



LITERARY SOURCES OF *LE LIVRE DE PAIX*

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Among the writings of Christine de Pizan, the *Livre de paix* is unusual for its use of Latin texts cited at the opening of every chapter, as well as for its quotation and paraphrase of these sources within the French text. The extent of these Latin quotations, mostly from the Bible and from a range of classical texts, presented without grammatical error in the Brussels manuscript, and translated by Christine with great accuracy, leaves us in no doubt about her capacity to read Latin.¹ In this respect, our research confirms the conclusions reached by Gabrielle Parussa from her study of the literary sources of the *Epistre Othea*, and by Liliane Dulac and Christine Reno in relation to *Le Livre de l'Advisiion Cristine* of 1405.² What is not clear, however, is whether the quotations in the *Livre de paix* came from Christine's perusal of complete works or from her reading of anthologies of classical texts.

Some idea of the extensive resources to which Christine had access can be gained from her description of the library established by Charles V at the Louvre in 1368.³ Both in the *Livre de paix* (3.18) and in her earlier

1. For further detail, see Constant J. Mews, "The Latin Learning of Christine de Pizan in the *Livre de paix*," in *Healing the Body Politic: The Political Thought of Christine de Pizan*, ed. Karen Green and Constant J. Mews (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), 61–80.

2. Gabriella Parussa, *Epistre Othea* (Geneva: Droz, 1999), 53n89, rejects the claim by Joël Blanchard ("Christine de Pizan: Tradition, expérience et traduction," *Romania* 111 [1990]): 200–35, esp. 206) that Christine knew little if any Latin, and thus agrees with the argument put by Liliane Dulac and Christine Reno in their "L'humanisme vers 1400, essai d'exploration à partir d'un cas marginal: Christine de Pizan traductrice de Thomas d'Aquin," in *Pratiques de la culture écrite en France au xve siècle: Actes du colloque international du CNRS, Paris, 16–18 mai 1992, organisé en l'honneur de Gilbert Ouy par l'unité de recherche "Culture écrite du Moyen Âge tardif,"* ed. Monique Ornato and Nicole Pons (Louvain-la-Neuve: FIDEM, 1995), 161–78, and "Traduction et adaptation dans *L'Advisiion Cristine* de Christine de Pizan," in *Traduction et adaptation en France à la fin du Moyen Âge et à la Renaissance: Actes du colloque organisé par l'université de Nancy II (23–25 mars 1995)*, ed. Charles Brucker (Paris: Champion, 1997), 121–31, as well as in their critical edition, *Advisiion xxxii–xxxiii*.

3. Edition of the catalog in Léopold Delisle, *Le Cabinet des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque impériale* (Paris: Imprimerie impériale, 1868–81) [vols. 2 and 3 as *Le Cabinet . . . de la Bibliothèque nationale*], 1:18–31, and in more detail in Delisle, *Recherches sur la librairie de Charles V*, 2 vols. (Paris: Champion, 1907).

Livre des fais et bonnes meurs du sage roy Charles V, she eulogized the king's commitment to making available to a wider audience not just Augustine but also classical authors like Valerius Maximus (translated by Simon de Hesdin and Nicolas de Gonesse) and above all Aristotle, whose *Ethics* and *Politics* were translated by Nicole Oresme. While she was certainly familiar with these translations, Christine seems particularly determined in the *Livre de paix* to demonstrate her knowledge of the Latin texts on which these translations were based. Gilles Malet, guardian of the royal library from 1369 until his death in 1411, was well-known to her,⁴ and the fact that she offered so many of her works (including the *Livre de paix*, on January 1, 1414) to the brother of Charles V, Jean, duke of Berry, suggests that she may also have had access to his library, which was stronger in classical texts than that of the king.⁵ The references in the *Livre de paix* are a strong indication, therefore, that Christine may have been able to explore the texts in the original Latin in both of these libraries, as well as the increasing number of French translations to be found there. More than any other of her writings, the *Livre de paix* suggests that—at least by 1413—she was very much at home in translating useful sayings of both classical and Christian writers.

