

## Christine de Pizan's *Enseignemens moraux*: Good Advice for Several Generations

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Christine de Pizan's *Enseignemens moraux*, or *Moral teachings*, is a collection, in the modern edition by Maurice Roy,<sup>1</sup> of one hundred thirteen nuggets of moral and practical advice addressed to the author's son. Christine's counsels are artfully worded in quatrains of eight-syllable lines rhyming a/a b/b. We cannot know exactly when the *Enseignemens moraux* was written, but the probable date of composition coincides with the departure of Christine's young son, Jean du Castel, to England.<sup>2</sup> That most likely occurred towards the end of 1398, when he left for the household of the Earl of Salisbury, to continue his education with Salisbury's somewhat younger son, Thomas, future leader of the English army. As events transpired, Jean ended up for a short while, much to his mother's dismay, at the court of Henry IV.

The first edition we have of the *Enseignemens moraux* is dated 1399-1402, in the manuscript Chantilly, Musée Condé 492, the first volume of the first known edition of Christine de Pizan's Collected Works copied in her workshop. A virtually identical copy of the *Enseignemens* is found in a contemporary one-volume edition of the Collected Works that can confidently be dated to 1402-1403: Paris, BnF fr. 12779.<sup>3</sup> It is possible

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<sup>1</sup> *Oeuvres poétiques de Christine de Pisan*, ed. Maurice Roy, 3 vols., Paris: Firmin Didot, 1886-1896; the *Enseignemens* is in vol. 3, pp. 27-44.

<sup>2</sup> For a review of the literature and the dating of Jean's departure see J. C. Laidlaw, "Christine de Pizan, The Earl of Salisbury and Henry IV", *French Studies*, 36 (1982), pp. 129-143.

<sup>3</sup> The *Dit de la pastoure*, dated May 1403, is added on at the end of the codex.

that the *Enseignemens* also circulated outside of these collected volumes, as did Christine's *Debat de deux amans* and *Dit de la pastoure*, of which individual copies have survived.<sup>4</sup> The *Enseignemens* is one of the few works in the Chantilly and Paris Collected Works to be highlighted with an illumination, which pictures the young Jean du Castel standing across the table from his mother, who sits before an open book and extends her arms in a pedagogical posture. In the illumination from Paris, BnF fr. 12779, Christine's face lacks features, inviting speculation as to whether the miniature was left unfinished in this hastily copied volume; the unknown artist, unofficially dubbed the Master of the *Dit de la Pastoure* by Inès Villela-Petit<sup>5</sup> is responsible for the majority of the nine illuminations in it.

Christine and her son are elegantly depicted by the Master of the *Epistre Othea*<sup>6</sup> in a later edition of Christine de Pizan's Collected Works, owned by the legendary bibliophile, the Duke of Berry. This magnificent edition dates from 1407-08; the original manuscript or manuscripts had been split into five by the early sixteenth century and are now housed in the Bibliothèque nationale de France.<sup>7</sup> The *Enseignemens* is in the third of the five volumes, BnF fr. 836, (folios 42r-45v), on eight sides of parchment written, like the rest of the manuscript, in two columns. The text of this second edition of the *Enseignemens* differs in numerous details from that of the earlier edition, and supports the oft-made observation that Christine de Pizan revised her works throughout her career. In the Duke of Berry's manuscript, the changes Christine made some six years after the first edition are not major, but neither are they negligible: *enseignemens* 3 and 4 and 89 and 90 have switched places, nos. 8, 54 and 65 totally rewritten, and a few others partially rewritten,<sup>8</sup> no. 15 moved forward from 47<sup>th</sup> position, the 97<sup>th</sup><sup>9</sup> moved back to 111<sup>th</sup> place. A number of *enseignemens* between 29 and 34 are shuffled about; two *enseignemens*, nos. 93 and 101, are dropped and one new one added, numbered 10 in the Roy edition. There is a net loss of one moral teaching, from 112 to 111.

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<sup>4</sup> Brussels, KBR 11034 and Paris, BnF fr. 1740 are slim copies of the *Débat*; an individual copy of the *Dit de la pastoure* survives in Paris, BnF fr. 2184.

<sup>5</sup> Inès Villela-Petit, *Le Gothique international. L'art en France au temps de Charles VI*, Paris: Louvre & Hazan, n.d., p. 108.

<sup>6</sup> See BnF fr. 836, f. 42r. This miniature is one of eighteen in the volume.

<sup>7</sup> These are BnF fr. 835, 606, 836, 605 and 607. On the composition of this codex, see James C. Laidlaw, "Christine de Pizan: A Publisher's Progress", *Modern Language Review*, 82 (1987), pp. 35-75, especially pp. 52-59 and 71-72.

