time was spent on them, and demonstrate the more polished skill of the artist responsible: the backgrounds in fr. 606 tend to be plain, whereas they often feature geometrical patterns in MCD's work (for examples, see fr. 12559, f. 1v: **Pl. 1.6**, and further, **Pls. 1.18-1.20**). Similarly, whereas clothing in the earlier copy is depicted quite plainly, in the later manuscript, detail has been added to the dress of noble figures in particular, and facial features are painted with more care and in more minute detail in MCD's illuminations. Therefore, although the later miniatures were more carefully prepared, MCD was not brought in to create *EO*'s iconographic programme anew, but to produce a higher quality copy.

Some of the differences described may be down to the stature of the manuscript on which MCD was working: as the Harley manuscript was commissioned by Isabeau de Bavière, more time and money would likely have

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<sup>53</sup> Throughout this thesis, I use the umbrella term *histoire* to refer to the combination of the three textual elements and the image that make up each chapter of *EO*. I discuss these elements in detail in Chapter 2.I.

<sup>54</sup> With a few minor exceptions: for instance, the illustration accompanying the *histoire* that describes how the crow was turned from white to black. Both manuscripts depict this story with an illumination featuring two birds in a tree, but, in fr 606 both are black whereas in Harley 4431, one is white and the other black. Another, amusing, exception is the image accompanying *histoire* XLIV: the earlier manuscript features a man in the threshold of a house, facing outwards to look up to Aurore, pulling his coat across his chest; in Harley 4431, the man is depicted facing into the house, looking up at Aurore, pulling up his trousers over his bare legs. Did MCD have a slightly bawdy sense of humour? Anne-Marie Barbier discusses the similarities between the illumination cycles of these two manuscripts in 'Le Cycle iconographique perdu de l'*Epistre Othea* de Christine de Pizan: Le Cas des manuscrits Beauvais, BM09 et Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 421', *CRMH*, 16 (2008), 279-299. Both *P&P* and *MMV* offer detailed comparisons between various aspects of the different versions of *EO*.

been available for the project.<sup>55</sup> However, it would have been more economical to use one of the three artists who had already successfully prepared the images for the earlier fully-illuminated copy of *EO* (fr. 606).<sup>56</sup> Of course, those artists may simply not have been available: MEO, who had carried out quite extensive work for Christine in the past, and the Maître au Safran are not seen to have worked on any further of Christine's manuscripts; MDE is credited with each of the single illuminations for three manuscripts of the *Sept psaumes allegorisés* in 1409 and, depending on exactly when the Harley 4431 miniatures were prepared, may no longer have been available.<sup>57</sup> But it is equally plausible that MCD, having by now worked on at least eight of Christine's manuscripts, was seen as the right artist to take on this extensive programme of high-quality images for a high-nobility patron.<sup>58</sup> By the time these miniatures were to be completed, MCD had proven his worth by carrying out the highly original iconographic programme of *CD* in fr. 607, the manuscript from which he derives his name.<sup>59</sup> Since choosing MCD to illustrate the Harley 4431 version of *EO* would not have been the cheapest option available to Christine, she must have had a particular desire to require his

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<sup>55</sup> The Harley 4431 dedication makes it clear that the Queen commissioned the manuscript from Christine: 'Dès que vo command en receu': reproduced in *Œuvres poétiques de Christine de Pizan*, ed. Maurice Roy, 3 vols. (Paris: Firmin Didot, 1886-1896), vol. 1 (1886), xv:54. Significantly, Isabeau had already been the recipient of Chantilly 492-493, a compilation manuscript also containing a six-illumination copy of *EO*. Christine likewise prepared a second, fully-illuminated copy of *EO* for Louis d'Orléans that would supplement the fr. 848 version dedicated to him six years earlier. The reasons for this are examined in Chapter 2.III. It was not unusual for a patron to commission a further copy of a recently composed work if it was to their liking: Winter, *Philippe le Hardi*, 19.

<sup>56</sup> See Chapter 2.III.

<sup>57</sup> Sandra Hindman argues that the Harley manuscript copy of *EO* was prepared in 1408, and later integrated into the wider collected works manuscript: 'The Composition of the Manuscript of Christine de Pizan's Collected Works in the British Library: A Reassessment', *British Library Journal*, 9 (1983), 93-123.

<sup>58</sup> Christine herself highlights the superior quality of this copy in her dedication: 'si qu'ay sceu | Tout au mieulx et le parfiner | D'escripre et bien enluminer': *Œuvres poétiques*, vol. 1, xv:51-53.

<sup>59</sup> The originality of these miniatures is discussed in Hindman, 'Ink', 464-472. The fr. 607 *CD* miniatures were copied for the Harley 4431 version.

craftsmanship: his superior skill and his potential to create original artwork qualified him to create a manuscript fit for a queen.

MCD was thus a well-reputed artist whom Christine employed to create original or improved iconographic programmes. I now return to the matter of author-portraits: why is it that MCD's characteristic way of drawing this author goes hand-in-hand with the vision of 'Christine' that readers now have?<sup>60</sup> The answer to this question lies in the fame of one particular manuscript and the extensive reproduction of its illuminations.

### *iii. Harley 4431*

In recent years, a great deal of scholarly attention has been paid to Harley 4431, including the major project 'The Making of the Queen's Manuscript', the first to carry out an extended and detailed study of a late-medieval collected works manuscript. This attention is not undue: of Christine's author-manuscripts containing copies of more than one work, it is one of the most homogeneous (originally made up of a single volume, now divided into two), and the most complete (it has not been damaged in any way and is the only of Christine's compilation manuscripts to contain both a table of contents and a prologue).<sup>61</sup> The different incarnations of the *Livre de Christine* ( $L_1$ ,  $L_2$  and  $L_3$ , of which only  $L_1$  is complete) only contain a maximum of twenty-three works, compared to Harley 4431's thirty, which also feature a greater iconographic programme. The makeup of the Duke's manuscript, now divided into five volumes, makes it a difficult item to study, and one that also contains four fewer works than the Harley manuscript. The existence of at least one further collected works manuscript is known, Leiden,

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<sup>60</sup> Later in this Chapter, I discuss exceptions to the representational convention set by MCD.

<sup>61</sup> Hemelryck and Reno, 'Dans l'Atelier', 268.

Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit, Ltk 1819 (now lost), in which a running title on an incomplete folio containing part of *CD* shows this was once item twenty-seven in a large collection of works.<sup>62</sup> But perhaps one of the main reasons why Harley 4431 has received so much attention, and one of the reasons often given as a justification for its being chosen as the base manuscript for so many critical editions, is that it contains the last surviving version of many of Christine's texts to have been revised and written under her supervision.<sup>63</sup>

Editions based on this manuscript include: *Cent ballades d'amant et de dame* (1982);<sup>64</sup> *EDA* (1990);<sup>65</sup> *CD* (1997);<sup>66</sup> *DA, TJ, Livre du dit de Poissy* (1998);<sup>67</sup> and *CLE* (2002).<sup>68</sup> As might be expected, these editions reproduce images taken from their base manuscript on their front covers, thereby replicating those created by MCD in which Christine wears a blue gown, and thereby contributing to the association of this particular representation with Christine. Although there are examples of very high quality illuminations in Harley 4431, the reasons given for using this manuscript tend to concern the volume's textual, as opposed to visual, qualities.<sup>69</sup> Although the Harley manuscript illuminations tend to be more refined,

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<sup>62</sup> Laidlaw, 'Publisher', 59-60. Although it does not necessarily follow that this would have been item number twenty-seven in a collection of *Christine's* works, Laidlaw believes it is likely to have been so, *CD* being the twenty-ninth work in the Queen's manuscript, and the twenty-sixth in the Duke's.

<sup>63</sup> Only two author-manuscripts postdate Harley 4431: KBR 10366, the only extant copy of the *Livre de la Paix* (1414), and Paris, BnF, MS fr. 24786 (c. 1418), of which ff. 36r-97r contain the only known author-copy of the *Livre de la prison humaine*.

<sup>64</sup> Ed. Jacqueline Cerquiglini-Toulet (Paris: Union générale d'éditions).

<sup>65</sup> In *Poems of Cupid, God of Love: Christine de Pizan's Epistre au dieu d'amours and Dit de la rose, Thomas Hoccleve's The letter of Cupid, editions and translations, with George Sewell's The Proclamation of Cupid*, eds. Thelma S. Fenster and Mary Carpenter Erler (Leiden: Brill), 33-74.

<sup>66</sup> *Cité*, ed. Caraffi and Richards.

<sup>67</sup> In Barbara K. Altmann, *The Love Debate Poems of Christine de Pizan* (Gainesville, University of Florida Press).

<sup>68</sup> *Chemin*, ed. Tarnowski.

<sup>69</sup> P. G. C. Campbell describes the Harley 4431 copy as 'infiniment supérieure' to the earlier manuscript: *L'Épître d'Othéa: Étude sur les sources de Christine de Pisan* (Paris: Champion, 1924), 19. Hindman finds that 'the copy in London emerged as the most carefully planned and executed with respect to the ways in which the miniatures work with the political allegory of the text': *P&P*,



there is a certain irony in the fact that these are the images so often reproduced, since many were copied from previous manuscripts and are not therefore original compositions.

However, the most often reproduced Harley 4431 illumination is indeed original and unique to that manuscript: the famous dedication scene found on folio 3r (**Pl. 1.9**). This image features on the front cover of *The Treasure of the City of Ladies or the Book of Three Virtues* (2003), a translation of *TV*,<sup>70</sup> an editorial choice which this edition shares with a surprising number of scholarly works. To restrict these to just three examples, they include: Susan Groag Bell, *The Lost Tapestries of the "City of Ladies": Christine de Pizan's Renaissance Legacy*,<sup>71</sup> François Avril et al., *Paris 1400: Les arts sous Charles VI*,<sup>72</sup> and Christine McWebb and Earl Jeffrey Richards, *Debating the Roman de la Rose: A Critical Anthology* –<sup>73</sup> not to mention innumerable websites and conference posters (connected and unconnected with Christine) that have reproduced this illumination.<sup>74</sup> The predilection for this image lies partly in its rich colours and the realism of the scene,<sup>75</sup> but also in the visualisation of the authority of a woman writer, which is rendered so centrally here: the Christine-figure occupies much more space within the image than any other, including the Queen, and she is firmly at the centre of the image, her blue dress sprawling across the lower part of the frame. In such a realistic setting, the

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61. Her second chapter provides many examples. Not all art historians agree on the quality of the illumination, of which Winter is particularly scathing: 'Enlumineurs', 366. For Meiss, 'some miniatures in the Queen's manuscript betray lack of comprehension of the myth', but this criticism applies primarily to the model, not to the qualities, of the Harley 4431 miniatures: *Limbourgs*, 39.

<sup>70</sup> Ed. and trans. Sarah Lawson (Harmondsworth: Penguin).

<sup>71</sup> Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 2004.

<sup>72</sup> Paris: Fayard, 2004.

<sup>73</sup> London: Routledge, 2011.

<sup>74</sup> Harley 4431 was also on display for a time in the Sir John Ritblat Treasures of the British Library Gallery, where it lay open at this very page.

<sup>75</sup> 'Every detail – dress, furnishings, and location – can be shown to correspond with documentary descriptions': *P&P*, 73.

viewer is tempted to accredit the figures within it with the same ‘effet de réel’ that Bouchet mentions in the epigraph to this Section, an effect that extends to the author-figure.

Some modern texts do, of course, reproduce images from a wider body of Christine’s manuscripts on their front cover, such as the recent facsimile edition of Cologny, Biblioteca Bodmeriana, MS Bodmer 49, entitled the *Epître d’Othéa*.<sup>76</sup> Likewise, by using as a cover a comparatively unknown illumination by the Maître du Couronnement de la Vierge from the author-manuscript Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, MS 10982 in which Christine is represented in grisaille, *ACP* seems to acknowledge that the Christine we encounter in her manuscripts is much more varied than a character in a blue gown. Nevertheless, the attention paid to Harley 4431 and reproductions of its imagery have led scholars to mistakenly see images of Christine in blue as the norm.<sup>77</sup> Outside the domain of scholarship, such images have become not just banalised, but commercialised: for example, in the existence of a Christine de Pizan Halloween costume, which takes a royal blue gown as its focal point,<sup>78</sup> or in a pair of Christine de Pizan blue sapphire-coloured earrings.<sup>79</sup> Representations of Christine in blue continue to be produced by modern artists, such as in Marsha Pippenger’s recent series of extraordinary collages, *Dinner in the City* (Pl. 10).<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Eds. Jacqueline Cerquiglini-Toulet and Hélène Basso, 2 vols. (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2008).

<sup>77</sup> See above quotations from Gathercole and Lechat, to which I add Lori J. Walters’ references to Christine’s ‘customary blue gown’, or her ‘characteristic blue robes’: ‘Depictions of Books and Parchment Sheets in the Queen’s MS (London, British Library, Harley MS 4431)’, published online [www.pizan.lib.ed.ac.uk/waltersbooksandletters.rtf](http://www.pizan.lib.ed.ac.uk/waltersbooksandletters.rtf) (accessed 31 October 2016).

<sup>78</sup> <http://takebackhalloween.org/christine-de-pizan/> (accessed 31 October 2016).

<sup>79</sup> <https://www.rubylane.com/item/506533-nx2fa1937/Christine-De-Pisan-Earrings-Sapphire-Quartz> (accessed 31 October 2016).

<sup>80</sup> Details and images of the project can be viewed at <http://pippengerart.com/?p=14> (accessed 31 October 2016); see especially, ‘Beam of Light’, ‘Christine de Pizan Icon’, and ‘Je Christine’. I am most grateful to the artist for permitting me to reproduce these images in this project.

But the fact is, even in Harley 4431, Christine is not exclusively depicted in blue. Although its style remains the same, the author's dress is of a different colour on two occasions.<sup>81</sup> In the first, on folio 95r, the start of *EO*, Christine is represented in a black dress, offering her book to the seated Louis d'Orléans (**Pl. 1.11**). On this occasion, it is possible that Christine was painted in black so as to distinguish her from her noble patron, who is himself wearing the royal blue in which Christine is normally depicted in this manuscript. The colours of this image are reversed in the composition of folio 178r (the dedication scene at the opening of *CLE*), in which King Charles VI wears a black costume and Christine a light blue gown.<sup>82</sup> Although black may have been selected as a mark of respect for and acknowledgement of the death of the king's brother Louis d'Orléans, who had been murdered in November 1407 (following Hindman's theory that this copy of *EO* was prepared in 1408), or even as a marker of Christine's own widowhood, it is more likely that it was used here to avoid dressing the author and her noble patron in the same colour.

The second occurrence (f. 265r: **Pl. 1.4**) is more problematic. This image features at the start of the *Oroison de Nostre Dame*, a position in which, in other manuscripts, a figure carrying out the familiar gesture of an author presenting her

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<sup>81</sup> Although Cristine wears a blue gown in the *CLE* images in this manuscript, the shade used throughout this series of illuminations is much lighter – almost grey. This may be for compositional purposes so that the figures stand out against the deep blue sky against which Cristine is depicted in four of the eight images.

<sup>82</sup> Charles VI was commonly depicted wearing black robes, usually decorated with gold – for examples (all of which are the work of MCD), see Paris, BnF, MS fr. 23279, ff. 5r, 19r and 119r, and Geneva, Bibliothèque de Genève, MS fr. 165, ff. 4r and 7r. Since MCD customarily depicted Charles VI in black robes, it is unlikely in this instance that this choice of costume has anything to do with his being in mourning. However, on two occasions in fr. 23279, Charles VI wears a different costume: a blue gown with gold trim, decorated with *fleur de lys*, worn over the top of a pink or red gown (ff. 1v and 9r). This change in costume seems to accommodate the setting: in both instances, the King is in a public, courtly setting, sitting on his throne wearing a gold crown, whereas he wears a black costume when represented in the more private space of his bedchamber. Consistency here therefore seems to be tied to the setting.

book to a patron is encountered (Chantilly 492-493, f. 161r and fr. 12779, f. 154r: **Pls. 1.12** and **1.13**). However, the figure in this position in the Harley manuscript is quite different from other portrayals of the author in the collection: not only is her pink gown an unusual colour choice, but in contrast to Christine's usually simple, plain gown, this one is decorated, featuring a grey fur trim on the sleeves and neck and a gilded belt around the waist. The figure holds an open scroll, which she presents to the Virgin or from which she could be reading to her.<sup>83</sup> This illustration was not carried out by MCD but is one of the five illuminations in this manuscript carried out by MBF. Two different artists may simply have represented the author in divergent ways, but this is one of three occasions on which MBF is believed to have painted Christine-figures in Harley 4431: in both other cases (ff. 259v and 261v: **Pls. 0.2** and **0.3**), she is depicted in a plain, deep blue gown.

There are two possible reasons for the unusual colour choice in Plate 1.4. On the one hand, as the Virgin is painted in her customary 'bleu marial',<sup>84</sup> it might simply be that once again, Christine was painted in a manner that distinguishes her from the more noble figure. Indeed, when representing them together in a single frame, illuminators appear to have been conscious not to paint Christine and the Virgin in the same colour (see Chantilly 492-493, f. 161r: **Pl. 1.12**).<sup>85</sup> On the other hand, it is possible that the artist did not recognise the figure to be the author, and therefore – regardless of the headdress that is reminiscent of Christine's usual

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<sup>83</sup> The figure in fr. 836, f. 45v bears no book or scroll, and her hands are joined together in prayer. Here, it is therefore even less clear whether the figure is intended to represent the author; this is also the only case in which this figure is significantly smaller in size than the Virgin, who is very much at the centre of this particular image.

<sup>84</sup> Michel Pastoureau, *Bleu: Histoire d'une couleur* (Paris: Seuil, 2006), 45.

<sup>85</sup> Miniaturists are often concerned with not overusing one colour within the same image. For example, Gathercole notes that in scenes of the Visitation, when Christ is represented in a blue robe, Mary is clad in purple rather than blue to add variety to the composition: *Depiction*, 76.

costume – the figure in pink is not to be identified with her. The writers of *ACP* would seem to follow the first hypothesis, as their caption to this image reads: ‘Christine présente son livre à la Vierge’.<sup>86</sup> If the artist did intend for this figure to be identified with the author, this would support my contention that, far from being represented in a consistent manner, Christine’s dress is more diverse than we are usually inclined to believe. The ornateness of her costume in this image would also merit further discussion, a point to which I return in Section III below.

Christine has been seen to have increasingly used MCD to illustrate her works and therefore to represent herself, gradually creating a recognisable author-figure who could be associated with the implied author, and thereby, with the historical author. Might this preference for this artist be tied to his consistent representations of the same persona, or to his use of the colour blue? If so, why might Christine have liked this characteristic representation? Why might MCD have chosen to use it to represent Christine in the first place? And what symbolic associations did it conjure for the medieval mind?

## II. Blue: Between the Blessed Virgin and MCD

Images, too, are constructions, whether conscious or not, of the artists who made them; and in turn they may be constructors of the world they profess to record<sup>87</sup>

The various conduits that work towards enhancing Christine’s authority are examined throughout this Chapter; in this present Section, three possible influences on MCD’s choice to represent Christine in blue are examined. First, the

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<sup>86</sup> *ACP*, 343.

<sup>87</sup> Lesley Smith and Jane H. M. Taylor, ‘Introduction’, in *Women and the Book: Assessing the Visual Evidence*, eds. Jane H. M. Taylor and Lesley Smith (London and Toronto: BL and University of Toronto Press, 1997) 13-18 (16).

symbolic links that the artist might have been seeking to create; next, one of these is focused on in more detail as I consider the possibility that this colour was selected so as to visually connect Christine with the Virgin Mary. Finally, I evaluate MCD's artistic and compositional conventions, and the extent to which these might have influenced the way in which he depicted Christine. I end by examining Christine's awareness of the connotations of different colour conventions, and by positing a new category of author-portraits that can be ambiguously interpreted.

### *i. Symbolic Potential*

Blue is a colour that has been endowed with various symbolic associations over the course of time. Before the Middle Ages, it was associated with divinity,<sup>88</sup> a factor that was only more significant taken the expense of producing blue dyes (particularly lapis lazuli). In turn, the costliness of the pigment and the perceived connection between God and the king led to blue being adopted by the nobility together with purple – another expensive colour to produce. These royal associations perhaps require little further illustration, the colour of the House of France being blue with gold *fleurs de lys*. From the early thirteenth century, blue was used to represent the nobility in illuminations,<sup>89</sup> a convention that continues into the fourteenth century, a period when royal members are often depicted in this colour in manuscripts. As a variant, members of the nobility might also be seen sitting against a royal blue backdrop, sometimes adorned with *fleurs de lys* –

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<sup>88</sup> Frédérique Jacquemin, *Histoire du bleu* (Paris: Noesis, 2000).

<sup>89</sup> Michel Pastoureau, *Blue: The History of a Color* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2001), 83.

of which the decoration of the Queen's chamber in the Harley 4431 frontispiece provides an example (f. 1r: **PI. 1.9**).<sup>90</sup>

But despite these apparently straightforward associations, both Michel Pastoureau and John Gage highlight difficulties in interpreting the significance of medieval colours. In Pastoureau's words, 'the medieval symbol does not function the same way as a modern symbol. It is less reductive, less mechanical, more lively, more supple in its use and signification, and [...] remains more resistant to analysis'.<sup>91</sup> For both of these scholars, part of the problem arises from the fact that in medieval symbolism, 'the same object might have opposite connotations'; a well-known example being the lion, who could be associated with the devil for its ferocity and with Christ for its fearlessness.<sup>92</sup> Gage concludes that 'it is not at all surprising that modern students of medieval colour-symbolism have been hard put to it to reach any general conclusions about the meanings of individual colours', and suggests that local variations may have been important in interpreting their symbolism.<sup>93</sup> Searching for a meaning behind Christine's blue gown may not, therefore, get us very far since any distinct meaning tied to her particular milieu may be lost on us. Nevertheless, as Gage suggests, we might find some clues as to the motivations behind this association in literature contemporary with Christine and in her own works, as no doubt contemporary uses of the colour blue would have been familiar to her and her illuminators.

For two late medieval French authors, Guillaume de Machaut and Jean Robertet, blue was strongly associated with *loyauté*, although the object of that

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<sup>90</sup> For further examples, see Sandra Hindman, *Symbolique et le monde médiéval* (Paris: Les Enluminures, 1999), nos. 10, 24, 27, and 42.

<sup>91</sup> Pastoureau, *Blue*, 9.

<sup>92</sup> John Gage, *Colour and Culture: Practice and Meaning from Antiquity to Abstraction* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2009), 83.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

loyalty differs for each poet. One of Machaut's ballads takes colours as its theme, and in this poem, loyalty is explicitly connected with blue, a connection emphasised by the refrain: 'Que fin azur loyauté signefie'.<sup>94</sup> Robertet links blue with loyalty in 'L'Exposition des couleurs', but here, the poem's emphasis on the celestial qualities of the colour suggests more of a concern with faithfulness towards God, as opposed to Machaut's faithfulness towards a lover.<sup>95</sup> This poem dedicates a stanza to each colour, and each, in turn, speaks their own qualities. The final line of the stanza links the colour blue to white, which the poet has explicitly associated with 'Sainte Escripiture' and religious faith in the previous stanza. Blue speaks:

Et moy qui suis de coulleur celestine,  
Dont fin azur a son pris et valleur,  
Signiffiant loyauté pour meilleur,  
Je doy au blanc par droit estre voisine.<sup>96</sup>

Its links with the divine, with royalty, and its attested symbolic associations with different kinds of loyalty can be seen in these examples.<sup>97</sup> MCD therefore evokes multiple symbolic connotations by representing the author in blue robes, whether deliberately or not.

Through its association with the Virgin Mary, to which I return more fully below, blue also comes to evoke peace, mourning, and wisdom.<sup>98</sup> Thereby,

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<sup>94</sup> Reproduced in Guillaume de Machaut, *La Louange des dames*, ed. Nigel Wilkins (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1972), 94: number 176. The narrator of Machaut's *Voir dit* is similarly distraught when his lady wears green, the colour of change, as opposed to blue, the colour of fidelity: *Le Livre du voir dit*, ed. and trans. Paul Imbs (Paris: Librairie générale française, 1999), 668-670:7,590-7,610.

<sup>95</sup> Reproduced in Jean Robertet, *Œuvres*, ed. Margaret Zsuppán (Geneva: Droz, 1970), 138-140.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, 138:5-8.

<sup>97</sup> In Christine's *DR*, the colour blue is also associated with Dame Loyauté: at the end of the poem, Christine awakes to find a letter from her, 'Et les lettres furent escriptes | De fin azur', and 'Le laz en fu de soye azure': in *Œuvres poétiques*, vol. 2 (1891), 46:574-575, 580.

<sup>98</sup> Pastoureau, *Blue*, 138 and 180, pls. 70 and 95. Blue became the customary colour in which to represent the Virgin from the twelfth century onwards. At this time, architectural and sculptural representations of Mary also shifted, a phenomenon that Penny Gold Schine puts down to a more general stylistic shift in the art of the twelfth century, the change from Romanesque to Gothic: *The*



Pastoureau claims that, by Christine's time, blue would have evoked not just royalty, but also a more general sense of morality.<sup>99</sup> Where Christine is encountered in blue, the artist could therefore have been exploiting the representation of the author in order to further the claims and associations made within the texts themselves. By representing her in this manner, the image gives visual substance to various aspects of Christine's self-creation in her texts, including her loyalty towards her patrons, autobiographical details (such as her state of widowhood),<sup>100</sup> her textual stance as an advocator of peace, as well as her textual self-creation as a teacher or prophet-figure, all of which could be associated with the colour blue. Its absence from sumptuary laws was perhaps what enabled it to be exploited in these ways: it could be seen as both a humble or neutral colour, whilst simultaneously ennobling the wearer by visual association.

In the late medieval period, blue therefore carries a variety of symbolic associations, any or all of which made it an appropriate colour with which to depict Christine. Whilst it is impossible to tell which of these – if any – readers are intended to connect with Christine when she is depicted in this colour, what is interesting is that multiple associations *can* be evoked by these representations. In the following century, François Rabelais would amusingly portray the different possible associations of the colour blue in *Gargantua*, where he stages a debate between the narrator and his audience. Grandgousier and the narrator argue that blue symbolises 'le ciel et choses celestes', but it is suggested that the audience might object that blue represents 'fermeté'.<sup>101</sup> These two readings need not be in

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*Lady and the Virgin: Image, Attitude, and Experience in Twelfth-Century France* (Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 1985), 45.

<sup>99</sup> *Bleu*, 73.

<sup>100</sup> Pastoureau calls this the 'attribut marial du deuil': *Bleu*, 44-45.

<sup>101</sup> *Gargantua*, ed. Floyd Gray (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1995), 89-97.

conflict, but nonetheless, that the differing interpretations that can arise from a single colour are deemed important – or entertaining – enough to include, testifies to the multiple possible symbolic interpretations of a colour in the sixteenth century.

From examining contemporary and near-contemporary sources, my findings match those of Gage and Pastoureau: the possible symbolic associations of a particular colour are wide and varied, making it difficult to confidently pin down a single interpretation of the colour blue. However, perhaps this is what appealed in using this colour in the construction of a recognisable author-figure: the symbolic possibilities it creates have the effect of reinforcing the various positions that Christine repeatedly adopts within her texts. The ‘neutrality’ of this colour also allows her to maintain a humble position, whilst it simultaneously increases her authority by visually associating her with two separate and well-attested iconographic traditions: it served to further connect her to the House of France, to which she was in service, and to the Virgin Mary. But there is more to these Marian links than a simple colour association. The connection between Christine and the Virgin must now be examined in more detail.

## *ii. The Authority of the Virgin Mary*

As touched on above, the depiction of a woman in blue in the late Middle Ages inevitably called to mind the Virgin Mary. Within MCD’s work, this intervisual link is apparent in representations not just of Christine, but also of other female figures, especially in depictions created to evoke motherhood, virginity, and wisdom.

In the Harley 4431 version of *EO*, the representation of the mythological characters Diana and Ceres in blue has been interpreted as explicitly linking them

with the mother of Christ. Hindman sees visual links being made with her through both the colour of Ceres's gown, and through her action of scattering wheat, which she claims serves to 'underscore the function of the eucharist through which worshippers affirm their belief in Jesus Christ'.<sup>102</sup> In each case, the figures' connection with Mary is both visual (through their blue robes) and thematic (in their statuses as goddesses of virginity (Diana), and of fertility and motherhood (Ceres)).<sup>103</sup> *EO* certainly makes these thematic connections plain: in *histoire* XXIV, Ceres's link with the fertility of the earth is expressed in language that could be associated with pregnancy: 'plus habondaument *porta* la terre'.<sup>104</sup>

A figure frequently connected with chastity in Christine's writings is Diana, whose virginity is mentioned on three occasions in *EO*: in *histoire* XXIII, she is explicitly described as 'moult chaste et tous jours vierge';<sup>105</sup> in *histoire* LXIX, Diana is said to 'notte chasteté';<sup>106</sup> and finally, in *histoire* LXXXVII, Damné prays to Diana to save her virginity.<sup>107</sup> That blue is seen to symbolise both fertility and virginity doesn't exclude possible Marian symbolism. On the contrary, as the Virgin is unique in her position as both mother and virgin, the use of colour here visually emphasises these mutual associations.<sup>108</sup>

The third quality to be frequently evoked in images that feature women in prominent positions and Virginal blue gowns is wisdom; a case in point is the fact that the first of the illuminations to accompany the three Diana stories in the

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<sup>102</sup> *P&P*, 92.

<sup>103</sup> Hindman also briefly notes that Andromache wears the same garments as those worn by Christine in the Harley 4431 dedication miniatures, possibly a subtle reference to Andromache's widowhood: *P&P*, 131. She also argues that 'Othea, Andromache and Christine are interchangeable': op. cit., 57. Their shared costume and experiences seem to emphasise (and even directly refer to) these correspondences.

<sup>104</sup> *Othea*, 237, added emphasis.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>106</sup> *Othea*, 296.

<sup>107</sup> *Othea*, 323.

<sup>108</sup> See Schine, *Lady*, 68-72.

Harley manuscript shows a goddess and her female followers reading from books (f. 107r: **Pl. 1.14**; I discuss this image further in Chapter 3.II). In this representation, the figure's status as goddess determines her position in a cloud above her followers, but this position might also be read as one of authority or instruction.<sup>109</sup> That Diana features in the accompanying *texte* 'forges a link between literacy and chastity'.<sup>110</sup> In this case, the Virgin is again present both through the colour blue and through the themes of reading and of female edification. In Harley 4431, Io, another woman associated with literacy, is also depicted in a blue gown and white headdress. As in the image just discussed, Io's authority is visually represented: surrounded by three men who sit and read on the floor, she sits at a desk, at which a fourth man presents a sheet of writing to her, as if for verification (f. 109r: **Pl. 1.15**).<sup>111</sup> If, as Hindman suggests, Diana, Ceres, and Io are to be identified as a trio of wise women, it can be no accident that their various *histoires* are also visually linked through their costumes, an iconographic link that they also share with the author.<sup>112</sup>

Whilst these represent cases in which the Virgin Mary is present as an intervisual model for exemplary figures to emphasise the virtues of female motherhood, virginity, and wisdom, elsewhere, representations of her had a more direct influence on the way in which the author is represented. One image in particular, Paris, Bibliothèque Sainte Geneviève, MS 1130, folio 168v (**Pl. 1.16**), a

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<sup>109</sup> Hindman suggests that Christine may have provided instructions for this miniature and for the other 'seven planet' images: *P&P*, 93. Desmond and Sheingorn share my reading of this image as emphasising Diana's position of authority. Whilst noting that 'the action in the miniature evokes the classroom', they also indicate the originality of this composition, which 'has no known textual or visual source': *MMV*, 123.

<sup>110</sup> *MMV*, 126. For their wider discussion of the image of Diana reading, which Desmond and Sheingorn interpret as 'open[ing] a space for female same-sex eroticism', see op. cit., 118-131.

<sup>111</sup> This image of Io also has no known visual antecedent: *MMV*, 217.

<sup>112</sup> In fr. 606, although lacking the Marian associations created through the use of blue, the *histoires* featuring these three women are also connected through the female figures all wearing the same pink/red colour. I discuss Christine's gendering of wisdom more fully in Chapter 3.

miniature depicting Mary teaching Jesus, bears a striking resemblance to that found in Harley 4431 (f. 261v: **PI. 0.3**) which represents Christine instructing her son, Jean de Castel. The artist behind the Sainte Geneviève illumination has not been identified, but is described by Camille as a 'Parisian illuminator'.<sup>113</sup> The resemblance between the two images lies not just in terms of the subject matter and general composition (both female figures feature on the left hand side of the image, instructing a boy from an open book; their gestures indicate that they are acting as teachers),<sup>114</sup> but also extends to detail such as the angle and position of the book on the lectern/table, the style of chair on which the women sit, their postures (the identical position of their arms and the direction of their gazes), the colour of each boy's clothing, and finally, the blue gown worn by both Christine and Mary. How might this resemblance be explained?

Setting aside for now the possibility of a direct influence of the earlier source on the later image, one possible interpretation lies in the use of models, many of which 'originated as designs by the master and were restricted to his shop'.<sup>115</sup> There is evidence that artisans used a variety of means to reproduce images, such as trunks of cartoons; artisans also relied on professional and personal collaborations, resulting in the sharing of visual iconography.<sup>116</sup> Furthermore, it would only be natural and economical for workshops to reuse compositional patterns, whether consciously or not, across different

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<sup>113</sup> Michael Camille, *Master of Death: The Lifeless Art of Pierre Remiet, Illuminator* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996), 223.

<sup>114</sup> On gestures of *adlocutio*, see Jean-Claude Schmitt, *La Raison des gestes dans l'occident médiéval* (Paris: Gallimard, 1990) 51-54.

<sup>115</sup> Robert Scheller, *Exemplum: Model-Book Drawings and the Practice of Artistic Transmission in the Middle Ages (ca. 900-ca. 1470)* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1995), 81. Although widely-used, the term 'model book' may in fact be misleading, as the models would have been transmitted in sheets, not bound in books. I am grateful to Gervase Rosser for this comment.

<sup>116</sup> Caitlin Hartigan discusses such shared visual iconography in her thesis, 'Image, Manuscript, Print: *Le Roman de la Rose*, ca. 1481-1538' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 2014). I am grateful to her for these indications.

manuscripts.<sup>117</sup> Appropriate compositional models were often found in devotional manuscripts or religious texts, and reused by workshops without necessarily intending any specific religious significance.<sup>118</sup> However, whatever the artists' intentions, nothing prevented readers from making intervisual connections between the text at hand and devotional material in which they had seen similar material. Since women were represented in earlier illuminations in less diverse poses than men, illuminators especially needed to turn to religious texts for prototypes of women, including of women writing or otherwise engaging with books.<sup>119</sup>

The Virgin Mary stands out as such a prototype, one who formed a frequently depicted exemplar for artists, but was also 'a role model for all women through the numerous public representations of her in sculpture, stained glass, and wall paintings'.<sup>120</sup> Other examples of literary women are to be found in devotional art, such as female saints who (like the Evangelists) could be represented pen in hand or with a book.<sup>121</sup> A case in point is that of St Catherine of Alexandria, who was most commonly represented with the wheel on which she

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<sup>117</sup> For example, the Athamas miniature in the Harley copy of *EO* (f. 104r) strongly resembles the miniature of Medea strangling her children in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Douce 371, f. 87v (a fifteenth-century copy of *RR*). Hindman and Sheingorn posit that 'the workshop used preexisting patterns that might be reversed for the sake of economy and variety': *MMV*, 208.

<sup>118</sup> See Hugo Buchthal, *Historiana Troiana: Studies in the History of Medieval Secular Illustration* (London: Warburg Institute, 1971).

<sup>119</sup> On the scarcity of images representing women writing, see Lesley Smith, 'Scriba, Femina: Medieval Depictions of Women Writing', in *Women and the Book*, 21-44.

<sup>120</sup> Michael T. Clanchy, 'Images of Ladies with Prayer Books: What do they Signify?', in *The Church and the Book: Papers Read at the 2000 Summer Meeting and the 2001 Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society*, ed. R. N. Swanson (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2004), 106-122 (121).

<sup>121</sup> As with the Virgin, colour consistency was often used to represent the Evangelists to aid literary understanding, although this consistency tended not to extend beyond single works. Examples are to be found in Elizabeth Williams, 'Corbie Gospels', in *Pen and Parchment: Drawing in the Middle Ages*, eds. Melanie Holcomb and Lisa Bessette (New York and New Haven: Metropolitan Museum of Art and Yale University Press, 2009), 77-79 and in Richard W. Pfaff, 'The Calendar', in *The Eadwine Psalter: Text, Image, and Monastic Culture in Twelfth-Century Canterbury*, eds. Margaret T. Gibson, T. A. Heslop, and Richard W. Pfaff (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), 62-87(64).

was martyred, but, because of her role as a teacher and preacher, this was occasionally substituted by a book.<sup>122</sup> Christine's illuminators were certainly aware of this convention since they represent a figure likely to be St Catherine holding a martyr's palm and book in the Harley 4431 copy of *CD* (f. 361r: **Pl. 1.17**).<sup>123</sup> On the choice of a book over a wheel in this illumination, Hindman says this is 'an iconographic aberration wholly consistent with Christine's interest [...] in presenting women as models of wisdom'.<sup>124</sup> There are also examples of images of women writing in non-devotional works such as French translations of Boccaccio's *De claris mulieribus*, including the Sibyls,<sup>125</sup> Sappho, and the Roman poets Cornificia and Proba. These last two figures are also represented in blue in Paris, BnF, MS fr. 598 (ff. 126r and 143v) and depictions of the Virgin Mary may therefore have also influenced these representations. Although other precedents of women reading and writing do exist, these are by far outnumbered by representations of Mary carrying out this action, and the Marian images may themselves have influenced those other depictions. That Mariology influenced artists when representing Christine, whether consciously or not, therefore seems certain.

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<sup>122</sup> Cynthia Stollhans, *St Catherine of Alexandria in Renaissance Roman Art: Case Studies in Patronage* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), 64 and pl. 15. Another example is to be found in Meiss and Beatson, *Belles Heures*, pl. 15.

<sup>123</sup> It is likely that this figure is St Catherine since she appears in the third chapter of this section of *CD* and is third in line in the image. Before her are the Virgin and Mary Magdalene, who make up the subject of chapters I and II respectively. In the equivalent image in the Brussels, KBR, MS 9393 copy of *CD*, this figure holds only a palm, and appears in-between and slightly set back from the Virgin and Mary Magdalene (f. 74v); it is therefore less clear in this copy that this figure represents St Catherine.

<sup>124</sup> Hindman, 'Ink', 468-469.

<sup>125</sup> See Paris, BnF, MS fr. 12420, ff. 30r and 36r. Because of the similarities in their clothing and poses, these miniatures could be used to further support the case that Christine associated herself with the Sibyls: see Bärbel Zühlke, 'Christine de Pizan – le "moi" dans le texte et l'image', in *The City of Scholars. New Approaches to Christine de Pizan*, eds. Margarete Zimmerman and Dina de Rentiis (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1994), 232-241.

To return to the similarity between the image of the Virgin teaching Jesus and of Christine instructing her son, the proximity in the dates of the preparation of both manuscripts, together with the fact that both were prepared in Paris, makes a direct influence of the earlier of these two images on the latter plausible. Without too much speculation, it might be assumed that MCD (who was active in Paris shortly after the Sainte Geneviève manuscript was prepared) would either have direct knowledge of this image, or have been instructed by someone who was familiar with its general representational convention, if not this particular illumination.<sup>126</sup> Throughout the fourteenth and into the fifteenth century, religious artistic subjects were gradually becoming secularised alongside the emergence of 'burgeoning notions of modern creativity and of growing artistic freedom'.<sup>127</sup> In this respect, illuminations such that found in Harley 4431, f. 261v (**Pl. 0.3**) may be considered as secularised images of the Virgin.

There is a more specific reason for the similarity between these images concerning the activity taking place within them, namely reading and teaching – or, more specifically, the act of a mother instructing her son from a book. As Clanchy has observed, 'in fifteenth-century western European culture the ideal of the mother teaching her little boy to read was enshrined in the recurrent image of the Virgin Mary with the Child Jesus and a Book of Hours'.<sup>128</sup> Similarly for young girls, visual imagery of St Anne teaching the Virgin to read was common from the early fourteenth century onwards. These types of images not only serve as a body of

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<sup>126</sup> It is highly improbable that MCD was the artist behind this image, which Camille dates to 1390 (*Master of Death*, 223), as no manuscripts on which he worked are dated any earlier than the very last years of the fourteenth century – although others have dated the manuscript less precisely, to between 1375 and 1399. Assuming that MCD was a group of artists and not one individual increases the likelihood that one of the team had direct knowledge of this manuscript.

<sup>127</sup> Scheller, *Exemplum*, 81.

<sup>128</sup> *Memory*, 13.



evidence for female literacy, but, for my present purposes, they also ‘promulgated the notion of mothers as teachers’.<sup>129</sup> These images of St Anne and of the Virgin were common throughout the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries,<sup>130</sup> and Clanchy notes that the image of the Virgin reading ‘became, in the Books of Hours of the later Middle Ages, the most popular of all images of the Virgin’.<sup>131</sup> At the time when Christine was preparing her manuscripts, the Virgin was therefore very much connected with the instruction of children and with female literacy.

But what function did images such as these serve, and why would Christine’s illuminators copy them so closely? What connotations did these Marian images conjure up that led Masters to reproduce them, substituting the Virgin for Christine? This reflection brings me back to the concept of authority, and its being bound up with wisdom. Representations of Mary holding a book (which might be a Book of Hours or Bible) show her as wise, and act as a visual reminder of Biblical authority.<sup>132</sup> In Smith’s words, this representational convention ‘testifies to the presence of Christ in the assembly, and confirms and heightens Mary’s authority [...]. Holding the book, she reminds viewers of her role as *theotokos* (God-bearer),

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<sup>129</sup> Pamela Sheingorn, “‘The Wise Mother’: The Image of St. Anne Teaching the Virgin Mary’, in *Gendering the Master Narrative: Women and Power in the Middle Ages*, eds. Mary C. Erler and Maryanne Kowaleski (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2003), 105-134. Such images were not only common in texts, but also flourished in devotional contexts, including literature, statues, and stained glass windows: see Michael T. Clanchy, ‘Did Mothers Teach their Children to Read?’, in *Motherhood, Religion and Society in Medieval Europe, 400-1400: Essays Presented to Henrietta Leyser*, eds. Conrad Leyser and Lesley Smith (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 129-153.

<sup>130</sup> Several examples of the Virgin instructing Christ are reproduced in Otto Pächt, C. R. Dodwell, and Francis Wormald, *The St Albans Psalter (Albani Psalter)* (London: Warburg Institute, 1960), pls. 15, 116, 117, and 118.

<sup>131</sup> *Memory*, 192.

<sup>132</sup> Smith has found that Mary is not only commonly represented with a book in Annunciation scenes, but also when pregnant (in one particular depiction, she holds a book over the foetal Christ), and at Pentecost: ‘Scriba’, 22. Susan Groag Bell notes that the Virgin is often represented with up to five books, and reading in a variety of poses in different manuscripts, including whilst midwives prepare for her confinement, and after childbirth: ‘Medieval Women Book Owners: Arbiters of Lay Piety and Ambassadors of Culture’, in *Women and Power in the Middle Ages*, ed. Mary Erler and Maryanne Kowaleski (Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 1988), 149-187 (168-173, and figs. 10-11). In the same article, she explains that the prevalent use of these representations is linked to Mary’s being seen as a ‘symbol of wisdom learned in the law of God, because only such a woman would be worthy to bear His son’: 173.

and the authority of the book-as-Christ rebounds on to her'.<sup>133</sup> By closely copying this iconography, Christine is shown to be equally wise, and her text authoritative. Not only do Christine's works represent the author writing,<sup>134</sup> a common device to enhance the authority of a writer (countless such illuminations may be found at or near the beginning of manuscripts), but the image of a woman with a book reminds viewers of representations of the Virgin Mary, and of the biblical teachings she emblematises.<sup>135</sup> Whether or not Christine or her artists were intentionally making an intervisual connection between the author and the Virgin – and if so, with what intentions in mind, and whose those intentions (Christine's, the artist, or even the patron's) they might have been – it is significant that such a connection can be made when viewing Christine's works. The artists working with Christine would undoubtedly have been familiar with these conventionalised representations, having perhaps even produced some of these images themselves. At the very least, these served as a kind of 'unconscious model' for them.

That Marian connections serve to enhance the authority that Christine seeks to create for herself is not a phenomenon to be found only in the iconographic programme of her manuscripts, as these connections are also apparent in the texts they accompany. Jacqueline Cerquiglini-Toulet is one of several scholars to have posited a connection between Christine and the Virgin in

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<sup>133</sup> 'Scriba', 22. Illustrated copies of *CD* produced by Christine represent the Virgin entering the city holding a sceptre and a book: **Pl. 1.17**; see also KBR 9393, f. 74v, and fr. 607, f. 67v. In Paris, BnF, MS fr. 1178, f. 135r, the Virgin herself only carries a sceptre, but two of the saints accompanying her hold books. In later non-autograph copies of *CD*, she often holds a baby instead of a book, including Munich, BSB, MS Cod. Gall. 8, f. 112; and Paris, BnF, MS fr. 1177, f. 95r. Zühlke has already noted that a link is established between Christine and the Virgin in *CD* illuminations, as both women are represented in blue: 'Moi', 235.

<sup>134</sup> Christine is one of the very few female figures Smith has found writing in books in the Middle Ages, 'Scriba', 26-38.

<sup>135</sup> On representations of the Virgin Mary in the Middle Ages in general, see Louis Réau, *Iconographie de l'art chrétien*, 3 vols. (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1955-1959), vol. 2 (1957) 70-128.

Christine's literary corpus:<sup>136</sup> she sees a similarity between the Annunciation to the Virgin Mary, and the annunciation scenes that take place in *DR*, *CLE*, and *CD*.<sup>137</sup> These scenes announce the text that will be produced from Christine's encounters with these various figures:

Dans un orgueil humble, elle se met à la place de la Vierge, qui, elle aussi, dans les scènes d'annonciation, est très souvent représentée un livre, *Le Livre* plutôt, à la main. Elle reçoit dans son *giron*, le mot est fondamental qui annonce la future maternité, une lumière venue du ciel. [...] La scène d'annonciation, pour le poète, est une scène d'inspiration. L'engendrement du livre se substitue à l'engendrement du Christ.<sup>138</sup>

For Richards, the cult of the Virgin Mary serves to justify Christine's taking a political stance in several of her works: 'en insistant sur la *regalitas* de la Vierge, elle se sert de la dynamique du culte marial pour commenter implicitement la position de saint Thomas d'Aquin touchant la nature de la femme et, par extension, l'aptitude des femmes à gouverner'.<sup>139</sup> Although she is careful never to explicitly

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<sup>136</sup> Such a hypothesis was first put forward by Quilligan in *Allegory*, 54-55. Following on from Quilligan and Cerquiglini-Toulet, Tina-Marie Ranalli reads Christine's lap or *giron* in *CD* as a 'metaphoric womb': 'Christine de Pizan's Metaphoric Womb', *Medieval Feminist Forum*, 47.1 (2011), 32-51. Likewise, Earl Jeffrey Richards sees the scene in which Christine recounts her transformation into a man in *MF* as an allusion to the Incarnation: 'Les Enjeux du culte marial chez Christine de Pizan', in *Desireuse de plus avant enquerre... Actes du VI<sup>e</sup> Colloque international sur Christine de Pizan (Paris, 20-24 juillet 2006)*, eds. Liliane Dulac and James Laidlaw (Paris: Champion, 2008), 141-165. More recently, Delsaux has drawn a parallel between the physical labour endured by Christine and the Virgin, their exertions leading to the 'birth' of a text in the former case, and to Christ in the latter: *Manuscripts*, 100.

<sup>137</sup> By Jacqueline Cerquiglini-Toulet, see: *La Couleur de la mélancolie: La Fréquentation des livres au XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle 1300-1415* (Paris: Hatier, 1993); 'L'Écriture louche: La Voie oblique chez les Grands Rhétoriciens', in *Les Grands Rhétoriciens: Actes du 5<sup>e</sup> colloque sur le moyen français, Milan, 6-8 mai 1985*, 3 vols. (Milan: Vita e pensiero, 1985), vol. 1, 21-31; 'Fondements et fondations de l'écriture chez Christine de Pizan. Scènes de lecture et scènes d'incarnation', in *City of Scholars*, 79-96.