Perhaps the single most important source of quotations in the *Livre de paix* is the Latin Bible.⁶ Christine begins her book with a quotation from Psalm 8:2 about drawing praise from the least of God's creatures—"Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, you have made praise"—perhaps as a way of legitimizing her own voice in the call for peace. She writes of God opening the lips of Daniel, who spoke out on behalf of the unjustly condemned Susanna, and was himself thrown into the lions' den—as violent a place as the present situation in France. She effectively likens herself to Daniel, prophesying in a situation of political danger. Only in her second chapter does she praise the new dauphin, who has to carry out the divine will. Her third chapter begins with a saying attributed to Jesus that combines the wording of Matthew 12:25 and Luke 11:17 (suggesting that she is here quoting the Vulgate from memory): "every kingdom divided in itself will be in mourning, and every city and house divided against itself will not stand." There is otherwise relatively little allusion to the New Testament, except in the margins of the opening six chapters, where she started to supply (as recorded in both manuscripts) the Latin

4. *Fais et bonnes meurs* 3.21 (Solente, 2:63); Delisle, *Cabinet des manuscrits*, 1:21, and *Recherches*, 1:10–22.

5. Delisle, *Cabinet des manuscrits*, 1:19.

6. This confirms what Liliane Dulac and Christine Reno have to say in their introduction to *Advision* xxxiv–xxxv.

quotations she translates within her text. More than in her earlier writings, Christine may have initially wanted to present herself as fully at ease with learned Latin texts, and thus to impress upon the young dauphin that she was giving authoritative advice. These early chapters give a valuable clue as to the extent of her familiarity with the Latin originals of the texts she was quoting in translation. Pressure of time, however, may well have forced her to discontinue this practice and rush the work to conclusion.

Christine quotes particularly frequently from the Psalter in the first part of the *Livre de paix*, transposing the concern for peace in Jerusalem onto her own longing for peace in France. On the other hand, she steers away from explicit quotation of the biblical prophets, at least in her chapter headings.⁷ While she is certainly familiar with the prophetic books in the Bible and compares the situation of France to that of Israel (as in 3.19–21), she prefers to cite the Wisdom books of the Hebrew Scriptures, above all the Book of Proverbs, which she presents as fully compatible with the values of classical antiquity as taught by Aristotle, Cicero, and Seneca. The model of the wise leader that she offers to the young dauphin is Solomon, presumed author of the Wisdom books, from which she draws extensively, both for her Latin quotations in the first part of her treatise and for her own discussion. The fact that she quotes Proverbs 28–29 in chapters 10–12 of Part 1 suggests that she was here deliberately looking for texts that supported her theme that a ruler needs wise counsel, and that one should always distrust false friends who give deceitful advice. She reads passages like “he who corrects a man shall subsequently find favor with him more than he who deceives through smoothness of the tongue” (1.10; Prov. 28:23) as being of direct relevance to the need for honesty in public life. Some of the texts she assigns to Proverbs are remembered texts from elsewhere, as “the tongue kills more than the sword” (1.15; perhaps false recall of Psalms 56:5, “and their tongue is a sharp sword”). Although she identifies the final quotation in the *Livre de paix* (3.48: “Semper in finem determinatur res”: An affair is always determined in its end) as coming from Proverbs 7, the phrase may in fact have been picked up from some nonbiblical source, if she did not invent it herself.

As is evident from the attached table of literary sources for the *Livre de paix*, there is a striking absence of quotation from the Church Fathers in this work. While the table is far from being a definitive list, it is evident that the proportion of quotations from classical as against patristic authors is quite different from the

7. See Christine Moneera Laennec, “Prophétie, interprétation et écriture dans l’Avision–Christine,” in *Une femme de lettres au moyen âge: Études autour de Christine de Pizan*, ed. Liliane Dulac and Bernard Ribémont (Orléans: Paradigme, 1995), 131–38.