<sup>8</sup> The last two verses of 7 and 19, the last line of 36, 83 and 92, the word "males" in 56 changed to "laidés".

<sup>9</sup> "97" here is not Roy's number, but the position of the *enseignement* in the first two manuscripts.

The last and most luxurious edition of Christine de Pizan's collected works, presented to Queen Isabeau, wife of Charles VI, around 1414<sup>10</sup>, London, British Library Harley 4431, contains virtually the same edition of the *Enseignemens* as the Duke of Berry's manuscript.<sup>11</sup> The illuminator for this work, identified by Sandra Hindman as the Bedford Master<sup>12</sup> has portrayed the mother-son pair in more intimate terms, but Jean's



London, British Library, Harley MS 4431, f. 261v

<sup>10</sup> On the dating of this manuscript, see James C. Laidlaw's article "The Date of the Queen's MS (London, British Library, Harley 4431)" on this website.

<sup>11</sup> The only significant textual change occurs in no. 88, where the last line is rewritten; in no. 46, the "t" is dropped before "arreste," which coincides with the earlier reading in Chantilly 492 and BnF fr. 12779.

<sup>12</sup> Sandra Hindman, "The Composition of the Manuscript of Christine de Pizan's Collected Works in the British library: a Reassessment", *The British Library Journal*, 9 (1983), 118.

folded arms might suggest to modern eyes some resistance to the maternal advice. However, the similar portrayal of one of Christine's audience in the *Proverbes moraulx* (f. 259v) miniature, done by the same artist, indicates that Jean's stance is meant to convey receptivity.



London, British Library, Harley MS 4431, f. 259v

In the *Enseignemens* miniature, Jean's red cowl links him to Christine's red chair cushion and the red binding of her open book and the binding of the closed book on the table shelf below.

At the top of the second column of f. 261v, the third *enseignement* was copied or completed after the decoration, and therefore lacks an introductory paragraph mark.



London, British Library Harleian MS 4431, f. 261v

The slight change of parchment colour indicates that a rather large hole in the parchment was patched, after which repair job the third *enseignement* was filled in. Decorative little “u”s were added in the space left empty, but the paragraph mark, called for by the two faint slanted lines, was never added.

The testimony of surviving manuscripts of Christine de Pizan's works copied outside of her workshop, most of these after her death, shows that the *Enseignemens moraux* was one of the author's most enduring works. Twenty later manuscripts containing it are known to exist,<sup>13</sup> not counting one lost in Turin<sup>14</sup> or two eighteenth-century copies.<sup>15</sup> There are quite possibly additional copies obscured behind generic titles, that remain to be identified. The *Enseignemens* generated considerably more interest among later readers than Christine's comparable *Moral Proverbs*, however, that was translated into English as early as 1478, but it exists in only four manuscripts copied outside of Christine's direction.<sup>16</sup>

In the copies of the first edition of her collected works, (Chantilly, Musée Condé 492 and BnF fr. 12779), Christine placed the *Enseignemens moraux* between the letters of the *Romance of the Rose* debate and two poems dedicated to the Virgin, the *Oroison Nostre Dame* and the *Quinze Joyes Nostre Dame*. The title in the rubric designates them as the *Notables moraulx* and specifies that they were intended for Christine's son: "Ci commencent les notables moraulx de Cristine de Pizan a son filz."<sup>17</sup>

Who is the young son for whose benefit the work was ostensibly written?

Jean du Castel was born in the mid 1380s<sup>18</sup> when Christine was in her young twenties; she writes of him in the *Advison* that he was a fine young man with exceptional intellectual talents and a lovely singing voice, and that he liked the high life to which he had become accustomed in England.<sup>19</sup> Approximately three of his formative years<sup>20</sup> were spent in the household of John of Montagu, Earl of Salisbury, who was a faithful ally of Richard II, whom he supported at the cost of his own life. After Salisbury's death, Jean du Castel was taken into the household of Richard II's nemesis, Henry IV. It is quite

<sup>13</sup> See Angus J. Kennedy, *Christine de Pizan: a bibliographical guide*, London: Grant & Cutler Ltd., 1984, pp. 75-76. To this list can be added Metz, B.M. 855, ff. 13v-16r; Rodez, B. M. 57, ff. 119r-128v and the codex recently purchased as a joint acquisition, Newberry Library-University of Illinois MS 5, where the *Enseignemens* is the fifth of more than two dozen brief moral pieces.

<sup>14</sup> See Josephus Patinus, *Codices Manuscripti Bibliothecae Regii Taurinensis Athenaei III*, Taurini 1749, p. 490. The manuscript's shelf mark was CXX l.v.30; it contained several works besides the *Enseignemens*.

