



CLASSIQUES
GARNIER

WALTERS (Lori J.), « Sailing to Byzantium. Christine de Pizan's Vision of Constantinople in *Le Livre du chemin de lonc estude* », *Cahiers de recherches médiévales et humanistes / Journal of Medieval and Humanistic Studies*, n° 32, 2016 – 2, p. 117-131

DOI : [10.15122/isbn.978-2-406-06745-0.p.0117](https://doi.org/10.15122/isbn.978-2-406-06745-0.p.0117)

La diffusion ou la divulgation de ce document et de son contenu via Internet ou tout autre moyen de communication ne sont pas autorisées hormis dans un cadre privé.

© 2017. Classiques Garnier, Paris.
Reproduction et traduction, même partielles, interdites.
Tous droits réservés pour tous les pays.

WALTERS (Lori J.), « Sailing to Byzantium. Christine de Pizan's Vision of Constantinople in *Le Livre du chemin de lonc estude* »

RÉSUMÉ – Cet article soutient que les deux passages sur Constantinople dans *Le Livre du chemin de lonc estude* de 1402-1403 sont cruciaux pour la compréhension du texte de Christine. Dans le premier passage, elle rend compte des splendeurs et des ruines de la capitale actuelle de l'Empire byzantin ; dans le second, elle exprime ses espoirs pour l'avenir de la ville. Christine fait l'éloge de la gouvernance actuelle de Constantinople par Jean de Châteaumorant.

ABSTRACT – *This paper argues that the two passages on Constantinople in Le Livre du chemin de lonc estude of 1402-1403 are crucial to understanding Christine's text. In the first passage she reports on the splendors and ruins of the present-day capital of the Byzantium Empire; in the second, she expresses her hopes for the city's future. Christine praises the current governance of Constantinople by Jean de Châteaumorant.*

SAILING TO BYZANTIUM

Christine de Pizan's Vision of Constantinople in *Le Livre du chemin de lonc estude*

Over half a millennium before William Butler Yeats¹, Christine de Pizan (1365-ca.1430) also figuratively sailed through the heavens on a visionary voyage to Byzantium, which, like Yeats, she portrays as the cradle of civilization. Although at first glance the two passages on Constantinople that she includes in her *Livre du chemin de lonc estude* of 1402-1403 might appear to be inconsequential, they prove critical to an understanding of her text². In the *Chemin* the protagonist, named Christine, like the author, accompanies the Cumean sibyl on a visionary journey that ends in the heavenly sphere, where the protagonist transcribes the proceedings of a debate about the character traits incumbent upon a world leader. The author here refers to prophecies concerning the exemplary universal monarch destined to reign over Christendom during the Last Days³. One such prophecy was evoked by Dante, whom

1 Yeats composed "Sailing to Byzantium" in 1928.

2 All references come from the edition and modern French translation of the text by A. Tarnowski, Paris, LGF, 2000.

3 A comprehensive treatment of the Last World Emperor appears in H. Möhring, *Der Weltkaiser der Endzeit: Entstehung, Wandel und Wirkung einer tausendjährigen Weissagung*, Stuttgart, Thorbecke, 2000. See also the recent studies by A. A. Latowsky, *Emperor of the World: Charlemagne and the Construction of Imperial Authority, 800-1229*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2013, and C. Jones, *Eclipse of Empire? Perceptions of the Western Empire and its Rulers in Late Medieval France*, Turnhout, Brepols, 2007. In his "Teste David cum Sibylla: The Significance of the Sibylline Tradition in the Middle Ages", *Women of the Medieval World: Essays in Honor of John H. Mundy*, ed. J. Kirshner and S. F. Wemple, Oxford, Blackwell, 1985, B. McGinn, p. 29, recounts how in the early thirteenth century a version of the Latin Sibylla Tiburtina was used "as a prophecy of the glories of the French monarchy and its apocalyptic destiny as the line from which would come the Last World Emperor, identified as Philip Augustus". E. A. R. Brown deals with how the Sibylline prophecy was used to legitimate Capetian aspirations in "La notion de la légitimité et la prophétie à la cour de Philippe Auguste", *La France de Philippe Auguste: le temps des mutations*, éd. R.-H. Bautier, Paris, CNRS, 1982, p. 77-110. For Christine's

Christine pointedly names as her forerunner on the “path of long study⁴”. The poet of the *Divine Comedy* refers to this prophecy in his description of Emperor Henry VII, in whom he “saw the promise of that ideal emperor by whom the civil government of the world might be established on a secure and peaceful basis⁵”. Dante has Beatrice describe the vacant throne in the empyrean awaiting Henry with these words:

And in that great seat which draws your eyes
for the crown already set above it,
before you shall dine at this wedding feast,
shall sit the soul of noble Henry,
who on earth, as emperor, shall attempt
to set things straight for Italy before she is prepared.

Par. 30:133-138⁶

Dante’s reference to prophecies concerning the coming of a salvific world leader would have reminded Christine of more recent developments in France. Her patron Louis d’Orléans, King Charles VI’s younger brother by three years, was being considered for the position of Holy Roman Emperor right around the time when she began work on the *Chemin*⁷. This fact,

use of the Cumean sibyl in particular, see K. Green, “Philosophy and Metaphor: The Significance of Christine’s ‘Blunders’”, *Parergon*, 22, 2005, p. 121-124, and R. Hollander, “The Sibyl in *Paradiso* 33.66 and in *De civitate Dei* 18.23”, which can be accessed via the Princeton University Dante website.