earlier *Epistre Othea*, in which Christine quotes extensively from Augustine, Gregory the Great, and other fathers. On the very few occasions that she gives a quotation from Augustine or St. Bernard in the *Livre de paix*, she has found these texts in Brunetto Latini's *Livres du Trésor*. She has a particular fondness for Cassiodorus (to whom the *De amicitia Christiana* of Peter of Blois was often attributed in the fifteenth century) but never identifies Augustine as the source of a Latin quotation at the beginning of a chapter. Parussa has observed that many of Christine's patristic quotations in the *Epistre Othea* seem to have been drawn from the comprehensive compilation the *Manipulus florum*, compiled by Thomas of Ireland in the late thirteenth century (although her quotations are not always in any of the known versions of the text).⁸ Christine's Latin was quite sufficient to draw both from this work and from other texts (like the commentary on the *Metaphysics* of Aquinas). Yet by the time she composed the *Livre de paix*, she was moving toward more classically focused sources of inspiration. Only one Latin quotation in the book (I.3) also occurs in the *Manipulus florum*, a passage from the *Variae* of Cassiodorus listed under *Pax*.⁹ The fact that she initially attributed it not to Cassiodorus (as in the *Manipulus florum*), but to Scripture, suggests that she was working here from memory, rather than by looking up an anthology, and only subsequently checked (and corrected with a marginal note) her identification of the source. As there are many other Latin quotations from Cassiodorus (including some attributed to Seneca, and some in fact by Valerius Maximus) included within the *Livre de paix*, it may be that she had access to a more classically oriented anthology of Latin texts than the *Manipulus florum*.

This is also suggested by the fact that she includes a number of wrongly identified classical quotations in the *Livre de paix*. Passages from Cicero's *De inventione* are attributed to Seneca, and the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* is attributed to Aristotle. A small text from the *De provinciis consulariis* of Cicero, whom she identifies as "grand prince romain," rather than as Tullius (suggesting that she does not realize that Cicero is the Tully she mentions elsewhere), is most likely to come from such an anthology, as are texts from various Roman poets, notably Juvenal and Claudian. More research into classical

8. Parussa (*Othea* 53–56) reports that certain quotations in that work correspond only to certain manuscripts of the *Manipulus florum* (notably, Paris, BNF n.a.l. 708), while others do not match exactly any known manuscript of the anthology.

9. A complete text of the *Manipulus florum*, edited by Chris L. Nighman from the Venice 1493–95 edition, is available online at <http://info.wlu.ca/~wwwhist/faculty/cnighman>. There were multiple versions as well as florilegia, however, of this influential text: see Mary Rouse and Richard Rouse, *Preachers, Florilegia, and Sermons: Studies on the "Manipulus florum" of Thomas of Ireland* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1979), 197–207.

anthologies in circulation in the early fifteenth century may well throw more light on how many of her quotations, both those in Latin and those given in French, are likely to come from such a source.¹⁰

Christine includes one Latin quotation from Giles of Rome that cannot be identified as occurring in the *De regimine principum* (2.14: “Principis est omnia cognoscere quod non potest fieri in solitario”) but could have come from an anthology. That she is very interested in both the *Ethics* and *Politics* of Aristotle is evident, not just from her obvious familiarity with Oresme’s translation of these works, but from her citation of Latin phrases found in them. She also frequently quotes and comments on the *Ethics* in her text. Yet, while she was also evidently familiar with the *Politics* (not a work known to Brunetto Latini), only some of the Latin quotations that she identifies as coming from this work actually occur in it. This suggests that she was using an anthology like the *Auctoritates Aristotelis* as the source of her quotations.¹¹ She is nonetheless fully capable of reading, digesting, and commenting on the significance of extracts from such compilations that strike her as particularly important.