<sup>15</sup> These are in Paris, BnF Moreau 1686 and Paris, Arsenal 3295, which are copies of BnF fr. 12779, commissioned by Lacurne de Sainte Palaye.

<sup>16</sup> See Kennedy, *op. cit.*, pp. 116-117. To this list can be added Paris, Sainte Geneviève 2879, ff. 44r-47v.

<sup>17</sup> Chantilly, Musée Condé 492, f. 156v and BnF fr. 12779, f. 149v.

<sup>18</sup> The range given in Laidlaw is between April 1384 and early 1387; Laidlaw 1982, p. 131. See also Charity Cannon Willard, *Christine de Pizan: Her Life and Works*, New York: Persea Books, 1984, p. 202.

<sup>19</sup> Christine de Pizan, *Le livre de l'advison Cristine*, ed. Christine Reno and Liliane Dulac, Paris: Champion, 2001, pp. 112-113, 122.

<sup>20</sup> Christine herself does not pinpoint the dates of his stay; in the first two *Advison* copies, BnF fr. 1176 and Brussels, KBR 10309, she states that he was 13 at the time of his departure; in the last manuscript of that work, ex-Phillipps 128, she gives his age as 12; see *Le livre de l'advison Cristine*, p. 112. In all three manuscripts, she states that his stay had lasted three years (*ibid.*, p. 113), which is the same duration given in *Autre Balade XXII* (see Roy, 1, p. 233).

likely that the young Jean had the opportunity to meet the elderly Geoffrey Chaucer during his stay in England; Chaucer, who held a number of official positions from the reign of Edward III onwards, knew just about everyone connected with the court, and received grants from both Richard II and Henry IV.<sup>21</sup> Salisbury had a keen appreciation for poetry and was occasionally inspired by the Muse himself, no doubt in French. It is also quite probable that Jean du Castel crossed paths with the young Thomas Hoccleve, who, like Chaucer, was pensioned by Henry IV and who had come into contact with a manuscript of Christine's *Epistle to the God of Love*, that he translated quite freely in 1402.<sup>22</sup> We know from Christine's *Advison* that she didn't want her son to remain at Henry's court, as she considered him a usurper. Henry had invited her to England, and she had sent him some of her works, including the *Epistle of Othea to Hector*, for which she had even composed a special preface for him.<sup>23</sup> Christine reveals in the *Advison* the ruse to which she resorted in order to bring her son back home safely to France.<sup>24</sup> Unfortunately, young Jean had difficulty finding a position as interesting as the one he had left. Christine had initially tried to place him with her first prominent patron, Louis d'Orléans, brother to the king; but Louis was fiercely anti-English, and probably not particularly eager to welcome a young man who had lived in Henry IV's household.<sup>25</sup> Christine eventually found a position for her son in the household of Philip, Duke of Burgundy; but Jean did not remain at the Burgundian court and ended up as secretary to the dauphin Charles, the future Charles VII, whom he would follow into exile in Bourges, as did the poet Alain Chartier. Jean would later serve as ambassador to the court of Castille. He did not live to see Charles crowned, dying in 1425 at the age of about forty.<sup>26</sup> His young companion Thomas of Montagu, who had become the fourth Earl of Salisbury and spent the greater part of his military career defeating French troops, would die in 1428 at the siege of Orléans.

What kind of guidance did Christine de Pizan offer her son to help launch him into adulthood? Several of the *Enseignemens* involve the master-servant relationship: the young man should serve his master well (9 and 11)<sup>27</sup> and especially beware of bad masters (8). (This latter lesson was a teaching that Christine considered important enough to rewrite for the second edition of the *Enseignemens* in the Duke's manuscript.<sup>28</sup>) He must acquire prudence and persistence, be compassionate and generous towards the poor, and give readily, for he who gives without hesitation gives twice; however, he should be neither too greedy nor too generous with his money. One cannot have too many friends,

<sup>21</sup> Derek Brewer, *Chaucer and his World*, New York; Dodd, Mead & Co., 1978.

<sup>22</sup> See *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*, ed. Thelma S. Fenster & Mary Carpenter Erler, Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1990. Jean du Castel might well have been instrumental in transmitting his mother's work to Hoccleve, perhaps through the king.

<sup>23</sup> Laidlaw 1982, pp. 138-140.

<sup>24</sup> *Le livre de l'advison Cristine*, p. 113.

<sup>25</sup> Willard, *op. cit.*, pp. 165-167.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 202. See also *The Poetical Works of Alain Chartier*, ed. J. C. Laidlaw, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974, p. 5.

<sup>27</sup> Numbers follow the Roy edition.