<sup>138</sup> Cerquiglini-Toulet, *Couleur*, 77. Whilst, for Cerquiglini-Toulet, these annunciation scenes are something of a leitmotif in her works, this likening of the poet to Mary is not limited to Christine's corpus, but, more generally, 'la représentation de la création littéraire au Moyen Age prend le modèle de l'incarnation, car elle n'ose adopter celui de la création du monde. Le poète ne se risque pas encore à se mettre à la place de Dieu, mais accepte de tenir, revendique même, la place d'une vierge': op. cit., 80. Machaut's descriptions of the genesis of his own compositional enterprises also liken the poet to Mary: op. cit., 75-76.

<sup>139</sup> Richards, 'Enjeux', 159. By the same author, see 'Justice in the Summa of St. Thomas Aquinas, in Late Medieval Marian Devotional Writings and in the Works of Christine de Pizan', in *Christine de Pizan, une femme de science, une femme de lettres*, eds. Juliette Dor, Marie-Elisabeth Henneau, and Bernard Ribémont (Paris: Champion, 2008), 95-114.

insist on any similarities between Mary and herself, Christine's prayer in the *OND* calls for her help in restoring peace in the kingdom,<sup>140</sup> and she asks for her help protecting women.<sup>141</sup> Throughout the poem, the Virgin's position is called upon as justification for these prayers being addressed to her in particular, which suggests that Christine saw her as not only especially suited to receiving them, but also as able to intervene in matters that Christine held close to heart. Similarities in the two women's political positions are therefore made implicit, and the correspondence of their costumes serves as a visual reminder of this shared political agenda.

If Christine and/or her illuminators were aware of the potential Marian links that might be made with the colour blue, to what extent was this a motivating factor in MCD's choosing to use it when representing the author? To answer such a question, I now turn to look more closely at how the artist responsible for portraying Christine in blue makes use of this colour elsewhere: both in those of Christine's manuscripts on which he worked, and in those outside this particular corpus.

### *iii. In the Hands of MCD*

Alongside any possible symbolic associations that are brought to mind when viewing MCD's portraits of Christine in blue, another important factor to consider is his use of this colour within his wider corpus of illuminations. In this part, I examine two further manuscripts on which MCD is believed to have worked as counterpoints to the examination of his illuminations in Christine's author-manuscripts. These are the fr. 12559 copy of *CE* (see above, 39), and Paris, BnF,

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<sup>140</sup> 'L'Oroison de nostre Dame', in *Œuvres poétiques*, vol. 3 (1896), 2:21, 3:58 and 5:106.

<sup>141</sup> 'Oroison', 8:193-204.

MS fr. 23279, the *Dialogues de Pierre Salmon* (1409), on which another artist who worked on Christine's corpus elsewhere also collaborated.<sup>142</sup> These two works provide fitting comparisons with Christine's works, as not only are they heavily illustrated, but since they are also partly pseudo-autobiographical works that represent the narrator-protagonist, this figure also claims some level of identification with the author. Before examining the narrator/author figures, I first consider MCD's broader use of blue in these manuscripts.

The alternation between red and blue detail within decorations such as initials (particularly champ initials), as well as in borders, backgrounds, etc. is a common convention of medieval illumination. MCD makes particularly prolific use of this technique, of which fr. 12559, f. 1v (**Pl. 1.6**) is a typical example: here, red and blue alternate in the chequered background, the image's frame, and in the filigraed champ initials. But this colour alternation often also extends into MCD's depictions of people: fr. 12559, ff. 1v, 24v, and 175v (**Pls. 1.6, 1.18, and 1.19**) offer examples of such a composition, to which f. 9v (**Pl. 1.20**) might also be added, as although the characters in this scene both wear blue, the Lady's vermillion sleeve and the vermillion background act as a kind of demarcation between the two blue-clad figures.

Anyone familiar with the most commonly-reproduced depiction of Christine may be struck by the appearance of a figure throughout fr. 12559, who also wears a long royal blue gown with trailing square-ended sleeves, a white, bi-horned

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<sup>142</sup> Variouslly identified as MBF or Maître de la Mazarine. In addition to sharing artists, Christine may have worked on the text of these manuscripts herself: Winter sees a likeness between the script used in the former volume and Christine's own; he goes on to suggest that Thomas and Christine might have met, and that his text was used as a model for her own: 'Enlumineurs', 336, n. 3; 338. Likewise, Charity Cannon Willard believed the script in two copies of the latter text could be attributed to Christine: 'An Autograph Manuscript of Christine de Pizan?', *Studi francesi*, 27 (1965), 452-457 (454).

wimple, and, on one occasion, even has contrasting red sleeves appearing underneath her blue gown – like those that Christine is often depicted wearing (fr. 12559, ff. 1v, 4v, 6r, 9v, 23r, 24v, and 175v (**Pls. 1.6 1.18-1.23**; see also **Pls. 0.1-0.3, 0.5, and 1.9**). However, what is really interesting about this figure in *CE* is that it does not represent just one of the characters within the text, but four separate figures who – to make ambiguity unlikely in this case – do not appear simultaneously at any point in the narrative. The first time a character in this costume is encountered on f. 4v (**Pl. 1.21**) it is worn by Bel Acqueil, who is represented in the same way in the following illumination (f. 5r). The next time, it is worn by Dame Esperance (f. 6r: **Pl. 1.22**). The third character dressed in this manner (ff. 23r and 24v: **Pls. 1.19 and 1.23**) is no longer an allegorised personification, but the Lady whom – to make matters more complicated – we have already encountered in three different outfits: a blue gown and black cap (f. 9v: **Pl. 1.20**; also f. 13r), a red gown and white wimple (f. 22r: **Pl. 1.24**, also f. 10v), and a green dress with no headdress (f. 11r: **Pl. 1.25**). Finally, Dame Cognoissance is the last character represented in a blue dress and white headdress (f. 175r: **Pl. 1.18**); however, this represents a change from the outfit she usually wears in this manuscript, which is made up of a blue gown and black cap (f. 1v: **Pl. 1.6**). Once again, the Lady has already been seen depicted in this costume (f. 9v: **Pl. 1.20**).

The point of this brief digression, from MCD's depictions of Christine into portraits of the various female characters in *CE*, is to illustrate that in the iconographic programme executed by MCD for this manuscript, individual characters are not consistently associated with a single costume. Concerns over the visual composition of a given image appear to affect the design and colour choice more than any concerns with consistency – either with representations of

the same figure elsewhere in the manuscript or with the narrative.<sup>143</sup> In other words, narrative concerns often appear secondary to artistic considerations. However, the main character, the Chevalier himself, is subject to less variation, as he is always represented in a mauve tunic worn over the top of either green or vermillion tights or leggings.<sup>144</sup> Perhaps these different female figures derive from a repertoire of stock female imagery that MCD held in his atelier, of which his standardised Christine-figure is merely an example?<sup>145</sup> An image used once to represent Christine that, for one reason or another, he continued to use?<sup>146</sup> Since this particular representation is so prevalent in MCD's works, and often cannot be straightforwardly associated with an individual character, perhaps in addition to not identifying author-portraits with the historical Christine, it should also not necessarily be assumed that this particular representation is intended to represent the author in Christine's works at all. When encountered, what indications are there that this does indeed represent C(h)ristine? Could these not sometimes simply be generic depictions of women, or of other characters? However, the author-portraits of Christine created during her lifetime do always display some

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<sup>143</sup> This is not the case for all Masters. In Grenoble, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 352 (a copy of Martin Le Franc's *Le Champion des dames*) the Champion's adversaries are always depicted in a blue hue, whilst the Champion himself is consistently depicted in a pink outfit. This particular manuscript thereby extends the verbal confrontation taking place in the narrative into the visual programme. Similarly, the adversaries are all represented in red in a Paris manuscript and brown in the Bourg de Bozas manuscript: Pascale Charron *Le Maître du Champion des dames* (Paris: CTHS, 2004), 208-212.

<sup>144</sup> Overall, manuscript illuminations appear less concerned with depicting minor characters consistently, which might explain why the Chevalier is represented more consistently in this manuscript than the secondary female characters: Didier Lechat, 'L'Art du portrait dans *Charles V*', in *Contexts and Continuities*, vol. 2, 515-529 (528).

<sup>145</sup> Winter may be referring to MCD's tendency to repeat the same features in his imagery in referring to this Master's 'répertoire rapidement normalisé': 'Enlumineurs', 362. This would support my contention that MCD used a collection of stock imagery repeatedly in his works.

<sup>146</sup> Hedeman suggests MCD's workshop used a combination of 'stock workshop scenes' and 'pictures that were specially tailored for one or more of th[e] manuscripts'. The latter category of images could be used to 'offer varied but timely advice to those charged with ensuring stable government in France': *Image*, 153. I return to the topic of imagery used to drive a political agenda in Chapter 2.

degree of consistency, and it should not be forgotten that they do always represent her in the same costume – it is only the colour that tends to change. It may be that, in order to play on some of the symbolic associations discussed above, Christine requested that the Master use blue, or maybe he simply continued to use one of his stock images in a favourite palette. Alternatively, artistic and compositional concerns might have been at the heart of the decision to proceed with the use of this colour (assuming, that is, that an active decision was in fact ever made).

Throughout the fr. 23279 manuscript of the *Dialogues*, MCD depicts the author in a similar palette to that used to represent Christine. F. 117v (**Pl. 1.26**) is a case in point: here, the author Pierre le Fruitier (or Pierre Salmon) is represented three times, in the same costume as that worn throughout the manuscript: a long blue coat and a red hood that hangs down behind him – colours which correspond to the blue gown and red sleeves typical of MCD's representations of Christine. This image also provides a clue as to why blue might have been used to represent the author: in the representations of both Christine and of Pierre, the blue garments serve to highlight the author-figure. Here, Pierre's figure stands out against the brown and beige background and light green floor: in the first group of four characters, two wear dark grey robes and one a vermillion tunic – but the latter is only just visible, so our eye is drawn instead to the author-figure, whose gestures indicate that he is speaking in each of the three representations and serve to further accentuate his presence.<sup>147</sup> In the representation on the right-hand side, there are only two figures with the author, one in dark grey and one in vermillion, but again, the latter is mostly concealed, so the viewer's eye is drawn once more to

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<sup>147</sup> See François Garnier, *Le Langage de l'image au moyen âge*, 2 vols. (Paris: Léopard d'Or, 1982-1989), vol. 1 (1982), 209-212.



the author-figure. The central representation features Pierre and a character wearing vermillion, but the latter fades into the pink/red background, attracting our eye towards the author-figure again. It is therefore possible that, for this particular Master, blue was the colour of choice when it came to representing author-figures, or a kind of highlighter that could be used to direct the viewer's gaze to a particular aspect of the composition. The fact that, in the only two illuminations of Pierre that are attributed to Maître des Heures du Maréchal de Boucicaut, the author is represented in beige as opposed to blue (as he is otherwise throughout the manuscript) supports this theory.

As he set about creating portraits of Christine in her author-manuscripts, it seems likely that MCD's colour choice was influenced both by the symbolic charge of the colour blue and by compositional concerns. He certainly would have been aware of the connections being made with the iconography of the Virgin Mary, but it may also be a fortuitous accident that his use of colour reinforces the link between text and image so well. This stylistic choice was perhaps made in order to balance the colours of the composition and/or because the limited models available of women in authoritative poses made use of such a colour scheme. However, I think it unlikely that these symbolic associations were created entirely unintentionally, particularly since the agency behind these images likely involved the author as well as the artist. It remains to be seen how aware Christine was of the possibility that colour might provide such links.

#### *iv. Christine's Awareness of Colour Potential*

The little-discussed final chapter of *FA* provides some clue as to Christine's own views on colour. Its purpose is to discuss the significance of the 'couleurs plus

nobles de armoyerie'.<sup>148</sup> Christine identifies six noble colours, by which she means those that are fit for noblemen to wear on their coats of arms. Because of its association with the sun, the most noble of the four elements, she tells us that gold is the noblest of colours; second is 'pourpre, que nous disons vermeil ou rouge', which its connection with the sun also ennobles. *Azur* is third on Christine's list:

Item la tierce noble couleur est azur, laquelle par la figure  
represente l'air, lequel apres le feu est le plus noble des IIII  
elemans, car il est en son corps soubtif et penetratif, et abille  
recevoir les influances lumineuses.<sup>149</sup>

Finally, white or silver and black or *sable*, with their respective connections to purity and innocence, and to pain and humbleness, make up the fourth and fifth colours, and green or *synople* the sixth, which Christine associates with nature. Although here Christine is referring specifically to the colours used on coats of arms, it is evident that, for her, the associations do not stop there.<sup>150</sup> For example, she explains that it is black's connection with the earth (in which the dead are buried) that makes it an appropriate colour to be worn when in mourning, and that it is worn by religious orders because of its association with humbleness.

Christine's awareness of the significance of colour may be further discerned by comparing the *FA* passage with the likely source for this passage, the anonymous *Songe du vergier*.<sup>151</sup> In this text, blue is simply said to be a 'corps tres

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<sup>148</sup> This text is not currently widely available in a French edition, but an excellent English translation exists in *The Book of Deeds of Arms and of Chivalry*, trans. Sumner Willard, ed. Charity Cannon Willard (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press; 1999); for this section: 218-219. I have transcribed the facsimile of author manuscript, fr. 603 for all French quotations (here, f. 79v).

<sup>149</sup> Fr. 603, f. 79v

<sup>150</sup> For a discussion of the significance of blue in armory, with particular reference to Froissart's *Dit dou bleu chevalier*, see Rupert T. Pickens, 'History and Narration in Froissart's *Dits*: The Case of the *Bleu Chevalier*', in *Froissart Across the Genres*, eds. Donald Maddox and Sara Sturm-Maddox (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1998), 119-152. For Pickens, when worn by a knight, blue signifies constancy and loyalty in love (see especially 122-126); on blue and loyalty, see above, 51-52.

<sup>151</sup> This text has not previously been posited as a source for this part of the *FA*.

soutif et est recevable de lumiere’;<sup>152</sup> by adding that blue is *penetratif*, Christine makes an overt reference to its enlightening capabilities. Such intellectual associations are introduced subtly: Christine modifies the *Songe*’s ‘est recevable’ so that it becomes ‘abille recevoir’, and expands her source’s ‘lumiere’ to ‘influances lumineuses’. These references to ability and to light’s influence link blue with ideas of enlightenment – in both senses of the word. This passage therefore not only demonstrates Christine’s acute awareness of the symbolic suggestions that use of colour may enable, but also her own branding of the colour blue as one linked with scholarly qualities.

To return to the qualities that Christine associates with the colour blue, the first two, *soubtilité* and *penetrance*, are intellectual traits: the first might be translated as *subtlety*, in the sense of intelligence or ability, but *soubtil* also suggests a certain finesse or ability in artistic creation.<sup>153</sup> Sylvia Huot points out that in this period, *soubtil* could take on a variety of connotations ‘encompass[ing] artistic and intellectual ingenuity; craftiness and deception; and the delicious pains of amorous desire’.<sup>154</sup> However, in Christine, she sees it as referring to ‘the ability of poets to express truths by means of fictions’.<sup>155</sup> Likewise, the intellectual connotations of the term *penetratif* could also be either positive or negative. It could suggest depth of enquiry and seriousness of thought, which might be translated by *penetrating* or *profound*. But this term also evokes harmful

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<sup>152</sup> *Le Songe du Vergier*, ed. Marion Schnerb-Lièvre, 2 vols. (Gap: CNRS, 1982), vol. 1, 292.

<sup>153</sup> See ‘soutil’ in Frédéric Godefroy, *Dictionnaire de l’ancienne langue française et de tous ses dialectes du IX<sup>e</sup> au XV<sup>e</sup> siècle*, 10 vols. (Paris: Vieweg and Bouillon, 1880-1902), vol. 7 (1892), 564. According to Pierre-Yves Badel, ‘une œuvre subtile est difficile. Elle est lourde du poids de la science antique. Elle exige réflexion’: *Le “Roman de la Rose” au XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle: Étude de la réception de l’œuvre* (Geneva: Droz, 1980), 138.

<sup>154</sup> ‘Sentences and Subtle Fictions: Reading Literature in the Later Middle Ages’, in *What is Literature? France 1100-1600*, eds. François Cornilliat, Ullrich Langer and Douglas Kelly (Lexington: French Forum, 1993), 197-209 (197).

<sup>155</sup> ‘Sentences’, 198.

connotations, including sexual ones, which, in the context of designating an intellectual trait might better be rendered by *piercing*. This is the meaning it has in Christine's letter to Pierre Col, in which she disparages Jean de Meun's use of 'mots poetiques entendables six fois plus atisans et plus penetratis [...] a ceulx qui y sont enclins'.<sup>156</sup> She thereby highlights that Jean's cunning has been put to bad use: the metaphor of the lover penetrating the narrow aperture in the tower with his staff at the end of the *RR* is understood by those who can or wish to do so; Christine pointedly makes use of the term *penetratis* in her letter to show that she very well understands that Jean's metaphor stands for the piercing of the rose-maiden's body.

Christine was highly aware that these terms carried both positive and negative meanings; for her, it was a case of using the skills associated with them in the right way: being creative, but not to the extent of being crafty and deceitful; of having a profound understanding without doing (bodily) harm. In the above quotation from *FA*, blue appears to represent the positive qualities at the end of the spectrum of possible meanings, but there is always the underlying potential that – if used unwisely – these positive traits could turn negative. Finally, the reference to blue as 'abille recepvor les influances lumineuses' recalls the parallels discussed above, between the Annunciation to the Virgin Mary and Christine receiving visits from allegorical figures. Blue is therefore explicitly connected with wisdom and more specifically with spiritual enlightenment for Christine.

Christine conceived of the symbolism of the colour blue as one particularly connoting morality and intellectuality, and she would undoubtedly also have been

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<sup>156</sup> Christine de Pizan et. al, *Le Débat sur Le Roman de la Rose*, ed. Eric Hicks (Paris: Champion, 1977), 125. David Hult also translates *penetratis* when denoting harmfulness as *piercing*, particularly highlighting the potential damage of Jean's expressions: *Debate of the Romance of the Rose* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 169.

aware of its Marian connections. If these were the full extent of its connotations, it would already have been a very desirable colour in which to be represented; any further possible associations with royalty would only add to the appeal of this colour choice. It may be the case that as her career advanced and her patronage by members of the House of France became more secure, it was more possible for that connection to be asserted in the iconographic programme of her works. If so, her visual association with the Virgin Mary would also serve to reinforce her service to the royal family, since throughout her time as a sovereign, Isabeau de Bavière also sought to visually link herself with the Virgin Mary.<sup>157</sup> Therefore, Christine's boldly mirroring the visual associations that her protector sought to create would only enhance the affiliation between them, and serve to illustrate the fact that the contents of her works were not just presented to the Queen, but that their theme was particularly suited to her.<sup>158</sup>

Although too much should not be conjectured about Christine's involvement in the detail of her manuscript illuminations, even if she had not been consulted over the colour(s) in which she would be represented, Christine would undoubtedly have been aware of the associations being projected in the MCD's portraits of her. She could also have asked him to stop representing her in this colour if she did not like it, but since, on the contrary, she increasingly used this Master to illustrate her works, who continued to depict her in this manner, she must have liked his manner of representing her. This shared agency in manuscript

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<sup>157</sup> For a detailed analysis of the parallels between Isabeau's entry into Paris and the Virgin's entry into heaven, see: Gordon Kipling, *Enter the King: Theatre, Liturgy, and Ritual in the Medieval Civic Triumph* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998); Tracy Adams, *The Life and Afterlife of Isabeau of Bavaria* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), 108-112. Adams also sees the frontispiece of Harley 4431 as visually connecting Mary and Isabeau.

<sup>158</sup> Books in which St Anne and/or the Virgin are shown holding books tended to be owned by women: Sheingorn, 'Mother', 121-124. The Harley 4431 frontispiece likewise highlights the female (and noble) ownership of the manuscript.

illuminations implies a close working relationship, which presents a picture of Christine as an author who took a keen interest in the design of all aspects of her manuscripts.

Before moving on to look at how Christine was represented after her lifetime, and to consider any legacy of the images produced by MCD, I turn to consider a particular set of illuminations which were produced by this artist; these are author-portraits that I deem to be deliberately ambiguous.

#### *v. Ambiguous Author-Portraits*

Within Harley 4431, which has been seen to almost entirely be illustrated by MCD, twenty-six illuminations feature women wearing the costume in which this artist usually represented Christine.<sup>159</sup> These miniatures may be categorised as follows: ten illuminations in which the figure represents Christine in her role as author (dedication scenes, the author writing or teaching at her desk, and scenes in which she indirectly presents her work to a patron, i.e. by presenting the theme of the work (such as two lovers in *DA*; f. 58v: **Pl. 1.27**) rather than a volume containing the work);<sup>160</sup> those that feature Christine in her role as character in the story (the seven illuminations accompanying the main body of *CLE*); finally, in the nine remaining portraits, it is not clear whether the person depicted is Christine, or whether this is simply a female whom the artist has chosen to represent in this

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<sup>159</sup> I count the double miniature on f. 290v as two separate representations.

<sup>160</sup> Paris, BnF, MS fr. 1740, Chantilly 492, and Brussels, KBR, MS 11034 present a slight variation of this miniature, as they feature a scroll between the author and patron/judge, making for both a direct and indirect presentation of the text: see Barbara K. Altmann, 'Hearing the Text, Reading the Image: Christine de Pizan's *Livre du debat de deux amans*', in *Au Champ des escriptures*, 693-703. Perhaps these illuminators felt the indirect presentation of the subject to be insufficient.

particular manner. It is this last category of portraits that I consider ‘ambiguous’ author-portraits, and that form the focus of this part (see also **Fig. 2**).<sup>161</sup>

By ‘ambiguous’ author-portrait, I mean portraits that can have more than one referent, one of which is the author. Because the figure represented is not carrying out what are evidently ‘authorial’ activities (such as writing, or presenting a text), and because the image does not coincide with a moment in the narrative in which the author is present through the Cristine-narrator avatar, these are equally not evidently author-portraits. However, because the female figure in these portraits wears the same costume that the author is seen wearing elsewhere, critics have often been quick to read Christine’s presence into certain of these representations. In such images, a figure visually associated with the author seems to direct readers towards the implied author’s point of view, and can be used to create didactic coherence within a text or within the same manuscript, and even intertextually. In this part, I first consider an example of this ambiguity, before going on to look at two cases in which the intervention of this particular figure in the visual programme of a work provides an evident visual prompt to the reader to pay attention to an important point, and/or to behave in a certain manner.

In the first example, Harley 4431, folio 48r (**Pl. 1.28**), the miniature features a messenger who delivers a scroll to a noble lady accompanied by two ladies in waiting. Because the woman to the right of this noble figure wears a white bi-horned wimple and blue gown, and because the only two illuminations to precede this image in this particular manuscript feature the author dressed in this way, Deborah McGrady has identified this figure as Christine. Furthermore, as this

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<sup>161</sup> The ambiguous case of the figure depicted wearing pink on f. 265r might be added to this analysis. However, as this miniature has already been discussed above, and as she is depicted variously to Christine’s more usual costume in this manuscript, I have excluded it from the present enquiry.

figure was not present in the equivalent incipit image of the earlier manuscript (fr. 835, f. 50r), she reads this unexpected presence as having implications for Christine's increasing authority.<sup>162</sup> However, it does not seem clear that the figure in Plate 1.28 is straightforwardly Christine: she wears a thick, black, decorated or gilded belt around her waist, an unusual addition to Christine's more customary outfit, and a feature only encountered in two representations of her, both also in Harley 4431. I have already questioned the identification with Christine in the first of these, the image on f. 265r (see above, 47-48 and **Pl. 1.4**), which is likely to constitute a further lady in waiting; the latter (f. 56v, **Pl. 1.29**) sequentially follows Plate 1.28 (f. 48r) in Harley 4431, and the figure it features in blue could represent the author giving a copy of her work to a messenger, or it might also depict the reverse: a messenger delivering the work to a lady. Because in Christine's works as in those of other medieval authors, author-portraits are often encountered at the start of a new text, it is understandable that these portraits have been viewed as such, but other identifications are also possible; considering these as ambiguous portraits allows for the possibility of these figures' being both.

To demonstrate this, I now examine two particularly striking cases in which Christine's presence in the Harley 4431 illuminations is uncertain, both of which are found within *EO*. Amongst the 101 miniatures that illustrate this text, only twice is a woman wearing a long blue gown with bi-horned white headdress encountered. These illuminations, found on folios 100v (**Pl. 1.30**) and 133v (**Pl. 1.31**), are separated by some thirty-three folios, and illustrate *histoires* VII and LXXXIV respectively. Although both miniatures feature a woman in the same

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<sup>162</sup> 'What is a Patron Benefactors and Authorship in MS Harley 4431, Christine de Pizan's Collected Works', in *Christine de Pizan and the Categories of Difference*, ed. Marilynn Desmond (Minnesota: Minnesota University Press, 1998), 195-214 (206-208).



Christinien costume, an identification with the author has only previously been postulated for the first, not for the second. Nevertheless, in each case, it seems that the possibility of identification with the author can hardly be accidental; why then were links created, not only with the author, but also between the two images? To answer this question, the textual context surrounding these images should be examined for a possible thematic link.<sup>163</sup>

The first image features alongside a textual warning against following and worshipping Venus, and believing her promises:

De Venus ne fais ta deesse,  
Ne te chaille de sa promesse:  
Le poursuivre en est traveilleux,  
Non honnourable, et perilleux.<sup>164</sup>

Some critics have read the prominent figure that features at the centre of this image as representing the author herself, but, like the figures on folios 48r and 56v, there is nothing in the narrative to suggest that Christine's presence should be read into this image, and this figure does not appear here in an obviously 'authorial' stance. However, because she wears Christine's usual costume, her presence here could be termed 'ambiguous'. The ambiguous Christine-figure in this context fulfils an exemplary role: as Desmond puts it, whilst 'most of the other mortals hold their hearts up towards Venus, as though they are completely enthralled by her', looking closely at the image, Christine can be seen 'clasp[ing] a heart close to her chest, as though she refuses to dedicate herself to Venus and the

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<sup>163</sup> The same ambiguity does not exist in fr. 606, which was used as a model in the preparation of the Harley manuscript (see above, 40-41). This ambiguity was therefore introduced by MCD in his preparation of this later manuscript.

<sup>164</sup> *Othea*, 213.

amatory values embodied by the goddess'.<sup>165</sup> The image, in other words, and the Christine-figure in particular, serve a didactic function in reinforcing the message contained within the rest of the *histoire*. It is as if the familiar manicule that sometimes appears to direct the reader towards important passages has been displaced from its usual place in the margins, into the centre of the image, where the Christine-figure purposefully points towards Venus.<sup>166</sup>

The space occupied by the Christine-figure is not without significance either: in an otherwise crowded picture, she is the only character around whom there is any space, and she stands very much at the forefront of the group of people on the right hand side; her skirts spread out around her against the bottom frame, emphasising her position as a leading figure in this image. Without this personage, the miniature would not convey the message to avoid Venus at all, but simply represent a crowd of people sending their hearts to the goddess – an illustration of exactly what the texts incites the reader *not* to do.<sup>167</sup> The Venus image illustrates the means by which the ambiguous author-figure could be used to highlight a particular point, or to draw the reader-viewer's eye towards the example to follow.

The second image to be considered (f. 133v: **Pl. 1.31**) is even less straightforward. The *histoire* tells readers that if they must follow Cupid, then they

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<sup>165</sup> Marilynn Desmond, 'Christine de Pizan: Gender, Authorship and Life-Writing', in *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval French Literature*, eds. Simon Gaunt and Sarah Kay (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 124-135 (125).

<sup>166</sup> I briefly note that Venus is not represented consistently within Harley 4431. Whilst here, she wears a green gown with a white lining, and her hair tied up in a black headdress, on folio 106v, she wears a blue gown, her long blonde hair hanging loose.

<sup>167</sup> Nevertheless, a number of later, non-author manuscripts represent this scene without the positive example, thereby losing the meaning. Not all manuscripts illustrate this scene in the 'children of the planets' tradition seen here: for example, Brussels, KBR, MS 9392, f. 10v represents Venus bathing with her nymphs. On the Children of the Planets, see Erwin Panofsky and Fritz Saxl, 'Classical Mythology in Mediaeval Art', *Metropolitan Museum Studies*, 4.2 (March 1933), 246-248.

should not follow the example of Troilus, who fell in love with the inconstant Briseis:<sup>168</sup>

S'a Cupido tu veulx donner  
Ton cuer, et tout habandonner,  
Gard toy Briseyda n'aointier,  
Car trop a le cuer vilotier.<sup>169</sup>

The accompanying image represents three figures: one a winged divinity, recognisable as a traditional representation of Cupid;<sup>170</sup> a man who gestures towards Cupid, and must represent Troilus; and a female figure. Given the context of the *histoire*, it only seems logical that this third figure should represent Briseis. Her fickle heart is even visually represented here, as she appears to hesitatingly reach towards Troilus's hand: her gesture could be interpreted as her either reaching towards him, or as her pushing him away – two actions that Christine's explicatory *glose* say she completed. Her open hand also sends mixed signals: it could be read as her indicating the direction for Troilus to follow, but might also signal acceptance or fear. Meanwhile, Troilus's double gesture, in which he indicates both Cupid as well as the Briseis figure, signals that he is torn between the two characters.<sup>171</sup>

It is the Briseis-figure that is of interest here, as she wears the customary Christinien costume, and therefore makes up the second ambiguous author-portrait of *EO*. The possibility of this figure's being Christine is particularly problematic when read in conjunction with the *texte* itself, as it so strongly warns against her acquaintance. It seems extremely unlikely that Christine would wish to be visually associated with a figure who is depicted so unfavourably and against

<sup>168</sup> Briseis is spelled Briseyda in Christine's text.

<sup>169</sup> *Othea*, 318.

<sup>170</sup> Cupid is another figure who is not represented entirely consistently within Harley 4431: on folio 117r, he wears a crown, holds bow and arrows, and his clothing is brocaded and different in colour.

<sup>171</sup> His posture turned towards Cupid suggests that he will eventually follow this figure. On these gestures, see Garnier, *Langage*, vol. 1, 171-177, 223-225; vol. 2 (1989), 108-117.

whom she warns the reader so explicitly – particularly in a manuscript whose iconographic programme she is widely accepted to have been involved. However, despite these negative connotations, I contend that this figure was deliberately represented in this manner so as to remind the reader of the message contained in the earlier image, and of the author's presence therein.<sup>172</sup> This would also account for this figure's ambiguous gesture: whilst Briseis pushes Troilus away, Christine attempts to restrain him from following Cupid.<sup>173</sup>

The ambiguous author-figure therefore accompanies two *histoires* with a similar message: to exercise caution in matters of love, advice reinforced by an intervisual link. This visual advertisement would have been particularly striking to readers who could recognise the author-figure within, which would certainly have been the case here, since these images appear after four author-portraits have already been encountered in the manuscript (to which the ambiguous portraits on ff. 48r and 56v may also be added). It is worth noting that although their liaison is now widely accepted to have been no more than an unfounded (though popular) rumour, the lesson to be cautious in affairs of the heart would have been particularly relevant to Isabeau de Bavière and Louis d'Orléans, both recipients of early copies of *EO*. Whoever the intended recipient of these messages, as Hindman, and Desmond and Sheingorn have shown, the reader of Harley 4431 would be used to encountering images with multiple significations, and have been open to seeing different meanings within a single image.

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<sup>172</sup> For an analysis of further such cases of deliberate intervisual links throughout the iconographic programme of autograph *EO* manuscripts, see *P&P*.

<sup>173</sup> The composition of this miniature is also used in KBR 9392 to illustrate *histoire* XLVII (f. 50v), which bears a similar theme as the reader is advised to acquaint himself with Cupid, but only 'par mesure'. This forms one of a series of miniatures in which Othea is visually present as a guide to Hector in this manuscript. There is unfortunately not space to discuss this series of miniatures in this thesis, which I plan to develop elsewhere.

These images, then, strictly function neither as author-portraits, nor as illustrations of characters in the story, and the Christine-like figure they represent both *is* and *isn't* Christine. The key to understanding these images therefore doesn't lie in *whom* they represent, but in *what* they do and how they function. The identity of the person represented only matters in that it visually conveys the point of view of the implied author, who guarantees its morality and its didactic dimension. This may have implications for the reading of supposedly non-ambiguous portraits: because portraits of authors are by their very nature neither textual nor extra-textual (an author-portrait's referent being extra-textual, but portraits themselves being situated in a (para)textual space), they are always ambiguous to some extent.<sup>174</sup> Indeed, those analysed here are not the only examples in this manuscript in which the representation of the author is ambiguous.<sup>175</sup> By bringing a visual element into play, author-portraits add a third element to the already somewhat slippery relationship between the real, historical author who exists outside the text, and the implied author who only exists within.<sup>176</sup> This is even truer of ambiguous author-portraits, which cause the viewer to actively question who is represented within the image. This questioning can be extended to other apparently non-ambiguous portraits, as considering

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<sup>174</sup> Dedication miniatures best exemplify this, as they visualise the communication between the textual and the extra-textual.

<sup>175</sup> Lechat analyses two representations of women in the Harley 4431 copy of *DVA* which he sees as doubles of the author, or 'un clin d'œil à la figure auctoriale', and which fit into my definition of ambiguous portraits: 'Doubles', 701. I would add that they serve a didactic purpose as well as a 'clin d'œil'.

<sup>176</sup> The ambiguity of certain author-portraits in Chartier manuscripts has also been remarked on: a portrait found in Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett, 78 C 7 has been described as 'ambiguous', because it 'shows the author alone, but not writing [...]'. In such images he can be understood as both historical author and *acteur*; his solitude, the studious atmosphere, and the absence of other figures all emphasize his authorship, but without a pen in his hand, he figures the *acteur* as well': Camille Serchuk, 'The Illuminated Manuscripts of the Works of Alain Chartier', in *A Companion to Alain Chartier (c. 1385-1430): Father of French Eloquence*, eds. Daisy Delogu, Joan E. McRae and Emma Cayley (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2015), 72-118 (77). This points to a general sense of author-portraits defying easy categorisation that merits further investigation.

author-portraits ambiguously in general would enable connections between historical and implied author to be rethought, and their function re-evaluated. One such function may be to act as manicules that direct the reader's attention from within the work, highlighting either a particular point, or the text in general, thereby asserting both its own authority and that of the author's.

But what was the impact of MCD's work? Did these representations change after Christine's lifetime, or did she continue to be depicted in a particular way? In a final Section, I turn to see the legacy of these author-portraits in later copies and editions of Christine's works.

### III. Future Christines

La peinture, elle, peut feindre la réalité sans l'avoir  
vue<sup>177</sup>

By examining representations of the author in copies of Christine's works prepared after her death, ideas that future audiences had about the author's life and background can be traced. Several of these do not present a remarkable shift, and continue to represent Christine in blue, inheriting the pre-existing iconographical traditions, particularly those established by MCD. Some also continue to represent her in a plain long gown and bi-horned wimple, including London, BL, Harley MS 4605 (a manuscript of *FA*, c.1434), Paris, BnF, MS fr. 25294 (*TV*, 1450-1500), and Brussels, KBR, MS 9009-11 (*FA*, c.1486).<sup>178</sup> That later artists reproduced these illuminations testifies to the circulation of the manuscripts on which MCD worked in the period immediately following Christine's death; many of them were also used as base manuscripts for later manuscript copies and early

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<sup>177</sup> Roland Barthes, *La Chambre claire: Note sur la photographie*, in *Œuvres complètes*, 3 vols. (Paris: Seuil, 1993-1995), vol. 3 (1995), 1,105-1,200 (1163).

<sup>178</sup> See Susan Groag Bell, 'Christine de Pizan in her Study', *CRMH* (June 2008).

printed editions (notably, Harley 4431). However, the focus of this Section is on the far more numerous representations that diverge from the way in which Christine was depicted during her lifetime. Across these later manuscripts, two distinct shifts can be identified: the instances that consider Christine to be a nun, and those that depict her as a fashionable woman in lavish dresses. These representations are not necessarily only pictorial in nature, but can also take the form of descriptions found in the peritext of Christine's works. I now briefly consider these two types of depiction in turn, and explore the factors that might have led to them being devised in such variant ways.

Only a small number of illuminations represent Christine as a nun. An example of this type of portrait is to be found in Brussels, KBR, MS 9235-37, in which the illuminations that accompany *CD* and *TV* both represent the author in nun's clothing, suggesting that the makers of this manuscript understood Christine to have been a member of a convent (f. 5r: **PI. 1.32**).<sup>179</sup> Evidence that Christine was understood to have been a member of a religious order may also be discerned in the paratextual apparatus of printed editions and translations of Christine's various works. A marginal note made in Latin by William Worcester, one of the translators of William Caxton's edition of *FA*, synthesises the views of Christine as a moneyed woman or as a nun.<sup>180</sup> He describes her as a:

domina praeclara natu et moribus et manebat in domo  
religiosarum dominarum apud Passye prope Parys; et ita virtuosa  
fuit quod ipsa exhibuit plures clericos studentes in universitate

<sup>179</sup> For Rinaldi, Christine's dress here is more open to interpretation, as 'like that worn by a wealthy burgher's wife, widow or nun': 'Character', 112.

<sup>180</sup> *The Book of Fayttes of Armes and of Chyvalrye* (Westminster: William Caxton, 1489). The nature of Worcester's role in this edition is still debated. The translation may be Stephen Scrope's, who also translated *EO* in the fifteenth century: Dominique T. Hoche, *The Reception of Christine de Pizan's Fais d'Armes in Fifteenth Century England: Chivalric Self-Fashioning* (Lewiston and Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press, 2007), 63. C. F. Bühler believes the translation to be Scrope's, with corrections made by Worcester: 'Sir John Paston's *Grete Booke*, a Fifteenth-Century "Best-Seller"', *Modern Language Notes*, 56 (1941), 345-351.

Pariensi, et compilare fecit plures libros virtuosos, [...] et doctores  
[...] attribuerune nomen autoris Christinae.<sup>181</sup>

The detail of certain portraits and this description together attest to a certain misunderstanding of the author's position, perhaps due to Christine's supposed retirement to a convent that has been widely assumed to be Poissy Abbey.

Although a retirement to Poissy is not referred to in Christine's works, uncertainty as to how, where, and under what circumstances Christine spent her final years endures to this day, and many scholars believe them to have been spent in the abbey at Poissy.<sup>182</sup> Her reference in the *Ditié Jeanne d'Arc* to her having spent 'XI ans en abbaye close' might have led some to extrapolate that she had always been based at an abbey.<sup>183</sup> But is another explanation possible?

It is possible to conjecture that the only way contemporary artists could make sense of the concept of a woman writer was to imagine that she had been based in a monastery or religious house of some kind, where most women's scribal activity took place in the Middle Ages. The learning that Christine flaunts in her interactions with learned men, notably in her correspondence on the debate over *RR*, would only have fuelled this confusion as to her status: this kind of scholarly knowledge would not have commonly been regarded as available to a woman outside a religious community.

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<sup>181</sup> '[A] famous lady who was born, died, and lived in a religious house in Poissy near Paris; and this woman was so virtuous that she employed/supported many clerks in the University of Paris, and made them compile many virtuous books [...] And learned men [...] gave the name of author to Christine': Jennifer Summit, *Lost Propriety: The Woman Writer and English Literary History, 1380-1589* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 75. Translation adapted from Summit's with the help of Gustav Zamore. I return to this reference to Christine's employing clerks below.

<sup>182</sup> Karen Green, 'Was Christine de Pizan at Poissy 1418-1429?', *Medium Aevum*, 83. 1 (2014), 28-40, refutes this commonly-held view.

<sup>183</sup> Christine de Pizan, *Le Ditié de Jehanne d'Arc*, ed. and trans. Angus J. Kennedy and Kenneth Varty (Oxford: Society for the Study of Mediæval Languages and Literature, 1977), 28:2.



However, of those manuscripts that continue to feature author-portraits, these representations constitute only a minority, as more numerous are those that depict her as a well-dressed gentlewoman. These include Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 421, f. 1r (1450-1475, **Pl. 1.33**); Geneva, Bibliothèque de Genève, MS fr. 180, f. 3v (late fifteenth century, **Pl. 1.34**); and Yale, Beinecke Library, MS 427, f. 1r (c. 1460, **Pl. 1.35**).<sup>184</sup> Rinaldi regards Christine's costume in illuminations carried out by MCD as 'in keeping with her own philosophy', and 'reflect[ing] her own modest manner of dressing as a widow or a court clerk.'<sup>185</sup> However, she sees these later illuminations as fundamentally betraying both the modesty Christine advocates in her works (most notably in the advice given to women in *TV*), as well as Christine's own historical circumstances:

Christine's admirers commissioning copies of her texts after her death elevate their favorite authoress to a higher status by having Christine portrayed in garments reserved for women in the class above her actual station of court author and scribe. Portraits of Christine painted after 1430 alter her appearance significantly, through elaborate headdresses, costly furs, forbidden fabrics, and gowns Christine would have regarded as quite immodest.<sup>186</sup>

In adopting this view, Rinaldi supposes that the historical Christine, who was heavily involved in the production of her images, and therefore in how she wanted representations of herself to be constructed, was depicted in true-to-life form during her lifetime, and in MCD's representations of her. Furthermore, in commenting that Christine would have found these later costumes 'immodest', she assumes that Christine's own lifestyle reflected the directives contained within her works – yet, the historical Christine's day-to-day taste, lifestyle, and dress, are

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<sup>184</sup> The strong compositional similarities between Plates 1.32 and 1.35, in which Christine is depicted as a nun in the former, and a noble lady in the latter, suggest that one image sought to correct the other.

<sup>185</sup> 'Character', 106-107.

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid*, 106.

aspects about which we know nothing at all. To what extent should it therefore be assumed that MCD's illustrations reflect historical reality?

It is customary to see the self encountered in Christine's works as highly constructed, and the notion that the discourse with which this 'self' presents us as multi-voiced, far from unitary, and refracted into the spectrum of different allegorical personas seen in her texts.<sup>187</sup> Surely it follows that the modest, humble pose with which readers are presented in her texts should not necessarily be seen as Christine's own, and should therefore also be approached with caution. In day-to-day life, clothing could be used as 'an indulgent form of pride, a deceptive means of hiding identity, or even worse, a means of creating a new one'.<sup>188</sup> In the inherently creative form of artistic endeavour, with its potentially limitless representational possibilities, a construct is fabricated by means of representing a figure in a certain way or in a particular costume; it is important to recognise this as figurative, rather than representing historical truth.

Extrapolations concerning Christine's humble lifestyle and modest means are often bound up with assumptions readers are led to make about Christine's difficult financial situation through descriptions of her hardships. But what does Christine herself say of her monetary hardships specifically? The financial difficulties she suffered during the period immediately following her husband's death are frequently evoked, and described in the most detail in *AC*.<sup>189</sup> Elsewhere, these references form a kind of leitmotif in her works, and are only emphasised by

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<sup>187</sup> See, for example, Andrea Echtermann and Sylvia Nagel, 'Recuperating the Polyphony of Women's Speech: Dialogue and Discourse in the Works of Christine de Pizan', in *Au Champ des escriptures*, 493-515 (514). See also below, Chapter 3.I.ii.

<sup>188</sup> Katherine L. French, 'Genders and Material Culture', in *The Oxford Handbook of Women and Gender in Medieval Europe*, eds. Judith Bennett and Ruth Karras (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 197-209 (201). See also *Dressing the Part: Textiles as Propaganda in the Middle Ages*, eds. K. Dimitrova and M. Goehring (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014).

<sup>189</sup> Christine de Pizan, *Le Livre de l'advison Cristine*, eds. Christine Reno and Liliane Dulac (Geneva: Champion, 2001), especially 98-108.

her tendency to use vocabulary associated with money to refer to twists of fate ('mon desavancement [p]ar Fortune')<sup>190</sup> and to her lack of intelligence in comparison to her father's ('Si ay povre avoir assemblé').<sup>191</sup> Citations such as these form part of the conventional modesty topos, in which the author professes a lack of financial and intellectual worth.<sup>192</sup> Whilst not necessarily motivated by poverty or need, one of the functions of this topos was to induce a financial donation or protection from a patron. Christine makes frequent use of this device, but although her position was undoubtedly unfortunate, it was not so abjectly poor as readers can be led to believe, and as several critics have been.<sup>193</sup>

Christine was descended from a family of rank, whose status as members of the landed nobility from the eleventh to fourteenth centuries is well documented.<sup>194</sup> However, the family appears to have suffered a loss of fortune, as their nobility is no longer attested beyond the early fourteenth century. The loss of rank seems to be total, having perhaps been caused by the death of Christine's father, Thomas, in 1387. These origins illustrate that the poverty Christine insinuates needs to be taken with a pinch of salt: although her financial situation was undoubtedly altered after the deaths of her father and husband, she was only 'poor' in relation to the situation to which she was accustomed.

As for Christine's own finances during the period in which she was writing, we know that she inherited three properties from her father: the Château de

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<sup>190</sup> *Chemin*, 96:148-149.

<sup>191</sup> *Fortune*, vol. 1 (1959), 22:460.

<sup>192</sup> This topos was a fundamental feature of medieval prologues or epilogues, and not necessarily a reflection of reality. Inherited from both classical and byzantine sources, it was widely used in medieval France and England: see William Calin, *The French Tradition and the Literature of Medieval England* (Toronto and London: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 288-295.

<sup>193</sup> I discuss the case of P. G. C. Campbell below.

<sup>194</sup> See Nikolai Wandruzka, 'Familial Traditions of the *de Piçano* at Bologna', in *Contexts and Continuities*, vol. 3, 889-906 (895-897 in particular). Christine herself refers to her birth 'de noble parens', as well as to her husband's being 'bien né et de nobles parents': *Advision*, 95 and 97.

Mémorant in the Fontainebleau region, and two further in Perthes and Étrelles. The sales of these properties from Christine to Philippe de Mézières are documented and alluded to in Christine's works.<sup>195</sup> These sales would have generated some income for the author, and there is also evidence of her having received gifts from Philippe le Hardi and Antoine de Brabant.<sup>196</sup> From the former, she received in 1403 'un hanap et une aiguier d'argent pesant v marcs d'argent dorez a x frans le marc',<sup>197</sup> possibly as advance payment for a manuscript of *MF* which she was to present to him on New Year's Day 1404.<sup>198</sup> Winter (whose research bears on Philippe le Hardi rather than Christine) finds that 'il s'agit là, selon la pratique de ce prince, de dons qui étaient réservés à des personnes qu'il désirait obliger et flatter, et non simplement rétribuer'.<sup>199</sup> This critic also notes that gifts of this kind were likely accompanied by some kind of monetary payment, and that 'des dons de cette valeur sont habituellement réservés à des personnes qu'il convient de ménager';<sup>200</sup> it is therefore most likely that Christine was housed at the expense of the Burgundian court for a period of time. It may be to this kind of support that Christine refers when she praises Philippe in the *CV*:

[...] ce bon duc est le reconfort des pouvres gentilz femmes et de toutes celles es quelles voit cause d'avoir pitié [...] et de ce puis-je

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<sup>195</sup> Willard, *Life*, 23.

<sup>196</sup> On Antoine de Brabant's gifts, see F. Quicke, 'Christine de Pisan', *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire*, 7 (1928), 316.

<sup>197</sup> Dijon, Archives départementales de la Côte-d'Or, B1523, f. 256: quoted in Winter, 'Enlumineurs', 341, n. 17.

<sup>198</sup> Françoise Autrand, *Christine de Pizan* (Paris: Fayard, 2009), 253.

<sup>199</sup> 'Enlumineurs', 341. This critic claims to have found a reference to a payment of '200 livres' dated 13 May 1411 in Paris, BnF, Collection Dupuy, vol. 755, f. 97v, which he believes to have been made by Isabeau to Christine in connection with Harley 4431: 'Enlumineurs', 365. This reference to a no longer extant shelfmark has not – to my knowledge – been followed up, and may have been discredited. Should Winter's inference be correct, this represents a substantial payment.