- 4 The French words with which Christine has Dante address Virgil: “Vaille moy lonc estude/Qui m’a fait chercher tes volumes/Par qui ensemble accountance eumes”, v. 1136-1138, are a close rendering of Dante’s original, Italian greeting: “vagliami ‘l lungo studio e ‘l grande amore/che m’ha fatto cercar lo tuo volume. Tu se’ lo mio maestro et ‘l mio autore”, *Inferno* I, v. 83-85, as quoted by Tarnowski, p. 154-155, at p. 155 n. 4. On the *Chemin* as a recasting of the *Divine Comedy*, see K. Brownlee, “Literary genealogy and the problem of the father: Christine de Pizan and Dante”, *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, 23, 1993, p. 365-387. See also E. J. Richards, “Christine de Pizan and Dante: A Reexamination”, *Archiv für das Studium der Neueren Sprachen und Literatur*, 222, 1985, p. 100-111, especially p. 105, where he discusses “lonc estude”.
- 5 Dante, *The Divine Comedy: 3, Paradise*, trans. D. L. Sayers and B. Reynolds, 1962, New York, Penguin, 1981, Glossary, “Henry VII, Emperor”, p. 376-377.
- 6 Dante’s placing of the reference to the throne in verse number 133 may well be a nod to Henry’s Christological status. Citations of Dante are taken from the Princeton Dante website, where the Italian originals can also be found.
- 7 See G. Ouy and C. M. Reno, “Ou mène le *Chemin de long estude*? Christine de Pizan, Ambrogio Migli, et les ambitions impériales de Louis d’Orléans (À propos du ms. BnF fr. 1643)”, *Christine 2000: Studies Offered to Angus Kennedy*, ed. N. Margolis and J. Campbell, Amsterdam, Rodopi, 2000, p. 177-195. Ouy and Reno discovered proof of Louis’s imperial ambitions in Latin poems composed by one of his secretaries, Ambrogio

especially when coupled with her wish, subsequently expressed, that King Charles VII be made emperor and that he recovers the Holy Land, suggests that as early as her *Chemin* Christine was promoting French imperial ambitions. She appears to have had her sights set on a French leader better equipped to prepare for the Last Days than Emperor Henry VII, who had failed to realize Dante's expectations of him⁸. My overarching argument is that Christine makes reference to sites in Constantinople in support of France's political ambitions to be recognized as the transcendent example of a contemporary Christian empire, a status attained by Byzantium in earlier days.

France's ambitions had been baldly stated in the *Grandes Chroniques de France*, the official history of the royal house. These vernacular chronicles were a major source not only for the *Chemin*, but also for two other of her texts of the same period, her biography of King Charles V of 1404 (hereafter *Charles V*⁹) and her *Livre de la cité des dames* of 1405. The *Grandes Chroniques* had been commissioned around 1250 from the monks at the royal abbey of Saint Denis, most probably by no less a figure than the future Saint Louis himself. By the early fifteenth century, the libraries of all of Christine's major patrons boasted copies of them. As shown by Anne D. Hedeman, King Charles V, the patron responsible for Christine's family's migration from Italy to Paris, did a major revamping of the chronicles¹⁰. As opposed to the official copies of the *Grandes Chroniques* that were otherwise produced, Hedeman considers many of Christine's texts to be successors to Charles V's political program¹¹. I have argued that by writing her *Charles V* Christine was attempting to circumvent the instability of Charles VI's government

Migli. Louis d'Orléans's designs on the imperial crown were also implicit in his choice of wife, Valentina Visconti, a descendent of Holy Roman Emperor Henry VII, whose vacant throne Dante had described in *Par.* 30, as quoted above.

- 8 For a French vision of the Last Days, see C. Mercuri, "Stat inter spinas lilium: Le Lys de France et la couronne d'épines", *Le Moyen Âge*, 110, 2004, p. 497-512. Mercuri describes a Dominican office commissioned during Saint Louis's reign, most likely by the King himself, to celebrate the preservation of the crown of thorns in the Sainte Chapelle. In a (comically?) charming twist on traditional representations of the Second Coming, the office imagines Christ knocking at the door of the royal palace to retrieve the crown of thorns, which French kings had lovingly preserved for him.
- 9 Christine de Pizan, *Le Livre des faits et bonnes meurs du sage roy Charles V*, ed. S. Solente, 2 vols, Paris, Champion, 1936-1940. In my notes I refer to this text as *CbV*.
- 10 A. D. Hedeman, *The Royal Image: Illustrations of the Grandes Chroniques de France, 1274-1422*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1991, p. 96-133.
- 11 Hedeman, *The Royal Image*, p. 153, 168, 174.

by focusing on and even embellishing his father's more successful reign¹². After considering the *Chemin's* portrayal of the military general Jean de Châteaumorant, we shall better understand how Christine designed her biography so as to inspire future leaders to follow Charles V's sterling example¹³.