<sup>28</sup> See *Les Oeuvres poétiques de Christine de Pisan*, 3, p. 28.

and no enemy is negligible. Several of the *Enseignemens* speak of various professions in which the young Jean might conceivably end up: the military, the church, trade. Advice is offered for when he is old: be patient with youth, never forgetting what it was like to be young; never become a spectacle, especially in old age, when ostentatious clothing is especially ridiculous. As Elisabeth Schulze-Busacker has shown, approximately three-quarters of Christine's material in the *Enseignemens* is conventional wisdom, and can be traced to three principal sources: pseudo-Cato's *Distichs*, that the author perhaps knew in Jean Le Fevre's roughly contemporary French translation, and two Latin poems both titled *Facetus*, one written in hexameters, dating from the twelfth century, and one in rhymed couplets dating from the late twelfth or early thirteenth. However, as Schulze-Busacker points out, some of Christine's advice is clearly original, such as *enseignement* 40 in the Roy edition: if you want to live peacefully at court, learn to keep quiet and hold your temper.<sup>29</sup> *Enseignement* 83 is another original piece of good sense Christine would have done well to follow herself: don't waste your time with lawsuits, as the courts are not honest and you'll only impoverish yourself. A few of the most original teachings involve advice on reading; on Christine's recommended list are Vincent of Beauvais, St. Bernard's sermons, the *History of Troy* and the *Deeds of the Romans*; books to stay away from are Ovid's *Art of Love* and the *Romance of the Rose*.

Christine de Pizan's *Enseignemens moraux* was apparently considered relevant for almost a century and a half after it was written, as at least two of the surviving manuscripts date from the sixteenth century.<sup>30</sup> As is true for the *Enseignemens* manuscripts from Christine's day, all later surviving copies are in codices that contain other works, ranging from two others in Brussels KBR IV 1114 to over forty in manuscript 855 housed in the Municipal Library in Metz.

Before turning to some of these later manuscripts, it would be useful to reflect on the phenomenon of the manuscript anthology. We can distinguish between an anthology that is a random grouping (*recueil factice*) of works that were bound together, perhaps for the sake of conservation, as was done at the Abbey of St. Victor outside of Paris in the late fifteenth century, where the size of the manuscript leaves was the primary determining factor, and not the subject matter. At the other end of the spectrum is the anthology that is the result of an owner's desire to possess certain works. Many of these manuscript anthologies are copied in a single hand and the volume will typically have uniform decoration throughout. These manuscripts are particularly rich sources for historians of the book since they invite questions regarding taste and interpretation that random anthologies cannot.

Keeping this distinction in mind, we turn to some later manuscripts of the *Enseignemens moraux* that were clearly put together with a purpose.

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<sup>29</sup> Elisabeth Schulze-Busacker, "Christine de Pizan, *Les Enseignemens moraux*," in *Plaist vos oïr bone cançon vaillant? Mélanges offerts à François Suard*, ed. Dominique Boutet, Marie-Madeleine Castellani, Françoise Ferrand and Aimé Petit, Lille: Université Charles-de-Gaulle, n. d., pp. 831-844.

<sup>30</sup> BnF fr. 2307 and Newberry-Library-University of Illinois MS 5, dated 1537.



Our first example, Brussels, KBR IV 1114 is unique among the surviving *Enseignemens* anthologies in that two of its three works are by Christine. It may therefore safely be assumed that the original owner had a particular interest in works by Christine de Pizan. Dating from the decade of Christine's death, the 1430's, this manuscript is written on 171 parchment leaves in a single hand and uniformly decorated in the workshop of the Guillebert de Metz Master. The *Enseignemens*, the third and shortest work in the collection, is preceded by the *Chronicle of Flanders* and by Christine's *Epistle of Othea to Hector*; both these works, but not the *Enseignemens*, are illustrated by one miniature apiece. The *Enseignemens* rubric identifies the work's author as "damoiselle Cristine" and specifies that it was written for her son ("a son filz"). The volume's probably Burgundian original owner is not known, but two later owners' signatures are visible: one by Nicolas Gourdon, who lived in the seventeenth century (f. 171r) and one by Francqueville de Chantemelle in the eighteenth. Hopefully, archival research will turn up further information on these owners of a very handsome manuscript book.

We turn to a second exemplar that stands out for another reason. This is Clermont-Ferrand, Bibliothèque Municipale 249, a fifteenth-century collection of poetry, including Machaut's *Dit de la Harpe* and several ballads by Eustache Deschamps. Because of the predominantly literary nature of this anthology, that is unfortunately badly damaged, we can speculate that the *Enseignemens*, one of the longer works in this collection (ff. 39r-50r) was included because the original owner appreciated it as a piece of literature. The *Enseignemens* is stylistically polished and can thus be enjoyed for its sheer aesthetic value. The Clermont-Ferrand anthology also contains a comparable work, Alain Chartier's *Bréviaire des nobles* that gilds with elegant language advice on aristocratic virtues. It can be noted that the Clermont-Ferrand manuscript contains a work of historical interest as well, the plea for justice made to the king by young Charles d'Orléans after his father's assassination. The manuscript has two ex-libris; one partially visible on f 55r that begins "Iste liber est nobilis..." and one by a certain Guiot de Montclar on f. 37v. While we cannot be certain of the reasons why the *Enseignemens* was chosen for this particular volume by the original owner, the hypothesis of its interest as a work of literature seems quite plausible.