A literary text she is fond of quoting in Latin is Walter of Châtillon’s didactic epic, the *Alexandreis*, which has the form of moral advice given by Aristotle to his charge, Alexander the Great.¹² Whether she is reading it in an abridgment or as the complete work, it is evident that she is fully able to comment on its sophisticated Latin imagery. Another Latin text for which she has a particular attachment she introduces as *in Exordiis Summe sue*, by Guido Faba. The half dozen different extracts that she quotes, however, cannot be traced in any of the edited writings of this great theorist of prose composition from the thirteenth century.¹³ This could have been a text

10. Evencio Beltran argues that, for the *Livre du chemin de long estude*, Christine used the *Communiloquium* of John of Wales, a thirteenth-century compilation: see “Christine de Pizan, Jacques Legrand et le *Communiloquium* de Jean de Galles,” *Romania* 104 (1983): 208–28; on this anthology, see Jenny Swanson, *John of Wales: A Study of the Works and Ideas of a Thirteenth-Century Friar* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989). On Jacques Legrand (d. 1425), an Augustinian friar and direct contemporary of Christine, see his *Archiloge Sophie: Livre de bonnes meurs*, ed. Evencio Beltran (Geneva: Slatkine, 1986).

11. *Les “Auctoritates Aristotelis”: Un florilège médiéval; Étude historique et édition critique*, ed. Jacqueline Hamesse (Louvain: Publications universitaires, 1974).

12. *Galeri de Castellione: Alexandreis*, ed. Marvin L. Colker (Padua: Antenore, 1978); *The Alexandreis*, trans. R. Telfryn Pritchard (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1986).

13. They do not occur in his *Summa de Vitiis et Virtutibus*, ed. Virgilio Pini, “La *Summa de Vitiis et Virtutibus* de Guido Faba,” *Quadrivium* 1 (1956): 41–152, or in his *Dictamina rhetorica epistole*, ed. A. Gaudenzi, *Medium aevum: Artes triviales* 7, 3 (Bologna: Forni Editore, 1971). I have not been able to consult the unpublished *Exordia vel proverbia ad commune bonum et ad utilitatem omnium scoliarum tam Bononiae quam alibi commorantium*, preserved in several manuscripts of Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek: Clm 639, fols. 54–68va; Clm 16124, fols. 43–55; Clm 21565, fols. 47va–64ra; Clm22293, fols. 92–103va, 105.

that she herself had obtained from her father, from his own earlier career in Italy. That she was fully aware of Italian literature is demonstrated by her familiarity with Dante.¹⁴ She also provides an excerpt (3.41) from the Latin text of Boccaccio's *Liber de casibus virorum illustrium*, further evidence of her debt to the Italian tradition.

One compilation to which Christine certainly did have access was the *Livre du Trésor* of Brunetto Latini.¹⁵ Latini (ca. 1220–94) began work on this great anthology during a period of exile from Florence, between 1260 and 1266, but completed it only after his return to Italy. Christine does not draw at all on the first of its three books, concerned with what Brunetto calls Theory, covering sacred and secular history and natural science (astronomy in particular). However, she quotes extensively from its second book, however, which deals with the vices and the virtues. She does not make direct use of the extensive paraphrase of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* that opens the second book (apart from a section on lordship, in 3.19) but adapts Brunetto's discussion of the virtues (Latini 2.52–132) and reproduces his citation of classical sources. Brunetto himself based much of this part of the second book on the *Moralium dogma philosophorum*, a widely diffused anthology of classical texts from the twelfth century, sometimes associated with William of Conches,¹⁶ as well as on the *Summa de virtutibus* of William of Peyraut OP (Guillelmus Peraldus, ca. 1200–1271?).¹⁷

14. See n94 in the Introduction.

15. In her edition of *Paix*, Charity Cannon Willard identified Christine's debt to Latini but only had access to the edition of P. Chabaille, *Li Livres dou Tresor* (Paris: Imprimerie impériale, 1863). This used a different system of numbering from that employed by Francis J. Carmody in his edition, *Li Livres dou Trésor de Brunetto Latini* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1948), and retained in a subsequent edition, *Li Livres dou Tresor*, ed. Spurgeon Baldwin and Paul Barrette (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2003). Barrette and Baldwin had earlier translated the work as Brunetto Latini, *The Book of the Treasure (Li Livres dou Tresor)* (New York: Garland, 1993). Unfortunately, neither their translation nor their edition identifies the sources used by Latini or provides a detailed index, making the Carmody edition still invaluable for research into Latini's sources and Christine's dependence on them.