In the prologue to the *Grandes Chroniques* the first chronicler, a monk of Saint Denis named Primat, sets forth France's idea of its divinely sanctioned role as Christianity's foremost monarchy. He reformulates for the French the theme known as *translatio studii et imperii*, the progressive displacement of the locus of empire and culture from one country to another, as the result of a country's failings. Primat holds that the favored site of empire and culture has moved from Greece to Rome and then to France, where, God willing, it will remain¹⁴. This line of reasoning applies not only to the ancient world, but even more pertinently to the westward shift from Constantine's Byzantium to Charlemagne's Holy Roman Empire and finally to Saint Louis's "most Christian" monarchy¹⁵. But Primat introduces a note of caution. France will retain its superiority over other nations only so long as it acts in accordance with Christian principles. The French monarchy was bolstered by its support of the Church, seen most clearly in the leadership given by the faculty of theology of the University of Paris. The idea was that competent leadership had to be based upon moral worthiness and sound Christian doctrine.

12 L. Walters, "Constructing Reputations: *Fama* and Memory in *Charles V* and *L'Advison-Cristine*", *Fama: The Politics of Talk and Reputation in Medieval Europe*, ed. T. Fenster and D.L. Smail, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2003, p. 118-142.

13 In claiming that Christine's writings "in particular focus on themes that became important in copies of the *Grandes Chroniques de France* produced during the second half of Charles VI's reign", Hedeman, *Royal Image*, p. 139, suggests that Christine was a key player during this troubled period, perhaps even influencing the author-compilers of the *Grandes Chroniques* as well as being influenced by them, an opinion supported by the rest of my study.

14 After saying that *clergie* and *chevalerie*, learning and chivalry, should never be separated, Primat continues: "En III regions ont habité en divers tens: en Grece regnerent premierement, car en la cité d'Athenes fut jadis le puis de philosophie et en Grece la flors de chevalerie. De Grece vindrent puis à Rome. De Rome sont en France venues. Diex par sa grace vuelle que longuement i soient maintenues" (*Les Grandes Chroniques de France*, ed. J. Viard, 10 vols., Paris, Société de l'Histoire de France, 1920-1953, vol. 1, p. 5-6).

15 See M. Schmidt-Chazan, "L'idée d'Empire dans le *Speculum historiale* de Vincent de Beauvais", *Vincent de Beauvais: intentions et réceptions d'une œuvre encyclopédique au Moyen Âge*, ed. M. Paulmier-Foucart, S. Lusignan, A. Nadeau, Montréal, Bellarmin, 1990, p. 253-284, in particular p. 262-270.

The speech of Christine's character Avis, or Good Counsel, echoes the *Grandes Chroniques*. He appears on the scene in the *Chemin* at the summing up of the debate by Lady Wisdom, to recommend that a transcript of the debate be transmitted to the French princes, a task that the Christine character is designated to perform. As a University-trained doctor, dressed in lawyer's robes (v. 6229), Avis explains and enforces laws consonant with Christian doctrine. He is the quintessential representative of *clergie*, or of the expertise obtained in the schools of learning. Avis echoes the *Grandes Chroniques* prologue in recounting how *clergie* has passed from Athens to Rome:

*Jadis en Grece et a Athenes
Fu la fleur des choses certenes
Que clergie apprent et recorde.
A Romme après, bien m'en recorde,
Usoient les Rommains de droit,
Mais tout est failli orendroit.* (v. 6213-6218)

The last line is significant: "Mais tout est failli orendroit" ('But all is over and done with now'). The question then becomes which country will be the rightful heir of ancient and contemporary Greece and Rome. The answer desired by the author Christine, the answer that she learned from reading the *Grandes Chroniques*, is obviously "France¹⁶". Avis advises sending a transcription of the debate back to the earth to be decided by members of the French court, which is composed above all by the King and many of Christine's other patrons. The author thereby intimates that members of the royal family are obliged to realize that French exceptionalism depends upon their actions and those of their French subjects whom they command and advise. Implicit in Avis's words is a criticism of current French mores. This becomes clear when Christine's lawyerly spokesman recounts the story of the Judgment of Paris. As the "excellant berger de Troye" (v. 6188-6189), Paris is the epitome of the French prince, as he was depicted in the *Grandes Chroniques* and elsewhere. But he was also the man who made an intemperate choice, by selecting Venus, and a bad Venus rather than a good one, over Minerva,

16 For Christine's reading of the *Grandes Chroniques*, see L.J. Walters, "Reading Like a Frenchwoman: Christine de Pizan's Treatment of Boccaccio's Johanna I and Andrea Acciaiuoli", *Reconsidering Boccaccio: Medieval Contexts and Global Intertexts*, ed. O. Holmes and D. Stewart, forthcoming.

thus *luxure* over wisdom. Christine seeks to dissuade the French princes from making a similar mistake.