The testimony of these two manuscripts would appear, however, to be anomalous, for the other surviving anthologies that include Christine de Pizan's *Enseignemens moraux* seem to indicate that the work was chosen and read primarily for its moral content. Karen Fresco has demonstrated this point for a few anthologies at recent conferences.<sup>31</sup> Without repeating her findings for the manuscripts she has studied in very convincing detail, I would like to use her insights to look at some manuscripts to which she has not yet turned her attention, as well as look at the manuscripts she has spoken about from a somewhat different perspective.

We consider first London, British Library Additional 17446, a volume of 41 folios, the first 37 in parchment, the last 4 in paper, uniformly ruled in red and written in the same black ink throughout, with a simple, uniform pattern of decoration. The volume dates

<sup>31</sup> Salzburg, July 2003; Kalamazoo, May 2004; Liège, January 2005.

from the late fifteenth or perhaps early sixteenth century. The British Library catalogue describes it as a “Collection of French poems by Christine de Pisan and others.” The works contained are in fact mostly anonymous, and treat of both moral and spiritual subjects. The moral subjects emphasize the themes of moderation in eating and drinking, with titles like *Contre aulcuns exces qui se commettent chascun jour a boire et manger* (*Against some excesses in food and drink that are committed each day*) (f. 4r) and *Touchant les exces qui se commettent a manger en plusieurs viandes* (*Involving excesses connected with eating several different foods*) (f. 6r). The volume is framed spiritually, opening with the *Instruction et doctrine a bien vivre et mourir* (*Instruction and doctrine for living and dying well*), and closing with two prayers, the *Stabat mater dolorosa* in French and, in larger script, a prayer to Christ. The volume was quite likely compiled for a woman, or perhaps for a man with strong feminist sentiments. A rather long poem (ff. 14r-16r), titled *Des femmes gloire et triumphe* (*The Glory and Triumph of Women*) sings the praises of all women through the person of the Virgin Mary: Woman is the daughter of God the father and the mother of his precious son, she is the glory of the heavens, the princess of the archangels, the melodious mirror in which the Holy Trinity takes delicious pleasure, the ladder to heaven, and the door to beatitude. An even longer and more sensual poem praising women is found immediately after. Titled *Des dames honneur et magnificence* (*The Honour and Magnificence of Women*), it compares all women to a fertile garden, a sweet pasture where all men should graze, a pillar of sustenance, a sea of pleasures, a treasury of rich loves, in short, a joy for men greater than material wealth. A fascinating brief work occupying ff. 22r-23r is titled *Comment nostre premiere mere Eve parle de noblesse et vertu* (*How our first Mother Eve Speaks of the Nobility of Virtue*). As Fresco has observed, this work sets Eve up as a teacher, analogous both to Mary, lauded in *Des femmes gloire et triumphe* and to Christine, author of the *Enseignemens*, that immediately follows.

The *Enseignemens*, occupying ff. 24r-34r, is the longest text in the anthology. Christine de Pisan is identified in the most positive fashion in the introductory rubric that reads “Ensuyvent les beaulx dictz et enseignemens de la saige Christine a son filz; qui font bien a noter a toutes gens voulans vertueusement vivre” (“Here follow the beautiful sayings and teachings of the wise Christine to her son; take note all who desire to live virtuously”).

The hypothesized original feminist owner’s enshrinement of models of female wisdom is, however, only part of the history of this volume. For on the recto side of the paper flyleaf numbered folio 1, an eighteenth- or nineteenth-century hand has written dismissively: “Cet ouvrage est d’une grande naiveté” (“This book is very naive.”) This unappreciative reader, most probably a later owner of the manuscript, follows his remarks by a table of contents that omits Christine’s *Enseignemens*. Should one feel relief that Christine’s work escapes the dismissive judgment of being naïve, or lament the fact that the compiler of the table of contents apparently never read the work at all? Fortunately, Christine’s reputation is rescued, for on the verso side of the same flyleaf, a nineteenth-century hand, perhaps that of the book merchant who sold the volume to the British Museum, writes: “It would be superfluous to subjoin any comments upon the productions of Christine de Pise which have already occupied the attention of the learned. The present volume contains

some pieces hardly known, and the manuscript is in the most clean and perfect state.” The codex was rebound in green morocco when it was acquired by the British Museum in 1848, and Christine de Pizan’s *Enseignemens* highlighted on the spine of the new binding, that reads: “Doctrine pour bien vivre de Christine de Pise.”