16. This anthology, printed as *Moralis philosophia de honesto et utili* among the works of Hildebert of Lavardin (PL 171, 1003–56), was attributed to William of Conches in *Das Moraliū dogma philosophorum des Guillaume de Conches: Lateinisch, altfranzösisch und mittelniederfränkisch*, ed. J. Holmberg (Paris: Champion, 1929), but this was questioned by R. A. Gauthier, "Pour l'attribution à Gauthier de Châtillon du *Moraliū dogma philosophorum*," *Revue du moyen âge latin* 7 (1951): 19–64, a debate summarized by J. R. Williams, "The Quest for the Author of the *Moraliū dogma philosophorum* (1931–1956)," *Speculum* 32 (1957): 736–47. R. A. Gauthier, "Les deux recensions du *Moraliū dogma philosophorum*," *Revue du moyen âge latin* 9 (1953): 171–260, argued that the *Moraliū* was dependent on Alan of Lille (and thus could not be by William of Conches). The issue still needs to be resolved.

17. Guillelmus Peraldus, *Summae virtutum ac vitiorum* (Paris, 1669).

Christine seems to have drawn only very slightly on the third book of the *Livre du Trésor*, which deals with rhetoric (taken from the *De inventione* of Cicero) and the government of the urban republic. She does not limit herself to quoting and adapting (sometimes quite significantly) excerpts from the second book of the *Livre du Trésor* in her discussion. Nonetheless, it is clear that this anthology, several copies of which were preserved in the libraries of Charles VI (including one sent to the Louvre by the duke of Guyenne in 1409), was a major stimulus for Christine.¹⁸ While her knowledge of Cicero and Seneca was very much influenced by her familiarity with Brunetto Latini, not all of her reading of these authors comes from this anthology. Brunetto would not have provided her with any of her extensive Latin quotations.

Another anthology on which she may have drawn (although no firm proof of this has yet been found) is the *Liber philosophorum moralium antiquorum*, again more classically oriented than the *Manipulus florum*. This was originally an Arab anthology of classical Greek texts, translated into Latin in the second half of the fourteenth century from a Castilian version of an Arab anthology from the eleventh century, and put into French by Guillaume de Tignonville (d. 1414), provost of Paris from 1401 and a close friend of Christine in the debate about *Le Roman de la rose*.¹⁹ Like Christine, Tignonville also offered a number of his writings to the duke of Berry.²⁰ Given this friendship, Tignonville may well have assisted Christine in her scholarly endeavors. Such compilations were

18. Multiple copies of the *Livres dou Trésor* in the library of Charles VI are recorded by Delisle, *Cabinet des manuscrits*, 3:136, nos. 451–56; in Delisle, *Recherches*, 2:77–78, no. 456 (2:78) is identified as sent to the Louvre by the duke of Guyenne in January 1409. Pierre Champion, *La Librairie de Charles d'Orléans* (Paris: Champion, 1910), identifies three copies (Paris, BNF fr. 571 [early fourteenth century], 191 [fifteenth century], and 1110 [early fourteenth century]) as belonging to the library of Charles d'Orléans in 1440.

19. The complex story of the transmission of this text is summarized by Curt F. Bühler in his introduction to the translation made into English from the French by Stephen Scrope (who also translated Christine de Pizan), William Worcester, and an anonymous translator, *The Dicts and Sayings of the Philosophers* (1941; repr., London: Oxford University Press, 1961), x–xiii. The Latin text was edited by Ezio Franceschini, “Il *Liber Philosophorum Moraliū Antiquorum*,” in *Memorie della Reale Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei*, anno 327, ser. 6, vol. 3.5 (1930): 354–99, and *Atti del Reale Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti*, anno academico, 91.2 (1931–32): 393–597. Bühler (xiii–xv) notes a large number of manuscripts of Tignonville’s translation, as well as a number of early printed editions of the French version, edited by Robert Eder: “Tignonvillana inedita,” *Romanische Forschungen* 33 (1915): 851–1091.