<sup>200</sup> Winter, *Philippe le Hardi*, 22. Another source states that similar gifts were given by Isabeau to her favourite ladies upon their marriage, suggesting that Christine was indeed close to the royal court: Yann Grandeau, 'De quelques dames qui ont servi la reine Isabeau de Bavière', *Bulletin philologique et historique* (1975), 129-238 (153).

bien parler par droitte experience, car son aide m'a eu besoing et  
n'y ay mie failli.<sup>201</sup>

This praise would be excessive, sarcastic even, if his only gifts had been a *hanap* and an *aiguiier*!

Further evidence that counters Christine's modest and humble stance can be found in her texts themselves and in the manner in which they are presented, in particular, when Christine covertly boasts about the expense of the preparation of her manuscripts. An example of this exists in the infamous reference to the enigmatic Anastaise, which has generated a great deal of speculation about the identity of this figure, and about the involvement of women in manuscript production. The passage is as follows:

[...] je congnois aujourd'uy une femme que on appelle Anastaise qui tant est experte et apprise a faire vigneteures d'enlumineure en livres et champaignes d'istories qu'il n'est mencion d'ouvrier en la ville de Paris [...] de qui on ait plus chier besongne, tout soit le livre riche ou chier, que on a d'elle qui finer en peut. Et ce scay je par experience, car pour moy mesmes a ouvré d'aucunes choses [...].<sup>202</sup>

Both the content (direct reference to 'vigneteures d'enlumineure') and the context (a chapter of *CD* dedicated to female painters and artists) of this passage suggest that Anastaise worked as a painter/illuminator, but it is not clear what particular work she undertook for Christine, or on which manuscripts she worked. As Inès Villela-Petit has shown, the phrase 'qui finer en peut' has either been misunderstood altogether or left out of translations, yet it holds the key to fully understanding Christine's humble brag in this passage.<sup>203</sup> For Villela-Petit:

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<sup>201</sup> Christine de Pizan, *Le Livre des fais et bonnes meurs du sage roy Charles V*, ed. Suzanne Solente, 2 vols., (Paris: Champion, 1936-1940), vol. 1 (1936) 158.

<sup>202</sup> *Cité*, 192.

<sup>203</sup> It has variously been understood as a reference to Anastaise's promptly finishing her work ('on lui confie la finition des ouvrages': *La Cité des dames*, ed. Eric Hicks and Thérèse Moreau (Paris: Stock, 1986), 113), or as a testimony to the fact that she well spoken of ('People cannot stop talking about her!': *The Book of the City of Ladies*, ed. E. J. Richards (New York: Persea Press, 1982), 41).

il y est [...] question du prix du livre et des prix pratiqués par Anastaise pour “qui finer en peut”: pour qui peut s’en procurer, ou mieux: pour qui peut en acheter, pour qui en a les moyens. Elle nous dit par là qu’Anastaise était rare et chère, ce qui était aussi une façon subtile pour Christine de rappeler aux princes la qualité et la valeur des livres qu’ils recevaient d’elle.<sup>204</sup>

I agree that this reference to the cost of Anastaise’s work is a way for Christine to boast in an understated manner,<sup>205</sup> as this is supported by Christine’s references to Anastaise’s ‘chier besongne’ and to how dear the book is (‘tout soit le livre riche ou chier’).

In terms of the type of craftsmanship displayed and of the increasing luxuriousness of her collected works editions, her manuscripts themselves attest to the gradually improving financial situation that Christine appears to have enjoyed after the hardship brought on by her widowhood dissipated. I have already mentioned the differences in copies of *EO*, on which I add that compared to the earlier fr. 848 copy, fr. 606 ‘was [...] a major undertaking by an established author-publisher [...] not the work of a struggling entrepreneur’.<sup>206</sup> But at whose expense were these decorations being undertaken? There is no known documentary evidence to clarify whether Christine herself or her patrons paid her illuminators for their work. Whatever the answer may be, in the passage quoted above, it seems either that Christine is vaunting the fact that she can pay for expensive artists such as Anastaise herself, or that her works are so coveted that

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<sup>204</sup> ‘À la recherche d’Anastaise’, *CRMH*, 16 (2008), 301-316 (303).

<sup>205</sup> A position that is frequently adopted by Christine; Cerquiglini-Toulet refers to it as Christine’s ‘orgueil humble’: *Couleur*, 77. Although this is more of a rhetorical stance than one to be taken literally, at the end of *TV*, Christine appears willing to spend as much money as necessary in order to ‘ceste noble oeuvre multipli[er] par le monde en pluseurs copies, quel qu’en fust le coust’: Christine de Pizan, *Le Livre des trois vertus*, ed. Charity Cannon Willard and Eric Hicks (Paris: Champion, 1989), 225.

<sup>206</sup> *P&P*, 15.

her patrons are willing to fund luxury copies of her work – and therefore the artisans involved.<sup>207</sup>

Although it is certain that she experienced great loss in her life, if Christine was poor, this poverty is relative to a person living at court, not abject. By no means was she so impoverished that she could not have made charitable donations for clerks studying at the University of Paris, as Worcester claimed.<sup>208</sup> However, for P. G. C. Campbell, the fact that Christine does not mention such charitable donations herself, and that ‘elle se plaint si souvent et si amèrement de sa pauvreté qu’il est assez difficile de croire qu’elle ait pu trouver de quoi aider des écoliers indigents’ is enough to refute these claims.<sup>209</sup> But by making use of the modesty topos, and giving herself the appearance of being in a financially modest – or even poor – condition, she would only have made her situation more pitiable, and her case for support stronger. She would not only have conveyed her need for patronage and financial aid, but would also have furthered the case she repeatedly makes in her works for the help and protection of widows, by providing her own situation as an example. The idea that Christine may have supported students is in fact perfectly plausible, given the staunch case she makes for their protection in times of war in *FA*.<sup>210</sup>

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<sup>207</sup> I am grateful for Deborah McGrady for these suggestions. Villela-Petit’s introduction to Christine’s illuminators states that the patron would decide on the number and type of decorations when placing an order with the author: *ACP*, 41-42. Her evidence comes in the form of ‘certains contrats conservés’, although this documentary proof does not directly involve Christine.

<sup>208</sup> See above, 83. The Latin phrase, ‘exhibuit plures clericos studentes’ is somewhat equivocal. In medieval Latin, *exhibuit* could mean to employ, support, or sustain – which in this context might mean that Christine provided bursaries for students and appears to be how Campbell understood this extract.

<sup>209</sup> ‘Christine de Pisan en Angleterre’, *Revue de littérature comparée*, 5 (1925), 659-670 (670).

<sup>210</sup> Part III, chapter XIX.

Campbell finds the idea of this charitable offering so inconceivable because, for him, the vision of ‘poor Christine’ presented in her texts is entirely authentic.<sup>211</sup> However, it should be remembered that representations of Christine created during her lifetime are carefully considered constructions. It is very possible that she was a courtly woman of some wealth, who would have dressed accordingly, and made charitable donations of her own – although it is likely that she was frugal during the difficult period immediately following her husband’s death. If so, it is also possible that the Master responsible for the illumination of a richly-dressed woman kneeling before the Virgin (see above, 47-48, and **Pl. 1.4**) was drawing Christine, but the Christine he knew: a courtly woman, who wore fashionable gowns and expensive fabrics befitting her station.

As the epigraph to this Section suggests, representations created after the fact have the potential to (re)invent historical events. It appears that those later artists who represented Christine as a nun formed a misguided idea of the author’s situation from certain remarks in her texts. But conversely, the Masters who painted her as a fashionable noblewoman may have in fact depicted a truer representation of the historical being, whether inadvertently or not. Neither of these diverging representations affects the authority of the named author, nor the author-function. However, representing and interpreting the author differently would have created a different idea of the implied author in the mind of the reader.

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<sup>211</sup> Carla Bozzolo and Ezio Ornato also believe she is unlikely to have made charitable donations as they see Christine’s choosing to pen many of her texts herself as a sign that she was actively trying to save money: *Pour une Histoire du livre manuscrit au moyen âge. Trois essais de codicologie quantitative* (Paris: CNRS, 1983), 45. However, attempting to save on production costs is not necessarily incompatible with contributing towards charitable causes. Christine inscribing her own texts could rather form evidence for her trying to control the transmission of her text, and was not necessarily determined by financial motivations.



## Conclusion

Although all twelve of the Masters working for Christine represented the author in a similar manner, there are variations in these representations, particularly in the colour of her gown. These affect the reading and interpretation of the individual image, and the various Masters and Christine were all undoubtedly aware of the symbolic associations being conveyed, particularly in the use of the Marian blue gown. As the discussion of ambiguous portraits has shown, by the time Harley 4431 was compiled, these miniatures served as more than mere author-portraits. It seems that with the help of MCD, Christine was consciously constructing a recognisable, authorial presence within her works, one that had the added effect of visually upholding her political views – such as promoting peace, and better support for widows. It is improbable that the costume in these illuminations exactly reflects the historical Christine's day-to-day dress, and although it may simply have been selected as one typically used in representations of women, the symbolism evoked and the thematic links that are enhanced within and across a single manuscript show that these images function as more than mere representations. The implications of this study indicate that Christine worked in close collaboration with MCD, a finding that conflicts with the vision of miniaturists as artisan-craftsmen who used little initiative and simply followed the patron's instructions, providing 'a practical or manual [role], rather than an intellectual one'.<sup>212</sup> MCD was an artist whom Christine trusted to create an

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<sup>212</sup> *P&P*, 68.

iconographic programme rich in political meanings,<sup>213</sup> and an authoritative persona for herself.<sup>214</sup>

Whatever the illuminators' roles were, the idea that Christine is recognisable by the colours of her costume is one that modern readers have created and imposed upon her. The potential Marian and moral connections that Pastoureau sees as being made by the colour blue are now even more ingrained, and it could even be *because* of these connections that modern readers and scholars tend to privilege the images that imply such connections, providing an obvious layer of interpretation and understanding. Furthermore, I would suggest that the tendency to identify Christine with this particular representational practice is symptomatic of our desire to unify Christine into a recognisable author-figure and to resolve uncertainties, such as the identity of the figures in some of the ambiguous illuminations. A. C. Spearing has recently suggested that

the "I" which readers might wish to stabilize by connecting it either to a fictional persona [...] or simply to "the real [author]", has an irreducible instability revealed [...]. The "I" [...] cannot be the label of a single, self-identical consciousness.<sup>215</sup>

These statements could also be applied to the images of Christine discussed here: if there is an intended or implied persona behind these portraits, caution should be exerted when it comes to identifying them straightforwardly with the author. Far from a particular image either decidedly being or not being the author, such images seem to deliberately evoke the *possibility* of such identification, without seeking to make it clear-cut. A plurality of meanings, and a spectrum of selves is thereby created.

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<sup>213</sup> On some of these, see *P&P*, *MMV*, and Chapter 2 for further examples.

<sup>214</sup> Lechat also analyses MCD's involvement in enhancing Christine's authority in the iconographic programme of her works in 'Doubles'.

<sup>215</sup> *Medieval Autographies: The "I" of the Text* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2012), 63-64.

The implied author encountered in Christine's author-manuscripts takes on a further dimension in what I have termed ambiguous author-portraits; here, because of the double movement that leads from narrator to implied author, and from implied author to historical author, the conventional distinction between these figures proves unhelpful. Even when considering all aspects of the textual Christine as making up the implied author, the self encountered in ambiguous author-portraits is not the author, or the narrator, nor even the implied author, but a proxy-figure – a kind of bouncing point that can be seen as operating between the real and implied author. Likewise, although author-portraits create a visual referent for the author-function, and thereby contribute towards generating authority for the historical author, the manner in which they do so is not straightforward, and involves multiple conduits.

Whilst it is tempting to read Christine's presence in every appearance of a figure in a particular costume, doing so is a mistaken attempt to render these sometimes confounding images easier to read. Although critics are willing to recognise the multifacetedness that Christine presents in her texts, for too long the idea of the historical author Christine de Pizan has been pinned to a particular representation, which can be identified with a particular woman, who looked and dressed in a distinct way. But like the subject encountered in her works, the woman represented in these images is also a careful construction, one in which several Masters had a hand. Failing to recognise this downplays the subtlety and art with which these manuscripts have been constructed, and the care and attention with which supplementary meanings have been worked into the visual apparatus.

The consistency with which Christine is imagined to have been represented might also be connected to her courtly as well as her narratological status within a text. Whilst the historical and extratextual nobility, including Charles V and Philippe le Bon, were portrayed fairly consistently by individual Masters or within the same manuscript,<sup>216</sup> purely textual beings, such as the characters in *CE*, were much less so. Being both an extratextual person (the historical Christine) and a textual figure (the narrator-protagonist Cristine) Christine therefore sits somewhere between these two poles, and perhaps as the historical figure grew in importance, so the textual figure gained in terms of consistency of representation.<sup>217</sup> Christine might have felt the advantage of using a single Master in order to successfully increase her authorial stance and to help visually build this authority. But if some sort of Christine de Pizan 'brand' was being created, it was thanks to the MCD's works. However flexible and open this branding was, after her death, its implications were lost as her works came to be illuminated by artists outside the limited Parisian circle. Tracing the changes that took place in the conception of this figure over time shows how differently it was possible to conceive of the implied author that can be gleaned from Christine's texts. The spectrum of Christine's selves extends beyond the boundaries of each text, into the images that accompany them, evolving in later copies and printed editions. As

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<sup>216</sup> Charles V tended to be represented fairly consistently, wearing the robes of a university Master: see Alexander W. Byvanck, *Les Principaux manuscrits à peintures de la Bibliothèque royale* (Paris: *Bulletin de la société française de reproductions de manuscrits à peintures*, 1924), 104-110, and Erwin Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting: Its Origins and Character* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953), 37 and 374, n. 1. For examples of consistency in representations of Charles V and Jeanne de Bourbon by one Master, see Hedeman, *Image*, pls. 4-6. Philippe le Bon is represented very consistently, nearly always in a full black outfit: either a long black gown, or a shorter black tunic over narrow trousers, with a black hat. Several examples may be seen in the online pages of the BnF's Flemish miniatures exhibit: <http://expositions.bnf.fr/flamands/> (accessed 31 October 2016).

<sup>217</sup> For McGrady, Christine's consistent image emerged as a counterpoint to 'the dispersement of the patron's authoritative role in the literary enterprise': 'Patron?', 205.

each is recopied and its iconographical programme recreated, the implied author can potentially be written and represented anew.

The conduits that went into conferring authority upon Christine in her manuscripts were therefore multiple, involving a complex network of symbolic associations: the work of a variety of artists, the influence of artistic conventions and preceding models, and Christine's own involvement in the design of the iconographic programme of her works. Having explored the importance of visual aspects within Christine's texts and the ways in which she exploited them in her self-creation, over the course of the next two Chapters, I examine the use of images in Christine's didactic works more widely. First of all, in *EO*, the work that features both the most extensive iconographic programme, and whose paratextual apparatus underwent the greatest change during Christine's lifetime.



## Chapter 2

### **The Edification of a Future Ruler: Text and Image in *L'Epistre Othea***

A ceste fable peuent estre mises plusieurs exposicions et semblablement aux autres teles fables, et pour ce les firent les poetes que les entendemens des hommes s'aguisassent et soubtillassent a y trouver diverses exposicions.<sup>1</sup>

In the Introduction, it was mentioned that not all of Christine's didactic texts appear to have been copied with a view to featuring illuminations. There are many possible reasons for this: some manuscripts were perhaps not intended for publication, and illuminations were only intended to be added to later publication copies – a possibility which is explored with reference to *EO* later in this Chapter; in the case of *CV*, which was written in some haste in the wake of the first signs of Charles VI's illness, the addition of illuminations would have slowed down the publication of the work. Looking at Christine's unilluminated manuscripts, one may note that when the advice given is straightforwardly didactic and not intended to provoke debate or be open to question, although an author-portrait sometimes features at the opening of a new work, images do not tend to be otherwise present: neither *CV*, *LP*, nor *CP* appear to have been illustrated, for example.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Othea*, 235.

<sup>2</sup> On *CV*, see *ACP* 477-515, and *Charles V*, ed. Solente, vol. 1, LXXXV-XCVII. Solente describes at least two further copies of this text that are now lost, and that might have offered variants to the iconography. The single extant author-manuscript of *LP* contains an opening miniature depicting Christine writing: see *ACP*, 687-694 and 704-709. Of the four surviving manuscripts of *CP*, only one bears an illumination, again of Christine writing: *ACP*, 631-662.

The absence of images from these texts seems all the more surprising given the prominence of the illustrative programme elsewhere in Christine's works, most notably in two author-copies of *EO*. Why were certain copies of that work enriched with such an extensive cycle of miniatures when others were not? Were these design choices solely influenced by practicalities surrounding composition, such as financial constraints, and the desires of the patron? Or was the scale of *EO*'s iconographic programme developed in order for the text to be read in a particular way? Some aspects of the relationship between text and image in *EO* have already been touched on in the previous Chapter, but so that the corpus of images involved, the extensive transmission of the work, and the instructive nature of its illuminations may be discussed in detail, it is necessary to dedicate a full Chapter to it. Its status as a text that straddles several genres whilst being didactic in nature, together with the fact that Christine gradually incorporated more and more images into author-copies of the work, make it especially valuable and intriguing to study. Unlike the author portraits examined in the previous Chapter, for which established traditions and models existed, many of the *EO* illuminations appear to have been bespoke, a point emphasised by Desmond and Sheingorn, for whom 'the originality of these visual programs and their engagement with the textual material suggest a collaborative artistic partnership that would certainly include the author'.<sup>3</sup> The collaboration between Christine and her Masters has already been established, and the focus of this Chapter is therefore on the function of the miniatures. Whereas images are absent from Christine's didactic works that offer advice without problematising it, here, I argue that in *EO*,

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<sup>3</sup> *MMV*, 14.



images are used to highlight potential problems touched on in the textual elements of each *histoire*.

The strange nature of *EO* has long puzzled scholars: this is a text that avoids being pinned down to any one particular genre,<sup>4</sup> one whose ‘organization shows little regard for narrative chronology of myth or history’,<sup>5</sup> and whose form (a hundred sets of prescriptive verse, each with two prose glosses) can seem fragmentary in nature. The images themselves can seem like a series of disparate snapshots, without any immediately apparent link between them:<sup>6</sup> each image generally represents a set of unique figures, who rarely appear depicted consistently in other miniatures.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, in the fully illustrated manuscripts, such as Harley 4431,<sup>8</sup> almost as many themes or actions are represented as there are images: whilst several miniatures depict deities, one winds a clock (f. 96v), another plays a harp (f. 101r), one presides over a battle (f. 101v), another over a group of men in lively discussion (f. 100v). In some cases, the mythological context is immediately apparent, such as Narcissus gazing into his reflection in a fountain (f. 104r) or the Trojan horse being brought into the ancient city (f. 112v), whilst several depict a general violent *mêlée* of nameless soldiers whose context is not apparent without textual guidance (ff. 134r, 135v, 136v).<sup>9</sup> Some miniatures are religious in nature (ff. 110v, 141r), others represent scenes of reading or instruction (ff. 107r, 109r); only one image does not feature

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<sup>4</sup> It has been variously described, for example, as a ‘hybrid form between a letter and a dream vision’ (*P&P*, 33), and as ‘une œuvre à double entrée: d’une part un recueil mythologique, et d’autre part un traité de morale’: Sylvie Jeanneret, ‘Texte et enluminures dans l’*Epistre Othea* de Christine de Pizan: Une lecture politique?’, in *Au Champ des escriptures*, 723-736 (723).

<sup>5</sup> *P&P*, 24.

<sup>6</sup> That is not to say that any link can never be found. For examples, see Chapter 1, 76-80.

<sup>7</sup> This is unlike the images in *CLE*, in which the Christine-figure herself provides a link throughout the visual programme. I return to that work in Chapter 3.

<sup>8</sup> The folio references given in parentheses in this paragraph refer to this manuscript.

<sup>9</sup> On the violence of some *EO* images, see *MMV*, 157-193.

any human figures, that depicting the crow changing colour (f. 119r). The visual programme therefore leads readers to expect a variety of topics to be touched upon in the text. But if this strange work, this letter that purports to be sent from the goddess Othea to prince Hector of Troy, engages with so many varied themes and ideas, how coherent will the advice it contains prove to be? How will the images serve the work's didactic aims? In what ways will they support and/or challenge them?

These questions are central to this Chapter. In examining the use of images in *EO*, I also seek to answer the question of why, in the space of just six years,<sup>10</sup> author-copies of this work went from comprising six illuminations to displaying a full programme of one hundred and one miniatures. The case of *EO* is particularly intriguing since not only did it undergo this transformation in terms of its visual apparatus, but it is also distinctive in Christine's corpus of texts: none of her other works was endowed with decoration anything like this extensive. I begin by expounding the unusual structure of *EO* itself, setting out both the ways in which its format sets out to instruct, and how contemporary readers would have engaged with the work. I then focus on ten stories within *EO* that take a seemingly definitive didactic text, the Ten Commandments of the Law, as their subject. As in the last Chapter, this analysis would not be complete without also taking into account copies and editions of the work prepared after Christine's lifetime. Changes made in the presentation of these later copies can also inform us as to how they were read, and how the work was interpreted and received, and I focus here in particular on Jean Miélot's reworking of the text. Finally, I consider

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<sup>10</sup> See above, Chapter 1, 39-40, and *ACP*, 348 and 240.

possible reasons for significant changes in the presentation of author-copies of *EO*, including alterations to its iconographic programme, and to the layout of the work.

### I. The Epistre Othea: Reading the Text, Reading the Image

[L]ettre n'est mie s'on ne le paint.<sup>11</sup>

During her lifetime, *EO* was arguably Christine's most popular work; fifty-six surviving manuscripts are known,<sup>12</sup> at least five of which are believed to be autograph;<sup>13</sup> although originally dedicated to the king's brother, Louis d'Orléans, its transmission in manuscript form was extensive, notably amongst the nobility:<sup>14</sup> Charles V's brothers, Philippe le Hardi and Jean de Berry, both received copies, as did Henry IV of England.<sup>15</sup> *EO* remained popular after Christine's lifetime, and it went on to be edited five times between 1499 and approximately 1540, including one translation into English.<sup>16</sup> To understand how the work functions, I will first explain the way in which each individual chapter or *histoire* is organised, before going on to look at how they are grouped and organised as a whole.

Pierre Pigouchet's edition renders the title as *Les Cent histoires de Troye*,<sup>17</sup> and that is very much its format: one hundred short maxim-like quatrains, or

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<sup>11</sup> Richard de Fournival, *Bestiaire*, 158:45.

<sup>12</sup> Although somewhat dated, Mombello's *Tradizione* is still the most complete point of reference for an overview of the *EO* manuscript tradition. The manuscript he lists as having been sold by Sotheby's in 1825 features here as Aylesbury, Waddesdon Manor, The Rothschild Collection (The National Trust), MS 8.

<sup>13</sup> Hindman believes one further *EO* manuscript, Cambridge, Newnham College, MS 5, was produced in Paris earlier in the fifteenth century than previously thought, possibly under Christine's supervision: *P&P*, 141.

<sup>14</sup> As mentioned in Chapter 1, 41, n. 55, fr. 606 and fr. 848 were respectively dedicated to and intended for Louis d'Orléans.

<sup>15</sup> It was not unusual for a work to be dedicated to more than one patron, either during or after the author's lifetime. McGrady notes that 'all of the works contained in Harley 4431, except for the dedication, had already been offered to other patrons prior to 1411': 'Patron', 195.

<sup>16</sup> Mombello notes the possibility of further editions having been lost: *Tradizione*, 361-363.

<sup>17</sup> This title appears to be an invention of Pigouchet's as neither of the witnesses on which his edition is based bear this title: see Mombello, *Tradizione*, 364-366; for descriptions the two witnesses, Beauvais, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 9, op. cit., 124-129, and the Newnham College manuscript, op. cit. 242-245.

‘tales’, that find their basis in the Trojan legends.<sup>18</sup> In the author-manuscripts, these verses are given the rubric *texte*. In the manner of an exegesis, each verse *texte* is followed by two glosses: one explanatory gloss (designated by the rubric *glose* in the manuscripts) that supplements the verses with detail of the wider mythological context, and an allegorical reading (*allegorie*) that relates the verse to biblical material.<sup>19</sup> The *allegorie* often ends with a short Latin quotation from the gospels or from one of the Church Fathers. These textual elements make up each of the one hundred *histoires* together with the image, where present.<sup>20</sup>

To understand the content and function of each of these three elements more generally, I present as an example the layout of *histoire XXXV*, as found in fr. 606 (for example, f. 17v: **PI. 2.1**).<sup>21</sup> In this manuscript, the three sections of each story – *texte*, *glose*, and *allegorie* – are clearly distinguished by rubrics and by divisions in the layout of the page. The *texte* section consists of octosyllabic rhyming couplets, usually forming a quatrain,<sup>22</sup> that exhort the reader to behave in a certain manner – usually by following, or not following, the example of a figure from classical mythology.<sup>23</sup> In this example, the verses read:

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<sup>18</sup> On the use of classical examples for didactic ends in France in the Middle Ages, see Bouchet, *Discours*, 68-69.

<sup>19</sup> *EO* is not the only of Christine’s didactic works to follow the text/gloss format, which is also present in the *Livre de Prudence*.

<sup>20</sup> The term *histoire* is particularly fitting, as it can refer both to the story itself, communicated through written words, and to the image. On this productive ambiguity, see Jacqueline Cerquiglini, ‘Histoire, image: Accord et discord du sens à la fin du moyen âge’, *Littérature*, 74 (1989), 110-126. Cerquiglini finds that the medieval term *ystoire* refers to a particular type of image, one that insists on ‘le processus d’une action, les éléments d’un récit’ (op. cit., 111). This is often the case in the *EO* illuminations, which ‘évoquent souvent le moment crucial d’une métamorphose, ou, plus en général, de l’événement raconté’: Parussa, ‘Introduction’, *Othea*, 78. Desmond and Sheingorn also emphasise their performativity: ‘the visual culture of the *Othea* is rich in represented gestures that could neither be communicated verbally nor effectively described in the text’: *MMV*, 8.

<sup>21</sup> This *histoire* forms the first of the Commandment stories, discussed in Section II of this Chapter.

<sup>22</sup> The first five *histoires* are of variant lengths.

<sup>23</sup> Although *EO* is dedicated to male, princely readers, I deliberately refer to an ungendered reader throughout this Chapter. Chapter 3 offers a fuller analysis of the question of the gender of the intended reader in several of Christine’s didactic works, including *EO*; here, I simply note that *EO* was included in two manuscripts presented to Isabeau de Bavière, which suggests that the intended

Bellorophon soit exemplaire  
 En tous les faiz que tu veulx faire,  
 Qui mieulz ama vouloir mourir  
 Que desloyaulté encourir.<sup>24</sup>

The *glose* that follows places these somewhat allusive verses within their mythological context.<sup>25</sup> Here, that includes clarifying who Bellerophon was, and expanding on the story surrounding him: it is explained that Bellerophon's stepmother was in love with him, and asked him to sleep with her.<sup>26</sup> So as not to risk being disloyal towards his family, Bellerophon refused, and, as punishment, was condemned to be devoured by wild animals. Bellerophon's refusal is illustrated in the accompanying miniature, which shows the queen gesturing towards him as he turns his back on her. Meanwhile, the animals faintly outlined on the cliffs in the background anticipate Bellerophon's ultimate sentence and death, illustrating the content of the *glose*.<sup>27</sup> Finally, the *allegorie* relates the story

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readership was not exclusively male, as the textual evidence would lead one to believe. I am not implying that all of the advice it contains was seen as fitting for either sex, but merely that caution should be exercised in taking the implied readership at face value.

<sup>24</sup> *Othea*, 249. Although the Plates used to illustrate this Section are taken from fr. 606, I quote from Parussa's excellent edition, which takes Harley 4431 as its base manuscript. There being very little textual variance between the two manuscripts, I quote from the published edition rather than making a near-identical transcription of fr. 606, highlighting any significant textual variants in the footnotes. I have preferred to consistently use images from the earlier manuscript rather than Harley 4431 so as to more fully illustrate the changes that *EO* underwent over time.

<sup>25</sup> It is not clear which parts of the *histoire* are voiced by Othea, and which – if any – by Christine. For Desmond and Sheingorn, Othea voices only the *texte*, whereas Christine provides the *glose* and *allegorie*. Othea would thereby offer the 'secular' reading, whereas Christine relates the Trojan material to a religious context, reminding readers of their Christian duties: see *MMV*, 7-8. An alternate reading would be that the whole text is voiced by Othea. As Hindman has shown, the figures of Othea and Christine are closely linked, and just as she argues that Hector is intended as a double for Louis d'Orléans, Othea functions as a double for Christine, connections that are both made evident through intervisual links in the opening miniatures: *P&P*, xx, 23, and 42-45.

<sup>26</sup> The primary meaning of the Old French word *marrastre* is stepmother: Georges Matoré, *Le Vocabulaire et la société médiévale* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1985), 211. The pejorative meaning of this word, which survives in modern French's *marâtre* (bad mother), may also be being played on here, leading some translations to mistakenly render it as 'bad mother': Raynaud de Lage, *Manuel pratique de l'ancien français* (Paris: A. & J. Picard, 1964), 207. The two meanings co-existed in Middle French, see the *Dictionnaire du moyen français*: version 2015 (DMF 2015). ATILF - CNRS & Université de Lorraine. Viewed online: <http://www.atilf.fr/dmf/definition/marâtre> (accessed 31 October 2016).

<sup>27</sup> See also **Pl. 2.5**, in which the queen insistently holds on to Bellerophon. Some copies, including the Waddesdon manuscript, represent Bellerophon awaiting his death, surrounded by wild animals, thus only illustrating his fate, not the event leading up to it.

to a religious context. Here, it is explained that Bellerophon's family loyalty should remind readers to behave likewise towards God, and it is explicitly stated that this story might then be taken for the first commandment: 'Tu n'aoureras point dieux estranges'.<sup>28</sup> This *allegorie* concludes with a Latin citation taken from Matthew 4:10, which is highlighted through the use of red ink.

But how were the one hundred tales arranged within the wider work? I have mentioned that *EO* can read as a somewhat disparate collection of glossed verses, and although the basis of the overall work may be the Trojan War, the way in which the material is organised appears somewhat random. Although the first forty-four *histoires* can be organised into groups this grouping is not apparent from reading either the *texte* or the *glose*, but only the content of the *allegories*. In these first *allegories*, the reader may deduce from the religious extrapolations effected that the material has become arranged according to certain religious categorisations: the four cardinal virtues thus become the 'theme' of *histoires* I-IV; the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit unite *histoires* VI-XII; next follow the three theological virtues (XIII-XV); the seven deadly sins (XVI-XXII); two lessons from the Credo (XXIII-XXIV); and finally, the Ten Commandments provide the theme for *histoires* XXXV-XLIX.<sup>29</sup> Hereafter, the remaining tales are presented apparently at random, without any interpretative grouping providing unity.<sup>30</sup> Although it is therefore possible to categorise the material to an extent, that this structure only emerges from reading the *allegories* suggests that it should not be overstated, as

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<sup>28</sup> *Othea*, 250. The commandment may seem somewhat incongruous as a conclusion to the story recounted. I return to this feature of the Ten Commandment stories below, Section II.i.

<sup>29</sup> Christine's linking of religious texts and classical mythology is by no means unique, *OM* being a particularly well-known example. Indeed, 'some medieval exegetes were so convinced by theological readings of classical mythology that they entertained the possibility that Ovid may have undergone a conversion and become, as it were, a Christian *avant la lettre*': Huot, 'Sentences', 203.

<sup>30</sup> For a discussion of the effect created by this fragmentation of the Trojan myth, see *MMV*, 212-216, who notes that *histoires* LXXXVIII-XCVIII present the Trojan material more chronologically than is done elsewhere in *EO*.

nothing alerts us to these groupings in either the writings, or in the paratext more widely.

Both the gloss format and the religious groupings of the first forty-four *histoires* thereby point to a moralising, devotional context. The combination of text and image seen to a degree in all copies of *EO* may have been inspired by one of the many sources Christine used when composing the text.<sup>31</sup> Manuscripts of *Des cleres femmes* might have influenced the format of one illumination per chapter seen in the later *EO* manuscripts, as Paris, BnF, MSS fr. 598 and fr. 12420 display the same format; *OM* is also likely to have inspired the 'Children of the Planets' miniatures that typically accompany *histoires* 6-12.<sup>32</sup> Although neither Gabriella Parussa nor Campbell posit the *Bible moralisée* genre as having influenced the *EO*,<sup>33</sup> it nonetheless seems likely that the format of historiated bibles influenced this work.<sup>34</sup> John Lowden describes the 'defining features of the form of a *Bible moralisée*' as follows:

Each large page has eight quite small images of identical size and shape, and each image is flanked by a relatively short text. There is an absolutely regular alternation on every page between a biblical image, and its accompanying biblical text, and a

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<sup>31</sup> The question of *EO*'s sources is a vast subject, which cannot be discussed here; Campbell's *Sources* remains essential for details of the texts used to compile the work.

<sup>32</sup> On the 'Children of the Planets' illustrations, see *MMV*, 41-45 and *P&P*, 84-90 (the inspiration for this type of representation may be Classical or pre-Christian in tradition). Not all *OM* manuscripts were illustrated, but four surviving copies depict the gods at the start of each chapter. At least three have a substantial programme of illuminations: Lyon, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 742 (fifty-three miniatures); Paris, Bibliothèque de l'arsenal, MS 5069 (302); Rouen, Bibliothèque municipale, MS O.4 (453). *OM* manuscripts are described in Marc-René Jung, *La Légende de Troie au moyen âge* (Basel: Franke, 1996), 625-627. The format of *OM* in general, one of narrative followed by commentary, undoubtedly also inspired Christine, as did the way in which it offered 'a set of competing interpretations': Marilyn Desmond, 'The Goddess Diana and the Ethics of Reading in the *Ovide moralisé*', in *Metamorphosis: The Changing Face of Ovid in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, eds. Alison Keith and Stephen James Rupp (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2007), 61-75 (65). On *OM* as a source for *EO* more widely, see Parussa, 'Introduction', *Othea*, 32-36, and *P&P*, 189-203.

<sup>33</sup> Both critics cite the *Manipulus florum* as the source for Christine's bible citations.

<sup>34</sup> On historiated bibles, see Babette Hellemans, *La Bible moralisée: Une œuvre à part entière: Création, sémiotique et temporalité au XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010).

moralizing interpretation of that image and text in the form of another image and accompanying text.<sup>35</sup>

In *EO* as in *Bibles moralisées*, a similar combination of text and image is witnessed.

Both also make frequent use of explanatory phrasing to make the meanings to be taken from each respective text explicit, such as 'si segnefie' or 'sont entendus'.

However, although similarities in terms of alternation of image and text can be seen, in Christine's work, the written element of each *histoire* is substantially longer than in *Bibles moralisées*. The exegetical process through which Christine takes her readers is also not found in *Bibles moralisées*, where it is the images that narrate the story, and 'the texts were only written in [...], a little like captions, after the images had been completed'.<sup>36</sup> The page layout alone therefore appears to have influenced Christine. Fr. 167, the 'Bible of Jean le Bon', is one of several *Bibles moralisées* to which Christine would have had access in the royal library in the early fifteenth century. The similarity in their combination of text and image and the availability of several illustrated copies to Christine make it feasible that they either directly or indirectly inspired the heavily illustrated format of *EO*.

Although modern readers may be puzzled by the unfamiliar format of *EO*, to the contemporary reader, it would not have been so unusual. Its tripartite structure was similar to that seen in devotional texts,<sup>37</sup> and calls to mind the practice of exegesis.<sup>38</sup> Exegesis would traditionally be made up of four levels of

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<sup>35</sup> "'Reading" Images and Texts in the Bibles moralisées', in *Reading Images and Texts: Medieval Images and Texts as Forms of Communication. Papers from the Third Utrecht Symposium on Medieval Literacy, Utrecht, 7-9 December 2000*, eds. Mariëlle Hageman and Marco Mostert (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), 495-525 (497).

<sup>36</sup> Lowden, "'Reading" Images', 510.

<sup>37</sup> Lowden also sees a type of exegetical reading taking place in the reading of historiated bibles: "'Reading" Images', especially 504.

<sup>38</sup> Hugh of St Victor is credited with setting out the theory of exegesis, for which, as is often the case when using medieval technical vocabulary, there is no exact definition; I mean it as a way of interpreting material along structured lines. I follow Duncan Robertson's explanation in *Lectio Divina: The Medieval Experience of Reading* (Trappis: Cistercian Publications, 2011), 40-42, which



meaning, usually presented in a 'tripartite division'. The first of these levels was the *historia*, the text itself and its literal meaning; two subsequent glosses then exposed the allegorical and/or anagogical, and the tropological senses of the text. Although modern critics tend to separate allegory and anagogy, for Duncan Robertson, 'allegory, ultimately, may be extended to subsume the fourth term, anagogy', which explains the presentation of four levels of meaning in three sections.<sup>39</sup>

Another feature of exegesis present in *EO* is the role that the reader is expected to play in reading and understanding of the text.<sup>40</sup> Robertson explains that the process of exegesis was one that heavily involved the reader, where 'exposition [...] emerges from an implied dialogue' in which 'the real or imaginary audience is constantly invoked'.<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, readers whose level of reading experience varied could take different lessons the same text:

Scripture addresses various classes of readers, ranging from the least instructed to the most adept. [...] Different readers find their needs met, and the given reader is urged to progress from the simple texts and first-level readings to those which are more complex, higher, and deeper.<sup>42</sup>

*EO* seeks to enter into a similar dialogue with the reader, inviting them to progress through the different levels, inciting further reflection and a personal response.

Indeed, the Prologue emphasises the importance of the reader's individual

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provides a useful summary of exegetical reading. A simple definition is also offered by Rita Copeland, for whom exegesis, like *expositio*, may be understood as a "'commentary" in the general academic sense of the term, as in a free-standing and continuous commentary on a biblical text': *Pedagogy, Intellectuals, and Dissent in the Later Middle Ages: Lollardy and Ideas of Learning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 121. For a more detailed analysis see Henri de Lubac, *Exégèse médiévale: Les Quatre sens de l'écriture*, 2 vols. (Paris: Aubier, 1959-1964).

<sup>39</sup> *Lectio Divina*, 42. Bouchet therefore appears to be mistaken when suggesting that, in reference to the tripartite structure of *AC*, 'par modestie, Christine en a proposé une triple allégorisation qui reste en-deçà des traditionnels quatre sens de l'Écriture': *Discours*, 133.

<sup>40</sup> *LP* too is reminiscent of exegesis: in this text, one or more Latin citations from a number of sources (including the Scriptures, common proverbs, ancient Greek and Latin texts, as well as some more recent sources, such as Dante and Boethius) lead to wider discussions on particular themes.

<sup>41</sup> *Lectio Divina*, xvi.

<sup>42</sup> *Lectio Divina*, 20.

understanding. This is firstly evident in Christine's assertion that the work contains 'maint vers et maint notable | Bel a ouyr et meilleur a entendre'.<sup>43</sup> The meaning of these verses is that although the *EO* verses will provide enjoyment when heard (i.e. when read or performed out loud), the reader will get greater profit or enjoyment from them by applying their understanding to the work as a whole, and do more than simply receiving the text.<sup>44</sup>

Perhaps the greatest indication that the reader will be called upon to actively engage with the text to fully comprehend it comes at the end of the Prologue, where a kind of *clé de lecture* is provided, written in purple ink:

Affin que ceulz qui ne sont mie clers poetes puissent entendre en brief la signification des histoires de ce livre, est a savoir que, par tout ou les ymages sont en nues, c'est a entendre que ce sont les figures des dieux ou deesses de quoy la letre ensuivant ou livre parle, selon la maniere de parler des ancians poetes. Et pour ce que deÿté est chose espirituelle et esleevee de terre, sont les ymages figurez en nues.<sup>45</sup>

Two points from this quotation merit discussion. Firstly, this explanation only partially elucidates the strange structure of *EO* and the material within it to its

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<sup>43</sup> *Othea*, 196.

<sup>44</sup> For a discussion of *entendement* as a synonym for *understanding* in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, see Bouchet, *Discours*, 47-54. On the link between pleasure and profit in texts from this period, see op. cit., 57-78.

<sup>45</sup> *Othea*, 197. These lines were not present in the earlier fr. 848 manuscript, but were added to fr. 606 (f. 1v) and Harley 4431 (f. 95v) (the two fully-illustrated copies of *EO*), seemingly at the same time as additional images were incorporated. The purple ink used to write these lines suggests that they were intended to be seen as a different status to the text written in black or red ink. Similar purple rubrics accompany *histoires* II, VI-XII, XIV-XVIII in both manuscripts, and additionally *histoire* XIII in fr. 606. The status of these purple rubrics and their intended readership has been of some debate. Although critics agree that the rubrics were composed by Christine, Jeanneret believes they were composed for the benefit of the illuminators, and that they testify to Christine's close working relationship with them: 'Texte et enluminures'. Jeanneret's contention is supported by some of the shorter purple rubrics, such as that accompanying *histoire* XVI, which reads 'Narcissus qui se mira en la fontaine'. However, three points contradict her: firstly, most of the rubrics are considerably longer than is necessary to provide instructions to the illuminator, and are therefore clearly written to advise a different type of reader. The rubrics are also not found in the margins, where this kind of instruction would usually occur (and from where they might later be erased), but firmly within the boundaries of the text. Finally, if these rubrics were indeed originally written for the illuminator's benefit, they would not have been reproduced in Harley 4431: not only were these illuminations copied directly from fr. 606, and therefore instructions not necessary, but Christine would have erased them in a manuscript that was otherwise so carefully prepared for the Queen. On Christine's role in correcting and preparing her manuscripts for presentation, see Delsaux, *Manuscripts*, 460-488.

readers. In this respect, the instructions at the start of the work are not unlike those we find in at the start of *AC*, which explains the poetic, metaphorical nature of the first section of that work.<sup>46</sup> Bouchet considers the *AC* explanation as follows: ‘Dans son entreprise d’élucidation, Christine [...] ne livre que le strict minimum, se dispensant d’expliquer certains détails qu’elle juge assez clairs par eux-mêmes, du moins pour un lecteur correctement doué d’“entendement”’.<sup>47</sup> The same might be said of the purple ink passages in *EO*, which likewise only explain ‘le strict minimum’, leaving the reader to work out the remaining details for themselves. However, I see this as a deliberate strategy on Christine’s part: by showing the reader that there is a certain amount of decoding to be done in order to fully understand the text, she invites them to look further, and thereby hints at further potential meanings to be uncovered. Christine does not provide her reader with all the keys needed to fully comprehend the work, but by showing that there are further understandings to be uncovered, she invites them to look further in order to find these hidden meanings.

The multiple possible meanings of the verses are alluded to at other points in *EO*, notably in the *gloses*. The *glose* to *histoire* XXII, which forms the epigraph to this Chapter, is particularly revealing about Christine’s own poetic endeavour, and the way in which she expects her reader to engage with and decipher the text.<sup>48</sup>

Reminders of the multiple meanings to be found within the text, and that it is the

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<sup>46</sup> ‘Pour [...] declairier les choses soubz figures dictes en la premiere partie de ce livre, laquelle appert aucunement obscure, se aucun le temps a venir au gloser plus estanduelement vouloit entendre, est asavoir [...] que souventesfois soubz figure de methaphore [...] sont muciees maintes secretes sciences et pures veritez. Et en telle parolle dicte par poisie puet avoir mains entendemens, et lors est la poisie belle et soubtille quant elle puet servir a plusieurs ententes et que on la puet prendre a divers propos’: *Advision*, 3.

<sup>47</sup> *Discours*, 125.

<sup>48</sup> Jeanneret also finds that ‘la fable devient [...] le prétexte d’un enseignement moral et didactique’; however, she transcribes the end of this passage as ‘double propoz’, a phrasing that I have not found in any of the author-manuscripts: ‘Texte’, 724. The meanings that Christine invites her readers to find in her texts are not just ‘double’, but multiple.

reader's task to reflect on and find them, continue to punctuate the text: 'et comme toutes telles choses soient figurees, y peut estre mis assez d'entendemens';<sup>49</sup>

'Circés peut estre entendue en plusieurs manieres', to give but two examples.<sup>50</sup>

This tactic is not unique to Christine's stance in *EO*, and she can be seen encouraging her reader to respond in several other works, including overtly at the end of *EM*, in the penultimate stanza of which she tells the reader:

Bon exemple et bonne doctrine  
Oz volentiers et t'y dottrine,  
Car pour neant son oreille euvre  
Homs a ouïr sans mettre a oeuvre.<sup>51</sup>

In this stanza, Christine clearly tells her audience that the advice they will have heard is useless, unless they respond to and act upon it. This audience response may simply take the form of reflection on the material, or may involve developing individual opinion in relation to some of the issues presented. However, the exhorted response is often more active: in both *EO* and *EM*, examples are given in order to foster the right kind of behaviour. This remains the case in works intended for a broader readership,<sup>52</sup> but because their actions will affect others, it is more pressing in texts that Christine writes explicitly with the instruction of a future ruler in mind, such as *EO*. As expressed by Eric Hicks and Thérèse Moreau in their preface to their edition of *CV*, 'En effet, pour Christine, régner, gouverner, c'est avant tout se préoccuper du bien public; il faut pour cela se gouverner soi-même, refuser d'obéir à sa propre volonté et de tenir compte de ses désirs, pour

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<sup>49</sup> *Othea*, 307.

<sup>50</sup> *Othea*, 338.

<sup>51</sup> *Les Enseignemens moraux*, in *Œuvres poétiques*, vol. 3, 27-44 (44). The opening of *FA*, and endings of *DR* and *EDA* likewise incite readers to take action.

<sup>52</sup> *EM* purports to be written for Christine's son. Within it, she envisages a variety of careers for the intended reader(s): one who works 'en champs ou ville', one who 'as estat ou office', 'es homs d'eglise ou prestre', or who has an entire country to govern: *Enseignemens moraux*, 38 and 30. Together with the fact that it was included in manuscripts donated to benefactors and not just to her son (the addressee of the work), it can therefore be surmised that there was more than one intended reader (see further, Chapter 3.II).

prendre conseil auprès des sages'.<sup>53</sup> Encouraging this kind of active response leads to Christine's ultimate goal: promoting her readers to act as good governors.

'Action' of this kind is one of the five steps that Hugh of St Victor outlines as part of the reading process;<sup>54</sup> in this respect, the way in which Christine expects her readers to interact with her works is again similar to a reader's engagement with exegesis. Far from finding its structure unusual, contemporary readers who were accustomed to exegetical readings would therefore have recognised the *EO* format as one requiring their response, and understood how they were expected to approach and use it.

The second point about the *clé de lecture* found at the end of the prologue cited above is that although Christine claims her instructions are provided so that readers may understand the text ('la signification des histoires de ce livre'), her subsequent explanation focuses on the content of the images. The meaning of this citation may therefore be paraphrased as follows: in order to fully appreciate the didactic content of *EO*, readers will need to pay attention to and interpret the content of the images, not just to the text itself. The remainder of this Chapter therefore proceeds under the assumption that images form part of the material requiring the reader's interpretation. It follows that, if a particular *histoire* sets up a disagreement or more than one possible interpretation, the images will also play a part in exposing potential controversy.

However, it was not always the case that the iconographical apparatus played such a central part in *EO* or in its reading: although the text itself remains fairly constant in Christine's author copies, its paratextual apparatus was subject

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<sup>53</sup> *Le Livre des faits et bonnes mœurs du roi Charles V le sage*, eds. and trans. Eric Hicks and Thérèse Moreau (Paris: Stock, 1997), 28.

<sup>54</sup> See Hugh of St Victor, *The Didascalicon of Hugh of St. Victor: A Medieval Guide to the Arts*, trans. Jerome Taylor (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961).

to significant changes. These included the gradual addition of images, and alterations to the layout of the different sections of each *histoire*. In terms of the illustrations, the earliest copy included only four illuminations: one dedication miniature, and three illuminations that, although accompanying *histoires* I-V, are found on the folios containing *histoires* I-II.<sup>55</sup> Two later author-copies contain six miniatures, and only the two last author-copies to be produced feature a full programme of one hundred and one miniatures (see **Fig. 4**).<sup>56</sup> Hindman has shown that, far from being somehow secondary to the text, even in the earliest copy, the illuminations contain hidden political messages through which Christine reminds readers of their duties. These few early miniatures also draw the various textual elements together: 'In a rather exceptional way, [...] all three parts of the text of the *Epistre* [*Othea*] are served by these pictures. The miniatures illustrate the texts, the glosses, and the allegories from the perspectives of political, secular, and spiritual allegories'.<sup>57</sup> In this last quotation, whilst acknowledging the importance of the illuminations and their potential to create links between the different elements of text, Hindman implies a hierarchy in which the images are in the service of, and are by implication deemed less important than, the text. Although this is not evidently the case even in the earliest copy of *EO*, it is even less so in later manuscripts, containing the full cycle of illuminations, in which text and image now occupy a similar status.