Another anthology that clearly frames the *Enseignemens moraux* as a work of moral instruction is Paris, BnF fr. 25434, a paper manuscript copied at a Celestine monastery. Karen Fresco analyzes this complex manuscript dating from the second half of the fifteenth century in a forthcoming article.<sup>32</sup> She points out that this manuscript groups some dozen and a half moral and spiritual texts along two thematic dichotomies: life and death, and male and female. Within this schema, Christine’s *Enseignemens moraux* is paired with the *Distichs* of Pseudo-Cato as an instructional work written by a woman. Following upon Fresco’s perceptive analysis, I would like to suggest that Christine’s *Enseignemens* sets up a third dichotomy in this anthology, namely between the spiritual and secular realms. The wording of the introductory rubric composed by the Celestine scribe, who stresses the usefulness of Christine’s advice for this world, is striking: “Cy ensuyt Cristine de Pise, auquel y a plusieurs bons enseignemens touchant le monde” (“Here follows Christine de Pizan, in which there are several good teachings for living in this world”) (f. 116v). At the end of Christine’s work (f. 131v), the scribe adds a poem of his own confection that expresses his respect for Christine’s text. The poem begins with the same two-line red capital that begins each *enseignement*, and ends with an “Explicit” that seems to mark the end of the *Enseignemens*. Thus, the Celestine’s poem is grafted quite smoothly onto Christine’s work: “Vous qui ce livre regardés/ Ces enseignemens aprenés/ Et les faictes des vo jeunesse/ Tous temps sans actendre vieillesse/ Car lors faire ne les pourrez/ Dont a tart vous repentirez/ Lesquelz demonstrent clerement/ Vie de bon gouvernement/ A ung chascun grant et petit/ Mais en ung proverbe l’en dit/ Raisons qui sont mal entendues/ Sont fleurs aux pourceaulx estendues. Explicit.” (“You who see this book/ Learn these lessons/ And follow them faithfully in your youth/ Without waiting for old age/ For then it will be too late/ And your regrets will be in vain. These teachings lay out clearly/ A well-regulated life/ For great and small people alike./ But, as they say in a proverb./ Wisdom that is badly understood/ Is like flowers cast before swine. Explicit.”<sup>33</sup>

Another fifteenth-century manuscript, Paris, Sainte Geneviève 2879, gives testimony to the fact that the Celestines were not the only religious community that considered Christine’s work worthwhile. This manuscript in fact contains two of Christine’s works, the *Proverbes Moraulx* and the *Enseignemens*, neither of which, however, is associated with her name; the *Proverbes moraulx* begins with the rubric that promises the reader

<sup>32</sup> “The *Enseignemens moraux* in the Order of Texts in Paris BnF fr. 25434”, forthcoming in the Acts of the Fifth International Christine de Pizan Colloquium held at Salzburg in July, 2003, ed. Roman Reisinger et al.

<sup>33</sup> It is interesting to note that the metaphor in the final verses, flowers (and not the proverbial pearls) cast before swine is found in Christine’s *Proverbes Moraulx* as well; could it be that the Celestine scribe coincidentally made the same mistake as Christine in her *Proverbes moraulx*, confusing the Latin “margarita” with the French “marguerite” (daisy), or could he have taken the image directly from Christine?

some highly profitable teaching: “moult profitable doctrine” (f. 44r). The *Enseignemens moraux*, that follows directly (f. 47v), is actually identified as a work written by “the good Cato” for his son. This small volume, written on 94 folios of relatively unblemished parchment (measuring 170 by 113 mm), is copied by a non-professional but careful and quite legible hand throughout, and decorated uniformly with the same baguette border that begins each work, with gold capitals on black filigree alternating with blue capitals on red filigree. The manuscript is a compendium of moral teachings: in addition to the *Enseignemens*, there is a work titled *Autres enseignemens d’aucuns sages* (*More teachings from some wise men*) (f. 43c) containing passages attributed to Solomon, Socrates, Aristotle, Ovid, Virgil, Boethius and Buridan; it also contains spiritual teachings such as the *L’eschelle de perfection* (*Ladder of perfection*) (ff. 66r-68v), a moral treatise addressed to the Christian woman. Interspersed with these moral and spiritual readings are numerous prayers and devotional works like Jean Quentin’s *Horloge de la passion Nostre Seigneur Jhesu Crist* (*Clock of Our Lord Jesus Christ’s Passion*) (ff. 63r-65r). It seems quite plausible that this manuscript was made for a well-heeled convent community in the fifteenth century, where it no doubt remained until it entered the Sainte Geneviève collection in the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century.