My foregoing analysis provides the framework for viewing Christine's two references to Constantinople, which are much more important than they would initially appear to be. The city is the first stop on the 787-verse world tour¹⁷ that Christine undertakes under the guidance of Dante's Cumean Sibyl. Rather than the grand world tour that we would go on today, it is a visionary voyage made possible by her extensive readings and by firsthand reports of travellers¹⁸. Christine presents the "great and noble city" of Constantinople (v. 1193-1194) as the gateway to the Holy Land, the high point of her journey. She mentions the city by name twice in the first passage, which extends from vv. 1193 to 1234. The Sibyl indicates to her charge the marvels of the city, pointing out that it was formerly the head of Greece (v. 1195). Among the city's many edifices, monuments, and art works, Christine's tour guide mentions only one by name, Hagia Sophia, referring to it as "l'Eglise Sainte Sophie", v. 1210.

Hagia Sophia is praised, in these very same terms, in the *Grandes Chroniques*. Primat recounts how after victories over many nations, the Emperor Justinian constructed a temple in Constantinople called the church of Sainte Sophie, meaning "Holy Wisdom", in honor of Jesus Christ, who, in Primat's words, "est divine sophie et divine sapience de Dieu le pere"¹⁹. Three points are noteworthy. First, Christine connects Hagia Sophia and the city it symbolizes with the universal prince, the world leader who incarnates all good qualities. When she reports what the major authorities have said about the properties of Wisdom, she cites the *Policratique*, the translation

17 The world tour has that number of verses in London, British Library, Harley 4431, Christine's last "edition" of the text. See J. Laidlaw, "The Date of the Queen's MS (London, British Library, Harley MS 4431)", 2005 in the "Research Output" section of the *Making of the Queen's Manuscript* website.

18 C. C. Willard suggests that besides sources such as *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville*, Christine may have also drawn from reports of travellers such as Philippe de Mézières, Jean de Werchin, and Guillebert de Lannoy. See "Une source oubliée du voyage imaginaire de Christine de Pizan", *Et c'est la fin pour quoy sommes ensemble: hommage à Jean Dufournet*, ed. J.-C. Aubailly et al., 3 vols., Paris, Champion, 1993, vol. 1, p. 321-326. Willard also cites several manuscripts of travel literature (London, British Library, Cotton, Othon D II and Paris, BnF fr. 1380) that have connections to Christine's scriptorium.

19 In the *Grandes Chroniques*, ed. Viard, vol. 1, p. 212, Primat refers to divine wisdom as "Sophie" and as the "Sapience" of God the Father.

of John of Salisbury's *Policraticus*²⁰, to explain that the “noble pagans” who first conceived of the concept adored the wise prince above all others. And their “god of gods” was Sapience, whose statue held an “ecrit” that says:

*Les Grigois qui de moy parlerent
Sophie en leurs dis m'appellerent;
Des Latins la sage emparlee
Sapience suis appelee.* (v. 5403-5406)

Second, in speaking of Lady Wisdom, as she does in the above quotation, Christine echoes the foregrounding of Wisdom by Primat, Saint Louis's chronicler. This emphasis was then extended by King Charles V, her family's patron, whom Christine celebrates for his wise decision to commission numerous translations of Latin texts deemed essential for the proper functioning of the monarchy²¹. These include the text cited by Christine, the *Policratique*. The third thing to note is Hagia Sophia's overweening significance for the French. Barbara Newman points out that Alcuin's palace chapel in Soissons was dedicated to Holy Wisdom, “after the example of Saint Sophia in Byzantium.”²² In sum, Christine begins her imaginary journey at Hagia Sophia because the French of her time believed it to be greater in beauty and goodness than all other churches of the world. It was as an essential source of France's self-conception as a Christian empire.

But Christine's initial praise of Constantinople's past glories soon gives way to lamentations on its present state²³. In her first passage on the city,

20 The Franciscan Denis Foulechat completed the *Policratique* in 1372. Christine documents Charles V's translation campaign in *CbV* 3.12, ed. Solente, vol. 2, p. 42-46.

21 She does so in *CbV* 3.12, ed. Solente, vol. 2, p. 42 and in the *Chemin*, v. 5001-5046. These “translations” would now be more properly considered to be adaptations.

22 This is the full quotation: “The Carolingian period witnessed the rise of a veritable cult of Sapientia, as Alcuin and his confrères raised the banner of Christian humanism over palace school and chapel. Both Alcuin's native church of York Minster and the palace chapel in Soissons were dedicated to the Holy Wisdom, after the example of Saint Sophia in Byzantium”, B. Newman, *Sister of Wisdom: St. Hildegard's Theology of the Feminine*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1987, p. 43-44. She adds, p. 44: “In his capacity as liturgist, Alcuin composed a votive Mass of the Holy Wisdom, which remained in widespread use through 1570”.

23 S. Sasaki, “Chateaumorant et *Le Chemin* de Christine de Pizan – à propos des ‘ruines’ de Constantinople”, *Et c'est la fin pour quoy sommes ensemble*, vol. 3, p. 1261-1270. Alongside Willard, Sasaki is one of the few scholars to have written about Christine's representation of Constantinople in the *Chemin*.

the poet also bemoans its many ruins, resulting from the long war in which the inhabitants have been engaged with their close neighbors, the Sarrasins. Constantinople, formerly rich and full of inhabitants, is now largely depopulated. At the end of the passage, Christine, however, interjects a note of hope: the city's fields have recently been cultivated anew and are feeding the populace (v. 1231). The subject of the second passage on Constantinople (v. 4503-4570) is the city's revitalization, which was largely brought about through the efforts of Jean de Châteaumorant (1352-1429), the leader of the city²⁴. He is lieutenant to Marshall Boucicaut²⁵, the head of the French army. Both men had escaped from imprisonment following the disastrous French defeat by the Turks at Nicopolis in 1396. King Charles VI expedited Jean to defend Constantinople after Boucicaut had secured it in 1399²⁶. Christine describes Jean in the highest of terms: his goodness, valor, and patience make him eminently worthy of renown (v. 4512-4519). He exemplifies the perfect marriage of chivalric prowess and virtue (v. 4568-4569). For Christine, Jean is a fitting model for modern times.