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<sup>55</sup> The second and third illuminations are divided into two panels, thereby each illustrating two *histoires*.

<sup>56</sup> I discuss the reasons behind this expanded iconographic programme in Section III of this Chapter.

<sup>57</sup> *P&P*, 81. On the use of the Trojan Myth for political ends in medieval France, see Colette Beaune, 'The Political Uses of the Trojan Myth', *The Birth of an Ideology: Myths and Symbols of Nation in Late-Medieval France*, tr. Susan Ross Huston, ed. Frederic L. Cheyette (Berkeley; Los Angeles; Oxford: University of California Press, 1991), 226-244, and Wolfram R. Keller, *Selves and Nations: The Troy Story from Sicily to England in the Middle Ages* (Heidelberg: Winter, 2008).

By around 1406 (the approximate date of the completion of fr. 606), each of the one hundred stories includes an image, creating a full iconographic programme – a feature shared with the later author-manuscript Harley 4431.<sup>58</sup> Indeed, the iconographic programme takes on such importance, and is so effective a vehicle by which to include further messages, that, in these manuscripts, it can be considered as making up the fourth part of the *histoire*. However, as the programme of illuminations was extended, images ceased to illustrate all three parts of the text in the manner described by Hindman, and the miniatures refer much less to the content of the *allegories*, as has already been seen in the Bellorophon example above.

Perhaps in order to accommodate this greater number of illuminations, with the production of fr. 606, the *EO* layout was significantly altered. In its earliest incarnation (fr. 848), the text was presented in a three-column format in which two or more *textes* were presented sequentially, in the centre of the page, with the *gloses* in the left column, and the *allegories* in the right (see, for example, f. 9r: **Pl. 2.2**). Small numerals next to each section allow the reader to connect a given *glose* or *allegorie* with the corresponding *texte*, but their eye might also wander across the page and take in the different elements less sequentially, making connections between and within the different *histoires*. For that reason, this layout has been seen as encouraging a ‘contemplative reading’: one in which the reader is invited to meditate on the connections between the different

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<sup>58</sup> Readers may wish to refer to Mombello, *Tradizione*, 346-357, for a full list of *EO* manuscripts, of which Mombello counts nine containing between ninety-nine and one hundred and two illuminations. At least three of the five editions printed between 1499 and 1545 contain the full programme of illuminations. Some of these copies are discussed below, in Section III.

elements of text.<sup>59</sup> The illuminations in earlier versions can be seen to operate in a similar way, forming part of the contemplative process that the reader is invited to undertake, helping them draw connections between the different sections of the text. This is seen in the split-frame format of certain illuminations, allowing a single miniature to illustrate more than a single *histoire*, and the fact that the images do not always occupy the same folio as the text they appear to accompany. In the later manuscripts containing the full iconographic programme, the *histoires* are presented in a two-column format, and the three sections of text follow one another sequentially (see fr. 606, ff. 17v and 18r, **Pls. 2.1** and **2.3**, for examples). In each case, the image is presented first, followed by the *texte*, the *glose*, and finally the *allegorie*. Incorporating this additional layer of material to be interpreted allowed Christine to push her reader further by including additional meanings within the work: meanings that could reinforce or conflict with the text itself. Sometimes the connections within and between the text and image are far from evident, puzzling even, inviting the reader to reflect further on the material before them to uncover any possible connection.

There is one significant iconographic variant that requires comment, found in Brussels, KBR, MSS 9559-64 and IV 1114, both of which were prepared between 1430 and 1445, outside the author's supervision (KBR 9559-64, f. 6r: **Pl. 2.4**). In each case, the illumination represents Dame Justice, a book opened on her lap, flanked on either side by Misericorde in a bishop's clothing, and the scribe Information. Various rubrics placed on the architecture framing the scene associate the three figures with different qualities: Misericorde with 'raison',

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<sup>59</sup> M. A. Ignatius, 'Christine de Pizan's "Epistre Othéa": An Experiment in Literary Form', *Medievalia et Humanistica*, 9 (1979), 127-142.



‘cremeur de Dieu’, ‘conseil’, and ‘prudence’; Dame Justice with ‘honneur’; and Information with ‘verité’, ‘equité’, ‘hardement’, ‘renommee’, and ‘diligence’.<sup>60</sup> These miniatures seem to illustrate the guidance to look for multiple meanings and associations with the text, and they therefore function as a kind of mindmap or spider diagram to which the reader may return. The gaps between the figures and the rubrics also play a part here: not only do they appear to represent the interpretative distance the reader is invited to bridge, but because the rubrics also appear to float around the frame of the miniature, the layout seems to suggest that they might apply to more than one figure. For Desmond and Sheingorn, ‘Such a visualization [...] elicits a reading [...] that emphasizes the *glose* and *allegorie* of each chapter. [...] A full pictorial cycle of mythical and historical illustrations would only have distracted from this moral level’.<sup>61</sup> The variant iconography found in these two manuscripts therefore constitutes a different way of visually representing the existence of different elements to each *histoire* and connections to be made within (and between) them, providing guidance to which readers may return. Whatever the origins of this variant tradition, it is significant that someone other than Christine deemed it important or useful to illustrate the work in a manner that makes clear the existence of connections and multiple levels of meanings.

To demonstrate the connections required to be made by the reader and the kinds of multiple meanings present in *EO*, in the next Section, I move deeper into the work, to consider ten stories that purport connections with the Ten Commandments that are sometimes far from evident.

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<sup>60</sup> The KBR IV 1114 illumination is nearly identical, but unpainted, and ‘equité’ is linked with Justice, and a further quality, most likely ‘loyauté’, has been erased from beneath the figure of Misericorde. The miniature is to be found on f. 123r.

<sup>61</sup> *MMV*, 235.

## II. The Ten Commandments Marginalised

Aimes Dieu de toute ta force,  
Crains ley et du servir t'efforce,  
La sont, se bien les as appris,  
Les dix commandemens compris.<sup>62</sup>

Now that they can be situated in context, I turn to *histoires* XXXV-XLIV. This section of *EO* takes the Ten Commandments as its theme, and some specific examples in which the Decalogue is particularly problematised are considered in this Section. In response to this problematisation, I propose ten alternative commandments – precepts that are particularly suitable for Christine's royal reader and addressee. Finally, I explore some of the ways in which the literal interpretation of the mythological material was given greater import at the expense of the religious content in Miélot's recasting of *EO*, downplaying any link between the Ten Commandment *histoires*.

### *i. Othea's Ten Alternative Commandments*

The first surprising element regarding this section is that many copies signal its beginning, and Christine appears to have sought to make these particular *histoires* more prominent in manuscripts whose layout she supervised. As usual, in both fr. 606 and Harley 4431, the stories follow one another sequentially, *histoire* XXXV continuing immediately in the same column after the end of XXXIV. Both first display the image, followed by the *texte* and *glose*, but unusually, at the start of the paragraph directly following the centered rubric announcing the *allegorie* of *histoire* XXXV, a sentence introduces this and the nine subsequent allegorical readings: 'Or venons a declairier les commandemens de la loy, et y prendrons

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<sup>62</sup> *Enseignemens moraux*, 27.

allegorie a nostre propos' (fr. 606, f. 17v: **Pl. 2.1**).<sup>63</sup> This is the only instance of such narrative signposting in author-copies of *EO*; readers are not alerted to the start of any of the other sections, such as those on the four cardinal virtues, or the seven deadly sins.

In fr. 606 and Harley 4431, the introductory phrase is not especially made to stand out from the text and is simply integrated into the body of the *allegorie* – although the presence of a pilcrow serves to accentuate this introduction a little. However, certain later copies do render the prefatory phrase more prominently. This is the case in Cambridge, Newnham College, MS 5, f. 19r, in which it is placed at the top of the third column, above the *allegorie* rubric (**Pl. 2.5**). Similarly, Chantilly, Musée Condé, MS 495 expands on this by signaling not just the start of the Ten Commandments, but also signposts the end of the twelve articles of faith directly above (f. 41v reads, 'Cy furent les douze articles de nostre benoiste foy': **Pl. 2.6**). A further example is to be found in Cambridge, St John's College, MS 5, f. 25r, a copy of Stephen Scrope's mid-fifteenth-century English translation (**Pl. 2.7**). Here, a separate rubric to that of the *allegorie* elevates this short sentence to the status of an exordium, by stating that this is the 'Prologue to the Allegorie', and a two-line-tall, gold illuminated champ initial makes this short passage stand out further on the page. Whilst these alterations of Christine's introductory statement may be no more than scribal adaptations into more recognisable formats, they seem to indicate that, for some scribes, the Ten Commandments section was deemed particularly worthy of attracting the reader's eye, perhaps more so than the author had originally intended. Why, then, do Christine and later scribes seek

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<sup>63</sup> Save for abbreviating the second *m* of *commandemens*, and a single *l* in *allegorie* which slightly affects the line breaks, this sentence is reproduced identically, both in terms of its placement and of its presentation, in Harley 4431. In fr. 848, this sentence features at the end of the *glose*, before the rubric.

to make these ten *histoires* stand out, particularly as they are located some way into the text, and what is their purpose?

In each of the ten *histoires* considered here, the lack of connection between the *texte* and *glose* and the Commandment given in the *allegorie* is striking, as it seems to undermine the strength of the precepts themselves. The Ten Commandment *histoires* thereby seem to exemplify the need for readers to think for themselves, and to carefully consider their own position. The three parts of *histoire* XXXVI provide a typical example. In this story, the *texte* and *glose* together exhort the reader to protect their cousins and family in war, taking Memnon – cousin of Hector and Paris – as a point of reference:

Maÿmon, ton loial cousin  
Qui a ton besoing t'est voisin  
Et tant t'aime, tu dois amer,  
Et pour son besoing toi armer.<sup>64</sup>

The *allegorie* that follows reminds readers that God became their cousin when He became man: 'Maymon, le loyal cousin, pouons entendre Dieu de paradis, qui bien nous a esté loyal cousin de prendre nostre humanité'.<sup>65</sup> There is nothing particularly surprising about this exegesis, or the proposition that God should benefit from the same loyalty that the reader ought to show his own human cousins. However, the second half of the *allegorie* offers a somewhat unexpected extrapolation: 'Si y pouons prendre le second commandement qui dit: 'Tu ne prendras pas le nom de Dieu en vain'.<sup>66</sup> If, as Margarete Zimmerman suggests, the quatrains function as some sort of mnemonic device for the rest of the lesson,<sup>67</sup> in cases where the concluding Commandment does not follow logically, it may appear

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<sup>64</sup> *Othea*, 250.

<sup>65</sup> *Othea*, 251.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> Margarete Zimmerman, 'Christine de Pizan: Memory's Architekt', in *Christine de Pizan: A Casebook*, 57-77 (61). For Desmond and Sheingorn, it is the images that have 'mnemonic potential': *MMV*, 19.

less likely that the reader would have easily recollected it. However, the lack of connection between the mythical content and the Commandment would have been thought-provoking for the reader, making it more, rather than less, memorable – a point to which I return shortly.

A further disengagement with the *allegorie* can be seen in the miniatures, which only depict the literal level of the legendary scenes referred to in the *texte* and *glose*. Continuing with the example of *histoire XXXVI*, the image in this case depicts a battle scene: in the foreground, whilst Memnon avenges Hector's death by wounding Achilles, he is prevented from killing the Greek warrior as men appear to the latter's aid in the background (fr. 606, f. 18r: **Pl. 2.3**). The situation described in the *glose* and illumination represents the sort of situation in which the reader or their cousin might find themselves, but no attempt is made to include the Commandment of the *allegorie* in the iconographic programme. The religious meaning is therefore not only unanticipated by the mythological part of the story, but it is also not made visually apparent; the religious context is not referred to in either of the most easily apprehended or memorable sections of the work (the images and the verses). Since the Ten Commandments are not carrying their messages in a conventional way, they therefore seem to be a mere pretext for gathering this material together. But as the lessons to be derived from the material are often unexpected, and sometimes even surprising, could the combination of the Commandments with Trojan material serve another purpose?

To answer this question, I turn to *histoire XXXIX*, where the Decalogue is even more overtly problematised than in the example just seen. Its *texte* reads:

Croy pour la santé de ton corps  
D'Esculappion les rappors,  
Et non pas de l'enchanterresse

Circés, qui trop est tromparresse. <sup>68</sup>

Somewhat unexpectedly, this advice to follow doctors and physicians and not to trust in enchantments and sorcerous deeds is extrapolated into the fifth Commandment, 'tu n'occiras point'.<sup>69</sup> This extrapolation is particularly surprising, as surely a more fitting spot for this Commandment would have been *histoire* XLI, which strongly advises the reader against following the example of tyrannical King Busiris who enjoyed slaying men for sport; instead, the equally surprising Commandment extrapolated from this latter story is the seventh: 'tu ne feras point larrecin'.<sup>70</sup> But it is the *allegorie* that particularly demonstrates the problems of the command not to kill for the reader. Here, it is explained that princes and ministers of justice may occasionally in fact *need* to put criminals to death, in order to protect the public good:

et n'est pas si deffendue aux princes, aux juges et aux menistres de justice mettre a mort les malfaiteurs, mais tant seulement a ceulx qui n'en ont point d'auctorité, mais que en cas de neccessité, la ou un homme n'en pourroit autrement eschapper, ou quel cas les drois seuffrent bien tuer autruy, en son corps deffendant, autrement non.<sup>71</sup>

Remembering that *EO* is a letter addressed to prince Hector of Troy, who is closely identified with another prince, Louis d'Orléans, that princes are explicitly exempt from this rule would certainly not escape the reader. Hindman has suggested that 'as an explication of the fifth commandment, this line of reasoning seems odd, since it concentrates on the punishment of evil-doers rather than on evil deeds

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<sup>68</sup> *Othea*, 255.

<sup>69</sup> *Othea*, 256. On the figure of Circe, see Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, *Reading Myth: Classical Mythology and its Interpretations in Medieval French Literature* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 176-181; Judith Yarnall, *Transformations of Circe: The History of an Enchantress* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994).

<sup>70</sup> *Othea*, 258. For a discussion of the images accompanying the Busiris story in Christine's manuscripts and in her source, the *Histoire ancienne*, see *MMV*, 176-178.

<sup>71</sup> *Othea*, 256.

themselves'.<sup>72</sup> She also sees the contrasting of the figures of Circe and Aesculapius as unusual (both are treated separately in *OM*), but considers contemporary factors to do with the treatment of Charles VI's madness – factors with which *EO*'s initial addressees would have been particularly concerned – as motivating this unusual presentation: 'it seems likely that these two individuals were discussed together because the practice of medicine versus the use of sorcery had been a serious and persistent issue with regard to Charles VI's health'.<sup>73</sup> But regardless of the possible interpretations of this image, the relevance of the Commandment for the reader remains an issue.

A final example from the Ten Commandments section shows the matter of reading and of interpreting correctly to be pivotal. *Histoire XXXVIII* concerns itself with the tragedy of Piramus and Thisbe, with which the fourth Commandment, 'honneures pere et mere',<sup>74</sup> is associated. In this instance, without outwardly contradicting one another, the *glose* and *allegorie* each attribute the cause of the lovers' deaths to a different element. In the *glose*, Thisbe's dropped wimple and Piramus's misinterpretation of this sign is seen as leading to the young couple's tragic death: 'Et pour ce que par petite occasion [the wimple] avint si grant male aventure, dit au bon chevalier que a petite enseigne ne doit donner grant foy'.<sup>75</sup> Conversely, the *allegorie* blames Piramus for having gone against his parents' wishes in the pursuit of his passion: 'De ce que il dit, que il ne cuide estre certain, pouons noter l'ignorance ou nous sommes soubz la correccion de pere et de

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<sup>72</sup> *P&P*, 117.

<sup>73</sup> As Charles VI's illness worsened, accusations of poisoning abounded, and Louis d'Orléans was accused of practising witchcraft on the king: *P&P*, 117-118. For Barbier, the censure of magic in this *histoire* is not absolute: 'Dessein avoué'. The outright censure of magic could also have been seen as condemning Thomas de Pizan's astrological practices, something Christine was unlikely to do. On the contemporary link between astrology and magic, see Adams, *Fight*, 25-26; on the censure of magic in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, see *op. cit.* 38.

<sup>74</sup> *Othea*, 255.

<sup>75</sup> *Othea*, 254.

mere'.<sup>76</sup> Now these two factors might go hand in hand: perhaps Piramus was too young to interpret signs such as the fallen wimple on his own, and his foolhardy youthfulness thereby caused his downfall. However, by depicting a lion devouring Thisbe's wimple (fr. 606, f. 18v: **Pl. 2.8**), the illumination represents the factor blamed in the *glose*, suggesting that *this* was the cause of the tragic unfolding, and not the young couple's having ignored their parents' wishes. In a similar vein, *histoire* XLII tells the story of Leander and Hero, whose tragic love affair is unexpectedly extrapolated to signify 'tu ne parleras point faulx tesmoignage contre ton prochain', another lesson that appears wholly unconnected with the material presented in the *texte* and *glose*.<sup>77</sup>

In fact, if 'ten commandments' do emerge from reading only the *texte*, *glose*, and images together without the *allegorie*, these form an alternative set of exhortations more tailored to a diplomatic prince and lover or to a member of one of the chivalric orders: to someone interested in politics and in government. In other words, the lessons suit the original addressee, Louis d'Orléans, founder of the secular Order of the Porcupine.<sup>78</sup> The Ten alternative Commandments that are implicit in the *gloses* of Christine's text, written with this type of knight in mind, might be formulated as follows:

*Histoire* XXXV: Better to die than be disloyal in battle.  
 XXXVI: Protect your (extended) family at war.  
 XXXVII: Do not threaten your neighbour.  
 XXXVIII: Give little credence to poor evidence.  
 XXXIX: If possible, avoid witchcraft.

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<sup>76</sup> *Othea*, 255.

<sup>77</sup> *Othea*, 260.

<sup>78</sup> On the secular orders, see *P&P*, 43-51. These orders were formed to defend political claims, and differed from earlier forms of knighthood in that they weren't directly concerned with soldiering or war. Louis de Bourbon had formed the Order of the Golden Shield in the previous century, which served as a model for the Order of the Porcupine, and that Hindman points out is visually alluded to in the presence of a golden shield in the miniatures featuring Hector of Troy in Harley 4431 and fr. 606. Philippe le Bon, who commissioned the KBR 9392 copy of *EO*, went on to found the Order of the Golden Fleece in 1430: *MMV*, 85.



- XL: Do not trust an enemy whom you have wronged.  
 XLI: You may occasionally be obliged to kill, but do not do so wantonly or without cause.  
 XLII: Do not value your life above your love.  
 XLIII: Better peace than the foolhardy pursuit of a quarrel.  
 XLIV: Live a happy life.

These 'commandments' take on a much more practical didactic quality – more akin to that we find in others of Christine's texts concerned with kingship and chivalric behaviour, such as *CV*, and *FA*. These commandments therefore offer pragmatic advice on how to act in situations in which the addressee is likely to find themselves.<sup>79</sup>

How to explain the incongruity of the pairing between the story and its Commandment? Is the mismatching between the two glosses deliberate, and if so, what purpose does it serve? I consider this incongruity to contribute to *EO*'s didactic function: these ten stories suggest that the Ten Commandments are to be taken as a whole, and that their messages fit in more place than one. That *EO* aims to instruct whilst offering ten alternative commandments provokes readers to reflect not just on the Commandments themselves in general, but also on their application in particular contexts or situations. Although it is occasionally signalled to readers that they will need to be flexible, it is ultimately left up to them to interpret the precepts as more or less absolute. Without directing readers *not* to follow the Ten Commandments, these *histoires* advise on some of the less straightforward situations they will face, including the inevitability of conflict, and the need to find the cause of an unfortunate outcome. Rather than offering the unrealistic advice to avoid war at all costs (unrealistic particularly in the midst of the Hundred Year War), *EO* teaches the future ruler how to conduct themselves in

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<sup>79</sup> Jean d'Arras' *Roman de Mélusine* is another example of a literary text offering this kind of practical didactic advice.

an honourable and noble way during their campaigns; rather than looking no further than a 'petite enseigne', *EO* invites the reader to consider provocations that stand beyond the illumination frame. The Decalogue offers advice for the world at large; Christine supplements this with advice for a ruler.

As the visual programme that accompanies these texts was extended in Christine's lifetime, the religious content, already somewhat of a convenience for the grouping together of the Commandment *histoires*, was increasingly rendered less prominent. The marginalisation of *allegories* continues to occur in copies and editions of *EO* prepared after Christine's lifetime, nowhere more so than in a reworking of the text that took place in the hands of Jean Miélot. It is this version of the text that I discuss next.

## *ii. A Scribal Recasting: Jean Miélot's Epître Othea*

Miélot's reworkings of *EO* are particularly interesting, as he not only somewhat altered its presentation and adapted its iconographic programme, but he also took it upon himself to expand upon and explain the mythological background of the *textes* in the *gloses*. Two copies of Miélot's reworking survive from the second half of the fifteenth century; here, I focus on one: Aylesbury, Waddesdon Manor, The Rothschild Collection (The National Trust), MS 8, which dates to around 1455 and was first owned by – although not necessarily commissioned by – Louis de Luxembourg.<sup>80</sup> Before examining his treatment of the Ten Commandments, I set out the main changes brought about by Miélot.

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<sup>80</sup> The second copy, dating to 1460, is KBR 9392. This manuscript's miniatures are reproduced in J. van den Gheyn (ed.), *Christine de Pisan: Epître d'Othéa, déesse de la prudence, à Hector, chef des Troyens; Reproduction des 100 miniatures du manuscrit 9392 de Jean Miélot* (Brussels: Vromant & Co, 1913). Although these two manuscripts are not absolutely identical in their presentation or visual programmes, both contain the same version of Miélot's reworked text. In 1985, Winter

In this copy, the layout has been altered so that one complete *histoire* features in full on each recto or verso.<sup>81</sup> Miélot seems particularly concerned with space: each complete *histoire* is expanded or contracted just enough for the written space on each page to be filled with text (f. 24v, showing the seventh Commandment, is typical of this layout: **Pl. 2.9**). What is intriguing about this new format is that Miélot has altered the presentation of the text so that, as Rosalind Brown-Grant points out, a hierarchy between the different elements of the story now seems to be firmly in place.<sup>82</sup> In this new layout, the *texte* is written in a large script, is centred on the page beneath the image, and introduced by an even larger illuminated initial. The *texte* and image are in line with one another, suggesting that they are to be read together, and the *glose* appears in a smaller script directly beneath the *texte*. A hierarchy has thereby been created between these different elements of the *histoire*, in which the *glose* is secondary to the *texte* and image. But the status of the *allegorie* is even more diminished: located in the narrow right hand column, almost in the margin, the column allocated to it is so thin that there is not enough space for the rubric 'Allegorie' to be written horizontally. It almost always has had to be written vertically to fit in the column space.<sup>83</sup> In certain cases, either where Miélot's expansion has taken up too much space on the page, or

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suggested that the Waddesdon manuscript was later than the Brussels copy, but scholars now agree the reverse to be the case: *Philippe le Hardi*, 140.

<sup>81</sup> The Aylesbury manuscript is not the first witness of this new layout, also found in the one hundred-illumination copy at Newnham College, which Mombello dates to the 1430s (**Pl. 2.5**). In KBR 9392, each story now begins on a recto, and ends at the bottom of the following verso – meaning that each story now takes up twice the amount of space allocated to it in his earlier manuscript. Such a change might have been brought on because the layout of the Aylesbury copy was found to be too cramped, or be down to the tastes of Philippe le Bon who commissioned it. Philippe was known for his taste in sumptuous manuscripts, and for crafting his identity around the Trojan legends: see 'Constructing Masculinities' in *MMV*, especially 85-97.

<sup>82</sup> 'Illumination as Reception. Jean Miélot's Reworking of the Epistre Othea', in *City of Scholars*, 260-271.

<sup>83</sup> **Pl. 2.10** is an exception. This is not the case in KBR 9392, where each *histoire* takes up a complete recto and verso, and the *glose* and *allegorie* follow on from one another in a single-column format.

where the original *glose* was longer than usual, the *allegorie* has been marginalised even further by being written in a smaller font. An example of this is seen in the layout of the Piramus and Thisbe story, the fourth of the Ten Commandment stories (f. 23r: **Pl. 2.10**). It is possible that this layout and formatting were chosen to emphasise the similarities between *EO*'s structure and that of bible commentaries. However, if this were the case, it would seem peculiar for the more secular *glose* to be so much more prominent than the religious *allegorie*, particularly as the earliest format used by Christine (that seen in fr. 848, see above, 113) also, and more unambiguously, imitates the exegetical model without creating a hierarchy between different elements of each *histoire*, as is contrived here.

But whilst the *allegorie* is rendered less prominent, the opposite is true of the *glose*, which not only retains its central position, but is also expanded by Miélot – sometimes considerably. Miélot extends and clarifies the mythology referred to in Christine's text by explaining the legendary context further, or adding details about the Trojan myths that the reader would not yet have encountered (if *EO* were read sequentially, i.e., from the first to the hundredth story). Miélot is keen to make his own additions visible to his reader, as each of his expansions is introduced by the eye-catching rubric 'de ce meismes' and a small champ initial (for example, f. 24v: **Pl. 2.9**).<sup>84</sup> The vocabulary used in Miélot's adaptation of the *gloses* is particularly concerned with clarifying their meaning: the phrases 'ce qui signifie', 'c'est a dire', and the variation 'vault autant a dire' punctuate his additions almost to the point of exaggeration, and are not just used to expound the Trojan

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<sup>84</sup> **Pl. 2.10** provides a single exception. This being the longest *glose* in Christine's text, there was no space for Miélot to expand the story without the *histoire* taking up more than a single page.

myth, but also explain and translate the Latin citations that often conclude the *allegories*.

A final, notable change in Miélot's reworking is that the incipit to the Ten Commandments, that was made more prominent by certain scribes, disappears completely in his version. Instead of offering any kind of preamble to signal the beginning of the Ten Commandment section, *allegorie XXXV* simply begins 'Bellorophon, qui tant fu plain de loyauté'.<sup>85</sup> Indeed, Miélot's chosen format, in which each story has a full page to itself, suggests a very different readerly approach to this text: unlike the contemplative reading encouraged by the original layout, or the sequential reading invited by fr. 606, in which the reader is led to read each section one after another, this layout encourages a mythological reading: one that focuses on the narrative content of the Trojan stories. The already somewhat unexpected links between each of the Ten Commandments and the *texte* are thereby to an extent rendered less problematic: by removing the textual signpost that marks the beginning of this section, and by representing the religious material as being less important, the integrity of the 'Ten Commandment stories' as a group is lessened. By altering the paratextual apparatus, Miélot can be understood as addressing the problem of the Commandments offered in each *allegorie* not quite mapping onto the mythological material. Whilst lessening any apparent link between the *allegorie* and the other elements of the *histoire*, he diverts the reader's attention away from the religious content, and onto his own

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<sup>85</sup> Transcriptions of Miélot's text are my own, and are all taken from the Aylesbury manuscript, here, f. 21v.

expansions instead.<sup>86</sup> Whilst a link to the Ten Commandments of the Law remains possible, it is clearly marginal in the Aylesbury manuscript.

### *Conclusion*

By tracing the absence or presence of the incipit to stories XXXV-XLIV of *EO* into early printed editions, two traditions can be distinguished: one that continued to reproduce the incipit (such as Robert Wyer's English translation, which possibly took the St John's College manuscript as its base edition),<sup>87</sup> and one in which it no longer featured (such as in Pigouchet's edition). From both its original inclusion at the hands of the author, and the way in which the St John's College manuscript renders it so prominent, the Ten Commandments section was evidently deemed by some to be of interest to readers and worthy of attracting their attention.

However, it can be a bit of a guessing game to work out which of the Commandments will be unveiled as a religious interpretation of the Trojan material, and the revelation can sometimes come as a surprise. But perhaps this was the intended effect: maybe these ten *histoires* are deliberately presented in a manner that will prompt readers to reflect more widely on the ethical and political matters alluded to. Readers are thereby encouraged to meditate on these ten tales – and the Ten Commandments – as a whole, rather than asked to consider each injunction in isolation. Certain of the illuminations can crystallise interpretative problems faced by the reader, and, in such cases, they serve as visual aids to the conundrum presented in the associated *glose* and *allegorie*. For example, as we

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<sup>86</sup> Miélot's expansions were perhaps made at the request of his patron, who wished the Trojan background to be explained more fully.

<sup>87</sup> *The C Hystoryes of Troye* (London: Robert Wyer, c. 1549). On this edition, see Anne Elizabeth Banks Coldiron, 'The Mireur and Maistresse of Intelligence: Christine de Pizan's Authority in Early English Print', in *English Printing, Verse Translation, and the Battle of the Sexes, 1476-1557* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 21-68.

look on the bloodied figures of Piramus and Thisbe, the question of how they got there is not straightforward: was it because of Thisbe's wimple? Or did they disobey the fourth Commandment? The question of how to interpret is central to *EO*, and, in this *histoire*, the reader is redirected towards precisely this question, both in the textual material, and in the image.

The final story of the Ten Commandments sequence displays a certain awareness of the awkwardness of some of these allegorical extrapolations. *Histoire XLIV* exhorts the reader not to be like Aurora, who tearfully mourns her son every morning, by not crying over worldly goods. The *allegorie* understands this as the tenth Commandment, which Christine phrases as 'tu ne couvoiteras pas la maison de ton prochain, ne son beuf, ne son asne, ne chose qu'il ait'.<sup>88</sup> However, the phrasing used in this *allegorie* gestures towards the previous nine Commandment stories: not only is a link made with the seventh Commandment, 'tu ne feras point larrecin',<sup>89</sup> but readers are also explicitly reminded that this latter Commandment has already been covered earlier in the text: 'Par quoy [...] est deffendue le voullenté de faire larrecin ou rapine; dont le fait est deffendu devant par le .vij. e commandement'.<sup>90</sup> By referring backwards in the text ('devant'), this statement has the effect of closing the Decalogue section. At this point, any further injunctions will inevitably incur repetition, and it becomes clear that a single Commandment fits in more than one place.

Although the extrapolations to be made from *texte* to Commandment are far from straightforward, ultimately, it is up to the reader to assess these precepts and to choose how to behave. Whilst some Commandments, such as that not to kill, are

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<sup>88</sup> *Othea*, 262.

<sup>89</sup> *Othea*, 258.

<sup>90</sup> *Othea*, 262.

shown to be problematic for a king or ruler, others, such as the injunction not to steal, to which Christine adds the order not to commit rape,<sup>91</sup> are shown to be universal. As the layout of *EO* changed, so too did the ways in which it could be read. In the earliest surviving copy, the kind of contemplative reading that the layout of the manuscript invites (in which three commandment *histoires* and their glosses are laid out on each folio, or six complete *histoires* on a double-page spread) would have encouraged and enabled readers to read these ten tales together. Each of the Ten Commandments could then more easily have been read as the conclusion to the other *histoires* on the page, and the reader is invited to contemplate on these moralisations as a whole. The link between the individual components in a given *histoire* was therefore less significant than it appeared to become in later copies. When considered from this point of view, the Ten Commandments in *EO* are treated in the same manner as in *EM*, which is cited in the epigraph to this Section. In both cases, the Ten Commandments may be read together and summarised as simply 'Love God'.<sup>92</sup> Liliane Dulac likewise suggests that the exact link between the *texte* and the Commandment isn't important, as the overall message remains the same.<sup>93</sup> To this, I would add that the fact that several of the Commandments may be understood as the 'moral' to more than one of the myths only emphasises their overall importance. However, this is not to be mistaken for an assertion of their absolute authority: not only are their morals occasionally brought into question, but Christine's alternative set of

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<sup>91</sup> On the theme of rape in *EO*, see *MMV*, 148-155.

<sup>92</sup> Matthew 24.34-40 states that the commandment to Love God is the 'greatest and the first', and continues that 'the whole law and the prophets depend on' this and the second commandment, 'love thy neighbour'. Christine's representation of the Commandments would not therefore have been seen as unusual.

<sup>93</sup> 'Travail allégorique et ruptures du sens chez Christine de Pizan: *L'Epistre Othea*', in *Continuités et ruptures dans l'histoire et la littérature, colloque franco-polonais (Montpellier, 9-14 février 1987)*, eds. Halina Suwała, Dominique Triaire, and Michèle Weil-Bergougoux (Paris and Geneva: Champion-Slatkine, 1988), 24-32 (29).



commandments (that have been seen as more suited to the implied reader as lover-warrior-ruler) are also given greater prominence. As the *EO* layout was adapted to include further images, this expanded iconographic programme came at the cost of the original, contemplative reading. It now remains for the reasons behind this expansion to be considered.

### III. The Evolution of a Masterpiece: The *Epistre Othea* Illuminations

Toute œuvre, tout roman raconte [...] l'histoire de sa  
propre création, sa propre histoire<sup>94</sup>

This Chapter has so far examined several examples that demonstrate that the function of images in *EO* is more than purely to decorate the manuscript. Whilst the illuminations are not alone in problematising the 'lessons' contained in the text, these examples have shown that images can underscore and draw attention towards interpretative problems that are hinted at in the text. When first opening one of the fully illuminated *EO* manuscripts, the reader's eye is drawn towards the image before going on to read the written sections. The potential for images to convey didactic meaning and to problematise the content of the text is therefore by no means insignificant, since before the text has even been read, the illuminations have potentially already set up the mythological subject, and possibly also the moral theme, that will form the theme of the *histoire*. Thus, when considering the manner in which readers would have apprehended the fully-illuminated format of *EO*, the images are just as important as the *textes*, *allegories*, and *gloses*.

However, it is important to remember that only two fully illustrated copies were produced during Christine's lifetime. Many scholars have tended to overlook

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<sup>94</sup> Tzvetan Todorov, *Littérature et signification* (Paris: Larousse, 1967), 49.

this significant fact, discussing the fully-illuminated copies in terms that imply the text was always decorated in such a manner. Bouchet, for example, describes each *histoire* as having four levels, the first of which is the miniature '[qui] offre une introduction iconographique à un "texte" en vers'.<sup>95</sup> Whilst Bouchet's reading can be applied to fr. 606 and Harley 4431, it overlooks the comparative paucity of illuminations in the four earlier author manuscripts (see **Fig. 4**). Likewise, Cerquiglini-Toulet discusses the miniatures as though they feature in the same manner in all of Christine's copies of *EO*: 'Chaque séquence (*histoire*) est accompagnée dans les manuscrits réalisés sous la surveillance de Christine d'une *ymage*',<sup>96</sup> apparently disregarding the four author-copies that do not feature such iconography.<sup>97</sup> Finally, when commenting on the similarity of fr. 606 and Harley 4431, Desmond and Sheingorn state that 'the early illustrated manuscripts of the *Othea* all show similar visual programs', overlooking the fact that the earliest visual program is very different from that of the two manuscripts on which these authors focus.<sup>98</sup> Too much attention has perhaps been paid to the two manuscripts containing the full iconographic programme, leading scholars to make these mistaken remarks. Such privileging is all the more surprising given that less densely-illustrated surviving author-copies outnumber fully illuminated versions by two to one. Diverting attention away from the earlier manuscripts has also prevented scholars from asking an important question: *why* were more images gradually incorporated into *EO* manuscripts? In the present Section, I seek to

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<sup>95</sup> *Discours*, 129.

<sup>96</sup> 'Histoire', 119.

<sup>97</sup> I do not include fr. 1187 in this number, since its status as an author-manuscript is unlikely (see Introduction, 3, n. 8).

<sup>98</sup> *MMV*, 14.

answer this very question, and to outline some of the material, practical, and intellectual reasons behind the changes to *EO*'s iconographic programme.

### *i. Material Considerations*

The most simple explanation for the gradual inclusion of extra illuminations would be that by the time fr. 606 was put together (in approximately 1406-1408), Christine simply had greater funds available with which to pay for additional decoration. Christine's manuscript output increased steadily in the years leading up to the preparation of fr. 606 (see **Fig. 3**), suggesting that she was becoming more established and better known as a writer. As evidence of this, Christine's increasing tendency to identify herself in the signatures and envois of her works has long been interpreted as a sign of her increasing self-confidence as an author.<sup>99</sup> However, although we do know that Christine's financial position was much more stable by around 1405, once she had gained the patronage of the dukes of Burgundy,<sup>100</sup> we still have very little understanding of the effect of patronage on Christine's literary output. Who exactly had control over the type of works that Christine would produce? And who dictated the shape they would take and the number of illuminations each would include? The preferences of both patron and author are likely to have been influential, as are those of the artisans involved, whose skills and availability would also have had an impact.

A clearer picture might be gained from examining the patron's influence on the content of the literary text. In one instance, it is clear that a patron provided

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<sup>99</sup> See Laidlaw, 'Publisher'; Jane H. M. Taylor, 'Christine de Pizan and the Poetics of the *Envoi*', in *Contexts and Continuities*, vol. 3, 843-854.

<sup>100</sup> Probably brought about by Christine's presentation of *AC* to Jean Sans Peur in c. 1405-1406: Willard, *Life*, 170. It is interesting to note that, following this event, Christine's manuscript output appears to have decreased, possibly an indication that there was a lesser need for her to produce books to make a living at this time (see **Fig. 3**).

Christine with the theme or subject matter to be treated. For example, at the start of *CV*, Christine describes Philippe le Hardi seeking out her services to compose ‘un traittié, touchant *certainne matiere*’, whose subject (the life and good deeds of King Charles V) he later makes explicit when he meets with her face to face.<sup>101</sup> Although this could be understood as meaning Christine’s patrons had a strong influence over her compositions, as it is fairly unusual for Christine to describe her patron’s instructions to her in this manner, it is more likely that Christine describes the encounter precisely because it was unusual. Far more of her longer works open with a description of inspiration being drawn from experiences she (or her textual double) claims to have had, in particular from books she has read (*CD*) or dreams and life events (*CLE*). Several of her texts appear as gifts bestowed upon a patron, which could have been given in exchange for their protection or other gifts (*FA*).<sup>102</sup> It should therefore not be extrapolated from the description in *CV* that Christine’s patrons always dictated the subject of her works in this manner.<sup>103</sup>

These examples suggest that the inspiration behind each of Christine’s works was individual to the creation of that particular text, and although they could be dictated by the patron’s wishes (who, in that case, would be a patron in the sense that they have commissioned a work from an author), they could equally be solely the author’s creation. The patron’s influence over the iconographic programme of the manuscripts they funded was therefore also likely to have

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<sup>101</sup> *Charles V*, ed. Solente, vol. 1, 7 (emphasis added).

<sup>102</sup> Copies of *FA* were dedicated to various different patrons. Although Willard suggests that Jean Sans Peur was the most likely commissioner of the text (‘Introduction’, *Deeds*, 5) (a point on which the authors of *ACP* agree: *ACP*, 688), Christine makes it clear in her introduction that she realises the boldness of her undertaking in choosing to write on this subject. It may therefore be that Christine prepared several copies to be granted to her various patrons and protectors. Willard also believes Christine may have received gifts from Isabeau de Bavière following her presentation of her *ERR* to the queen: *Life*, 164.

<sup>103</sup> McGrady likewise sees the author as the guiding force behind literary production: ‘Patron’, 196, 203-204.

varied – whether their financial support was direct (i.e. a patron commissioning an author to write on a particular subject) or indirect (i.e. a patron is invited to reward the creative endeavours of an artist, without necessarily having requested any work from them).<sup>104</sup> Author-patron relationships would have taken on various shapes in the Middle Ages, representing ‘a large spectrum of exchanges said to have fostered the literary enterprise’;<sup>105</sup> these relationships do not all fit a single model. The ‘individual cultural context’ of each manuscript,<sup>106</sup> and the specificity of each individual author-patron relationship will have affected the shape of the final product.<sup>107</sup> Unfortunately, details of these relationships are often lost to us – as is usually the case with Christine.<sup>108</sup> With the exception of a few details of gifts she received in exchange for books that appear to have been freely given by the author to a protector,<sup>109</sup> rather than ordered by a patron, we know very little about Christine’s relationships with her benefactors, and thus about the extent to which they might have dictated the shape her works were to take. Looking ahead into the

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<sup>104</sup> The shields that were sometimes left empty, to be filled with a patron’s coat of arms once one had been found, testify to the latter practice: Reynolds, ‘Duke of Bedford’, 467.

<sup>105</sup> Deborah McGrady, ‘Introduction: Rethinking the Boundaries of Patronage’, *Digital Philology*, 2.2 (Fall 2013), 145-154 (145).

<sup>106</sup> Salter and Pearsall, ‘Pictorial Illustration’, 103.

<sup>107</sup> On the variety of medieval relationships of patronage, see Martin Warnke, *The Court Artist: On the Ancestry of the Modern Artist*, trans. David McLintock (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), especially 1-26.

<sup>108</sup> Philippe le Bon treated artists who worked for him variously: whilst he took ‘unusual care [...] to ensure that payments [to Jan van Eyck] actually materialised’, Colard le Voleur and Hue de Boulogne had to wait great lengths of time to receive their dues: Catherine Reynolds, ‘The King of Painters’, in *Investigating Jan van Eyck*, eds. Susan Foister, Sue James, and Delphine Cool (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), 1-16 (3). In another article, Reynolds describes the terms of Jacquet le Caron’s employment by his patron, who paid him an annual salary, and provided him with bed, board and some clothing for a period of three years: ‘English Patrons and French Artists in Fifteenth-Century Normandy’, in *England and Normandy in the Middle Ages*, eds. David Bates and Anne Curry (London: The Hambledon Press, 1994), 299-313 (311). On the regular employment of painters and other artisans, also see R. Kent Lancaster, ‘The Human Factors in the Art Patronage of King Henry III’, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 35 (1972), 81-107, especially 92-104.

<sup>109</sup> For a discussion of some of the gifts Christine received in exchange for her manuscripts, see Chapter 1, 87-88. McGrady points out that, according to the dates on which some of these gifts were made, Christine was working for the Burgundian court, and not for the Queen, when Harley 4431 was produced – a fact that further obscures our understanding of Christine’s patronage: ‘Patron’, 198.

later fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, Cynthia J. Brown describes ‘an apparent loosening of the binding ties between author and patron that had characterized [...] manuscript culture’, allowing for ‘a more interactive relationship between author and text’ to develop.<sup>110</sup> Although the exact shape that Christine’s various relationships with her patrons would have taken cannot be known, it can be surmised that these relationships would have varied according to the text, to the patron, and even according to the individual manuscript involved.<sup>111</sup> Whilst some appear to have relied heavily on the patron’s direction, others, including *EO*, were more likely conceived independently from a patron, in the manner described by Brown.<sup>112</sup>

Christine has been described from an art historical point of view as ‘l’un des premiers auteurs à avoir recherché et patronné les praticiens du nouvel art’,<sup>113</sup> a description that places her in a very active position as an author who went out and sought new talent, rather than one who simply made use of the artists available to her through her patrons’ preferred workshops, for example.<sup>114</sup> Based on the increase in illuminated manuscript production in Paris in the early fifteenth century, Christine’s own writings about miniaturists, and the evidence provided by her iconographic sources, Campbell and Marie-Josèphe Pinet also assume that

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<sup>110</sup> *Poets, Patrons and Printers: Crisis of Authority in Late Medieval France* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1995), 227.

<sup>111</sup> Godfried Croenen proposes a similar view, stating that late-medieval ‘patrons were often able to influence various aspects of writings, such as the genre, the subject matter or the story line, although it would be injudicious to overstate the case and claim that they controlled all aspects of the works they commissioned or that were written for them’: ‘Patrons, Authors and Workshops: Books and Book Production in Paris around 1400’, in *Patrons, Authors and Workshops*, 1-19 (10).

<sup>112</sup> The articles in *Digital Philology*, 2.2 (Fall 2013) demonstrate that late-medieval writers and artisans were more engaged in the creative enterprise than the patron. A different view is put forward by Scott, for whom unusual choices in iconography are down to the patron: *Caxton Master*, 70; see also Jonathan J. G. Alexander, *Medieval Illuminators and their Methods of Work* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992). Croenen likewise sees the patron as having a direct role in the selection of the scribes and illuminators who would have worked for them, ‘Patrons’, 4.

<sup>113</sup> Winter, *Philippe le Hardi*, 100.

<sup>114</sup> Nevertheless, Christine’s choice of artisan is unlikely to have been limitless.

Christine took on a very active role in terms of designing the iconography of her manuscripts, suggesting that she planned the content of the illuminations herself, and that she supervised the miniaturists' work.<sup>115</sup> Further evidence that Christine sought out new artists is to be found in the names that have been ascribed to the various artists and/or workshops, many of whom have not been found to have worked on manuscripts other than those of Christine's works after which they are named.<sup>116</sup>

A further material concern for author and patron alike would have been the commercial worth or saleability of a manuscript – put crudely, the sheer value that a book would be seen to bring to a library or represent as a gift. However, given that texts that are known to have been commissioned by patrons number among Christine's output of unillustrated manuscripts, in some cases at least, the value of Christine's text was not seen to lie in its design or illuminations.

Lacunae in our understanding of the precise transactions that took place between Christine and her benefactors make it difficult to fully assess the role that financial support could have played in bringing about changes to the iconographic programme of *EO*. However, what is clear is that Christine was in a much better financial position after around 1406, which likely played a part in the change in the illumination of *EO* manuscripts. This may also go some way towards explaining why the Harley 4431 miniatures are of better quality, and why its overall programme was more carefully prepared than that of fr. 606. Perhaps previous

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<sup>115</sup> Campbell, *Sources*, 19; Pinet, *Christine de Pizan, 1364-1430: Étude biographique et littéraire* (Paris: Champion, 1927), 62. See also *P&P*, 62-63, 78. This would account for the innovation witnessed in several illuminations that have no known anterior models and appear to be original to Christine's texts.

<sup>116</sup> See Chapter 1, 39, n. 51. It has not, to my knowledge, been suggested that Christine herself might have been one of these nameless artists. This is an unlikely hypothesis, as she makes no boast about her drawing skills– unlike her writerly endeavours. However, it is not impossible that a member of her household had some artistic training.

patrons had appreciated *EO*, and provided Christine with the funding necessary to produce more luxurious copies: the patron could then retain the first copy for their own personal use, whilst being able to lend the second to other interested parties. Alternatively, Christine could have wished to thank her benefactors for their protection by presenting them with a further copy of a text she knew they had enjoyed, now enriched with further illuminations, thanks to their support.<sup>117</sup>

That this was taking place in the first decade of the fifteenth century in Paris is also significant: at this time, despite the political instabilities and expensive military campaigns, the city's increasing population of artists and artisans were being kept particularly busy, with a widening circle of patrons (who were no longer exclusively to be drawn from the royal circle) commissioning works and providing labour for them.<sup>118</sup> The improvement in Christine's financial circumstances, and the availability of labour, would have been conducive to further manuscripts being produced. Although the patron would only have been one possible source of direction in terms of the precise content or number of images to be included, their financial support and patronage would have had an indirect influence on the way in which later copies of *EO* could be decorated and produced. In Christine's case, the author's known involvement in the preparation of her manuscripts makes her a more likely source of influence in that respect.<sup>119</sup> Undoubtedly, the author's improved financial situation would have had an impact on the practicalities surrounding the preparation of any given manuscript.

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<sup>117</sup> This could also explain why two copies were presented to Isabeau de Bavière. For an alternate theory as regards the two copies presented to Louis d'Orléans, see below, 145.

<sup>118</sup> Avril, *Paris, 1400*, 201. Pinet summarises this somewhat paradoxical economic situation: 'Malgré le mauvais état général des finances et des fortunes princières, le goût du luxe allait croissant': *Étude biographique*, 61.

<sup>119</sup> No contracts between Christine's illuminators and either the author or patron survive. For examples of such contracts, see Alexander, *Illuminators*, Appendix 1.