In contrast to the serious moral tone of the works included in the three previous anthologies, another manuscript, Bnf fr. 1181, permits us to wonder whether the *Enseignemens* was perhaps read in a lighter vein. This fifteenth-century paper manuscript reads like a manual for a social climber, beginning with a ballad addressed to servants whose refrain is “Ainsi devient le varlet maistre” (“Thus does the valet become master”) (ff. 1r-v), followed by two pieces on proper table manners interspersed with another ballad, then by a regimen for the good servant, which directly precedes Christine’s *Enseignemens* (ff. 10v-19v), that are followed by the *Enseignemens de monseigneur saint Bernard*. The volume moves on to pieces of catechetical instruction and concludes with the *Complainte de l’ame dampnee* (*Plaint of the damned soul*) the *Quinze signes du jugement final* (*Fifteen Signs of the Last Judgment*) and the *Danse macabre aux hommes* (*Men’s Danse Macabre*). These works of conventional piety serve as a reminder to the social climber that even a socially successful person will be judged on moral terms at the end of his life.

In addition to the anonymous lay and religious readers of the *Enseignemens* who can be connected to the preceding manuscripts, we turn now to a quite famous, if young reader in whose hands Bnf fr. 1551 certainly passed. This fifteenth-century parchment manuscript measures 250 by 175 mm; the current worn velvet binding dates from the 16<sup>th</sup> century. One scribe copied the whole volume, but the decoration was never completed; while letters in red ink are included, none of the planned painted letters was executed in the designated spaces. The *Enseignemens* is the third work in the volume, after Jean de Meun’s *Testament* and Jean Le Fevre’s translation of Pseudo-Cato’s *Distichs*; the volume also includes three brief works by Gerson, a letter by St. Bernard, Laurent de Blois’ *Summa of virtues and vices* and catechetical pieces such as the 10 commandments, the 12 articles of Christian faith or Creed. This manuscript is particularly intriguing since it can be traced to the royal collection in Blois in the early sixteenth century, that Francois I<sup>er</sup>

moved to Fontainebleau in 1544; in fact, a signature on the inside of the back cover, written in large, thick letters, is none other than that of the future François I<sup>er</sup>, born in 1494. Young François d'Angoulême's official tutor was his widowed mother, Louise de Savoie; contemporary works, like the anonymous *Compas du dauphin*, refer to Louise de Savoie as François' spiritual educator. In her *Journal*, Louise makes constant reference to her son, for whom she occasionally wrote poems.<sup>34</sup> Behind young François' signature, then, lies the influence of Louise de Savoie, who was surrounded by Christine de Pizan manuscripts all her life: in her childhood in the château of Chambéry;<sup>35</sup> in her formative years under Anne de France's tutelage at the château of Amboise; through her marriage to Charles d'Angoulême (whose main residence was the château of Cognac), and as regent for her son François I<sup>er</sup> after his accession to the throne. In choosing this anthology of moral and spiritual readings for the young François, Louise was signalling that advice Christine de Pizan had given her son some hundred years before still had relevance for the heir presumptive.

We turn, finally, to a manuscript that concludes with a moving testimony to the enduring interest Christine's work generated even beyond the Renaissance. This is BnF fr. 2307, a sixteenth-century parchment manuscript written, like Newberry/ University of Illinois MS 5, in a uniform humanist script and that once belonged to, among others, Cardinal Richelieu, whose arms it bears on the red morocco binding.<sup>36</sup> This slim volume contains a mixture of practical, moral and spiritual advice; it contains, like Newberry/ University of Illinois MS 5, a guide on how to evaluate different coins, a short poem of advice on good living that begins "Lever matin et prendre esbatement" ("Wake up in the morning and do something enjoyable") (f. 60r), a poem lamenting the miseries of this world, ballads in honour of the Virgin and Saint John, and a work titled *La Voye de Paradis (The Path to Paradise)* (f. 33v). Christine's *Enseignemens* is identified in the introductory rubric as "...plusieurs beaulx dictz et enseignemens de la saige Christine de Pizan a son filz, utiles et prouffitables" ("...several beautiful sayings and teachings of the wise Christine de Pizan for her son, useful and profitable" (f. 7r). According to the Bibliothèque nationale catalogue, this anthology of some two dozen different pieces ends with some teachings written in a different hand but not otherwise identified.<sup>37</sup> In fact, what we have here are four of the *Enseignemens moraux* copied a century or more after the rest of the manuscript by one of Christine de Pizan's attentive readers, who made good use of the ruled but blank verso side of the last folio (f. 64v). The second and fourth *enseignemens* are related to the dress and conduct of wives and daughters (nos. 91 and 96), the first and third have political or spiritual resonance: "Ayme qui tient a amy/

<sup>34</sup> See Deborah McGrady, "Louise of Savoy" in *Women in the Middle Ages: an Encyclopedia*, 2 vols., ed. Katharina M. Wilson & Nadia Margolis, Westport, Connecticut & London: Greenwood Press, 2004, 2, pp. 562-566.