Christine strategically precedes Jean's story with that of his Roman prototype, Scipio the African (v. 4481-4502). Scipio, having acquired

24 Christine places his story in the section after the initial debate in Lady Reason's court, conducted by Ladies Nobility, Wealth, Chivalry, and Wisdom (Noblesse, Richesse, Chevalerie, and Sagesse). Lady Wisdom (Christine's "Dame Sagesse") gives a proper definition of the ideal representative of each category; Jean de Châteaumorant appears in the corrective definition of Chivalry given by Lady Wisdom.

25 Marshall Boucicaut's name was Jehan le Meingre (Jean II Le Maingre, 1366-1421).

26 Christine also praises Jean in her *Livre du Debat de deux amans*, *The Love Debate Poems of Christine de Pizan*, ed. B. K. Altmann, Gainesville, FL, University Press of Florida, 1998, p. 124. As in her *Chemin*, here the author's praise of Jean follows her praise of Boucicaut. "Le bon Chasteau Morant, que Dieu sauver /Et garder vueille, / Qui en armes sur les Sarrasins veille / En la cité Constantin, qu'il conseille, / Ayde et garde, pour la foy Dieu travaille; / Cil doit avoir / Pris et honneur, car il fait son devoir, / Et ceulx qui sont o lui, a dire voir, / Loz acquierent, qui trop mieulx vault qu'avoir, / Et aux François / Font grant honneur", v. 1627-1637. Some believe that Christine dedicated her *Dit de Poissy* to Jean de Châteaumorant or to Marshall Boucicaut: see Altmann, *Love Debate Poems*, p. 264; C. C. Willard, *Christine de Pizan, Her Life and Works, A Biography*, New York, Persea Books, 1984, p. 64-65; E. Yenai, *Christine de Pizan: A Bibliography, Second Edition*, Metuchen, NJ, Scarecrow Press, 1989, p. 18. Willard comments on why Boucicaut and Jean would be good candidates for the dedicatee: "Christine knew both men, and in the spring of 1400 both were in Constantinople defending the city against the advancing armies of the Turkish sultan Bayazid. Either would have justified the description that she gives of him at the beginning of the poem: 'Good knight, valiant, full of wisdom...'" I add that both men would have qualified for Christine's characterization of the dedicatee as "un estrange," someone who was "out of the country".

Spain for the Romans, was offered for his pleasure a beautiful young female prisoner. But, as says Christine, “Sa char vainqui par fort courage” (v. 4495), giving her instead in marriage to a noble baron, together with generous gifts²⁷. The author then segues to Jean de Châteaumorant by suggesting that even more worthy examples of military leaders exist in the present time²⁸. Her telling, which is an obvious recasting of Scipio’s story, has some outstanding features. Most importantly, Christine connects Jean’s virtue of continence with how his exercise of Christian charity informs all his actions²⁹. Not only does he assure Constantinople’s populace of having sufficient foodstuffs, but he also tries to alleviate the famine raging in the neighboring Muslim territories. His profoundly Christian attitude toward conquered peoples is evident in his treatment of the beautiful Muslim prisoner and her mother. Jean’s acts of generosity are motivated by the immediate compassion he feels for the mother wailing in anguish before him. As Christine explains it, he realizes that her desperate concern is to save her entire family from starvation³⁰. Jean responds by helping out the young woman’s mother as well as he could³¹, thus rescuing the family from death by starvation as well as from dishonor (v. 4565-4566). Christine equally emphasizes that he did not insult his female prisoner in word or in deed (v. 4558-4560). Besides his sensitivity to his enemies’ human needs, Jean thus shows his high regard for women. Christine demonstrates that Jean’s policies are part of the mission that he has received from the French

27 The episode of the continence of Scipio inspired writers and painters for centuries to come. Bellini, Rubens, and Poussin chose to portray it, the most famous being Poussin’s eponymous painting of 1640.

28 Christine hints at her preference for Jean over Scipio by the relative lengths of the appreciative portraits she makes of the two men. Whereas she devotes only twenty-one verses to Scipio (v. 4481-4502), she gives sixty verses, almost three times as many, to Jean (v. 4510-4570).

29 “Alors Charité la piteuse/Esmut si son noble courage”, v. 4556-4557. Christine comments on Charles V’s exemplary charity in *CbV* 1.32, ed. Solente, vol. 1, p. 89-94.

30 Christine describes her as a noble woman with a household full of children. They have not a morsel of bread to eat, and suffer severe hunger pangs (v. 4536-4543). The fact that our author repeats the latter description with several variations (“la fain qui l’oppressoit”, v. 4545; “sa fain trop felle”, v. 4547) reveals the understanding of, and sympathy for, the poor that Christine shares with Jean.