## *ii. Practical Concerns*

Three practical considerations may have affected Christine's ability to include images in her manuscripts, the first of which being the availability of artists able to execute an iconographic programme to the desired standard. Given the number of artists with whom Christine collaborated over the course of her career, it seems she was happy to switch artist or workshop when needed, not apparently depending on or showing particular loyalty to any one individually, especially early in her career (in the first five years during which she produced her own manuscripts, she collaborated with six different artists – see **Fig. 1**).<sup>120</sup> Christine's tendency to switch between workshops may simply have been to do with their own availability: individual artists could move and operate from different workshops, or relocate to a different city; they might have been unavailable when Christine needed them, be involved in another project – or even be deceased.

The employment of a particular artist to work on a given manuscript would carry wider implications. At the start of her career, both because of her inexperience and her apparent lack of attachment to a particular workshop, Christine was unlikely to have built up the kind of close working relationship needed to entrust a craftsman with a large volume of work intended for a high-status patron. It would be logical for her to wish to see how an illuminator went about their work, and to build a trusting relationship with them before asking them to undertake the kind of vast programme of illuminations seen in the later *EO* manuscripts.

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<sup>120</sup> It should, however, be borne in mind that the pseudonyms by which the artists are now identified could refer to either an individual artist or to a collectivity of artists working out of a single workshop. The different styles of the various illuminations make this an unlikely possibility, and Christine's example seems rather to highlight the variety of workshops operating in Paris at the time. Too little evidence survives to be certain that a single author employing different workshops was usual practice in the Middle Ages. I am grateful for Gervase Rosser for these observations.

Even once such a relationship had been built up, an individual artist's ability to work on a particular manuscript would have depended on a second practical consideration: the issue of time. Outside what can be conjectured from her manuscripts, little is known about the timeframes to which Christine worked. However, as already observed, *CV*, a text known to have been commanded by Philippe le Hardi, was not illuminated. This is interesting in two respects: firstly, it shows that the Duke does not appear to have valued Christine's work for its illuminations or decorative qualities – otherwise he would have requested that his purchase (or subsequent copies of *CV*) bear more decorative features; furthermore, the reason for this lack of decoration could be seen to suggest a certain urgency to the text's being completed. Several possible factors might have motivated this urgency: the text was composed from 1404 to 1405, during the tense period that opposed Philippe de Bourgogne and his nephew Louis d'Orléans.<sup>121</sup> At this time, tensions between France and England, as well as between the houses of Bourgogne and Orléans, were extremely high, and only exacerbated by periods of King Charles VI's madness in August and September 1405.<sup>122</sup> *CV* is believed to have been intended for the education of the young Dauphin, Louis de Guyenne, who would have been just seven or eight years old at the time. For Hicks and Moreau, the commissioning of the work was purely didactic in motivation:

Le duc de Bourgogne, voyant que ni la reine, ni le frère du roi, ni les conseillers n'étaient à même de faire l'éducation du futur roi, [...] a pu vouloir un nouveau *Miroir du prince*, tout familial. Il

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<sup>121</sup> On this feud, see Tracy Adams, *Christine de Pizan and the Fight for France* (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2014), 95-120, for details of this particular period and for Philippe de Bourgogne's motivations in asking Christine to compose this work at this time.

<sup>122</sup> Bernard Guenée sees a direct link between this episode of the king's madness and the political crisis in 1405: 'Le Voyage de Bourges (1412): Un exemple des conséquences de la folie de Charles VI', *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, 140<sup>e</sup> année, 2 (1996), 785-800 (786).

demande alors à Christine de revivifier l'idéal du roi sage [...], l'ami des livres et du savoir. Charles V le Sage – c'est-à-dire le raisonnable – serait l'antidote à Charles VI le Bien Aimé – c'est-à-dire, en quelque sorte, le Fou.<sup>123</sup>

The Duke may have perceived the need for a text of this kind to be somewhat urgent, particularly in light of the Dauphin's upcoming nuptials to his own granddaughter.<sup>124</sup> The perception of Philippe as a close relative taking an active interest in the education of the Dauphin would also have bolstered his claim to regency, and shown him to have the interests of the future ruler at heart.<sup>125</sup> Christine herself was acutely aware of these political tensions, leading her to see this as a task requiring immediate attention; she may also have wished to impress her patron by completing the work in good time. Finally, that the Duke passed away before the text was completed could have motivated a hasty completion of the work, as not wanting her labours to go to waste, Christine quickly sought other recipients for her text.

Comparison with the unilluminated *CV* forms an interesting counterpoint for the present analysis of *EO*. Unlike *CV*, the latter work does not appear to have been commissioned by a particular patron, or to have been written to educate the future king on the verge of a brewing political crisis.<sup>126</sup> Time, in other words, was less of a concern for Christine when composing this text: she was able to spend time consulting with illuminators, to consider the design and layout of the text and

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<sup>123</sup> 'Introduction', *Charles V*, ed. Hicks and Moreau, 16.

<sup>124</sup> The marriage took place on 31 August 1404. Solente thinks it likely that the duke wished to mould the moral and political thought of his future grandson-in-law, who would one day rule over France: *Charles V*, ed. Solente, vol. 1, XXVIII.

<sup>125</sup> Nevertheless, as Adams shows, Christine actually subtly promotes Philippe's rival Louis as an ideal ruler within this work, by comparing him favourably with Charles V. Burgundian politics, on the other hand, are covertly criticised: *Fight*, 107-112.

<sup>126</sup> There are several possible intended recipients for the work, one of whom could be the Dauphin, Louis de Guyenne. I return to the subject of intended readership of *EO* in Chapter 3.II. Although *EO* was not composed during a period of absolute calm in the royal household, it lacks the sense of urgency of *CV*. However, Charles VI's worsening condition could have motivated Christine to produce the three copies of *EO* made after 1406.

iconography, and to prepare the manuscripts without too much haste, ensuring a finely polished end product.<sup>127</sup>

A final practical consideration to be borne in mind is that of the status of the various *EO* manuscripts, or, put otherwise, the function that they were prepared to serve. Delsaux distinguishes three types of author-manuscripts: *manuscripts de composition* (early drafts and workings), *manuscripts d'édition* (models on which future copies could then be based), and *manuscripts de publication* (copies intended for the public).<sup>128</sup> The intended status of a manuscript would naturally have had an impact on how it was prepared. In the case of fr. 606, fr. 12779, Chantilly 492-493, and Harley 4431, it seems clear that these compilation manuscripts dedicated to noble patrons are *manuscripts de publication*. However, the cases of fr. 604 and fr. 848 are much less clear. Although also a compilation manuscript, the former was never completed and contains no dedication. Its unfinished nature, and the lack of probability that it was prepared under the author's supervision make it difficult to ascertain whether fr. 604 would have been a *manuscrit d'édition* or intended as a *manuscrit de publication*. Indeed, the fact that it does not seem to have been prepared by the author does not preclude its being a *manuscrit de composition*: this could be a copy of Christine's 'livre' that she intended to keep for herself, and from which later copies of works could then be made. Because of its

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<sup>127</sup> A vast body of evidence provided by codices whose miniatures were never complete shows that illuminations were the last part of a manuscript to be completed. The reasons behind this would vary according to the manuscript, but may have involved lack of finance, the unavailability of an artist/workshop, or lack of time. Fr. 604 provides an example of such an unfinished manuscript from Christine's own corpus.

<sup>128</sup> For more detailed descriptions of these categories, see *Manuscripts*, 45-63.

simplicity, and lessened concern with accuracy, the task of copying a text for Christine to keep was easily assignable to a different scribe.<sup>129</sup>

But what is to be made of the evidence presented by fr. 848? As seen, it contains only *EO*, laid out in a format that has not survived in any other copy of the work, four grisaille miniatures, and no dedication. These factors suggest this was not a *manuscrit de publication*, intended for a patron to see. However, it may have been a *manuscrit d'édition*, a prototype: Christine could use this early version of the work to show to possible patrons to give them an idea of how the final product would look, should they wish to commission a copy. Perhaps either she or a patron disliked the layout, and decided to alter it in subsequent copies. Despite the lack of textual dedication, the fact that this manuscript does contain a dedication miniature featuring Louis d'Orléans should not be overlooked. He could be the very patron to whom this copy was presented as a *manuscrit d'édition*, to approve or comment on, as a precursor to the *manuscrit de publication* that was later intended to be presented to him, fr. 606.<sup>130</sup> The status of this copy as a *manuscrit d'édition* explains why Christine was not concerned to use an artist on this project with whom she had an established relationship, or was to work again.<sup>131</sup> As a manuscript designed merely to provide a prototype for a later, more carefully

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<sup>129</sup> On this practice in *manuscripts de composition* that he terms 'de second jet', see Delsaux, *Manuscripts*, 189-199.

<sup>130</sup> A more expensive, illuminated copy was sometimes only prepared once the patron had confirmed that an earlier, more cheaply-produced version was suitable; in such cases, the draft version of a text (or, in Delsaux's terms, the *manuscrit de composition*) would sometimes be read aloud to the patron: Hanno Wijsman, *Luxury Bound* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), 532. This would have lessened any initial expense incurred in preparing an early copy, only for the patron not to approve the project. Louis d'Orléans was the intended recipient of fr. 606, but he died before it was completed. The manuscript passed instead to Jean de Berry: see *ACP*, 241.

<sup>131</sup> MPE, who carried out this manuscript's miniatures, is not known to have illustrated any other manuscript, for Christine or anyone else. Villela-Petit describes his style as being 'd'un très grand raffinement', although 'aucun autre manuscrit ne semble [...] pouvoir lui être attribué': *ACP*, 104. Not all art historians are so complimentary: for Sterling, he is 'un artiste fort archaïsant': *Peinture*, 315.

prepared copy, the author simply did not wish to spend a great deal of time preparing it. These practical considerations go some way towards explaining the evolution of the iconographic programme of *EO*.

### *iii. Intellectual and Cultural Motivations*

In this final part, I briefly explore some of the changes that were taking place in the composition of manuscripts, and the cultural shift in reading practices in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. Some of these developments could have affected the way in which Christine set out her texts.

The political nature of many of *EO*'s illuminations has already been extensively demonstrated in *P&P* and *MMV*. The examples that can be taken from these studies are too numerous to be listed here, but what both find is that, in Hindman's words, 'Christine saw [...] a greater potential in the *Epistre* [*Othea*] than in her other manuscripts to present her political views in miniatures'.<sup>132</sup> Whilst the didactic aims of *EO* are not only political, its illuminations are exceptional within Christine's *œuvre* in that Christine's awareness of their potential to convey didactic meaning is fully exploited within them. But this can be taken a step further, and I would add that the inclusion of further illuminations over time can be seen as testifying to Christine's *increasing* awareness of this potential, and of her desire to fully play on it. As seen, this was also an opportunity for her to use images to problematise some of the lessons in the text, and to prompt the reader to reflect on the issues presented. A desire to find new ways to strengthen the didactic potential of manuscripts, such as by exploiting the possibilities offered by images, might also have been triggered by Christine's desire to intervene in

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<sup>132</sup> *P&P*, 19.

discourse surrounding the worsening political situation in France: after two years of relative peace, from 1405-1407, the murder of Louis d'Orléans at the hands of Jean de Bourgogne on 23 November 1407 was to lead to three years of extreme political tension.<sup>133</sup> This tension could have led Christine to revisit and even to revise her text, to which she more fervently wished to draw the attention of France's political leaders. However, the political context alone does not account for the increased iconography in the later manuscripts, for which, in addition to the material and practical motivations analysed above, changes in reading practices might also account.

Broadly speaking, the latter half of the fourteenth century had already begun to witness the emergence of more private reading in lay circles. By this, I mean that whilst still rarely an entirely silent, solitary activity, reading was no longer exclusively carried out by professionals, involving a trained performer or individual reading to a group.<sup>134</sup> Nevertheless, public reading continued to exist, though in a slightly variant form, limited to reading for just one or a few individuals – for example, a secretary communicating the contents of a letter to its recipient, or a preceptor reading with a pupil. These forms of 'public' reading were themselves more private in nature than their name suggests.<sup>135</sup> Reading in a more private setting therefore slowly became more widespread, particularly after 1400, leading Bouchet to describe the fifteenth century as 'l'âge de la lecture

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<sup>133</sup> Adams, *Fight*, 121-150.

<sup>134</sup> Changes in reading practices at the end of the Middle Ages have previously been understood as a move from public, oral reading, to silent, private reading. However, Bouchet (*Discours*), Joyce Coleman (*Public Reading and the Reading Public* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2006)), and Hélène Haug ('Le Passage de la lecture oralisée à la lecture silencieuse: Un mythe?', *Le Moyen Français*, 65 (2009), 1-22) have shown that this was far from a seamless transition, with different types of reading practices coexisting.

<sup>135</sup> For Haug, the term 'public' reading is misleading as it conjures images of large performances: 'Passage', 3.

personnelle'.<sup>136</sup> This change in reading practices in turn affected the way in which texts were composed: for example, although they would often still choose to use one, the author was no longer reliant upon a scribe or secretary to assist with the writing task.<sup>137</sup> Writers also needed to be mindful of the way in which a text would be read, leading them to alter the manner in which a text was presented on the page: to give just a few examples, texts began to be written in a script that would be more legible to an untrained lay readership;<sup>138</sup> conventions of punctuation that would aid silent reading also began to evolve; finally, additional references, such as glosses, and references in or to other parts of the volume could supplement the text.<sup>139</sup> Whilst certain of these practices, such as glosses, were already commonplace in clerical writings, they became more customary in works intended for a lay readership, notably in vernacular texts.<sup>140</sup>

A further change brought about by gradual shifts in reading practices was the possibility of consultative reading: the reader could go backwards and forwards in the text, cross-referencing as they went along. Put otherwise, codices could be consulted as manuals, a type of reading that relied on indices, chapter

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<sup>136</sup> On these themes, see *Discours*, 23-54 (23).

<sup>137</sup> For the discussion of scribal practices that follow in this paragraph, I am indebted to Paul Saenger, *Space Between Words: The Origins of Silent Reading* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), 257-269, and to Malcolm B. Parkes, *Pause and Effect: An Introduction to the History of Punctuation in the West* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1993), 41-49.

<sup>138</sup> For Parkes, the development of cursive scripts in England in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries attests to the 'steadily growing class of "general" readers': 'The Literacy of the Laity', in *Literature and Western Civilisation*, eds. David Daiches and Anthony Thorlby, 6 vols. (London: Aldus, 1972-1976), vol. 2 (1973), 555-577 (563).

<sup>139</sup> For Parkes, new reading practices were developed as 'the monastic culture gave way to the culture of the schools'. These new practices led to changes in the presentation of scholastic texts that would facilitate reading, such as the addition of tables of contents and running titles: 'The Influence of the Concepts of *Ordinatio* and *Compilatio* on the Development of the Book', in *Medieval Learning and Literature: Essays Presented to Richard William Hunt*, eds. J. J. G. Alexander and Margaret T. Gibson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), 115-141 (115). Saenger describes the same changes taking place in the paratextual apparatus of lay vernacular works in the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries: *Space*, 269.

<sup>140</sup> On the increase in lay readership from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries, see Parkes, 'Literacy'.



headings, and titles featuring within the book.<sup>141</sup> This is the kind of process that *EO* has been seen to invite, both in terms of making connections between different elements of the text, and between illuminations. Such reading would have been difficult if the text was received orally, without the reader being able to look upon the volume. *EO* is therefore very much a product of the time: the kind of private reflection that it encourages was facilitated by the advent of silent reading and private study.

However, by suggesting that the changing format of *EO* testifies to the move from public to more private reading, I do not mean to suggest that it would have been read entirely silently. Indeed, as Andrew Taylor points out, private reading in the Middle Ages would never have been entirely private, nor entirely silent. For a king, at least, 'the chamber rarely offered perfect solitude', and 'there was no clear separation between the public and private realms'.<sup>142</sup> Readings of texts such as *EO* are likely to have been guided by a preceptor, and a single manuscript could be 'displayed, read alone, [or] read aloud in company' at different times or on different occasions.<sup>143</sup> However, its unusual, exegesis-like format wouldn't be suitable for a performative reading in which the reader/listener does not have the text before them; in both its earlier 'contemplative' format and in its later, fully illuminated programme, *EO* required its readers to be able to view the work in order to follow and understand it.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> Andrew Taylor points out that private reading would still involve a range of activities, and not just reading a volume from start to end, for example – the consultation of a manual being just one such activity: 'Reading and Privacy in Late Medieval England', in *The Practice and Representation of Reading in England*, eds. James Raven, Helen Small, and Naomi Tadmor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 41-61.

<sup>142</sup> Taylor, 'Reading and Privacy', 43.

<sup>143</sup> Wijsman, *Luxury Bound*, 562. As Adams suggests, 'the *Othea* was not intended to be read once and abandoned but was meant to be consulted over the years': *Fight*, 75.

<sup>144</sup> Conversely, McGrady sees the change in format from glossed to sequential as facilitating an oral reading: 'Authority', 169.

In his discussion of the reading of *Bibles moralisées*, Lowden describes the format of these works as representing ‘a schema that presents text and image as material for discussion’. Although there are differences between *Bibles moralisées* and *EO* (to name but a couple, *Bibles moralisées* comprise less text than *EO* and do not make reference to non-scriptural material), I have demonstrated that their formats have a lot in common (see above, 105-106). Lowden’s vision of how the reading of text and image would have taken place when reading *Bibles moralisées* can thereby also be applied to *EO*. Despite their differences, the didactic nature of both works and similarities in their presentation in terms of text and image suggest they were probably read in a similar manner, somewhere in-between public and private reading. Lowden’s portrayal of this type of reading therefore merits being quoted here in its entirety:

I have in mind something formal but not formalized: the sensitive and private discussion before the open codex between a king or queen and his or her favourite chaplain or confessor, who stood ready to turn the book’s pages, and looked with the royal viewer sometimes carefully, sometimes not, and intervened with appropriate words as he or she sought for explanations [...]. Speaking sometimes briefly, sometimes at length, as the occasion made appropriate, the religious would expound the page from his biblical and exegetical knowledge, always sympathetic to the specific requirements of his royal audience. I am not sure that we have a term for this kind of use of a book. It is not merely pedagogical, it is not merely devotional, it is not simply instructional, it is not entirely private, but it is certainly not public.<sup>145</sup>

The above description lacks any mention of the function or use of illuminations, yet I would argue that these suggest a public dimension in terms of display and ornamentation, but might also have been used by the precursor to guide reading and discussion in the more private setting Lowden envisages. The *EO* miniatures

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<sup>145</sup> “‘Reading’ Images’, 515-516. In the reading of *EO*, another type of guide, such as a preceptor, could have stood in for the chaplain or confessor.

therefore provide additional evidence for its having been read in a not quite public setting, that was also not entirely private.

However late-medieval reading practices may have played out practically, a move towards a more private form of study also allowed readers to engage with the physical page before them in a different way, as evidenced by the marginalia in manuscripts used for educational or didactic purposes. In Saenger's words, 'visual reading encouraged private readers to use books as instruments of study by noting passages in the margin with brief phrases, symbols, and doodles, enhancing subsequent visual recall'.<sup>146</sup> If, as Saenger suggests, these annotations served to facilitate 'subsequent visual recall' (a phrase meaning that such additions made passages easier to call to mind – to which it might be added that visual detail also enhanced the didactic quality of a text) then surely this is also how illuminations operate. As changes in reading patterns gradually led to shifts in the composition and formatting of texts, Christine is likely to have become aware of the didactic potential of images by encountering visual programmes in her own reading, and thereby to have chosen to extend the iconographic programme of *EO* for this purpose. By this, I do not suggest that earlier copies of *EO* were designed to be read orally and that later ones were intended for more personal or visual reading, but that authors, including Christine, were still only coming to understand how private reading would work, and how their texts could be designed to facilitate or benefit from it. It took some time for authors, bookmakers, and artisans to become aware of these shifts and to adapt the formats they used for visual readers – one such adaptation being the inclusion of images that could serve the didactic aims of the text. Such practices had long been common in devotional literature, and these

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<sup>146</sup> *Space*, 264.

gradually became incorporated into other genres of didactic writing.<sup>147</sup> As evidence of the increase in visual reading, it would be possible to posit a correlation between the expansion of the visual reading public and the number of illustrated manuscripts, notably in early fifteenth century Paris,<sup>148</sup> many of which were popular contemporary didactic texts. As Saenger has found, 'the number of illustrations increased in vernacular aristocratic books as miniatures evolved to play a more direct role in the comprehension of the text, serving a didactic function analogous to that of the diagrams accompanying scholastic literature'.<sup>149</sup>

Changes in who possessed manuscripts at the start of the fifteenth century and for what purpose should also be taken into account. As they came to be owned by a somewhat more varied social class, the widening market generated an appetite for illuminated manuscripts.<sup>150</sup> Elizabeth Taburet-Delahaye sees competition amongst patrons as stimulating this demand, as well as artisans' desire of to create something technically distinct and more refined than the works of previous centuries:

Les rivalités politiques semblent chercher un exutoire dans la commande d'œuvres sans cesse plus somptueuses ou plus nouvelles, [...] stimulant le perfectionnement [spelling corrected] des techniques les plus précieuses mises au point par la génération précédente. Tandis que les artistes qui avaient, sous Charles V, été à l'initiative des principales innovations disparaissent peu à peu, de nouveaux venus savent s'adapter aux

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<sup>147</sup> On the use of images in Machaut's didactic texts, see Deborah McGrady, *Controlling Readers: Guillaume de Machaut and His Late Medieval Audience* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006). McGrady also finds that 'monastic and scholastic models' were reproduced in didactic writings for lay audiences: op. cit., 23.

<sup>148</sup> This expansion in illuminated manuscripts included devotional works, notably Books of Hours. On the use of images (both physical and imaginative) in medieval devotion, see Ringbom, 'Images'.

<sup>149</sup> *Space*, 269.

<sup>150</sup> Although widening, the market in contemporary Paris did not yet extend beyond the nobility. Avril states that by the turn of the fifteenth century, it was no longer restricted to the royal family alone, but to the high aristocracy more generally, and to the high clergy: *Paris, 1400*, 146-147.

exigences des princes et aux courants de la pensée du temps pour illustrer les thèmes traditionnels remis à l'honneur.<sup>151</sup>

It seems obvious to point out that these decorated manuscripts looked good, and would have enhanced the owner's collection. But ownership of a didactic manual alone was not sufficient to impress political rivals: they also had to be visually imposing. It would therefore only be logical for patrons to commission sumptuous manuscripts, and for authors to envisage their works in decorated form.

### *Conclusion*

Whilst changes in reading practices and in fashions at the end of the Middle Ages were undoubtedly a factor in the expansion of *EO*'s iconography, material considerations and practical concerns are also likely to have contributed towards this change. The reasons for the shift from four to just over a hundred miniatures are therefore complex; they show *EO* to be in many ways a product of its time, whilst also highlighting the importance of particular circumstances in the preparation of each individual manuscript. Although a more heavily illustrated book could have held greater appeal to potential benefactors, many of whom were perhaps coming to expect texts to be illuminated, Christine herself likely also became increasingly aware of the possibilities for images to enhance the didactic qualities of her text. Since, for pragmatic reasons, illustrations tend to cluster towards the beginning of a manuscript,<sup>152</sup> as new illuminations were incorporated into *EO*'s visual programme, it was only logical that they too would feature in the earlier part of the work – until eventually it had expanded such that each of the one hundred *histoires* included an image. This factor would explain why, when the

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<sup>151</sup> *Paris, 1400*, 74. In the same volume, Avril refers to the 'profond besoin de renouvellement après une période de relative stagnation' following the death of Charles V (262).

<sup>152</sup> Salter and Pearsall, 'Pictorial Illustration', 104.

iconographic programme was first extended from three to six illuminations, the additional three miniatures followed on from the three pre-existing images.

The historical context within which *EO* was composed is crucial to gain an understanding of the relation between text and image in this unusual work.

Although critics such as Adams have already highlighted the significance of the political situation in terms of shaping the content of the images, an understanding of the changes taking place in reading and writing practices is also necessary to contextualise the circumstances surrounding the composition of the work.

### **Conclusion:**

*EO* is a text that invites response and multiple possible readings; Miélot's reworking offers an example of one such reading, and his mythological interpretation can be seen in his *remaniement* of the text and its paratext. Later medieval literature written with a particular reader in mind could be fashioned so as to more directly aim at the improvement of an individual – by drawing attention towards passages deemed particularly relevant, for example. Such a claim as regards *EO* has already been made by Hindman, who sees this work 'an individual communication from one writer, Christine, to selected recipients'. She shows the particularities in relation to their intended readers to be especially evident in the iconography of fr. 606 and Harley 4431, which 'preserve unique cycles that were appropriate at specific moments for royal readers'.<sup>153</sup> This more individualised

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<sup>153</sup> *P&P*, 141-142. Hindman posits that a second illustrative programme to *EO* might have existed, 'one that was more suited to a general public since it omitted those allusions to persons in the royal circle'. This second iconographic programme might have formed the base manuscript of later copies, including the Newnham College, Cambridge manuscript: *ibid.* Further corroborating evidence on the existence of another iconographical programme has been put forward by Barbier, 'Cycle Perdu'.

form of didactic literature, partly a product of changes in reading practices, invites a more personal response from a reader who can be individually appealed to, whilst still allowing for multiple possible responses. This direct address is not an urgent appeal on behalf of the author to deal with a political crisis, but rather an entreaty to reflect upon matters that might arise, to be mentally 'armed' for moments requiring good moral conduct.

*EO* provides an example of how the role of devotional literature was gradually being taken on by other types of writing. That is not to suggest that devotional literature was any less widely read or circulated at this time – on the contrary, the spread of literacy and availability of books only led to increases in their production – but simply that the scholastic aspect of devotional writings began to be shared by other genres. This can be seen, for example, not only in *EO*'s didactic form, and its emphasis on morality and good conduct, but also in its interest in teaching its recipients how to read attentively – evidenced by the purple rubrics describing the content of the first few images, and in the exegetical format, which invites the reader to actively engage with the content of the work. Finally, the addition of further images over time only added to the material to be 'read', as illuminations can serve to underscore any inconsistencies that are already apparent in the text. Rather than providing readers with a coherent collection of lessons to be gleaned from the text, the images thereby function in a more unexpected way, forcing the reader to think about the connection between the different components of each *histoire*, and between the text and image. *EO*, then, teaches its readers how to read, notably exegetically – an aspect of aristocratic

education more commonly fulfilled by devotional literature.<sup>154</sup> By adding to the material to be read through an augmented iconographic programme, and by inviting the reader to reflect more carefully on the advice and examples provided by text and image, *EO* testifies to and exploits the possibilities afforded by the more personal kind of didactic reading that was beginning to take place in the early fifteenth century.

Now that the way in which *EO* was intended to be read and the historical setting in which it was first composed and received have been analysed, I turn to the question of the audiences of works such as this. The matter of the gender of the audiences of individual works, including *EO*, will be a central question to the next Chapter, but first, the presence and roles ascribed to women within Christine's works in general must be explored.

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<sup>154</sup> 'Les textes de dévotion contiennent le plus de recommandations sur l'art et la manière de lire, engageant le lecteur à méditer efficacement et à intérioriser la leçon spirituelle', Bouchet, *Discours*, 45. Texts whose primary function was not overtly devotional were increasingly taking the place of devotional literature, notably in didactic settings. For the example of Guillaume Diguileville's *Pèlerinage de vie humaine*, see Marco Nievergelt, *Allegorical Quests from Deguileville to Spenser* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2012), 23-44.



## Chapter 3

### (Re)Configuring Gender

Et ainsi ne sont pas les enffans d'un père et d'une  
mère d'une manière; car les uns aiment un mestier et  
une manière de oeuvre et les autres une autre.<sup>1</sup>

Over the course of the last two chapters, I have explored some of the ways in which Christine de Pizan's texts are designed to instruct her readers. In Chapter 1, I demonstrated that through intervisual connections made within her author-manuscripts and with preceding iconographic conventions, Christine's author-portraits were designed to evoke authority and wisdom. Chapter 2 then explored some of the various ways in which readers are invited to consider the visual programme as well as the text of *EO* in order to respond to the moral questions raised in this work. The present Chapter seeks to expand these findings into Christine's wider literary corpus to examine the didactic roles that female figures play in both text and image within her works. In the first Section, I consider ways in which women are presented as teachers or guides, in particular with reference to *MF*; I next discuss Christine's wider *œuvre* through a focus on her use of the figure of Minerva. The second Section goes on to evaluate what these findings suggest about the intended readership of these works: if women were presented in certain roles, for whose benefit was this, and what was Christine seeking to convey to the reader? The second Section enables the concept of the 'intended reader' to be problematised, leading me to consider whether the person whom Christine truly wished to read a given work coincides with the figure who features in the

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<sup>1</sup> Geoffroy de la Tour Landry, *Le Livre du Chevalier de La Tour Landry pour l'enseignement de ses filles*, ed. Anatole de Montaiglon (Paris: P. Jannet, 1854), 164.

textual or iconographic dedication – an apparently straightforward correspondence that, as will be shown, can be misleading. The presentation of three of Christine's texts that were dedicated to patrons of both genders will be closely examined: *CLE*, *CD*, and *EO*.

This discussion begins by looking at the textual presentation of women in one of their most traditional functions, which is in their role as mothers. The reason for this is that many of the female figures encountered in Christine's texts who take on a preceptive role, also operate as mother figures in the narratives. Christine's works therefore strongly draw on and perpetuate the traditional link between motherhood and didacticism, such as that encountered through the iconography of St Anne teaching the Virgin to read (see Chapter 1, 60). The visual programme is instrumental in highlighting these connections and underscoring these notions.

## I. Didacticism and Gender

Nature imparts one freedom to all human beings  
equally – to learn.<sup>2</sup>

Examination of female teachers in Christine's works begins with analysis of how didacticism is bound up with motherhood in *MF*. In this part, I focus in particular on a much-discussed passage in which Christine describes both of her parents in an allegorical mode. I seek to complicate the notion that the author's birthmother is presented in a negative light in this text, as has often been assumed. The discussion of mother figures is then widened to include other works as the way in which miniatures affect their presentation comes to be considered, and

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<sup>2</sup> Laura Cereta, *Collected Letters of a Renaissance Feminist*, ed. and trans. Diana Robin (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 78.

representations of two women whom Christine often connects with female wisdom are analysed: Diana and Minerva.

*i. Motherhood and Fatherhood in the Mutacion de Fortune*

Whilst Cristine is usually seen as showing great admiration for her father, conversely, she tends to be viewed as less positively disposed towards her mother. Andrea Tarnowski, for instance, claims that 'the author favors her patrilineal heritage' and that her 'more ambivalent view of her own, historical mother [...] manifests itself as clearly in *La Mutacion* as does her admiration for her father';<sup>3</sup> similarly, Sheila Delany talks of 'Christine's effacement of her biological mother' whilst she 'mythifies her father'.<sup>4</sup>

These opinions are based on two passages, in *CD* and *MF*, in which Cristine discusses the influence of each of her parents on her. In *CD*, the passage is the following, spoken by Droiture:

Ton pere qui fu grant naturien et philosophe n'oppinoit pas que femmes vaulsissent pis par science, ains de ce que encline te veoit aux letres, si que tu scez, y prenoit grant plaisir. Mais l'opinion femenine de ta mere qui te vouloit occuper en fillasses, selon l'usage commun des femmes, fu cause de l'empeschement que ne fus en ton enfance plus avant boutee es sciences en plus parfont.<sup>5</sup>

Whilst Cristine's father encourages his daughter in her scholarly interests, her mother is seen as a restrictive force, one who wishes her daughter to turn her attention to traditional womanly occupations (disparagingly referred to as *fillasses*). In the final part of the citation, Droiture explicitly states that it is because of her mother that Cristine's childhood education was limited. A similar picture is generally seen to be presented in *MF*, but a careful reading of Cristine's

<sup>3</sup> 'Maternity and Paternity in "La Mutacion de Fortune"', in *City of Scholars*, 116-126 (116 and 117).

<sup>4</sup> *Writing Woman: Women Writers and Women in Literature Medieval to Modern* (New York: Schocken Books, 1983), 193.

<sup>5</sup> *Cité*, 316.

presentation of her parents in this text reveals that she is not so negative towards her mother as has previously been suggested, and that her mother in fact takes an active interest in her daughter's education. The argument that Christine's mother is presented negatively rests on the fact that, although she is subject to praise in *MF*,<sup>6</sup> her identity is revealed to be an allegorical figure that 'On [...]appelle dame Nature'.<sup>7</sup> Christine's unequivocal praise for her mother is therefore seen to be quickly undermined, since it is not her biological mother who is exalted, but an allegorical substitute. On this point, critics appear to be in agreement: Christine writes her birthmother out of *MF*, replacing her with an allegorical figure – a move made all the more pointed as it follows the favourable picture of her father (who, despite the fact that he is also not explicitly named, is seen as a true-to-life representation of Thomas de Pizan). For Cerquiglini-Toulet, in this respect Christine merely follows the cultural norms of the Middle Ages in which paternity was more highly regarded than maternity.<sup>8</sup> She claims that 'Christine de Pizan invoque sa filiation paternelle alors qu'elle révoque sa filiation maternelle charnelle au profit d'une filiation allégorique'.<sup>9</sup> Tarnowski feels that *MF* betrays 'a certain uneasiness as regards the mother's purpose', and that her reason for substituting her mother for an allegorical figure, who is therefore seen by Tarnowski as more elevated than the corporeal mother, is that Christine is 'casting about for a maternal line of descent to rival her father's'.<sup>10</sup>

In the following part of this Section, these representations of motherhood in *MF* and *CD* will be reassessed. Far from a disparaging representation of

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<sup>6</sup> The passage concerned is found in *Fortune*, vol. 1, 18:339-344.

<sup>7</sup> *Fortune*, vol.1, 19:366.

<sup>8</sup> 'Pour des raisons religieuses et culturelles, la paternité est un modèle de pensée au Moyen Age': *Couleur*, 29.

<sup>9</sup> *Couleur*, 35. On contemporary cultural conceptions of fatherhood, op. cit., 25-31.

<sup>10</sup> 'Maternity and Paternity', 118 and 126.

motherhood, I argue that *MF* presents us with multiple allegorical mother figures, with the overall effect of heightening the roles that they play – roles with a strong didactic element to them. In doing so, Christine valorises the preceptive responsibilities that a female parent would traditionally have taken on in the Middle Ages.<sup>11</sup> It is not insignificant that these gender reconfigurations take place in a text in which Cristine's gender is also reconfigured, making *MF* a work that deals with the constructs of gender in more than just Cristine's own gender-transformation. Part of heightening the roles played by Nature and Cristine's birthmother takes place in inviting readers to see them as one; but I will show that Nature is not the only allegorical mother figure encountered in that work.

#### *Cristine's Parents in the Mutacion de Fortune*

I begin by looking closely at Cristine's presentation of her parents in *MF*. These descriptions take place over several chapters, with chapters III and IV taking her father as their subject, and V focusing on her mother. Following this, chapter VI depicts Cristine's conception and birth, and chapter VII her upbringing at the hands of both parents. It is important to state what these descriptions are not: neither representation of either parent seeks to draw their portrait for the reader or to conjure up an artistically realistic picture of a lifelike being. So, for example, after emphasising his intellect (*tesor*) and talent or ability (*vertu*),<sup>12</sup> the description of Cristine's father focuses on his abilities to predict the future and to

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<sup>11</sup> See Clanchy, 'Mothers'. According to Joni M. Hand, noble mothers educated children of both genders at home until the age of seven, after which a tutor would take over the education of male (and some female) children: *Women, Manuscripts and Identity in Northern Europe, 1350-1550* (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2013), 186-187. On the education of girls in the Middle Ages and medieval women's roles in children's education, see Joan Ferrante, 'The Education of Women in the Middle Ages in Theory, Fact, and Fantasy', in *Beyond their Sex: Learned Women of the European Past*, ed. Patricia H. Labalme (New York and London: New York University Press, 1980), 9-42; Erika Uitz, *Women in the Medieval Town* (London: Barrie and Jenkins, 1988), 71-72 and 97-98.

<sup>12</sup> *Fortune*, vol. 1, 13:176 and 178. In this context, *vertus* evoke intellectual prowess and ability, rather than a more general moral virtue.

cure illnesses, abilities that are metaphorically represented as two precious stones that he collected from the Fountain of Knowledge.<sup>13</sup> The description does not therefore depict a real, identifiable being, and could even be said abstractly to represent Erudition.<sup>14</sup>

The description of Cristine's mother proceeds in a similar vein, emphasising her intellectual ability – which we are told exceeds her father's. It is thanks to this greater intellect that her mother's will prevails when deciding Cristine's gender:

Mon pere  
[...] ot devocion  
Et tres grant voulement d'avoir  
Un filz masle, qui fust son hoir,  
Pour succeder a sa richesce [...]  
Lui et ma mere d'un accort  
M'engendrèrent en celle attente,  
Mais il failli a son entente,  
Car ma mere, qui ot pouoir  
Trop plus que lui, si vout avoir  
Femelle a elle ressemblable,  
Si fus nee fille [...]<sup>15</sup>

Although, until now, the descriptions (albeit metaphorical) might be fitted to real-life persons, the declarations that 'On l'appelle dame Nature',<sup>16</sup> and that 'bien

<sup>13</sup> *Fortune*, vol. 1, 14-18. One of these stones enables him to predict the future, the other to cure all ills – references to Thomas de Pizan's skills as court astronomer cloaked in a layer of fictionality, and reminders of the expertise with which he fulfilled his role.

<sup>14</sup> Tarnowski feels that 'it does not matter whether [...] his name [is given]', as 'his traits of character remain constant', allowing the representation of 'the father' in *MF* to be identified with Thomas de Pizan as encountered elsewhere in Christine's *œuvre*: 'Maternity', 116-117. Thomas is named in the *EO* Prologue, where he is described as 'philosophe et docteur': *Othea*, 195:19-24.

<sup>15</sup> *Fortune*, vol. 1, 20:379-392. There is no doubt a degree of irony in suggesting that the woman's role in pregnancy and childbirth involves her will and intellectual capacities, and that it is not just a biological process. The *pouvoir* of line 389 could be variously interpreted – including as physical power; however, the addition of *vout* in the following line (which responds to the father's *voulement* in line 381) makes it clear that it is her mental capacities that prevail over those of the father.

<sup>16</sup> Christine's Dame Nature might be written as a response to the figure bearing the same name in *RR*. Although, in both texts, she fulfills a generative role, her desire in *MF* that Christine be born female, against the wishes of her father, stands in contrast to Nature's antifeminist stance in the earlier text, against which Christine spoke so vehemently in *ERR*. See, for example, Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun, *Le Roman de la Rose*, ed. Armand Strubel (Paris: Librairie générale française, 1992), 944:18, 134-18, 152. Nature's not being ashamed to create supposedly imperfect women is also described in *CD*, in which Reason replies that Nature should not be ashamed to

pevent estre prouuees | Ses œuvres, partout sont trouuees'<sup>17</sup> introduce uncertainty to the narrative, complicating the understanding of the rubric 'Ci devise de sa mere'.<sup>18</sup> It seems to be a deliberate ploy on Christine's part to pull the rug out from beneath her readers, who might have taken the portrayals literally up to this point: naming her mother as Dame Nature only takes place twenty-seven lines into the description of her mother, but this identification might have been mentioned earlier if Christine had not wished to mislead the reader. What might be the purpose of such a ruse?

The answer seems to be given in two lines that almost immediately precede the descriptions of Cristine's parents: 'je diray, *par fiction*, | Le fait de la *mutacion*'.<sup>19</sup> These lines are generally understood to refer to the *mutacion* itself (i.e. the Cristine-protagonist's transformation from a woman into a man), which occurs between lines 1336 and 1361: 'Transmuee me senti toute [...] j'esprouvay | Que vray homme fus devenu'. In other words, through the mention of *fiction*, readers are warned in advance of the allegorical nature of Cristine's gender transformation.<sup>20</sup> However, two difficulties arise in assuming that this is the *mutacion* to which 'fiction' refers: firstly, why would Christine see the need to warn against taking literally an event that obviously did not really occur? Second, if this warning applies only to the gender-*mutacion* itself, why mention it here, some 1,200 lines before that event is recounted? The answer must be that readers are invited to understand more than just the *mutacion* alone 'par fiction', and this

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create female bodies as women, too, are created in God's image, and God himself was not ashamed to create them: *Cité*, 9.

<sup>17</sup> *Fortune*, vol. 1, 19:353-354.

<sup>18</sup> *Fortune*, vol. 1, 18.

<sup>19</sup> *Fortune*, vol. 1, 12:151-152 (added emphasis).

<sup>20</sup> As Kevin Brownlee points out, Christine's avoidance of talking about sex organs could be an indication that her transformation is 'a gender change that does not involve a sex change': 'Widowhood, Sexuality, and Gender in Christine de Pizan', *Romanic Review*, 86.2 (1995), 339-353 (341).

metaphorical reading can be extended into the descriptions of the parents that immediately follow this warning. It is for this reason that Christine allows readers to believe that she is describing Cristine's biological parents, only to subvert that reading. The revelation that the mother described here is Nature serves as a reminder of the earlier caution that the tale being presented is an allegory.

However, it is significant that this warning precedes not only Cristine's description of her mother, but also the less obviously allegorical representation of her father. In fact, allegory plays a significant part in the father's portrayal – most evidently in the description of the two precious stones and in the reference to the allegorical *locus* that is the Fountain of Knowledge. Whilst the stones are understood as metaphors for the father's skills and knowledge, the description of her father collecting them at the fountain stands for his process of edification. It is therefore just as significant that Cristine's father does not bear a name or identifier as it is that her mother is revealed to be Nature. Although readers are invited to identify Cristine's mother figure with the author's historical, biological mother, it does not follow that there is identity between two figures. This last statement can also be applied to the father's identity: although there are parallels between the father-figure and the historical Thomas de Pizan,<sup>21</sup> it also does not follow that there is identity between them.

In the remainder of the section of *MF* devoted to Cristine's parents, Nature continues to be strongly associated with motherhood. This motherhood is often

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<sup>21</sup> The original recipients of *MF* would either have known Thomas personally, or by reputation. They included Isabeau de Bavière (Chantilly 492), Philippe le Hardi (Brussels, KBR, MS 9508), Jean de Berry (The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, MS 78 D 42; fr. 603), and Louis d'Orléans (private collection, MS Ex-Phillips 207). I consider Christine's audience further in the next Section.



explicitly biological or connected to the body: Nature conceives Cristine,<sup>22</sup> gives birth to her and breastfeeds her:

Si fu comme fille nommee  
Et bien nourrie et bien amee  
De ma mere a joyeuse chiere,  
Qui m'ama tant et tint si chiere  
Que elle meismes m'alaicta,  
Aussitost qu'elle m'enfanta<sup>23</sup>

For Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, Cristine's biological or 'physical' mother is a separate entity from Nature, who acts as a kind of secondary mother or surrogate. She states that 'although love and affection for her mother permeate this passage, one cannot deny that Christine posits Nature as her real mother here. [...] The function of her physical mother that is highlighted here is just that: physical, that is, breastfeeding'.<sup>24</sup> However, the distinction between the two different mothers that Blumenfeld-Kosinski sees here is not one that readers are invited to make: Cristine herself makes no such distinction, and the statement that her mother is called Dame Nature is not further qualified in terms of a particular role. Nature in the *MF* should therefore not be seen as *replacing* the author's biological mother, but *as* the narrator's biological mother.

Reminders that Nature is Cristine's biological mother in a fictional realm are placed in remarks such as 'mere est celle a toute personne':<sup>25</sup> the implausibility of a single figure being mother to everyone reminds readers not to take the text literally and prevents them from mistaking the allegorical narrative for an autobiographical one. In other words, readers are made aware that this representation is taking place in another, allegorical, sphere in which Dame Nature

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<sup>22</sup> *Fortune*, vol. 1, 20: 386-387.

<sup>23</sup> *Fortune*, vol. 1, 21:401-406.

<sup>24</sup> 'Christine de Pizan and the Misogynistic Tradition', in *The Selected Writings of Christine de Pizan*, ed. Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, trans. Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski and Kevin Brownlee (New York and London: W. W. Norton, 1997), 297-311 (305).

<sup>25</sup> *Fortune*, vol. 1, 19:367.

stands in for the author's historical mother. Far from a disparaging representation of motherhood, one that fades in comparison to the father's role, Nature is presented as a forceful being, one with the power to determine the gender of children. Significantly, she also endows the protagonist with a 'chappel' adorned with four stones that metaphorically stand for Cristine's natural gifts:<sup>26</sup> Discrecion, Consideracion, Retentive, and Memoire. It is the mother, not the father, who therefore shapes the daughter's character and personality (Discrecion and Consideracion), as well as her more intellectual abilities (Retentive and Memoire).<sup>27</sup>

But Nature is not the only allegorised maternal figure in *MF* to take an interest in Cristine's intellect. In Chapter VII, Cristine describes how, once she was a little older, Nature sent her to serve at the court of another lady, Dame Fortune. We are told that this move from Nature's to Fortune's court is motivated largely by Nature's desire to ensure Cristine's education is complete:

si vault songneusement  
 Penser de mon avancement,  
 Pour ce que riens je n'avoie en ce  
 Qu'on prent ou tresor de science;  
 Affin que me peusse chevir  
 Elle me vole mettre servir

<sup>26</sup> The 'chappel' and the stones are described in *Fortune*, vol. 1, 26-28. Quilligan has also found that Cristine's mother is 'far from effac[ed]' in this passage, but her study concentrates on how *MF* 'emphasises the quintessential femaleness of her mother', without distinguishing the historical and allegorical realms: *Allegory*, 136.

<sup>27</sup> Nature's gifts represent a further way in which Christine's Nature responds to *RR*'s. In Jean de Meun's text, Nature also describes herself as bestowing four gifts that are granted to every 'hom' (which might be read variously as 'man' or 'mankind'). They consist of 'estre, vivre [...] sentir', and 'entendement': *Rose*, 988:19,039-19,059. Whilst, in *RR*, Nature creates human beings with the same universal capabilities, Christine's Nature goes further, bestowing different traits and qualities to each individual, and she is thereby instrumental in shaping characters. Similarly, in *CD*, Nature is described as compensating bad qualities with good: *Cité*, 14. Christine's Nature may also be inspired by Machaut's, who, in his *Prologue*, grants his persona Guillaume the gifts of Sens, Rhetorique, and Musique. However, Machaut's Nature functions less as a mother-figure and more as a patron who commands him to write new works: 'fourmé | T'ai a part pour faire par toi fourmer | Nouveaux dis amoureux plaisans': *The Fountain of Love: La Fonteinne Amoureuse and Two Other Love Vision Poems*, ed. and trans. R. Barton Palmer (New York and London: Garland, 1993), 2:3-5. The gifts that Nature bestows to Guillaume are not therefore personality-shaping as they are in *MF*, but rather granted to the poet to fulfill the patron's orders.

Une dame de hault parage [...] <sup>28</sup>

*Chevir* in this quotation is a telling word: according to Godefroy's *Dictionnaire*, it means to sustain, nourish, and/or provide.<sup>29</sup> It also conveys the sense of finishing or concluding, which here can be understood as completing Cristine's education. Once Cristine has reached a certain age, having begun her learning at Nature's court, her mother places her in another, more suitable environment to complete her education, where she will be protected and nourished by Fortune. In other words, Fortune's court forms a kind of secondary or finishing school for Cristine. Two points from this passage of *MF* merit comment. The first is that Nature's handing her daughter to Fortune is akin to placing her in the care of a kind of surrogate mother;<sup>30</sup> the second is the total absence of the father-figure in this part of the text, notably in matters concerning his daughter's education – a surprising fact given the strong opinions he has been claimed to hold on the matter. Over the two following parts, I will examine these two points in turn, starting by considering the similarities between Nature and Fortune that can lead the latter to be seen as a surrogate mother to Cristine.<sup>31</sup>

### *Nature and Fortune as Joint Mothers*

As Fortune's role is to educate Cristine and provide for her whilst she matures, she can be understood as taking over the mother/Nature's role at this point in the

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<sup>28</sup> *Fortune*, vol. 1, 23:471-477.

<sup>29</sup> Vol. 2 (1883), 116.

<sup>30</sup> Catherine Attwood's analysis of the vocabulary used to describe Nature and Fortune concludes that 'le narrateur semble revendiquer une double maternité allégorique': *Fortune la contrevait: L'Envers de l'écriture médiévale* (Paris: Champion, 2007), 17-18. Attwood finds that the figures of Nature and Fortune are often found together in late medieval literature, respectively incarnating the benevolent and maleficent mother: op. cit. 16-29.