<sup>35</sup> See Gianni Mombello, "Christine de Pizan and the House of Savoy," trans. Nadia Margolis, in *Reinterpreting Christine de Pizan*, ed. Earl Jeffrey Richards et al., Athens, Georgia and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1992, pp. 187-204.

<sup>36</sup> The verso of the third guard leaf bears the inventory number 2758 and the signature of the bookseller Blaise, who inventoried Richelieu's collection with the Cardinal's secretary in 1643-44.

<sup>37</sup> *Catalogue des Manuscrits français, Ancien fonds*, 1, Paris: Firmin Didot Frères, 1868, p. 399.

Et te garde de ton annemy/ On ne peult avoir trop d'amys/ Il n'est nulz petits ennemys"  
 "Love those who consider you friend,/ And watch out for your enemy, /For one cannot  
 have too many friends,/ And there is no small enemy" (no. 30)' "Ne laisse pas a Dieu  
 servir/ Pour au monde trop t'asservir/ Car biens mondains vont en declin/ Et l'ame durera  
 sans fin" ("Do not forget to serve God,/ And become enslaved to the world,/ For worldly  
 goods fade away,/ And the soul lives forever") (no. 113).

A few brief general observations can be drawn from the later *Enseignemens moraux* anthologies. The first is that the appreciation of the work for its didactic value by later generations continues the interpretation Christine had encouraged for this work by repositioning it in the final edition of her Collected Works, Harley 4431, where for the first time the *Enseignemens* is grouped with the *Proverbes moraulx*.<sup>38</sup> In the Duke of Berry's manuscript (the third surviving edition of the Collected Works), the *Enseignemens*' character is not entirely clear, as it is found between the political allegory the *Chemin de long estude* and two poems in praise of the Virgin, the *Oroison Nostre Dame* and the *Quinze Joyes Nostre Dame*.

The second general observation, already made by Karen Fresco in a recent conference paper in Liege,<sup>39</sup> is that the later anthologies in which the *Enseignemens moraux* is included usually connect the work with the author, thus serving to keep her reputation alive for later generations. As we have seen, Christine de Pizan's profile is sometimes enhanced in added *Enseignemens* rubrics in ways she could not have done herself. For example, the introductory rubric to the work in British Library Additional MS 17446 praises Christine as "wise" and recommends that her teachings "be noted by all people who desire to live virtuously." This point complements the observation made by Cynthia Brown for the *Feats of Arms and Chivalry* in her important article "The Reconstruction of an Author in Print: Christine de Pizan in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries"<sup>40</sup>: that the majority of the later manuscripts of this work erase both Christine's name and voice from the text. With Christine edited out of the *Feats of Arms and Chivalry*, her work was ready to be hijacked by Antoine Vérard, publisher of the 1488 printed edition, that attributed it to Vegetius. Later copies of the *Enseignemens moraux*, on the other hand, tended to preserve Christine's memory as a writer and as a moral authority.

<sup>38</sup> The *Proverbes moraulx* are found on ff. 259v-261v, the *Enseignemens* on ff. 261v-265r.

<sup>39</sup> "Christine's *Enseignemens moraux* in the Order of Texts of Paris, BnF fr. 1551", to be published in the Acts of this conference titled "Christine de Pizan: une femme de science, une femme de lettres (11-15 January 2005).

<sup>40</sup> In *Christine de Pizan and the Categories of Difference*, ed. Marilyn Desmond, Minneapolis & London: University of Minnesota Press, 1998, pp. 215-135.

Finally, the later *Enseignemens moraux* manuscripts can tell us a lot about Christine's original manuscripts and their often uncharted circulation throughout the centuries. For five later *Enseignemens* manuscripts at least,<sup>41</sup> it is Christine's first edition, and not the significantly modified second one housed in ducal and royal collections, that later generations were finding, transcribing, reading and making annotations to more than a century later. The full story of the transmission of this text will have to await the critical edition promised for the *Etudes christiniennes*.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Metz, B.M. 855, BnF fr. 1551 and 2307, London, BL Add. 17446 and Sainte Geneviève 2879.

<sup>42</sup> The edition is being prepared by Karen Fresco for the series published by Honoré Champion under the direction of Bernard Ribémont.