31 Christine may have seen in the mother’s dilemma a reflection of her own situation after her husband’s death, when she had to support five family members and herself. She implicitly returns to a point that she makes elsewhere: women’s issues cut across national and religious lines.

king³². She thereby sets the standard for the way rulers should govern conquered peoples. They have to earn their right to rule by showing that their moral system is preferable to that of their subjects³³. The French moral system, as illustrated by Jean's sterling behavior, is characterized by Christian charity as well as by respect for women, the latter being one of the major leitmotifs of Christine's career.

The author's portrayal of Jean's outdoing of his model Scipio has to be seen against the backdrop of the latter's frequent representation as an exemplary leader. In "Dante and the Empire", Charles Till Davis explains that for Dante, Scipio was forerunner to a world emperor:

So, presumably, the imperium, won by republican heroes like Scipio and perfected by Augustus, will be restored by a future emperor. Perhaps he will also prepare the world for the second coming of Christ, just as Augustus prepared it for his first coming³⁴.

As per Davis's formulation, we have seen how Christine portrays Jean de Châteaumorant as a latter-day Scipio who prepares the world for the Last Days. As the country that best realizes classical ideals of *chevalerie* and *clergie*, France, in her eyes, would be the cradle of a new world emperor. Christine's implicit message to the French princes is the following: in order for the country to realize its divinely sanctioned destiny to be the leader of the Christian world, which would be fulfilled if a French prince were to become Holy Roman Emperor, it has to correct its past failings.

32 V. 4523-4524: "par l'ordonnance /du roy françois". In *CbV* 2.2, ed. Solente, vol. 1, p. 115, Christine discusses how the prince assigns authority to lieutenants under his command, pointing out that even in ancient times these men were considered to be knights ("chevaliers" in French) because, like today, they rode on horseback.

33 This is a point to which Christine returns throughout her career: one's beliefs must be demonstrated by one's acts. Christine, who characteristically avoids censuring French leaders directly, nonetheless frequently implicitly criticizes their past actions. In *CbV* 2.18 she maintains that the best way to correct someone is by citing the positive virtues they should demonstrate. Direct criticism of rulers diminishes the respect their subjects should have for their authority as God's representatives on earth. But in return, leaders have to live up to the responsibilities toward their subjects that their God-given authority has given them. Christine places her emphasis firmly on the responsibilities of rulers toward their subjects.

34 C. T. Davis, "Dante and the Empire", *The Cambridge Companion to Dante*, ed. R. Jacoff, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 73; see also Schmidt-Chazan, "L'idée d'Empire", p. 259.

Christine would have been acutely conscious of the fact that Christian crusaders were responsible for the weakened state of Constantinople from which the city still suffered in her time. She suggests as much when she says that the city's walls were destroyed "par meschef", as well as by the long war that the inhabitants had been waging with the Sarrasins (v. 1223-1225). The meaning of "meschef" in Middle French is "a distressing event, bad fortune, misadventure, or calamity"³⁵. The term "meschef" is significantly composed of "mes", meaning "poor", and "chef", meaning "head". With her choice of term, Christine implies that the forces that put the city to ruin were poorly headed. This, I believe, is Christine's diplomatically couched nod to those events in Constantinople's history unflattering to the French.

What was the most distressing of those past events? Beyond doubt, it was the sacking of Constantinople two centuries earlier. The limited victory of the Christian princes in the Third Crusade (1189-1192), led by France's Philip Augustus, England's Richard I and the Holy Roman Emperor, Frederick I Barbarossa³⁶, was reversed in a particularly ugly incident of the short-lived Fourth Crusade of 1202-1204. Pope Innocent III had initiated that particular crusade by calling together a group of Europeans to retake Muslim-controlled Jerusalem. But the crusaders, the majority of whom were French, diverged from their appointed path, deciding instead to invade Constantinople, whose troops, although numerous, were not united under a forceful leader. The crusaders sacked the city in record time, embarking on a three-day rampage of looting, plundering, and raping, and moreover doing it during Easter Week, 1204. In a Latin letter addressed to the papal legate, Innocent III excoriated the offenders in the strongest of terms:

As for those who were supposed to be seeking the ends of Jesus Christ, not their own ends, who made their swords, which they were supposed to use against the pagans, drip with Christian blood, they have spared neither religion, nor age, nor sex. They have committed incest, adultery, and fornication before the eyes of men. They have exposed both matrons and virgins, even those dedicated to God, to the sordid lusts of boys³⁷.

35 "Événement fâcheux, mauvaise fortune, malheur, calamité," according to the *Dictionnaire du Moyen Français* website.

36 Mercuri, "*Stat inter spinas lilium*", p. 498, considers Frederick's canonization of Charlemagne in 1165 to be a key act in the establishment of monarchical ideology.