<sup>31</sup> In terms similar to those used by Christine to describe Nature, Eustache Deschamps describes Fortune as 'mere de tous', further suggesting that the two figures held comparable roles as mothers: Balade MCXXXIV, *Œuvres complètes*, ed. Gaston Raynaud and Queux de Saint-Hilaire, 11 vols. (Paris: Firmin Didot, 1878-1903), vol. 6 (1889), 56-58.

narrative on a basic level, but her role is also more overtly didactic than this.<sup>32</sup>

Fortune can therefore be seen as a kind of 'didactic mother', a mother figure who takes an active role in the instruction of her children. This home-education, which would have been partly if not entirely carried out by a mother, would have been common to many noble medieval girls.<sup>33</sup> It also calls to mind St Anne instructing the Virgin Mary, and the Virgin teaching baby Jesus – both archetypal didactic mothers.<sup>34</sup> This association would have been familiar to Christine's readers: Hand comments that '[noblewomen] would have regarded St Anne as a model for their own lives, specifically as teachers of their children' and that contemporary Marian images showing St Anne instructing the Virgin to read served to 'reinforc[e] the matriarchal educational structure of the nobility'.<sup>35</sup> Christine continues the line of

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<sup>32</sup> It was common for noble girls to be sent to another court to complete their education under a noblewoman's supervision. The women who instructed them were sometimes given motherly titles: for example, at the Burgundian court this role was filled by the *mere des filles*: Caroline zum Kolk, 'The Household of the Queen of France in the Sixteenth Century', *The Court Historian*, 14.1 (June 2009), 3-22 (18-19). See also 'Les Etats de France d'Eléonore de Poitiers', ed. Jacques Paviot, *Annuaire Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de France*, 516 (1998), 75-118 (116). Grandeaume cites a source that claims under the reign of Charles VI, the royal princess was instructed by the Duchesse d'Orléans, who was seen as a mother figure by the king's uncles; likewise, Isabeau de Bavière herself 's'entourait volontiers d'adolescentes qu'elle instruisait, façonnait, gouvernait': 'Quelques dames', 132 and 151. This custom endured into the eighteenth century: Mark Edward Motley, *Becoming a French Aristocrat: The Education of the Court Nobility, 1580-1715* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 50.

<sup>33</sup> Although I do not agree with the conclusion that 'On a [...] l'impression que, pour Christine, le rôle de la mère est déconnecté de la formation intellectuelle', Bernard Ribémont's article provides a useful summary of mothers as children's educators in Christine's corpus: 'Christine de Pizan et la figure de la mère', in *Christine de Pizan 2000: Studies on Christine de Pizan in Honour of Angus J. Kennedy*, ed. John Campbell and Nadia Margolis (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000), 149-161 (158). Very little is known about Christine's education, but given her family's position in the royal household, it can be assumed that she would have received an education similar to that of other girls at court. If this were not the case, it would be all the more significant that she depicts her textual double as receiving the education common to young noblewomen, a further means of bolstering her status and authority.

<sup>34</sup> In *Bonum universale de apibus*, Thomas de Cantimpré tells the anecdote of a peasant girl who desperately wished to learn to read, but whose parents could not afford to buy her a psalter. The Virgin Mary appears to her in a vision, telling her to visit 'la maîtresse qui appren[ait] à lire aux demoiselles de la paroisse' every Sunday and Saint's Day. The noblewomen are so impressed by her enthusiasm that they band together to buy her a psalter. In anecdotes such as this, the Virgin appears as a kind of patron saint of children's education, girls' in particular, whose influence would often be felt. Thomas's text is discussed in Léopold Delisle, 'De l'Instruction littéraire de la noblesse française au moyen âge', *Le Correspondant*, 36 (1855), 444-450 (449-450).

<sup>35</sup> See *Women*, 186-201 (here, 192 and 194).

mother-teachers in *MF*, where she represents her textual double as having been cared for and brought up by two such women, each with a slight difference in focus: whilst Nature's role is more concerned with nurturing her daughter, Fortune prepares her for a life at court. However, this education also seems to include a certain formal schooling, as Nature explicitly places her in Fortune's court 'Pour ce que riens je n'avoie en ce | Qu'on prent ou tresor de science' – in other words, to fill the gaps in her knowledge. The education that Nature envisages for her daughter is not, therefore, one exclusively concerned with *fillasses*, as she takes steps to ensure Cristine is schooled in the *sciences*, as her father had wished. Fortune does not fail in educating Cristine:

Ou temps que ses [Fortune] tours appris  
 Par divers cas, qui m'avint  
 Par elle, par quoy devint  
 Mon sens plus soubtil assez  
 Qu'esté n'ot es temps passez [...] <sup>36</sup>

This shared concern for Cristine's education is alone insufficient in justifying my reading of Fortune as a surrogate mother to Cristine. Two further connections serve to link the allegorical figures of Fortune and Nature. First, they share a power to (re)create: Nature's role in Cristine's conception has already been seen, but whereas her power is creative, Fortune's lies in her ability to alter and reshape. For example, she is able to completely remodel entities, such that they become the opposite of their former state. This ability extends to the recreation of human bodies:

Souvent voit on qu'elle fait traire  
 Maintes choses a leur contraire,  
 Et meismes les façons des corps,  
 Qui plus est grant merveille encors [...] <sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> *Fortune*, vol. 1, 8:36-40

<sup>37</sup> *Fortune*, vol. 1, 10:81-84.

Indeed, Fortune's role in recreating Cristine is central to the plot of *MF* as her recreation also gives this text its title. Fortune's regenerative power is mentioned here somewhat proleptically, long before the *mutacion* itself is described:

Vous diray qui je suis, qui parle,  
Qui de femelle devins masle  
Par Fortune, qu'ainsy le vould;  
Si me mua et corps et vould  
En homme naturel parfaict [...]<sup>38</sup>

This transformative power is not just of interest because it serves to link the two allegorical figures, but it also provokes the question of which is the more powerful force: Nature, whose will prevails over Cristine's father in creating her a woman, or Fortune, who redoes Nature's work and recreates the protagonist as a man?<sup>39</sup> I suggest that their shared (re)generative power serves to highlight the fact that the two mother figures are of equal standing in this respect.<sup>40</sup>

A further connection between the two allegorical figures lies in their distant familial relation: Fortune is described as 'Une dame de hault parage, | Qui .I. poy lui [Nature] tient de lignage'.<sup>41</sup> Cristine's move from one household to another is therefore made within the heart of the same extended (and allegorical) family. This familial link is emphasised later in *MF* as Nature and Fortune join together to prepare Christine for marriage. Their shared role at this point is conveyed by the repeated use of the plural verb form:

Adont les dames, qui conduite  
M'orent la, m'ont moult bien enduite

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<sup>38</sup> *Fortune*, vol. 1, 12:141-145.

<sup>39</sup> John Jay Thompson notes that 'Fortune, in reforming Nature's work, has become Christine's second mother [...]. Nature was the mother of the woman; Fortune of the man': 'Medea in Christine de Pizan's *Mutacion de Fortune*, or How to be a Better Mother', *Forum for Modern Language Studies*, 35.2 (1999), 158-174 (159). Whilst the two figures play an active role in different stages of Christine's education, I see this as more of a shared enterprise between Nature and Fortune.

<sup>40</sup> That is not to say that Christine's representation of Fortune in *MF* is always positive: indeed, the remainder of the work exposes the arduous treatments to which she subjects the protagonist. Although Fortune proves to be good and generous so far as education is concerned, her mutability and deceitfulness form the subject of the remainder of *MF*.

<sup>41</sup> *Fortune*, vol. 1, 23:477-478.

Du maintien que devoie avoir [...]  
 Et m'ont en un retrait menee;  
 La richement m'ont atournee,  
 Comme affiert a une pucelle [...]<sup>42</sup>

At this point, readers might wonder: what has become of Cristine's father? It is this absence that must be discussed next.

*The Absent Father in the Mutacion de Fortune*

Although early on in *MF*, it is implied that Cristine's father wished for his daughter to be educated as though she were a boy, he is not actually shown to involve himself with her schooling at any time. Instead, her tuition is overseen by two women at different points in the narrative. He is also not apparently involved in her wedding; this is particularly problematic for any attempted autobiographical reading of either *MF* or *AC*, since the two works are in disagreement on this point. In the latter, Cristine is explicit about her father's involvement in selecting a husband for her:

le temps vint que je aprouchoie l'aage ouquel on sieult les filles  
 assener de mary [...] comme mon dit pere reputast cellui plus  
 valable que le plus science avec les bonnes meurs avoit, avisa ung  
 jeune escolier gradué, bien né et de nobles parens de Picardie, de  
 qui les vertus passoient la richesce; a cellui qu'il reputa comme  
 propre filz je fus donnee.<sup>43</sup>

In the passage that corresponds to this in *MF*, the protagonist's biological father is written out of the marriage narrative, whilst the two allegorical mother figures take centre stage. However, another figure intervenes at this point who might be interpreted as taking on a fatherly role: Cristine and her cortege arrive together in the city of Hymen (not forgetting that this still takes place in the realm of allegory), where Hymen takes Cristine by her hand and greets her, saying: 'Bien soiez venue!

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<sup>42</sup> *Fortune*, vol. 1, 36:857-863.

<sup>43</sup> *Advision*, 97-98.

| Fille!’<sup>44</sup> Next, he carries out some of the role fulfilled by Cristine’s father in *AC*, as he hands over to her ‘Un jovencel bel et plaisant’, and then oversees the wedding ceremony. The figure who could be identified with Thomas de Pizan has therefore also been supplemented by an allegorical figure in this passage.<sup>45</sup> Indeed, other than the chapters that deal with Cristine’s conception and early childhood, the biological father is not encountered at all in *MF*. The two mother figures are much more prominent in the text, and much more powerful: Nature triumphs over the father’s will when Cristine is conceived as a female child, and similarly, Fortune’s will prevails when she turns the protagonist into a man. Ultimately, in the fictional transformation recounted in *MF*, the biological father *does* gain the male child he desired when Cristine is transformed into a man, but this transformation takes place on Fortune’s terms, not his.

### Conclusion

In *MF*, the father therefore proves to be completely powerless when it comes to deciding Cristine’s gender, a marked contrast to the power of the two female figures who are each able to determine it at different points in the narrative.

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<sup>44</sup> *Fortune*, vol. 1, 37-38:908-909.

<sup>45</sup> Multiple-parented situations are in fact quite common in Christine’s *œuvre*. Roberta Krueger has remarked that the three virtuous ladies who dialogue with Cristine in *CD* make up three mother figures (of whom the same might be said in *TV*), and thereby ‘Christine subtly undermines the patriarchal family as the universal norm for women’s social existence’: ‘Towards Feminism: Christine de Pizan, Female Advocacy, and Women’s Textual Communities in the Late Middle Ages and Beyond’, in *The Oxford Handbook of Women and Gender in Medieval Europe*, eds. Judith Bennett and Ruth Karras (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 590-603 (597). Similarly, the Sibyl who guides Cristine in *CLE* fulfills a certain maternal role, doubling that played by her biological mother in the prologue of that work. For Tarnowski, these figures form doubles for Cristine’s mother: ‘when the mother [...] is given a sustained role to play in the text, Christine changes her form and function: she may be a sibyl [...] or a virtue personified. [...] There is no question that Christine accords the mother central importance, yet the character of the center is not fixed’: ‘Maternity and Paternity’, 117-118. Multiple genealogy also extends to father figures, and Kevin Brownlee has shown that Cristine has ‘two father figures’ in *CLE*: her biological father providing ‘natural genealogy’, and Dante ‘literary genealogy’: ‘Literary Genealogy and the Problem of the Father: Christine de Pizan and Dante’, *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, 23.3 (Fall, 1993), 365-387 (377 and 366).



Christine's representations of parents in *MF* also serve to reconfigure gender roles by representing less binary denotations of motherhood and fatherhood: the biological dimension is just one facet of motherhood represented in this text; it is integrated into the positive model by its creative status and ability to nurture and cultivate life. But Christine does more than dismantle the notion that a mother's involvement in pregnancy is only biological and the father's purely intellectual: she also highlights the primary role that women took in the education of their children, as is known to have been the case in the later Middle Ages and beyond. This is made evident by calling to mind and amplifying the models provided by the Virgin Mary and St Anne, didactic mothers who were the archetype of mothers playing a key role in educating their offspring. It is worth mentioning that since Isabeau was strongly identified with the Virgin Mary (see Chapter 1, 73, n. 157), any example that perpetuated the model of powerful women as teachers obliquely served to support the Queen.<sup>46</sup> Far from being mythified, Christine's father is replaced by two powerful mother figures, whose importance is anything but effaced, and who share the role and duties of motherhood between them.<sup>47</sup> Motherhood in *MF* is therefore characterised by flexibility and a certain fluidity, whereas the fathers' roles in *AF* and *MF* are fixed, punctual, and intermittent: one father-figure engenders the child, and the other gives her away at her wedding.<sup>48</sup>

This exposition of female figures as mothers and teachers serves to pave the way for the remainder of this Section, in which I return to considering the

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<sup>46</sup> I discuss Isabeau as one of Christine's intended readers and her support for the Queen's cause further below.

<sup>47</sup> It is important to remember that the power of these female figures itself remains a fiction, as it is represented in an allegorical mode. This is not one of the texts in which Christine is actively and explicitly vocal about a need to treat women differently or to recognise their power (as she is, for instance, in *EDA*, *DR*, and *CD*). Nonetheless, these representations of female power may still be seen as and intended to be empowering for female readers.

<sup>48</sup> On this point, I disagree with Tarnowski, who argues that 'Christine's father is as constant as she could wish', 'Maternity and Paternity', 116.

interaction between the visual and textual content of Christine's works, and women's functions in their iconographic programmes. In a variety of Christine's texts, women are encountered who seek to educate, instruct, or enlighten Christine in one way or another and who, like Fortune, can be described as 'didactic mothers'.<sup>49</sup> These include the three virtuous ladies in *CD* and *TV*, as well as the figure of Libera in *AC*, Dame Loyauté in *DR*, and Sebille de la Tour, who writes a letter to the lady in *DVA* advising on careful conduct in love, which Christine reuses in the final chapter of the first section of *TV*.<sup>50</sup> It is interesting to note that no equivalent male figures take on similar roles anywhere in Christine's corpus.<sup>51</sup> Education in Christine's works is therefore a charge carried out by women, especially when the subject to be educated is the author's textual double. Indeed, continuing the model of women educating the young, Christine herself becomes an advisor and preceptor by composing works intended to educate, such as in *EO* and *CV*.<sup>52</sup> In the latter of these works, as in *MF*, fathers are shown to be concerned with 'lignée' and 'engendre[ment]',<sup>53</sup> both in terms of the continuation of knowledge, and of their own biological line of descent, rather than with formal education.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> They are 'mothers' as, where their great age is not directly referenced (as it is for the Sibyl in *CLE*), their experience allows us to generally suppose them to be older than the protagonist. Their guidance and advisory roles are also akin to the education provided by lay mothers in the home.

<sup>50</sup> The letter is found in *Le Livre du duc des Vrais Amants*, ed. Thelma S. Fenster (Binghamton and New York: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1995), 171-180, and in *Trois vertus*, 109-120. Christine is open about the fact that the letter has been copied from her earlier work, and urges her reader to 'la [...] passer outre [...] se autre foiz l'a veue': *Trois vertus*, 109.

<sup>51</sup> This may evidently be to do with the grammatical gender of the figures Christine includes in her works, and the fact that allegorical figures (such as Fortune, Reason, Justice) were traditionally female. Nevertheless, Christine could have chosen to include some male figures, whether allegorised or not, had she wished to. On Christine's father-figure as an allegorised representation of Erudition, see above, 159-160.

<sup>52</sup> In *CV*, Christine places a particular importance on the education of young males, whom she advises be placed in the hands of good company and instructors: *Charles V*, ed. Solente, vol. 1, 18.

<sup>53</sup> *Charles V*, ed. Solente, vol. 1, 12-13.

<sup>54</sup> The line of descent from the Trojan kings to Charles V forms the subject of chapters V-VI in part I of *CV*; the second part of chapter VI and chapter VII then take as their theme the education of Charles V and of noble children in general. The very structure of this text therefore juxtaposes the

Although male preceptors would traditionally have delivered the kind of instruction this text contains to young noblemen, the fact that this advice is given by Christine herself (i.e. a woman) shows that a man need not necessarily fill this role.

Now that women's concern with education has been made apparent in Christine's works, even in a work in which the opposite has previously been seen to be true, in this next part, I examine how these women were visually represented in Christine's manuscripts.

## *ii. Didactic Women in Text and Image*

Many of the female didactic figures who take on central roles within the narratives of Christine's texts also feature heavily in their iconographic programmes. For example, Raison, Droiture, and Justice are represented collectively or individually in every illumination in all extant illuminated author-copies of *CD* (for example, Harley 4431, f. 361r: **Pl. 1.17**).<sup>55</sup> The trio of women are also depicted in the two author-copies of *TV*: both manuscripts feature a double-framed opening miniature, showing Cristine being woken by the three virtuous ladies in the left compartment, and Raison sitting at a lectern surrounded by two and four other women respectively in the right (Boston, Public Library, MS 101, f. 3r: **Pl. 3.1**. Brussels, KBR, MS 9235, f. 5r and Yale 427, f. 1r share the same composition as the left

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themes of the passing down of education and of biological descent, emphasising the successive accession of noble heirs.

<sup>55</sup> The two earliest copies of *CD*, Paris, BnF, fr. MS 24293 and Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, MS 2686 (dated to c. 1405) are both unilluminated; a slightly later copy, fr. 1179 (c. 1405-1406), contains one illumination, depicting the three ladies and Christine in the left-hand frame of the image, and Christine and Raison in the right. The later manuscripts, KBR 9393 (c. 1407-1408), fr. 607 (c. 1408), fr. 1178 (c. 1413), and Harley 4431 (c. 1414), each contain three illuminations, all of which were carried out by MCD: the first reproduces the single illumination found in fr. 1179; the second represents Droiture leading ladies into the city; the third Justice and other ladies greeting the Virgin as she approaches the city. See *ACP* for detailed descriptions of these illuminations and their wider manuscript context, and on some of these miniatures, Chapter 1, 58-59 and 61, n. 133.

compartment of these two author-manuscripts: **Pls. 1.32** and **1.35**).<sup>56</sup> These illuminations make a feature of visually conveying the didactic purpose of the text and of the women's roles within that context, as well as representing the purported audience: the right compartment shows Raison instructing or lecturing to an audience of seven women from a book.<sup>57</sup>

The Sibyl also features prominently in the different renditions of *CLE*'s iconographic programme. Copies of this text feature four, five, six, or eight illuminations.<sup>58</sup> In each case, the first is always a dedication scene that represents Christine and a patron, but otherwise all but one remaining illustrations in the corpus of *CLE* manuscripts depict both Cristine and the Sibyl.<sup>59</sup> These miniatures often serve to highlight the Sibyl's role as a guide, which is visually rendered by her indicating subjects to Cristine – for example, pointing towards the fountain of virtues and/or Pegasus as Cristine looks on (fr. 836, f. 5v: **Pl. 3.2**; c.f. KBR 10983, f. 13r).<sup>60</sup> She is also seen gesturing towards the ladder that will take the two women up to the firmament (fr. 836, f. 10v; Harley 4431, f. 188r), indicating either Raison's throne or Raison herself with one hand (KBR 10982, f. 33v: **Pl. 3.3**; c.f. Harley 4431, ff. 192v and 196v), often whilst holding Cristine's hand with the other (fr. 836, ff.

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<sup>56</sup> In Boston 101, Raison is surrounded by four crowned ladies, whereas in Paris, BnF, MS n.a.fr. 25636, she is flanked by only two, whose dress corresponds more closely to that of Droiture and Justice in the left compartment. Both miniatures were produced by the MCD. For detailed descriptions of these illuminations, see *ACP*, 617 and 623.

<sup>57</sup> *ACP* notes that the women's headdresses 'indiquent qu'elles sont de différentes classes sociales', thus reinforcing the text's claim to be addressed to women of all ranks: 617 and 623.

<sup>58</sup> Brussels, KBR, MS 10983 and Chantilly 493 each feature four illuminations in total; Paris, BnF, fr. MS 1188 has five; there are six in KBR 10982, and eight in both fr. 836 and Harley 4431. A further manuscript, Paris, BnF, fr. MS 1643, has spaces for five illuminations that were never completed.

<sup>59</sup> The only exception is the second illumination in KBR 10982, f. 2r, which represents Christine in her study.

<sup>60</sup> Catherine Attwood argues that the Fountain of Muses (or Hippocrene) 'seems to have been subsumed by the medieval imagination into the Fountain of Narcissus', including in *RR* and Machaut's *Fonteinne amoureuse*: 'The Image in the Fountain: Fortune, Fiction and Femininity in the *Livre du voir dit* of Guillaume de Machaut', *Nottingham French Studies*, 38.2 (Autumn, 1999), 137-149 (146). Christine seems to be an exception to this, as references to fountains in her works explicitly evoke the fountain of literary inspiration, not the Ovidian model.

5v and 10v; Harley 4431, ff. 183r and 188r). This is also the position that the Cumean Sibyl adopts in the final illumination of *EO* (*histoire C*): in all known surviving manuscripts, this miniature depicts Emperor Augustus kneeling before the Virgin and Child, towards whom the Cumean Sibyl directs the Emperor's gaze by pointing, often with one hand on his back or shoulder – a gesture that emphasises her coercive position (for example, Harley 4431, f. 141r: **Pl. 3.4**). For Desmond and Sheingorn, this posture draws attention to the Sibyl's didactic role, as by 'insistently directing his adoring gaze toward the vision, the sibyl teaches the emperor how to read history and his place in it'.<sup>61</sup> The same could therefore be said of examples in which the Sibyl adopts this posture with Cristine in *CLE*.

Not all didactic mothers feature visually in Christine's texts, and this is notably the case for Nature and Fortune in *MF*. Whilst Nature is not represented in any existing manuscript, Fortune herself is usually only ever depicted together with her traditional wheel, flanked by Eur and Meseur (such as in Chantilly 493, f. 248v: **Pl. 3.5**; c.f KBR 9508, f. 17v; The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, MS 78 D 42, f. 16v; Chantilly, Musée Condé, MS 494, f. 16r). Representations of Fortune's castle are more common than depictions of its owner: six surviving author-manuscripts feature a trio of illuminations for *MF*, which in turn show Fortune's castle from the exterior, the interior, and the paintings in the *salle de Fortune* (on which subject, see Introduction, 1-3). It is possible that the existence of an already well-established iconographic tradition for Fortune limited the possibilities of depicting

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<sup>61</sup> *MMV*, 222. Note that the Sibyl's teaching relies upon an image, one that represents the Virgin and Child, which is emblematic of the overall pedagogy of *EO* examined in Chapter 2, namely that reading this work relies upon the interpretation of images, not just of text.

her otherwise.<sup>62</sup> However, without directly depicting the titular figure, these miniatures nevertheless represent female power. For instance, the female figure of Richesse features prominently at the centre of the image found in KBR 9508, f. 14r (**Pl. 3.6**), considerably larger in size and more richly dressed than the other beings depicted. Her status is conveyed visually through her rich clothing: she wears a gold crown, and a dress also decorated with gold. Another image, in Cod. gall. 11, f. 13r (**Pl. 3.7**), represents Richesse sitting on a throne, wearing a golden cloak, and carrying a sceptre. The male Eur stands nearby, holding a wreath, along with a second crowned queen-figure illustrating royalty. Here again, female power is enhanced through the choice to present two queens, since a king might just as easily have been used to represent royalty.

Although not all women with didactic power are given prominence visually, these examples show that women's influence and power remain at the fore in both text and image in these works. I now go on to examine a female figure who features on a number of occasions in both text and image in Christine's wider *œuvre*.

### *The Case of Minerva*

When considering women and didacticism, the case of Minerva (Minerve) is particularly striking. She features in several of Christine's works, sometimes under the name Pallas;<sup>63</sup> she is a figure who explicitly embodies and connects wisdom and chivalry. Minerva is somewhat different from the didactic mothers examined so far, in that whilst Christine directly encounters these figures (for example, in *CLE*

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<sup>62</sup> Jean Wirth dates the apparition of Fortune's wheel to the eleventh century: 'L'Iconographie médiévale de la roue de fortune', in *La Fortune: Thèmes, représentations, discours*, eds. Yasmina Foehr-Janssens and Emmanuelle Métry (Geneva: Droz, 2003), 105-128 (105).

<sup>63</sup> For Christine, Pallas and Minerva are one (see below).

and *CD*), Minerva does not feature in the narrative. Because she is not present as a character, her role is less directly instructive than that of other female personages, but she still fulfills a didactic function, in that she embodies and is symbolic of the ideals to be attained. There is also a motherly element to her, as we are told in *EO* that because ‘moult sceut Hector armeures mettre en oeuvre [...] l’appella Othea filz de Minerve’; likewise, all those who are ‘ameurs des armes’ (some of whom might be reading this text) are to be considered her sons.<sup>64</sup> Although didacticism and maternity are present in Minerva, she is not a ‘didactic mother’ in the sense seen above, since she does not take on an active role in the instruction of her children. Rather, her function in the narrative is exemplary; her presence represents women’s creative abilities and practical inventions. This figure, who is often characterised by multiplicity, features in somewhat variant guises, but always with the effect of strengthening Christine’s claims for female creativity, intelligence, and women’s ability to produce solutions to problems. In order to trace the changes in representations of Minerva through Christine’s *œuvre*, I examine them chronologically.<sup>65</sup>

### *Minerva in the Epistre Othea*

In *EO*, the earliest work in which Minerva appears as more than a passing figure, she is the subject of two consecutive *histoires*, numbers XIII and XIV. In the first,

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<sup>64</sup> *Othea*, 222.

<sup>65</sup> In this part, I concentrate on the texts in which Minerva is treated at some length. In addition to those discussed here, she also features to a lesser extent in the following works: the final lines of *EDA*; ballade XC of the *Cent balades*; three of the *Autres balades*; *CP*; and *CV*. Christine also initially mistakes the Sibyl for Minerva in *CLE*, a text in which the identification between the Sibyl and Minerva/Pallas is also suggested by its intertextuality with *OM*. Zühlke remarks that the *CLE* illumination in which the Sibyl gestures towards the Fountain of Muses (**Pl. 3.2**) is based on an *OM* miniature, where Pallas features in the Sibyl’s place: ‘Moi’, 239. That the two figures are to be identified is further suggested by Christine, who, describing first meeting the Sibyl, says she reminded her of Pallas: *Chemin*, 114-116:478-481; the similarity between the figures is again brought to mind in the description of the Fountain, that the Sibyl remarks was once Pallas’ purlieu: *Chemin*, 152:1,094-1,095.

she is associated in the *texte* with armour and protection in battle. This is reinforced by the visual programme of the fully-illustrated manuscripts, which show the goddess handing down shields and other protective items to a group of knights (Harley 4431, f. 102v: **Pl. 3.8**; see also fr. 606, f. 8v). It can be observed that Minerva's associations with war are purely defensive here: in both text and image, she provides only protective armour, and the sword attached to her girdle is symbolic of her association with chivalry; as it is not being used, its violent connotations are limited.<sup>66</sup> *Histoire* XIV complicates the straightforward Minerva-chivalry association, as readers are told there is a second, equally praiseworthy side to her, and that is her association with *sagece*. This connection is explained as follows:

doit on savoir que Pallas et Minerve est une mesmes chose, mais  
les noms sont pris a .ii. entendemens, car al dame qui ot nom  
Minerve fu aussi surnommee Pallas [...] et pour ce que elle  
generaument en toutes choses fu sage et maintes ars  
nouvellement trouva belles et soubtilles, l'appellerent deesse de  
savoir; si est nommee Minerve a ce qui appartient a chevalerie, et  
Pallas en toutes choses qui appartiennent a sagece.<sup>67</sup>

The *histoire's* image again supports the content of the textual apparatus: in Harley 4431, it shows two goddesses, one holding a sword, dressed in the same red costume as Minerva in the previous image, the other dressed in blue,<sup>68</sup> holding a

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<sup>66</sup> This fits with the ancient perception of Minerva: 'Armed as she was, she was regarded as a kind of female Mars, though she [...] promot[ed] only just wars': H. David Brumble, *Classical Myths and Legends in the Middle Ages and Renaissance: A Dictionary of Allegorical Meanings* (London and Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn, 1998), 218.

<sup>67</sup> *Othea*, 223. Andrea Tarnowski underlines the fact that Pallas and Minerva are not interchangeable names, and explains their bipartite division as follows: 'la première appellation [Pallas] évoque la Grèce, source première de tout savoir et garante infaillible de la sagesse; la seconde rappelle Rome, qui, tout en étant le berceau du latin, langue de l'érudition, a toujours fait figure dans l'imaginaire occidental du lieu où les vertus civiques et militaires étaient les mieux appréciées': 'Pallas Athena, la science et la chevalerie', in *Sur Le Chemin de longue étude. Actes du colloque d'Orléans, juillet 1995*, ed. Bernard Ribémont (Paris: Champion, 1998), 149-158 (150).

<sup>68</sup> On blue as a symbol of wisdom in Christine's texts, see above, Chapter 1.II.



book.<sup>69</sup> Lest there should be any uncertainty about the content of the miniature, the purple rubric directly above the image reads 'La deesse Minerve et la deesse Pallas ensemble' (f. 103r: **Pl. 3.9**).<sup>70</sup>

### *Minerva in the Mutacion de Fortune*

The multiplicity and shared identity and associations between Minerva and Pallas continue to be found in *MF* and *CD*. However, these texts present some variations, as both considerably expand the talents embodied by each identity. In *MF*, her association with *sagece* is merely touched upon, and readers are simply informed that she was 'tant lettree [...] et fondee en grant science'.<sup>71</sup> On the other hand, her innovations in armoury and warfare are exposed at some length, and a new skill is also introduced: her talents and innovations in the textile crafts.<sup>72</sup> In this text, Minerva's discoveries in the field of chivalry have therefore been amplified somewhat from *EO*, whilst her *sagece* has apparently diminished in importance, and textiles are added to her talents. In this configuration, the male pursuit of chivalry and more traditionally feminine textile work are granted equivalent status and united through Minerva as two valid occupations – both of which also thereby maintain oblique links with wisdom. Perhaps it was the range of qualities that Minerva represents and her potential to help reconfigure gender by uniting two gendered pursuits that appealed to Christine, and motivated her frequent references to the ancient goddess. A final point to make about Minerva's

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<sup>69</sup> On Minerva as an emblem of the pursuit of knowledge in medieval scholastic and early Humanist culture, see Helen Solterer, *The Master and Minerva: Disputing Women in French Medieval Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).

<sup>70</sup> These two captions and miniatures are identical in fr. 606 (ff. 8v and 9r). Other copies represent the Minerva/Pallas duality variously. The miniature in Lille, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 175, f. 15v, for example, only represents one woman. In another variation, KBR 9392, f. 17v maintains the duality by showing two women, but the figures are identical, mirror images for one another.

<sup>71</sup> *Fortune*, vol. 2, 12,004-12,005.

<sup>72</sup> Minerva's associations with chivalry, textiles, and wisdom date back to Classical times: Brumble, *Classical Myths*, 218-221.

association with warfare in this text is that her link with chivalry is nuanced, such that she is now not only 'Deesse de chevalerie', but also 'De batailles et d'armerie'.<sup>73</sup> In *MF*, her association with active warfare is therefore more engaged with the actualities of battle than in *EO*.

#### *Minerva in the Cité des dames*

Turning next to *CD*, where Minerva's dual identity with Pallas is maintained: it is again stated that Minerva 'fu surnommee Pallas',<sup>74</sup> but, in contrast to *EO* and *MF*, her talents in this text seem almost boundless: 'ceste fu soubtille et de grant entendement, non mie seulement en une chose, mais generaument en toutes'.<sup>75</sup> Some of her inventions are associated with scholarly wisdom, such as the Greek alphabet (and therefore writing), numbers and counting, but they also extend to wool and cloth-making, weaving, oil extraction, carriages, and armoury.<sup>76</sup> In this text, Minerva is primarily associated with wisdom and invention: over what forms two columns of text in the Harley 4431 version of *CD* (ff. 313v-314r), the word *trouver* is used ten times, *savoir* three, and *soubil* three. By contrast, Minerva's association with chivalry is mentioned only briefly. It is said that the Athenians 'l'aouroient comme deesse et l'appelloient deesse d'armes et de chevalerie', and a short paragraph describes how 'elle trouva l'art et la maniere de faire le harnois et les armeures de fer et d'acier [...] [et] apprist l'usage d'ordener ost et batailles et la maniere de combatre en ordre arreegee'.<sup>77</sup> After the lengthy enumeration of Minerva's other feats and discoveries in various areas, this involvement in the field

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<sup>73</sup> *Fortune*, vol. 2, 11,993; 11,997-11,998.

<sup>74</sup> *Cité*, 170.

<sup>75</sup> *Cité*, 172.

<sup>76</sup> For the description of Minerva, see *Cité*, 170-174.

<sup>77</sup> *Cité*, 172.

of chivalry reads as just another one of her many discoveries, as the list of her strengths continues beyond this passage with details of her invention of wind instruments, and praise for her preserved virginity. However, Christine is sure to highlight the fact that her involvement with warfare is all the more impressive, given that Minerva was a woman: 'plus fist ceste dame et qui plus semble merveillable pour ce que c'est loings de nature de femme que elle de telle chose s'avisast'.<sup>78</sup> The multiplicity encountered in *EO* and *MF*, where her association with *armes* is given greater prominence than her links with *sagece*, is therefore somewhat recast in this description of Minerva's inventions, since not only are *armes* downplayed, but she is represented as being responsible for a myriad of new creations to which Christine gives more space.

However, the downplaying of chivalry in the description of Minerva's skills stands in contrast to the portrait of her that is drawn in the final paragraph of the Minerva chapter, in which her military nature comes to the fore. This visual portrait is the only one of its kind in *CD*, and is striking in its detail and its ekphrastic nature; it claims to be a description of the goddess's 'ymage' found within the temple of Minerva in Athens.<sup>79</sup> It almost seems surprising that the written portrait is not translated into a painted image, but a figure matching the description does not feature in any of the miniatures that precede each of the three sections of *CD*. The portrait mentions different aspects of Minerva's attire in turn, explaining the significance of each element. At first, the portrait begins in the traditional manner of cataloguing a woman's profile, with the goddess' facial features. But in this case, the description goes no further than her eyes, which are

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Tarnowski notes that although the Minerva episode is borrowed from Boccaccio's *De claris mulieribus*, the description of the portrait is original to Christine's work: 'Pallas Athena', 157.

described as ‘terribles et crueulx’.<sup>80</sup> The rest of the portrait is anything but a conventional description of a woman, focusing not on her physical, female, body but on her armoured body as a warrior. The portrait enumerates the different kinds of armoury and weaponry that Minerva carries: in turn, her helmet, hauberk, lance, shield, and the image on the shield boss are evoked. Each of these items is given two significations, one relating to her association with *chevalerie*, the other to *sagece*. So, for example, her hauberk ‘signifioit [que]’<sup>81</sup> la puissance de l’estat de chevalerie et nottoit aussi que le sage estoit tousjours armez contre les mouvemens de Fortune, soit ou bien ou le mal’.<sup>82</sup> The descriptions often name either the *chevalier* or *sage* as types to whom these significations are particularly relevant, perhaps an indication as to the intended audience here, a point to which I return in Section II. The focus on Minerva as a warrior rather than as a woman serves to unite the two genders within a single figure in terms of more than their occupations, as was seen to take place in *MF*.

#### *Minerva in the Fais d’armes et de chevalerie*

Although Minerva’s written portrait does not coincide with a painted portrait in *CD*, it is to some degree executed in the opening illumination of two author-copies of Christine’s *FA* (fr. 603, f. 2r and KBR 10476, f. 3r: **Pls. 3.10** and **3.11**). In both miniatures, Cristine stands by her desk to the far left of the composition, with Minerva in the centre-left and centre respectively. Their gestures indicate that the two women are in discussion. An army is depicted in the right-hand pane of both

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<sup>80</sup> *Cité*, 172.

<sup>81</sup> This ‘que’ is an error in the edition, as it is not present in the base manuscript used (Harley 4431, f. 314r).

<sup>82</sup> *Cité*, 172-174.

images, towards which the Minerva in Plate 3.10 points.<sup>83</sup> In both illuminations, either Minerva's gestures or her position between Christine and the army suggest that she acts as mediator between the author and chivalry. These portraits bear some similarity to the *CD* description of Minerva, in that the goddess wears a hauberk and carries a lance, but she is without the crystal *targe*, and, instead of a helmet, she wears a hat in one image and a garland around her head in the other. This mirrors the depictions of Minerva in the *EO* manuscripts discussed above, where Minerva is dressed as a warrior, with protective armour on her arms, but wears a dress over which her hair flows loose. Both the Harley 4431 Minerva illuminations and the two *FA* frontispieces were the work of the MCD, and it is worth noting that a single workshop depicted the goddess so variously. While all of these illuminations depict Minerva as a warrior, the artist seems to have struggled with the practicalities of depicting her as both a woman and as a knight: for example, she wears a long dress (a sign of her femininity, though impractical on the battlefield) and although she wears a partial suit of armour, she lacks any form of head protection.

That Minerva features in these illuminations is explained by her heavy presence in the second half of the *FA* Prologue, in which she takes the place both of dedicatee and of one who can justify or authorise Christine's taking on the theme of feats of arms and of chivalry. The justification is phrased as follows:

pour ce que est chose non accoustumee et hors usage a femme qui  
communement ne se sieust entremettre ne mes de quenouilles,

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<sup>83</sup> Her gesture is not the same in the KBR manuscript, where she clasps a banderole. C(h)ristine, meanwhile, gestures simultaneously towards her books, Minerva, and the army. For Claire le Ninan, 'l'iconographie désigne la déesse comme le point de jonction entre le monde de la théorie et celui de la pratique': "'Si fais hardiement et ne te doubtes": Christine de Pizan entre clergie et chevalerie dans le *Livre des fais d'armes et de chevalerie*', in *Une femme de guerre à la fin du moyen âge: Le Livre des fais d'armes et de chevalerie de Christine de Pizan*, eds. Dominique Demartini et al. (Paris: Champion, 2016), 119-131. I am grateful to the author for sharing a copy of this article with me ahead of the book's distribution.

fillaces et choses mainaige, je supplie humblement au dit treshault office et noble estat de chevallerie que en contemplacion de la sage dame Minerve [...] laquelle trouva [...] l'art et la maniere de faire le harnois de fer et d'acier qu'ilz ne vueillent avoir a mal se moy, femme, me suis chargee de traittier de si faite matiere.<sup>84</sup>

This is followed by a prayer to Minerva:

O Minerve, deesse d'armes et de chevallerie, qui par vertu d'eslevé entendement par sus les autres femmes trouvas et instituas entre les nobles ars et sciences qui de toy naquirent l'usage de forger de fer et d'acier armeures et harnoys propice et convenable a couvrir et targier corps de homme contre les coups des dars nuisibles traiz et lanciez en bataille et fais d'armes. Escuz, targes, et autres harnois deffensibles de toy premierement venuz instituas et donnas maniere et ordre d'arrangier batailles et d'assaillir et combatre en maniere arree.<sup>85</sup>

When read within the context of representations of Minerva in Christine's wider *œuvre*, it is interesting that Minerva's previously multiple associations have been compressed so much in *FA* – undoubtedly to emphasise her pertinence to the military theme of the work. Her wisdom is particularly condensed, from the lengthier expositions seen in *MF* and *CD* into just a single word: *sage*. However, references to weaving are used as a means to justify and segue into Christine's work on chivalry: before Minerva is directly mentioned, she is obliquely evoked by the reference to *quenouilles* as a female activity. Only after this reference are her wider associations with the fabrication of armour brought up. Although feminine activities are presented somewhat disparagingly as *fillaces*,<sup>86</sup> because Minerva is associated both with them and with (masculine) feats of war, Christine's humble claim that writing about male activities is not fitting for a woman becomes a *clin d'œil* to the reader who understands Minerva's double position. It also justifies

<sup>84</sup> There not yet being a published French edition of *FA*, the transcription of fr. 603 is my own: here f. 2c, 4-23. I have also consulted Willard's translation (*Deeds*).

<sup>85</sup> Fr. 603, f. 2c, 29-2d, 5. Everett L. Wheeler believes that this prayer to Minerva may have been offensive to the medieval reader, as it places her in the position of creator that only God could occupy: 'Christine de Pizan's *Livre des fais d'armes et de chevalerie*: Gender and the Prefaces', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, 46 (2002), 119-161. The mythological tradition of Minerva as inventor of arms contradicts this as there was a strong precedent for her being seen in these terms.

<sup>86</sup> On *fillaces* in *MF* (spelt there as *fillasses*), see above, 158.

Christine's present enterprise: if Minerva could be associated with both male and female activities, so, too, can Christine.<sup>87</sup>

Amplifying Minerva's association with warfare is undoubtedly fitting for the context, as well as for the intended audience of *FA*, since it can fairly safely be assumed that this was not a text Christine intended primarily to be read by women. In that light, Christine and Minerva both become teachers of arms and chivalry, as Christine 'taps into the tradition of chivalric literature on female instructors of chivalry'.<sup>88</sup> Guiding figures were common features of medieval literature, overtly didactic or otherwise: 'From the twelfth century on, chivalric romances featured a parent, an anchorite [...] or a supernatural character who instructs a youth on the duties of knighthood'.<sup>89</sup> From this point of view, it is Christine – whose female gender is highlighted in the Prologue – who instructs the readers of her text, but she does so through the example of Minerva, who both provides the subject matter for the work, and justifies the author's writing it.<sup>90</sup>

### *Conclusion*

Within Christine's *œuvre*, Minerva is one of several female figures who is able to instruct and provide a model for a variety of readers: her association with chivalry means that knightly readers, and not just women, will see her as a model.

Regardless of the reader's gender, Nature for Christine instructs those whom she disposes towards learning, a relationship between Nature and learning that is also

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<sup>87</sup> On a passage contrasting weaving to masonry in *CV*, Nadia Margolis remarks that 'the distinctly feminine loom [...] allowed the same creative, narrative power as only men had been traditionally allowed with their pens': 'The Rhetoric of Detachment in Christine de Pizan's *Mutacion de Fortune*', *Nottingham French Studies*, 38.2 (Autumn 1999), 170-181 (173).

<sup>88</sup> Wheeler, 'Gender and Prefaces' 151.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 150-151.

<sup>90</sup> On Christine's progressive identification with Pallas/Minerva, see Barbel Zühlke, *Christine de Pizan in Text und Bild. Zur Selbstdarstellung einer frühhumanistischen Intellektuellen* (Stuttgart and Weimar: Metzler, 1994), particularly 46-47, 185, 190-200.

drawn on by the Renaissance proto-feminist poet Laura Cereta, whom I cite in the epigraph to this section. Because Minerva is not active within the narrative, she is not a didactic mother in the same way as the Sibyl, the three ladies in *CD*, or Fortune, yet her strong connection with wisdom is always present, and sometimes could not be more explicit. Like so many of the women encountered in Christine's *œuvre*, she can be characterised by multiplicity: multiple connotations, and more than one name. In other examples of didactic women, multiplicity serves to blur the distinctions not only between the women, but also between them and C(h)ristine: 'la personne de l'auteur se cache parfois à peine derrière ses personnages'.<sup>91</sup> This is particularly evident in *CD*, where the three women virtues make several references to Christine's works,<sup>92</sup> echoing Christine's practice of referring to her other writings elsewhere,<sup>93</sup> ascribing the content of Christine's works to her avatar, Cristine, further blurring the distinction between author and narrator-protagonist.

In *CD* as in *TV*, the three women virtues are not distinguished by any particular character traits or types of speech (beyond the different objects they hold), and their function serves more to structure the work into three parts than to provide three separate, authentic voices. It seems that whatever is said by any of the individual female authority figures is voiced by the collective – including Christine, who through her textual double repeats their speech within her own work. This has the effect of blurring the distinctions between the figures, making their speech appear universal. Such a technique bolsters not only Christine's

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<sup>91</sup> Tarnowski, 'Pallas Athena', 157.

<sup>92</sup> For example, Droiture says, 'quant est ad ce qu'ilz dient que si decevables soient, ne scay a quoy plus t'en diroie, car toy mesmes as assez souffisamment traictié la matiere tant contre celui Ovide, comme contre autres en ton *Epistre du dieu d'amours* et es *Epistres sus le "Rommant de la Rose"*': *CD*, 376.

<sup>93</sup> For example, Christine refers to *MF* in the *CV* Prologue.



authority, but also that of women in general. A similar technique is at work in *EO*, where Christine repeats Othea's words as she inscribes and comments on them, thereby also voicing whatever the goddess says. Likewise, when the content of Sibylle de la Tour's letter is repeated in *TV*, the Sibyl's voice is amplified: as C(h)ristine ventriloquises the letter, the two women's voices become one, whilst its contents are endorsed and its exemplarity re-stated. Sometimes, the distinction between C(h)ristine and her fictional authoritative figures is very negligible,<sup>94</sup> and it can be pointed out that in the fr. 1188 version of *CLE*, it is Cristine, not Sibyl, who appears to point things out in two of the miniatures (for example, ff. 14r and 46r **Pls. 3.12** and **3.13** – contrast with fr. 836, f. 5v and KBR 10982, f. 33v: **Pls. 3.2** and **3.3**), as if the two characters were interchangeable in the visual programme. At the end of Chapter 1, I suggested that representations of the author-protagonist evoked a 'spectrum of selves', and I have now shown that Christine's didactic message is also ventriloquised by a spectrum of characters with little to distinguish them. As previously noted, it is no accident that some of Christine's most authoritative figures are often represented in the same or a similar costume to the author-figure.

Bolstering women's authority therefore served both to increase Christine's own authority, and to serve the proto-feminist cause she supports in her work.

The changing representations of Minerva were undoubtedly influenced by the nature of the audiences envisaged and for whom these different texts were

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<sup>94</sup> The slipperiness between the author and the narrator makes it particularly difficult to ascribe speech in the examples discussed in this paragraph to either Christine or Cristine. Part of what makes Christine's arguments so convincing is to have those of her previous, existing works repeated in, and thereby confirmed by, other texts. Such a technique inevitably results in confusion between textuality and reality, especially when the author can appear to be present in the narration, albeit in a textual avatar. Passages such as these make it very tempting to slip into an autobiographical reading, and my use of 'C(h)ristine' serves to highlight the slipperiness between the extra-textual author and her textual double. Inevitably, anything that serves to highlight Cristine's authority within the text will also bolster that of Christine's.

intended. But who were these audiences made up of, exactly? And to whom were the didactic messages contained in the various works addressed? In the second Section of this Chapter, I turn to considering the audience of Christine's works more widely; in particular, the possibility that women were envisaged as part of the audience of works traditionally seen as addressing men, and vice versa.

## II. Gender and Christine's Audiences

The successful author of any century must experience (and endure) the transition from a 'primary' or intended public to a larger, 'secondary' audience which receives and enjoys the author's works in circumstances over which he or she has little control.<sup>95</sup>

Who did Christine intend to read her texts? Many of Christine's author-manuscripts carry a dedication to an individual patron, but this does not mean that the person named was the only one to read the works contained within a given manuscript. The dedicatee may never even have opened the manuscript, leaving it to be lent, or to read by other members of their household. Alternatively, even if a patron had commissioned a text, they might have done so in order for someone else to read it. In such a case, unless the patron's intentions had been made explicit to the author, the intended reader would not be the same in the minds of these two parties. Ownership marks can therefore be misleading or only tell a part of the story. For example, Brussels, KBR, MS 4373-76 was first possessed by Jean de Flers and later inherited by his son Alexandre, yet this manuscript (which features a copy of *EO* along with five further works) contains a copy of a text entitled *Les*

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<sup>95</sup> Paul Strohm, 'Chaucer's Fifteenth-Century Audience and the Narrowing of the Chaucer Tradition', *Studies in the Age of Chaucer*, 4 (1982), 3-32 (18).