20. Delisle, *Recherches*, 2:246 (nos. 136–37), notes his gift of two volumes of translation of laws into French, offered in May 1412, and 2:250–51, *Un livre des Dis moraulx des philosophes*, bought from Maistre Regnault de Montet in January 1404, may be Tignonville’s work. An early copy, from around 1400, is now held at the Beinecke Library, Yale University, MS 285. See <http://webtext.library.yale.edu/beinfla/pre1600.MS285.htm>. A copy was held at the library of Charles d'Orléans at Blois, where it was shelved next to Christine’s *Epistre Othea* (Champion, *La Librairie de Charles d'Orléans*).

popular in the period, and it is always difficult to pin down any particular one used by Christine. Another, which could have been used by Christine in earlier writings, is the *Chapelet des vertus*, translated in the late fourteenth century from the *Fiori di virtù*, but again no firm certainty can be reached.²¹

Another influential text to which she was exposed, either directly or indirectly, was the *Formula honestae vitae*, widely attributed to Seneca but in fact by a sixth-century Christian writer, Martin of Braga. Christine had glossed this work in her *Livre de prudence* and *Livre de la prod'homme de l'homme*, while an independent translation into French of this work was produced by Jean Courtecuisse in 1403.²² Much more work still needs to be done on the influence of classical texts like the *Formula honestae vitae* on Christine. Another text she could well have encountered in the library of Charles V was a French translation of the *Speculum dominarum*, composed by Durand de Champagne, the Franciscan confessor of Jeanne de Navarre (d. 1305), wife of Philip IV. Christine's discussion of the tripartite division of prudence could possibly have been mediated through this work, though its original inspiration was certainly in comments made by Martin of Braga.²³ Again much more research is needed before firm conclusions can be drawn.

Compared to writings like the *Epistre Othea*, the *Livre de paix* demonstrates profound familiarity with a wide range of both classical and Christian authors. Christine shared the taste of her generation for adapting nuggets of ethical wisdom from ancient authors and presenting them as fully consistent with the ethical precepts preserved in the Wisdom literature of the Old Testament. In moving away in the *Livre de paix* from the more frequent reference to the Church Fathers that she had displayed in some of her earlier writings, she was moving in accord with the growing interest in classical authors that defined her age.

21. Curt F. Bühler, "The *Fleurs de toutes vertus* and Christine de Pisan's *L'Épître d'Othéa*," *PMLA* 62 (1947): 32–44; and by the same author, "The *Fleurs de toutes vertus*," *PMLA* 64 (1949): 600–601. Parussa discusses Christine's possible use of this work in *Othea* 46–53 but observes that Bühler did not observe that Christine cites many passages more accurately and fully than in the *Chapelet des vertus*.

22. *Sénèque des IIII vertus: La Formula honestae vitae de Martin de Braga (pseudo-Sénèque), traduite et glosée par Jean Courtecuisse* (1403), ed. Hans Haselbach (Bern: Herbert Lang, 1975). A comparison of Christine's work and that by Courtecuisse is offered in Jean-Louis Picherit, "Le *Livre de la Prod'homme de l'homme* et Le *Livre de Prudence* de Christine de Pizan: Chronologie, structure et composition," *Le Moyen Âge* 40 (1985).

23. *Paix* 1.4. This tripartite division is found in pseudo-Seneca [Martin of Braga], *Formula vitae honestae*, 2, in Martin of Braga, *Opera omnia*, ed. Claude W. Barlow (New Haven: Yale University Press for the American Academy in Rome, 1950), but is also mentioned in the *Miroir des dames* (Corpus Christi College MS 324, fols. 103v–104r) with more specific reference to its sources in Cicero and Seneca (see notes to translation). The copy Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 324, belonged to the library of Charles V (Delisle, *Recherches*, 1:247).