37 Pope Innocent III, *Letters*, p. 126 (addressed July 12, 1205 to the papal legate, who had absolved the crusaders from their pilgrimage vows). This text was taken from P. Halsall's

In the words of a historian paraphrasing this same letter, the crusaders “smashed the silver iconostasis, the icons and the holy books of Hagia Sophia, and seated upon the patriarchal throne a whore who sang coarse songs as they drank wine from the Church’s holy vessels³⁸”. In typical medieval fashion, the Pope saw the crusaders’ inordinate sexual desires, their *luxure*, to be at the root of their inability to competently rule the Holy Land. He lodged a mordant criticism of crusaders who act more ignobly than the infidels they were sent to conquer and convert. Christine presents the sexually continent Jean de Châteaumorant as a counter to irresponsible leaders who would allow disgraceful acts such as these to take place.

For the visionary pilgrim Christine, the Holy Land is and should remain a sacred place. She lingers over it, savoring the sight of the sites of Christ’s birth and death. She takes and preserves the measures of the savior’s tomb (v. 1267-1268), implying that those who view the site, whether in real life or in their text – or image – inspired visions, will possess the Heavenly Jerusalem, the true city of God, conceived first by the psalmist, and later by Saint Augustine, as a place of peace and justice for all³⁹. But first they must deserve the right to own the land where Christ had lived and died. Christine proposes Jean as a model of continence and charity in order to show that the French deserve to continue their rule in Constantinople and thus maintain their jurisdiction over the Holy Land that the city’s location commands. Jean has shown how the French can correct past mistakes. But will they continue to rule justly? This depends upon the strength, both military and moral, of French leaders.

Charity Cannon Willard connects Christine’s promotion of Jean with France’s desire to increase its closeness to the Holy Roman Empire. She describes how Marshall Boucicaut and Jean de Châteaumorant encouraged the Byzantine emperor, Manuel II Palaeologus, to come to Europe to solicit the aid of the Christian princes in keeping control of the Holy Land⁴⁰. When the Emperor arrived in Paris in June 1400,

entry on Fordham University’s *Internet Medieval Sourcebook* website, Halsall having modified the original translation by J. Brundage.

38 S. Vryonis, *Byzantium and Europe*, New York, Harcourt, Brace & World, 1967, p. 152.

39 The name Jerusalem means “vision of peace”, ‘visio pacis’. “Urbs beata Jerusalem dicta pacis visio” is the first line of a seventh or eighth-century hymn sung for the dedication of a church.

40 See J. Herrin and S. M. McManus, “Renaissance Encounters: Byzantium meets the West at the Council of Ferrara-Florence 1438-1439”, *Renaissance Encounters: Greek East and Latin*

King Charles VI received him with great ceremony and promised him help. In September 1402 Jean de Châteaumorant arrived in Paris to second Manuel II's quest for French aid, after which he conducted the Emperor back to Constantinople⁴¹. Willard points out that the date on which Christine began to compose her *Chemin*, October 5, 1402, was only two weeks after the Byzantine Emperor had left Paris with empty hands, despite Charles VI's promises⁴². According to Willard, Christine's message was that the French princes were too preoccupied with their own ambitions to be interested in such far away events. By staging her celestial debate, Christine reminds her audience of the good work Jean is doing in Constantinople, with the suggestion that the French princes should continue to support his efforts. For Willard, Christine's implicit message is that they had a responsibility toward the Emperor and the world that extended beyond their borders and their personal ambitions⁴³. To my mind, Christine even more profoundly implies that France's "manifest destiny", to use an anachronistic term, was intimately tied to the country's character as a "holy Christian empire". This notion, which had been initially formulated by Alcuin and Charlemagne as readers of Augustine's *City of God*⁴⁴, was subsequently taken over and developed by French kings, in particular by Louis IX (the future Saint Louis) and Charles V⁴⁵. Christine's praise of French leaders comes with a warning

West, ed. D. Gondicas and M.S. Brownlee, Leiden, Brill, 2012, p. 36-37, for a colorful account of the urgent appeal that Manuel II made to Western rulers.

- 41 Jean also arrived in Paris with news of an unexpected event. The Mongolian general Tamerlane had vanquished the Turkish leader Bajazet, thus prolonging the life of the Byzantine Empire.
- 42 Willard, "Source oubliée", p. 325.
- 43 Willard, "Source oubliée", p. 326.
- 44 Three of Charles V's translators follow Charlemagne's first biographer, Einhart, in pointing out that Charlemagne valued the *City of God* above all other books. See L. Walters, "Christine de Pizan comme biographe royal", trans. L. Costa, *Le passé à l'épreuve du présent: Appropriations et usages du passé au Moyen Âge et à la Renaissance*, ed. P. Chastang and M. Zimmermann, Paris, Presses de l'Université Paris-Sorbonne, 2007, p. 223-236, and four accompanying plates.
- 45 J. le Goff, *Saint Louis*, Paris, Gallimard, 1996. For Le Goff and others, Augustine's chapters on the Christian emperors (Book 5: 24-26) had a decided influence on Louis IX's conception of France's "most Christian" monarchy. Charles V's efforts to increase his closeness to the Empire is revealed by the care that he took in arranging a lavish reception for his cousin, the Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV, which is recorded at great length in his official copy of the *Grandes Chroniques*, Paris, BnF fr, 2813. During his visit, Charles V staged a short play celebrating the taking of Jerusalem in the First Crusade by forces

similar to the one issued by Saint Louis's chronicler, Primat. In order for France to maintain her right to rule over Constantinople and the Holy Land, she must govern in accordance with Christian principles.