*Enseignemens des filles*.<sup>96</sup> Girls are addressed directly throughout this short text, each verse providing advice on how to behave, or how not to behave, with the imperative formula ‘filles [...] —ez’, or ‘filles ne [...] —ez’. Why might Jean de Flers, and his son after him, have owned a manuscript containing a copy of a text addressed explicitly to young women?<sup>97</sup> Who was the intended reader in this case? One possibility is that Jean commissioned the manuscript, but intended this work to be read by his daughters (in which case, the actual audience of the text does not equate to the owner of the manuscript); alternatively, the manuscript might have been a gift presented to Jean, but again, the benefactor probably intended this individual work to be read by Jean’s daughters; a final possibility is that Jean commissioned the manuscript in order to demonstrate an interest in the education of his male and female children (either to represent himself as a man interested in his children’s education, or in order to facilitate that education). The table of contents demonstrates that this is a compilation manuscript containing several overtly didactic works, including the *Enseignemens moult beaux*, and the *Enseignemens et les bons exemples que le bon roy de France, Monseigneur Saint Loys, envoa a sa fille*, alongside Jean le Fèvre’s moralising encyclopedia, the *Respit de mort de 1376*, and his *Justificacions du duc Jehan de Bourgogne touchant la mort du duc d’Orleans*. KBR 4373-76 is therefore likely to be an instruction manual prepared by a father for the education of his offspring, and there is evidence that it was intended to be read by children of either gender: in addition to the two works

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<sup>96</sup> On this manuscript, see Marleen Marynissen, ‘The *Epître Othéa* in MS 4373-76: An Enigma in the Royal Library’, *In Monte Artium*, 5 (2012), 95-106.

<sup>97</sup> Alice A. Hentsch’s *De la Littérature didactique du moyen âge s’adressant spécialement aux femmes* (Cahors: Coueslant, 1903) offers a chronological list of many European medieval didactic works. Her list is by no means exhaustive, but shows that didactic texts were being written explicitly for women from the second century AD onwards, and that there was a proliferation of such works from the twelfth century to the end of the Middle Ages. In England, ‘from the 12th century onward there were didactic treatises addressed to women’: Parkes, ‘Literacy’, 557.

that address a female readership, that Jean's son Alexandre read parts of the volume when young is suggested by the presence of some schoolboy Latin on a flyleaf that refer to him in the first person.<sup>98</sup>

KBR 4373-76 is therefore an example of a manuscript intended for an audience of both genders, although individual texts within the collection set up a gendered reader.<sup>99</sup> Although its primary audience was fairly restricted (to the family bosom), other works envisage a wider secondary audience. For example, in *Le Livre du Chevalier de La Tour Landry pour l'enseignement de ses filles*, although the work purports to be addressed to the Chevalier's daughters, a wider noble audience is also implied – for example, references to the Chevalier's daughters in the third person suggest that the daughters themselves are not the readers envisaged at certain points in the text.<sup>100</sup> Perhaps the Chevalier used the pretext of writing a text for his daughters to compose one for a further layer of intended audience (and thereby display the act of writing for his daughters to a broader public).<sup>101</sup> Certain indications in the *Livre* suggest that this was always the Chevalier's intention, but how often is the desire for a work to be disseminated successful? Does a text's eventual or secondary audience frequently extend beyond the primary audience the author envisaged? Conversely, a work might not even reach the immediately intended audience – especially if that audience was conceived of as very wide. But is it always possible to be sure of whom the

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<sup>98</sup> Marynissen suggests that after Alexandre's death, the manuscript probably passed to one of his two daughters: 'Enigma', 96.

<sup>99</sup> That is not to suggest that didactic works on female behaviour would not have been of interest to or read by male readers.

<sup>100</sup> On the *Livre*, see Anne Marie de Gendt, 'Stratégies éducatives pour nobles damoiselles: *Le livre du Chevalier de La Tour Landry*' (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Groningen, 1999); its audience is discussed on 55-56.

<sup>101</sup> This wider public was attained, as the *Livre* was widely disseminated, and even translated into more than one European language. One manuscript, fr. 580, also contains a copy of Christine's *Epistre a la Reine*, and might have been used as a didactic manual for a female audience.

intended audience of a particular work truly consisted: if an author claims to be writing for a given audience (whether that be an individual reader, a particular social group, or a general, extended public), should it be assumed that that audience was, in fact, reached? How genuinely should the claim that a particular audience was intended be taken? Could it be wish-fulfilment on the part of the modern reader to take such claims at face value?

Some of these questions have been addressed by Paul Strohm in two articles, one of which I cite in the epigraph to this section. In that article, Strohm distinguishes between the 'primary audience' of a text (i.e. the audience for whom an author directly intends their work – the French nobility, for example), and the 'secondary audience' (the wider public, which includes us as readers from a different period, class, and possibly even gender to that originally envisaged), each of whom will have different motivations for reading the text. As an illustration of this, although modern readers now form part of Christine's audience, evidently this was not the readership she envisaged when composing her works.

In a second article, Strohm moves away from the idea of primary and secondary audiences to explore the broader idea of the 'intended audience'.<sup>102</sup> He sees this as merely:

[...] evidence of intention – not a guarantee that the intention was fulfilled, but something between the author's hope and shrewd estimate as to the kinds of persons likely to fall inside the relationship that a literary work implies, and the kinds of persons likely to become its actual readers.<sup>103</sup>

This kind of intention is evident in the prologue to Pierre Salmon's *Dialogues*, where the author directly addresses and dedicates his manuscript to King Charles

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<sup>102</sup> Strohm does not dismiss the concept of primary and secondary audiences, but rather it does not serve his purpose in this article, since an intended audience could include a desired secondary audience, wider than the original, primary one.

<sup>103</sup> 'Chaucer's Audience(s): Fictional, Implied, Intended, Actual', *The Chaucer Review*, 18.2 (Fall, 1983), 137-145 (142).

VI: 'mon souverain et droituriez seigneur naturel, vous qui portez nom de roy [...] je applique et adresce ceste parole [...] a vous',<sup>104</sup> but also acknowledges (or, perhaps, expresses a hope) that his text will reach a wider audience. This is done through the use of an exhortative subjunctive that addresses both the prince (who, in this case, is both the intended and primary audience), and a wider or secondary audience (who, according to Strohm's definition, is also intended because hoped for): 'ainsy soit il de vous treshault et tresexcellent prince *et de tous ceulx qui veulent les liront et oront*'.<sup>105</sup> Within an individual work, the intended audience is therefore not itself a single unit, and can comprise several different layers or readers, as in the example of Geoffroy de la Tour Landry's *Livre*. This is more complicated when individual manuscripts contain works apparently addressed to different audiences, which may themselves be made up of different layers, such as I have shown to be the case to an extent with KBR 4373-76. Strohm's article implies that the audience set up in a text (even if that audience is only wished for) is faithfully desired, or, put simply, that if an author sets up *x* as the reader, then they hope it will be read by *x*. But this is not necessarily so straightforward, as doubts can be cast on the nature of the audience set up by the author. The concept of 'unreliable narrators' has long been encountered in scholarship, so why should this unreliability not also extend to claims of intended audiences?<sup>106</sup> In other words, what if by addressing a text to *x*, the author actually intends it to be read by *y*?

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<sup>104</sup> Fr. 23279, f. 4r.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid, ff. 4r-4v, added emphasis. According to Anne Hedeman, a second version of the *Dialogues* 'expands references to the moral utility of the text for an audience that goes beyond Charles VI to include Queen Isabeau of Bavaria, Dauphin Louis of Guyenne, and the royal family': *Of Counselors and Kings: The Three Versions of Pierre Salmon's Dialogues* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 28.

<sup>106</sup> On unreliable narrators, see Ansgar Nünning, 'Reconceptualizing Unreliable Narration: Synthesizing Cognitive and Rhetorical Approaches', in *A Companion to Narrative Theory*, eds. J. Phelan and P. J. Rabinowitz (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 89–107; James Phelan, *Living to Tell about It* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005); Tamar Yacobi, 'Fictional Reliability as a Communicative Problem', *Poetics Today*, 2.2 (1981), 113–26.

Scholarship appears to assume that prefatory dedications, such as those found in prologues, are a reliable indicator of audience, but are they necessarily so?

These are the questions I explore in this Section by considering the gender of the audiences set up in three of Christine's didactic works: *CLE*, *CD*, and *EO*. The case studies that follow consider both the iconographic and textual programmes of the works in manuscript form in order to examine differences between the original possessor of the text and the intended reader as set up in elements of the textual and visual apparatus.

#### Chemin de lonc estude

Author-copies of *CLE* were possessed by Jean de Berry (fr. 836 and 1188), Jean Sans Peur (KBR 10982), Philippe le Hardi (Brussels, KBR, MS 10983), Louis d'Orléans (Paris, BnF, MS fr. 1643), and Isabeau de Bavière (Chantilly 492 and Harley 4431). From this list of owners, it appears that although Christine intended *CLE* for high nobility readers, they were not of one particular gender. However, this stands at odds with the prologue, which sets up an exclusively male readership in its dedication:

A vous, bon roy de France redoubtable,  
Le VI<sup>e</sup> Charles du nom nottable, [...]  
Mon petit dit soit premier présenté, [...]  
Et puis a vous, haulx ducs magniffiez, [...]  
Et aux gittons d'icelle flour amee [...]  
Princes tres haulx [...] <sup>107</sup>

Curiously, this dedication remains unaltered, even in the two copies included in collections prepared for the Queen. A possible explanation may lie in the political situation within which *CLE* was composed, and its promotion of the King's brother,

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<sup>107</sup> *Chemin*, 86:7-23.

Louis d'Orléans, as candidate for Holy Roman Emperor.<sup>108</sup> Christine must appeal to his adversaries for her endorsement to succeed, the main opponents being precisely those to whom *CLE* was presented: the King's uncles, Jean de Berry and Philippe le Hardi, and his nephew Jean Sans Peur. Isabeau need not be directly addressed or asked to take note, since she already supported Louis in the conflict. Christine is strategic in uniting the different sides of the Orléans-Burgundy feud within her interpellation to the 'haulx ducs magniffiez', rhetorically presenting the dukes of Berry, Burgundy, and of Orleans with the united front that she argues they ought to form in life.

If the prologue is taken at face value, women are excluded from the questions of governance that *CLE* sets up as a matter for discussion amongst the male nobility.<sup>109</sup> However, it seems ironic that a text only explicitly mentioning male readers goes on to feature women so heavily: the ensuing narrative involves only female protagonists; the debate over good governance takes place between women; and, besides the dedication scenes,<sup>110</sup> the iconographic programme in each copy of *CLE* represents women almost exclusively.<sup>111</sup> Finally, the four women taking part in the debate that makes up the second half of *CLE* are also frequently depicted – often recurrently within the same manuscript. This visual repetition

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<sup>108</sup> As Gilbert Ouy and Christine Reno have shown: 'Où mène *Le chemin de long estude*? Christine de Pizan, Amborgio Migli et les ambitions impériales de Louis d'Orléans (à propos du ms. BNF fr 1436)', in *Christine de Pizan 2000*, 177-186; see also Adams, *Fight*, 82-88.

<sup>109</sup> This clashes with the important role Christine ascribes to Isabeau elsewhere in her work, such as in *ER* or the *Lamentacions sur les maux de la guerre civile*. On the Queen's role as mediator in the Orléans-Burgundy conflict, see Adams, *Fight*, 68-72.

<sup>110</sup> Where present, dedication scenes in *CLE* show Christine presenting her work to the noblemen mentioned in the prologue.

<sup>111</sup> Exceptions include Chantilly 492, the only manuscript to feature men and women in the audience of the debate that makes up the second half of this text (f. 199r); fr. 836 also features Maistre Avis in the illumination on f. 19r, perhaps intended to represent an audience member. There is a further minor exception in an illumination that is present in some manuscripts, which features an old man holding the top of the ladder to the heavens, which the Sibyl prevents Christine from climbing: KBR 10982, f. 25v; Harley 4431, f. 188r.



emphasises these women's importance, all the more so since in three manuscripts the women are depicted with symbols of activities that are not traditionally feminine: Sagesse holds a book; Chevalerie appears with a helmet and a banderole; Richesse holds a hammer, and has a plane and saw at her feet; and Noblesse sits holding a sceptre, whilst a king is crushed beneath her feet.<sup>112</sup> These images therefore act as a subtle reminder of women's (political) power. Even though women are absent from the list of addressees in the prologue, they are therefore granted a prominent place within the narrative and iconographic programme of the work. The governance of the world is also shown to be of concern to women, and it should not be forgotten that the princes to whom Christine is entrusted to present the debate are asked to discuss which of the four women (albeit allegorised) embodies the ideal ruler.

In *CLE*, although Christine does not directly address women, they are very much present in both text and image. In this instance, Christine has chosen to directly address and present copies of her work to political rivals in an attempt to bring the two sides together. She does so whilst covertly showing her support for Louis d'Orléans, so as not to risk her own position.<sup>113</sup> Copies were presented to the Queen in subtle acknowledgement of her position as Louis' main supporter in the feud, and, as the second part of *CLE* stages a debate taking place between four women in an allegorical sphere, it demonstrates the part that they might play in

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<sup>112</sup> This is how the women are represented in Harley 4431 and KBR 10982. They are depicted with scaled-back versions of these symbols in fr. 836 – for example, Richesse holds only a hammer.

<sup>113</sup> Louis' supporters were especially in danger in Paris, where the university and population overwhelmingly supported the Burgundian faction. In Willard's words, Christine's 'family was fortunate to escape [the Burgundian massacre] with their lives': *Life*, 196. Christine therefore had to be cautious in demonstrating loyalties. That she succeeded can be seen by the fact that so many critics have seen her as supporting the Burgundian cause: see, for example, Wheeler, 'Gender and Prefaces', 155; Claude Gauvard, 'Christine de Pisan a-t-elle eu une pensée politique?', *Revue Historique*, 250 (1973), 417-30 (423-424). Adams shows that whilst Christine was 'of necessity discreet', she became 'more openly partisan' after 1410: *Fight*, 3 and 172.

political reality. This goes some way towards explaining why copies of *CLE* were included in two compilation manuscripts presented to Isabeau de Bavière: not only does it show Christine's support for her patron's political cause, but this work also demonstrates the author's advocacy of women's involvement in scholarly and political debates – tacitly encouraging the Queen to involve herself in the political situation, and potentially providing an example for other female readers who could encounter the text through her copies.

#### Cité des dames

Whilst *CLE* is an example of a text dedicated to men that concerns itself with women's political role, my next example is *CD*, a work that appears to be written for women, but whose original possessors included men. This seems particularly curious for a book that not only aims to endorse female wisdom but that is also generally assumed to have been intended for a female readership. Of the paratext of a later edition prepared by the printer Henry Pepwell (an early sixteenth-century translation produced in London), seen by some as having been altered to appeal to a male readership, Jennifer Summit remarks: '*Le Livre de la cité des dames* seems a singularly illogical choice of text to package for gentleman readers, given the overtly feminine title and the subject, a monumental history of women directed against clerical misogyny'.<sup>114</sup>

But does the subject matter indeed inhibit a male readership? By whom did Christine originally intend *CD* be read? There is nothing in the presentation of copies prepared by Christine herself, such as a dedication, to suggest the original readership was purely female. None of the single-work manuscripts contains a

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<sup>114</sup> *Lost Property*, 96-97.

dedication scene, although two have miniatures that feature only women to illustrate the subject of the book (see, for example, Harley 4431, f. 361r: **Pl. 1.17**). Of the seven surviving author-copies, any known original ownership – about which very little is known – is split between male and female possessors: in addition to the copy found in Harley 4431, which was prepared for Isabeau de Bavière, Paris, BnF, MS fr. 24293 is thought to have belonged to Jean Sans Peur and/or his wife, Marguerite de Bavière, whilst Brussels, KBR, MS 9393 is said to have belonged to Jean Sans Peur only;<sup>115</sup> the decoration of Paris, BnF, MS fr. 1179 suggests that it was owned by a member of the royal household, perhaps Isabelle de France; no details are known of the original ownership of Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, MS 2686, nor of Paris, BnF, MSS fr. 603 or 1178.<sup>116</sup> In any case, as seen to be the case with *CLE*, ownership and dedication marks only reveal so much, and do not necessarily reflect the actual or even the intended readership of the manuscripts; for example, Christine may have given a copy of her work to Jean Sans Peur, but intended it to be read by the women of his household – most likely his wife and daughter. Indeed, because its root in the Latin *pater* means that 'the term *patron* defines a role clearly masculine',<sup>117</sup> it perhaps seems more conventional for

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<sup>115</sup> *ACP*, 532 and 552. No traces of dedication or ownership may be found in the manuscript. However, on the final folio, the phrase 'la felonnie des mauvais chevra sur leur [ceulx qui blasment les femmes] teste' has been underlined in red ink. This emphasis on the warning to men who defame women could suggest a male readership. This is the only manuscript of *CD* in which I have seen this passage emphasised. Although possibly added by a later reader, the underlinings present in this volume likely date to the composition of the manuscript, as elsewhere they are used to underline the wise ladies' responses to Christine's questions and the authorities cited.

<sup>116</sup> *ACP*: 546, 538, 560. Fr. 603 may have belonged to Jean d'Angoulême, or to another member of the Armagnac side of the Armagnac-Burgundian conflict: *op. cit.*, 297.

<sup>117</sup> Ralph Hanna III, 'Some Norfolk Women and Their Books, ca. 1350-1440', in *The Cultural Patronage of Medieval Women*, ed. June Hall McCash (Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 1996), 288-305 (288). That is not to say that female patrons did not exist, but that in carrying out patronage, women claimed a masculine position for themselves, and were usually only able to do so 'because of the achieved success of their consort or male parent': *op. cit.*, 288-289. As Madeline H. Caviness points out in the same collection of essays, different meaning is ascribed to *matron*, the female equivalent of *patron*: 'Anchoress, Abbess, and Queen: Donors and Patrons or Intercessors and Matrons?', in *Cultural Patronage*, 105-154 (106). On female patronage more

modern readers that books were dedicated to the male head of the household rather than to a female within it.<sup>118</sup> Despite the lack of concrete information concerning the original owners of *CD* manuscripts, the above analysis shows that at least one copy (KBR 9393) belonged to a powerful male patron, and complicates the assumption that it was written for a female audience.

To venture an answer to the question of the intended reader's gender, I now return to the portrait of Minerva in *CD* discussed above (181), in which each element of the goddess' attire is ascribed a different significance for the *chevalier* and for the *sage*. For example, the emblem of the snake at the centre of her shield 'signifioit que *le chevalier* doit estre cauteilleux et agitant sur les ennemis comme le serpent estoit aussi a dire que *le sage* est avisé de toutes les malices de quoy on lui pourroit nuire'.<sup>119</sup> Should mentions of these vocations be understood as interpellations to the intended readers? If so, whilst *chevaliers* invokes a male reader, is the same true of *sages*? This word could be read either as a gender-non-specific grammatical noun, but could equally be understood as a masculine adjective.<sup>120</sup> It can safely be assumed that Christine intended her text about women to have an at least partly female readership, so how would they have interpreted this passage? Rather than feeling excluded by it, I suggest that, because these roles are both embodied by Minerva, it served to illustrate the

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generally, see Bell, 'Book Owners'; June Hall McCash, 'The Cultural Patronage of Medieval Women: An Overview', in *Cultural Patronage* (1-49); Hand, *Women*.

<sup>118</sup> The majority of Christine's author-manuscripts were dedicated to male patrons. Its female dedicatee forms part of the appeal of Harley 4431, whose large frontispiece also presents an explicitly all-female environment. Christine herself does not use the word *patron* to refer to those who commissioned work from her or for whom she worked, since at this time, it had the general meaning of 'protector', rather than the more specific sense of 'patron of the arts'. According to the *Trésor de la langue française*, *mécène* was not in use until 1526: available online: <http://www.cnrtl.fr/definition/> (accessed 31 October 2016). Nevertheless, the fact that the term that came to be used is one evocative of male dominance and patriarchy combined with material evidence suggests that dedications addressed to a man were more common than those to women.

<sup>119</sup> *Cité*, 174, added emphasis.

<sup>120</sup> According to the *Dictionnaire du moyen français*.

various functions that female figures could represent, and could therefore even be read as empowering the female reader. Embodying warfare within a female figure was a way of showing that women were not disconnected from chivalry; furthermore, by guiding her readers through the details of the Minerva portrait, Christine also actively engages women readers in *sagece*. *Chevalerie* and *sagece* are therefore not connected with gender here, but shown to be an occupation and a trait that can be of concern and attributed to everyone.<sup>121</sup> Members of either sex may have read *CD*, and the Minerva chapter shows their concerns (*chevalerie*, or war) and abilities (*sagece*) to be the same.<sup>122</sup>

#### Epistre Othea

In Chapter 2, much space was dedicated to the ways in which the reader is invited to engage with the text and image in *EO*, but the question of who that reader would have been has, until now, been left aside. Who, then, did Christine have in mind as the addressee in this work? The fact that it contains an internal audience in the figure of Hector of Troy has led critics to seek to identify the Trojan prince with a counterpart at the medieval French court – most commonly, Louis d'Orléans, to whom copies of *EO* were presented, and who is visually equated with Hector in the opening miniatures.<sup>123</sup> However, as Louis was twenty-eight when *EO* was composed, his son, who was nearly ten (and therefore closer in age to fifteen-year-old Hector to whom the *epistre* is addressed), might have been a more fitting recipient, as would the Dauphin, who was then aged eight, and who would be able

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<sup>121</sup> In a similar vein, see le Ninan's description of the gradual feminisation of *hardiesse* in *FA*: 'Clergie et chevalerie'.

<sup>122</sup> As shown above, Minerva also unites men's and women's occupations through her embodiment of masculine warfare and of female textile work. She therefore unites male and female activities in more ways than one.

<sup>123</sup> See Chapter 2, 143, and *P&P*, 36-39 and 42-50.

to rule from the age of fourteen.<sup>124</sup> Several critics have also posited Christine's son, Jean de Castel, who was fourteen years old when *EO* was composed, as the possible addressee,<sup>125</sup> and Mombello lists Charles d'Orléans, Antoine de Bourgogne, Henry V of England, and Duc Amadée VIII de Savoie as further possible contenders.<sup>126</sup> However, these interpretations seem to ignore the material transmission of the text: although it was originally dedicated to Louis d'Orléans, author-copies were presented to Philippe le Hardi, Jean de Berry, and Isabeau de Bavière. The fact that author-copies of *EO* were owned by and presented to so many different patrons (without any of these having apparently commissioned the work), taken with the above suggestions that several possible addressees may be posited, makes it unlikely that Christine composed *EO* with a single addressee in mind, but rather that she deemed a number of readers would benefit from reading this text.

These readers almost certainly included the Queen, as *EO* features in two manuscripts that Christine prepared for her.<sup>127</sup> The critics I mention above have all posited a male audience, but made little of the fact that Christine also prepared at least two copies for a woman.<sup>128</sup> I have already touched on the fact that one of the most explicit warnings contained in two of *EO's* *histoires* would have been particularly relevant for Isabeau at the time when the manuscript concerned was being prepared (Chapter 1, 80). According to Hindman, further evidence that the Queen was an intended reader of *EO* is to be found in the figure of Ino in *histoire*

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<sup>124</sup> *P&P*, 38.

<sup>125</sup> Notably James C. Laidlaw, 'Christine de Pizan, the Earl of Salisbury and Henry IV', *French Studies*, 36.2 (1982), 129-143 (137-138); Willard, *Life*, 94.

<sup>126</sup> 'Per un'edizione critica dell' «Epistre Othéa» di Christine de Pizan', *Studi francesi*, 8 (1964), 401-417 (414-416).

<sup>127</sup> It remains unclear whether Isabeau commissioned Chantilly 492-493 or whether Christine offered it to her as a gift. On the Queen commissioning Harley 4431, see Chapter 1, 41, n. 55.

<sup>128</sup> However, as mentioned above, that *EO* was included in a manuscript prepared for the Queen does not necessarily indicate that she was its only intended reader, or that its intended reader was female.

XCIX, who forms ‘a model for Isabeau [...] that she should shun rather than emulate’.<sup>129</sup> The production history of the manuscript and the nature of certain advice contained within *EO* itself suggest that the Queen was therefore a firm member of Christine’s intended audience. But was she the only woman whom Christine intended to read the text, or does it contain advice for women that suggests a wider female audience? To answer this question, I turn to the figure of Diana (Diane), the subject of three separate *histoires* (XXIII, LXIII, and LXIX), one of which depicts a female audience for whom the accompanying textual exhortation seems particularly relevant.

In two *histoires*, Diana is represented so as to explicitly draw on iconographical conventions and mythological traditions that connect her with chastity and hunting.<sup>130</sup> *histoire* LXIII instructs the reader not to spend too much time hunting – advice that is illustrated with a scene depicting Diana and her nymphs stalking deer with hounds (Harley 4431, f. 124r: **Pl. 3.14**; fr. 606, f. 30r). Similarly, *histoire* LXIX recounts the story of Actaeon hunting and accidentally surprising Diana bathing, and the corresponding image shows the goddess in her bath whilst nymphs hold her bow (Harley 4431, f. 126r: **Pl. 3.15**; fr. 606, f. 32r); Actaeon appears on the left-hand side of the image, whilst a stag in the background prefigures his imminent transformation.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> *P&P*, 132-138 (136).

<sup>130</sup> Brumby, *Classical Myths*, 98. In the final lines of *EDA*, Diana is also referred to as ‘Dyane la chaceresse’: *Œuvres poétiques*, vol. 2, 26:822.

<sup>131</sup> On representations of Diana in this period and into the Renaissance, see Patricia Zalamea, *Subject to Diana: Picturing Desire in French Renaissance Courtly Aesthetics* (unpublished PhD thesis, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, 2007). Zalamea provides numerous examples of representations of Diana with a bow or bathing. Diana is presented as the goddess of hunting in one of Christine’s principal sources, *OM*: see *Ovide moralisé en prose*, ed. C. de Boer (Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing Company, 1954), 219; and Zalamea, *Subject*, figs. 50-51. The bath was a more common feature in Diana imagery, as the Diana-narratives both take place in that setting (Diana surprised by Actaeon whilst bathing; Diana noticing Callisto’s pregnancy while washing):

However, the first time Diana is encountered in *EO* is in the *texte of histoire* XXIII, where nothing in the image visually signals the goddess's presence to the audience. Instead, in the author-manuscripts, this image shows a group of seven women reading together from open books, accompanied by a further female figure reading in the clouds (Harley 4431, f. 107r: **Pl. 1.14**; fr. 606 f. 13r). Of this image, Desmond and Sheingorn have said that it 'appears to lack any connection to the textual material of this chapter';<sup>132</sup> it is true that the image does not bear an immediately apparent connection to the lesson contained in the textual elements, which instruct the reader to be chaste and 'honest[e] de corps'.<sup>133</sup> Indeed, in later, non-author manuscripts, this image is usually altered so as to remove the connections with books.<sup>134</sup> Instead, later manuscripts tend to depict groups of women in different positions, most commonly either conversing together (Bodley 421: **Pl. 3.16**), in discussion with the goddess (Bodmer 49, f. 42r) or looking towards her (The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, MS 74 G 27, f. 26r); in several examples, she is shown holding a single flower, or one is being handed up to her (for example, Bodley 421: **Pl. 3.16**; Bodmer 49). The altered presentation of the iconographic programme suggests that later readers and illuminators could also not see the connection between the text and the image. Why, then, was this scene depicted as it was in the author-manuscripts? Once again, as Christine closely oversaw the preparation of these copies, it can safely be assumed that there must be a reason for the miniature to have been composed in this way, and that if it is

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Zalamea, *Subject*, 34. Nevertheless, the tradition of representing Diana with the hunter's bow dates back to Ancient Greece: op cit., 172, and fig. 29.

<sup>132</sup> *MMV*, 123.

<sup>133</sup> *Othea*, 236.

<sup>134</sup> Only Lille 175 retains a book in the Diana image: *MMV*, 232. This image shows two women sitting on the floor with open books in their laps, and further volumes on the shelves behind them, their gestures signaling that they are engaged in lively discussion. A goddess figure stands in a cloud to their left.



not immediately apparent, readers must search deeper for it. This particular illumination features an example of a gathering or audience of readers, and, I believe, provides an important clue as to the intended readership of this *histoire*, if not *EO* more widely.

Before discussing the audience, I begin by asking: *who* is represented in this image? Because Diana is the deity and mythological figure evoked in the textual elements of the *histoire* and since she occupies the usual position for gods and goddesses in the *EO* illuminations, she is generally identified as the figure in the clouds in this image. However, it would seem unusual for an artist to represent a figure with such stable pre-existing iconography in a way that diverges from tradition – or, at least, this would be unusual if it was hoped that the reader would recognise the figure. Because the deity would not be visually identified as Diana, the key to reading this image does not lie in whom it represents, but in *what* is being depicted, for which the textual elements of the *histoire* should be consulted. The verses read:

De Dyane soies recors  
Pour l'onnesteté de ton corps  
Car ne lui plaist vie soullée  
Ne deshonneste ne toussee.<sup>135</sup>

The message contained in the *texte* therefore concerns the importance of preserving virginity, a lesson that would have been especially pertinent to female readers, particularly the younger or unmarried women who apparently make up some of the group in the two author-manuscripts (in both, three of the seven women do not wear any kind of head covering and their hair flows loosely over their shoulders, suggesting that these are unmarried maidens). As if to emphasise this message, the miniature shows a group of women reading, thus not only

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<sup>135</sup> *Othea*, 236.

depicting the audience for whom the message is most pertinent, but also reflecting the situation in which readers of this manuscript may actually find themselves – all the more so should they happen to be women. Instead of explicitly depicting a recognisably relevant mythological figure, this image therefore represents the readership to whom the didactic message most directly applies. Whilst the textual elements of the *histoire* are based on Diana's associations with chastity, the image serves to draw attention to the utility of this particular lesson to women.<sup>136</sup> I might also remark that it would be difficult to otherwise represent virginity or purity in a decorous manner! In this image, Christine revisits a theme seen elsewhere in her work: the link between reading and chastity.<sup>137</sup> This link is one that was also embodied by the Virgin, whose association with chastity stands firm, and whose connection with literacy was explored in Chapter 2. In fact, without knowing the textual content of the *histoire*, should the figure shown to be reading and wearing a blue dress in Plate 1.14 be identified by the image alone, the Virgin Mary is more likely to be seen as being depicted than Diana.<sup>138</sup>

There is a second curious point to be made about Diana in *EO*. In addition to her associations with chastity and hunting, the goddess is also traditionally

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<sup>136</sup> Zalamea provides an alternative reading of this image, suggesting that 'the source of inspiration for Christine's innovative presentation of Diana might be Évrart de Conty's lengthy presentation of Diana as a wise figure, who [...] is capable of delivering textual commentaries and providing interpretations of mythological tales, while emphasizing the value of chastity': 'Subject to Diana', 43-44.

<sup>137</sup> The more autobiographical passages of Christine's works show the narrator choosing to remain a widow instead of remarrying (therefore, remaining chaste to her late husband), a choice that goes hand-in-hand with her taking up study: see, for example *Advison*, 109-113. In noting the originality of the Diana illumination, Hindman comments that this is testament to Christine's involvement in its design: *P&P*, 93. This further supports my contention that this image was designed for the purpose of drawing the reader's attention.

<sup>138</sup> I am grateful to the audience of my paper, 'Evaluating Christine de Pizan's Audience through the Queen's Manuscript (London, British Library, MS Harley 4431)', International Medieval Congress (Leeds, July 2016) for supporting this thought.

linked to the moon.<sup>139</sup> This is explicitly stated in the *glose* to *histoire* XXIII: ‘Dyane c’est la lune’.<sup>140</sup> However, if the *histoires* in *EO* are taken in order, the reader will notice that a different moon-figure was encountered previously in *histoire* X, where Phoebe’s (Phebé) connection with the moon is conveyed both textually and visually. All three textual elements of *histoire* X indicate Phoebe’s lunar associations: the *texte* refers to ‘lunage’ as one of her character traits; the *glose* explicitly states that ‘Phebé est appellee la lune’, which is repeated in the *allegorie* (‘Phebé, qui est la lune’).<sup>141</sup> In terms of the visual apparatus, the images in both author-manuscripts evoke the moon in several ways: the illuminations use white, cream and golden tones, to make the goddess stand out against the deep blue background – evocative of the moon standing out against the night sky; her hair also has the shape of a crescent moon in fr. 606, f. 7r (**Pl. 3.17**), and rays have been added to the roundness behind her head in Harley 4431, suggestive of the sun being eclipsed by Phoebe’s head (Harley 4431, f. 101r).

Not only are two different goddesses said to represent the moon in a single text, but, confusingly, they are also said to symbolise very different, even opposing, qualities: where the Diana-moon is exemplary in representing chastity, the Phoebe-moon conversely stands for mutability and vices that the reader is instructed to avoid – inconstancy in particular: ‘la lune [...] donne influence de muableté et de folie, et pour ce veult dire que le bon chevalier se doit garder de tieulx vices’.<sup>142</sup> In other words, the changing moon represents two opposing qualities: in different guises, it can stand for either loyalty or disloyalty. It should

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<sup>139</sup> Diana is also linked with the moon in Christine’s sources, including the *Glose des echecs amoureux*: see *Othea*, 406.

<sup>140</sup> *Othea*, 236.

<sup>141</sup> *Othea*, 218.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*

be noted that in mythology, Diana is the Roman equivalent of Phoebe, the Greek goddess of hunting, childbirth, and of the moon.<sup>143</sup> It is not therefore surprising that they share associations in *EO*.<sup>144</sup> But what is to be made of the fact that a single symbol is shown to convey two such opposing meanings within *EO*, and how are readers to respond to it?

The reasons behind this duality must be partly due to the fact that, to the medieval mind, ‘as the goddess of the (changeable) moon, Diana had many aspects’.<sup>145</sup> The visual representations of Diana and Phoebe and the associations they conjure up therefore warn the attentive reader that the same symbol can represent more than one thing and various qualities at different times. When associated with Diana, the moon represents chastity and virtue, but with Phoebe, it stands for unfaithfulness and fickleness. As for distinguishing between which meaning is evoked in a particular context, the examples given in *EO* cannot instruct further: it will be the reader’s task to learn to carefully discern which applies in any given occurrence. The differences in meanings also seem applicable to different audiences: whilst the importance of chastity/loyalty is highlighted in *histoire XXIII*, where a female audience is posited, *histoire X* explicitly evokes a *bon chevalier* (i.e. a male recipient) when warning against behaving inconstantly. Whilst there is a benefit to reading only one or other *histoire*, reading the two moon-stories together reveals the multiple possible meanings, and pushes the reader towards further reflection.

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<sup>143</sup> Phoebe is one of several names for Artemis, by which she is more usually known: Brumble, *Classical Myths*, 98. See also Blumenfeld-Kosinski, *Reading Myth*, 312.

<sup>144</sup> Phoebe’s association with hunting is signaled in *EO* by her holding a bow and arrow.

<sup>145</sup> Brumble, *Classical Myths*, 98. See op. cit. 98-101 for details of three ‘aspects’ of Diana.

## Conclusion

In the three examples examined here, I have shown it not to be the case that Christine wrote each text with either an exclusively male or female audience in mind, but rather that textual and material indications reveal that they were intended to be read by members of both sexes. In several examples, a gap opens up between the person named in the dedication and the person who appears to be addressed in the text itself. The intended audience is therefore set up differently in two areas of the manuscript, suggesting a multi-layered audience. Some of this was undoubtedly intentional on Christine's part, as she could *appear* to be intending her work for one reader, whilst actually intending it to be read by another audience.

The 'intended reader' in these works becomes a slippery concept to grasp, and a somewhat inadequate tool by which to analyse Christine's readership. Unfortunately, the very persons to have read these texts in the Middle Ages are unlikely to ever be known, but something of Christine's intentions can nonetheless be conjectured. Although, judging by the text alone, women do not appear to be the intended readers of *EO* or *CLE*, their absence in textual and iconographic dedications is made up for by their presence in other miniatures, and their roles in text and image as guides, teachers, and imparters of moral guidance.<sup>146</sup> The example of *CD* shows that assumptions about the gender of a text's audience can be

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<sup>146</sup> On women as models bearing a connection with wisdom in *EO* see Jeanneret, 'Texte et enluminures', especially 732-736. Although Jeanneret is right that 'Christine [...] cherche à revaloriser les figures de femmes négligées ou noircies par l'histoire' (op. cit, 732), it would be remiss to ignore the fact that *EO* also contains a number of dubious or 'bad' women. However, unlike in *CD*, Christine does not indiscriminately include only women of exemplary moral value or skip over details that make them appear in a bad light. As an example, see Bellerophon's mother, discussed in Chapter 2, 103.

misdirecting in both ways, and a text that at first glance appears to be intended for a female readership can in fact contain lessons for men.

## Conclusion

This Chapter has explored some of the ways in which current approaches towards gender in Christine's works can be rethought. Although Cristine's gender transformation in *MF* could be read as entirely allegorical, undoubtedly its presence within a narrative highlights the possibility of gender-flexibility in Christine's works. Women in her texts partake in activities that would be less open to them in reality, and, undoubtedly, there is a degree of irony in this reconfiguration of gendered roles and in the possibilities opened up by personified female allegorical figures: in the textual/allegorical realm, female characters' preferences not only prevail over men's choices, they also have unlimited knowledge, and partake in and represent male activities, such as knightly pursuits. Whilst using fiction and allegory to present a state of affairs contrary to that most (if any) contemporary women would have known, the underlying meaning is that an alternate vision is possible: Cristine's transformation into a man could only exist in an alternative, allegorical, reality, but the historical Christine still assumed her husband's place, and took on a male role.

Whilst presenting a possible alternate reality, Christine also bolsters female power and authority by emphasising women's traditional role as teachers; she does this by providing multiple examples of didactic mothers, whose positions are strengthened by the archetypes of St Anne and the Virgin Mary.<sup>147</sup> Although the connection between mothers and teaching is not new, Christine takes it further

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<sup>147</sup> The examples discussed in this chapter are taken from some of Christine's most heavily illustrated texts. The author-portraits examined in Chapter 1 also assert female power and presence by serving to emphasise Christine's authority.

through the figure of Minerva, the very embodiment of wisdom. Although Minerva and Diana are not didactic mothers, like all of the authoritative guiding female figures encountered in Christine's works, they remain symbols of female power and achievement. The connection between mothers and didacticism and/or education has not previously been seen as a theme in *MF*, but has been demonstrated here, as has Christine's configuration of the female sex, which is not so negative as has previously been seen. Text and image in those of Christine's works examined in this Chapter have been shown to work together to assert female power and presence – even in *CLE* and *EO*, which appear textually to be addressed to an exclusively male audience.

The final approach towards reconfiguring gender in this Chapter has been to rethink the intended audience of some of Christine's works. Perhaps because modern readers find themselves so very far removed from any audience Christine could have envisaged for her works, it has been too easy for any textual indication of intended audience contained in the dedications or prologues to be taken literally, without regard for how the audience is set up within the rest of the work. However, just as *EO* and *CLE* contain textual, visual, and material indications that they were intended to be read by women, upon closer reading, *CD* also presents intimations of a male readership. Endlessly reconfigured, her presentation altered according to the audience envisaged, the multiplicity incarnated by Minerva makes her a perfect figure through which to engage different types of readers. She is thus more than a useful didactic tool, being a figure who unites the sexes, enabling engagement with audiences of both genders.





## **Conclusion**

### **Multiple Meanings, Meaning in Multiplicity**

The Introduction to this thesis set out the premise that images would be central to the understanding and to the reading of Christine de Pizan's didactic works. Over the course of the last three Chapters I have demonstrated that, in addition to affecting the way in which readers would have approached various aspects of Christine's texts, the iconographic programme also influenced the reading process itself: reading the text without the images could lead to a very different understanding of the work to one that included the visual programme. The meanings brought about through reading text and image together influenced the reader's conception of the author, and even served to configure the readers themselves.

To summarise my assessment of the function that images play in Christine's texts, it is that they enact and evoke multiplicity. In Chapter 1, this multiplicity was found to lie in the various author-portraits and representations of Christine-figures that feature in the iconographic programmes of many of her works. The multi-facetedness that already exists in the gap between Christine the historical author and her textual double, Cristine, extends into elements that would sometimes be considered paratextual. The multiple intervisual associations that are evoked in Christine's author-portraits (the Virgin Mary and the House of France in particular) serve to underscore and enhance her authority. Chapter 2

demonstrated that Christine was not only aware of the plurality of meanings and ambiguities to be found in texts such as *EO*, but that she pushed the reader to actively seek them out. Far from being a work written for one particular reader, it caters for the needs of different types of readers – and there is no longer any need to keep trying to identify a single, male intended reader, especially since the intended readership undoubtedly comprised women. *EO* can seem puzzling to modern readers because, although its didactic aspect has long been recognised, it has not previously been seen that what this complex work teaches its medieval audience was above all how to read. The work as a whole comprises and teaches through both visual and textual components; a reading of only one or the other of these two elements is incomplete. In Chapter 3, multiplicity for Christine was shown to be incarnated by the figure of Minerva, who is both a woman representing multiple activities, as well as being plural herself through her double, Pallas. Minerva/Pallas embodies and unites several activities that would usually only be associated with one or the other gender, thereby diminishing the boundary between the two. Examining the roles of Christine's multiple parents demonstrated that it is not the case that her father is interested in her education and her mother is not, but that, on the contrary, the role of the female in education is one that is valorised throughout Christine's works. The conclusion that Christine envisaged multiple types of different readers problematises the concept of the 'intended reader', particularly when that reader is envisaged as an individual, and demonstrates that material indications such as ownership marks and marginal notes enable a better assessment of the readership of Christine's works than the textual and visual detail these include.

The various analyses carried out demonstrate that rather than looking for single answers to questions posed of Christine's works, the answer often lies in multiplicity: multiple readers and readings, multiple meanings, conveyed through multiple personas. More fundamentally, the potential for didacticism to provoke the reader's reflection and individual interpretation offers a new way to consider the goals of medieval didactic literature. Far from being an 'undoubtedly [...] monologist mode', as has previously been argued, on the contrary, Christine's didactic literature pushes readers to think, to consider opposing viewpoints and to establish their own position.<sup>1</sup> Certain works, such as *CLE* and *EO*, display multiple viewpoints, on which readers are more or less explicitly asked to make up their mind. Although works such as *CD* or *TV* appear more monologic in their overall message, that this is generated through dialogue and a plurality of voices, rather than the monolithic repetition of a single point, shows that even apparently monologist didacticism involves more pluralism than might be expected. It remains to be seen to what extent this is a feature of medieval didactic literature more widely.

Each Chapter has explored the didactic function of the iconographical apparatus in a different way. Author-portraits were seen as first being able to lead the reader-viewer into believing that the textual construction of the implied author was as one with her historical counterpart. This would have served the useful purpose of bolstering the author's pleas for financial help or for protection, but readers must be careful not to confound literary or visual constructions with historical reality. Carefully constructed author-portraits also intervisually evoke a variety of authorities, with the effect of reinforcing Christine's own authority and

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<sup>1</sup> Kay, *Place of Thought*, 177.

that of any didactic messages she relays. Author-portraits were also observed to direct the reader-viewer's attention towards an important point that the author wished for them to take away. In Chapter 2, the *EO* miniatures were shown to form part of the didactic material that Christine explicitly invites the reader to interpret; the series of miniatures could serve the viewer as memory aids and as prompts to carry out the exegetical reading contained in the *gloses* and *allegories*. The final Chapter explored the ways in which the audience of a particular work could be set up so as to conflict with the text. This could serve the purpose of underscoring a didactic message that is most relevant for a particular type of reader (such as the image of the female readers in *histoire XXIII* of *EO*), or for an individual (for example, the images accompanying the *histoires* concerning Venus and Cupid). Such conflicts were undoubtedly deliberately set up by the author, and reveal something about the intended recipients of particular messages to make up for the lack of detail conveyed by the dedications or the ownership of individual manuscripts, sometimes even offer opposing such detail.

The importance of the iconographic programme in the interpretation of the text has consequences for the preparation of editions of these works in a way that suggests current editorial practices do not accurately represent them to the modern reader. Reading an edition of a medieval text that does not feature or mention illuminations, or that appears to overlook the significance of the way in which the manuscript page layout has been carefully crafted to guide the reader towards considering different possible connections within the material and a variety of ways of reading it, can present a confusing text.<sup>2</sup> This is especially true

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<sup>2</sup> The different types of reading invited by the various *EO* manuscripts have been discussed here, but there has not been space to consider the diagrammatic forms Christine uses elsewhere in her

of *EO*, in which the extensive iconographic programme is key to interpreting several *histoires*, to uncovering hidden meanings, and to the exercise that Christine invites the reader to undertake in making their way through this work. But this is true also of lesser-illustrated texts, or those that feature only an author-portrait: images were always included for a purpose, to convey meaning of some kind, to be seen and interpreted by the reader. By omitting the carefully constructed iconographic programme from editions of Christine's works, modern readers are only getting a partial picture of the text as it was conceived by the author and encountered by medieval audiences. If the reason for using Harley 4431 as the base manuscript to so many modern editions is that it represents the last copy of a text to have been revised by Christine, the fact that a large number of illuminations were designed especially for and included in and those revisions should also be taken into account.

There are obviously limits to what can reasonably be included in modern paper editions, and I am not suggesting that Christine's texts should be printed in a format that includes reproductions of all of the miniatures or even in facsimile form (indeed, several of Christine's texts remain to be edited at all, let alone in such luxurious editions).<sup>3</sup> However, steps could be taken to ensure that readers are at least aware of the material that printed editions do not contain. Details such as page layout and iconographic programme (I might also mention performances of

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manuscripts, whose scarcity would make them all the more interesting to study. An example is to be found in the Harley 4431 copy of *Prudence* (ff. 285v-286v).

<sup>3</sup> Whilst isolated attempts have been made to publish heavily-illustrated copies of Christine's texts, either in facsimiles or in scholarly texts, these are frequently superseded by digital editions or by the manuscript's later being made available online. Jacqueline Cerquiglini-Toulet and Hélène Basso recently published *Épître d'Othéa*, a luxury facsimile of Bodmer 49, only for the manuscript to be subsequently digitised on an open-access platform within a few years. Similarly, although *ACP* usefully reproduces many images from Christine's manuscripts, only a few of these are not available online. The cost of this expensive publication might have been considerably lower had it directed readers towards these freely available sources, or collated a list of the online sources, perhaps on a webpage linked to the publication.

medieval music) have sometimes been presented in audio-visual forms that complement a book,<sup>4</sup> but such detail may now be presented in a dedicated online space. Whilst some twenty-first century writers of fiction and poetry make fruitful use of the opportunities afforded by an online platform,<sup>5</sup> this remains an underused resource in the world of scholarship. Several notable projects in the broad field of Medieval Studies have, nevertheless, made successful use of online platforms to display and support research, to aid primary reading or the navigation of the manuscript tradition of a text, and as a means of making research accessible to the public. 'Charlemagne: A European Icon', is an example of a website that displays the research currently taking place within the wider project alongside accessible 'Virtual Exhibitions', in which experts introduce and contextualise the material being examined by the group to a general audience.<sup>6</sup> Likewise, the 'Roman de la Rose Digital Library' is an invaluable resource for students, scholars, and general readers alike, both as an aid to research or simply an easy means by which to view the 146 *RR* manuscripts to which it provides access.<sup>7</sup> Though there are many advantages to such projects (public engagement and dissemination of research being just two of those),<sup>8</sup> these online spaces can be

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<sup>4</sup> As examples, I cite Peter Lord, *Medieval Vision: The Visual Culture of Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2003), which presents supplementary visual material in CD-ROM form, and Mary Louise Switten, *The Medieval Lyric*, 4 vols. (South Hadley: Mount Holyoke College, 1987), whose four books are accompanied by five audiocassettes featuring recordings of works by Machaut, amongst others.

<sup>5</sup> Jessie Burton directs curious readers within her books to the dedicated Pinterest pages she maintains for her two novels (published 2014 and 2016), where they can find pictures that illustrate and explain details that are unfamiliar from the settings of her books, or that show the inspirations behind them: <https://uk.pinterest.com/jesskatbee/> (accessed 31 October 2016). Similarly, the poet Hollie McNish's professional website links to her YouTube channel, which features videos of her reading her poems aloud: <https://www.youtube.com/user/holliepoetry> (accessed 31 October 2016).

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.charlemagne-icon.ac.uk> (accessed 31 October 2016).

<sup>7</sup> <http://romandelarose.org> (accessed 31 October 2016).

