(the last repr. 1969). Silvère Ménégaldo marshals and interprets the little evidence relating to Le Mote’s life (in particular by analysing his patrons and their literary spheres): a native of Hainaut – to the court of whose count he seems to have been attached – he seems also to have frequented, for his ballades, the puys of northern France and the Low Countries; his Regrets were, he says, commissioned by Philippa of Hainaut, queen to Edward III; in 1340, we find him in Paris, in the service of Simon de Lille, official goldsmith to the court of France, where he composed his Parfait and his Voie d’Enfer et de Paradis; somewhere between 1341 and 1343, he may have been attached to the English royal court. Ménégaldo then offers chapters devoted to the manuscripts containing Le Mote’s works; a study of him as a ‘professional’ poet; an analysis and assessment of the plainte, and of Le Mote’s place in that tradition; an analysis of the Parfait and Le Mote’s ingenuity in rounding off a long-standing cycle of poems; an assessment of the Voie showing the poet’s expertise in manipulating and structuring the dream-allegory; an appraisal of Le Mote’s ballades in the context particularly of the ballade-competition described in the Parfait. What is fascinating here – and very much original – is the portrait of what I called, perhaps unfairly, the ‘jobbing poet’, the poet, poète de métier, menistrallus, able to turn his hand, rapidly and more than competently, to any commission: a plainte in good time for a patron deceased; a skilful – graceful – courtly poem, the Parfait, for another patron, Simon de Lille, who, we are told, expected biax dis in return for bed and board; an efficiently minatory account of Heaven and Hell. It is this responsiveness to commission and to socio-cultural context that Ménégaldo brings out with striking clarity and completeness; he offers, in appendices, a nice list of the twenty-eight exempla, some plainly invented for the occasion, scattered across the Regrets; a list of the metres of Le Mote’s ballades; a heavily annotated edition of ballades exchanged by the poet with Philippe de Vitry and Jean Campion; finally, a copious and complete bibliography. Jean de Le Mote is unlikely to leap to the top of reading-lists – but this is a remarkably full, and interesting, account of a poet who epitomizes, perhaps, the professional littérateur of the fourteenth century.

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As Olivier Delsaux points out in the introduction to his study of manuscrits autographes, that is, manuscripts transcribed by the author, for the past several decades scholars have recognized that the study of any product must also include
the study of its producer and the process of its production. And yet, the *manuscrit autographe*, an important variation of textual production, particularly in late medieval France, has not been integrated, intellectually or methodologically, into the study of textual transmission. Delsaux fills this gap, exploring the values that characterize the autograph practices of late medieval French authors. Under what circumstances and to what extent were authors involved in the production of their own manuscripts? Did readers prize autographs? Did authorial involvement result in better manuscripts? Authorial intervention was a complex practice, or rather set of practices, as Delsaux demonstrates in this examination of the *manuscrit autographe* and what he coins the ‘*manufacture autographe*’, a manuscript transcribed by a collaborator but overseen by the author.

Delsaux’s principal corpus is the manuscript production of Christine de Pizan, who left fifty-four manuscripts containing only her work, of which, as Gilbert Ouy and Christine Reno have shown, twenty-five are *manuscrits autographes* (Ouy and Reno identified three principal hands within these manuscripts which they designated as P, R, and X, identifying X as Christine’s own). Although Delsaux refers to many other authors, he focuses on Christine in the study’s three sections. The detailed and nuanced observations in these sections make a quick summary impossible, but, to highlight the main findings, in the first, ‘Le manuscrit de composition’; Delsaux explains that by Christine’s time, the author was imagined with a plume in hand. With Scholasticism, writing had become associated with reading in quantity and, by Christine’s time, compilation: writing was an intermittent process no longer easily dictated to a scribe. Still, the author was valued for the end product, not the process, meaning that manuscripts were not valued simply because they contained corrections in the author’s own hand. Thus few *manuscrits de composition* exist today. The short second section, ‘Le manuscript d’édition’, explores how the author created the version that would serve as the copy for all further transcriptions. This phase, although crucial to the publication of a work, was not accorded particular authorial value either.

In the third and longest section, ‘Le manuscrit de publication’, we discover to which form of *autographie* Christine’s contemporaries afforded value. The growing prestige of the scribe, the essential link in the transmission of a flourishing vernacular culture, was incorporated into the vision of the author, who became transcriber of his or her own works. But the prestige attached primarily to the author’s *manuscrit de publication*. Delsaux’s description of the preparation of the final manuscript is fascinating and detailed. Christine and other contemporary writers, explains Delsaux, remained within the ‘*bibliophilie curiale*’ logic, that is, unlike Italian humanists, they were interested not in producing relatively cheap books that could be copied and easily circulated, but in creating luxury products for noble patrons and, through this, gaining prestige for themselves. Delsaux gives us a glimpse into Christine’s scriptorium in this chapter. The author gives herself
the most significant role in the production of her manuscript for Queen Isabeau of Bavaria, BL, Harley MS 4431, having herself depicted as the largest figure in the dedication miniature, where she hands an enormous codex to her royal patron. We also see Christine carefully supervising production of her beautiful collections, modulating them to fit her patrons (in a manuscript originally prepared for the Duke of Orleans, she removes or transforms pieces associated with him when, after his assassination at the hands of John of Burgundy, she recycles the manuscript to present to the Duke of Berry; she removes a piece in which she reinforces the queen’s authority to mediate between the warring factions from Harley 4431 when John of Burgundy is forced from Paris in 1413). We see the differences between the way Christine’s collaborators and Christine herself handled her manuscrits d’édition: her scribes were very respectful towards the copies that she prepared; Christine herself copied her own work mechanically.

Although the study targets primarily specialists of medieval manuscripts, providing a wealth of nuance that I cannot reproduce here, it offers much of broader interest. The notion of the medieval author cannot be separated, as Delsaux insists, from the material conditions that shaped the production of writing. The economics of the publishing industry, while not in the forefront of the study, are suggested here. But perhaps most interesting for readers with a general interest in Christine is the portrait that Delsaux offers of a talented businessperson competently overseeing every step of the production of her brand.

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TRACY ADAMS


This study continues Tracy Adams’s revisionist approach to Christine de Pizan and her times as exemplified most recently in her 2010 monograph, *The Life and Afterlife of Isabeau de Bavière*. In this earlier work, it is argued that the charges of lax morals levelled against both Queen Isabeau and her brother-in-law, Louis d’Orléans, are unjustified, as they have their source in slanderous Burgundian propaganda that over the centuries influenced historical accounts of the period. This consideration paves the way for the thesis of the present work, namely, that throughout the ducal conflicts between the Houses of Orléans and Burgundy (unleashed by Charles VI’s mental instability) Christine remained loyal to the Orleanists, primarily because she shared their conception of monarchy and regency (a single hereditary ruler aided by a council including non-nobles; the choice of regent during the ‘absences’ of Charles VI being determined by hierarchy within