Events, however, did not transpire according to Christine's wishes. For one thing, Louis d'Orléans failed to become Emperor. But more dramatically, on November 23, 1407 he was mercilessly cut down on the street by henchmen of his first cousin, Jean sans Peur. In direct retribution for his part in Louis's murder, on September 10, 1419 the duke of Burgundy himself fell to an assassin's blows. Soon thereafter France's ongoing civil conflicts ushered in almost a quarter century of English occupation⁴⁶. In her last and final text, her *Ditié de Jehanne d'Arc* (Poem of Joan of Arc) of 1429, Christine breaks an eleven-year silence, spent, as she puts it, "wailing in a walled abbey"⁴⁷, to celebrate Charles VII's recent coronation⁴⁸. Her poem depicts Charles ending his days re-conquering the Holy Land with the aid of Joan of Arc. An important point for my argument is that in Stanza XVI Christine specifically predicts that Charles VII will become emperor:

Car ung roy de France doit estre
Charles, filz de Charles, nommé,
Qui sur tous rois sera grand maistre. [...]
Et en fin dois estre empereur⁴⁹.

commanded by the French general Godefroy de Boulogne. After noting that the description of the Emperor's 1378 visit is the most densely illuminated segment of text in Charles V's *Grandes Chroniques*, Hedeman devotes *Royal Image*, p. 128-133 to an analysis of it. See also L. Walters, "Performing the Nation: Christine de Pizan's Biography of Charles V and the Play Performed at the Great Feast", *Cultural Performances in Medieval France: Essays in Honor of Nancy Freeman Regalado*, ed. E. Doss-Quinby, E. J. Burns and B. Krueger, Woodbridge, Boydell and Brewer, 2007, p. 219-235.

46 For a study of these troubled years, see R. C. Famiglietti, *Royal Intrigue: Crisis at the Court of Charles VI, 1392-1420*, New York, AMS Press, 1986.

47 Christine took refuge from the Parisian massacres of 1418 in an abbey, traditionally thought to be the Dominican abbey of Saint-Louis de Poissy outside Paris, where her daughter Marie was a nun. See Willard, *Christine de Pizan*, p. 201-208.

48 See K. Brownlee, "Structures of Authority in Christine de Pizan's *Ditié de Jehanne d'Arc*", *Discourses of Authority in Medieval and Renaissance Literature*, ed. K. Brownlee and W. Stephens, Dartmouth, N. H., University Press of New England, 1989; rpt. *The Selected Writings of Christine de Pizan*, ed. R. Blumenfeld-Kosinski, trans. R. Blumenfeld-Kosinski and K. Brownlee, New York, W. W. Norton, 1997, p. 371-390.

49 Christine de Pizan, *Le Ditié de Jehanne d'Arc*, ed., trans. A. J. Kennedy and K. Varty, Oxford, Medium Aevum Monographs, 1977, p. 43. All quotations of this text come from this edition.

For Christine, Charles's enterprise also entails conquering the Holy Land with Joan's help⁵⁰. These references support my claim that as early as in her *Chemin* Christine hoped, and perhaps worked to garner support for, a French prince who would ascend the imperial throne and win back the Holy Land.

Unfortunately for Christine, Charles VII never did become Holy Roman Emperor, nor did he ever undertake a crusade. And we all know how things turned out for Joan of Arc. Christine's high hopes for Constantinople would, moreover, be dashed when the city fell to the Turks in 1453⁵¹. It would remain under Ottoman control until 1922. The fall of Constantinople would necessitate a rethinking of France's idea of itself as a player on the world stage, which had been a function, in large part, of the country's ability to keep the Holy Land under Christian dominion. If, in her *Livre du chemin de lonc estude*, Christine shares Yeats's glowing vision of Constantinople as the cradle of civilization, then events such as the assassination of Louis d'Orléans in 1407 and the ensuing civil unrest would dim her optimism. Such texts as her 1410 *Lamentation*⁵² instead sound the apocalyptic strains of Yeats's "Second Coming"⁵³. Along with him, she might have asked: "And what rough beast, its hour come round at last/Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?"

Lori J. WALTERS
Florida State University

50 Stanza XLIII: "Des Sarradins fera essart, /En conquerant la Saintte Terre. /Là menra Charles, que Dieu gard! /Ains qu'il muire, fera tel erre. /Cilz est cil qui la doit conquerre. /Là doit-elle finer sa vie, /Et l'un et l'autre gloire acquerre. /Là sera la chose assovyé". Christine also refers to the Second Charlemagne prophecy in *CbV* 2.15, ed. Solente, vol. 1, p. 163.

51 Given that Christine died around 1430, she would not have seen how her forecasts played out in the immediate future. But she often makes the point that she is writing for the ages. Her hopes for France's ascendancy would be vindicated in the long run. The country would recover from the Hundred Years War to go on, under Louis XIV, to become Europe's greatest monarchy.

52 Christine de Pizan, *La Lamentacion sur les Maux de la France*, ed. A. J. Kennedy, *Mélanges Foulon*, Rennes, Université de Haute-Bretagne, 1980, p. 177-185.

53 Yeats composed his "Second Coming" in 1919.