<sup>8</sup> Several libraries (including the BnF) significantly reduce their charges for reproducing material online as opposed to in print form – a considerable advantage that digital publications hold over traditional publications.

costly and time-consuming to set up (especially if participants or contributors require training of any kind) and difficult to maintain, particularly once the project and any associated funding has come to an end. A significant disadvantage that remains a problem for all online resources is their ephemerality: over the course of this project, for example, many of the web-addresses of sources cited have changed, some numerous times.<sup>9</sup> Details can be added, updated, or removed entirely, and the preservation of online resources remains a challenge for the digital age. A final disadvantage of the use of online platforms is that scholars may tend to prefer to focus on the most easily accessible resources, leading to others, that have not been subject to the same online treatment, being side-lined in scholarly discourse (as noted, since its digitisation, Harley 4431 has been subject to such preferential treatment). Whilst there are certainly disadvantages to online platforms, they can also easily be updated and new resources added as they become available. This online space can supplement printed editions that might refer readers to other available resources, both on and offline.

Nowadays, digitised copies of Christine's works (both author-manuscripts and subsequent copies) are available through several digital library collections, at no cost to the user. There was an attempt 'to create an online library of all manuscripts containing the works by this author', in the 'Christine de Pizan Digital Scriptorium', but this project has not advanced for several years, and only mentions those manuscripts now housed at the BnF.<sup>10</sup> The last accessible, dedicated Christine project to use online space was 'The Making of the Queen's Manuscript', which came to an end in 2009, and it would be advantageous for

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<sup>9</sup> A particular challenge occurred in late-2015 when the BnF updated its manuscript-viewing platform, leading to changes in almost all of its so-called permalinks.

<sup>10</sup> <http://pizanmanuscripts.org> (accessed 31 October 2016).

other Christine manuscripts or individual texts to be given a similar online treatment.<sup>11</sup> I have analysed some of the alterations that took place over the course of Christine's preparation of the *EO* manuscripts, but further changes would undoubtedly be better perceived should it be possible to view the manuscripts side by side, as would be possible on a digital platform. Such an analysis would not just be advantageous to Christine studies, but to our understanding of late-medieval *mouvance* as a whole.<sup>12</sup>

It took time for the new possibilities opened up by changes in reading practices in the fifteenth-century (as explored in Chapter 2) and for those offered by the shift from manuscript to print to be made use of.<sup>13</sup> In a related manner, the new ways of reading that digital technology enables still remain largely to be exploited. As put by Martin K. Foys:

The large-scale reproduction of medieval manuscripts as digital media has the potential to challenge and change how such works are studied and understood. But digital resources for manuscript study are still relatively immature, and largely have not realized their own methodological and technological logic.<sup>14</sup>

It is true that viewing manuscripts online has certain limitations, as described by Elaine Treharne: 'critical elements of the book disappear before our eyes in a

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<sup>11</sup> An electronic edition of *DVA* has been prepared by Sylvie Bazin-Tacchella and Gilles Souvay within the last year, but this is only available to candidates of the Agrégation in 2017, and sadly not accessible to a wider public: <http://www.atilf.fr/dmf/PizanVraisAmans/> (accessed 31 October 2016).

<sup>12</sup> I have obtained the consent of thirteen libraries to present their copies of *EO* as part of the 'Epistre Othea Online Database' that I plan to compile as part of my post-doctoral research (eleven of the sixteen manuscripts involved have previously only been partly digitised or not at all).

<sup>13</sup> See Seth Lerer, 'Medieval English Literature and the Idea of the Anthology', *PMLA*, 118 (2003), 1251–1267 and Harold Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993), who uses the term 'scribal publication' to describe seventeenth-century publication conventions.

<sup>14</sup> 'Medieval Manuscripts: Media Archaeology and the Digital Incunabulum', in *The Medieval Manuscript Book: Cultural Approaches*, eds. Michael Johnston and Michael Van Dussen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 119–139 (120).



digital world where scale, heft and space are not provided around the image'.<sup>15</sup>

Whilst it is true that digital 'viewers do not see or understand the "book"[...] any more than they would from a print edition', and that digital copies indeed only provide 'new, partial editions', Treharne's objections concern the 'bookness' of the textual object requiring study, an argument of less significance when it comes to the study of the text and image contained within a manuscript (although still a factor that demands to be taken into account – in terms of the layout of images, the order in which they are encountered, where they appear on the page, whether on a recto or verso, etc.).<sup>16</sup> Although 'images supplied in [electronic databases of digitized manuscripts] are no substitute for autopsy of originals, [...] they are particularly well adapted to the study of illuminated manuscripts'.<sup>17</sup>

On the grounds of their originality, many of the individual images examined over the course of this thesis were likely to have been conceived of by the author, just as the textual elements were. It is unlikely ever to be known with any certainty exactly how involved Christine was in the preparation of each individual miniature. Her involvement may have varied significantly from image to image, according to the artist with whom she was working, the existence or availability of a suitable model or precedent, or the particular function of an individual illumination, etc. Nevertheless, the fact that the author of the material that normally forms the focus of a reader's attention (the text) was also the creative force (or, at least, one of the creative forces) behind the images makes them a worthy object of study, one that should be viewed, interpreted and analysed along with the text.

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<sup>15</sup> 'Fleshing out the Text: The Transcendent Manuscript in the Digital Age', *Postmedieval*, 4.4 (Winter 2013), 465-478 (475).

<sup>16</sup> Treharne, 'Fleshing out', 476.

<sup>17</sup> Hamburger, *Script as Image*, 4.

This is by no means the final word on text and image relations in Christine de Pizan's works. In terms of Christine's complete corpus, there has only been space to consider a fraction of her illuminations in detail here. My discussions of some of the fr. 606 and Harley 4431 *EO* miniatures supplement and sometimes contradict the founding works of Hindman, and of Desmond and Sheingorn. That our approaches have been so different shows how much room there is for interpretation within these images: whilst Hindman's approach in *P&P* was to underscore the political elements of the iconographic programme, and Desmond and Sheingorn focused on the cinematic qualities of the movements they represent in *MMV*, my approach has highlighted the multiplicity of interpretations that the presentation of the visual elements made possible and even invited. Other approaches will undoubtedly also be advanced, leading to a variety of individual perspectives, and to further patterns being discerned. One of the most surprising findings of this project was that, despite being considered as a very recognisable iconographic figure in her manuscripts, so little has been written on Christine's author-portraits.<sup>18</sup> My own examination in Chapter 1 has gone some way to remedying this, but many more manuscripts and images could also be examined for their visual construction of the author. The concept of ambiguous author figures would be a useful means of conceptualising the slippery relationship between an author and a narrator bearing the same name – in this respect, this relationship is perhaps easier to conceptualise in terms of the visual apparatus than it is textually or narratologically. One cannot talk of ambiguous narrators in

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<sup>18</sup> Articles often limit themselves to stating that Christine is represented in her manuscripts, rather than analysing the implications (or ambiguities) of such a practice. See, for example, Christine Reno, 'La Mémoire de Christine de Pizan dans ses manuscrits', *Le Moyen français*, 75 (2014), 67-83 (73).

the same way: the term would imply that it is their role as narrator itself that is subject to ambiguity, not their identification with the author.

There is therefore certainly much more to examine, and this study has perhaps raised more questions than it has answered. Foremost amongst those are questions concerning the extent of Christine's involvement in the preparation of her images. Clues or answers to this might lie beneath the layers of paint that adorn the pages of Christine's author-manuscripts, and it would not be impossible for these pages to be scanned, possibly uncovering buried instructions to illuminators, maybe even in Christine's hand.<sup>19</sup> The question of how involved Christine's various patrons were in the design of manuscripts, whether they commissioned them or whether they were gifted to them, also merits further investigation. The structures of medieval patronage have long been subject to enquiry, and McGrady's forthcoming book, *The Writer's Gift: The Aesthetics and Economics of Patronage in the Late Middle Ages*, promises to help improve our understanding of this still obscure subject.<sup>20</sup> Although few of these questions are likely to be definitively answered, some of the findings presented here contribute towards understanding Christine's relationships with her various patrons. What has been shown is a picture of Christine as an author who was subject to multiple creative stimuli at different times: in addition to powerful patrons who commissioned particular works of her (*CV*), others ordered copies of works already in circulation, or that had already been presented to the same or a different patron (as was the case with many of the works in Harley 4431);

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<sup>19</sup> In a personal conversation, Marilyn Desmond expressed her hopes to some day examine images of Harley 4431 taken under x-ray.

<sup>20</sup> I am grateful to McGrady for supporting several of my thoughts concerning Christine's relationships with her patrons in our personal correspondence.

Christine could also draw on her own inspirations and readings, without any individual appearing to have requested a work of her (*EO*).

A quantitative analysis of Christine's manuscript output and a timeline that represents her relationships with various illuminators is another of this study's original outputs. This would not easily have been accomplished before the publication of *ACP*, a critical work that not only compiles the data required in a single volume, but that also, by taking the most recent scholarship available when it was written into account, allows for more precise dating of a number of manuscripts whose timeframe has previously been subject to debate amongst scholars. This timeline demonstrates an improved situation for Christine post-1405, whether that be a financial improvement (Christine's ameliorated economic situation) or author(itor)ial (her increased reputation as an author) – my own hypothesis is that these are not mutually exclusive, and Christine's improved situation is likely to have been a combination of the two.

Wider questions concerning didacticism also arise, and further work could be undertaken concerning how didactic texts would have been read, and the particular lessons it was hoped that audiences would take from them. It would be most interesting to examine, from a historical point of view, whether the advice given in these texts was heeded – by contemporary readers and by future audiences. In this respect, Harley 4431 might yield yet more valuable information, since, after Charles VI's death, this manuscript passed to the English Court through the Duke of Bedford and his wife, Jacquetta of Luxembourg (mother of Elizabeth Woodville, the future Queen Consort of England through her second marriage).<sup>21</sup> What did the English make of the advice presented to their rivals in manuscripts

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<sup>21</sup> Campbell, 'Angleterre', 663.

such as this? Did the English conform to the comportment advocated by French texts, or rather, did they come up with their own directives? The wider context in which various didactic texts are presented within the manuscript tradition also remains to be explored: for example, two manuscripts present the *Livre de Prudence et Melibée* as a kind of epilogue to *CD* (Brussels, KBR, MSS 9551-52 and 9235-37): what thematic and didactic traits do these two works share? Did they present the reader with concordant advice, or, as in *EO*, did they present conflicting messages and seek to further provoke the reader's engagement and reflection?

Although more remains to be done on the topic of text-image relations in Christine de Pizan's works, this thesis has demonstrated the value of approaching medieval literary texts from that angle, and indeed the need to do so. This is an approach that Christine herself repeatedly encourages her reader to take, whether it be inciting them to look at the *ymages* as well as the *letre*,<sup>22</sup> by inserting a representation connected with herself into the iconographic programme of her works at key moments, or in describing and depicting herself as drawing inspiration from a series of images in the Salle de Fortune. In order to read her works as she desired, it would be remiss of us not to get the picture.

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<sup>22</sup> *Othea*, 197.



## Figures

**Figure 1** – Timeline of Christine’s author-manuscripts, together with number of illuminations and name of Master.<sup>1</sup>

Year	Manuscript	Masters
1399	Chantilly 492	14 illuminations: 13 by Maître de la Pastoure; 1 by Maître Bleu-Jaune-Rose
1400	fr. 848	4 illuminations, all by MPE
1401	fr. 1740	1 illumination, by MCV
1402	fr. 12779 KBR 11034	9 illuminations, all of which by MDP, 3 with Maître de Jean Ravenelle 1 illumination, by MCV
1403	fr. 1188 Chantilly 493 KBR 9508 KBR 10982 KBR 10983 The Hague 78 D 42	5 illuminations, all by MCV 11 illuminations, all by BJR 6 illuminations, all by MEO 6 illuminations, all by MCV <sup>2</sup> 3 illuminations, all by MCV <sup>3</sup> 6 illuminations, all by MEO
1404	Chantilly 494 Ex-Phillips 207	6 illuminations, all by MEO 4 illuminations, all by MEO
1405	fr. 580 fr. 1176 fr. 1179 fr. 25636 Boston 101 KBR 10309	1 illumination, by Maître de l’Ovide Moralisé 1 illumination, by MEO 1 illumination, by <b>MCD</b> <sup>4</sup> 1 illumination, by <b>MCD</b> 1 illumination, by <b>MCD</b> 1 illumination, by MEO
1406	Arsenal 2681 fr. 606 fr. 835 fr. 836 Ex-Phillips 128	1 illumination, by MEO 101 illuminations, 80 by MEO, 19 by MAS, and 2 by MDE 6 illuminations, 5 of which by MEO, one by MDE 18 illuminations, 10 of which by MEO, 8 by MDE 1 illumination, by MDG
1407	KBR 9393	3 illuminations, by <b>MCD</b>
1408	fr. 607	3 illuminations, by <b>MCD</b>

<sup>1</sup> As with all work of this kind, the dates of the creation of most of Christine’s manuscripts are only approximate. Here, I continue to follow the dates given in *ACP*. Where a range of dates are given, I use the earliest, e.g. Chantilly 492 has been dated to 1399-1402, and therefore features here as 1399. Hindman’s convincing argument for the *EO* section of Harley 4431 having been created at an earlier date, then re-bound with the finished manuscript, has been taken into account.

<sup>2</sup> Patrick de Winter believes these illuminations to be those of the Maître du Roman de la Rose de Valencia and his workshop; I follow *ACP*.

<sup>3</sup> De Winter believes the artwork to have been carried out by the Lancelot de Jean sans Peur workshop; again, I follow the *ACP*.

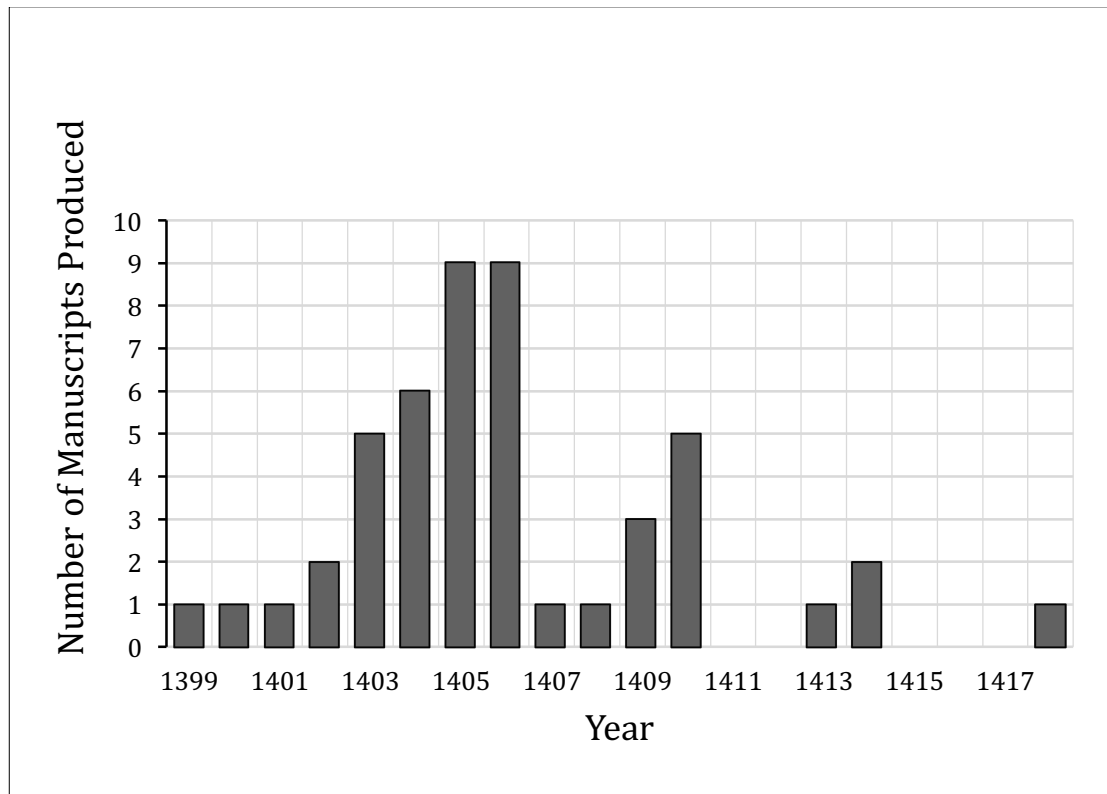
<sup>4</sup> MCD has been highlighted, so as to demonstrate Christine’s increasing preference for this Master.

	Harley 4431	101 illuminations to <i>EO</i> , all by <b>MCD</b>
1409	fr. 4792 Ex-Ashburnham- Beauvais MS 203 KBR 10987	1 illumination, by MDE 1 illumination, by MDE  1 illumination, by MDE
1410	fr. 603 KBR 10476 Munich 11	11 illuminations, all by <b>MCD</b> 1 illumination, by <b>MCD</b> 6 illuminations, all by <b>MCD</b>
1411	No known manuscripts	
1412	No known manuscripts	
1413	fr. 1178 Harley 4431	3 illuminations, all by <b>MCD</b> 20 remaining illuminations executed, 15 by <b>MCD</b> , 5 by MBF
1414	KBR 10386	1 illumination, by <b>MCD</b>



**Figure 2** – Non-ambiguous and ambiguous author-portraits in Harley 4431.

Location in MS	Type of Portrait	Plate
f. 3r – Prologue	Dedication scene	8
f. 4r – <i>Cent Balades</i>	Writing scene	n/a
f. 48r – <i>Complainte amoureuse</i>	Ambiguous	20
f. 56v – <i>Une autre complainte amoureuse</i>	Ambiguous	n/a
f. 58v – <i>Livre du debat des deux amans</i>	Indirect presentation scene	n/a
f. 71v – <i>Livre des trois jugemens</i>	Indirect presentation scene	n/a
f. 81r – <i>Livre de Poissy</i>	Ambiguous	n/a
f. 95r – <i>Epistre Othea</i>	Dedication scene	9
f. 100r – <i>Epistre Othea</i>	Ambiguous	21
f. 133v – <i>Epistre Othea</i>	Ambiguous	22
f. 143r – <i>Livre du duc des vrais amans</i>	Patron solicits author's services	n/a
178r – <i>Chemin de lonc estude</i>	Dedication scene	n/a
180v – <i>Chemin de lonc estude</i>	Christine as character	1
183r – <i>Chemin de lonc estude</i>	Christine as character	n/a
188r – <i>Chemin de lonc estude</i>	Christine as character	n/a
189v – <i>Chemin de lonc estude</i>	Christine as character	n/a
192v – <i>Chemin de lonc estude</i>	Christine as character	n/a
196v – <i>Chemin de lonc estude</i>	Christine as character	n/a
218v – <i>Chemin de lonc estude</i>	Christine as character	n/a
259v – <i>Proverbes moraulx</i>	Teaching scene	n/a
261v – <i>Les enseignemens que Cristine donne a son filz</i>	Teaching scene	13
265r – <i>Oroison de nostre dame</i>	Ambiguous	3
290v – <i>Cité des dames</i>	Writing scene; ambiguous	n/a
323r – <i>Cité des dames</i>	Ambiguous	n/a
361r – <i>Cité des dames</i>	Ambiguous	n/a

**Figure 3** – Christine’s manuscripts output.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Whilst the previous figure only shows illuminated manuscripts produced during Christine’s lifetime, this figure takes into account all of Christine’s author-manuscripts (i.e. illuminated and non-illuminated), showing a peak in her manuscript production around 1404-1406. As always, it cannot be known how many manuscripts may have been lost, which might affect the distribution of manuscripts in the presentation of this graph.

**Figure 4** – Author-copies of the *Epistre Othea*

Manuscript	Date	Type of Layout	Illuminations	<i>Histoires</i>	Dedicatee of MS	First Owner
fr. 848	c. 1400	Contemplative	4	Prologue; I (three illuminations)	None	Philippe le Hardi <sup>6</sup>
fr. 12779 (L <sub>2</sub> )	June 1402	Sequential, double column	3 + 3 missing <sup>7</sup>	Prologue; II-III (I, IV and V missing)	None	Valentina, Duchesse d'Orléans <sup>8</sup>
Chantilly 492-3 (L <sub>1</sub> )	1402 <sup>9</sup>	Double column	6	Prologue; I-V	Isabeau de Bavière <sup>10</sup>	Isabeau de Bavière
fr. 604* (L <sub>3</sub> , copied from Chantilly 492-3) <sup>11</sup>	c. 1407	Sequential, double column	Space for 6	Prologue; I-V	None	Unknown
fr. 606	1406-1408	Sequential, double column	101	Prologue; I-C	Louis d'Orléans	Louis d'Orléans or Jean de Berry
Harley 4431 (copied from fr. 606)	1414	Sequential, double column	101	Prologue; I-C	Isabeau de Bavière	Isabeau de Bavière

\* Status as an author-manuscript debated.

<sup>6</sup> Agnès de Bourgogne is the first certain owner, who claims to have received it from her mother-in-law, although it may have come to her from Philippe le Hardi – *ACP*, 349.

<sup>7</sup> Van Hemelryck and Reno estimate that a total of three miniatures have been removed, one showing Othea presenting Hector with her epistle (*histoire* I), and illuminations of Minos, and Perseus (which usually accompany *histoires* IV and V): 'Dans l'atelier'. This would bring the illustrative programme of fr. 12779 and Chantilly 492-3 in line, and suggests they might have been copied at the same time. Although this seems to be the likely hypothesis, we the possibility that there might not have been this many images, or indeed the opposite hypothesis, that it may have contained more illuminations, cannot be excluded.

<sup>8</sup> Laidlaw, 'Publisher', 48 states that Valentina is likely to have been the first owner of this manuscript.

<sup>9</sup> Fr. 12779 may have been copied from the Chantilly manuscript, but the proximity in their dates allows for the to conjecture that they were prepared together, copied from another draft kept in Christine's scriptorium: 'Dans l'atelier', 272.

<sup>10</sup> According to *ACP*, 190.

<sup>11</sup> Laidlaw, 'Publisher', 43.



## Plates



**Plate 0.1:** Munich, BSB, Cod. gall. MS 11, f. 53r (MCD). *MF*: Cristine contemplates the text and image on the walls of the Salle de Fortune.



**Plate 0.2:** London, BL, Harley MS 4431, f. 259v (MBF). *PM*: Christine instructing a group of men.





**Plate 0.3:** London, BL, Harley MS 4431, f. 261v (MBF). *EM*: Christine instructing her son.



les anciens dessus, entre lesquels  
cette maniere de parler des dieux  
estoit ainsi comme assignorēt  
aux dieux descriptions et figures  
diverses selon les propriēts de lēs  
natures en semblables manières  
q nous faisons les pmaiges des  
saints et si mettoyēt entre eulx  
ordre et ainsi cōe vne maniere  
de generation selon ce q lūy se  
dependoit de l'autre. Et pōce il  
me semble pō la declaration de  
ce present chapitre pō aultres  
choses aussi dites aillēs ou hū  
exme dessus q est expedient de  
faire aucune mention de pma  
ges des dieux et des figures q  
les anciens poētes le bailloient  
et dire vng petit aussi de la ge  
nealogie dieulx tant q l doye  
suffire aux chōs dess' dites de  
dancer aucunement. Nou' cō

menterons dōc aux dieux du  
ciel lesquels platon appelloit  
dieu des dieux en parlāt deulx  
a la personne du createur mes  
mes souverain et pmiē pō ce  
q l sont cause et comencemens  
apres luy des choses terriēnes  
des dieux q y sont. Nous par  
lerōs donc premierement de Satūne  
q des anciens est entre les nota  
bles dit le pmiē et le vrs des  
aultres. Satūne estoit pāt  
a la similitude d'ung ancien  
courbe et retrait et aussi triste  
et palle q tenoit vne faulx en  
vne de ses mains et en celle  
mesmes il portoit la figē d'ung  
dragon ou d'ung serpent q an  
gouloit sa queue et la mordoit.  
et en l'autre il tenoit vng en  
fanton petit q l deuorait et mā  
geoit par semblāt et auoit celle

In thp' en dōc  
a pōe et scelle

**Plate 0.4:** Paris, BnF fr. MS 143, f. 28r (Robinet Testard). Evrart de Conty, *Le Livre des eschecs amoureux*: Saturn castrating Uranus; Cybele's generosity; Saturn devouring his children.





**Plate 0.5:** Paris, BnF fr. MS 603, f. 49r (MCD). FA: C(h)ristine in dialogue with Honorat Bovet.



**Plate 1.1:** London, British Library, Harley MS 4431, f. 180v (MCD). *CLE*: the Cumean Sibyl visits Cristine in her sleep.



**Plate 1.2:** Chantilly, Musée Condé, MS 492, f. 2r (MDP) © Cliché IRHT-CNRS – Bibliothèque du musée Condé. *Cent balades*: Christine at her desk.





**Plate 1.3:** Paris, BnF, fr. MS 848, f. 1r (MPE). *EO*: dedication scene.



**Plate 1.4:** London, British Library, Harley MS 4431, f. 265r (MBF). *Une oraison de Nostre Dame*: presenting a reading to the Virgin Mary.





**Plate 1.5:** Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, MS 2681, f. 4a (MEO). *CP*: Christine in her study.



**Plate 1.6:** Paris, BnF, fr. MS 12559, f. 1v (MCD). CE: the Chevalier encounters Dame Cognoissance in the forest.









Plate 1.8: Paris, BnF, fr. 606, f. 4v (MEO). EO: Perseus and Andromeda.





**Plate 1.9:** London, British Library, Harley MS 4431, f. 3r (MCD). *Prologue:* Christine presents her book to queen Isabeau de Bavière.





**Plate 1.10:** Marsha Pippenger, *Beam of Light* (2007), Private Collection. Reproduced by permission of the artist.





**Plate 1.11:** London, British Library, MS Harley 4431, f. 95r (MCD). *EO*: dedication scene.



**Plate 1.12:** Chantilly, Musée Condé, MS 492-493, f. 161r (MDP) © Cliché IRHT-CNRS – Bibliothèque du musée Condé. *Une orison de Nostre Dame*: Christine presents her book to the Virgin and Child.





**Plate 1.13:** Paris, BnF fr. MS 12779, f. 154r (MDP). *Une oraison de Nostre Dame:* Christine presents her book to the Virgin and Child.



**Plate 1.14:** London, British Library, Harley MS 4431, f. 107r (MCD). *EO*: a group of women reading with a goddess above.





**Plate 1.15:** London, British Library, Harley MS 4431, f. 109r (MCD). *EO*: Io in her scriptorium.





**Plate 1.16:** Paris, Bibliothèque Sainte Geneviève, MS 1130, f. 168v (artist unknown). The Virgin instructing Jesus.



**Plate 1.17:** London, British Library, Harley MS 4431, f. 361r (MCD). *CD*: the saints are greeted at the city gates.





**Plate 1.18:** Paris, BnF, fr. MS 12559, f.175v (MCD). CE: the Chevalier is reunited with Dame Cognoissance.



**Plate 1.19:** Paris, BnF, fr. MS 12559, f. 24v (MCD). CE: the Lady, the Chevalier, and the Dieu d'Amour.





**Plate 1.20:** Paris, BnF, fr. MS 12559, f. 9v (MCD). *CE:* Travail delivers a letter to the Lady.



**Plate 1.21:** Paris, BnF, fr. MS 12559, f. 4v (MCD). *CE*: Beau Regard and Bel Acueil visit the Chevalier in his hermitage.



**Plate 1.22:** Paris, BnF, fr. MS 12559, f.6r (MCD). *CE*: Dame Esperance guides the Chevalier.





**Plate 1.23:** Paris, BnF, fr. MS 12559, f.23r (MCD). *CE*: the Chevalier and the Lady.





**Plate 1.24:** Paris, BnF, fr. MS 12559, f. 22r (MCD). *CE*: the Lady in her castle.



**Plate 1.25:** Paris, BnF, fr. MS 12559, f. 11r (MCD). *CE*: the Lady kneels before the God of Love.



**Plate 1.26:** Paris, BnF, fr. MS 23279, f. 117v (MCD). *Dialogues de Pierre Salmon*: the author in dialogue.





**Plate 1.27:** London, British Library, Harley MS 4431, f. 58v (MCD). DA: the author indirectly presents her work to a patron.



**Plate 1.28:** London, British Library, Harley MS 4431, f. 48r (MCD). *Une complainte amoureuse*: a messenger brings a letter to the Lady.





**Plate 1.29:** London, British Library, Harley MS 4431, f. 56v (MCD). *Une autre complainte amoureuse*: ambiguous author-portrait.



**Plate 1.30:** London, British Library, Harley MS 4431, f. 100r (MCD). *EO:* Venus and her followers.





**Plate 1.31:** London, British Library, Harley MS 4431, f. 133v (MCD). *EO*: Troilus reaches up towards Cupid.





**Plate 1.32:** Brussels, KBR, MS 9235, f. 5r (Jacquemart Pilvaine's workshop). *CD*: the three ladies visit Cristine in her sleep.





**Plate 1.33:** Oxford, Bodley MS 421, f. 1r (style of Maître de Wavrin). *EO*: Christine at her desk.





**Plate 1.34:** Geneva, Bibliothèque de Genève, MS Fr. 180, f. 3v (unknown artist)  
<https://www.e-codices.ch>. CD: C(h)ristine reading.





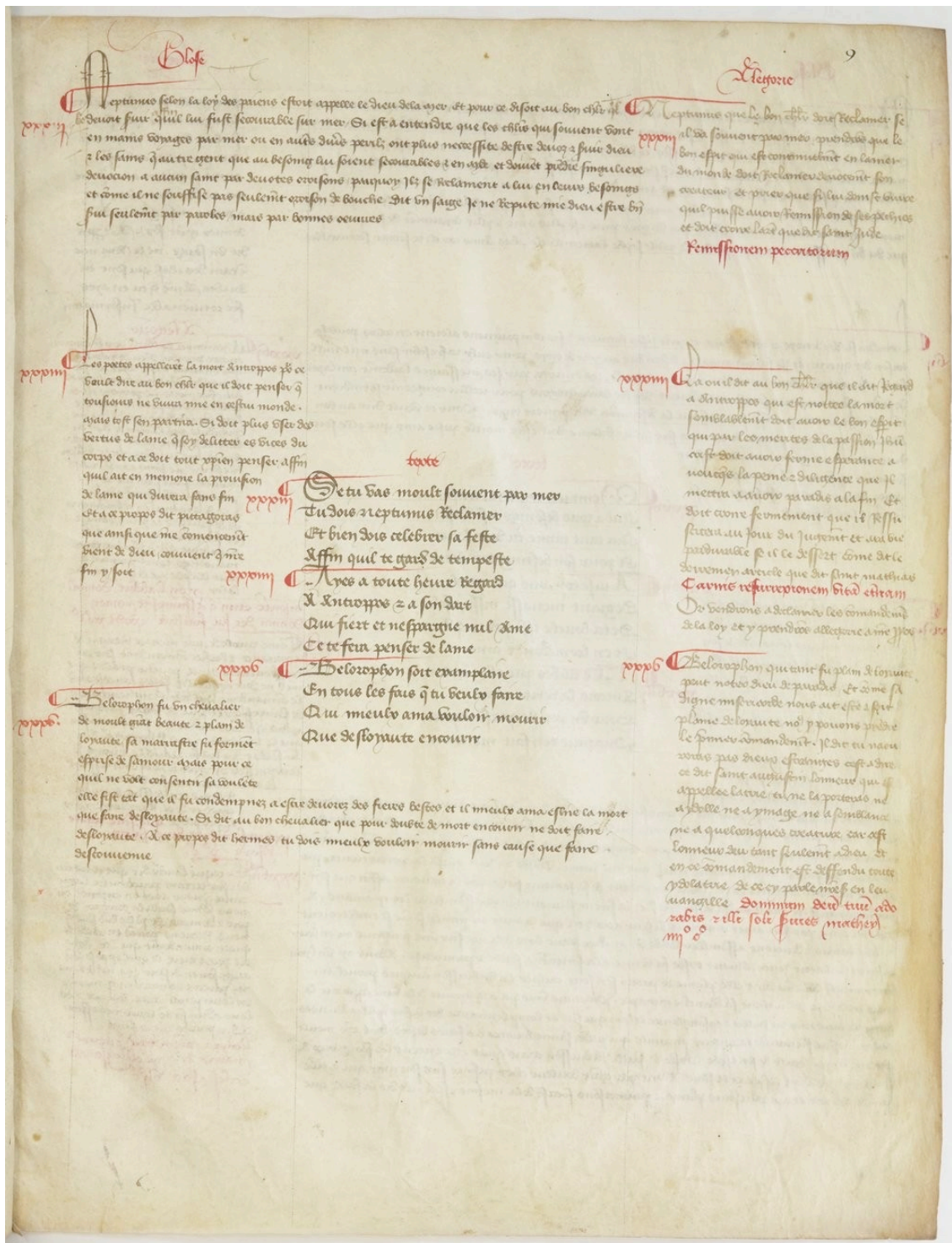
**Plate 1.35:** Yale, Beinecke Library, MS 427, f. 1r (Rambrues Master). TV: the three virtuous ladies visit Cristine in her sleep.





**Plate 2.1:** Paris, BnF fr. MS 606, f. 17v (MEO). *EO*: Bellerophon and his stepmother; start of the Ten Commandments section.





**Plate 2.2:** Paris, BnF fr. MS 848, f. 9r. *EO*: start of the Ten Commandments section.



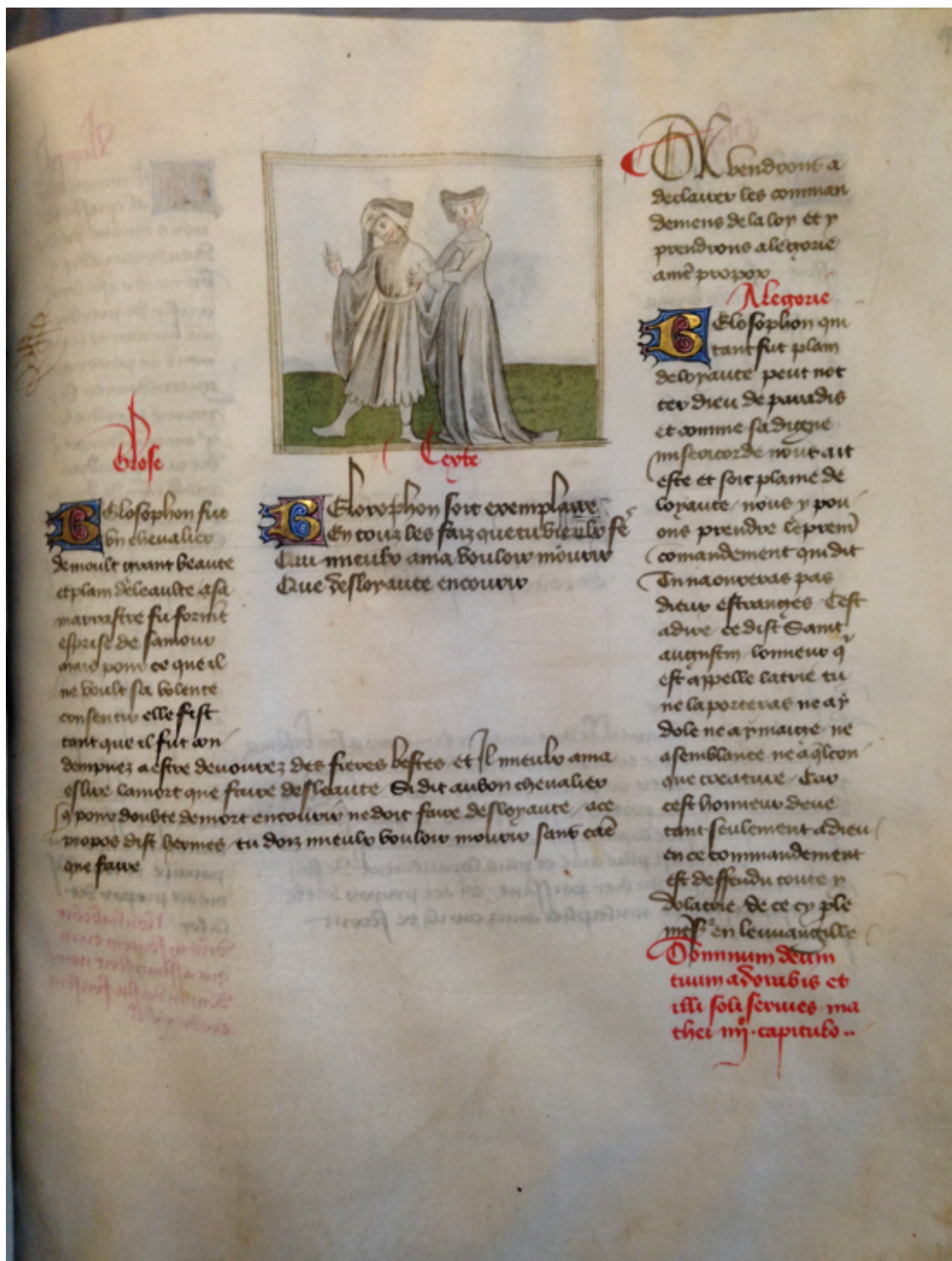
**Plate 2.3:** Paris, BnF fr. MS 606, f. 18r (MEO). *EO*: King Memnon.





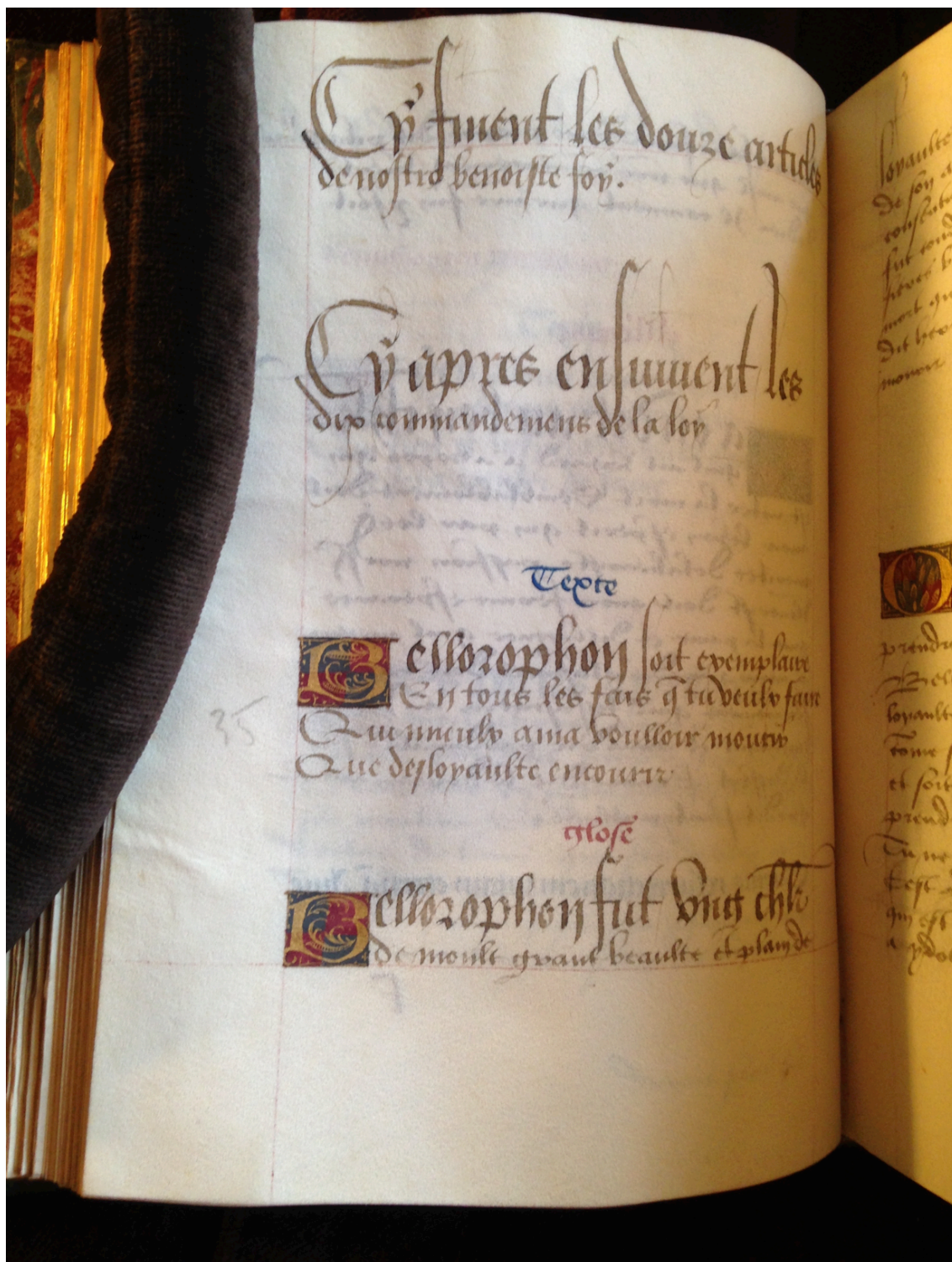
**Plate 2.4:** Brussels, KBR, MS 9559-64, f. 6r (Guillebert de Mets Master). *EO*: opening miniature representing Misericorde, Justice and Information.





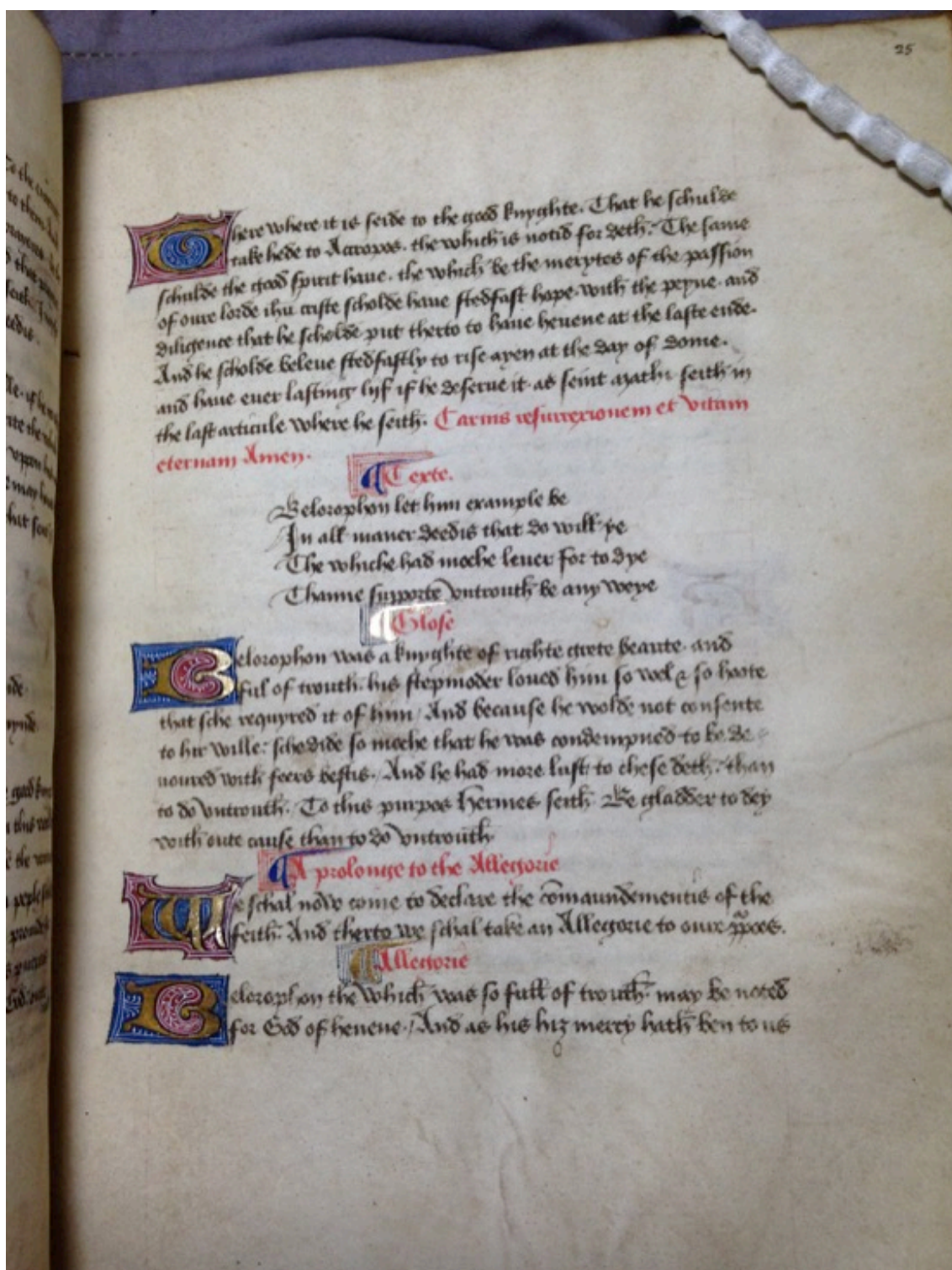
**Plate 2.5:** Cambridge, Newnham College, MS 5, f. 19r (unknown artist). *EO*: start of the Ten Commandments, and Bellerophon. Reproduced by permission of the Principal and Fellows of Newnham College, Cambridge.





**Plate 2.6:** Chantilly, Musée Condé, MS 495, f. 41v © Bibliothèque du musée Condé.  
 EO: start of the Ten Commandments.





**Plate 2.7:** Cambridge, St John's College, MS 5, f. 25r. *EO*: start of the Ten Commandments. Reproduced by permission of the Master and Fellows of St John's College, Cambridge.



**Plate 2.8:** Paris, BnF fr. MS 606, f. 18v (MEO). *EO*: Piramus and Thisbe.





**Plate 2.9:** Aylesbury, Waddesdon Manor, The Rothschild Collection (The National Trust), MS 8, f. 24v (Loyset Liédet). EO: king Busiris.





**Plate 2.10:** Aylesbury, Waddesdon Manor, The Rothschild Collection (The National Trust), MS 8, f. 23r (Loyset Liédet). *EO*: Piramus and Thisbe.





**Plate 3.1:** Boston, Boston Public Library, MS 101, f. 3r (MCD). TV: the Three Virtues wake Cristine from her bed; the court of Reason.





**Plate 3.2:** Paris, BnF, fr. 836, f. 5v (MEO). *CLE*: the Sibyl indicates the Fountain of Muses to Cristine.





**Plate 3.3:** Brussels, KBR, MS 10982, f. 33v (MCV). *CLE*: the Sibyl indicates the Court of Dame Reason to Cristine.



**Plate 3.4:** London, British Library, Harley MS 4431, f. 141r (MCD). *EO*: the Cumaean Sibyl and Emperor Augustus.





**Plate 3.5:** Chantilly, Musée Condé, MS 493, f. 248v (BJR) © Cliché IRHT-CNRS – Bibliothèque du musée Condé. *MF*: Fortune, Eur, and Meseur.



**Plate 3.6:** Brussels, KBR, MS 9508, f. 14r (MEO). *MF*: Dame Richesse outside Fortune's castle.



**Plate 3.7:** Munich, BSB, Cod. gall. MS 11, f. 13r (MCD). *MF*: Fortune, Eur, and a queen.





**Plate 3.8:** London, British Library, Harley MS 4431, f. 102v (MCD). *EO:* Minerva handing down armoury to knights below her.



**Plate 3.9:** London, British Library, Harley MS 4431, f. 103r (MCD). *EO*: Minerva and Pallas together.





**Plate 3.10:** Paris, BnF, fr. MS 603, f. 2r (MCD). FA: C(h)ristine and Minerva.





**Plate 3.11:** Brussels, KBR, MS 10476, f. 3r (MCD). FA: C(h)ristine and Minerva.



**Plate 3.12:** Paris, BnF, fr. MS 1188, f. 14r (MCV). *CLE*: Cristine and the Sibyl at the Fountain of Muses.





**Plate 3.13:** Paris, BnF, fr. MS 1188, f. 46r (MCV). *CLE*: Cristine and the Sibyl at the Court of Dame Raison.



**Plate 3.14:** London, British Library, Harley MS 4431, f. 124r (MCD). *EO:* Diana hunting scene.





**Plate 3.15:** London, British Library, Harley MS 4431, f. 126r (MCD). *EO*: Actaeon surprises Diana bathing.



**Plate 3.16:** Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley MS 421, f. 23v (style of Maître de Wavrin). *EO*: a goddess and two groups of women.





**Plate 3.17:** Paris, BnF fr. MS 606, f. 7r (MEO). *EO:* Phoebe.





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